An evaluation of the impact of visitor orientation procedures at Old Sturbridge Village

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AN EVALUATION OF THE IMPACT OF
VISITOR ORIENTATION PROCEDURES
AT
OLD STURBRIDGE VILLAGE

A Thesis Presented
by
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ABSTRACT

Old Sturbridge Village offers an innovative and exciting experience in American history to visitors from all parts of the world. However, for many visitors unfamiliar with the interactive mode of interpretation and the emphasis on exploration within the living-history museum, some form of orientation can be extremely valuable. The present study examined the impact on the visitor's experience of the various orientation procedures available at Old Sturbridge Village. Of particular interest was the effect of the two orientation films presented in the Visitor Center theater, although other orientation procedures were considered as well. This research is based on a "pre-test/exposure/post-test" model in which visitors were interviewed both before and after their trip through the Village in order to determine what changes in their image and information about Old Sturbridge Village had taken place. Within this design, it was intended that the experiences of visitors who saw a film would be compared to those of visitors who did not. A control group of respondents who received only the exit interview was also included. Film-viewing visitors seemed to anticipate spending longer in the Village and did, in fact, spend more time although they do not see a greater number of exhibits. These same results were also found for respondents with a greater extent of orientation. However, neither film-viewing nor greater extent of orientation were associated with increased learning. The greatest impact seemed to
come from the entrance interview procedure itself. These visitors saw a greater number of exhibits and exhibited higher levels of learning than those who did not receive an entrance interview. Overall, the orientation procedures are underutilized and evaluation data indicate that only the map and film were perceived as valuable in orienting visitors to the Village. Results provide new directions both in future orientation planning and for further research in the field.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Two brawny looking oxen stare at you disinterestedly as you pass through the double-glass doors of the Visitor Center into Old Sturbridge Village. As you reach the crest of the hill, wandering along a dirt path edged by a rough rail fence, you are greeted by a view of the Village Common. If you are a native New Englander, this sight may be fairly familiar to you. But New Englander or not, you are taken by surprise which you notice a dapper gentleman in top hat and long coat reining in a horse-drawn carriage to speak to a pert, white-bonneted woman carrying a gingham covered basket on her arm. Old Sturbridge Village is not, you realize, your "ordinary, everyday" museum.

Living history museums such as Old Sturbridge Village have increased in both number and popularity over the past years. These museums attempt to bring to life the American history that most of us know only from schoolbooks by reconstructing and reenacting places and periods from the nation's past. But because the living history museum is so radically different from the more traditional museum in its approach to the presentation and interpretation of its subject matter, visitors may experience some confusion and disorientation upon first encountering a scene such as the one just described. A new set of rules and a new and very exciting mode of learning are implicit in the visitor's experience in the living history museum. Making these rules and opportunities explicit and available to the visitor is the role of the orientation experience.

The present report describes the results of a study examining the impact of the various orientation procedures at Old Sturbridge
Village. Data collection was conducted in the autumn of 1979. This involved interviewing first-time visitors both before and after their visit, concerning their reactions both to the Village in general and, more specifically, to the types of orientation they had received. Past research and observation have suggested that appropriate orientation can be an important component of the visitor's experience and can enhance later understanding of particular concepts and ideas. Little is known, however, about how specific orientation procedures may affect the visitor's understanding nor about the overall impact of orientation in a setting such as Old Sturbridge Village. It was the purpose of this research to begin to explore these questions.

To outline briefly the organization of the present report--this brief introduction will be followed by a review of relevant literature from the fields of museum research and naturalist interpretation. A more detailed description of Old Sturbridge Village and of the development of the issues currently under examination will then be presented, followed by a discussion of study objectives and a more concrete experimental design statement. After this, the research instruments and methods used in the study will be described. Experimental results and a summary of the statistical analyses will then be presented; while the final chapter presents a more detailed discussion of these results, along with conclusions and recommendations both for future orientation efforts as well as for future research endeavors. Appendices at the rear of the report include copies of all instruments used as well as an annotated map of Old Sturbridge Village locating interview and orientation sites.
Review of Relevant Literature

The living history museum is still a relatively novel setting, as new to the researcher as it is to the visiting public, and there is only a small amount of existing literature upon which to base hypotheses and experimental methods. In order to provide a context within which to understand the potential effects of orientation on visitors to Old Sturbridge Village, two related areas of research have been examined—the first consists of studies of museum visitation and visitor behavior and the second focuses on the evaluation of interpretive practices in public recreation areas.

1. Museum visitation.
   a. Orientation. The term "orientation" as it is found in the literature, has two distinct usages: conceptual and physical. Of primary concern in the present study is the issue of "conceptual" or "thematic" orientation. Few museums have the well-defined theme of a living history museum where a specific place and period of time define the organization and interpretation of the museum's artifacts; most general museums present a more eclectic array of collections to the visitor. Even so, the importance of providing an adequate conceptual orientation has begun to gain recognition. The process of developing an effective conceptual orientation can be reviewed in four stages. At its most basic level, this has meant finding out who the museum visitor is. In an article entitled, "Please, Not Another Visitor Survey," Ross Loomis reviews some of the problems of past visitor surveys and offers suggestions on how to make such research more useful in
future museum planning. He points out particularly the need to determine for a specific study what types of information will be most useful and, once this has been done, to design a sampling procedure that will maximize the reliability, and hence the usability, of the results (Loomis, 1973).

Knowing the potential audience, the next step should be for administrators to develop carefully considered objectives for various orientation procedures. In a collection of statements by museum administrators concerning orientation (Cohen, 1974), orientation objectives such as, "(the visitor) should be cognizant of styles and periods of American art and the commercial interaction between patron/consumer and artist," provide clear goals for orientation planning by defining concrete learning objectives. Objectives such as, "a conceptual orientation device should bring people to a level from which they can assimilate what they see and make it meaningful," do not provide such guidance. Objectives will only be useful when it can be determined whether or not they have been successfully met.

Once measurable objectives have been established, orientation procedures can be developed. Many museum administrators have entered enthusiastically into the mass-media market, providing visitors with a sometimes overwhelming variety of orientation films, slide shows and cassette recordings. More traditional orientation methods include brochures, maps, display cases, and information desks staffed with museum personnel (Cohen, 1974).

But too often the process ends here. There is generally little funding available for evaluation efforts and the success of orientation
procedures is generally measured by informal staff observation or unsolicited visitor reactions. Cohen's review of orientation at various museums describes visitor reactions to orientational methods but none of the sampling procedures are actually discussed. More data on the effects of conceptual orientation devices are not available; however, the following presentation of results from related fields does give some direction toward developing effective orientation evaluation.

The more commonly understood use of the term "orientation" refers to a "physical" or "locational" orientation which enables the visitor to locate exhibits and services within the museum building. The importance of providing adequate physical orientation has been widely recognized and there is a wealth of information related to directional signage (Fleming, 1976), map use (Winkel et al., 1975), and the use of architectural cues as aids in orientation (Royal Ontario Museum, 1976), to guide museums in designing this type of orientation service. Some of the results from these studies are also of interest in a consideration of conceptual orientation.

Winkel et al. (1975), in their research at the Smithsonian Institution, found that museum visitors have "an insatiable demand for orientation information" and that different orientation devices are used in different ways. What might appear to be unnecessary redundancy is not perceived in this manner by the visitor. According to that study, visitors used maps to get an overall orientation to the museum, while specific exhibits were located by the use of directional signs. This type of differential use might also be explored for conceptual orientation procedures, to guide administrators in developing more
effective orientation programs.

b. Exhibit effectiveness. While the area of exhibit planning and design is more fully developed than that of orientation, there is still a widespread tendency to rely on the subjective reactions of administrators to evaluate exhibit effectiveness. But, as one author notes, "the expert and subjective evaluations of colleagues and critics may be of interest, but they are not measures of effectiveness unless the exhibit was designed for them" (Cameron, 1968). When visitors' views are used to evaluate exhibit effectiveness, they tend to rely on the unsolicited opinions of a small minority of users. One study cites the following result, "the educational impact of this amount of material is quite considerable, judging by the number and quality of inquiries brought to our office as a result of listeners' interest" (Libin, 1974).

However, a variety of more rigorous evaluation tools, including both observational and interview methods, have been developed and may be of interest in planning an evaluation of orientation procedures. Observational methods have been used to track the visitor's path through the museum or through a particular hall and to measure visitor attentiveness to specific artifacts or displays. Such studies have provided interesting information concerning the visitor's behavior in the museum. For example, early research (Melton, 1935) noted a tendency for museum visitors to travel in a counterclockwise direction (i.e., turn first to the right) from entrance to nearest exit when viewing an exhibit hall. Later studies indicate that this tendency may be influenced by the placement of "landmark" exhibits (those items of greatest
visual interest or where large numbers of other visitors are observed to congregate) (Weiss & Boutourline, 1963), by exhibit hall design (deBorgehyi, 1968) and by the visitor's own cultural background (deBorgehyi, 1963). Visitor attentiveness has been measured by the length of time spent examining individual artifacts (Barr, 1976), and by the visitor's willingness to read informational labels (Wolf and Tymitz, 1978). One author even suggests (perhaps half seriously) the use of "noseprints on the glass" as an informal measure of exhibit effectiveness (Anderson, 1968). These observational techniques have the advantage of being easily quantified and can be used without interrupting the visitor's trip through the museum.

Interview techniques adapted from the fields of education and psychology measure effectiveness in terms of information retention. In some studies (deBorgehyi, 1963), the visitor views the exhibit and is then asked a series of questions related to the information presented there. Other researchers (Cameron, 1968) advocate using a "pretest/exposure/post-test" model which accounts for initial differences in level of information, although the effect of initial questioning which may introduce certain biases in visitor learning behaviors (Wagar, 1976) is not taken into consideration in this particular study. In either case, these methods gather more focused information than do the observational techniques concerning the individual visitor's experience at the cost of interfering with that experience.

Unfortunately, even when the study is well conceived and carefully planned, as in the deBorgehyi (1968) study which examines the effects of three aspects of exhibit design by carefully manipulating each
condition, the exclusive use of descriptive statistics in all the studies (as opposed to inferential statistics) makes it impossible to draw conclusions or to compare findings between studies. A true understanding of the effect of various exhibit techniques will not be gained until it becomes possible to generalize the results of individual studies and to begin to look at their impact in different situations.

2. Interpretation. A second research perspective on the development of appropriate evaluation techniques can be gained from an examination of studies of interpretation in natural settings. "Interpretation," as used in these studies, might be defined as the communication, through any number of possible media, of concepts and factual information with the intent of broadening the visitor's understanding of and appreciation for a particular natural or historic site.

In the United States, agencies involved in outdoor recreation have interpreted natural and cultural history for their visitors for many years. However, the effectiveness of these presentations has seldom been evaluated. Attempts at evaluation have usually meant observation of the interpreter's technique by a supervisor. Although supervisors can provide important guidance, the only sure test of effectiveness is to examine what we are trying to affect—the audience. (Dick, Myklestad & Wagar, 1975)

In fact, evaluation in interpretive research is far better than that found in current museum literature. This is true primarily due to the work of one person, J. Alan Wagar, whose work in evaluating effectiveness in environmental interpretation has defined and advanced the field greatly. Wagar, along with numerous colleagues, has studied audience attention, audio-visual media and visitor participation practices and he applies these findings to improving interpretive techniques.
One of Wagar's methods focuses on measuring levels of audience attentiveness at interpretive talks by observing nonverbal indicators of interest such as percentage of time spent focused on the speaker and response to instructions given during presentations (Dick, Myklestad & Wagar, 1975). As in museum research, these observational methods have the advantage of not interrupting the listener's concentration. However, they do not provide a great depth of understanding concerning the visitor's experience either. Wagar's simple use of graphic presentation of results is probably appropriate since this paper seems to be directed primarily toward an audience untrained in research methods. However, it is difficult to make conclusions concerning the reliability of the methods or of Wagar's recommendations without having a more complete reporting of the results available.

Wagar has also studied the effectiveness of various teaching aids. One of his early innovations was in the use of the recording quizboard (Wagar with the help of Davis, 1972). This technique is used not only to encourage visitor participation, but serves as an evaluation device, as well, by recording visitors' responses to questions related to exhibit material. Unfortunately, this method does not distinguish between first-time and tenth-time users (Wagar has some very devoted enthusiasts) making it difficult to interpret the results of this method. However, assuming equal occurrences of such repeated play, this method can be used to measure differences across questions and between variations of one question, thus serving as a valuable evaluation aid.

Another of Wagar's studies examines the effect of cassette
recordings of interpretive material made available to visitors (Wagar, 1976). Results indicated that the use of these cassettes increased enjoyment and short-term retention of information presented. He also notes that including questions directed to the visitor within the interpretive message increases the retention of information concerning that specific topic but at the risk of reducing retention of other information not directly tested.

Another study is of particular interest in that it compares the use of a number of evaluation techniques (Wagar, Lovelady & Falkin, 1976). This study finds that "a panel of outsiders, suggestion boxes, observed audience attention, and time-lapse photography all proved to be good techniques for evaluating effectiveness" (see Abstract). Other evaluation techniques used were visitor voting, which received little response from subjects and tracking a sample of visitors through the exhibit, which proved too costly in terms of evaluator time. Wagar concludes that evaluation need not be complicated nor expensive to be useful in improving interpretive methods so long as it is thoughtfully conceived and carried out.

Other researchers in the fields of interpretation and environmental education have also helped to develop and refine evaluation techniques. Hanna and Silvy (1978), for example, developed an observational method for distinguishing between participants and non-participants in terms of various visitor characteristics. This inclusion of non-participant groups is an important point and one rarely taken into consideration. More (1978) examined the differential effect of static versus dynamic orientation exhibits at a nature center and found that
the more active orientation did improve short-term retention of information but that there is no significant difference between the two by the end of the visit. She also reports that visitors find the dynamic orientation more enjoyable. Mahaffey examined both visitor preference as well as information retention, comparing three interpretive media: a cassette tape recording presentation, signs, and brochures (Mahaffey, 1970). There appears to be a considerable preference for recorded information although information retention appears to vary little across groups.

This last study exemplifies a common shortcoming of research reviewed in both interpretive and museum settings. Researchers, for the most part, seem capable of defining clear research objectives and of designing adequate experimental situations in which to test these effects. Unfortunately, their reliance on simple, descriptive statistics makes it impossible to determine the true extent of their findings. Large differences in percentages could easily be the result of error variability in the sampling techniques. Conversely, small differences in information retention may be important although they appear relatively insignificant when reported in terms of overall frequencies. It is difficult to determine whether or not the research reviewed is actually as simplistic as it appears or whether reports are geared for a less statistically knowledgeable audience. Perhaps if there were a forum in which evaluators and researchers in these areas could address one another directly, greater cooperation and progress in the field would result.

One study which examined the determinants of visitor satisfaction
at Gettysburg National Military Park, presents a model for what future research may accomplish, that it was conducted in an historical park makes it particularly relevant here (Knopf & Barnes, 1979). Past research by Knopf and his colleagues has focused on the development of "motive profiles" of users in a number of recreational settings. Using factor analytic methods, the authors define four such scales for use in this study. Respondents were grouped into eight categories on the basis of their scores along these four scales. Differences in park perception and facility usage were then examined in relation to these eight categories. Results indicate different patterns of usage and different evaluations of park facilities were found for the various types of visitors providing valuable planning information. The second section of the study applied discriminant analysis methods to determine what factors best predict satisfaction with the park and attained awareness of the history portrayed there. Results indicate that satisfaction with the park is most strongly affected by the performance of park staff while interacting with visitors. Results pertaining to awareness of Gettysburg history are of less predictive value, though it appears that the auto tour and other orientation procedures available to visitors, as well as park personnel were effective in communicating this information. However, both of these analyses rely on a single response as the dependent variable, leaving these interpretations open to question. The authors note several other difficulties in the use of their methods. First, they question the representativeness of their sample and caution that results should not be generalized beyond the scope of the research. They also note problems resulting from the use of scaling procedures in
which no concrete example is provided as a common referent for respondents. In addition, the use of self-judged knowledge gain as opposed to objective questioning puts the results of this particular analysis into question. Even so, this study does begin to go beyond the use of descriptive statistics and does so in a reasonable and critical way, providing a greater depth of understanding of the issues involved and a direction for future research.
CHAPTER II
RESEARCH SETTING AND OBJECTIVES

The Research Setting: Old Sturbridge Village

Old Sturbridge Village "is an outdoor museum which depicts the life, work and surroundings of ordinary Americans--rural New Englanders--at a time of crucial historical change" (Larkin, 1978). The outdoor or "living-history" museum has been defined as "a carefully selected and situated collection of original buildings, grouped compatibly and designed to illustrate in three-dimensional form, as totally as possible not only the architecture and building forms of a given geographical area and period of time in history, but also to recreate as nearly as possible the atmosphere and life-style of a segment of human development in its entire context" (Tishler, 1977). This concept, first developed in Europe, has become increasingly popular in the United States as a way of presenting to the public the variety of cultures and lifestyles which have contributed to the nation's growth and development. Today there are over one-hundred such sites across the country.

Old Sturbridge Village was started in 1926 by the Wells family as a means of preserving and displaying their collection of Early American artifacts. Since that time, the Village concept has been defined and developed until today Old Sturbridge Village is among the best known and most highly respected living history museums in the country. The Village is situated on a 1200 acre site in Central
Massachusetts and includes nearly 40 period buildings. Some of the buildings display formal exhibits presented in a more traditional museum style; however, the majority have been restored and furnished as they would have appeared in the early 19th century. In these buildings, costumed interpreters answer visitor's questions and demonstrate the crafts and everyday chores of the period.

The staff and administration of Old Sturbridge Village have a great dedication to preserving and enhancing the authenticity of the museum through continuing historical research, physical changes and additions within the exhibits themselves, the acquisition of new exhibits and artifacts, and the development and implementation of new interpretive programs and materials. They have also recognized the important role played by orientation in making the visitor's trip to the Village a success. A wide variety of orientations have been developed and are currently available to visitors, and efforts are constantly underway to improve existing orientation procedures and to develop new, more effective ones. Recently, Old Sturbridge Village received funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities to define and develop the Center Village (town commons) area more fully. It was as part of this "Community in Change" project that the present study was conducted, examining the effect of currently available orientation procedures on the visitor's experience at Old Sturbridge Village.

1. Orientation in Old Sturbridge Village. There are currently seven types of orientation available to visitors at Old Sturbridge Village. As visitors first approach the main entrance, they encounter a large
vertical display case which presents a map of the Village and provides some basic information concerning the period (see map in Appendix).

The Visitor Center building itself is a modern structure which serves as the gateway into the Village and nearly all orientations are presented here. Inside the Visitor Center, the walls are covered by large photographic scenes of the Village and information panels describing life in the Village period. When the visitor purchases tickets, s/he receives a large hand-out which provides a map of the exhibits as well as basic information about the Village and the period portrayed. To the left of the main ticket counter are the Visitor Center exhibit gallery and theater. The gallery presents changing exhibits of artifacts along with interpretive information generally focusing on one concept or theme (such as the rural 19th century landscape or women's clothing of the period). The two orientation films, "Working in Rural New England" and "The Legacy of Old Sturbridge Village," are shown in the theater. At the time of this study, each film was shown twice a day, once in the late morning and once in the early afternoon (a brief synopsis of each film appears in the Appendix). As a final orientation within the Visitor Center building, a costumed staff person sits at the membership table near the building's exit into the Village proper; this person is often asked questions about the Village as visitors pass by. The only orientation provided beyond the Visitor Center is an oral presentation sometimes available at the Quaker Meetinghouse, the first building most visitors encounter. This presentation describes the Village and the Village period and explains the role of costumed interpretive staff. The interpreter there also encourages visitors to explore
and to ask questions and describes the special events taking place in
the Village that day. This particular orientation has not been fully
implemented, however, and it is difficult to determine when such pre-
sentations are available. Most visitors also receive some form of ori-
entation prior to their arrival at Old Sturbridge Village—many have
read about the Village in magazine or newspaper articles, some have
friends and relatives who have visited Old Sturbridge Village in the
past, and many have visited similar places such as Colonial Williamsburg
or Plimouth Plantation.

2. Past research at Old Sturbridge Village. Original work by The En-
vironmental Institute investigating the nature of the visitor's experi-
ence at Old Sturbridge Village began in the spring of 1978 (Hayward et
al., 1978). This preliminary research identified four potential areas
of interest:

1) learning,

2) gaining a sense of the community and of the interdependence of
Village life,

3) gaining a sense of the time period portrayed by the Village,
and

4) understanding the relationship between the Village experience
and the visitor's everyday life.

Several research methods were developed and piloted during that project.
These included interviews conducted at various points in the Village,
behavioral mapping within exhibits, tracking of visitor's paths between
exhibits, path-recall and map-identification exercises. The results of
this pilot work provided direction in terms of future research efforts.

Orientation was recognized as potentially important to the visitor's experience at Old Sturbridge Village in terms of gaining both a sense of the community and of the time period portrayed by Old Sturbridge Village and a number of possible studies were suggested to examine the various impacts of the orientation. These proposed studies included the planning of a new orientation focusing on the commons area, the development of a new series of thematic guides to be used as orientation materials, and the implementation of a program to give visitors more personalized information concerning the Village.

The year's pilot work also resulted in the identification of those methods which might be most easily and effectively used in future research. It was found that measures such as tracking and behavioral mapping, while informative, required too much of the researcher's time to be efficient. Problems were also experienced in using tape recording methods due to the obtrusiveness of these methods and to poor sound reproduction and in the use of mail-back questionnaires due to low response rates. Interviews proved to be most useful as a research method. Visitors seemed willing to respond to a short series of questions at almost any time and the procedure did not seem to interfere drastically with the visitor's experience in the Village.

Research efforts began again in the spring of 1979 when The Environmental Institute agreed to participate in evaluating the success of the "Community in Change" project currently underway at Old Sturbridge Village. This project, funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, focuses on the development of the Center Village area as a more
salient core to the Village experience. Historical research concerning
the development and functioning of the Center Village area has led to a
series of changes in both the physical and interpretive aspects of this
area. It is the role of the research team of The Environmental Insti-
tute to evaluate the impact these changes have on the visitor's percep-
tion of the Village. In addition to the research described here on the
impact of orientation procedures, other research is also being conducted
as part of this project, including an examination of the visitor's sense
of "going back in time" and the collection of data upon which to base an
evaluation of changes in selected exhibits in the Center Village area.

Study Objectives

A number of possible studies focusing on orientation were sug-
gested at the conclusion of the first year's pilot research (Hayward et
al., 1978). The importance of orientation was recognized and many new
approaches to orientation had been suggested by the year's work. How-
ever, when planning began for the present project, it became apparent
that basic information concerning the use and impact of currently avail-
able orientation procedures would have to be gathered before new innova-
tions could be introduced and evaluated. It is difficult, in exploratory
research of this kind, to state firm experimental hypotheses; how-
ever, the examination of related literatures and a review of earlier
research suggest some possible questions that might be asked concerning
the effects of orientation on the visitor's experience.
A. Past research has indicated that audiences learn more and express a greater preference for active orientation devices such as films, slide shows, tape recordings and oral presentations than they do for more static orientations such as photographs and written material (Wagar, 1976; Cohen, 1974; Libin, 1974). The majority of this research, however, has been conducted in settings which are otherwise static—traditional museum exhibits and natural and historical information centers. It is not known whether these findings apply to orientation conducted in settings such as Old Sturbridge Village in which active interpretation and demonstration are central to the operation of the entire site. In discussing plans for the current project with Village staff members, particular interest was expressed in knowing more about the impact of the two orientation films currently available to visitors. These films present an overview of the site and provide visitors with some information concerning the history and current operation of the Village. It was thought that seeing one of the two films would heighten both the visitor's level of learning as well as his/her enjoyment of the Village.

What then is the effect of seeing one of the two orientation films available to visitors at Old Sturbridge Village? Do visitors learn more as a result of this experience? Is the visitor's enjoyment of the Village greater? How are such "active" orientation devices received in a setting which is already active and involving?

B. It has been demonstrated that people use different orientation devices in different ways (Winkel et al., 1975), implying that a
multiplicity of orientation devices might better serve user needs. Old Sturbridge Village has seven orientation experiences available to visitors to the Village. However, little is know about the numbers of people receiving each orientation nor about the value of each orientation to users.

Do learning and enjoyment increase with a greater number of orientation experiences? Do particular orientation devices have distinct impacts on the visitors's experience? Which orientations do visitors most often receive? Which do they think have been most helpful?

C. Old Sturbridge Village is a large and complex environment in which information is made available to visitors on a number of different levels in a number of different ways. However, there are certain themes and concepts which the administrators of the Village have indicated are of primary importance. Past research has noted the distinction between physical and conceptual orientation (Royal Ontario Museum, 1976). Old Sturbridge Village goes beyond this simple distinction to present conceptual orientation to several distinct themes. In planning new programs, determining the effectiveness with which each of these themes is communicated to visitors through orientation is equal in importance to understanding the impact of the devices themselves.

What types of information are most effectively communicated to visitors to Old Sturbridge Village through the present orientation procedures?
CHAPTER III

EXPERIMENTAL METHODS

A basic "pretest/exposure/post-test" model was used to evaluate the effect of orientation on the visitor's experience at Old Sturbridge Village with special emphasis placed on examining the effectiveness of the two orientation films presently being shown. Included in the design, however, is a control group of respondents who were interviewed only at the conclusion of their visit. This permits an analysis of the possible effect of the entrance interview procedure itself. A detailed description of interview formats, subject groups and experimental procedures follows.

Interview Formats

Three interview forms were developed for use in the current study. The first, a relatively short entrance interview, provides information concerning the visitor's incoming image of Old Sturbridge Village and his/her level of information about the Village. The second is an exit interview designed to be administered to the same respondents after their trip through the Village. This second procedure provides information concerning changes in the visitor's image and information about the Village and examines visitor reactions to specific orientation procedures as well. The third, a slightly modified version of the exit interview schedule incorporating items from the entrance interview,
served as a control by utilizing respondents who were approached only at the conclusion of their visit. Each of the schedules will be described in some detail below and copies of each appear in the Appendix.

1. Entrance interview. The entrance interview was designed to gather two types of information. Its primary goal was to gain an understanding of the kinds of information and images visitors have about the Village before entering. Most visitors seem to hear about the Village from friends or relatives who have visited before or from travel guides and brochures. Considering the variety of sources of information available, it was the intent of the entrance interview to determine the visitor's initial level of knowledge concerning Old Sturbridge Village.

There was particular interest expressed by Old Sturbridge Village staff concerning visitors' knowledge about the period of time represented, the origin of the buildings now in the Village and the history of the site on which the Village now stands. These were also the types of information identified by visitors in pilot studies as most important in gaining an understanding of Old Sturbridge Village. And as they are questions to which there are unambiguous correct and incorrect responses, items relating to these three questions were included on the entrance interview schedule.

Respondents were also asked to indicate which of four possible responses—"a museum," "a park," "a crafts exhibit," or "an old New England town where you might go sightseeing"—best described their "image" of Old Sturbridge Village, and were asked how Old Sturbridge Village might differ from other similarly defined places they had visited in the past. It was thought that visitors might have different
expectations and might seek out different kinds of information in relation to these definitions.

Visitors were also asked to rate their knowledge of American history on a scale of 1 (well above average) to 5 (well below average) and were asked to estimate the amount of time they expected to be in the Village. Only two demographic items were included on the entrance interview schedule, out of concern for taking as little of the respondent's time as possible. Respondents were asked to identify the number of adults and the number of children in their group, and finally the sex of the primary respondent was coded for later comparison in order to determine whether or not the same individual was responding to both entrance and exit interviews. (This information was not, however, used in later analysis.) A second benefit in administering the entrance interview, aside from gaining information about visitors' knowledge, was to be able to encourage visitors to participate in the available orientations, particularly the films, and to request respondents to return at the conclusion of their visit in order to complete the exit interview. In total, the entrance interview took approximately five minutes to complete.

2. Exit interview. Information gathered from the exit interview can be divided into four areas. These are: (a) visitor behavior, (b) knowledge or information about the Village, (c) evaluation of the Village in general, and (d) evaluation of specific orientation procedures. Items within each of these categories will be described below.

a. Visitor behavior. The visitor's trip through the Village was recorded in two ways. First, interviewers recorded the time of
both entrance and exit interviews to make possible the determination of the total amount of time each respondent spent in the Village. Second-
ly, respondents were given a map of the Village (the same one they had received upon entering) and were asked to number the exhibits they had seen in the order in which they had been visited. This made it possible to determine not only the total number of exhibits viewed but also the path taken through the Village during the course of the visit. The present report considers only the total number of exhibits visited. It is hoped that later analysis can consider the effect of the specific path the visitor takes through the Village.

b. Knowledge. The same questions used in the entrance inter-
view, evaluating visitors' knowledge of Old Sturbridge Village, were repeated here. This repetition was designed to gauge the amount of in-
formation gained during the course of the visit. These questions, again, were related to: the period of time represented by the Village, the history of the buildings, and the history of the site itself.

c. Evaluation. At the conclusion of their visit, respondents were also asked to evaluate Old Sturbridge Village along a number of different scales. They were first asked to give an overall evaluation of the Village ("overall, how enjoyable did you find your visit?" rated on a scale of 1 (extremely enjoyable) to 7 (extremely unpleasant)). Pilot research had indicated that responses to overall evaluation ques-
tions such as this tend to be quite positive and to vary little. For this reason, a sequence of evaluation questions asking respondents to compare Old Sturbridge Village to a number of other types of settings was included as well. (For example, visitors were asked to rate Old
Sturbridge Village on a scale of 1 (high) to 10 (low) in comparison to other museums they had visited in the past.)

In addition to these more general evaluations, two conceptual themes were evaluated which had been identified for the purposes of the current research as being of particular importance to the "Community in Change" theme. These are: (a) the sense of the time period portrayed by the Village, and (b) the "sense of community" communicated by the exhibits and activities within the Village. Pilot studies had attempted any number of ways of tapping this information, with little success. Abstract ideas, such as those central to these two themes, are difficult for visitors to express even assuming that the themes have been successfully communicated in the first place. The researcher treads a fine line between defining the concept and coercing the respondent with available responses. Thus, in the current study, these two themes were approached in two ways. First, visitors were asked to respond to a scaled question about the extent to which Old Sturbridge Village had been successful in communicating these themes. This does not, however, provide a measure of the degree to which respondents actually comprehend the ideas being discussed. Two open-ended questions about these two topics were included in order to gauge levels of understanding. This information has proven to be as difficult to interpret as it was for respondents to express and is still in the process of being analyzed.

d. Orientation evaluation. In order to obtain more specific orientation evaluation information, respondents were asked first to identify which of eleven possible orientations they had received, some within the Village, others outside. They were then asked to evaluate
which of these orientations (if any) had been most helpful to them in terms of:

1) finding their way around,

2) gaining a sense of the time period portrayed by Old Sturbridge Village,

3) gaining a sense of Old Sturbridge Village as an active and interdependent community, and

4) providing factual information about the Village and about the Village period.

These criteria, it will be noted, relate back to the earlier list of questions concerning the visitor's path through the Village, the visitor's understanding of the two conceptual themes defined for the study, and the information gained during the visit.

Finally, demographic information was solicited from respondents, including age, sex, income, education, and distance from home.

Subjects

Subjects in the current study were first-time visitors to Old Sturbridge Village. This selection enables the researcher to gain an understanding of current experiences in the Village without the confounding effect of earlier memories. While one person generally serves as primary respondent, sampling was by group rather than by individual. Two-hundred and eleven groups received the initial entrance interview. Of these, 153 (72.5%) returned for the exit interview at the conclusion of their visit. An additional 51 respondents completed the exit-only interview.
Procedures

A total of nine persons served as interviewers for the current study. Interviewers included members of the research team as well as Old Sturbridge Village research and interpretive staff members. Interviews were conducted from September 18 to October 20, 1979. Data related to daily weather conditions and crowds density were not recorded and are not considered to be of primary importance in the present analyses. (However, this information might be reconstructed through the use of archival sources should it be required in future analysis.) The majority of the entrance interviews were conducted from 9:30 a.m., when the Village opens, until noon; exit interviews were conducted from early afternoon until shortly after 5:30 p.m., when the Village closes. However, an interviewer was available at all times to administer exit interviews should a respondent leave earlier than this.

Entrance interviews were conducted along the broad path leading from the parking lot to the Visitor Center (see map in Appendix for interview locations). Interviewers were instructed to make a random selection of groups by approaching the next group to enter the walkway area after they had concluded an interview and had finished coding all information on the interview schedule for that respondent. It should not be assumed, however, that this constitutes a truly random sample; first because the sample was limited to first-time visitors and secondly because it is difficult to determine how individual interviewers actually made their selections of which groups to approach. The interviewer, after approaching one member of a group, would first ask
potential respondents whether or not this was their first visit to Old Sturbridge Village. If visitors had been to the Village, or if other members of the group had visited before, they were thanked and the interviewer went on to the next group.

First-time visitors, however, then received a brief explanation of the research being conducted and were asked if they would be willing to answer a few questions. Respondents who agreed were given a somewhat more detailed explanation of the interview procedure including being informed of the necessity to return at the conclusion of their visit. After obtaining consent for the interviews, respondents were informed that they would be able to select a small gift from a number of items available in the gift shop as a way of thanking them for their cooperation. The interviewer then conducted the entrance interview and reminded respondents about the exit interview. If the timing was appropriate, the interviewer also suggested that they might see one of the orientation films in the Visitor Center before beginning their tour through the Village. At this time, respondents were also given a small yellow card on which the number corresponding to their entrance interview had been written. These cards were returned to the interviewer at the time of the exit interview allowing the two forms to be matched. Surprisingly, this system worked out quite well. Only a very few respondents lost their cards and for the most part, matches could still be made by a process of elimination at the end of the afternoon. Where this was not possible, both forms were eliminated from the sample.

During the process of gathering data, it became apparent that few respondents were actually taking the suggestion to see one of the
films. To compensate for this sampling problem, entrance interviews were also conducted inside the Visitor Center theatre so that only those visitors who would see a film were sampled. In addition, some respondents were asked to fill out their own interview schedules although these schedules had been edited to delete any leading information from appearing. While it is recognized that the use of such a procedure may introduce biases into the data, it was decided that the difficulty of obtaining a film-viewing group warranted these extra efforts.

Exit interviews were conducted in a seating area between the Gift Shop and Visitor Center or, in the case of inclement weather, in the Old Sturbridge Village Conference Center just outside the exit booth from the Village. In either case, respondents approached the interviewer and returned their yellow identification card. The interviewer then administered the exit interview, allowing the respondent to fill out the map independently (seeing the map seemed to serve as a mnemonic device for many respondents). Respondents were also asked to fill out demographic items independently since they are of a more personal nature and might be answered more truthfully in this way. At the conclusion of the interview procedure, respondents were asked if they had any questions or comments about the research, were offered one of the small gift items and were thanked for their participation.

Exit-only interviews were conducted in much the same way as the regular exit interviews except that visitors were stopped as they left the Village and were asked to participate. They, too, were only interviewed if they were first-time visitors and they received the same
explanation as those visitors who agreed to respond to the entrance interview and received the same selection of gifts at the end of the interview.

After data collection was completed, coding of the information was done by members of the research team. All data were then key-punched by professional operators and verified by research team members. This information was then processed into an SPSS save file at the University Computing Center and it is this main file which has been used in all of the analyses which follow. All analyses were conducted through the SPSS system using both directly coded and derived variables as well as a system of SPSS subfiles corresponding to the various classifications of respondents. The process by which derived variables were computed is described as those variables enter the analysis.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The results of this research are presented in five parts. First, demographic information on the sample will be presented along with comparative information from an earlier survey conducted at Old Sturbridge Village. Secondly, the visitor's initial image and level of knowledge about Old Sturbridge Village will be discussed. The third section describes principal independent variables while the fourth summarizes the dependent variable data and probes the relationship between independent and dependent variables. The fifth and final section discusses the respondent's evaluation of the orientation experiences in terms of four general criteria.

Demographics

The following discussion describes the sample in more detail and compares the results of the present study to those of a more general visitor survey conducted by the Institute for Social Research, University of Hartford, in 1977 (Gilmartin, 1977). In the present study, five demographic questions were asked of respondents (N = 204). These variables are presented in greater detail in Tables 1 through 4, and will be summarized along with corresponding data from the University of Hartford study where appropriate. First, it might be noted that while the current study sampled first-time visitors only, the
Hartford study, sampling all visitors, found that 63% were first-time visitors. This group, then, forms a significant portion of the entire population of visitors to Old Sturbridge Village.

Because sampling for the current study was done by group rather than by individual, one important demographic variable is "Group Size." Contrary to the primarily family-oriented image of Old Sturbridge Village, the majority of visitors interviewed in the present study came in pairs (63.4%). The Hartford study reported that the majority of the visitors they sampled came in "family" groups (73.5%); however, this classification does not distinguish husband and wife and other family pairs from larger family groups. When current figures for "pair" and "family" are combined, a comparable figure (77.1%) is reached. The large proportion of pairs is probably due in part also to the fact that data for the current study were collected through the autumn months when most children are in school, although weekend days were included in the sampling in order to help alleviate this problem.

The average distance from the respondent's home to Old Sturbridge Village was high ($\bar{X} = 884.6$ miles, Median = 300.2 miles). This finding may have been influenced by the fact that only first-time visitors were sampled. It is reasonable to assume that visitors who live in the general vicinity of Old Sturbridge Village may be more likely to have visited previously and it seemed that a relatively large number of visitors sampled came from the West Coast (9.4%) or from a foreign country (3.4%).

The age of visitors to Old Sturbridge Village varies from the very young to the very old. Only those visitors who appeared to be
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Size</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alone</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>63.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group (adults only)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group (adults and children)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>204</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*aQuestion reads: "Could you tell me how many people are in your group? (number of adults and number of children)"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Respondent</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 - 25</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 - 35</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>21.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 - 45</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 - 55</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56 - 65</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66 - 75</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75+</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>204</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*aQuestion reads: "Please indicate your age."
### TABLE 3

**RESPONDENT'S LEVEL OF EDUCATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completed High School</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed College</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>24.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Graduate School</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed Graduate School</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>204</td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a Question reads: "Please indicate the last year you completed in school."

*b includes professional schools

### TABLE 4

**RESPONDENT'S ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME LEVEL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Income Level</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$0 - 4,999</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,000 - 9,999</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000 - 19,999</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000 - 29,999</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,000 - 39,999</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40,000 +</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>204</td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a Question reads: "Please indicate the total annual income of your household."
over the age of 18, however, were asked to serve as respondents in the current study. The greatest proportion seemed to be young (26-35 years, 21%) or middle-aged (46-55 years, 28%) adults. Fifteen (7.5%) were over the age of 65. Although the use of a different scaling system in the Hartford study makes comparison difficult, it seems that the majority of respondents in that study were young middle-aged persons (20-39 years, 52.9%). The greater proportion of older middle-aged respondents noted in the current study may again be due to the season and to the fact that persons in this age range would be less likely to have school-aged children.

The current study also reflects a relatively high level of educational attainment. Fully 54% of the respondents had completed college and another 19% had some college experience. The Hartford study reveals a similar trend (50%, completed college; 24%, some college). This trend continues to be reflected in the high average household income levels reported by respondents in the current study ($20,000+, 69.0%) and by the large proportion of professional (29%) and skilled workers (44%) reported by the Hartford study.

Despite these overall statistics which indicate a general trend in demographic data, it should be emphasized that there is no "typical" visitor to Old Sturbridge Village. Visitors are varied; they are young and old, low-, middle-, and high-income, educated and uneducated, and they come to the Village with different experiences and expectations. These expectations and measures of the visitor's initial knowledge of Old Sturbridge Village are discussed in the following section.
Initial Knowledge

Visitors arriving at Old Sturbridge Village for the first time have a host of impressions and expectations regarding the site. For some it is a museum; for others a town left standing from the early 1800's, or perhaps a crafts exhibit in antique garb; for others it is simply the next stop on the bus tour. Visitors also have varied amounts of information (and misinformation) about the Village before they arrive. It was the purpose of the entrance interview to gain some understanding of what first-time visitors know and expect about the Village. In the interests of keeping the entrance interview as short as possible, only a few key questions about the Village were included. Only those respondents who received an entrance interview and returned later for the exit interview (N = 153) are included in the following analyses.

Respondents were first asked how they would describe the Village (see Table 5). They were given a series of four choices: fifteen (9.8%) said they would describe Old Sturbridge Village as "a museum," 10 (6.5%) as "a crafts exhibit," and 114 (74.5%) said they would describe Old Sturbridge Village as "an old New England town where you might go sightseeing." The remaining fourteen (9.3%) described Old Sturbridge Village as some combination of the four and none of the respondents selected "a park" as the best descriptor. It is interesting to note that first-time visitors do not think of Old Sturbridge Village as a museum. They come more as they would to a non-interpretive setting and may be somewhat unprepared for the vast amount of information and interaction available to them at Old Sturbridge Village.
TABLE 5

INITIAL DESCRIPTOR OF OLD STURBRIDGE VILLAGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Best Description</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. &quot;a museum&quot;</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. &quot;a park&quot;</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. &quot;a crafts exhibit&quot;</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. combination of the above</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. No Response</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*aQuestion reads: "Which of the following would you say best describes what you expect Old Sturbridge Village to be?"

Visitors were also questioned about their knowledge of specific facts about the Village; facts related to issues which are central to Old Sturbridge Village's educational goals and interpretive objectives (see Table 6). Results from these questions are used in two ways: first, in order to gain an understanding of visitors' level of knowledge about the Village as they enter; and secondly, to use this information to gauge the amount of learning that actually takes place within the Village. Questions were based on three topics. Visitors were first asked to identify the time period portrayed by Old Sturbridge Village. A response was counted as correct if it fell between the years 1790 to 1840 or described the period accurately (e.g., "early 19th century"). Of the 153 respondents interviewed, 65 (42.5%) correctly identified the period; the other 88 (57.5%) did not. The majority of incorrect responses seemed to tend toward identifying an earlier
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 1: What period of time is portrayed at Old Sturbridge Village?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correct</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>42.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorrect</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>57.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 2: Do you know whether the buildings here are originals as opposed to being reproductions or models of originals?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correct</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>28.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorrect</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't Know</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>49.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 3: Was there a village like Old Sturbridge Village on this particular site during the period portrayed here?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correct</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorrect</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't Know</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>71.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
period, such as "colonial times" or "the Revolutionary War period."
The years actually represented by Old Sturbridge Village are in many ways an obscure period in American history, for while important economic and social changes were taking place, there were no Plymouth Rocks or Boston Tea Parties to note in our elementary school history books. Fortunately, by the end of the visitor's stay at Old Sturbridge Village, the great majority of visitors are able to correctly identify the period of time represented by the Village. The need to inform potential visitors of the unique opportunity available at Old Sturbridge Village to view a novel period in American history from an educational as well as a marketing perspective will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter V, Discussion and Recommendations.

Visitors were also asked two questions concerning the history of the Village as a museum and seemed to have even less information concerning these aspects of Old Sturbridge Village than they did concerning the time period portrayed. When asked whether or not the buildings at Old Sturbridge Village are originals or reproductions, 71% answered incorrectly or responded "don't know." Only 29% of the respondents were able to answer this question correctly. When asked whether or not a Village like the one represented had actually existed on the site during the Village period, an even greater proportion, 85%, were incorrect or didn't know; only 14% were able to correctly answer this question.

The majority of first-time visitors to Old Sturbridge Village (and first-time visitors are in the majority) arrive with little information concerning the Village. Most have heard about the Village
through friends or through printed travel guides but few are able to correctly respond to questions related to basic facts concerning the Village. Without this kind of background, gaining an appreciation of the detail and conceptual development of the Village would be impossible. It appears, then, that Old Sturbridge Village must provide information concerning even the most basic facts about the Village if visitors are to gain an understanding of what the Village is and what it represents. The extent to which this goal is achieved will be discussed in the following two sections.

Independent Variables

Three independent variables are used in the analyses which follow. It should be recalled that the entrance interview was administered in order to examine the first-time visitor's preliminary image of Old Sturbridge Village. However, there was some concern that this procedure might sensitize visitors to certain features of the Village. To provide a measure of this initial impact, a control group of exit-only interviews was also created. The first independent variable, hereafter referred to as "Group," examines these possible effects of the entrance interview by dividing respondents into two groups: (1) those who received both entrance and exit interviews (N = 153), and (2) those who received only an exit interview (N = 51).

Of primary concern in the present study is the second independent variable, "Film," which divides respondents into: (1) those who saw either one or both of the two orientation films presented in the Village (N = 77), and (2) those who did not see either film (N = 76).
Only those subjects who received both entrance and exit interviews are included in the variable "Film." This decision was made in part due to differences between the entrance-and-exit and exit-only groups (which will be discussed later) and in part because the inclusion of the exit-only group would skew the cell sizes radically. It was originally hoped that each film might be analyzed independently but the difficulty experienced in persuading visitors to see the films forced the two film groups to be considered jointly.

The third independent variable, "Extent," provides a measure of the overall extent of orientation received by the visitor during the course of his/her visit to Old Sturbridge Village. The total number of orientations was calculated for each visitor (e.g., a visitor who received the map and saw the Visitor Center gallery and a film would receive a score of 3). The distribution of this variable was then separated into three categories depending on the number of orientations received: low (0, 1 or 2 orientations), medium (3 or 4 orientations), and high (5, 6 or 7 orientations). There were a total of seven orientations available and only one visitor claimed to have received no orientation whatsoever. As with the variable "Film," only those respondents who received both entrance and exit interviews are included in this categorization. It should be noted that these last two variables, Film and Extent, tend to be highly interrelated ($X^2 = 57.26, p < .001$) and analyses for these variables will tend to coincide. Frequencies for these three independent variables are presented in Table 7.
### TABLE 7

FREQUENCIES FOR PRIMARY INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;GROUP&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrance-and-exit</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exit-only</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&quot;FILM&quot;&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saw a film</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>49.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not see a film</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>50.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&quot;EXTENT OF ORIENTATION&quot;&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low (0, 1 or 2 orientations)</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>35.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (3 or 4 orientations)</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>37.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (5, 6 or 7 orientations)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>includes respondents from entrance-and-exit group only
Dependent Variables

Measures of the effectiveness of the orientation experience (the dependent variables) can be divided into three categories: visitor behavior, information gain, and evaluation. Each category is comprised of a number of related questions. A list of the three categories and individual items within categories is presented in Table 8. The following discussion will consider each category in turn; first describing the variables within that category, then going on to examine the relationships between these variables and the three independent variables.

1. Visitor behavior. One way in which orientation might influence the visitor's experience at Old Sturbridge Village is by altering the visitor's behavior while in the Village proper. The visitor may see more exhibits or may spend more time in the Village as the result of a successful orientation. On the other hand, the visitor may spend the same amount of time but decide to concentrate on developing a better understanding of a few exhibits after receiving an orientation. The two visitor behavior variables to be considered here are measures of:

   (1) the total amount of time the visitor spends in the Village; and

   (2) the total number of exhibits the visitor sees during the course of the visit. As is indicated in Table 9, visitors spend an average of about four hours in the Village; this figure ranges from approximately one to seven hours. When these figures are compared to visitor's estimates of the time they expect to spend at Old Sturbridge Village (Time difference $\bar{X} = -.160$ hours), it becomes apparent that visitors
TABLE 8
PRIMARY CATEGORIES OF DEPENDENT VARIABLES
LISTING ITEMS WITHIN CATEGORIES

1. Visitor Behavior
   a. Total amount of time spent at Old Sturbridge Village
   b. Total number of exhibits visited

2. Information Gain
   a. What period of time is portrayed by Old Sturbridge Village?
   b. Do you know whether the buildings here are originals as opposed to being reproductions or models of originals?
   c. Was there a village like Old Sturbridge Village on this particular site during the period portrayed here?

3. Evaluation
   a. What score would you give Old Sturbridge Village as...
      -- a museum
      -- a park
      -- an amusement park
      -- a crafts exhibit
      -- an old New England town where you might go sightseeing
      -- a place to take children
      -- an educational experience (for yourself)
   b. To what extent would you say that the exhibits and activities here at Old Sturbridge Village portray these interconnections, that is the sense of the Village as a living, interdependent community?
   c. To what extent do you feel you might actually have been visiting a New England town of the 1830's?
### Table 9
**Comparisons of Visitor Behavior Variables with Independent Variables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Entering Estimate of Time in Village</th>
<th>Number of Exhibits Seen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>4.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>1.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total N</td>
<td>(204)</td>
<td>(153)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Comparisons

**Group**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Entering Estimate of Time in Village</th>
<th>Number of Exhibits Seen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entrance-and-exit</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>4.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exit-only</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Film**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Entering Estimate of Time in Village</th>
<th>Number of Exhibits Seen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saw a film</td>
<td>4.48***</td>
<td>4.66**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not see a film</td>
<td>3.64***</td>
<td>3.79**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Extent of Orientation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Entering Estimate of Time in Village</th>
<th>Number of Exhibits Seen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>3.81**</td>
<td>3.91**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>3.93**</td>
<td>4.00**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>4.60**</td>
<td>4.99**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a* includes respondents from entrance-and-exit group only

**indicates significance at the .01 level

***indicates significance at the .001 level
are well able to predict the duration of their visit. The possible implications of this fact for visitor orientation will be discussed later, but it does suggest that many visitors may be under specific time constraints. Such constraints may well limit the extent to which conclusions can be drawn on the basis of comparisons with this particular variable. During their stay, visitors saw an average of 24 exhibits. Again, this ranges greatly from a low of 9 to a high of 33 (there are a total of 34 exhibits listed on the map, although this includes such exhibits as the covered bridge and the saw mill which is presently inoperative).

a. Visitor behavior by group. As was mentioned earlier in the description of how the independent variables were developed, it is important to understand the potential impact of the experimental situation before other effects within the research design are discussed. Therefore, throughout the following presentation, the effect of the entrance interview itself will be presented first and subsequent analyses should be considered in the light of these findings. As will be seen, the entrance interview did have a number of significant effects on visitors' experiences at Old Sturbridge Village. While admittedly unexpected, these findings contribute greatly to an understanding of the orientation process and are an important part of the study.

It appears that an entrance interview does not affect the total amount of time visitors spend in the Village (Entrance-and-exit $\bar{X} = 4.06$ hours, Exit-only $\bar{X} = 4.17$ hours). However, those visitors who received an entrance interview did report having visited a significantly greater number of exhibits than those who did not receive an entrance
interview (Entrance-and-exit $\bar{X} = 24.91$, Exit-only $\bar{X} = 20.50$, $F = 21.01$, $p < .001$). It is possible that these visitors, who were aware that they would be interviewed at the conclusion of their visit, felt some greater obligation to see the Village thoroughly, although pre-existing time constraints might make it impossible for them to actually spend a greater amount of time.

b. Visitor behavior by Film. Results indicate that those visitors who do see a film spend significantly more time, almost an hour longer on the average, than visitors who do not see a film (Film $\bar{X} = 4.48$ hours, No Film $\bar{X} = 3.64$ hours, $F = 17.30$, $p < .001$). However, there is no significant difference in the total number of exhibits seen by either group (Film $\bar{X} = 24.97$, No Film $\bar{X} = 24.84$). This difference can be explained in part by the fact that the film itself takes approximately twenty minutes to view, thus adding time without increasing the number of exhibits. When estimated time in the Village was compared across Film and No Film groups, it also appears that the Film group anticipates having more time to spend in the Village (Film $\bar{X} = 4.66$ hours, No Film $\bar{X} = 3.79$ hours, $F = 9.83$, $p < .002$), thus these visitors are probably more willing to spend time in orientation.

c. Visitor behavior by Extent of orientation. As with the film vs. no film groups, there is a significant difference in the amount of time respondents spend at Old Sturbridge Village depending upon their extent of orientation (Low $\bar{X} = 3.81$ hours, Medium $\bar{X} = 3.93$ hours, High $\bar{X} = 4.60$ hours, $F = 4.94$, $p < .01$). The greater the extent of orientation, the longer the respondent spends at Old Sturbridge Village. When estimated time in the Village is compared with extent of
orientation, the results again indicate that those visitors with more
time to spend in the Village are willing to participate in a greater
number of orientations (Low $\bar{X} = 3.91$ hours, Medium $\bar{X} = 4.00$ hours,
High $\bar{X} = 4.99$ hours, $F = 5.35$, $p < .01$). And again, the total number of
exhibits visited is not significantly different depending upon extent
of orientation (Low $\bar{X} = 24.5$, Medium $\bar{X} = 25.24$, High $\bar{X} = 25.00$). These
differences mirror the findings for the film and visitor behavior vari-
ables; it should be remembered in all discussions of Film and Extent of
Orientation that these two independent variables are highly interrelat-
ed and that analyses will often appear similar.

2. Information gain. One of the primary goals of Old Sturbridge Vil-
lage is to inform visitors about life in New England in the period from
1790 to 1840. Results have already been discussed (see Table 6) which
indicate that many first-time visitors to Old Sturbridge Village arrive
without having a great deal of information about the Village or with
misconceptions about what the Village represents. The extent to which
these doubts and misconceptions are corrected during the visitor's stay
provides a measure of the extent to which this primary educational goal
has been achieved.

The three questions which were asked of visitors entering the
Village—namely, the period portrayed, whether buildings are originals
or reproductions, and whether or not there was a village on the site
during the period—were repeated in the exit interview. A knowledge
change score was then calculated by assigning a score of 0 to incorrect
and don't know responses and a score of 1 to correct responses. For
each of three questions, the entrance response score was then subtracted from the exit response score to indicate any change in knowledge concerning that item. As an example, if a visitor incorrectly identifies the time period represented by Old Sturbridge Village on the entrance interview but is able to correctly identify the time period on the exit interview, the knowledge change score would be: \[ 1 - 0 = 1 \]

\[ \text{Exit} - \text{Entrance} = \text{Knowledge Change} \]

Conversely, a visitor who correctly answers a question on the entrance interview but is unable to do so at the time of the exit interview would receive a score of -1. An overall knowledge change score is then calculated by summing the scores of the three items. Thus, the final knowledge change scores might range from a high of +3 to a low of -3. These scores, of course, apply only to visitors who received both entrance and exit interviews. Analyses by "Group," where exit-only respondents are to be included, were performed using a sum of the exit scores. Differences along individual items were also examined in order to determine whether or not some issues were being more effectively communicated than others (see Table 10).

When the level of knowledge at the time of the entrance interview is compared to the level of knowledge at the exit interview, a significant gain is noted (pre-test \( \bar{x} = .849 \), post-test \( \bar{x} = 2.177 \), \( t = 18.49, p < .001 \)). When scores along individual items are compared, it becomes apparent that the greatest gain is in the visitor's knowledge that the buildings at Old Sturbridge Village are originals (gain score \( x = .612 \)). Visitors also seem to know the time period portrayed by Sturbridge Village (gain score \( x = .513 \)), although the knowledge change
### TABLE 10

**KNOWLEDGE CONCERNING OLD STURBRIDGE VILLAGE**
**PRE-, POST-, AND CHANGE SCORES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Entrance</th>
<th>Exit</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Entrance-and-exit Group</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Period</td>
<td>.425</td>
<td>.887</td>
<td>.513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Originals vs. Reproductions</td>
<td>.288</td>
<td>.862</td>
<td>.612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village on Site</td>
<td>.145</td>
<td>.429</td>
<td>.318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>.849***a</td>
<td>2.177***ab</td>
<td>1.450</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|                          |          |       |        |
| **Exit-only Group**      |          |       |        |
| Time Period              | .725     |       |        |
| Originals vs. Reproductions | .745     |       |        |
| Village on Site          | .333     |       |        |
| **Total**                | 1.804***b|       |        |

***indicates significance at the .001 level

a results of t-test between pre-test and post-test figures

b results of $X^2$ test between figures for entrance-and-exit and exit-only groups
score for this item is somewhat lower because so many respondents already knew this information. Considerable confusion remains even after a visit through the Village concerning the history of the site itself (gain score $\bar{x} = .318$). Overall, however, visitors do seem to experience a significant increase in their level of information about the Village over the course of their visit. The effect of the three independent variables on this learning will be discussed next.

a. Information gain by Group. Because no data are available for the exit-only group concerning incoming levels of knowledge about Old Sturbridge Village, the analysis of the effect of the entrance interview on learning was performed using the sum of the three knowledge questions from the exit interview rather than knowledge change scores as will be the case in subsequent analyses. It has already been seen that a significant increase in learning does take place during the course of the visit. Here the attempt is to determine whether or not that effect is heightened for visitors who receive an entrance interview before entering the Village. A $X^2$ test comparing the two groups indicated that visitors who do receive an entrance interview have significantly higher scores than those who do not ($X^2 = 16.73, p < .001$).

It seems reasonable to assume that the entrance interview experience may have sensitized visitors to these issues, so that while not providing answers, the process did encourage visitors to seek out this information. What is not known is whether or not information gained about other issues is also affected by such a process. This issue will be discussed at greater length in the discussion chapter.

b. Information gain by Film. In this analysis, knowledge
change scores were used to determine whether or not viewing one of the two orientation films significantly affects the amount of learning among visitors. Both films, and particularly "The Legacy of Old Sturbridge Village," provide information concerning all three of these questions, and so it would seem that film-viewing groups would have a better opportunity to learn this information which is not as readily available elsewhere in the Village. However, a $X^2$ test comparing Film and No Film groups indicated that there are no significant differences in amount of learning along this variable. Levels of knowledge at the time of entry did not differ, ruling out the possibility that initial differences might account for the later lack of significant differences between Film and No Film groups. It would appear that seeing a film does not significantly increase the visitor's knowledge about the Village. It may be that visitors are successful in learning this information regardless of whether or not they see a film, or that the films are not, in fact, helpful in communicating this information. However, it may also be that this finding results from a ceiling effect since only those visitors who received an entrance interview initially are included in the two film groups and the general level of information gain among those visitors who did receive an entrance interview was already extremely high. Unfortunately, so few of the visitors in the exit-only group saw a film that no analysis is possible.

c. Information gain by Extent of orientation. There is a significant difference in knowledge change scores across the three levels of orientation ($X^2 = 15.94, p < .04$). However, the trend is for knowledge change scores to be greater for moderate levels of orientation
than for either higher or lower levels (Low $\bar{X} = 1.46$, Medium $\bar{X} = 1.52$, High $\bar{X} = 1.33$). This surprising result may be explained by the fact that those visitors who are most informed at the beginning of the visit are also those who seek out the greatest number of orientations (Low $\bar{X} = .87$, Medium $\bar{X} = .74$, High $\bar{X} = .97$), and so for these visitors there is little change in knowledge scores over the course of the visit.

3. Evaluation. Education is not, however, the only goal of Old Sturbridge Village. Enjoyment is equally as important and, in the past, has been particularly difficult to measure since there tends to be an extreme positive response bias to questions such as, "How enjoyable did you find your visit to Old Sturbridge Village?" As a general rule, visitors enjoy the Village very much ($\bar{X} = 1.71$ on a scale of 1 (high) to 7 (low)), and even those who might be inclined to rate the Village less highly, have difficulty communicating this to an eager interviewer. In an attempt to probe this topic more thoroughly, a series of evaluation questions was developed asking visitors to compare Old Sturbridge Village to other similar types of places. For example, visitors were asked to think of the best museum they had ever visited and give it a 10 and to give the worst museum they had ever visited a 1. They were then asked to rate Old Sturbridge Village as a "museum" using this ten point scale. Respondents were also given the option of giving Old Sturbridge Village a "0" if they felt that the Village did not fall into a particular category. (Frequencies for this response are reported separately and are not included in the analyses.) It was hoped that by putting Old Sturbridge Village in the context of other similar
settings that respondents might be more discriminating in their ratings.

The frequencies and summary statistics for these questions, which appear in Table 11, indicate first that the majority of visitors were willing to define Old Sturbridge Village within each of the possible categories with the exception of "an amusement park." A large number of respondents also stated that Old Sturbridge Village could not be called "a park," although many added that it did have certain "park-like" qualities and was certainly a very pleasant setting. In terms of the scaled responses, visitors tended to rate Old Sturbridge Village very highly on all alternatives, again with the exception of "an amusement park" ($\bar{X} = 4.44$). The highest rating was given to Old Sturbridge Village as "an educational experience," with more than 60% of the respondents giving it a rating of 10 ($\bar{X} = 9.25$). Other mean ratings ranged from 8.81 for "an old New England town. . ." to 7.07 for "a park." It should be remembered that these statistics include only scaled responses, excluding the "0" scores discussed earlier. Thus, different sample sizes are represented for each alternative; for "an amusement park," only the relatively small proportion of visitors who considered Old Sturbridge Village an amusement park at all (18%) are included while every respondent included "an educational experience" as one definition of Old Sturbridge Village.

In addition to the more common goals of education and enjoyment, Old Sturbridge Village also tries to instill in the visitor a sense of the period and of the importance of community life in a village such as the one portrayed at Old Sturbridge Village. Past research in the Village has indicated that these concepts are difficult for the visitor to
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>a museum</th>
<th>a park</th>
<th>an amusement park</th>
<th>a crafts exhibit</th>
<th>an old N.E. town</th>
<th>a place to take children</th>
<th>an educational experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 best</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
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<td>7</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 worst</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$\bar{x}$</td>
<td>7.92</td>
<td>7.07</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>7.89</td>
<td>8.81</td>
<td>8.02</td>
<td>9.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total N</td>
<td>(198)</td>
<td>(152)</td>
<td>(43)</td>
<td>(198)</td>
<td>(195)</td>
<td>(198)</td>
<td>(204)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>52</th>
<th>151</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(not OSV)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
express since they are not linked to specific facts but to a more intuitive and holistic appreciation of the Village. The difficulty visitors experience in expressing these concepts has created even greater difficulty in measuring the extent to which visitors do, in fact, understand these concepts. Two questions were included in the exit interview which attempt to assess the extent to which visitors respond to these aspects of the Village. Visitors were asked to rate on a scale of 1 (high) to 7 (low) the extent to which they felt Old Sturbridge Village was successful in communicating a sense of the time period and a sense of the community represented at Old Sturbridge Village. In general, visitors felt that Old Sturbridge Village was highly successful in communicating both of these concepts; the mean rating for sense of time was 2.16 and for sense of community, 2.09. The relationship between all of these evaluation scales and the independent variables will be discussed in the next sections. It should be noted, however, that in terms of the conceptual issues, these very positive ratings do not communicate what visitors actually understand about these concepts. A more detailed analysis of this issue is currently being conducted by other members of the research team (see Table 12 for frequencies).

a. Evaluation by Group. No significant differences were found along any of the eight evaluation scales according to "Group" (see Table 13), although there does seem to be a tendency for the exit-only respondents to view Old Sturbridge Village more highly as "a place to take children" (Entrance-and-exit \( \bar{x} = 7.83 \), Exit-only \( \bar{x} = 8.56 \), \( F = 3.10, p < .08 \)). Nor were differences observed along either sense of time or sense of community scales. As with the knowledge change score
TABLE 12
FREQUENCIES FOR EVALUATION RATING SCALES OF CONCEPTUAL THEMES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Sense of Time</th>
<th>Sense of Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 high</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>44.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 low</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \bar{X} = 2.16 \quad 2.09 \]
\[ \text{S.D.} = 1.55 \quad 1.19 \]
Total N = (203) (203)
TABLE 13
COMPARISON OF EVALUATION RATING SCALES WITH INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Overall Evaluation</th>
<th>a museum</th>
<th>a park</th>
<th>an amusement park</th>
<th>a crafts exhibit</th>
<th>an old New England town</th>
<th>a place to take children</th>
<th>an educational experience</th>
<th>sense of time</th>
<th>sense of community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GROUP</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrance-and-exit</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>7.98</td>
<td>7.20</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>7.93</td>
<td>8.71</td>
<td>7.83</td>
<td>9.18</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>2.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exit-only</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>7.74</td>
<td>6.70</td>
<td>5.12</td>
<td>7.75</td>
<td>9.10</td>
<td>8.56</td>
<td>9.46</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>2.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FILM</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saw a film</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>8.28</td>
<td>7.17</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>8.25</td>
<td>8.83</td>
<td>8.22</td>
<td>9.31</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>2.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not see a film</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>7.66</td>
<td>7.24</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>7.62</td>
<td>8.60</td>
<td>7.42</td>
<td>9.05</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>2.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXTENT OF ORIENTATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>7.63</td>
<td>7.10</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>7.50</td>
<td>8.55</td>
<td>7.80</td>
<td>9.02</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>2.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>7.91</td>
<td>7.22</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>8.02</td>
<td>8.84</td>
<td>7.81</td>
<td>9.20</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>1.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>8.54</td>
<td>7.31</td>
<td>5.56</td>
<td>8.38</td>
<td>8.75</td>
<td>7.89</td>
<td>9.38</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>2.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(a\) indicates scale 1 (high) to 7 (low)--other scales 10 (high) to 1 (low)

\(^+\) indicates significance at the \(p \leq 0.10\) level

\(*\) indicates significance at the \(p \leq 0.05\) level
data, a ceiling effect created by extremely positive evaluation along most of the scales may have limited the extent to which differences across groups might be observed.

b. Evaluation by Film. The two film groups demonstrated a greater degree of difference in their evaluations of Old Sturbridge Village. No differences were observed in overall evaluation but as a museum (Film \( \bar{X} = 8.28 \), No Film \( \bar{X} = 7.66 \), \( F = 4.12, p < .04 \)), as a crafts exhibit (Film \( \bar{X} = 8.25 \), No Film \( \bar{X} = 7.62 \), \( F = 3.67, p < .06 \)), and as a place to take children (Film \( \bar{X} = 8.22 \), No Film \( \bar{X} = 7.42 \), \( F = 3.40, p < .07 \)) the film-viewing group tended to rate Old Sturbridge Village more highly than did non-film-viewing respondents. Without random assignment to groups, however, it cannot be determined whether such differences result from visitors' reactions to the film or whether film-viewing visitors are generally predisposed to give higher evaluations or whether it is simply that spending more time in the Village leads to more positive evaluations. There were again no differences in either sense of time or community scales.

c. Evaluation by Extent of orientation. Apart from a tendency for visitors with more extensive orientation to rate Old Sturbridge Village more highly as a museum (Low \( \bar{X} = 7.63 \), Medium \( \bar{X} = 8.54 \), \( F = 2.75, p < .07 \)), no differences in evaluation were found dependent on extent of orientation. Nor were sense of time and sense of community evaluations found to differ. This may again be due in part to a ceiling effect resulting from high evaluation scores overall.
Orientation Evaluation

The final series of analyses examines the ways in which visitors themselves evaluate the various orientation procedures available at Old Sturbridge Village. Two items from the exit interview address this issue. First, visitors were asked to identify which of a list of eleven orientation procedures they had received. From this list, visitors were then asked to indicate which of the orientations, if any, had been of use to them in:

1) finding their way around,
2) gaining a sense of the time period portrayed by Old Sturbridge Village,
3) gaining a sense of Old Sturbridge Village as a community, and
4) providing factual information about the Village and about the Village period.

The total number of respondents who received each orientation and the proportion of the total population represented by this figure appears in Table 14. Seven of the eleven items are orientations which take place within the Village proper. Of these, the most often received orientation was the map brochure distributed to every visitor at the time they purchased their ticket. Even so, three respondents seemed to have managed to avoid even this (98.5% received orientation). Ninety-seven (47.5%) of the respondents had seen the information panels which are displayed on the walls on either side of the main concourse through the Visitor Center. In order to get to the ticket counter and from there into the Village itself, visitors must pass these panels.
TABLE 14
FREQUENCY OF EXPOSURE TO INDIVIDUAL ORIENTATION PROCEDURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orientation</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Model</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>35.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Map</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>98.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Information panels</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>47.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Visitor Center gallery</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>44.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Film&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>41.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. OSV staff</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>21.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Quaker Meetinghouse</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Friend or relative&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>63.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Children&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Read about OSV&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>48.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Visited similar place&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>65.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: Total N = 204

<sup>a</sup>"Film" represents the combined frequencies of the two orientation films. Frequencies for individual films:
"Working in Rural New England" 42
"The Legacy of OSV" 50

<sup>b</sup>these variables are grouped in subsequent analyses as "outside OSV"
That such a relatively low percentage of the respondents recalled having seen them would indicate that this is not a particularly salient orientation.

Despite keen efforts to encourage visitors to see one of the two orientation films available, only 41% of the respondents had seen either one. A total of 90 (44%) of the respondents had seen the Visitor Center gallery.

It was unfortunate that so few respondents (16.2%) had seen the Quaker Meetinghouse presentation which, in the most recent interpretation, serves as an orientation procedure. Many of the visitors who did not receive this orientation said that they had, in fact, entered the exhibit only to find that there were no interpreters there.

Finally, it is interesting to note that of the three most often received orientations, two ("talking to a friend or relative familiar with the Village" and "visiting a similar place") are orientations which take place outside Old Sturbridge Village. The importance of this outside orientation in terms of promoting visitation has been addressed in earlier marketing surveys conducted for Old Sturbridge Village. The potential for using these orientations to inform visitors about the Village will be discussed in the next chapter.

The results of the second question, asking respondents to rate the usefulness of these orientations, are presented in Table 15. In this table, the number of respondents who listed each orientation procedure within a given category is noted first. Then the percentage of those people who mentioned that it was useful to them is noted. This is followed by the percentage of the total population. Total
## TABLE 15

FREQUENCIES FOR ORIENTATION EVALUATION RATING SCALES
BY ORIENTATION OBJECTIVES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Map</th>
<th>Information Panels</th>
<th>Visitor Center Gallery</th>
<th>Film</th>
<th>OSV Staff</th>
<th>Quaker Meetinghouse</th>
<th>Outside OSV</th>
<th>Total Number of Times Mentioned</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of respondents</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>187</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percentage of total N</td>
<td>(35.5)</td>
<td>(98.5)</td>
<td>(47.5)</td>
<td>(44.1)</td>
<td>(41.1)</td>
<td>(21.1)</td>
<td>(16.2)</td>
<td>(91.7)</td>
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### Way Finding

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<th>186</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>16</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>12</th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of above</td>
<td>(12.5)</td>
<td>(92.5)</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
<td>(19.0)</td>
<td>(11.6)</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
<td>(6.4)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of total N</td>
<td>(4.4)</td>
<td>(91.2)</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
<td>(7.8)</td>
<td>(2.5)</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
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### Sense of Time

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<th>9</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>67</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>17</th>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of above</td>
<td>(2.8)</td>
<td>(8.0)</td>
<td>(9.3)</td>
<td>(16.7)</td>
<td>(79.8)</td>
<td>(14.0)</td>
<td>(42.4)</td>
<td>(9.1)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Model</td>
<td>Map</td>
<td>Information Panel</td>
<td>Visitor Center Gallery</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>OSV Staff</td>
<td>Quaker Meeting-house</td>
<td>Outside OSV</td>
<td>Total Number of Times Mentioned</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of total N</td>
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<td>(7.8)</td>
<td>(4.4)</td>
<td>(7.4)</td>
<td>(32.8)</td>
<td>(2.9)</td>
<td>(6.9)</td>
<td>(8.3)</td>
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**Sense of Community**

<table>
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<th>3</th>
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<th>36</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>98</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of above</td>
<td>(6.9)</td>
<td>(19.9)</td>
<td>(3.1)</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
<td>(42.9)</td>
<td>(2.3)</td>
<td>(6.1)</td>
<td>(5.9)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of total N</td>
<td>(2.5)</td>
<td>(19.6)</td>
<td>(3.1)</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
<td>(17.6)</td>
<td>(0.5)</td>
<td>(1.0)</td>
<td>(5.4)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Factual Information**

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<th>Total number of mentions</th>
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<th>45</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>54</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>148</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of above</td>
<td>(4.2)</td>
<td>(22.4)</td>
<td>(5.2)</td>
<td>(13.3)</td>
<td>(64.3)</td>
<td>(14.0)</td>
<td>(27.3)</td>
<td>(7.5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of total N</td>
<td>(1.5)</td>
<td>(22.1)</td>
<td>(2.5)</td>
<td>(5.9)</td>
<td>(26.5)</td>
<td>(2.9)</td>
<td>(4.4)</td>
<td>(6.9)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
frequencies for each of the four objectives (i.e., summing across each row) indicate the relative efficacy with which each of these concepts has been communicated. (However, it should be remembered that the percentages refer to individual orientations, not to objectives, and hence will not sum to 100% across rows.)

Looking at the population figures, it is apparent from both low attendance and unenthusiastic evaluations that the majority of the orientations were of little value to visitors at Old Sturbridge Village. The two exceptions to this were the map and the film. Respondents were highly enthusiastic about the map as an aid in finding their way around the Village (91.2% of the total population mentioned that it was helpful). Many noted that they simply followed the map and visited each exhibit in sequence. Many, too, mentioned that without it they were certain that they would have missed some exhibits. Respondents also noted that the map provided factual information about the Village and helped them to see the community as a whole. It should be noted that population figures for this orientation are so high because nearly every visitor received a map. However, even when controlled for the relative frequencies of the different orientations, the map is overwhelmingly the most useful.

Respondents were also very enthusiastic about the film, particularly in terms of gaining a sense of the time period portrayed by Old Sturbridge Village. Respondents reported that the film also was helpful in providing factual information about the Village and in gaining a sense of Old Sturbridge Village as a community. The only sense in which the film seemed of little value was in helping visitors to find
their way around. In this sense, these two orientations—the map and the film—seem to complement each other well.

The Quaker Meetinghouse was reported to have helped visitors gain a sense of the period but so few respondents received this orientation that it had little overall impact.

Though nearly all of the respondents had received some form of outside orientation to the Village, none of these experiences seemed particularly useful in terms of the four criteria being considered here.

Table 15 also provides information concerning the relative efficacy with which each of the four orientation objectives have been met. Totalling across orientations for each objective, it appears that visitors receive the most help in finding their way around (a total of 228 times mentioned). Both factual information (148) and gaining a sense of the time period (146) also seem to be moderately well represented. However, there seems to be little effective orientation geared toward helping visitors to gain a sense of Old Sturbridge Village as an active, interdependent community (98 times mentioned).

The impact and implications of these findings as well as those discussed earlier will be considered in the following chapter.

Summary of Results

On the average, visitors to Old Sturbridge Village spent approximately four hours at the Village during which time they saw 24 of the 34 exhibits available. When asked to estimate the amount of time they planned to spend in the Village, visitors were able to predict accurately the actual length of their stay. While the entrance interview
did not affect length of stay, those visitors who received the entrance interview did see a greater number of exhibits. Both film-viewing and a greater extent of orientation were related to longer estimated and actual lengths of stay, although there were no differences in the number of exhibits visited across these groups.

There was a significant overall information gain during the course of the visit. By the conclusion of the visit, nearly all respondents were able to correctly identify the Village period and were aware that the buildings on the site are originals, though many remained uncertain as to the history of the site itself. Being interviewed at the beginning of the visit did significantly increase learning while film-viewing did not. Results for extent of orientation were influenced by the fact that those visitors most knowledgeable on their arrival at Old Sturbridge Village were also those who sought out the greatest number of orientations, making it appear that information gain is less for the most highly oriented group.

Overall, visitor evaluation of Old Sturbridge Village was high. Respondents were particularly impressed with Old Sturbridge Village as an educational experience and as an old New England town where they might go sightseeing, while they did not view the Village as either a park nor as an amusement park. Visitors also rated Old Sturbridge Village as highly successful in communicating both the concept of community interdependence and a sense of the time period portrayed. Few differences appeared in any of the evaluation scales along the independent variables except that film-viewing respondents did show a tendency to rate the Village more highly as a museum, a crafts exhibit, and as a
place to take children. However, this general lack of significant differences may have resulted from a ceiling effect created by high evaluations across groups.

When asked to identify which orientation procedures they had received, only the map was mentioned by a majority of the visitors. The Visitor Center gallery and the film were also seen by a relatively large proportion of visitors, although these figures are inflated by the experimental design which selected for film-viewing groups. The information panels and model were both viewed by more than a third of the visitors interviewed, while Old Sturbridge Village staff and the Quaker Meetinghouse reached less than one-quarter of these respondents. Evaluations of these orientation devices indicated that visitors found the map helpful in finding their way through the Village, while the film presented useful factual information and aided visitors in gaining a sense of the time period portrayed. None of the other orientations seemed to have a strong impact on the visitor's experience at Old Sturbridge Village.

Overall, visitors seemed to find the orientations useful in helping them to find their way through the Village. Both factual information and a sense of the time period portrayed were also relatively successful. However, few visitors noted gaining a sense of the community through the available orientations.
Old Sturbridge Village offers a novel and intriguing experience to the first-time visitor. Where else can you watch a team of oxen, back-bred to resemble 19th century farm stock, plow a rocky field, or learn which herbs served as medicine in this rural farming community? Where but in fantasy stories do you have such an opportunity to travel back in time to see the life of America's early frontier? Old Sturbridge Village is unlike anything most of us have ever witnessed and without some type of orientation, much of the wonder and depth of this experience is likely to go unnoticed. Old Sturbridge Village offers a variety of orientation experiences to visitors, but until this study, little was known about the effect of these procedures on the visitor's experience in the Village. It was the purpose of this study to examine the impacts of the various orientations available to visitors, and from this information to offer some guidance in future orientation planning.

The Value of Orientation Films

Results from the more objective measures of visitor behavior and learning would indicate that film-viewing has little impact on the visitor's experience at Old Sturbridge Village. While film-viewing respondents did tend to spend more time in the Village, they also had
more time to spend as indicated in measures of estimated length of stay gathered during the entrance interview. Thus, it may be that visitors who have more time to spend are willing to allocate more of that time to orientation compared with visitors with a more restricted schedule. Without random assignment to film and non-film viewing groups, it is impossible to say with certainty that this is the case. Although the film-viewing group did spend more time in the Village, they did not see a greater number of exhibits. Obviously, the fact that viewing a film occupies nearly one-half hour helps to explain this discrepancy.

Again, though they spend more time in the Village, film-viewing respondents did not demonstrate greater learning than those respondents who did not see a film. Learning on the whole, however, was very high especially among visitors who received an entrance interview. Thus, the failure of the present study to demonstrate differences in learning between film and non-film viewing groups may be, in part, due to a ceiling effect created by the entrance interview procedure itself which masks any real differences.

Respondents' evaluations and comments regarding the film, however, support the conclusion that the film did, in fact, provide a useful orientation. The film-viewing group tended to give higher evaluations of the Village as a whole, particularly as a museum, a crafts exhibit, and as a place to take children. When asked to evaluate specific orientation devices, visitors noted the films as useful both in providing factual information and in giving the visitor a sense of the time period portrayed. Only the map was noted more often as a valuable orientation device (see Table 15). Respondents' unsolicited comments,
too, suggest this; many visitors noted, for example, that "everyone should see it" or that "it's a good way to start out" because it "gives you a feeling of what to look for" and "helps transport you back."

Thus, the films seem to provide a useful and interesting orientation to the Village.

Research in other settings, too, would indicate that such films should be useful and popular orientation devices. Winkel et al. (1975) note the visitor's "insatiable demand for orientation information" in museum settings while Wagar (1976) finds that cassette tapes and other active orientations are highly successful in interpretive work. Yet of the fifty-one visitors receiving exit interviews alone, only eight had chosen to see a film. The answer to this paradox cannot be found in the results of the present study and one possible avenue for future research might be to examine this issue more closely. However, casual observation in the Visitor Center and visitor comments suggest one possible explanation. As visitors first approach the ticket counter, they look ahead onto the rough dirt road which enters the Village area. The gallery and theater are to the left and behind their line of sight. Melton's (1935) now classic research suggests that visitors tend to avoid left-hand turns in exhibits and with such a view enticing them into the Village, it is surprising that any visitors see the film at all. In addition, the administration of Old Sturbridge Village has an abhorrence of what they call "the National Park Service model." It has long been the practice of Park Service personnel to encourage (if not coerce) visitors into viewing orientation presentations by placing the theater in the main path through the Visitor Center, announcing the
time of the next showing and doing nearly anything else they can think of to convince visitors to participate. Old Sturbridge Village, on the other hand, believes that visitors should be free to develop their own interests and seek out the orientation most appropriate to them. In this case, however, this noncoercive approach borders on the noncommunicative. Many visitors expressed disappointment at not having seen a film and told interviewers they would have seen a film if they had known they were available. The out-of-the-way location of the theater, poor signage and infrequent showings of the films all contribute to this dilemma. This is, in the judgement of the author, unfortunate since the films themselves seem to be quite successful.

The relocation of the ticket counter to the entrance of the Visitor Center might help to alleviate this problem while at the same time making the entire Visitor Center a more widely used orientation area than is currently the case. More attention-drawing signage and more frequent showings might also help to make the films more popular. A shorter film or slide-show might also be developed to provide a more appropriate orientation to visitors with less time available to spend in the Village.

The success of any or all of these changes could be easily evaluated by gathering baseline data similar to the information gathered for use in the present study and comparing it to information gathered after changes have been instituted. Even without such relatively elaborate evaluation methods, a careful recording of the numbers of visitors viewing the films before and after these changes have been made would be useful.
The Impact of Other Orientation Procedures

Although the impact of the orientation films was of most central concern in the present study, the examination of other orientation experiences available to visitors at Old Sturbridge Village is also of interest. The most striking finding is that so few visitors take advantage of the orientation opportunities available to them. Again, because it is not the policy of Old Sturbridge Village to choreograph the visitor's experience, many possible orientation experiences go unnoticed. This is not the case with the map which is distributed to groups as they purchase tickets, and visitor response to this orientation is overwhelmingly positive. Visitors seemed to rely heavily on the map in finding their way through the Village and in addition, the map and the other information available in the brochure provided factual information and helped visitors gain a sense of the community by illustrating the overall layout of the Village and its outlying areas.

Aside from the films and map, however, none of the other orientations seemed to have a significant impact on the visitor's experience at Old Sturbridge Village. Not only did few of the visitors receive other orientations, but of those who did, few found them useful. One potential exception to this is the Quaker Meetinghouse presentation where a large proportion of the visitors who did experience this orientation found it useful both in terms of gaining a sense of the time period and in providing factual information about the Village. Aside from the film, this is the only other "active" orientation available and for most visitors it is their first encounter with a costumed
interpreter. As such, this exhibit presents a special opportunity to acquaint the visitor with the role of the interpreter and to encourage interaction as well as to set the mood of the period and describe special events and items of interest to visitors beginning their trip through the Village. To date, the potential impact of this orientation has not been fully developed and increased efforts to improve the quality and consistency of this presentation would be extremely valuable.

Other orientation devices, such as the information panels and Visitor Center gallery did not seem to have any significant impact on the visitor's experience at Old Sturbridge Village. This is not to say, however, that these orientations should be discontinued. The findings of Winkel et al. (1975) indicate that different orientation devices are used by visitors in different ways and it may be that orientations such as the Visitor Center gallery, whose exhibits are generally designed to explore a particular theme in some depth, may serve a small but nonetheless important group of visitors. Instead, some thought might be given to improving the presentation of these orientation procedures. For example, it was mentioned earlier that moving the main ticket counter to the front of the Visitor Center might encourage exploration of this building as a part of the visit rather than as an elaborate gateway to the Village itself. If this were the case, both information panels and the Visitor Center gallery might receive more attention. Improved signage directing visitors to various orientations and encouragement from the staff stationed in the Visitor Center to take advantage of orientation opportunities would also be of use.

Again, evaluation of the effectiveness of these measures could be as
elaborate as an examination of the reactions of the special populations utilizing each orientation or as simple as counting heads; any of several methods could provide valuable information in future orientation planning.

While unexpected, the importance of the entrance interview itself as an orientation was clearly shown in the results of the present study. Not only did visitors who received the entrance interview see a greater number of exhibits and demonstrate greater learning but some even suggested that the experience was the best orientation they had received. If those aspects of the procedure which contributed to its success as an orientation could be understood, these elements might be incorporated into new orientation devices or used to improve existing ones. Two possible explanations seem most reasonable. First, earlier research has demonstrated the value of addressing questions to visitors regarding orientation material. Wagar (1976) found that retention of information was increased when a question related to the topic was incorporated into the interpretive message. The entrance interview, while not providing information directly, did address questions to visitors which might have served as cues in later learning. This does not, however, explain why these respondents saw a greater number of exhibits than those who did not receive an entrance interview. This may be due to a mild case of "test anxiety" on the part of this first group of respondents--knowing they were expected to return at the conclusion of their visit may have made these visitors feel a greater obligation to see as much and learn as much about the Village as possible. One way to determine whether learning in general was improved or whether
visitors were simply cued to key topics suggested in the entrance interview would be to include additional informational questions in the exit interview. Wagar's findings would suggest that including questions in orientation narratives, while it improves retention of information specifically addressed in those questions, tends to decrease learning of other information. Thus, if additional informational questions were included, it might be shown whether the increase in learning found in the current study was limited to those topics specifically addressed in the entrance interview or whether visitors were encouraged by this experience to learn more generally. Of course, it would be impossible to demand visitors to pass a test before allowing them to leave the Village, but such questions might be incorporated into both orientation and interpretation if it is found that this is accepted by visitors and does, in fact, encourage greater learning. Devices such as Wagar's recording quizboard or matching exercises included on the map handout might also be developed as effective question-asking orientations.

Results of the present study also indicate that large proportions of the visitors to Old Sturbridge Village receive some form of orientation prior to their arrival at the Village (see Table 14). However, these orientations were not regarded as being particularly valuable (see Table 15). Future orientation planning should consider the possibility of developing a more informative pre-arrival orientation device. This could, for example, take the form of a brochure available at local information centers and distributed to other tourist sites and historical parks. This brochure might identify the Village period and
describe the events taking place at the time as well as describe the history of the Village itself. Such an orientation would not only interest visitors in coming to the Village but would provide valuable background information for their visit.

Future orientation planning should also consider the types of information which are being communicated through orientation; clarifying which concepts and themes are most central to the goals of the Village, and, of these, which are being successfully communicated and which are not. Four possible orientation objectives were examined in the present study. Of these, aiding visitors in finding their way through the Village seemed to be most effectively accomplished. Providing factual information about the Village and promoting a sense of the time period also seemed to be relatively well communicated. However, visitors were seldom able to identify orientations which had been useful in providing a sense of the interdependence of the community represented by Old Sturbridge Village. It is the goal of the present "Community in Change" grant to develop the salience of this particular theme and it seems that an orientation which introduces this concept to visitors would be a critical component in this effort. The staff of Old Sturbridge Village is now in the process of developing a slide presentation which, it is hoped, will fill this need. Evaluation of the effectiveness of this orientation might follow the model developed in the present study and would provide immediate feedback for improving this particular procedure as well as for planning future orientation experiences.
Summary

The results of the current study thus offer a number of recommendations to the staff of Old Sturbridge Village in relation to future orientation planning. Of these, four in particular merit repetition:

1) moving the main ticket counter toward the front of the Visitor Center in order to increase the salience and perceived value of orientation procedures presented there,

2) developing the Quaker Meetinghouse as a more focused and consistent orientation procedure in which visitors are introduced to the interpretive methods used at Old Sturbridge Village,

3) extending the scope of orientation to include pre-arrival orientation procedures which inform and interest potential visitors to Old Sturbridge Village, and

4) continuing, on whatever level is possible, an ongoing orientation evaluation effort so that orientation can be better geared to meeting the needs of visitors to Old Sturbridge Village, and can respond quickly and effectively to changes in those needs.

Directions for Future Research

Conducting research in an area which has, to date, received little attention is at once exciting and discouraging. A single study can contribute significantly to an understanding of the field, yet, at the same time this single study usually uncovers ten or a hundred new questions and issues for each one it answers. The present study, while it provides useful information for orientation planning and represents
greater methodological sophistication than most earlier studies, seems to present a myriad of such unanswered questions, as well.

It is clear both from a reading of the literature and from experience gathered during the present project that a foundation of basic information concerning orientation is sorely needed. At a simplistic level, this would involve no more than keeping careful records of orientation use, noting who uses various orientations as well as when and where they are used. Once such baseline data are gathered, they could be used to evaluate the effect of simple changes in the presentation of these orientations. For example, the present study demonstrated that nearly all of the orientations available to visitors at Old Sturbridge Village are sadly underused and are most neglected by those visitors who have the least information about the Village. Using this information, the effect of improved signage could now be evaluated in terms of increased usage. More elaborate methods might also be developed to differentiate knowledgeable from less informed visitors and to examine differences in reactions to improved signage across groups. Evaluation efforts should not be neglected simply because they are thought to require rigorous statistical analyses or long-term data collection. Any efforts, however simple, so long as they are carefully conceived and carried out, will be of use in orientation planning.

Collaboration between settings engaged in orientation evaluation would also provide valuable information. Studies such as the collection of statements gathered by Cohen (1974) addressing orientation issues would be more meaningful and their findings more generalizable if they could compare orientation procedures in terms of actual usage.
Once a model for such research has been developed and piloted, evaluation efforts such as these could be easily carried out by research and interpretive staff members with a minimum amount of training in observational and interview techniques and simple analyses used to gain information about relevant issues on an ongoing basis.

Beyond these relatively simple evaluation efforts, there is the need to develop an understanding of more conceptual issues related to orientation evaluation. The present study brought to light a number of such questions. For example, what do visitors learn and how do they learn in a setting such as Old Sturbridge Village? In retrospect, the present study utilized a highly simplistic model of learning in order to measure information gain. Learning was defined in terms of the acquisition of certain facts concerning the Village and even the conceptual issues addressed were those considered to be important by Old Sturbridge Village staff. No consideration was given to broadening the scope of the factual questions nor to allowing visitors to define their own learning experiences. In part, this decision was made because past efforts to examine learning in more natural, holistic ways have resulted in uncertainty both in analyzing and in interpreting results (Hayward et al., 1978). However, even without extending the definition beyond the acquisition of factual information, improvements in the experimental design are possible. Past research (Wagar, 1976), as well as the results of the present study, demonstrate that "pre-testing" can have significant effects on learning. The present experimental design does not, however, indicate whether this result is limited to topic areas addressed in "pre-testing" or whether it generalizes to other
areas, although Wagar's findings would suggest that this kind of generalization of learning is, in fact, inhibited by posing specific questions. This ambiguity could be easily clarified by including new topic areas as well as old in the exit interview schedule. If learning is generally enhanced, the inclusion of questions in orientation presentations might be considered. If, on the other hand, learning of information not specifically addressed in questions is inhibited by this procedure, such questions should be excluded from orientation materials or, if used, should address only those issues of most central concern.

It is important that future research not dismiss the idea of examining different models of learning since it is unlikely that visitors to a setting such as Old Sturbridge Village do, in fact, learn in such stereotypic ways. Most visitors do not come to Old Sturbridge Village to "learn" in any traditional sense but rather come to experience a new environment and to enjoy themselves. Even those who do come to "learn" have their own goals and interests and are probably not eager for formula learning developed by someone else. Methods developed to examine these more subtle and more individualistic modes of learning will have to be more sensitive and less rigidly defined than methods such as those used in the present study and it is likely that results will not be easily quantified nor analyzed. Nonetheless, a true understanding of the impact of orientation will not be gained without examining the visitor's concept of learning rather than our own translation of that experience.

A second area which requires the development of more sensitive methods is in the examination of visitors' evaluations of the setting.
The current study shared the difficulty of many earlier studies of dealing with very positive overall evaluations with little variability between visitors' responses. The present design did improve upon this dilemma to some degree by developing a series of scaled responses which required visitors to compare Old Sturbridge Village to other settings. Even so, visitor responses tended to be very positive. It would be ludicrous to attempt to force visitors to denigrate an experience which they found to be both educational and enjoyable. However, it might be possible to ask visitors to rank order the success of various aspects of the Village, in much the same way that orientation procedures were evaluated in the present study, in order to gain an understanding of which specific features contribute most to the Village's success.

Observational methods offer another avenue of orientation evaluation which has been developed in earlier research but which was not included in the present study. For the most part, such methods have been fairly crude measures of attentiveness, but they do have the advantage of not interfering with the visitor's experience. It might be possible to develop more useful observational methods or to incorporate observational and interview methods to gain a better understanding of the effect of various orientation procedures. Tracking visitor behavior through the Visitor Center, for example, might provide information useful in future space planning. If visitors do tend to avoid making left-hand turns and select the first exit they encounter, as Melton (1935) suggests, more emphasis might be placed on directing visitors to the Visitor Center gallery and theater areas. Such methods could also be used in evaluating the effect of changes in the Visitor
Center design and in the presentation of orientation materials.

Finally, it is important that researchers in the field begin to address these more complex issues by utilizing more sophisticated statistical models and methods. Less rigorous methods are not necessarily of less value nor is an elegant statistical analysis even appropriate in all situations. However, if researchers are to develop an understanding of the interrelationships between various visitor characteristics or various aspects of the visitor's experience, simple descriptive statistics will no longer serve. Past research has, for the most part, relied solely on such simple descriptive techniques. The present study attempts to build on the knowledge already gained through these studies and to develop a better understanding of the visitor's experience through the use of inferential methods which allow the researcher to examine the effects of specific orientation experiences. Future research, it is hoped, will continue this effort and will extend our understanding of the visitor's experience even further through the use of multivariate techniques and the eventual development of predictive models, allowing us not only to improve our understanding of the visitor's experience but to enhance the nature of that experience as well.
NOTES

1 Figures for elderly visitors may be lower than actual visitation because many elderly arrive in bus tours which are not included in the sampling technique used in the present study.

2 Wagar (1976) indicates that including questions in interpretive presentations, while it increases retention of information specifically addressed may decrease retention of non-cued information.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX
Synopsis of Films

1. Working in Rural New England--Summary. This film portrays the working life of residents of a small New England community of the 1830's. It puts major emphasis on the role of the farmer and the farm family showing scenes from the Freeman Farm and using both interpreter's comments and period quotations to illustrate points. The film then goes on to look at the sites of other occupations being carried on at Old Sturbridge Village including the blacksmith, the potter, the parsonage, the Knight Store, and the carding mill.

Visitor Behavior--This film provides little information related to a physical orientation to the Village. While all of the filming was done in the Village, the immediate area is most often shown and paths between areas are not included. However, the film might influence the visitor's choice of which exhibits to see having presented a particular group of exhibits as examples. The film might also affect route choice by having emphasized the fact that farm life is a particularly important aspect of the Village and by having opened the film with this exhibit implicitly suggesting that visitors might start there as well.

Evaluation--To the extent that this film provides an interesting and relevant conceptual framework for the visitor's tour of the Village, it might enhance the visitor's enjoyment of the experience. Visitors on the whole, however, evaluate the Village very highly, and the extent to which this film might increase the visitor's evaluation over and above this is certain. The film is well made. Visually it is very interesting and the use of a variety of quotations, some of which are very amusing, increases its effectiveness. Therefore, in terms of the visitor's evaluation of the film itself, I expect this to be very positive.

Sense of Time--Unlike the second film, "The Legacy of Old Sturbridge Village," this film seems to have been made at a time when no visitors were present in the Village. Since the major hindrance visitors report to gaining a sense of the time period is other visitors, it would seem likely that this film will be more effective in promoting a sense of going back in time. Also the use of period journals and diaries as elements in the narration and the demonstration of activities are quite effective in achieving this goal.

Understanding of Conceptual Themes--This is a thematic film. Its entire purpose is to provide a visual, thematic orientation to the Village and it seems to do so quite effectively. In presenting this specific theme, the film also touches on other important concepts such as the interrelatedness of people's lives during this period, the transition from farm to community residence especially with the concurrent rise of craftsmen and artisans. However, these themes are suggested rather than explicitly stated and the extent to which visitors will respond to this is uncertain.
2. The Legacy of Old Sturbridge Village—Summary. This second film focuses on the development of Old Sturbridge Village as a museum. In conversations with staff and administrators, the history and current philosophies and goals of the Village as a "living history" museum are presented.

Visitor Behavior—Again, this film provides little information regarding a physical orientation to the Village. A few exhibits are shown and discussed but there is little to suggest a route or to inform the visitor about the layout of the Village.

Evaluation—Personally, I found this film less interesting in terms of content as well as visual quality than the film "Working. . . ." and expect that visitors will not evaluate the film itself as positively. However, in terms of overall evaluation, the same idea holds. To the extent that the film makes the visitor's experience more comprehensible and provides valuable information, it will increase the visitor's overall evaluation of the Village.

Sense of Time—If anything this film detracts from, rather than supports the visitor's ability to gain a sense of going back in time. The film juxtaposes period-dressed interpreters with modern day administrators, shows scenes of visitors taking photographs, rubbing sore feet and eating ice cream and discusses the operation of the Village as a modern-day museum rather than attempting to create the illusion that it is an actual period community.

Understanding of Conceptual Themes—AHA! Now we get to the good stuff. In terms of providing a clear, coherent presentation of conceptual themes as well as factual information, this film is far superior to "Working. . . ." It identifies the Village period, explains the origins of the Village and alerts visitors to the role of costumed interpretive staff. In addition to developing the concept of the importance of the Center Village area and the relation of rural New England to the rest of the world, the film urges visitors to think of the Village not simply as an historical setting separate from their own life, but as a way of using comparisons with a time past to gain a better understanding of today's world.
Good morning (afternoon), is this your first visit to Old Sturbridge Village? (IF NO, SAY: "Well, today we're interviewing first-time visitors. Thanks anyway, and I hope you enjoy your visit." IF YES, CONTINUE)

Well, today we're talking to our first time visitors to better understand who our visitors are and what they think of the Village. Could I ask you a few questions before you begin your visit? (IF NO, SAY: "OK, thank you anyway, I hope you enjoy your visit." IF YES, CONTINUE)

OK, these questions will take just a couple of minutes now, and then at the end of your visit we'd like to talk to you again, to find out how you liked it and what parts you found to be interesting and so on. That interview, at the end, will take about 15 minutes. In exchange for your help with this, we'd like to give you a gift from the gift shop. So, would you be willing to participate in this study? (IF NO, SAY: "OK, thank you anyway, I hope you enjoy your visit." IF YES, CONTINUE)

Great! Now we realize that this is your first visit to Old Sturbridge Village and there may be some questions you don't know, but just do your best.
1. First, I wonder if you could tell me which of the following you would say best describes what you expect Old Sturbridge Village to be. (If respondent wishes to give more than one response, probe for primary response and note secondary responses as well.)

1. ___a museum
2. ___a park
3. ___a crafts exhibit
4. ___an old New England town where you might go sightseeing

2. And how might Old Sturbridge Village be different from other _____ you’ve visited? (Fill in response from above.)

3. Can you tell me what period of time you expect Old Sturbridge Village to represent? (Can you give me a representative year?)

CODE AFTER INTERVIEW: 1. ___correct (1790-1840 or late 1700's or early 1800's)
2. ___incorrect

4. Do you happen to have any information concerning the origins of the Village? For example, do you happen to know whether the buildings in the Village are original structures as opposed to being reproductions or models of originals?

1. ___originals 2. ___reproductions 3. ___don't know

5. And do you happen to know: was there a village like Old Sturbridge Village on this particular site during the period portrayed here?

1. ___no, there was not 2. ___yes, there was 3. ___don't know

6. In comparison to the general population, how would you rate your knowledge of American history in general and, more specifically, of the period portrayed by Old Sturbridge Village?

1. ___well above average
2. ___somewhat above average
3. ___about average
4. ___somewhat below average
5. ___well below average
7. Just a couple of short questions now, could you tell me how many people are in your group? (number of adults and number of children)

- #adults
- #children

CODE: 1) ___ alone
2) ___ pair
3) ___ family
4) ___ group (adults only)
5) ___ group (mixed)

8. CODE: Sex of primary respondent
1. ___ M
2. ___ F

9. And finally, can you tell me how much time you expect to spend here in the Village today? ________ hrs.

Great! That's all the questions I have for now. What I'd like to ask you to do is to take this card (Hand visitor card with interview number noted) and return it at the end of your visit to me or to the other interviewer who will be sitting in that small courtyard area (in Conference Room if weather is bad). This will enable us to match up the two sets of questions. You should plan to allow about 15 minutes to complete the second interview, and to select your gift. Thank you so much for your help! See you later and enjoy your visit!
Thank you for stopping back. Why don't we sit down here for a few minutes. (If there are other people in the group, interviewer might suggest that they are welcome to stay and contribute or might like to look around the gift shop.)

1. First, overall how enjoyable did you find your visit? Would you say it was:
   1. _____ extremely enjoyable
   2. _____ very enjoyable
   3. _____ somewhat enjoyable
   4. _____ somewhere in the middle, neither enjoyable nor unpleasant
   5. _____ somewhat unpleasant
   6. _____ very unpleasant
   7. _____ extremely unpleasant

2. What, in your opinion was the best or most interesting exhibit you saw here at Old Sturbridge Village today? ______________ Why?

3. And which exhibit was the least interesting? ______________ Why?

4. Now that you've seen the Village, which of the following would you say best describes it?
   1. _____ a museum
   2. _____ a park
   3. _____ a crafts exhibit
   4. _____ an old New England town where you might go sightseeing
5. Now, I'd like to ask you to compare Old Sturbridge Village to other places you've visited. For example, compared to other museums you've visited, if the best received a score of 10 and the worst a score of 1, how does Old Sturbridge Village compare as a museum? What score would you give it? (If you can't compare the two at all, give it a score of 0.)

And what about parks? (Repeat as much of the question as necessary to cue respondent.) What score would you give Old Sturbridge Village as a museum? _____

1. ___ a museum
2. ___ a park
3. ___ an amusement park
4. ___ a crafts exhibit
5. ___ an old New England town where you might go sightseeing
6. ___ a place to take children
7. ___ an educational experience

6. Did you happen to receive any information concerning the origins of the Village during your visit? For example, do you know now whether the buildings here are original structures as opposed to being reproductions or models of originals?

1. __ originals 2. __ reproductions 3. __ don't know

7. And was there a village like Old Sturbridge Village on this particular site during the period portrayed here?

1. __ no, there was not 2. __ yes, there was 3. __ don't know

8. Can you tell me now, what period of time Old Sturbridge Village portrays? (Can you give me a representative year. ) _____

CODE AFTER INTERVIEW: 1. __ correct (1750-1840, or late 1800's or early 1800's) 2. __ incorrect

9. Now, on this map would you please number the exhibits you visited here in the Village by the order in which you saw them? (Hand respondent copy of map with clipboard and pen.)
10. People in a village like this in the 1820's depended on one another in a number of ways. Old Sturbridge Village is concerned with portraying these connections to visitors accurately. To what extent would you say that the exhibits and activities here at Old Sturbridge Village portray these interconnections, that is the sense of the Village as a living, interdependent community?

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11. We're interested in what visitors find out about several important aspects of village life in this period. Could you tell me what you've seen or heard today about:
(Things that you weren't aware of before coming here to Old Sturbridge Village.)

a) Work and economic patterns in the early 1800's.

b) Family life and kinship ties.

c) Community life and social activities

d) The different parts of the town. For example, the distinction between the Center Village, the Mill Crossroads, and the outlying areas.
12. We're also concerned with the extent to which visitors perceive the Village as actually being of another time. Could you tell me what things helped you get a sense of "going back in time?"

13. And what things prevented you from gaining this sense? (Is there anything that seemed to break the continuity of the time period? Anything too modern?)

14. Overall, then, to what extent do you feel you might actually have been visiting a New England town of the 1830's.

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15. Great! Now, I'd like you to think back to the orientation you received as you first entered the Village. We're interested in the kinds of information visitors receive before they enter the Village proper and are currently in the process of evaluating how helpful these experiences are to our visitors. Your reactions will help us to do this more effectively. Could you look at this list and tell me which of these types of orientation to Old Sturbridge Village you received? (Hand visitor card.)

1. Examine model in area outside of Visitor Center.
2. Received a map of the Village at the Visitor Center.
3. Looked at photographs and information panels in the Visitor Center.
4. Examined exhibit in the Visitor Center gallery.
5. Saw film in the Visitor Center.

Please specify film: ____ "Working in Rural New England"
____ "The Legacy of Old Sturbridge Village"
6. Talked to Old Sturbridge Village staff before beginning my visit.

7. Heard costumed interpreter at Quaker Meetinghouse (the first building.)

8. Talked with a friend or relative familiar with the Village before coming.

9. Talked to children who had come on a school field trip.

10. Read or saw something about the Village or about this period in history. Please specify:

11. Visited similar place. Please specify:

16. And finally, of those orientation procedures you just noted (list choices), which, if any, contributed to each of the following aspects of your visit? If none of them were helpful to you, feel free to say so. (Any others?) And could you describe the ways in which these experiences were useful?

1. Finding your way around.

2. Gaining a sense of the time period portrayed by Old Sturbridge Village.

3. Gaining a sense of Old Sturbridge Village as a community.

4. Providing factual information about the Village and about the Village period.
That's about it. I'd just like to ask you to fill out these last few questions while I straighten out the gift box. (Hand Interview Schedule to respondent) Fill this out just for yourself if you would.

Please indicate your

17. Sex: _____ Male  
       _____ Female

18. Age: 1. ___ 18-25  
         2. ___ 26-35  
         3. ___ 36-45  
         4. ___ 46-55  
         5. ___ 56-65  
         6. ___ 66-75  
         7. ___ 75+

19. Total Annual Income of Your Household:  
  1. ___ $0 - $5,000  
  2. ___ $5,000 - $9,999  
  3. ___ $10,000 - $19,999  
  4. ___ $20,000 - $29,999  
  5. ___ $30,000 - $39,999  
  6. ___ $40,000 or more

20. Last year completed in school:  
  1. ___ high school  
  2. ___ some college  
  3. ___ complete college  
  4. ___ some graduate school (includes law or medical school)  
  5. ___ completed graduate degree

PLEASE HAND INTERVIEW SCHEDULE TO INTERVIEWER.

22. If you have any other suggestions, either about the orientation procedures or in relation to other aspects of the Village, we'd like to hear them.

Thank you very much for your time and help! Hope you enjoy your gift and have a safe trip home!
Good Morning (afternoon), is this your first visit to Old Sturbridge Village? (IF NO, SAY: "Well, today we're interviewing first-time visitors. Thanks anyway, and have a safe trip home." IF YES, CONTINUE)

Well, today we're talking to our first-time visitors to better understand who our visitors are and what they think of the Village. Could I ask you some questions about your visit here today? This may take a few minutes of your time, so in exchange for your help we'd like to offer you a gift from the gift shop. So, would you be willing to participate?

(IF NO, SAY: "Thanks anyway, I hope you have a safe trip home." IF YES, CONTINUE)
0. First, can you tell me what time you entered the Village today?

1. And, overall how enjoyable did you find your visit? Would you say it was:
   1. ___ extremely enjoyable
   2. ___ very enjoyable
   3. ___ somewhat enjoyable
   4. ___ somewhere in the middle, neither enjoyable nor unpleasant
   5. ___ somewhat unpleasant
   6. ___ very unpleasant
   7. ___ extremely unpleasant

2. What, in your opinion was the best or most interesting exhibit you saw here at Old Sturbridge Village today? ___________ Why?

3. And which exhibit was the least interesting? ___________ Why?

4. Now that you've seen the Village, which of the following would you say best describes it?
   1. ___ a museum
   2. ___ a park
   3. ___ a crafts exhibit
   4. ___ an old New England town where you might go sightseeing

5. Now, I'd like to ask you to compare Old Sturbridge Village to other places you've visited. For example, compared to other museums you've visited, if the best received a score of 10 and the worst a score of 1, how does Old Sturbridge Village compare as a museum? What score would you give it? (If you can't compare the two at all, give it a score of 0).
People in a village like this in the 1830's depended on one another in a number of ways. Old Sturbridge Village is concerned with portraying these connections to visitors accurately. To what extent would you say that the exhibits and activities here at Old Sturbridge Village portray these interconnections, that is the sense of the Village as a living, interdependent community?

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We're interested in what visitors find out about several important aspects of village life in this period. Could you tell me what you've seen or heard today about:
(Things that you weren't aware of before coming here to Old Sturbridge Village.)

a) Work and economic patterns in the early 1800's.

b) Family life and kinship ties.

c) Community life and social activities

d) The different parts of the town. For example, the distinction between the Center Village, the Mill Crossroads, and the outlying areas.
12. We're also concerned with the extent to which visitors perceive the Village as actually being of another time. Could you tell me what things helped you get a sense of "going back in time?"

13. And what things prevented you from gaining this sense? (Is there anything that seemed to break the continuity of the time period? Anything too modern?)

14. Overall, then, to what extent do you feel you might actually have been visiting a New England town of the 1830's.

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15. Great! Now, I'd like you to think back to the orientation you received as you first entered the Village. We're interested in the kinds of information visitors receive before they enter the Village proper and are currently in the process of evaluating how helpful these experiences are to our visitors. Your reactions will help us to do this more effectively. Could you look at this list and tell me which of these types of orientation you received? (Hand visitor card.)

1. ___ Examined model in area outside of Visitor Center.
2. ___ Received a map of the Village at the Visitor Center.
3. ___ Looked at photographs and information panels in the Visitor Center.
4. ___ Examined exhibit in the Visitor Center.
5. ___ Saw film in the Visitor Center.

   Please specify film: ___ "Working in Rural New England"
   ___ "The Legacy of Old Sturbridge Village"
Talked to Old Sturbridge Village staff before
beginning my visit.

Heard costumed interpreter at Quaker Meetinghouse
(the first building.)

Talked with a friend or relative familiar with
the Village before coming.

Talked to children who had come on a school
field trip.

Read or saw something about the Village or about
this period in history. Please specify:

Visited similar place. Please specify:

And finally, of those orientation procedures you just
noted (list choices), which, if any, contributed to
each of the following aspects of your visit? If none
of them were helpful to you, feel free to say so.
(Any others?) And could you describe the ways in which
these experiences were useful?

1. Finding your way around.

2. Gaining a sense of the time period portrayed by Old
Sturbridge Village.

3. Gaining a sense of Old Sturbridge Village as a
community.

4. Providing factual information about the Village and
about the Village period.
That's about it. I'd just like to ask you to fill out these last few questions while I straighten out the gift box. (Hand Interview Schedule to respondent) Fill this out just for yourself if you would.

Please indicate your

17. Sex: _____ Male  
   _____ Female

18. Age:  
   1. ___ 18-25  
   2. ___ 26-35  
   3. ___ 36-45  
   4. ___ 46-55  
   5. ___ 56-65  
   6. ___ 66-75  
   7. ___ 75+

19. Total Annual Income of Your Household:  
   1. ___ $0 - $ 5,000  
   2. ___ $ 5,000 - $ 9,999  
   3. ___ $10,000 - $19,999  
   4. ___ $20,000 - $29,999  
   5. ___ $30,000 - $39,999  
   6. ___ $40,000 or more

20. Last year completed in school:  
   1. ___ high school  
   2. ___ some college  
   3. ___ complete college  
   4. ___ some graduate school (includes law or medical school)  
   5. ___ completed graduate degree

PLEASE HAND INTERVIEW SCHEDULE TO INTERVIEWER.

22. If you have any other suggestions, either about the orientation procedures or in relation to other aspects of the Village, we'd like to hear them.

Thank you very much for your time and help! Hope you enjoy your gift and have a safe trip home!
FOR THE SAFETY & COMFORT OF ALL:

- Walk carefully: Village roads and houses are like those of 150 years ago.
- Pets taken into buildings must be carried and must be leashed at all times.
- Smoking and eating are not permitted in buildings.
- Strollers may not be taken into buildings.
- For the sake of our livestock, please do not feed them.
- Please don't pick flowers or crops.

WINTER SCHEDULE

- Open weekends, weekdays by special tour
- Open all day, weekdays & weekends

FORMAL EXHIBITS & DEMONSTRATION AREA

To Administration