How highly educated professional people in service occupations experience their jobs: a presentation and analysis of the self-reported feelings and attitudes of public school superintendents.

Raymond F. Reisler

University of Massachusetts Amherst

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HOW HIGHLY EDUCATED PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE IN SERVICE OCCUPATIONS EXPERIENCE THEIR JOBS: A PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE SELF-REPORTED FEELINGS AND ATTITUDES OF PUBLIC SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

A Dissertation Presented

By

Raymond F. Reisler, Jr.

Submitted to the Graduate School of the University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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September 1976

School of Education
HOW HIGHLY EDUCATED PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE IN SERVICE OCCUPATIONS EXPERIENCE THEIR JOBS: A PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE SELF-REPORTED FEELINGS AND ATTITUDES OF PUBLIC SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

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Approved as to style and content by:

Harvey Scribner, Chairperson

David Flight, Member

Seymour Sarason, Member

Louis Fischer, Acting Dean
School of Education

September, 1976
ABSTRACT

HOW HIGHLY EDUCATED PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE IN SERVICE OCCUPATIONS EXPERIENCE THEIR JOBS: A PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE SELF-REPORTED FEELINGS AND ATTITUDES OF PUBLIC SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

September 1976

Raymond F. Reisler, Jr., B.S., Cornell University
M.A.T., Cornell University, Ed.D., University of Massachusetts

Directed by: Professor Harvey B. Scribner

Since work structures our lives, consumes most of our time and energy, and is at the core of our social and self identities, the purpose of the study is to obtain a better understanding of how educational administrators—specifically school superintendents—experience their jobs, and their own development or degeneration in those jobs, over time. The dissertation further explains the causes and consequences of superintendents' satisfaction/dissatisfaction with their work experience. In contrast to occupational role studies, and most job satisfaction research, the study probes the effects of work on the personal (non-work) life of the superintendent. The focus on the personal and social drama of work is more concisely described by the question, "What does the superintendency do to the superintendent?"

The study is an exploration of a relatively untouched area of research. The review of the literature serves primarily to illustrate the general image of the superintendent and to point out the scarcity of literature directly related to the purpose of the dissertation. It also serves to highlight the few references which address and support the need for examination of issues fundamental to the dissertation.

In separate interviews, each approximately three hours, thirty public school superintendents from three New England states were asked primarily open-ended questions in order to encourage the amount and the type of disclosure. Those and other methodological decisions were based upon the exploratory and generative nature of the study.
The interview responses are summarized and selectively quoted by question in Chapters IV and V. The results indicate that the large majority of school superintendents are satisfied with their jobs and are pleased about the personal needs the job seems to be meeting. There is also abundant information in the responses about the job itself. Simultaneously, however, the superintendents reveal painful hidden injuries caused by the superintendency. They poignantly describe intense feelings of regret and/or guilt at the way in which the job has drained them of the energy needed for their children, their spouses, their health, and their non-professional growth. The job took a heavy toll on the thirty superintendents interviewed. That aspect of the dissertation introduces a compelling area of concern for students of educational administration and related fields of study. The final chapter contains discussion of conclusions and speculations about the superintendent's choice of priorities, and suggests some implications for further research.
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CHAPTER I
THE NATURE OF THE STUDY

Background

For more than a century of American history, and continuing into the present, there has been discontent among blue collar workers about their working conditions, and at the same time, a corresponding struggle for material and tangible changes that would make their jobs more rewarding and bearable. There is a plethora of documentation in this area—False Promises (Aronowitz, 1973) and Work In America (Report, 1973) are two of the most recent works. In recent decades, beginning in 1953 with the publication of White Collar by C. Wright Mills, there has been a similar, growing documentation of discontent about working conditions among middle-level\(^1\) white collar workers. We have witnessed the formation of white collar labor unions and in general, we have seen a gradual and moderate proletarianization of the middle-level, middle-class, white collar worker. In addition, recent census bureau reports show that white collar occupations now substantially outnumber the blue, and that the professional, technical, and service occupations continue to grow at almost three times the rate of blue-collar occupations.\(^2\) The unionization of blue and white collar workers has gradually become part of the public impression of the American labor scene.

Much more recently, perhaps a product of the sixties taking shape in the seventies, is a new form of discontent on the part of both

\(^1\)"Middle-level" is meant to describe those white collar workers who are not in the top echelon of administration and who are not highly credentialed members of traditionally elite professions such as law, medicine, and dentistry. This explanation is not meant to be exclusive, for there are undoubtedly many exceptions.

groups; that is, a profound and often emotional questioning of the fundamental nature and value of work as we know it. For the past few years, there have been numerous wire service and magazine features which spread the word and seem to confirm that the American work ethic is not what it used to be for a rapidly increasing number of Americans.

...if it is true that our own times are characterized by an increasing alienation from work, then this is the more profound sense in which alienation has occurred. It is a phenomenon that is not confined to industrial workers, but it is also evident among teachers, clerical workers and others whose tasks are not organized on an excessively "rationalized" basis. 3

Furthermore, the growth of the leisure industry and the expansion of emphasis on the use of leisure time--so mercilessly drummed into us by the media--has only served to heighten the contradictions and frustrations for many people who are still trying to find the time and energy to be with their families. Clearly, probing and questioning the principle of the centrality of work to the human condition is a phenomenon that must be rediscovered by some and initiated by others. 4

The areas of psychology, sociology, human resources--indeed social science in general--have been negligent in not sufficiently addressing the need for investigation into the breadth and depth of job (dis)satisfaction among people in the upper levels of our social structure. Remaining basically unstudied are the feelings and attitudes about the significance of the "work experience" as self-reported by highly educated (completed graduate degrees) professional people in human service occupations. 5 It is that gap which this dissertation seeks


5 Peter Blau and Richard Scott, Formal Organizations (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co., 1962), p. 51. They have defined a service
Work and Identity

Work is an extremely broad and complex subject which has been studied from innumerable perspectives by scholars in a variety of fields. Included in this general area are topics such as job satisfaction, professions, professionalism, working conditions, occupational status and the quality of work, among others. In the opinion of some, the study of work is a dry, methodical, impersonal task. The research for this dissertation, on the contrary, has been influenced by and attests to the acuity of thinkers such as Everett Hughes who writes that "a person's work is one of the most important parts of his social identity, of his self, indeed of his fate...[and] a man's work is one of the primary things by which he is judged and certainly one of the most significant things by which he judges himself."\(^6\) The study of work provides us with a frame of reference for a broader understanding of the needs, wants, values, desires and expectations of people. However, the literature in this area has traditionally propounded a dichotomy between the person at work and the same person outside of work. In achieving the aims of the present research, the boundaries of a person's work will be stretched beyond the traditional confines of the workplace. As a result, questions such as the following become more important: Why is a person in a

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particular job? Did he/she seek out the job? Why is he/she still in that job? What kind of mindset and expectations were brought to the job? How does a person's behavior on the job affect his/her life outside the job? What is the relationship between life on the job and the more complete life off the job? In other words, for each person, what role does work play in relation to the benefit or detriment it causes for other properties of the total life of that person? In addition to one's survival needs, what additional needs might work fulfill? Some possible factors, listed within a compelling framework, are summarized in the introduction to *The Worker and The Job*:

...work means being a good provider, it means autonomy, it pays off in success, and it establishes self-respect or self-worth. Within this framework, the person who openly confesses active job dissatisfaction is virtually admitting failure as a [person], and failure in fulfilling his moral role in society. Since work resides at the very core of life's values, self-esteem colors the response to job satisfaction attitude surveys. A negative answer may negate the life style and the very ego of the individual. It may well involve a painful, if not impossible denial of basic goals in life.  

What this writer is assuming and intends to assert is that the answers to these and similar questions are crucial to a person's total sense of well-being and not simply to his/her performance on the job. Since work structures our lives and consumes most of our time and energy, it is imperative to undertake research that will further identify and explain the causes and consequences of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with one's work experience. "We are in a position as a nation to consider the definition of work in broader terms, to reduce its damages and increase its benefits to the worker even if he is not thereby made more productive on the job."  

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Kahn is an important one and unfortunately a rare one. Most writers and most studies have been concerned with productivity-related improvements in business/industrial organizations. By accepting the existence of, and by probing the profound effects of work on one's non-work life, this dissertation research will closely examine the personal and social drama of work. The issues discussed in this section are concisely summarized by the following:

The economic base of societal structure has its psychological counterpart in the individual's relationship to his/her work. The importance of work to a person's psychological experience has long been demonstrated in studies of adult development, theories of personality, identity, self-esteem, and of course job satisfaction research. The nature of work provides one thematic perspective from which to view the complex inter-relationships that explain human behavior.

Why Superintendents of Schools?

The job of superintendent of schools is representative of those jobs held by a segment of white collar workers to be called "highly educated professional people" in service occupations. The service sector is the fastest growing sector of the economy and included more than half of the employed labor force in 1972. Workers in positions requiring highly educated professional people tend to have control over production, i.e., the autonomy and authority to decide for the most part what is to be produced, when and how. These jobs, for example

9 Brian Sarata, "Job Satisfaction In The Service Occupations: A Literature Review," (Paper submitted to the Department of Psychology at Yale University, April, 1971), p. 6.


11 The idea and need to study this group of people was suggested by Seymour Sarason and stimulated by his essay "Aging and the Nature of Work," American Psychologist, 30 (1975).

school superintendencies, are often the top positions, and along with them go power, authority, status, respectability and responsibility. Many people's personal expectations are consumed by the ideal of reaching such a position. Their expectations are further magnified by the glorified image given to such jobs by the larger society. When and if the job in practice does not meet the expectations, there is disillusionment and dissatisfaction.

Despite the benefit reaped from abundant studies reporting job satisfaction among blue collar workers, there is the unfortunate possibility that one of the "unintended consequences will be to reinforce the belief that work is a major problem only for certain segments of the population."¹³ Many highly educated professionals would like to change careers or jobs--some probably because of actual dissatisfaction and others simply because of the desire for something new and different. Often the public literature about a job such as the superintendency perpetuates an image of a tireless, talented educator/manager who is one of the most prestigious and respected leaders in the community. However, professionals themselves have also contributed to the credibility gap concerning negative work experiences for highly educated professional people. They "have long sold themselves and others the view that it was the factory worker who was victimized by the nature of his work,"¹⁴ while they themselves were also feeling boredom, futility, or lack of self-worth.

The superintendent in each school district is the individual at the top of the hierarchy of power and responsibility in what is most often the largest "industry" in that district. She/he is one of a few thousand highly educated professional leaders of what is, in a manner of speaking, the largest "industry" in the country. The role of the superintendent has changed in the last decade from that of

¹³Sarason, p. 589.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 584.
teacher-educator-philosopher to that of a manager, a professional, a bureaucrat, and a chief executive of a school system. With that change has come a job that is both more satisfying and dissatisfying. However, in a review of the job satisfaction literature, Sarata reported that "very few studies have focused on the job satisfaction of people employed in what might be termed the service or helping occupations." Another study stated that "...there are surprisingly few investigations of work satisfaction among the talented." A recent conference for school superintendents on the subject of "reducing administrative stress" and a news article of last year stating that many school superintendents would rather quit than fight the necessary struggle, are only a few examples which attest to the myth of the ideal job in which no one should feel dissatisfied.

Finally, one can imagine a response to the selection of "highly educated professional people" such as, "Why study them? They have it made! Blue collar people are suffering." This writer is well aware of and concerned about the individual and political implications of work dissatisfaction and the lack of work at the subsistence level among blue-collar workers. This study is not intended to compare the plights of these two levels of workers. Beyond survival needs, there is no merit to the accusation that it is more important to study one than the other. Again, beyond the issue of survival needs, psychological injury as a result of one's work is equally deplorable and equally in need of investigation and publication at all levels of work.

15 Sarata, p. 6.

Purposes, Assumptions, Hypotheses

We must pay close attention to
the wants and expectations (...culturally determined
variables)...which [people] bring to their work and how
the interpretations which they give to their work shape
the attitudinal and behavioral patterns of their lives
as a whole. ...important in analysis of work is a frame
of reference within which the workers' own definitions
of their situations are taken as an initial basis for
their social behavior and relationships. This approach
in a better way comes to terms with the variety of
meanings which work may come to have for professionals. 17

The purpose of this research is to obtain a better understanding of
how educational administrators--specifically school superintendents--
experience their jobs, and their own development or degeneration in
those jobs, over time. The implications of the expression "experience
their jobs" go beyond the purview of most job satisfaction studies
reviewed by this writer, regardless of their orientation (psycholo-
gical, sociological or other).* The assumption that school superin-
tendents are a terribly beleaguered group is gaining credibility.

What used to be spoken only in one's home or over a cocktail at the
various school administrator conventions is now somewhat more acceptable
as a public issue. A Los Angeles Times news article quoted school
superintendents saying, "It's a lonely, tough, not very rewarding
job...the constant turmoil and pressures tear a man up...bogged down
80 hours a week, much of it mundane housekeeping jobs." 18

17 John Goldthorpe et al., The Affluent Worker (London: Cambridge

* To be discussed in full in Chapter III.

[they] must learn that many other superintendents also feel the agony of trying to cope with insurmountable problems and contradictory pressures." There are strong indications that reaching the top of one's field and the peak of one's career is not necessarily the nirvana it is generally assumed to be.

It is necessary to acquire a better understanding of the apparent contradictions; however, there are numerous obstacles. On the one hand, "Our society shows little interest in measuring the influence of overwork on the professional's effectiveness and mental health," while on the other hand, "...the professionals have been no more willing than the public to face up to the predicament in which their triumph has placed them." Indeed, they are more sensitive to public opinion and "outside" evaluation than most other workers. Through extensive interviews, this researcher attempted to ascertain the factors which cause particular job attitudes, and later to report these factors (e.g., rewards and contradictory pressures) in detail. However, the primary investigation in this study is on job attitudes and feelings themselves, and the consequences of these attitudes and feelings for the total life of the school superintendent) not simply for his/her work role and productivity levels). The importance of this perspective is given support by the job satisfaction study Talent and Performance in which it was reported that "it was only in the course of our study of our data that we became more fully aware of the need to develop a framework that would include the whole of a man's life."

One of the related methodological assumptions in the design of this study is that the original assumption and hypotheses will lead to a clearer definition of the parameters of the issues and will

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20 Kenneth Lynn, Introduction to "The Professions," Daedalus, 6 (Fall, 1963).

21 Ginzberg, p. 199.
generate more specific hypotheses which merit further exploration. It will not be surprising if the initial assumption and hypotheses require some reformulation due to unexpected patterns and factors which emerge from the data. The limited amount of related research concerning the attitudes and feelings about "work experience" as self-reported by school superintendents, account for the rather global and speculative nature of the following working assumption and hypotheses. The basic assumption is that:

Work is an integral part of an individual's total life and as such:

(a) should not be separated or isolated for purposes of occupational or related research.

(b) has profound and lasting effects on how the individual thinks about and values himself/herself.

The hypotheses are:

(1) Work may not be as highly satisfying for highly educated professional people in service occupations--specifically school superintendents--as is commonly accepted.

(2) There is undoubtedly great personal gratification derived from the superintendency, but at the same time, there is severe psychological and physical strain.

(3) The factors that compose work satisfaction and dissatisfaction of school superintendents are more varied and numerous than is generally assumed or reported.

(4) Other studies indirectly or directly dealing with the work experience of school superintendents--if indeed they do find vexatious aspects of the job--fail to investigate and examine the consequences of these findings for the total life (the integration of work life and non-work life) of the superintendent.

The assumption and hypotheses formed the basis for this writer's intention to explore the relationship between daily demands of work, and individual psychological concerns such as the following:

What meaning does the maxim "hard work always pays off" have for you?

How does this job affect and how is it affected by what happens outside of work?
How does this job affect how you think about and value yourself?

What are your needs that are being met and not being met by your present job?

How does this job influence any feeling of concern for your future?

A succinct crystalization of the above might be formulated in the following somewhat colloquial version of the purpose of the present study: "to explore what the superintendency does to the superintendents."

That is to say, the emphasis is more on the effects of the job for the person, than on the job itself and how well a person performs the job.

Although some practitioners and scholars would contend that "what the superintendency does to superintendents" is a real and serious phenomenon, others are not sure if it is an overrated and perhaps unnecessary issue. We begin to appreciate how little we know when we simply sit down with the people in these jobs, and record their thoughts and feelings.
CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

General Design

To understand the nature of work in a way which least fragments its human reality, requires an investigation into the phenomenology of the worker.22 Unfortunately, very few studies (none with superintendents) have been conducted which probe the relationship between a person's work experience and his/her feelings about his/her performance in other life roles.

The suggestion and implication of the preceding two statements lay the foundation for the choices that created the methodological design for this study. Choices were made, for example, among methods of sampling, between interviews or questionnaires, open-ended or fixed-alternative questions, many or few scales, and among various methods for interpretation. This chapter will discuss the choices in detail. In general, however, it should be noted that a flexible research design was chosen because it allows and encourages consideration of varied aspects of an issue—especially when that issue is a relatively unexplored phenomenon. More specifically, the use of working hypotheses and the flexible arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data aided this researcher in gaining familiarity with the phenomenon being studied and in obtaining additional insights. Flexible research designs, most often used in studies called "exploratory," "explanatory," or "case," support the purpose of developing hypotheses or formulating a problem for more precise or controlled investigation (not for testing or demonstrating). The potential utility of such an approach lies as much in the generation of insights as in the presentation of standard behavior and responses.

22Patricia Fountain, p. 4.
Sample

The amount of written material about school superintendents or the school superintendency is minimal. Of this literature, approximately one half are research studies and not more than a handful go beyond demographic and background data. Only two studies employed an interview with a superintendent directly. A number of studies have included a component which was intended to increase understanding about the superintendency, but all of these have relied on the views of parents, teachers, or other administrators, not on the self-perceptions of the superintendents themselves. One of the reasons for this history is the unwillingness and/or lack of time of superintendents to fill out questionnaires or submit to interviews. Superintendents are also more reluctant to grant interviews to doctoral students—especially those without personal references—than to established and recognized researchers. That is to say, advice and trial attempts have convinced this researcher that without influential contacts or references, data-gathering which requires personal, reflective, rather lengthy interviews with school superintendents is highly unlikely to happen. However, to discover patterns of behavior and orientation of school superintendents, it was determined that interviews were requisite. As a result, the procedure for drawing a sample became a method of election based on the recommendation of key influencers. Therefore, the contents of the sample fell into the hands of three well-known educators with whom I had personal contact. Due to lack of funds and time to travel outside the immediate New England area, as well as limits to the resources of the key influencers, potential subjects were concentrated in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut. The goal for the sample was approximately thirty superintendents who had at least three years experience as a superintendent (this does

*See Chapter III, Review of the Literature, for details.
not mean three years in the same job) and were not over 55 years old. Any amount three years or over was considered stable, and enough time to have experienced most elements of the job. However, people over fifty-five were considered too close to retirement to adequately respond to the interview questions concerning the future.

The method of selection for choosing the sample is not technically random, and the sample is not necessarily representative of a larger body of superintendents. However, it should be noted that there is a second-order randomness to the sampling procedure which has produced an adequate cross-section of superintendents from this region. Implications of this research can be inferred for other superintendents in this region. After much thought, it was decided that the data needed for this research required qualitative in-depth interviews with highly educated professional people (school superintendents) and that it could only be obtained by the means described above. To be blunt, the name of the game in gathering data for this research was "access." Consequently, other than the previously stated conditions--experience as a superintendent and maximum age--it was impossible to rigidly control other variables such as sex, age, composition and size of the school district, and tenure.

Testing Instrument

For a study of this nature, the interview proved to be a most effective instrument.

It has important qualities that objective tests and scales and behavioral observations do not possess. When used with a well-conceived schedule, an interview can obtain a great deal of information; it is flexible and adaptable to individual situations, and it can often be used when no other method is possible or adequate. ...it can be used as an exploratory device to help identify variables and relations, to suggest hypotheses...

Fred Kerlinger, Foundations of Behavioral Research (New York:
The questionnaire was the prime contender as a testing instrument. Questionnaires however are highly impersonal and leave much to be desired if the respondent is being asked to reflect upon his/her feelings and sincere beliefs. The opportunity to establish some rapport with a respondent is vital for interviews with people in higher status occupations where there is a definite tendency to suppress and repress some of the more personal thoughts and profound feelings. Questionnaires as opposed to interviews do not allow for immediate clarification and follow-up. In a New York State study of chief school officers, the authors wrote:

> By its nature, a questionnaire can ask a question only once and in only one way. A respondent's thoughts can not be explored nor can he/she be encouraged to expand and elucidate his/her ideas.  

Questionnaires do not as easily encourage or allow respondents to tell the researcher what they feel the researcher should know or be looking for—an essential tool in a research design involving working hypotheses.

The use of personal interviews receives additional support from a study entitled Changing Careers After Thirty-Five, in which the author wrote that "interviews rather than formal questionnaires were used to avoid forcing the respondents into a priori responses." The test interviews and the actual interviews for the present research, impressed upon this writer the fact that interviews can encourage the honesty, and can assimilate the complexity and individual variability anticipated in certain kinds of studies. The superintendents often expressed respect for this writer's effort and energy in conducting an interview study as opposed to a study using mailed questionnaires. In


addition, through both anecdotes and serious comments, many respondents revealed such a cynical attitude in relating how and when and if they filled out questionnaires, that this writer has become more wary of the validity of research studies using questionnaires for data-gathering. Unfortunately, the vast majority of research studies on the school superintendent have been conducted by means of questionnaires. It was felt that the use of interviews to elicit self-reported feelings and attitudes would result in a more sensitive and personal view of the superintendent's world (as he/she sees it) than any of the earlier research. Finally, it was felt that the "self-reported attitudes and perceptions are vitally important because it is these which determine administrative behavior."26 In spite of the fact that a questionnaire would allow for a random and larger sample, statistical analysis and anonymity, the need for the interview as the testing instrument, based upon the design of this study and the advantages listed above, supports its choice.

Type of Interview

The informational base for the choice of the testing instrument, the kind of interview and the types of questions was supplied by a number of books—only some of which will be quoted here.27 The unstructured (unstandardized) interview in contrast to a formal standardized interview creates a more open and flexible setting, and leaves many decisions (the questions, sequence and wording) to the discretion of the interviewer. The choice, for the present research, of

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26 Perkins et al., p. 7.

27 Books that will not be quoted but have served as helpful references are:

open-ended questions in a semi-structured (semi-standardized) interview was influenced by the research of Frederick Herzberg. In this type of interview, "the interviewer raises previously specified questions, but is free to pursue lines of inquiry suggested during the course of the interview." His research strongly suggests that the partially structured interview is best suited for exploratory studies. Interviewers can follow-up the responses with non-directive probes, and requests for concrete examples based upon personal experience. That is to say, in the actual interviews the respondents tended to speak of or for superintendents in general, therefore, it was often necessary to ask them to personalize their response.

In addition to non-directive probes seeking elaboration and summary, there were also opportunities to use directive probes such as the request for clarification of an apparent inconsistency or value conflict. For example, if a superintendent somewhat regretfully describes a compromise he/she made, the interviewer could ask, "how did that make you feel."

The flexibility of the partially structured interview helps to bring out the affective and value-laden aspects of the subject's responses and to determine the personal significance of his attitudes. Not only does it permit the subject's definition of the interviewing situation to receive full and detailed expression; it should also elicit the personal and social context of beliefs and feelings.

In a few instances, fixed alternative questions, using rank-order and rating scales, confirmed the discussion and/or checked the information in the open-ended questions. Scales are most helpful in interviews when combined with open-ended questions. For the most part, the questions were open-ended which "enabled the interviewer to detect


ambiguity, to encourage cooperation and achieve rapport, and to make
better estimates of the respondent's true intentions, beliefs and
attitudes." Sometimes, due to the inclusion of many interview
questions offering polar extremes (e.g., "some people say that...
while others believe that...") and a few complex questions which caused
confusion, respondents would be referred back to areas that were over-
looked or asked if there were other comments they wanted to add.

Open-ended questions, especially when they are used in an
interview and can be followed by probes, are called for
when the issue is complex, when the relevant dimensions
are not known, and when the interest of the research lies
in the exploration of the individual's own formulation of
an issue, the frame of reference in which he/she perceives
it, the factors that are salient to her/him and the moti-
vations that underlie his/her opinions. The interview schedule in this research used some Likert scale ratings
(e.g., very satisfied...........very dissatisfied). For some respondents,
these were annoying; however, they indicated that they were pleased
to have the freedom to explain their choice(s) or discuss a conflict
in making a choice.

Question Selection

The aim of each question was to elicit the school superintendent's
thoughts and feelings which, in some cases, would up-date and verify
data from previous studies, and in others, add some new "pieces" to
a "conceptualization of [the superintendent's] encounter with his/her
work." The information from each interview with a respondent can
be rich, intricate and sensitive. It would take numerous interviews
to gain a meaningful understanding of that individual. However, the

30Kerlinger, p. 471.
31Selltiz, p. 262.
32Fountain, p. 15.
combination of up-dated and new information provides important insights into a group of people and an occupational category. In a reciprocal way, the patterns and trends of the group often stimulate more profound perceptions of the individual. The routes to the desired insights are complex and often require diverse methods. The interview schedule was developed with these ideas in mind. In addition, the questions were considered in the light of the following question-writing precepts:

- Is the question related to the research problem and the research objective?
- Is the type of question the appropriate one?
- Is the item clear and unambiguous?
- Is the question a leading question?
- Does the question demand knowledge that the respondent does not have?
- Does the question demand personal or delicate material that the respondent may resist?
- Is the question loaded with social desirability?^{33}

The twenty-one questions were conceived in five parts: job history and background; satisfaction with and description of job; personal feelings about the "self," the work role and other life roles; the future; and the system. These groups were designed with full awareness that the order of the questions might be altered during the actual interviews and the data might be more convincingly and effectively reported in another fashion. It was also expected that some questions would draw similar if not repetitious information at various points during the interview. This effect was not blatant and did not cause resistance. There was a twenty-second question which attempted to obtain the superintendent's political sense of the relationship between the industrial and the education sectors of the economy. The interview was already very lengthy, and an advisor believed the

^{33} Kerlinger, pp. 473-475.

*See Appendix A for a complete set of interview questions.
question to be outside the purview of the research problem. Therefore, the question became optional and was administered in eighteen interviews where there was time.* The order and wording of some questions were revised after analysis of three test interviews and the comments of advisors.

Implementation of the Procedures

A cover letter* describing this writer and the project was signed by the "contact" persons and mailed to forty potential subjects. In addition, a half dozen subjects recommended other superintendents who they believed might grant an interview. After the letters were mailed, contact was made by telephone to the subject's office. In half the cases, the appointment was made with the superintendents themselves; in the others, contact was only with a secretary or sometimes an assistant. Those who were interviewed were able to make and keep the interview appointment within the five month data gathering period. The others could not be reached, or refused the request because the "interview would take too long," "too busy," "bad time of the year" or simply because it was not an important enough priority.

In all instances, an effort was made to describe the average length of the interview and the kind of interview ("somewhat personal requiring ideally an uninterrupted two to three hour period of time for serious reflection"). This writer suggested that the interview could be held at the subject's home, office or any other place, and requested that the interview be without interruption if possible. The average length of the interviews was two and a half hours with an average of one interruption per interview. All interviews except one (at a

*See Appendix B for the twenty-second question and the responses.

*See Appendix C.
luncheon club) were held in the superintendent's office or an adjoining room. Most of the superintendents would not give as much time as was requested; consequently the interviewer accepted what was offered and either was given the extra time anyway, did not finish the interview, or returned to finish the interview some other time.

The interviewer was neat in appearance and wore a sport jacket and tie. He was almost always on time and was kept waiting an average of thirty minutes. A brief oral introduction* and invariably some questions about the interviewer's background usually created a relaxed atmosphere. Since school superintendents are such political and public people, the question of confidentiality and anonymity bore even greater importance. Both were assured in the oral introduction. The interviewer's references, background, and rapport seemed to earn him a modicum of sophistication and as a result, a categorization somewhere between learner and colleague. Though the above may seem of questionable relevance, it was of great importance to the quality of the responses from these highly educated professional people who were not used to fielding many of the questions in this research.

The interviewer took advantage of the open-ended semi-structured nature of the interview although the same exact questions were read to every respondent. That is to say, the interviewer probed, asked for clarification and in some cases prodded the respondents, in addition to answering the questions from the superintendents. The order of the questions was changed once because the superintendents were taking much too long at the beginning when answering questions about their job histories, satisfactions, etc. The questions were read to the respondents and all responses were written on the interview schedule by the interviewer.

At the close of approximately half the interviews, respondents offered their comments about their reactions to the process and content

* See Appendix D.
of the interview. Immediately upon leaving the interview, the interviewer wrote a brief profile of the interview and filled in responses which were remembered but had not been written down. Time, cost of tape transcription, and the possible negative and inhibiting effects of tape recorders on public officials were the factors that ruled out the use of tapes.

Analysis of the Data

A large amount of data was collected. There was a total of 570 individual interview schedule forms filled with responses. This total, after coding, categorizing, quoting and summarizing, became 135 type-written pages. The interview, as mentioned earlier, was semi-standardized. Accordingly, the questions themselves, in some cases, provided natural units for categorization, while some categories apply to groups of questions. This research utilized an assistant to translate the responses to each question into categories for purposes of analysis. Each question was coded and categorized separately. Coding is a means of characterizing types of responses. The coding system in this research was not drawn from previous studies. The coding decisions were based upon the way in which the question was phrased or upon the natural dichotomies (e.g., satisfaction/dissatisfaction, frustrating/pleasurable, concern/indifference) implied in the research problem. For some questions, the coder used a modified form of content analysis; that is, categories were formed by interpreting and grouping various themes of the responses. The decision to let another person do the first draft of coding was made in order to reduce the amount of subjectivity that is inherent in a study of this nature and scope. The second and final drafts of the coding, and the summary of apparent patterns, similarities and contradictions for each question were performed by the author.

The material in Chapter V and in Appendix D, which has been and will be referred to as "the data," ideally should have thirty
responses to each question, though some do not. However, "the data" is, for the most part, complete and for the most part, verbatim. "For the most part" is explained by reason of omission and editing-coding. That is to say, in nine situations the superintendents did not have time to complete the interview. The interviewer was able to return for second appointments to finish four of the interviews. The superintendents, in a few other interviews requested that we return (during the interview) to a particular question(s). This request was sometimes forgotten and sometimes omitted due to lack of time. 34 Lastly, in a few cases, respondents avoided answering a question or stated that they would rather "pass." During the editing-coding process, this researcher, for purposes of "readability," sometimes combined into one paragraph the comments of two different respondents that complemented or helped define each other. Other responses were repetitious or very similar. As a result, these were sometimes eliminated or grouped together in an encompassing category. Some respondents glossed over the question (for example, by telling an anecdote), creating an answer which was too long or too irrelevant to be included. Finally, for reasons of confidentiality, some of the abundant personal information in the responses to questions 1, 2, 3, and 4 (career history) is reported in summary form.

This writer attempted to relate three characteristics of the respondents' social context (age, tenure, and size of school district) with the respondents' reported feelings and attitudes about their jobs. This multivariate method of analysis would allow the researcher to infer relationships and make generalizations that apply, not to all, but rather to most or some aspects of the research problem. The results of this effort showed no significant relationships. The absence of significant correlation is offset, to a degree, by the

34 It would be helpful at this point to note that each respondent was asked twenty-one questions which, including the sub-parts, totaled forty-five questions.
following remarks in Sarata's comprehensive review of job satisfaction literature.

Taken as a whole, the results seem to suggest that the apparent relationships between job satisfaction and each of these two variables (age and job tenure) are actually second order relationships. That is, age and job tenure are related to a variety of dimensions which are highly correlated with satisfaction.\textsuperscript{35}

The reviews of job satisfaction studies indicate that there is more satisfaction than dissatisfaction with work. Furthermore, it is the opinion of this writer that if there were more studies of higher status people, the results would show an even greater predilection toward satisfaction. This tendency, in the opinion of Blauner (1964), could be due to one's ego-defenses.\textsuperscript{36} According to Wilensky (1964), it could be due to the "general cultural tendency to give socially approved responses,"\textsuperscript{37} and one need only imagine the numerous other adjustment mechanisms that people use to protect their identities. These statements, combined with a natural skepticism, provoke the question of honesty. Why are the respondents going to be honest, and how does a researcher know if he/she is being told the truth? In answer to these questions, it was clear, in the opinion of this interviewer, that the credibility gained as a result of referral by a personal friend of the respondent, substantially overcame the fears that the interview would ever be used maliciously. The fact that this writer was a person outside the respondent's school district, who would most likely never be seen again, in many cases allayed fears and allowed cathartic urges to surface. In addition, the reader is

\textsuperscript{35}Sarata, p. 26.


referred to the data in the last (21st) question which asks the respondent to comment on the thrust of the present research.

... but in the social sciences through the very important technique, the interview, the social scientist is in the very unique position of being able to interrogate his subject concerning the process which is taking place, thus adding a valuable check to the discovery of his facts and the formulation of his generalizations.\(^{38}\)

More persuasive however are the following comments about the interview offered by more than half the respondents.

---Very pertinent questions. Helps to reflect on one's own role. I haven't ever asked myself or pushed myself this much. Can't remember talking like this.

---It's been a more thoughtful and deeper interview than most. It touched tender nerves.

---I was once interviewed by someone doing something similar to your's but not nearly as thorough. You bring out things I wouldn't have talked about normally.

---The interview has been enjoyable. I would only talk about these things with other superintendents who were friends.

---I liked the interview. It gave me a chance to say what I wanted to and not only what you wanted to know.

---After you finish all your interviews they'll be enough information to make the most valuable course in the training of school superintendents.

---This interview is not like the ordinary. I don't often probe these areas. This interview has taken two and a half hours. If it wasn't so interesting I never would have spent so much time with you.

---In ten years of being the superintendent I've had only one other experience like this. The questions were well thought out. It would be interesting for me to see your study. The interview was not unusual. I've discussed it before with colleagues and family. It wasn't imposing but the questions dug in.

---I talk only with very close friends about many of the issues in this interview. And I don't usually take the time to do this kind of self-introspection.

---I haven't done this kind of thinking for about two years. Everybody should have this experience. I've only done it with my wife.

---Things I've said to you, I'd never say in public. Only to my wife. The questions are difficult. My wife might have responded better to them than me. Wives should be talked to for their perceptions of changes.

---I've never experienced anything as consuming as this. It's almost a couch approach. It deals closely with the depths of an individual.

---This was much more valuable than a questionnaire. It's not the kind of thing you feel on a regular basis. I was forced to defend my feelings.

---The opportunity for me to answer your questions is important for me. It made me reflect as I usually don't do.

---The questions were provocative. I move at such a pace usually that there's no time for reflection like this. It forced me to become introspective and that's good.

---The interview was interesting and gave me a chance and also forced me to think about myself and my dissatisfactions in a way that I wouldn't normally do, or wouldn't let myself do.

Furthermore, to many of the interview questions (including the personal ones), a large majority of the superintendents have responded in a manner reflective of the statements above. While some superintendents could be lying, it is unlikely that it could have happened in so many cases.

Final Comments

The major research study to date of the school superintendent is *Who Runs Our Schools* by Neal Gross. ³⁹ It was a well-funded study which

has most often been described as a study of the role relationships between superintendents and Board of Education members. Its scientific and rigorous methodology provided a solid foundation for the data's use as a validity test of numerous sociological and educational hypotheses. In this writer's opinion, the primary purpose of the Gross study was to explore role analysis; as a result, the data on the superintendents was not startling, nor was it, for the most part, germane to the import of the present study. Gross refers a number of times to the "limited yield" of the study and to the methodological problems. This was an unfortunate loss but one that has not been repeated by the present research. Perhaps as more data, such as the present research, is assembled on the school superintendent and the superintendency, it will stimulate a growth of improved and alternative methods of measurement as well as practice. The relevant information from the Gross study will be used as a point of departure, and will be discussed accordingly in later chapters. This chapter on methodology is best summarized by the following remarks from a similar study which was referred to earlier:

Since ours was an exploratory study, the data were used not to test the validity of the formulations and generalizations, but rather to serve as a frame for developing them and pointing directions where interpretations might be found.  

40 Ibid., p. 320.
41 Ginzberg, p. 24.
CHAPTER III
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The scarcity of resources directly related to the purpose of this research was briefly mentioned earlier. This chapter will outline and describe the references in the literature which render credibility and insight to the state of the issues in question. There are, however, two summary statements that can give some indication of the findings in the review of the literature.

1. There is neither a significant amount of literature concerning the superintendency in general, nor an abundance of research on job attitudes and feelings held by American school superintendents. This writer's research is an exploration of a relatively untouched area of study.

2. Concerning the general literature in the area (not specifically relating to superintendents), Ginzberg writes, "Moreover, in their study of work, most social scientists seldom have a purview that includes the totality of an adult's life."42

In arriving at the above as summary statement, this writer utilized the Educational Research Information Center (ERIC) catalogue to "microfiche" and the Educational Research Information Center catalogue to journals in education. All references under the headings superintendent, school superintendent and superintendent's role were reviewed. All directly related references under the headings of leadership, job satisfaction, work attitudes, administrative problems, and administrator role, characteristics and attitudes were reviewed. In addition, the bibliographies and footnotes in the various books and articles, suggested many others.

42 Ibid., p. 178.
Superintendents as super-men. More than half of the literature speaks to topics such as the superintendent's educational background, talents and qualities, multiple role functions, and great responsibility. The Profile of the School Superintendent (American Association of School Administrators, 1960; Hickox and Snow, 1969) reports the results of a survey about the personal background of school superintendents. We learn that superintendents were high achieving students who feel they were selected because of their superior ability, experience and training. They believe that the ability to see issues in their broader context and also an unusually good understanding of people are the most important qualifications for their job.

Two other works which are addressed to the beginning superintendent (American Association School Administrators, 1960; Ellena, 1975) outline the probable problems and needs. The authors suggest that not everyone who is professionally qualified and intellectually able, possesses the emotional and physical qualities to cope with the task of being a superintendent of schools. Two short paragraphs, titled "Responsibility to Self" and "Home and Family," urge the superintendent to live and schedule his activities so that there is time for self-appraisal, self-satisfaction, deep-seated personal joys, reasonable family life and the thrill of personal fulfillment. They go on to describe the proper role of a superintendent's wife, the proper choice of a home, and they conclude by saying that the wise superintendent will not fail to reserve some time for his family.

A book titled, The American School Superintendency (A.A.S.A., 1952) is typical of the documents already reviewed and of many yet to

*Note: because of the larger number of citations in the next two chapters, there will be a change of style. Footnotes will be replaced by simple reference to the author and the publishing date. Full citations can be found in the bibliography.
come. It briefly warns against over-work, and the health and emotional pitfalls of the job. However, at the same time, it describes the superintendent's role in "superhuman" terms—a style that prevails in much of the literature. For example, consider the following in The American School Superintendency:

Far too often the impossible is expected of the superintendent and such difficult conditions of work are imposed that no human being could function successfully under them.

in contrast to:

On his fairness, wisdom and judgment will depend whether the school system, and through it the community, will go forward or backward. And in his spirit will ultimately be the answer to many of our most perplexing national problems...it offers an opportunity for personal service to God, to country and to one's fellow man which is exceeded in few if any other professions. The superintendent is an orchestra leader drawing from the community discord or harmony. The superintendent is a plant manager, leading an organization into success or failure. The superintendent is a laborer serving public and staff with skill and devotion.

and the following excerpt from The Education of a School Superintendent (A.A.S.A., 1963):

The successful school superintendent seems to have a personal built in quality that for want of a better word, may be characterized as stamina, toughness of fiber, responsible initiative and drive, and ability to get up and go once more when most others have fallen by the wayside. This is more than physical strength; it is the kind of nervous energy sustained by commitment, vision, faith and devotion to a purpose. It is the rare quality which enables men and women to stand up firmly for what they believe even when the tide of public opinion and the pressures of the times flow against them. Of equal importance, is the ability of the school superintendent to handle the sheer volume of work that descends on [them]. Some men and women handle individual problems beautifully but are unable to cope with them when they are piled 20 deep as often happens in the school superintendent's office.
The Education of a School Superintendent (A.A.S.A., 1963) suggests a program that would produce well-educated superintendents of schools if indeed they were able to finish the program before they were too old to get a job. The program is similar in content to the spirit of the excerpt above.

Daniel Griffiths, writing for The Center for Applied Research in Education, authored The School Superintendent (Griffiths, 1966) in which he discusses the history of the superintendency, the selection functions and status of the superintendent, and an emerging role of the superintendency. The last paragraph in his 105 page book is titled "Person." In it, he says the most important qualities of a superintendent are intelligence, a broad cultural background, administrative training, and courage. The "emerging role" he describes is written in managerial and administrative jargon. Also void of reference to the personal psychological and physical strains is a book commissioned by the National Educational Association to portray the role, the problems and the potential of the superintendent of schools. The Unique Role of the Superintendent of Schools (Educational Policies Commission, 1965) suggests under the heading "Qualities of the Superintendent" that the superintendent (a) must be dedicated to the belief that the finest ideals of American life depend on the schools for their realization; (b) must have the temperament of a leader; and (c) must be a person of considerable knowledge. The book is very general and, as such, provides a vague impersonal description of the ideal role for the superintendent of schools.

Toward the other extreme is a book called The Modern School Superintendent which details the "little things that count" such as proper attire, good grammar, avoiding extreme positions, being a conformist to community mores, urging one's wife to be ignorant of school affairs but active in community groups, urging one's wife not to be ostentatious, buying the right house in the right place, and spending one's personal income wisely. Written by a former school superintendent
(Wilson, 1960), the book is "dedicated to helping superintendents be successful." Wilson emphasizes the differences between textbook or job description versions of the superintendency and what he has determined the job is actually like. He appropriately describes the position as one of loneliness, unpleasantness, risk and pressure. As antidotes he recommends: keep healthy, take vacations, take very little work home, have a hobby and have a sense of humor. He believes that there are "ways of working through the darkness toward a higher ratio of pleasantness and gratification from the job" (p. 46). He uses the position of quarterback on a football team as a prime analogy and selects the following as the seven most important personal qualities for a successful superintendency: 1) stoicism, 2) divergent interests, 3) progressive conservatism, 4) adaptability, 5) diplomacy, 6) gregarious personality, 7) a good understanding of human nature. The bulk of the book is filled with chapters telling potential superintendents how to successfully confront the major issues facing a superintendent. The book is written in a condescending tone, as illustrated by the following line: "It is helpful if the superintendent can acquire a philosophical attitude of looking through a one-way vision glass at the antics of men and women trying desperately to satisfy their basic drives of life" (p. 196).

A comparatively realistic picture. The most recent extensive survey of the superintendency was written by (Knesevich, 1971) and sponsored by the American Association of School Administrators. Titled, The American School Superintendent, this book reports the findings of a questionnaire survey of seven hundred and forty superintendents. Seven hundred and forty represents 55% of the 1128 who were mailed questionnaires. One thousand one hundred and twenty-eight represents 7.5% randomly selected from the nationwide total of 14,848 school superintendents. The survey questions covered topics such as educational and family background, career path, future plans, major job activities, major job problems, and opinions of graduate school
preparation. All of these findings will be reported in a later chapter with the corresponding findings of the present research. In general, however, the superintendents in the Knesevich survey were quite satisfied as evidenced by the 71% who would definitely "do it all over again" if they had the choice. 12% of the superintendents said they would choose a non-education career, while 9% reported a desire to select an administrative position in education other than the superintendency.

Modern superintendents appear to have inherited a legacy of overwork. Bair (1934) in The Social Understanding of the Superintendent of Schools writes that no figure in the American scene is more drawn upon by his community, in many different ways, and that the superintendents are expected to speak continually on every conceivable subject to every conceivable audience in addition to doing more writing and publishing than most professional groups.

The Superintendency Team (Fensch and Wilson, 1964) argues that the job is too much for one person. The whole book outlines the changes in education (all increases in size, function, responsibility, conflict, etc.) which make a "team" more effective and feasible.

The New York State Regents Advisory Commission on Educational Leadership published a report, Chief School Officers (Perkins et al., 1966) which also speaks of the expanding leadership role of the superintendent. However, the authors in this case are supporting the idea despite the fact that over the last decade the job has taken on more complexity and more tasks. The Cattel Personality Test scored the superintendents more outgoing, more emotionally stable, and more intelligent than the average person, and their activity logs showed that they averaged 69 hours per week on the job.

Another book, titled The Superintendent of Schools (Burbank, 1968), contains one of the best descriptions of the overwhelming and overburdening nature of the job. Burbank's outline of the "time problem" is excellent and will be discussed later. He also reports on the
almost ludicrous multiplicity of roles of the superintendent and adds that one result of this is the professional loneliness of the superintendent. However, his response to the loneliness and the other ills of the job is typical of the earlier literature and reminiscent of locker-room pep-talks during half-time for a losing football team.

It [loneliness] is one of the characteristics of a position which has many compensatory satisfactions. ...In school administration, there is no time for small men, for hidebound or fearful men. The need is for men who can see the far ranges of high promise. The need is for courage and wisdom. The job is all but impossible for little men but a high challenge for the great. The rewards are well worth the effort. (p. 117)

Finally, the New York State Office of Education Performance Review (1974), in a review of the superintendency, made four recommendations none of which, unfortunately, aimed at alleviating the predominant overbearing role. They were: 1) access to the superintendency by women, 2) a more rational basis for salaries, 3) to allow non-educators to become superintendents, and 4) legislate that graduate school programs become more relevant to the current job.

The purpose of the literature review to this point was to show what constitutes a large percentage of the written word on the superintendency and, at the same time, to convey the image of the superintendency that creates the expectations of the public, the people employed in the field of education, and the aspiring superintendent. In addition, this background is relevant to a better understanding and interpretation of the data to be reported in Chapters IV and V.

The following quotation from an unknown superintendent of schools is an appropriate conclusion to this section of the review:

I have the biggest budget in the city and the finance board trusts me with the same indifference it does the dog warden. I have teacher groups and politicians against me because I'm at least trying to clear out some dead wood in the system. I have the civil rights groups against me because they want the school desegregated yesterday. I have parent groups against me because the school bus
doesn't stop at this corner or because there's no cold-lunch program at that school. About the only thing I have going for me is my wife, although I can't even be sure of that because I haven't seen her for more than 5 minutes at a time for the past two weeks.

Extraneous material. The next examples of more literature about the school superintendent—Man In the Middle: The Superintendent of Schools (Ashby, 1968); "Ethics and the School Superintendent" (Conference Report, 1969); A Developing Concept of the Superintendency (Davies, 1953); The Pressures on and the Dilemmas of the School Superintendent (Gross, 1954); "The Changing Nature of the School Superintendency" (Marland, 1970); The Effective Superintendent (Mayer and Wilson, 1972); "Current Problems of the School Superintendent" (Norton, 1971); Career Sponsorship in the School Superintendency (Rose, 1969); Evaluating the Superintendent of Schools (Stemnock, 1972); "Help Wanted: A New Role for Tired Superintendents" (Urich and Shermis, 1969); The Superintendent as Educational Leader (Wallace, 1959); "Memo to a Future Superintendent" (White, 1969); "Lots of Loving Advice to the Superintendent's Wife" (Wilson, 1974); "How Superintendents See Themselves" (Huff, 1969)—all have one point in common. All of them have titles which suggest inclusion of some reference to the personal, psychological and physical consequences of the school superintendency; nevertheless, the titles are misleading for none of them in fact contain such references. To be precise, however, there is an exception. The 235 page book entitled The Effective Superintendent (Mayer and Wilson, 1972), includes only one such reference:

Finally, and very important, the effective superintendent must covet an effective balance in life which allows a fair amount of time and energy for the profession, social activities and family life.

The statement above by Mayer and Wilson is one example of what this writer was hoping to document when originally reviewing the literature on the superintendency.

Essential references. There were six or seven references which seemed to support the contention that the work experience of school superintendents is not as satisfying as it is purported to be. Some
of these implied or actually indicated the existence of conflict between work and non-work roles. As mentioned earlier, Morrow et al., (1974) wrote of the need for superintendents to share with each other the agony of trying to cope with contradictory pressures, while a news article (Los Angeles Times, 1974) quoted school superintendents who were voluntarily demoting themselves or quitting because the personal price they were paying was too great. In an article on "The Functional Allocation of the Superintendent's Time," Christensen's (1967) main conclusion is his feeling that it is appropriate to suggest that the superintendents' perception of their roles needs to be re-examined by the superintendents themselves in light of present needs and demands on them.

Perkins et al., (1966) report that chief school officers in New York State do not have enough time or help to do the job well. The Perkins study was a major one in New York State. It was concerned with the personal characteristics of chief school officers, the chief school officers' attitudes about their pressures and problems, and how they use their time; however, it failed to examine the meaning and consequences of the dissatisfactions for the superintendent's work-life and non-work life. Some of their findings showed that chief school officers spent most of their time (a) preparing for and attending meetings; (b) budget planning; (c) discussing personnel problems and (d) expanding facilities. The three most frequently mentioned dissatisfactions were, 1) demands on my time keep me from my family; 2) handling petty details and paperwork; 3) attending unnecessary or fruitless meetings. Additional dissatisfactions were the lack of contact with teachers, and a dwindling money supply.

In another kind of examination of the superintendency, Burbank (1968) writes from his own personal experience or knowledge. He describes situation after situation that creates problems and challenges for the superintendent. Burbank's most important contribution, however, is his chapter on "The Time Problem." He is the one author who has written more than a line or a paragraph about the content and
consequences of the time problem.

The overwhelming demands of the [superintendent's] job give him and his family a major problem. Time is the core of the issue, time to do all the work that faces him, time to devote to his family, time to rest and time to re-create himself. For some, the structures of time present merely a difficult task of perceptive analysis; but for many, the enigma results in a continuing and hopeless feeling of being trapped by the relentless pressure of time. The effects of this treadmill can be real and potent for the superintendent and his family. (p. 91)

The superintendent is often on-call at any time. Theoretically, as a public employee, he/she should be regularly available and all communications should be responded to. The superintendent is expected to become a member of numerous community groups. In addition, the superintendent is also expected to be up to date in his/her reading of magazines, journals and books, and well informed about conferences, workshops and conventions. Conscience as well as concern for a public image, drive the superintendent to compulsive and endless hyperactivity at all times of the day and week. It becomes harder to even know how to relax. Health problems appear and work effectiveness deteriorates as a result of 70 hour weeks. The more the superintendent allows him/herself to work at such a pace, the more the public comes to expect. The outcome of this kind of life for a host of superintendents is unfortunate and sometimes even tragic. Unfortunately, there are no other studies of the superintendent that address this issue.

**Summary.** The literature reviewed to this point appears to fall into two categories. On the one hand, some of the material clearly relates to the questionable satisfaction of a superintendent's work experience--a condition succinctly described by Talbut (1966) in an article entitled "Needed: A New Breed of School Superintendents:"

Most of his work day is spent arguing with the local finance committee, bargaining salaries, reviewing contracts and architectural drawings, dealing with politicians, haggling with principals and fighting with parents and teacher groups. Few superintendents to be
sure are happy with this state of affairs. They would prefer to devote more time to questions of pedagogy, but they just don't have time...As now conceived, the superintendent is expected to be at once a tireless administrator, a superb educator, and a political wheeler-dealer of the first order. Only a Superman could match this job description. (p. 82)

On the other hand, the remainder of the literature appears to contend that the school superintendent is or should be the "Superman" mentioned above by Talbut.

One book in particular, Explorations in Role Analysis: Studies of the School Superintendency Role (Gross et al., 1958), has been held for discussion until now because it, like another book to be discussed in the next section (Talent and Performance by Ginzberg), will serve as a primary reference and as a point of departure for the findings of the present study. The purpose of the Gross study was to examine, 1) the degree of consensus on behavioral expectations for the occupants of the superintendency; 2) the degree of potential or actual role conflict in the superintendency; and 3) the manner in which an occupational role is defined and learned. In the process of meeting these aims, one hundred and five superintendents from the state of Massachusetts were interviewed and questioned about topics such as level of aspiration, job satisfaction, career satisfaction, personal initiative and worry. The assumption that the superintendency has associated with it a defined, agreed upon set of expectations was found to be suspect. Variability in superintendents' behavior could not always be accounted for by differences in motivation, attitudes or personality characteristics. Gross's research suggested that the different expectations held for superintendents' behavior and attributes were crucial to an understanding of their behaviors and characteristics. The study found superintendents satisfied with their jobs and their career, and not particularly worrisome individuals.

Gross also wanted to know whether or not exposure to role conflict had any consequences for the way superintendents experience their
jobs. He found four areas of substantial role conflict--personnel, teacher salaries, the budget, and time allocation. The role conflict was based on the frustration incurred in trying to meet the perceived expectations of different groups and individuals. In three of these situations--personnel, teacher salaries, and budget--the conflict stemmed from the incompatible expectations of significant groups and individuals involved in educational issues; that is, the conflict was intra-role conflict and did affect the way superintendents experienced their jobs. For the time allocation situation, the primary source of conflict was the expectations of wife and family--people whose concerns are not integrally related to the educational issues of the superintendent. Consequently, this situation was the only one categorized as inter-role conflict, and also the only one that did not have any statistically significant effect upon the way superintendents experienced their jobs. This last fact about time allocation is a curiosity to Gross, and to this writer. In a later chapter, this issue, along with Gross's proposals on role conflict resolution, will be discussed in relation to the findings of the present research.

Professionals and Bureaucrats, Professions and Bureaucracy

The superintendency: a profession. The superintendent of schools is a highly educated professional who more often than not, belongs to a professional association. A review of the literature was undertaken in this area in order to better understand this aspect of the superintendent's role and to explore the relationships of professionalism and bureaucracy to the questionable work satisfaction of school superintendents. Everett Hughes, in an article written for the Daedalus issue "The Professions," stated his belief that the insistence, by an occupational group, upon the use of the term profession is a very important clue to understanding that occupation. He wrote:

...even the language about the work is loaded with value and prestige judgments and with defensive choice of
symbols...the term professional itself is a symbol for a desired conception of one's work and hence of one's self. ...there goes with prestige a tendency to preserve a front which hides the inside of things; ...it appears that almost all groups or people who claim professionalism base it primarily on a claim of expertise in a specific body of knowledge that is needed as a service to be offered to the public. (Hughes, 1963)

Most of the above is applicable to superintendents. There is a state licensing procedure for superintendents as well as professional associations of superintendents which seek exclusivity in a number of ways—one of which is to raise the graduate education requirements for membership. In fact, one of the reasons superintendents do not fight to rid themselves of their overbearing number of roles and tasks, could be the fear of weakening their hold on the top position (the #1 educator in the community). The superintendent covets his/her power and prestige, and has lobbied extensively to keep the role out of the hands of non-educators. They know that if they cease claiming their capability to administer all aspects of running the school system, they will soon have to share power and probably accept reductions in salary.

Support for these contentions is given by Lieberman (1970) who also believes the term profession is primarily one of value and person. Despite the professional claim that their main function is service, he writes in The Tyranny of the Experts, in the underlying theory of the professional class, service is only incidental to the principal function of the profession. That is to say, maintenance of the system of educational administration as construed by educational administrators is the principal function of the educational administrator.

Friedson (1971), without knowing it, seems to be speaking to superintendents when he writes that professions are often claiming more knowledge and skill and a broader jurisdiction than can in fact be justified by demonstrable effectiveness. In The Professions and Their Prospects, Friedson (1971) continues:

Such imperialism can of course be a function of crude
self-interest, but it can as well be seen as a natural outcome of the deep commitment to the value of [their] work developed by thoroughly socialized professionals who have devoted [their] entire lives to it. (p. 19)

The superintendency: its uniqueness. As directly as the superintendency appears to correspond with the various descriptions of professions, there are some elements of the superintendency which make it stand out as a unique profession. The superintendent is responsible to the state, the school committee and the parents, to name a few. There is only one superintendent, yet there are so many clients and they are all "the public." As a result, the job is under microscopic scrutiny and there are still people looking over the superintendent's shoulder. Lastly, superintendents don't seem to have the profit and autonomy motives as deeply embedded as many other professionals. They acknowledge and accept the realities of their public employment. What this writer has called the uniqueness of the superintendency, Hughes (1963) describes in terms of the traditional free profession (medicine, law, etc.) on the one hand, and the new profession, on the other. The traditional free profession becomes the new profession as the following challenging conditions become prevalent: maintaining professional autonomy, professional standards of work, and professional solidarity, within a structure of working for salary inside complicated and even bureaucratic organizations.

Mason and Gross (1955) in an article "Intra-occupational Prestige Differentiation: The School Superintendency" suggest that the superintendency is an occupation having both professional and executive characteristics. In this writer's opinion, the profession called the superintendency exists within a bureaucratic structure (the school system), and executive skills are requisite to performance of the job.

According to Blau and Scott (1962), professionals and bureaucrats are elements in the prevailing institutional patterns. The similarities and the primary difference between these two elements were listed
by Blau and Scott as follows:

1. most decisions are based on certain objective criteria;
2. specialization is the key to expertness;
3. relations with clients are bound by effective neutrality insuring reasoned judgment.
4. status or level is not ascribed; it is achieved by individual performance and technical qualifications.

The main difference is in control over work. The source of control in a bureaucracy is hierarchical authority, not a colleague group as would be with professionals. For bureaucrats, performance is controlled by directives rather than self-imposed standards and peer group surveillance as with professionals.

They contend that the significance of the "main difference" described above, is revealed by people subject to both forms of social control. In this case, it is the superintendent of schools who is a professional working in a bureaucratic organization. Many of the superintendents interviewed in the present research reported that in the course of their jobs, they were not utilizing many of the skills in which they were most interested and more than competent. In almost all cases, it was the educational (as opposed to the managerial) skills that were under-utilized.

Sorensen and Sorensen (1974) in an article titled, "The Conflict of Professionals in Bureaucratic Organizations" write that coping with conflicting bureaucratic and professional orientations may be dysfunctional because differences in orientations create points of tension and conflict. For example, administrative demands increasingly divert professionals from their real work (Lynn, 1963). In the case of school superintendents, they have experienced the intellectual narrowness of their job functions as their job has become more managerial. Their self-description is often that of a thinker—sub-employed in a sense. Eventually they either adapt, accept, avoid or resign and look for other more hopeful positions. Most often, however, they become "socialized to the bureaucracy" (Bensman and Rosenberg, 1960).
The final new reference for this section is a highly relevant and revealing article from a rather un-noticed journal called *Journal of Employment Counseling*. In an article entitled "Between Boredom and Terror: The Credibility and Survival of the Professional," Ehrle (1974) suggests that the new technocrat (professional) functioning in a service-oriented bureaucracy finds that maintenance of one's sense of excellence must take the form of a treadmill type of existence where one's "antennas" are always attuned to the expectations of others.

This section of Chapter III, Review of the Literature, began with the thoughts of Everett Hughes and now appropriately concludes with his thoughts which, in this instance, serve as a synopsis of the relationship between the vexatious aspects of work for school superintendents, and the subject of this section, "Professionals and Bureaucrats, Professions and Bureaucracy."

The numbers of people who intervene in their work is a most bothersome problem to professionals. But worst of all is the differing conceptions of what really is or should be, of what mandate has been given by the public, of what it is possible to accomplish, and by what means; as well as the particular part to be played by those in each position, their proper responsibilities and rewards. (Hughes, 1971)

**Job Satisfaction; The Meaning And Nature of Work**

**Description.** A review of the literature reveals that for the past three decades the variable "job satisfaction" has generated a vast amount of interest and research effort. Most relevant to the present

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research is Sarata's (1971) clear, concise and thorough review of various methodological approaches to the study of job satisfaction in service occupations. Kahn (1972) reported that the ten major population studies of job satisfaction from 1935 to 1967 show an average job satisfaction level of between 79-90%. The Kahn and Sarata statements above, and in fact most studies of job satisfaction, focus on blue-collar and middle level white collar workers. However, it has also been reported (Porter and Lawler, 1965) that those in higher status occupations, such as executives and professionals, experience high job satisfaction. Kahn cites the following as the most probable categorical descriptions of job satisfaction: occupation, status, supervision, peer relationship, job content, wages and other extrinsic rewards, and physical conditions. Levenstein (1962) in his analytical study, Why Men Work, found that the more skilled and less manual a job is, the larger the percentage of workers* who would choose their present job if they were beginning again. He wrote that the three basic factors that account for this attitude are occupational prestige, control over one's work, and the ego strength that comes from acceptance in one's work group.

A frequently cited research study (Morse and Weiss, 1955), reported that 80% of the sample of middle class workers were satisfied or very satisfied with their jobs, and that there appears to be a tendency for the individuals to react positively to their work situation and to emphasize the favorable aspects of it. Their sample emphasized interest in the job, sense of accomplishment, and chance to contribute, as factors of job satisfaction.

According to Friedmann and Havinghurst (1954), jobs can be said to perform certain "functions" in the life of an individual. A person can be considered satisfied if he/she feels the job is satis-

*Workers who were interviewed: mathematicians, physicists, biologists, chemists, lawyers, journalists, skilled printers, paper workers, skilled autoworkers, textile workers, skilled steel workers, unskilled autoworkers and unskilled steel workers.
factorily performing the "functions" of income, identification and status, association, and source of a meaningful experience. Intellectual stimulation, security, and respect are three other factors often noted in connection with job satisfaction. The five determinants of job satisfaction used by Ginzberg (1964) were: rewards and concomitants (including income, status, conditions of work and social relations), self-expressions (including self-realization and responsiveness to others), nature of work (including basic interests, particular activities, and stimulation), freedom, and social contribution. Almost all people in the Ginzberg study were very satisfied with their work and also felt that their expectations had been met.

The enumeration of the various elements of job satisfaction in the studies mentioned above is not only important to an informed perspective, but also to a better understanding of the interview responses. As the next chapter will illustrate, the interview responses reveal that when superintendents evaluate themselves in light of the most common factors of job satisfaction/dissatisfaction, the superintendents are more satisfied than dissatisfied. The scope of exploration of the present study however, extends beyond the limits of any previous research reviewed by this writer. Ronan and Marks (1973) in an article entitled "Continuing Problems in Exploring the Structure of Job Satisfaction" reported that despite the concern and activity in the study of job satisfaction, knowledge relating to the nature and assessment of job satisfaction remains fairly primitive. The area of job satisfaction appears to be still in need of innovative research. Ideally, an analysis, such as this dissertation, with a new perspective and supportive data, will contribute significantly.

Interpretation. Varied interpretations, such as the following, were influential in this writer's decision to examine the nature of peoples' working lives—that is, how people experience their work—as well as the nature of their jobs. Sarata (1971) reported that intellectual stimulation and status were more important to job
satisfaction than, for example, income and security. However, in an article by George Strauss called "Workers: Attitudes and Adjustments" (American Assembly, 1974) income was found to be of greater significance to job satisfaction. The evidence strongly suggests, according to Strauss, that for workers at all levels—even managers and professionals—lack of challenge is far less oppressive than lack of income. Sarata indirectly analyzed and explained the above contradiction when he summarized his literature review and wrote that:

Job satisfaction is a complex phenomenon which is related in many ways to a wide variety of variables. ...Taken as a whole the data suggests that job satisfaction is best conceptualized as reflecting the interaction between situational and individual variables [which]...will be different for different occupational populations. The correlation between job satisfaction and the presence of job variables has been shown to be moderated by the orientation of the employee. (Sarata, 1971, p. 37)

Kahn (1972), like Sarata, finds ample evidence that job satisfaction is not unitary and that satisfaction by any definition is an interactive product of the person and the environment. Goldthorpe (1968) set himself apart from the mainstream of researchers by stating that analysis of job satisfaction would more usefully begin with the orientations to work which are found to prevail rather than the general assumptions about the needs which all people have.

The preceding few references accentuate the futility of the job satisfaction controversy in which various groups or individuals debate their belief in a different facet of an ambiguous, multi-dimensional problem. Research into job satisfaction and work, needs to be freed from the confines of the immediate job situation, and prodded into a position whereby work is viewed as being intertwined with a person's total life involvements. Without actually adopting this view of work, Gross (1958) introduced the significance of sub-roles and inter-role behavior for the school superintendent. Hall (1971) examined the concept of a "sub-identity" which he explained
as that aspect of the total identity which is engaged when a person is behaving in a given role.

The role presents the social stimuli in the form of behavioral expectations; the sub-identity represents the individual's perceptions of his [her] unique response to these expectations. (Hall, 1971)

In Gross' discussion of the time allocation problem for school superintendents (see above p. 39), he reported that 53% of the sample were exposed to role conflicts with respect to their use of after-office time. When confronted with incompatible expectations about time allocation, the majority of superintendents conformed to the "occupational" expectations rather than to the "family" expectation. These findings are in themselves important and will be discussed later. However, there is another point to be made in conjunction with the literature reviewed in the past few pages. This writer believes that research into work satisfaction should probe the consequences of the kind of choice made by superintendents in the Gross study. If, for example, as a consequence, a superintendent reports feelings of guilt and discontent, how is that response to be evaluated when the superintendent has simultaneously reported high satisfaction with his/her job. That is to say, what is the significance and what are the results of a clash between one's role and one's sub-identity?

There is some research which shows the presence of considerable work-related stress and dysfunction (Gurin, Veroff, and Feld, 1960). In addition, Levinson (1964 a, 1964 b) has written extensively of the intense frustration characterizing those in professional and managerial positions, derived from the competitive pace of their jobs, high anxiety level, and the denial of feeling.

Seeman (1967) suggested that unfortunately we underestimate the social-psychological subtleties of the work process. The work process is not limited to the boundaries of normal working hours. In an article entitled "Work As A Central Life Interest of Professionals," Orzack (1959) wrote that many facets of professionals' lives are
affected by the nature of their work and the extent of their high commitment to it. As described by Orzack, this issue is given very little recognition or importance in the academic literature; however, it is a common, visible theme in many plays and novels, past and present. Undoubtedly, the interest exists. The challenge lies in overcoming the taboos and norms which have traditionally restrained investigative research into the work lives and work-affected lives of highly educated professional people.

**Final note.** To end this chapter, three points of information about the literature review must be taken into consideration. First, it is unfortunate but true that the majority of the references cited in the three sections of this literature review (References to the superintendent; Professionals and bureaucrats; Job satisfaction) have been researched in industrial settings, and/or have had their thoughts and analysis directed at blue collar or middle level white collar workers. Second, the categories of (a) human service occupations, (b) highly educated professional people and (c) school superintendents have received only minimal attention in studies of job satisfaction and the nature of work. Third, those studies that directly or indirectly reported or analyzed negative aspects of a school superintendent's work experience, failed to investigate and examine the consequences of those findings for the total life (the integration of work life and non-work life) of the superintendent. The implication of these items suggests that the preceding literature review is merely a framework for broadening the perspective and increasing the understanding needed to appreciate the uniqueness and significance of the present study.
CHAPTER IV

REPORT AND ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS: PART I

Many occupational case studies claim to have identified, on a general level, certain recurring and persistent job problems. In the area of school superintendency research, there have been primarily updating and repetition of earlier findings during the past twenty-five years. In part, the present research contributes to this legacy, and as such, this chapter will report the superintendents' responses which confirm and/or duplicate earlier research and describe the more familiar aspects of their role.* This material reflects some of the recent economic, social and political influences on education and offers a view of the superintendency that will provide students of educational administration a better conception and more vivid perceptions of the superintendent's role.

Profile of the Sample

The sample is composed of thirty school superintendents whose average age was 48 years and whose median age was also 48 years. Partially due to the sampling procedures described in Chapter II and partially due to the fact that less than 2% of the superintendents in the nation are women, there are no women in the sample. All the superintendents are married except one who is divorced. They have between one and five children with an average of 2.7 children each. All the superintendents were teachers at one time and they spent an average of six years in the classroom. The large majority (22) became principals after leaving the classroom. However, six moved directly into central administration positions and two became teachers in higher

*The full text of responses to all questions in Chapter IV should be consulted by the reader and can be found in Appendix E.
education. Twenty-two superintendents (73%) have doctoral degrees, and all have Masters degrees. Of the eight who don't hold doctorates, four hold certificates of advanced graduate study, and three were enrolled in doctoral programs but never completed all the requirements.

When asked whether they considered their present school system to be urban or suburban, twelve said urban, sixteen said suburban, and two said both. Their cities' populations ranged from 7,000 to 200,000. The student enrollment in their school districts ranged from 2,000 to 30,000. Fifteen superintendents were administering school districts with 8,500 students or less. With one exception, these districts were in cities or towns with populations less than 40,000. The other fifteen superintendents were administering school districts which have more than 8,500 students. Again, with one exception, these districts were in cities with populations of more than 40,000.

Though 17 superintendents reported that they do not have tenure in their present position, a few of them commented that they have "model A.A.S.A. contracts which is like tenure" or "continuing contracts which are renegotiated and renewed every year for a two year period." Twelve superintendents reported that they do have tenure. The mean number of years in their present superintendency was 6.2 with a range of one to seventeen years. Their total length of experience in the superintendency averaged 9.5 years but ranged from three to twenty.

Some profile statistics in a 1970 nationwide survey of school superintendents provide a representative comparison. Knesevich (1971) sent questionnaires to 740 superintendents whose average age was 48. 96% had been teachers and they spent an average of six years in the classroom. Approximately 85% moved from teaching to a position as principal and then to the superintendency. Approximately 15% went from teaching to a central administration position, and into the superintendency. The superintendents had spent an average of 9.3 years
(total) in the superintendency. These nationwide figures are very similar to the profile in the present study. One exception however is the relatively low percentage (29%) of superintendents in the Knesevich survey who hold doctorates. Because the present study does not contain rural superintendents in its sample, an additional point to note is the elimination of rural superintendents from the national profile in the Knesevich survey. The reasons for this action were, (a) financial problems and a trend toward centralization, which may lead to these districts disappearing by 1980; (b) the instability of the group; and (c) compared to suburban and urban districts, the significantly different level of management and administrative concerns.

The responses to the first few interview questions in the present study contained more personal information than is reported in Appendix E. Due to the confidentiality of the responses, only the statistical data, the major categories and the most repeated specific references are reported. These data are similar (more like an update) to the superintendent's career history information previously mentioned in Chapter III (A.A.S.A., 1960, 1963; Griffiths, 1966; Hickox and Snow, 1969; Knesevich, 1971; N.Y.S. Office of Education, 1974; Perkins et al., 1966). In response to questions 1.a (when did you first decide to enter the field of education?) and 1.b (was this career your first choice?), 84% of the thirty superintendents interviewed decided to enter the field of education during college, the military, or before. Four superintendents entered the field of education after dissatisfaction with their first career choice, and two other superintendents chose education only because there was no other viable choice for them following World War II. Confirming the data of the cited relevant studies, the responses to question 1.c (what was your first job?) show that all the superintendents began their careers in education as teachers and remained so for an average of five years.
Since all the superintendents responded with such fond memories and high praise about their satisfaction with teaching (question 1.d--what were the sources of satisfaction?) and its strong positive influence on their choice of careers (question 1.e--how did this job influence your thinking about work and your career?), it became even more interesting to know why they all switched from their teaching jobs. That is to say, at least 95% of all teachers who are highly satisfied with teaching remain in the classroom as opposed to entering administration. Why did these thirty move out and up? The responses to question 1.f (why did you switch from teaching jobs to administrative jobs or graduate school?) show an array of personal (e.g., "status ego-growth and career ambition; I wanted to run the whole ship and be top dog") and educational (e.g., "my capabilities were such that I knew I should go higher; I wanted to be of greater service to a greater number of people") reasons which appear to emphasize egotism and a desire for more influence, responsibility, and money. Hall (1971) reported that as people feel more competent and successful, their satisfaction will increase their commitment to job and career.

The respondents* in the present study moved up to administrative positions and reported a high level of satisfaction. Once again, however, they switched to other and higher administrative positions, eventually applying for and accepting the job of superintendent of schools. The reasons given for these job switches, in response to questions 2.c and 3.c (why did you switch to your successive administrative jobs?), include the same factors which have been influencing superintendents-to-be for the past twenty years--money, confidence in one's own ability to do better and more, and a desire to be at the top. These factors appear to be consistent with the opinion of

*Note: Throughout the remainder of this study, the words respondent(s) and superintendent(s) will be used interchangeably when referring to the 30 people who were interviewed.
Hall (1971) that there is a general predisposition toward increasing one's self-esteem and sense of competence. In addition, in almost every bureaucracy, there are unspoken beliefs of incompetence which lower officials cherish about their superiors (Stein, 1960). These two statements above, along with the responses to questions 1.f, 2.c, and 3.c are some indication of the origins of the respondent's quest for the superintendency.

Whether or not it is a quest for the superintendency itself, is debatable in light of the responses to question 4 (Had you planned your career to the extent that you always knew you wanted to reach your present position?). Twelve responses support the idea of a well-planned career path and goal. However, seventeen respondents didn't interpret their career in this way. Some felt it was coincidence, luck, need for a new experience, high aspirations, and aggressiveness, but definitely unplanned. Others did not deny aspiring to the superintendency at some point, but felt that it had not been a career plan right from the beginning. Though it is likely that these seventeen respondents indeed did not "plan" on the superintendency upon entering the profession as teachers, this writer believes it is highly probable that the goal of the superintendency was an important consideration in the decision to seek an administrative post and pursue a doctorate. It is not simply coincidental that many of the twelve positive responses mention graduate school as a beginning of a plan to become a superintendent. Not only the superintendents responding in the affirmative, but also almost all those responding in the negative column, attended those few well-known graduate institutions that play an extraordinarily large role in the placement of school superintendents. Research by Rose (1969), "Career Sponsorship in the School Superintendency" lends support to the above contention that there is a network of contact people who virtually guarantee that graduates of the noted institutions are selected for promising superintendent job openings. Furthermore, the large majority of responses to questions
asking why they switched jobs, (already mentioned and in the appendix) strongly indicates that the superintendents in the present sample are a group of people with well-defined goals. Career development studies, such as Ginzberg (1964), suggest that some of the superintendents in the present research who saw their career development solely in terms of a response to external forces (breaks, luck, happenstance, etc.) are displaying a "particular psychological attitude toward their rise [to the superintendency] rather than a valid analysis."

Question 5.a (How if at all did graduate school and/or professional school prepare you for the position of superintendent?) attempted to find out if graduate school prepared the respondent for the superintendency and, if so, how. The largest number of responses was in contrasting categories. Six respondents felt that graduate school broadened them and gave them an important overview; however, five others found graduate school inadequate. The two other major positive sentiments were "contact with influential role models and interesting people" and "school management, finance and administration." The respondents had more to say about the deficiencies in their graduate school preparation (question 5.b, What about your work didn't it prepare you for?). The four categories mentioned most often were (in order), public relations, human relations, and group dynamics; budget and fiscal matters, and general business administration; labor relations; and politics. Other dissatisfactions were the lack of preparation in organizational development, law, curriculum, mundane realities of the job; problem solving and race relations. Some of them described their dissatisfactions quite vividly.

Almost everything! Graduate school was totally irrelevant. ...It didn't prepare me for the hate, rancor and jealousies around here. ...It didn't prepare me for the rampant negativism toward education. ...A realistic understanding of the job, for example, the family sacrifice involved.

On a scale of one to five, with one being very dissatisfying and five
very satisfying, the superintendents on the average, rated the preparation they received at 3.5. By comparison, an A.A.S.A. (1960) survey of superintendents found the average rating of graduate school preparation was 3.3 (Good) on a scale of one to four. The main weakness was "not practical enough." A more recent A.A.S.A. survey (Knesevich, 1971) listed "poor educational administration courses, other poor or irrelevant courses, and poor professors" as the three major weaknesses. The strengths were all described in terms of course content as follows: finance, personnel administration, public relations, school law, school business and plant management, child growth and development, and adult education. Lastly, a study by the New York State Office of Education Performance Review (1974) reported that most superintendents felt their graduate education to be outdated. Specifically they said it was irrelevant, did not have enough finance and legal courses, gave poor supervision in too little field work and too few internships, and did not offer enough access to the faculty. Concerning graduate school preparation, it is this writer's opinion that the similarities and differences between the present research and previous studies are not enough to warrant further explanation. More important however is the fact that the data about graduate preparation in past studies and the present research did not contain references to the following issue: "...Part of the problem of professional education schools is the need to train people to economize in time and effort so that they will not in due course become purely administrators." (Hughes, 1963). Superintendents' comments reported in subsequent questions highlight the need for people to be capable of economizing in time and effort as one of the major concerns of school superintendents.

Question 6:

Recent writers have said that highly educated professional people have the following problem: At the same time that society views their work as interesting, fascinating and challenging, most professionals, over time, come to view their work in less positive
terms and, therefore cannot talk as candidly about their feelings about work. How do you feel about this?

The respondents found question six the most confusing and troublesome of the interview. A few could not respond to it at all, while some others picked out a part of the question and spoke to that. For example, some superintendents were not responding to the issue of talking candidly, but whether, over time they have come "to view their work in less positive terms." Unfortunately, this question was poorly written and based on too many tenuous assumptions. It was assumed that the respondents would agree that society views their job in very positive terms. It was assumed that respondents were conscious of their dissatisfactions, yet unprepared to express them. Finally, it was assumed that the respondents would be able to admit that they could not do something (such as talk candidly about their dissatisfactions). A large group of respondents did not agree that society views the superintendent's job in positive terms. They felt that: "most people see the job as less satisfying than I do"; "the superintendent is looked upon as the highest paid official in town who isn't worth what he's paid"; "society's image of the superintendency is not that glorious." Another group of respondents agreed that superintendents cannot talk candidly about their feelings toward work, and their comments emphasized the constraints on the superintendent as a public figure. They spoke of the superintendent's responsibility as a leader not to gripe, the precarious relationship many superintendents have with their school committees (employers), and also the fact that unlike most doctors and lawyers, superintendents have the whole town (city) as clients and their actions therefore usually affect everyone. "Wish I could say how boring my job is at times," and "...I can only be candid with my wife." There is a third group of superintendents who appear bold, secure and confident, and feel able to talk candidly about their feelings toward work. For some reason, however, they also seem to believe that other superintendents do have a problem being candid.
Three of their comments follow:

I agree with the assumption in general. On balance, it doesn't inhibit me. Other superintendents probably do have trouble being candid; While in general I accept the statement--because of 
(a) the Peter principle (b) Reisman's The Lonely Crowd and (c) I suspect human characteristics are distributed along a normal curve which suggests that the bulk of the population is not like me--I find it has very little application to me...

Doesn't apply to me, but does tend to apply in general.

Question 7.b:

To be more specific now, I'd like you to evaluate the following aspects of your job from the standpoint of a satisfaction-dissatisfaction dimension.

Workload (How much time do you give beyond what is required?)

Salary (does it reflect the worth of your job?)

Relationship with others (administrators, teachers, parents, and community)

Autonomy (freedom to perform the job in your own way)

Continuing presence of a sense of challenge and novelty

Others (any other aspects you believe should be considered)

Would you please rank these aspects according to your satisfaction with them. (one is most satisfying, five is least satisfying)

The superintendents are far more satisfied than dissatisfied with the following four aspects of their job: salary, relationship with others, autonomy and continuing presence of a sense of challenge and novelty. The category "workload" is the exception. These results are not unlike the findings of previous surveys and reports about school superintendents. For example, in the present research, 60% of the respondents are dissatisfied with their workload (the amount of time they give beyond what is required). Perkins et al. (1966) and Gross (1958) found similarly. In the Gross study, among twelve items testing job satisfaction, workload/time was the only item revealing appreciable dissatisfaction. A report of a conference of school superintendents at Howard University (1975) and a Los Angeles Times news article (1974) are more recent documentation of severe complaints about the school superintendent's workload. The news article concerned a group
of California school superintendents who have quit or voluntarily demoted themselves because of stress and "overwork." The conference participants discussed ways of combatting administrator's personal stress and overwork—or what one participant called "the Western way of dying."

At first glance, "salary" appeared to be a clear-cut example of an item on which a substantial majority of the respondents (73%) felt satisfaction. However, 20 of the 22 satisfied respondents volunteered the additional information that comparing their salary to comparable positions of authority and responsibility in private industry, they are dissatisfied. Also, a comprehensive review of the literature on job satisfaction in service organizations (Sarata, 1971) found that pay alone was relatively insufficient (i.e., intellectual stimulation and status were more important) as a source of job satisfaction for highly trained personnel.

In light of the respondent's additional comments, if "salary" can be considered high in dissatisfaction, then the major amount of satisfied responses is found in the categories which are inherent in the work that people perform—challenge and novelty (66%), autonomy (66%), and relationship with others (76% average). For the category "relationship with others," respondents were asked to evaluate the quality and frequency of their relationships and not simply whether or not they were liked. For the category "challenge and novelty," four respondents chose to split the category in order to express their dissatisfaction with only one of the factors, in this case, novelty. In the second part of the question 7.b, respondents were asked to rank the given five aspects of their jobs from 1 (most satisfying) to 5 (least satisfying). This scale provided a composite check, of sorts, on the validity of the individual category responses. The results were consistent: 1) relationships with others (most satisfying), 2) challenge and novelty, 3) autonomy, 4) salary, 5) workload.

Research in this area has produced like results. A 1966 study of
school superintendents (Perkins et al.) reported that the superintendents' chief reason for staying in the job was the "challenge of it." A study of highly educated professional people (Ginzberg, 1964), though not about school superintendents, provides an interesting parallel. Ginzberg developed a category scheme of five aspects of work which closely corresponds to the aspects listed in the present research. The three major categories that refer to intrinsic work satisfactions account for almost three-quarters of all positive responses in the Ginzberg study and are ranked as the three most satisfying categories in the present research. Similarly, in both studies, the responses to the categories that refer specifically to extrinsic satisfactions, such as workload and salary (rewards and concomitants), contained the highest amount of dissatisfaction.

Finally, the Gross study mentioned earlier, Who Runs Our Schools? (1958), utilizes a twelve item job satisfaction instrument of which certain items are comparable to questions in the present research. The findings are extremely similar to each other. On closer examination, the only real difference is a uniformly higher percentage of dissatisfaction among the superintendents in the present research.

Application of the variables of tenure, age and size of school district to question 7.b can be examined in two ways. First, by dividing the variables into their parts--tenured/not tenured, over 8,500 district enrollment/8,500 or under, 49 years old or over/under 49 years--and looking at each of the five work aspects "across the board," it appears that the percentage distribution of satisfaction/dissatisfaction corresponds to the preferences reported for all thirty superintendents. In other words, in the findings reported for question 7.b on page 57, more superintendents were satisfied than dissatisfied about salary, relationship with others, autonomy, and challenge and novelty; similar results were found for all six subgroupings of the three variables. One slight difference appeared in the category called workload. In this case, the results were consistent with the total
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<th>8,500 or Under</th>
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<td>Dissatisfied</td>
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<td>60%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salary</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<td>Relationship</td>
<td>75%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>27%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Challenge</td>
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**TABLE I**

**NOTE:** Respondents were not stating whether they were simply satisfied or dissatisfied. They were reporting whether they were more satisfied than dissatisfied or more dissatisfied than satisfied.
group findings (more dissatisfied than satisfied) with one variable being the exception—the group of superintendents 48 years old and under; that is, the younger superintendents constitute the only sub-group that shows more of its members satisfied than dissatisfied with their workload.

The second way of examining the variables is by comparing the two sub-groups of each variable (see Table I). Looking at "size of school district," approximately the same percentage (within 6%) of both large and small district superintendents feel more satisfied than dissatisfied about workload, relationship with others (hereafter called relationship), autonomy, and challenge and novelty (hereafter called challenge). However, 27% more superintendents of large districts are more dissatisfied with their salary than superintendents of smaller districts. In the case of tenure, approximately the same percentage (within 5%) of superintendents in both the tenured and the non-tenured groups feel more satisfied than dissatisfied about workload, salary, relationship, and challenge. However, 25% more non-tenured superintendents feel dissatisfied about their autonomy. Comparisons within the variable of age produce the one contrasting response, and also wider percentage differences. In the group of older superintendents, more superintendents are dissatisfied with their workload. However, in a group of younger superintendents the reverse occurs; that is, more superintendents are satisfied with their workload. This statistic could be interpreted to imply that younger superintendents are healthier, more industrious and have a higher morale, but these or other possible implications cannot be determined from the limited and often contradictory data. This point should become clearer as more multivariate data is presented.

To continue with the comparisons—for each of the other categories (salary, relationship, autonomy and challenge) there is a larger percentage of satisfied superintendents than dissatisfied superintendents in both age groups. The same percentages also show that,
consistently, compared to older superintendents, a larger percentage of younger superintendents are more satisfied than dissatisfied with salary, relationship, autonomy and challenge.

Questions 7.e, 8A, 17.b:

7.e Taking into consideration all the factors about your job, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with it? Would you rate that on a scale of one to five?
1(very dissatisfied) 2 3 4 5(very satisfied)

8A Having attained the leadership position you are in, is it all that you expected it to be? Yes____ No____

17.b All in all, would you say, then, that the superintendency _______was better than you expected
_______fulfilled your expectations
_______was not as good as you expected

A review of the findings illustrates some of the inadequacy of short-answer (also called fixed-alternative) questions in the pursuit of job satisfaction research. The mean score for the job satisfaction scale in question 7.e was 3.8 or 2/10 of a point less than an average rating of "satisfied." The results also show that 80% of the superintendents were either satisfied or very satisfied with their job, and 83% said that the job either fulfilled or was better than their expectations. Furthermore, in response to another question, 79% of the superintendents reported that their job was all they expected it to be. These findings are quite surprising when contrasted with the wealth of information in other parts of the interview which details substantial dissatisfaction and disillusionment. Perhaps, when forced to give a brief and/or numerical summary evaluation of one's life endeavor, there is a tendency toward positive self-reinforcement. On the other hand, it is possible that the responses in other parts of the interview simply describe problems which in no way negate the quantity of satisfaction indicated in questions 7.e, 8A and 17.b. This writer believes there is cause for serious concern about what the superintendency does to the superintendent, and will attempt to discuss and illustrate this contention in the remainder of this study.

Related research which provided information on job expectations
was scarce. Only the book by Gross (1958) produced relevant data. Those results showed nine out of ten superintendents were satisfied with their job when they considered the expectations they originally held about the job. The overall results from the Gross study revealed a satisfied to very satisfied group of superintendents.

A review of the data in light of the three variables produced nothing startling. The mean satisfaction scores were almost identical for the older (4.0) and younger (3.7) groups and the larger (3.9) and smaller (3.9) school district groups. The only difference between the tenured and non-tenured groups was a higher rating of satisfaction for the tenured group (4.5 compared to 3.6). The percentage of superintendents whose job fulfilled or exceeded their expectations was high in every sub-group and almost identical when comparisons were made. The group of superintendents running larger school districts had the lowest percentage of members reporting "fulfilled or exceeded expectations" (76%).

This last fact might lead the reader to think that superintendents running large school districts may have higher dissatisfaction; however, the same group of superintendents had a high mean job satisfaction of 3.9 which was also identical to the mean for small district superintendents. Contradictions such as this were the "rule" in the analysis of variables. For question 8A, the large majority of superintendents in all six sub-groups said their job was all they expected it to be. In the comparison of older and younger superintendents, 24% fewer younger superintendents said their job was all they expected it to be, but that percentage (69%) was also high.

Question 7.c:

Do you think most of the superintendents you know feel similarly/differently? How might you explain those who feel differently than you do?

The preceding few questions have strongly suggested that the large majority of superintendents feel more satisfied and fulfilled than not. The statistics for this question, 7.c, indicate that
superintendents' ratings of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction of other superintendents was the reverse of their self-ratings. The comments of superintendents who are satisfied and attempting to explain those who feel differently, seem to depict the dissatisfied superintendent as worn down or defeated. "Bored; tired; tied up with minutia; don't get themselves excited; forever behind; reactive; not willing to give extra time; you make your own workload; feel insecure about their jobs; less autonomous; concerned with retirement" are some of the descriptive phrases which stand out in the explanations. In contrast, the comments of superintendents who are dissatisfied and attempting to explain those who feel differently, are quite general and dissimilar in content with the exception of two references to probable differences in the type of community. For example, "Either they have a community where they have greater control and can meet more of their personal needs, or people in their communities are sleeping; it depends on too many differing variables." In numerical terms, the ratings reversal (mentioned earlier) meant that two-thirds of the respondents believed their colleagues to be dissatisfied, while only one-third of the respondents believed their colleagues to be satisfied. These facts indicate the possible adoption of a tool of rationalization called projection. In order to gain insight into the curious contradiction between self-ratings and ratings of others, the reader might consider the conviction and specificity of the comments by satisfied superintendents about dissatisfied superintendents.

Questions 8B.a and 8B.b:

8B.a Can you recall those aspects of your job and those feelings about your job that:
were not imaginable to you before you started the job?
8B.b are contrary to and different from your original expecta-
tions and goals?

These two questions were somewhat indistinguishable to the respondents and their answers reflect this perception. In their responses, the superintendents cover the gamut of professional issues and some
of the personal issues which are the factors that provoke the attitudes and feelings described in answers to questions yet to be discussed. To some extent, this question proved to be a check on the consistency of other answers. It was hoped that from open-ended question interviews such as the present research, patterns would emerge from information which the respondent consistently or inconsistently volunteered in answer to related but dissimilar questions. For instance, noteworthy in the responses to questions 8B.a and b are the quantity and complexity of the issues raised. In addition, the responses which described job aspects and feelings that were unimaginable or different from expectations, were in most cases those which were problematic, or about which the respondent was incredulous. Most of the responses to question 8B.a fall into two major categories which describe:

(a) how "political" the job is

(b) how mentally and physically demanding and draining the job is

Some examples of specific responses are: I could not have imagined the power of special interest groups, the hostility of critics, the patronage system, the encroachment of state laws, the political intervention, the nature of collective bargaining, the workload, the administrivia, and the public relations. Question 8B.b asked the respondents to state what they found in the job that was contrary to their expectations. The most frequently mentioned topics were the difficult relationship with local School Committees, the void in curriculum areas, the frustrations of the superintendent's power and authority, the power of the racial issue, the fragility of the community, the way time is spent and the decline in satisfactions. The responses to 8B.a and b were not offered as indices of job dissatisfaction/satisfaction, and, although they appear somewhat negative, they do not, of course, describe job dissatisfaction; however, the responses do add to the substantial and mounting data which describe difficult, disillusioning, and dissatisfying parts of the school superintendent's job.
Question 19.b:

Are there any external factors or conditions which impinge on your work over which you have no control? If so, what are some?

The responses to this question produced another, but perhaps a broader, "shopping list," of issues that are either dissatisfying or simply of great concern to the superintendents. During the interview, this question was asked near the end and, as such, became a check on the consistency of superintendents' major concerns. Their responses are consistent with other data in the interview and are also consistent with responses to similar questions in previous surveys and journal articles. For example, superintendents' responses in other literature stress some of the following external factors and conditions over which they have no control: inadequate financing; pressure groups; changes in students' values and behavior; current social-cultural ferment; teacher militancy; inflation, parental expectations; legislative mandates. Similarly, the school superintendents in the present research emphasized the following general categories (in rank order): economic factors; law; public attitudes; politics; labor relations; declining enrollment; school committee. The superintendent is the person who absorbs the adverse consequences (often simultaneously) of the factors and conditions listed above.

Question 9:

In a recent magazine article, Kenneth Lamott proposed that every American worker be given a sabbatical once every seven years. Regardless of the specific merits of that proposal, do you feel that you need a sabbatical? Why?

While there are numerous reports and articles (see Bellon and Jones, 1970) calling for the continuous training and self-renewal of school administrators, the sabbatical for school superintendents (Perkins et al., 1966) is a plan that has received much less attention in the literature on school administration. Clearly, the majority of the respondents in the present research (twenty-eight) believe that they need or could use a sabbatical. This attitude corresponds predictably
with the feelings of work-overload that were stressed throughout most of the interviews. In fact, the responses give the impression that the respondents believe they deserve a sabbatical in return for the "dues they have paid." Someone should figure out the care and feeding of school superintendents" said a former school chief in an interview with the Los Angeles Times in 1974. This article gives the impression that the inclusion of sabbaticals would reduce the number of superintendents who eventually ask themselves "Who needs it?". This condition in the field of education is in stark contrast to comparable executive positions in private industry where inducements are offered to persuade top executives to take time off and revive themselves. To the chagrin of many school superintendents, much of the public holds the mistaken belief that superintendents, like teachers and students, have a two, to two and a half month summer vacation. Some of the catch-words and phrases most frequently reported by the respondents to explain their desire for a sabbatical are as follows:

a sabbatical would give needed reflection, relaxation, perspective, retraining, and the insight to initiate new directions and long-range planning; need time to study, write and catch up with the literature; physical and mental regeneration; need to get away from the eye of the hurricane; would be in the best interests of the school system.

The seriousness of the need communicated by the consensus and the tone of the reasons in favor of sabbaticals (see Appendix E for the full responses) should stimulate apprehension concerning the continuing effectiveness and psychological-physiological endurance of school superintendents.

Question 10.a:

What tasks or events make a week unusually interesting/uninteresting for you?

Throughout the interview, the major factor underlying most of the responses revealing dissatisfaction is "lack of time." Consequently,
the present question on uninteresting tasks or events indirectly elicits the superintendent's suggestions concerning what specifically might be eliminated in order to provide more time. The major uninteresting tasks or events are: (a) routine administrivia; (b) budgetary matters; (c) contract negotiations and personnel grievances; (d) "re-inventing the wheel" with new school committee members; and (e) the number of boring, wordy, mundane school committee meetings. The most frequently mentioned interesting tasks are working with staff, and program and curriculum development. This contrast is noteworthy because it illustrates administrative/managerial activities on the one hand, and educator/mentor tasks on the other. Similar findings were reported in a study of the role of the school superintendent (New York State Office of Education Performance Review, 1974). Increasing financial responsibilities, union negotiations, and the preparation for and attendance at school committee meetings were the tasks or events which caused the greatest headaches. More specifically, 79% of the superintendent's time was spent at public relations, community grievances, personnel matters, labor contracts, finance, construction, and the administration of food, transportation and other non-education supervision. The other 21% of their time was spent at curriculum planning, evaluation of current programs, attendance at student activities and supervision of teaching. This breakdown is illustrative of the superintendent's emerging (in most cases already established) role as a high level manager and their declining role as an educator.

Question 10.b:

In terms of your specific job, what would you recommend that would make it more satisfying? For example, could you suggest two major changes?

The superintendents in the present research reported numerous specific areas of dissatisfaction which, when compared and coded, convincingly fall into two major categories.
Problems with the School Committee

(a) the functions of the School Committee as they affect the superintendent's power and authority.

(b) the nature of the superintendent's relationship with the School Committee.

For example, the following comments suggest major changes needed:

provide a training program for the school committee that would enable it to function as an enlightened board of directors; appointed School Committees; a School Committee which would devote itself to a policy-making rather than an administrative role; a legal definition of the differences in the roles of the superintendents and the School Committee. The School Committee is an anathema to many superintendents because it is a real threat to the superintendent's self-image as an autonomous, expert chief executive. The interviews give the strong impression that superintendents would prefer the School Committee to be either a low profile Board of Directors or a group similar to the U.S. President's cabinet.

The second major category of necessary change is:

(2) More administrative assistance for the superintendent

(a) reduction in workload and more personal time.

(b) more time for real educational planning and leadership.

Some of the comments in this category are: I need an assistant to deal with the everyday issues; more assistance for the superintendent personally; a more reasonable time and work load; more assistance in handling non-educational stuff would allow me to get into the schools and help with curriculum; a reduction in the activities expected of the superintendent; sufficient staff to do adequate research. The fact that these two categories of dissatisfaction (especially the latter) were dominant is most important because it is the consequences of these dissatisfaction that compose the most significant findings of this research. By comparison, in other studies of the superintendency (Perkins et al., 1966; Knesevich, 1971) the major dissatisfying and
inhibiting functions of the job were: lack of teacher dedication, administrative details, lack of contact with teachers, personal attacks, caliber of School Committee members, inadequate financing, insufficient time, not enough staff, and limits on one's personal or professional capabilities.

Question 19.a:

Some people feel that the job of running a school system or a school has a great many similarities to the job of a business executive or high level manager. Others feel that jobs in human service organizations such as schools and school systems are not comparable to those in business. What is your thinking on the subject?

The issue of the school superintendent as either manager or educator or both, has been a controversial subject in professional circles. Titles such as "Would your district be better off with a superintendent who is a business man and not an educator?" and "Risk Propensity in Decision-making: comparison of business and public school administrators" have increasingly been filling the pages of educational magazines and journals. One research study on school superintendents included a question on this subject in the interviews with school superintendents (Perkins et al., 1966). The differences between educational administration and business administration in the Perkins study were described as follows: children are a unique product; accountability to the public; lack of an easy yardstick (such as profit) of performance; and, in general, greater constraints. Aspects listed as similar to both fields were human relations, finances, personnel and facilities.

In the present research, fourteen superintendents considered the two jobs comparable and much more similar than dissimilar. The similarities which they mentioned most often were personnel matters, allocating limited resources, other budgetary matters and organizational techniques such as planning, coordinating and program development. In general, they felt that both positions called for people with top level managerial skills. The seven superintendents who felt
that the two jobs are not comparable stressed the following dissimilarities: more direct and active public control in education; the amount and means of product evaluation; the fact of the profit-motive in business; education is not a finished manufactured product; salaries; the fact that a business's board of directors doesn't usually attempt to get involved in decision-making. Nine superintendents believed that the jobs were both comparable and not comparable in many ways and could not be categorized as one or the other. Finally, a slightly greater percentage (17%) of superintendents from large school districts, compared to those from smaller districts, felt that the two jobs are comparable, and slightly fewer (13%) found the jobs not comparable. Though merely speculative, it is interesting to note that many of the superintendents who found the jobs of business executive and school superintendent quite similar, also reported dissatisfaction with their lack of opportunity and time to do the tasks for which they were trained, and to use the skills they enjoyed most.

Questions 16 and 17.a:

16 How long did you originally expect to be in your present job in this town (city)?

17.a For some superintendents, talking about past and present jobs has been pleasant and positive, but they have expressed concern about their future. Do you share this concern? How do you find yourself thinking about your future?

There is a wide range in the original job length expectations of the superintendents. The only substantial grouping occurred at five-six years (eight superintendents). When original expectations were matched with the actual number of years in the job, there were no significant findings other than the fact that seven superintendents, at the time of the interview, were in their job an average of five and a half years (a range of one to twelve years) longer than they expected to be. Some superintendents suggested, sometimes seriously and sometimes anecdotally, that five years in the superintendency is long enough to use up your bag of tricks, to accomplish what you set out
to do or to demonstrate that it couldn't be accomplished; in any
case, it is usually time to move on.

Question 17.a provided another means and opportunity for superin-
tendents to reveal attitudes and feelings toward their present jobs;
that is, by affirming or denying concern about their future. Two-
thirds of the superintendents expressed varying degrees of concern.
Their concerns fall into the following three categories:

1) job security (fears of having to move to a new town
and start all over again); retirement and income loss.
Sample comments illustrative of these concerns are: "I'm concerned
about the tentativeness and turnover in this job; My job security
means my family security; I'd like to be able to have job security
at any earlier age, because it would enable me to spend more time with
my wife in our later years and make up for the sacrifices she and I
have had to make: I'm 48 and I'm beginning to worry about the future.
I'd like to stay in this job until my children finish their present
schools. However, I'm lucky to be here this long. I know I don't
enjoy the superintendency as much anymore. Yes, it's an unsettled
future."

2) more of the same (fighting the same fires year in
and year out; Can I last?; Do I have the mental
strength and stamina?
Sample comments are: "What else am I going to do? I'm over-prepared.
Larger superintendencies are open to me but I'm not sure I want
them; I've thought about my future and my physical and mental
strength carefully in the last four years; I'd really like to move
on. Much of what I'm doing now is repetitious of what I've been doing
for a long time; I'm not sure I have the mental strength and stamina
to continue to be as effective. I've already started to plateau and
I don't want to get worse; I'm thinking about shifting gears and dropping
down into a lower level position in order to get away from the negotia-
tions and school committees and budgets and all that non-meaningful
stuff."
3) the lure and challenge of switching to a new job
Sample comments are: "I need that carrot held out for me and something to keep me young; Therefore I'm open to the possibility of moving to a new situation; I've done about every job in public education; I'm also interested in the issues of law and also selling; I'd like to be able to have a choice but there are no supports in our society for helping people relearn."

Most of the superintendents in these three categories were expressing some present uneasiness (not necessarily dissatisfaction) and were keenly aware of the instability of their jobs.

One third of the total group of school superintendents did not express concern about their future. They either felt satisfied with their jobs or felt confident of finding a new one. If we examine the individual categories of tenured superintendents and not tenured, superintendents of large school districts and smaller ones, and superintendents under 49 years old, we find the majority in all cases are superintendents who have expressed concern about their futures. The one exception is the group of superintendents who are 49 years or older. In fact, age was the only variable in which there were substantial differences between the compared groups (in this case, younger and older superintendents). The majority (57%) of older superintendents were not concerned about their future, while the ratio of concerned to unconcerned in the younger group was similar to the two-thirds to one-third ratio used earlier to describe the total group of thirty superintendents. In addition, the older superintendents expected to be in their present positions seven years, which is almost two and a half years more than the younger superintendents had estimated.

Question 17.a is another question which cannot in itself make a statement about job satisfaction; however, it adds an additional perspective to the total amount of complex and often contradictory data.
Questions 15.a and b:

15.a Some superintendents are frustrated about having so few "yardsticks" to help them and others determine the quality and acceptability of their job performance. Others feel that the ambiguity is simply a part of the nature and "level" of their work. How do you feel about this?

15.b Using your own "yardsticks," how do you evaluate your job performance?

There have been numerous articles in the last decade which suggest plans and questions for the evaluation and selection of superintendents. The criteria in these plans range from "success with wife and family in fitting into the social, civic and religious life of the community," to "ability to maintain poise and emotional stability," to "ability to remain true to convictions and live with a high pressure job (Stemmock, 1972)." On the other hand, to evaluate themselves, the superintendents in the present study list numerous abstract criteria, most of which are broad, and hardly measurable. Phrases such as "intuitive feeling, the general pace, a sense of improvement, the growing edge concept of Paul Mort," are a few examples which suggest that superintendents often depend on impressions for self-evaluation. Responses to question 15.b correspond with the majority of responses to question 15.a which stress the superintendent's feeling that very few "yardsticks" or criteria have been set forth by their employers and that ambiguity in the area of job evaluation is part of the nature and level of their work. Some superintendents are bothered by it. They say: "The most frustrating part of this job is not being able to show clearly that you're doing a good job. Even if you could, there is always the variable of public satisfaction and the changing composition of School Committees." "There are many times I'm insecure or unaware of a direction to go in. What can I do?" Other superintendents

* Other literature is too lengthy and too irrelevant to list here. However, the Stemmock paper offers the full text of five or six different evaluations.
accept the ambiguity. They say: "Very subjective! They're not evaluating me against any real objectives. All this is O.K. with me. There aren't many yardsticks but I don't want or need them anyway. There are no standards, only controversies. Any evaluation is dependent on the community and intangibles that can't be measured. You have to have a tolerance for ambiguity in this job." Finally, there is a smaller group of superintendents who believe there are enough "yardsticks." These people tend to take the initiative in setting up objectives and demanding written or verbal response from the School Committee.

In general, the responses leave this writer with the impression that most superintendents rely on the renewal, alteration, or termination of their contract for the primary indication of their evaluation by others and for their self-evaluation. That is also to say, the superintendents are seeking indications which confirm their self-image as a successful, autonomous, chief school executive.

Question 7.d:

Suppose someone was told to come to your office for advice about becoming a superintendent. If he/she said, "I've read what the books and articles say about the superintendency, but I am hoping that you can tell me REALLY what it's like to be a superintendent," what would you say?

In their attempts to "tell it like it is" about the superintendency, the respondents placed greater emphasis on the frustrations and the pressures in the job than on the pleasures and the rewards. In many of the interviews, this emphasis seemed to be characteristic of the tone and content of the total interview. The frustrations and pressures most often mentioned are "endless compromise, politicking, slow change, managerial functions, deterioration of physical and mental health, personal sacrifice to self and family, and the worry in delegating authority." The literature in the field stresses only the problems. For example, "Current Problems of the School Superintendent"
(Norton, 1971) reports the results of a questionnaire survey of 118 superintendents. The 10 greatest problems were: 1) Teacher personnel, 2) Public relations, 3) Pupil personnel problems, 4) Relations with school committee, 5) Increased educational costs and other financial problems, 6) Evaluation, 7) Professional negotiations, 8) Budget research, 9) Facilities, and 10) Scheduling. These problems are not new problems. Perkins (1966) reported that special interest pressure groups, and individuals seeking influence were what the superintendents were most burdened by. Also, Talbut (1966) wrote that most of the superintendent's work day is spent arguing with the local finance board about money for salaries, renewing contracts and architectural drawings, dealing with politicians, haggling with principals, and fighting with parent groups. For a book-length discussion of "really what it's like to be a superintendent," the reader should see The Superintendent of Schools (Burbank, 1968). In contrast, expressions like "moments of exhilaration, professional integrity, good working relationship, your programs get accomplished, fun, thoroughly interesting, be an influence, best textbook in human relations," are examples of the statements focusing on pleasures and/or rewards of the superintendency. More specific examples of the frustrations and pressures are: "people are convinced you're on the take; lonely job; if you are honest to the job, you will give up a lot of things you cherish and value in your private life; don't become a superintendent if you want to raise a family, more business oriented than you'd anticipate; if you become a superintendent, you will become "the Superintendent" and will be stuck with the close personal identity." While this question, on the one hand, restates many of the issues reported in other questions in this chapter, it should be noted that the responses to this question also introduce (or reintroduce more strongly) the deterioration of physical and mental health as well as the issue of personal sacrifice to self and family.
Conclusions

The research findings reported in this chapter are largely repetitive of previous studies about the superintendent of schools. This part of the inquiry however was necessary to verify previous findings on the chance that some changes might have occurred. Asking these more familiar and ordinary questions also allowed the respondents to get "warmed up," to educate the interviewer, and, as a result, to feel more comfortable in answering other more personal and difficult questions. Furthermore, the findings are also fuel for the controversy concerning the assessment of attitudes and feelings about work.

The finding that superintendents are generally satisfied with their work is supportive of many other studies showing correlation between job level (job status) and job satisfaction. It also seems to reflect, at least superficially, that higher level jobs generally have satisfactory work conditions. Superintendents are people who basically knew where they are headed and have a strong drive and sense of purpose. It is clear that almost all of them wanted to be their own bosses at "the top of the ladder" and "running the whole ship." In attaining the superintendency, they have accomplished what they set out to do. Ginzberg labels this kind of person "the leadership type" and describes in the following paragraph, some of the needs and desires that they display in their attitudes and behavior toward their work:

...strong drive to direct and guide the work of others.
...do not want to take orders from others. ...They seek a leadership role and they feel comfortable and happy when they are in a position to encourage others to follow the directions which they have established. In broad, their objective is to control others and their work. Achievement for these people is to arrive at a position of dominance over others. ...But their efforts are directed toward securing, holding and expanding their
positions of influence... They are in search of positions of leadership...

The job of superintendent was the axis along which their pattern of life was organized. They invested a great deal of time and effort in their work, probably exercised strong control over short run desires in order to reach the top, and displayed the confidence and boldness necessary to be actively taking advantage of opportunities. For the superintendent, it appears that there is a high compatibility between their work role (that is, what one is employed to do and often has to do) and their ideal self-image (what one loves to do). When the superintendents report high job satisfaction, this writer believes they are saying that they're satisfied with "making it to the top" (i.e. a self-satisfaction) as much as they are saying they like their job.

When some of the data in this chapter was reviewed in terms of age, tenure and size of school district, the results produced the same distribution as the total group results. That is to say, if a profile of the older and younger superintendent were developed, it would be similar to the profile of the tenured and non-tenured superintendent, which would also be similar to the profile of the large and small school district superintendent and the profile of the typical superintendent in the present sample of thirty. However, there were a number of inconsistencies such as those described on the bottom of page 61 and the bottom of page 63. In these instances, the percentage distribution of a subgroup (e.g., non-tenured and tenured respondents) indicated greater dissatisfaction than was the trend for other subgroups in response to that particular question. However, in response to other questions which also probed satisfaction and dissatisfaction, this same subgroup's percentage distribution corresponded with the general

\[43\] Ginzberg, pp. 118-19.

subgroup pattern of satisfaction.

Much of the literature cited in Chapters III and IV contained some information about the problems, frustrations or complaints of the school superintendent. In most cases, it took the form of lists and rankings of various problem areas. High level jobs may not have the same kinds of problems as blue collar jobs, but they definitely have their share. The responses of the superintendents in the present research were very similar to previous findings. Given a chance to make positive and negative statements about the same job, superintendents were usually ready and willing to make favorable and unfavorable comments about various facets of their job. In fact, in many cases, the same particular job aspect or the same broad area was the cause of both satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Only a very few respondents indicated overall dissatisfaction or felt that the large majority of their basic needs were not met by their work. But the large proportion commented profusely about burdensome or unrewarding specific aspects. This chapter and the full text in Appendix E offer abundant information about the functions and the role of the superintendency. What is learned is for the most part a replica of earlier superintendency role studies. It appears that in the case of the school superintendent, despite significant changes in technology, educational thought, and the socio-political scene, the more things change, the more they seem to remain the same. There were, however, a few new directions.

The superintendents were nearly united in feeling the need and the desire for a 1/2 year sabbatical. While previous studies had revealed vehement support for more vacations or more re-training and self-development time, the current statements seemed almost to imply that school committees should be obliged to grant sabbaticals in recognition of the extraordinary amount of time and effort required of superintendents. In addition, these superintendents' responses placed substantially more emphasis on the need to possess business and managerial skills; yet the responses also indicated regret at the inordinate amount of the
superintendent's time that must be allotted to business-related matters. Finally, there was the curious fact that two-thirds of the superintendents believed their colleagues to be more dissatisfied than satisfied while only one-third of the superintendents described themselves as more dissatisfied than satisfied.

Although there was a wide range of statements about the least gratifying aspects of their work, one consistent theme appeared throughout the interviews—work overload and lack of time. The responses convey the definite impression that superintendents must constantly run to stay in place. The consequences primarily affected the superintendent's health and family life. During the past two decades, the job of school superintendent has assumed more tasks, more complexity, a wider span of control and an increase in relentless pressures. This enlargement of the job suggests that if superintendency job descriptions were more candid, they would call for a tireless manipulator and compromiser, who is also an aspiring tragic hero.

Knowledge of the findings reported in this chapter (which primarily describe the superintendents' life on the job) is necessary for an appreciation of the next two chapters which will focus on the "working lives" (i.e., the integration of life at work and outside of work) of the superintendents. That is also to say that the import of this research is its exposure of a deeper level and different kind of work dissatisfaction. It is a dissatisfaction which in large part is caused by the conditions reported in this chapter and the role expectations cited in the beginning of Chapter III. These conditions wrought consequences which are more appropriately described as the hidden injuries of the superintendency.
CHAPTER V
REPORT AND ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS: PART II

Introduction

The superintendents' frustrations and problems (much of the data in Chapter IV) are rather common and predictable concerns and complaints. In spite of them, most of the superintendents believe their work is fulfilling and they rate themselves generally satisfied. These two statements would constitute a large part of a general summary had this research terminated with only the questions and responses already presented. However, the interview questions and responses to be reported in this chapter, reach below the surface; for example: What are the consequences of the frustrations and problems? Are there sources of job dissatisfaction other than those described? What has the job exacted from the person and his/her non-work life? What kind of person has been directly or indirectly molded by the years spent striving for the superintendency, and by the actual years on the job? What are the hidden injuries of the superintendency?

In this chapter, superintendents are depicted as aware of and verbal about the pain of certain conflicting goals, needs, and values; however, they either will not, cannot, or do not know how to resolve them. If there are, as the findings will illustrate, profound negative consequences caused by the superintendency, it is important to consider why there is not a comparable effect on the superintendents' affirmative summary remarks and ratings of work satisfaction. One can speculate that rank order and scale ratings of job satisfaction will elicit distinctly different results than lengthy, open-ended interviews. Part of the previously mentioned research by Gross offers another

perspective. He concludes that there are two different types of role conflict affecting work satisfaction. On the one hand, he finds intra-role conflict—the results of incompatible expectations by significant others concerning the superintendents' actions within the limits of his/her role as school superintendent. On the other hand, he finds inter-role conflict—the result of incompatible expectations by significant others concerning the superintendents' actions in his/her role as school superintendent intertwined with his/her other primary, life roles. For the present research, Gross' conclusions suggest that a superintendent can judge his/her job satisfaction one way on the basis of intra-role conflicts (the majority of the data in the previous chapter), and simultaneously feel differently about the job, based upon other kinds of conflicts.

Inter-role time pressures have long been a major concern of school superintendents. In 1958, Gross found that over 90% of the superintendents reported that "their wives were concerned about the infinitesimal amount of time they were able to spend with their families."46 The expectations of wives and children conflicted with the expectations of the school committee and the local community.

Ten years later in 1968, Burbank wrote:

The overwhelming demand of the school [superintendent's] job give him [her] and his [her] family a major problem. Time is the core of the issue, time to do all the work which faces him [her], time to devote to his [her] family, time to rest and time to recreate himself [herself]... The effects of this treadmill can be real and potent for the superintendent and his [her] family. ...When other [parents] are playing with their sons and daughters, [superintendents] will be found at [their] desk or on some other professional mission.47

Now in 1976, this writer's research will also conclude, no less emphatically, that lack of time is the curse of the superintendency.

46 Ibid., p. 263.

However, the present analysis adds that the curse of the superintendent may be within the superintendent as well—an issue discussed in Chapter VI.

Reading the full text of the superintendents' responses to the final eleven questions is imperative for an adequate comprehension of their meaning. Summaries alone, similar to the ones in Chapter IV would not do justice to the significance or the impact; therefore the text adjoins each question's interpretation. The following quotations in themselves and by their juxtaposition vividly characterize the essence of the research findings:

The professional [superintendent] performs his [her] services primarily for the psychic satisfaction and second for money. The work life invades the after-work life and the sharp demarcation between the work hours and the leisure hours disappears. To professionals [school superintendents], their work becomes their life.48

A superintendent, who voluntarily demoted himself to a lower level job, said:

I just decided I had a greater responsibility to my own children; it's a rational, personal goal. I have a feeling of relief. The change will give me a chance to do more personal things.49


49 Los Angeles Times, Part XII, p. 1.
Question 7.a

Concerning your present job, some researchers have posited that there is a form of psychological obsolescence and intellectual starvation in highly educated professional people resulting from pressures, bureaucratic obligations, lack of time and a lack of desire to keep up with or adapt to changes in their field. How do you feel about this with regard to your job?

By approximately a three to one margin, the superintendents feel that psychological obsolescence and intellectual starvation are major factors in their jobs. With reference to psychological obsolescence, many of the respondents speak in terms of the "toll" the job takes on them. For example:

I lose a little piece of my soul every day due to the pressures. I'm always manipulating various groups' realities to make them more responsive. I've become a marginal person, a personal sacrificer. The job has taken a terrible psychological toll on me and my family.

The "toll" appears to center around the personal sacrifice they make as a result of the job's pressures, politics and frustrations. Similarly, in the comments which affirm the presence of intellectual starvation, the focus is on the unbearable pace of the job, the repetition, and the predominance of managerial functions which result in the narrowness and retardation of their personal and professional growth. "The cost of missing a significant opportunity to learn seldom becomes apparent until it seems too late to recoup," but even when obsolescence is apparent, superintendents are often more aware of the issue than they are able to act against it. The problem for

50 In this question, obsolescence not only means "no longer in use" or "outmoded," but also the process of becoming out-of-date. It is not solely the superintendents' lack of new skills or deteriorating physical health that is at issue. Psychological obsolescence refers to the emotional process involved in realizing that one is out-of-date or becoming out-of-date.

superintendents who are immersed in their jobs ten to fourteen hours a day, six or seven days a week is making time for self-development and professional growth on a planned basis.\textsuperscript{52} Respondents who disagree with the above stress their abilities and attributes which reduce or eliminate the phenomena at issue. Phrases such as "I compensate for...; I take precautions...; I draw on my resources...; I discipline myself...; I make a deliberate attempt...; I've made it my job to...; illustrate the tone and thrust of their comments.

The author quoted twice above, William Dill, proposed the following ways and means of surmounting the problem. New learning to combat obsolescence (especially self-initiated effort) should be an active engaging and rewarding process. It must be seen as important at the expense of other things that now command priority on the job since for almost any professional [superintendent], it is unreasonable to demand more time at the expense of family and relaxation concerns. Finally, he proposes that we try to become more perceptive about how our efforts to offset obsolescence can be varied to suit a person's total life involvements, not just the immediate job situation.\textsuperscript{53}

\textbf{Table II}

\begin{itemize}
\item[A)] 22 superintendents feel that psychological obsolescence is a major factor in their job.
\item[B)] 7 superintendents do not feel the effects of psychological obsolescence in their job.
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{52}Ibid., p. 105.

\textsuperscript{53}Ibid., p. 106.

*Throughout the report of the data (interview responses), the numbers in parentheses following a statement or set of statements, for example (5), refer to the total number of times the respondents mentioned (either directly or indirectly) that item. Four dashes or asterisks indicate that the statement(s) of a new respondent, or a new grouping of respondents is (are) beginning.
Table II - continued

C) 9 superintendents do not feel that intellectual starvation is a major factor in their job.

D) 21 superintendents feel that intellectual starvation is a major factor in their job.

Their Comments - A:

I've lost some of the patience I used to have with less perceptive people. I've developed a rather sharp style of response to unjust criticism. I have trouble living with the fact that I can't do the personal things I want to do. As each year goes by, I begin to realize that I'm probably never going to get to those things. The more I realize this the more it hurts and the more I'm dissatisfied. It eats away at me.

* * * *

It's true for me. I've adapted my skills to deal with the demands of the job. I've developed skills to cope with the job, i.e. to evaluate other people's skills rather than my own. I'm mostly doing bottom line skills such as constantly watering down material. This makes the job psychologically devastating and obsolescing. I've learned how to survive but I don't find it very satisfying. However the "task-oriented" side of me is satisfied.

* * * *

The job has taken a toll on me. I use old solutions because of my experience instead of new creative solutions. I'm subject to too much public scrutiny. Also, I've suffered physically.

* * * *

I'm bored with the repetition. Ho hum over and over again. Gets me feeling disenchanted with the job, and feeling lazy--sort of a give up attitude.

* * * *

America chews up and spits out its public officials. There is a physiological, psychological and neurological toll. The job does not permit an adequate amount of time for self-renewal. The body and spirit can just take so much for so long.

* * * *
Their Comments - B:

Untrue of me because I have recognized this phenomenon and have used all of my resources to manipulate the environment around me which would cause atrophy or entropy. For example, I redesigned the whole management organization to allow my main functions to be ones that interest me.

* * * *

Their Comments - C:

I have built in things to take me away from the job every once in a while. Intellectual starvation is not applicable to me as long as I stay on the move.

* * * *

I've made sure intellectual starvation hasn't happened. I maintain a strong reading program and go to good workshops and conferences.

* * * *

I'm conceptually starved but there is a lot of intellectual stimulation based on practical learning and programming.

* * * *

Their Comments - D:

So much repetition prevents me from exploring a lot of new areas. As years go by I'm not stimulated as much.

* * * *

The issue of intellectual starvation is very true and even dangerous. I lost touch with the real world outside of education. I read nothing but education journals and I have trouble keeping up with them.

* * * *

Yes. Intellectual starvation from lack of time and the rapidity of change. I'm not up on things. I've become a manager deliberately. I enjoy the manager's role better than the educator's role.

* * * *

Accurate. If I take time for intellectual growth, my desk just piles up with more pressing matters.

* * * *
Their Comments - D - continued

Very true. My time is committed to involvement in hundreds of hours of process meetings which have no academic stimulation. Leaves no time for discussion and other mind-stretching activities. Even most conferences are simply practical.

* * * *

Intellectual starvation definitely exists because I'm constantly chasing fires. I feel personally deficient. I should be able to offer better leadership and guidance in many areas I am falling behind in.*

* * * *

*See Appendix F for the text of the remaining interview responses.
Questions 11.a, 11.b and 11.c

11.a "Work skills" have often been described as those skills emphasized in professional training. Of the work skills you feel competent in performing, which ones are you not using in your job? Which of your work skills are being utilized in your present job?

11.b What are your personal skills and strengths which are NOT being utilized in your job? Which of your personal skills and strengths are being utilized in your job?

11.c Do you, and, if so, how do you expect to someday use your presently unused work skills and personal strengths in another job situation?

More informally, these questions are asking—what are the skills and strengths about which you feel competent and good, that your job does not call on you to use enough. It was not intended to be a question of obsolescence. A focus of the responses to the question about work skills—educational/pedagogical concerns contrasted with business/administrative concerns—is one which reappears throughout the interview. While it is recognized that to perform the job, a superintendent must be both administrator and educator, the significance of these interview responses lies in the ratio of time spent and interest in business/administrative concerns, to the time spent and interest in "educational/pedagogical concerns." The job of school superintendent today does not encourage superintendents to utilize their curriculum and instruction skills or to utilize their other expertise in the field of education for writing, speaking, research or other "operational skills of producing." Many superintendents regretfully perceive their role as demanding an inordinate amount of time for organizational and business concerns and for "managing power relationships between symbiotic groups" and individuals. "Few superintendents to be sure are happy with this state of affairs. They would prefer to devote more time to questions of pedagogy but they just don't have time."54  

implementing educational programs are now subordinate and have been replaced by his/her role of manager and reviewer. Approximately 20% of their time is spent in interaction with teachers on pedagogical concerns utilizing relevant work skills, while their greatest headaches result from the time spent in the managerial and business role. The active involvement in the educational process is delegated to various members of the superintendent's staff. Studies previously cited in Chapter III of this research, lend credibility to these perceptions.

In the area of personal skills and strengths, almost half of the respondents could not think of any they did not use. However, of those who did not report unused personal skills, six superintendents described some combination of personal warmth, caring and sensitivity, and another three superintendents mentioned their ability to motivate people. Very few of the respondents were affected by their unused work and personal skills to the point of wanting to change jobs in order to utilize them again. Of the sixteen superintendents who expressed a desire to use the skills again someday, nine indicated that it would have to wait until retirement or until their present job conditions allowed it. The responses to question 11.a, b and c provide some initial information about the "trade-offs" that successive questions will exhibit as a requisite element of the superintendent.

Interview Responses

Least Used and Unused Work Skills

--- Curriculum and instruction skills including areas such as supervision, teacher training, curriculum development (15)

---

55 "Trade-off" in this research refers to the process of giving up a desired job satisfaction(s) in order to survive in the job and obtain (any) other factor(s) of job satisfaction.
Least Used and Unused Work Skills - continued

--- Reading, writing, speaking, public relations (9)
--- Teaching and working with kids (5)
--- Human relations skills including working with groups of opposing people (4)
--- My creative abilities in meeting with teachers and administrators for program development and implementation; I've been pushed into the business arena. (3)
--- The management of children (principal's role) (2)
--- Philosophy and learning theory (2)
--- Research skills (2)
--- My job requires that I be aware of numerous skill areas and be able to judge those who have primary responsibility in these areas. I work through others. I'm a functional illiterate who is only a leader, monitor, director, defender and sounding board. I don't do things other than managerial and review functions.
--- My least used and my most competent skill is understanding the full functions of elementary schools and the potential of elementary schools for challenging students.
--- Staff development for administrators. Also the direct evaluation of staff.
--- Handling legislative matters and the knowledge of school law
--- Research skills and my other operational skills of "producing" have gone into atrophy. Now I delegate others to produce.
--- Most of them! Conceptualization of new ideas.
--- Reading instruction and computer programming

Most Used Work Skills

--- Organizational development (6)
--- Management skills; selection of personnel (6)
--- Human Relations Skills (5)
--- Long range planning (3)
--- Decision-making skills (3)
--- Writing and speaking and persuading (2)
--- School law
Most Used Work Skills - continued

---- Coordination and follow through of activities

---- Managing many power relationships between symbiotic groups.
I often must set one group against another. I must manipulate
in order to get my desired results.*

*See Appendix F for the text of the remaining interview responses.
Question 12

Which of your personal needs are not being met by your present job? Which are being met? How do you feel about this?

With many respondents, this question served as a turning point in the interview. "Interview questions must help the interviewer to motivate the respondent to provide the desired information, and often the interviewer must go beyond initial responses to probe the specific meanings..." For some superintendents, it was the spot at which they decided that this interview was different than most, and that perhaps they too, could benefit from earnest participation. It was also the point at which they began sharing of themselves as whole persons for whom one's life at work is relentlessly intertwined with one's life outside of work. For example, most people develop personal strategies which enable them to link the present to the future; i.e., to make plans, and have goals, hopes and dreams. These strategies, when directed towards work, encompass the whole of a person's life plans, which in turn encompasses a person's self-image. Most job satisfaction research ignores this necessary framework.

Some responses repeat factors affecting the quality of work and the attitudes caused by those factors. But more importantly, the responses to this question (and question 14) reveal the effects (or consequences) of these factors and attitudes for one's job, one's family and oneself; for example, "I can't overcome the devastating influence of job pressures on my family relations," and "I'm giving up too much for this position."

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57 Ginzberg, p. 175.
The frequency and importance of each unmet and met need are largely self-explanatory, while their meanings and implications receive elaboration in question 14. What is extremely significant is the distinctly different message conveyed by the list of unmet needs and the list of met needs as well as the congruence of the needs within each list. It appears that the superintendents' work-related lives are satisfying, while their personal lives are (at least in comparison) suffering. The starkness of the contrast is a compelling picture of the way in which the school superintendent adjusted to the particular attributes and liabilities of the job and the job situation.

The maximum satisfaction workers can experience is probably determined by the extent to which the job fulfills their needs. In addition, their satisfaction will also be influenced by their perceptions and evaluation of their worker-job compatibility.58

The follow-up question, "how do you feel about this?" was intended to elicit a synthesis of the relationship between the superintendents' two lists of needs. The apparent honesty and sincerity of these efforts at self-reflection are note-worthy; for example "...I feel cheated in my outside life" and "My marriage has suffered and been very trying to deal with." Most surprising and startling is the fact that the superintendents' sadness, regret and even anger, when speaking of their unmet needs, can be immediately followed by an affirmation of their job satisfaction and self-satisfaction in terms of their met needs. What is the process of coexistence? Why and how is one set of needs able to be realized at the expense of the other? How painful is the trade-off? Ginzberg suggests that:

The major challenge that individuals experience in the shaping of their careers is to handle their strong needs and desires in such a fashion that they do not disrupt their other important objectives and [needs].59

58 Sarata, p. 59.

59 Ginzberg, p. 174
Their own lists and explanations of unmet and met needs are strong indications that most school superintendents in the present sample have not successfully met the challenge!

Interview Responses

Table III

Most Common Met Needs:

- Status, respect, prestige and recognition (19)
- Self-satisfaction, self-esteem, self-importance, ego needs (19)
- Standard of living (13)
- Important contribution to the field and to fellow man (12)
- Power, need to run things and be boss (8)
- Fulfilling life, personal accomplishments (6)

Most Common Unmet Needs:

- Responsibility to and time with family (20)
- Cultural growth (travel, reading, writing, plays, concerts) (19)
- Recreational needs, hobbies, vacation time (13)
- Physical exercise and health (10)
- Personal growth and emotional needs (5)

How Do You Feel About This?

----- Met needs outweigh unmet needs

----- I feel satisfied in my professional role but I feel cheated in my outside life. My job doesn't allow me the time to do the things I enjoy. The two are inseparable. My job is with me all the time. It is extremely important that I thoroughly enjoy work; thus I'm willing to sacrifice those unmet needs!

----- The job precludes me from having close friends. I am definitely alienated. This is the prime negative job aspect.

----- Comparing met and unmet needs, the job wins out. As long as I want to sit in the superintendent's chair, I must agree to sacrifice things.
How Do You Feel About This - continued

---- It's not a fair trade-off. I'm giving up too much for the position. While I wouldn't leave the job, it is unfair to my personal life.

---- I'm not able to relax and respond to the environment without feeling that there is an institutional response expected.

My job is always unfinished. I suppose I could meet some more of my needs if I could run the school system like a business. Some of my colleagues can do that. It's not my way.

---- I hate it. I can't go without a shave, dress any way I want and go anywhere I want without being recognized. My kids are not allowed the same mistakes as others.

---- I'm not resigned to this balance for long. There is a competition for power between the mayor, the school committee chairman, me—the superintendent, and me—the man with a family.

---- I don't see my son very often but I made a decision to be superintendent and I must live with it. The advantages to me personally outweigh the disadvantages. I try to make it up to my family, but it doesn't usually work. I can't overcome the devastating influence of job pressures on my family relations. I lack patience for my family problems. Strangers' problems probably get more and better attention from me than issues at home. In general, my family seems to get second best.

---- There isn't time to become involved with my family as much as I'd like. I've accepted it however. I've got "personal growth" time written into my contract but none at home.

---- This job is weighted overwhelmingly on the side of meeting the needs I described as met. I however find the position more of an opportunity than a sacrifice.

---- The superintendency is a lonely position. I'm not part of any group, and people are always "dealing" with me.

---- The solution lies in how you organize your central office.

It's my fault, not the job. Also, none of the needs I described as unmet have reached the breaking point. If so, I would not be on the job.

---- I'm probably not as effective in either aspect of my life (professional or personal) because of the hassle trying to juggle them. Everything has to be scheduled.

---- It is a necessary trade-off because met needs require so much time. I'm dissatisfied with it and I'm more motivated to change my circumstance.
How Do You Feel About This - continued

----- My synthesis of the situation is negative. The job takes more than it provides. Many superintendents quit because of this sacrifice. But I do it because it has to be done.

----- This job leads to some family problems. I'm at a point where it is almost too difficult and far gone to do anything about. My marriage has suffered and been very trying to deal with. I can't get off this treadmill I'm on because financially I'm in so deep and my ego needs are so important. What a heavy price!

----- On total balance, those met needs outweigh the others, but the gap is closing. When the gap closes it will be time to quit.

----- I don't know how you can do the job as it should be done and maintain a family. The time I had with my kid was all parceled up. She became more dependent on her peers than on me. I did a poor job of managing my time. The highs are far more sustaining than the lows in the short run, but eventually the lows took their toll on me and won out. Also, I'm now torn between a desire to get a "bigger piece of the pie" and the dictates of my conscience to continue to carry the torch." This is a crucial choice if one is to exist in a capitalist society.

----- My whole personal existence has become sublimated. My job and my life have become the same at the expense of my family, and the things I like to do. A good friend said, "You don't have enough fun. In fact, you don't know how to have fun." I laughed at first but that's basically true. To do the job properly, any free time should be spent resting to "climb into the tank again." However, at my last breath, knowing I've contributed something and worked hard while I've been here, is important. Sounds trite but I'm a trite person. I have helped people. Within all these parameters, I'm satisfied.*

* See Appendix F for the text of the remaining interview responses.
Question 13

Some people say that it is impossible, psychologically speaking, to separate the world of work from that of friends, family, and other social relationships. That is to say, what happens at work affects and is affected by what happens outside of work. Others say that it is possible and necessary to separate the two. What is your experience?

This question is the second in a series of three that explore the effects of job stimulated attitudes and behaviors on the superintendents' personal life. Unfortunately the question was poorly constructed and was too "psychological." The inclusion of three factors—friends, family, and social relationships—together with the intended clarification ("that is to say,...")—created a diversionary effect and allowed the respondents a wide choice of interpretations. Though the responses, as a group, contain a wealth of information about the social consequences of the superintendency, individually, they lack cohesiveness in terms of the expressed question. The expected "either-or" responses to this question did not happen. A majority of the respondents (believing "it is impossible but necessary to separate...") focused their remarks on two major themes. First, the "publicness" of the superintendent is the major obstacle to the separation of the world of work and one's personal life. While there are many doctors and lawyers, there is only one superintendent; he/she is a public servant whose actions affect the whole community. For example, one superintendent said: "Everywhere I go, I'm known because I'm such an extremely public figure. I'm not permitted an escape from my role."

Second, the superintendent's acceptance of the public nature of the job and all its accompanying demands have deleterious effects for the superintendent's family. For example, a wife's propriety and the children's notoriety are socially constraining burdens. Two related research studies offer evidence that most superintendents can't or won't defer to their personal lives. The Gross study found that "when confronted with incompatible expectations with respect to their time
allocation, ... the majority of superintendents (66%) conformed to the 'occupational' expectations rather than to the family expectation, that 8% conformed to their family obligation, and that 26% adopted some kind of compromise...."60 Ginzberg's study of talent and performance indicates that "most of the group spent some of their free time and many spent a considerable amount of their free time, in activities that were closely connected with their work."61

A smaller group of respondents in the present study who feels that it is "possible and necessary to separate the two," explains that the mental health of the superintendent is dependent upon leaving the job at the office, and finding social life and friends outside the school system community. Most of this group share similar feelings with the first group about malaise of the superintendency; however, they feel it is possible, if one works at it, ("It has taken me years and a divorce to achieve it,... however my family might not agree as much.") to separate work from friends, and/or family, and/or social relationships.

Interview Responses

Table IV

A) Those Who Feel It Is Impossible But Necessary To Separate The World Of Work From That Of Friends, Family And Other Social Relationships (Approximately 17 superintendents)

B) Those Superintendents Who Feel It Is Possible And Necessary To Separate The Two (Approximately 8 superintendents)

C) Those Superintendents Who Do Not Feel It Is Necessary To Separate The Two.

60 Gross, op. cit., p. 267.

61 Ginzberg, p. 190.
Their Comments - A:

I've never been able to separate the two. Most of my basic discussions with people come back to the schools and many of my social functions are directly related to the job. In the family is where the intrusion is greatest. In family emergencies, I'm rarely available. I'm unable to attend events of my children and wife that a family and husband should go to. I miss not being able to participate regularly in evening meals with my family. I eat here in town before going to night meetings. It's lonely. This is a sacrifice I'm willing to take to be able to keep this "never-a-dull-moment-job."

***

I can't separate them. The job is heavily a part of my social relationships and in large measure determines my relationship with my family. My children never know whether their daddy is their father or the superintendent of schools. My wife doesn't know either, but she thinks I'm more the superintendent than the husband. My loss of personal identity is the worst aspect of the job.

***

As hard as I try, it is too difficult to separate. I carry my work home with me. It gets frustrating to continually deal with job-related problems at home. If my son asks me a Math question, I often try to give him the answer too quickly to get it over quickly. My family suffers. It is the most devastating effect of the job. I haven't had the kinds of relationships I would have loved to have had with my children. I've had to schedule in my children. It's become artificial rather than natural. I can't be there when they need me. I envy my wife's role and her kind of relationship with the children. However, I am fairly successful in avoiding social relationships with school system people. I've developed "outside" friends.

***

It is necessary but it isn't possible. This town forced me into being a recluse when I found that everyone was trying to compromise me, set a trap for me and get favors from me. They even started rumors about me. It forced me into seclusion and I attempted to refrain from social functions.

***

Work impinges on my family. I must schedule-in my kids needs. The job establishes a level and type of behavior that makes me feel responsible to maintain public's expectations of me.
Their Comments - A - continued

I am not at my own discretion to control my life. My social relationships are primarily with professional friends. Even if I'm mowing my lawn, the neighbors inevitably talk about their kids and school.

* * * *

Their Comments - B:

It is best for my family to keep the job totally separate. I accomplish this by not living in this town, by never discussing business at home, and by keeping the number of school type social relationships and functions to a minimum.

* * * *

I absolutely separate the two. I bet I don't have 10 people in this town of around 50,000 that I socialize with. With my family it's more difficult but I try. However, my children are subjected to more stress because I'm the superintendent.

* * * *

Outside interests are more important to me than this job. I build a wall between the two. My work is a game and I play the game as best I can, but the problems are those of the city and the whole school system--not my individual personal problems.

* * * *

Their Comments - C:

I don't try to separate the two. I'm always discussing or arguing education issues. My friendships are school system-related to a large degree. I like to think about work all the time. My family is willing.

* * * *

I'm not the superintendent at home. I can separate my work from my family. But my family is very small and I have very few social relationships. Work is so completely absorbing. It provides the few friends I have.

* * * *

I don't mind family and work being meshed in that closely. Most activities of my wife and I are intertwined with education in this state. I plead guilty to the fault that work is
Their Comments - C - continued

too much of my life. I admit it but I don't regret it. I am very conscientious. It demands so much commitment that other needs by default get left out. I don't know if I could be effective if I didn't make the large commitment.*

*See Appendix F for the text of the remaining interview responses.
Question 14.a and b:

14.a There is general agreement that one's work or job inevitably affects how one thinks about and values one's self (for example, one's values, sense of well-being, life style). The effects are almost always mixed: Some of the effects on the self are seen as "good," others are seen as "bad." This has come out rather clearly in our work with physicians, lawyers, etc... What have been some of the "good" effects of your job on your view of yourself?

14.b What have been some of the "bad" effects?

Though unplanned, question 14.a and b have clearly provided an opportunity for the superintendents to expound the meaning of the "met" and "unmet" needs in question 12. That is to say, by describing "good and bad effects," the superintendents are actually giving recognition to the role the job has played in their lives and to the kind of emotional response they have made to it. In doing so, the most significant findings of this research have surfaced.

The responses to the question of "good effects" are a modest elaboration of the "met" needs reported in question 12. The following needs are stressed again: pride, accomplishment, status, confidence, recognition, self-worth, ego-growth, contribution to society, and financial security. In our society, these are highly desired goals which stress the non-economic meaning of work--a concept which is supposedly more characteristic of highly educated professionals. According to the Perkins study of school superintendents, the chief reasons for staying in the job were the "contribution to society" and the "challenge of it."62 Other superintendents value the prestige and status that accompany being at "the top." Burbank indulges the ego needs, among others, when he writes, "The gravity and complexity of the problems facing the superintendent are measures of professional stature needed to fill this position. Nothing less than greatness will do."63 The preeminence of the "met" needs is also discussed by

63 Burbank, p. 117.
Knox in a book about college presidents, school superintendents and the like. He writes, "Reward is inherent in the challenge and specific to the task. Always a new challenge and always a new way to meet it. If there is continuing challenge, there is the potential of continuing achievement and success." The comments in the text of question 14.a exhibit individuals fulfilled and satisfied with their work. These statements are not specifically contested by this writer. What is perplexing, however, are the proud assertions of their attainment of society-valued, career achievements and personal needs simultaneously presented with claims such as having been "robbed" of a significant portion of their personal life.

The good effects are my own self-respect and community recognition. ...The importance of the job and my own ego growth have taught me that I can do things better than others.

My life has gone increasingly inward. I haven't enjoyed a normal social life or normal vacations. My physical health has suffered. Everything revolves around the job.

The "robbery," so to speak, has left psychological and physical scars which are elaborated upon profoundly and self-critically in the superintendents' responses to question 14.b. These responses are also, to some extent, a self-critical analysis of numerous negative job factors cited in other interview questions earlier in this research. Included are references to "guilt at being nowhere the kind of father or husband I ought to be," loneliness, increasing materialism, decreasing idealism, dejection, paranoia, resignation, value compromise, deteriorating health, and suppression of emotions. Given the fact that the public awareness of work dissatisfaction among highly educated professional people is a fairly recent phenomenon, and self-reported accounts such as contained herein are not known

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to be previously published, it can be speculated that the superintendents' prospective self-concept (early in adult life), with regard to work, did not include the attendant afflictions listed above; consequently, the afflictions developed as the job progressed. It is plausible also to suggest that the value orientation of these individuals determined the nature of their response to job-related dilemmas and conflicts among equally desirable choices. In other words, because most people who achieve in society adhere to Protestant ethic ideals, work time is given priority, and therefore prevails over leisure time. More specifically, people who aspire to and reach the superintendency receive cultural support (via societal norms) for a high degree of self-restraint in the use of one's leisure or non-work time. Implied in this discussion is the need to examine issues broader than working conditions, if one is to gain more than a veiled understanding of "what the superintendency does to the superintendent" or more precisely perhaps, in light of the findings, "what the superintendent does to gain and retain the superintendency."

Interview Responses

What Have Been Some of the "Good" Effects of Your Job on Your View of Yourself?

Confidence, independence, a feeling of responsibility and authority, a feeling of making a difference. Increased my pride.

* * * *

I have been part of a revolution in our social system. I have met the ultimate challenge of leadership. I have met my challenges well, with intellectual calm and poise. I've shown an ability to cope. I've contributed to a community in a way no one will ever really know or appreciate. Very few people ever have the opportunity to make the kind of significant contribution I have. Given me great ego satisfaction. I've done something in this world.

* * * *

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65 Ginzberg, p. 198.
What Have Been the "Good" Effects.... - continued

The job has given better security in terms of a role in society, and the power and authority to affect the lives of 30,000 people. It's allowed me to impose my values on the system and the people I associate with.

* * * *

Good effects of the job are the interest, challenge, excitement, power and the feeling of pride when the system runs well. The job has helped me be more rational and objective--two qualities I like in myself and am effective at.

* * * *

Prestige. Respect from community and peers. Greater feeling for democracy, people's needs, and the good in serving one's fellow man.

* * * *

I'm the boss, I'm successful and doing good for society. Deeper realization of the dignity and worth of humans.

* * * *

Financial security. My self-esteem and self-worth are high. Job also has confirmed that I'm a work ethic person. That is a complete view of myself and the central nature of my being.

* * * *

Sense of personal worth and status. Surrounded by top people. I need to be viewed as a competent person and I've received that. The contact with top people in other fields also is good for my view of myself.

* * * *

I've felt a great sense of worth and personal confidence in attaining and mastering this job. I found I had no difficulty matching wits or intellect with anyone in the business. The job has also broadened and sensitized my values.

* * * *

What Have Been Some of the "Bad" Effects?

The job tends to be a self-destructive job. It has destroyed a lot of friends. The emotional intensity and conflicts inherent in the job is enough to break the strongest people. There are many double-bind situations and there is very little positive reinforcement. There is a tremendous conflict of values when I
What Have Been Some of the "Bad" Effects - continued

I feel a lack of ability to do what I believe is the right thing, because of an opposing position by the Board of Education. Similarly, when it is necessary for me to defend something publicly that I don't believe in because it is for the good of all concerned. The job has been destructive to my physical health. I've aged three or four years for every one. If I had had children I would not have been able to be a successful superintendent.

* * * *

I've had to compromise my own sense of values approximately 15-20% of the time. I feel a bit of guilt. I'm very conscious of the public's expectation of a superintendent. It makes me feel constricted. Another bad effect had been the lack of time with my family. My younger son complains about my being away and this makes me feel guilty. And my wife is forced to pick up the slack.

* * * *

I know that the physical wear and tear of the job is taking its toll on me. I also know that the job is forcing me to overschedule. My life-style is severely cramped. It is having a definite negative effect on my family, and I'm quite dissatisfied.

* * * *

Some of what I've had to do from a power standpoint (firings and reorganization) have developed in me the ability to submerge the personal impact that such decisions have. I'd like to think of myself as more sensitive. Success in the job requires so many analytical problem solving skills, that it gives me a tendency to approach all aspects of life in a logical rational way. I have lost some of my ability to respond emotionally. For example, those who knew me a few years ago say I was by nature a very funny guy in a natural way. Now, there's none of that. I am seen as calculating and strategy-oriented. I've taken on a manager's role. I've paid a price for it.

* * * *

Increasingly there has been a conflict between the political and the professional aspects of the job. I can tolerate political shenanigans of the school committee that would have bothered me terribly twenty years ago. My steadfastness of purpose is being tainted and bent. My integrity is being compromised by my recognition of political reality. The values my mother taught me are losing out but I'm getting more done. On occasion I get pretty damn tired. My tolerance of inefficiency is greater.
What Have Been Some of the "Bad" Effects - continued

That is both positive and negative. Some of my critics criticize me for being too tolerant and less concerned. But I am less concerned. I've adapted to the job. I've learned to say "well you can't do anything anyway," and walk away from it. I've reduced my commitment.

***

My life has gone increasingly inward. I haven't enjoyed a normal social life and normal vacations. My children have had to accept the exigencies of their father's position; that is, the job comes first. Too many times, I haven't been able to take my wife out or my son to a ballgame. Everything revolves around the job. The job has had negative effects on my sense of well-being, but it's also been so enriching and never dull. My physical health has suffered. I just had a semi-heart attack which they said came from cumulative fatigue. The life style of the job has caused an overwhelming amount of aging to my body. In nine years here I've aged many times that.

***

The bad effects have been too much personal sacrifice, too many self-doubts as to how successful I am, too little time with my family and too little concern about my health. Another bad effect is the presence of value conflicts like the following: I may agree with the teacher's union, but I'm employed to represent management's point of view. Often I must resign myself to the employer's point of view or leave the job and I've never left a job over it.

***

I have to plan the time with my family. There's no spontaneity and I feel very guilty. I know this is wrong. I'm constantly compensating. The job provides an artificiality with my family. I can't involve my kids in the conduct of my work because of the ethics involved. There is little or no recreation time and a closed narrow life. This job is a tenuous one with no feeling of security.

***

I feel badly about allowing myself to be seen as far too flexible. I have a sense of guilt once in a while about my criteria for my decisions. I'm not sure I should always be imposing my values.

***

The job has negative effects on my health. I tend to be a whirling dervish doing things and losing perspective. It's like drinking out a fire hose. A lot goes by no matter how big
What Have Been Some of the Bad Effects - continued

a gulp. In some instances you can't be yourself. You're a public person and sometimes you're your own worst enemy. The vices you allow yourself are those which don't tarnish your public image. This forces me to adopt a code of values that reflect the upstanding citizen values as defined by this town. When you're up to your ass in alligators, it's hard to remember your job is to drain the swamp.

* * *

The continual criticism and personal attack make me worry about my own confidence. It deteriorates my self-worth, my self-respect, etc. I have to take responsibility for other people's behavior and have to be the target of criticism for their behavior. There is very little praise and positive reinforcement. The staff are afraid of trying to influence you. The public think you're paid well enough. My philosophy and design for my work life comes from the old protestant work ethic. Work is a duty. Who the hell says you have to love it and that it should be fun? I've been resigned to that from day one. I don't like it but it's a necessary thing. At the same time, I feel a lot of guilt about the amount that the job has kept me from my family. My children have sort of grown up without me. Finally, I can't afford the luxury of passing myself off as an expert and running the system at my own level of competence. Society and education are much too complex for that paternalistic role now. We must rely on other experts.

* * *

The job has not negatively affected my values and I haven't had to compromise those values. But it has negatively affected my life-style because I'm away so much of the time. It's had a negative effect on me as an individual because I haven't done myself or my family justice.

* * *

I feel some guilt about not fulfilling the role of father and the family-man as I feel I should. I also need more understanding from my friends.

* * *

The job causes feelings of guilt when I do things that are demeaning or degrading to the job. For example, drinking too much in a public cafe. Another bad effect of the job is that I become an upholder of views that I do not really hold personally. The worst effect of the job is my loss of personal identity. I'm expected to live by a set of rules and conduct that is twice as strict as the average guy.

* * *
What Have Been Some of the "Bad" Effects - continued

First, people who were close to you and liked you when you were in power move away from you when you are no longer in power. This has a negative effect on my self-image. Second, I became a work horse and let the personal and family stuff slide. It cost a lot! Over and over again I've had to say to my children, "can't make your game" or your circus, or something.

* * * *

The job has made me a much too cautious person. It's also placed enormous constraints on my family. I'm nowhere near being the kind of husband or father I ought to be. And my wife and kids know it.

* * * *

The job has thrust my own self too much into the center where I put my own work needs ahead of my responsibility to my family. My marriage has really suffered. I relax less. I see less entertainment. I read superficially. All this makes me feel guilty!

* * * *

The job has a momentum of its own and just carries me along. The result has been physical deterioration, unhappy feelings, and a frightening realization that I'm stuck.*

*See Appendix F for the text of the remaining interview responses.
Questions 18.a and 18.b

18.a Regardless of how you feel about your present occupation, would you rather be involved in some other kind of work/some other kind of role?

18.b What are the circumstances that would enable you or deter you from changing jobs (either within or outside of your field)?

A research study related to the question of mid-career change reported that the vast majority of highly educated and skilled people who were making changes, were staying within the same field; it was found to be highly unusual for a person to totally abandon a decade or more of experience in one field and strike out in a completely new direction. In addition, very few people made job shifts because of general or particular dissatisfaction with their previous situations. 66 Another related study with a similar sample of highly talented people, found that two-thirds of the sample did not intend to switch, while the remaining third indicated that they planned to leave at some time in the future. 67

The present findings, not unlike the findings above, showed that a large majority of the superintendents (between 70 and 73%) quite definitely do not want to switch to some other kind of work (career) or to some other role within the field of education. Though an earlier question showed 66% of the sample "concerned about their future," the present two questions (18.a and 18.b) illustrate the superintendents' difficulty and reluctance to shift career or role. The two principle reasons offered in opposition to a job shift were: they had not yet mastered their job; and 2) even where they felt mastery, there were still so many challenges left. Furthermore, it can be speculated that superintendents, unlike most professionals, have often spent many years since school "climbing up the hierarchy"

66 Heistand, p. 9.

67 Ginzberg, p. 167.
to their present position, and as a result, perhaps have a stronger desire to remain where they are.

Five superintendents were considering switching roles within the field of education because of new challenges, improved situations, greater income, and possibly having broader impact on public education. Most of them were not dissatisfied with their present jobs. It is interesting that there was no mention of retirement as a desired alternative. Though the median age is 48, the whole group talked about either staying in their jobs or switching to others.

Only six superintendents wanted to switch careers. They wanted to do so for varying reasons such as present job dissatisfaction, a lark, new challenges, new competition, and the reduction in responsibility. In a report on new careers for mid-life, Hoenninger wrote that "the economic and social successes which are driving forces earlier, are not as likely to be as fulfilling in middle-life. Neither are the symptoms of success-without-meaning difficult to observe in a group of economically and socially successful people." This writer believes that more members of the majority group would have considered an alternative career or role if it were not for the kinds of factors listed in response to question 18.b. The chief circumstances deterring respondents were loss of retirement benefits, reduction in income and various family related reasons such as children in school and the problems of finding a new home in a strange area. Psychological research posits that "...needs stemming from insecurity and threat become important in the later years. ...anxiety and susceptibility to threat increases with passage of time." In addition, switching from

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such a celebrated job (especially if it is to one with less status) seems to cause a confrontation with tradition, and stimulates gratuitous and often intimidating comments from colleagues and the general public. "...Such reappraisals raise havoc with life style, interpersonal relationships and family life."70

Finally, analysis of the findings with the variables of age, tenure, and size of school district yielded nothing startling. The results in every category showed the majority against switching jobs by a 2 to 1 margin. The non-tenured superintendents were the only ones whose distribution (almost 3 to 2) was narrower than a 2 to 1 margin.

Interview Responses

Table V

A) Some Other Kind of Work: Yes: 6
In addition to the 6, 1 - if he could retire with pension at 55
1 - maybe in 5-6 years
1 - maybe in 10-15 years

B) Some Other Kind of Role
Within the Field of Education:

Yes: 5
Included in the 5, 2 - yes, in the future, but not now.
1 - at 55 years old

C) Some Other Kind of Work or Role:
No: 22
1 - yes/no; he's considering the idea.

Their Comments - A:

---- I'd like a change, such as selling or law. I'd like to do some writing, for example on "the missing link in cybernetics." Most important, I at least would like the choice

70Hoenninger, pp. 18-19.
Their Comments - A - continued

--- Yes, if it was not for the money, I'd have had enough. If I could get full retirement benefits now, I'd switch fields in a minute. Though I'm satisfied with my job, I'd like to try something different.

--- I've been wondering whether I should chuck the whole superintendent bit, and start farming the land that was just left to us in Kansas. I'd get out of the rat race.

Their Comments - B:

--- If I could find a job that could maximize my talents and skills, then I'd move. However, I only know the public school and university arena. I'd also have to have control over time and power and resources as in this present job. I could become a teacher. I must be my own boss.

--- I'd like to teach and do consulting work at the state or national level. Can't switch now, however, because I have 4 kids in or on their way to college.

Their Comments - C:

--- Actually, I never felt that I ever totally mastered my job. There are still unexplored "roads" to the top.

--- The idea of mastering the job doesn't apply to me because the superintendency keeps changing.

--- Although I have some, I don't now have enough desire to be involved in some other kind of work/role.

--- I haven't mastered my job to the point that it isn't challenging.

Table VI - Question 18. b

Circumstances That Would Deter Superintendents From Changing Jobs:

--- Reduction in income, i.e. financial security (13)

--- Various family related reasons such as children in schools (11)

--- Loss of retirement benefits (7)

--- Declining job opportunities; i.e., job security (5)

--- Problems of finding new home and moving out of the familiar area (4)

--- Geographical preferences (2)
Other Comments:

---- Breaking relationships with staff and friends
---- Regrets about not fulfilling certain goals
---- Economy
---- Advancing age
---- The risk and insecurity of trying something new is threatening.
---- There is a stigma attached to people changing jobs or not working during their late forties.
---- Society doesn't give support to people trying to change jobs. There are other jobs that I would like to take for 1 or 2 years and that could use my skills for a short period of time but this becomes impossible because of the constraints on your personal security. Money is the key problem. People don't usually want you anymore at age 50.
---- Retirement benefits are a powerful influence when a person starts to consider old age. The retirement benefits laws lock superintendents in. Superintendents hang on and get stale, when ideally we should be able to move into something else just as interesting. To do this, we would need financial grants to help maintain family finances while we are relearning or retraining.
---- To change fields I'd need so many new credentials. American system locks us into our profession, through licensing procedures and others. We are stuck. Of course we can move, but at what price? In middle-class society, we keep on going in our same job because of our numerous responsibilities. We as men get ourselves hooked by a wife, a house, cars, college, insurance, etc. We are no longer free because we are controlled by the physical things.*

*See Appendix F for the text of the remaining interview responses.
Reflecting on your whole career, are you aware of changing values about work in yourself or in your staff?

School superintendents face a gradually developing dilemma. The world around them is changing—not simply in relation to their expertise in educational administration. Their attitudes toward work in general, their jobs, and their personal priorities, are all bound to be challenged by cultural changes vis-a-vis work. "New ideas about success revolve around various forms of self-fulfillment. The emphasis now is on the self..." Increasing throughout the last decade and still growing, are the demands of teacher unions for less work and more leisure, among other issues. In New York City last year, many interns and younger doctors went on strike to protest the long hours that are a tradition in hospitals. "Professionals are also faced with the challenges of understanding and working with their own children—and the questions their children raise may prompt the basic doubts and self-examinations that they naturally might begin to experience." Superintendents have the choice of utilizing their instinctual coping/defense mechanisms as a barrier to change, or they can try to integrate the changes with the natural processes of their adult development. "...The nature of one's job does seem to affect personality and adjustment, both personal and political. ...Further, the apparent relationship between jobs and personality is a function of both people selecting (and even changing) the nature of the jobs, as well as, jobs changing people."  

The findings for question 20 exhibit eleven superintendents (answered YES) who have experienced a self-examination concerning their values toward work. The focus of their responses is a fairly recent

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72 Dill, p. 49.
rejection of long held beliefs in the work-ethic and, consequently, a readjustment of their priorities. Given many of the superintendents' negative feelings and attitudes (described in the report of earlier questions), it is understandable that some superintendents would begin to reject the work ethic. At the same time, it is also understandable that some superintendents would stoically rise to the defense of the superintendency and the work ethic in order to maintain either their self-image, or public image, or both. Sixteen superintendents fall into the latter category. They have been thoroughly and successfully socialized to work as they first knew it.

In response to the question of changing values about work in their staff, superintendents from both groups above said YES (23) and they were unanimous in their perception of the new values of their staffs: "less work for more money" and "more money if more work." It is interesting to note that superintendents who were rejecting the work ethic for themselves, at the same time angrily berated their staff for demanding workers' rights and for abandoning the work ethic.

The work orientation adhered to by many in the earlier years begins to fail, if it is to fail, during the middle years. It is found no longer adequate as an organizing principle of life but nothing is very easily discovered to take its place. When structure built around one compartment of life begins to fall apart, the whole fabric of life is threatened--feelings of chaos, anxiety, or defeat may follow.74

Interview Responses

Table VII

A) Changing Values About Work In Yourself?
   Yes: 11  No: 16

B) Changing Values About Work In Your Staff?
   Yes: 23  No: 3

74Hoenninger, p. 19.
Their Comments - A:

I've moved away from my former belief in the Protestant ethic, and I'd advise my children against the "work-work-work" policy. I now keep time in perspective. I've changed in 30 years--farther away from 100% commitment of time to the job.

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I used to be a work ethic person. Now I think work is an evil. It has been robbing me of a chance to appreciate life outside of work.

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I've moved from a first generation work ethic belief, to a position where work is not all righteous and holy and completely consuming.

***

Some close friends of mine, my age, have died of cancer. This has made me want to readjust my priorities and change my values, but my conditioning hasn't allowed me to change much. I want more informality but I'm also not willing to risk losing my total "design" for the job by altering it. Work shouldn't be so compulsive and time consuming. In a sense it's too late now that my children are grown and their needs for me are less.

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No. I accept for myself a lot of the conclusions of C. Wright Mill's book White Collar.

***

I've always placed a high value on work and I still do.

***

I'm still hung up on the work ethic.

***

I'm a drone and I recognize that drones are antiquated, but I am stuck to the work ethic. It's too late to change. I'm too compulsive.

***

Their Comments - B:

I'm pissed off about the "give-away" to welfare recipients and my taxes picking up the bill for everyone else. I came up the hard way. I've worked my ass off. In my staff and everywhere,
Their Comments - B - continued

the work ethic is gone. This country is giving hand-outs to everyone. With taxes so high my salary has actually gone backwards.

* * * *

In the staff I see less conscience, less willingness to follow policy directives and an unwillingness to put in extra time without remuneration.

* * * *

New teachers are making more demands for rights and benefits rather than being top flight professionals.

* * * *

Not management people. But, yes, for teaching and civil service staff --those with less rewarding positions in terms of status, income and esteem. There is a real correlation between work values and esteem and income.

* * * *

They're less willing than before to do the shitwork, the non-education stuff.

* * * *

They want more pay for less work. I don't really like that but then I look at the economic reality which says more people should work and people should work less.

* * * *

It's simply a job and they want personal satisfaction from the job. To get this, they describe their jobs in contracts. I envy that. Management is working harder and harder while the "troops" are defining their jobs narrower and narrower.

* * * *

Older staff are upset at the work value of younger staff who complain about too much work. Younger people put limits on the amount they'll allow work to infringe on their life.

* * * *

They now have an "it's in the contract attitude." They want more money if they do a little more work.*

*See Appendix F for the text of the remaining interview responses.*
Question 21

As was mentioned in the cover letter, this research is part of a larger project which involves job satisfaction interviews with doctors, lawyers, and other highly educated professional people. Now that we have almost completed the interview, can you tell me, from your personal experience, if you think we are on the road to something important? For example, is it only the blue collar and middle level white collar workers who suffer from alienation and other factors of job dissatisfaction?

Consistent with the "self-report" nature of this research, the report of the data is concluded with the responses to question 21 which illustrate the superintendents' own summarizations and speculations.

Lack of time in some of the interviews prevented approximately 7 superintendents from answering this question, but 20 of the 23 others expressed, with varying degrees of support, agreement with the purpose of this research. Some expressed agreement in terms of their knowledge and personal feelings about the plight of superintendents.

All levels are dissatisfied from time to time. There is a dearth of studies and lack of evidence showing job dissatisfaction in highly educated professional people. Studies that exist are superficial. This study is the first to really probe deeply. I know many who are dissatisfied. They're lying if they won't admit it.

Others chose to focus on the reasons why it is not just blue collar and middle level white collar workers who suffer from alienation and other factors of job dissatisfaction. Among this group, faced with the comparison of their jobs to those of blue collar workers, a few chose to extol the virtues of the superintendency and explain why lower level workers are necessarily more dissatisfied.

No, it's not only blue collar and middle level white collar workers who suffer, but there is greater boredom at these positions. In addition, there is something inherently satisfying and rewarding through participation in service occupations.

A few of them desired once again to disclaim dissatisfaction themselves,
but agreed that it was a real issue for many other superintendents.

I'm sure you're on the right track. I don't happen to be dissatisfied but I know many superintendents who are. Their wives hate the job, the families are messed up, often resulting in abandonment or divorce. But I've been able to maintain my family values.

One respondent felt the research had no importance to him, and that the problems are usually in the superintendents themselves and not caused by the job.

The answers to this question did not lend themselves to a general conclusion. The question simply allowed the respondents—after speaking rather specifically and personally for a few hours—to reflect and/or theorize about the subject matter of the interviews.*

*See Appendix F for the text of the remaining interview responses.
CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSIONS; SPECULATIONS; AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Conclusions and Speculations: Discussion

This writer believes that despite the number of questions and dilemmas raised by the findings, there are some discernible patterns and "messages" in the superintendents' responses as a whole, which should not be subordinated to or subsumed in the belief that every superintendent and every school district are unique. For example, this writer has concluded that for school superintendents there exists concurrent dissatisfaction and satisfaction, the quantity and quality of which is a profoundly complex issue. It is also significant that the job of school superintendent "serves to regulate [their] life activity, to fix [their] position in society, to determine the pattern of [their] social participation, and the nature of [their] life experiences, and a source of many of [their] satisfactions and affective experiences." 75 One of the interjected purposes of this research is to show how two distinctly different responses to the job (dissatisfaction and satisfaction) can be experienced simultaneously. While the contention about each superintendent's uniqueness is not to be denied, it is equally important and argueable that our understanding of the superintendency, superintendents, and their inter-relationships will remain as it has for years--stagnant--if generalizations and speculations based on the examination of self-reported attitudes and feelings (e.g., this study) are not acknowledged and utilized for further research.

The conclusions and speculations generally fall into two categories:

1. What the superintendent does to attain and retain the superintendency.

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75 Friedmann and Havinghurst, p. 3.
2. What the superintendency does to the superintendent.
The first category is itself an example of a conclusion and insight
drawn from this research. The formulation of this conclusion war-
rants elaboration. Resting upon the assumption and hypotheses set
forth in Chapter I, the original purpose of this study was to examine
what the superintendency does to the superintendent. In doing so, it
was expected that evidence would be found to support or refute the
hypotheses. One hypothesis stated that:

The factors that compose work satisfaction and dissatisfaction
of school superintendents are more varied and numerous than is
generally assumed or reported.

The findings of this research, primarily Chapter V, give credibility
to this hypothesis and encourage the belief that the job called the
superintendency (the functions and aspects, etc.) is not the only
cause of the work-related regrets and dissatisfactions that accrue for
the superintendent. That is to say, there is a distinction between
that which the role requires and that which the superintendent allows
and promotes the role to become. A description of the superintendency
contains the role a superintendent is expected to play. Job (work)
role has traditionally referred to "the minimum number of attitudes
and behaviors required [or expected] for participation in the overt
expression" of, for example, the superintendency. 76 Bluntly speaking,
the worker does what is called for, and consequently receives concom-
mitant positive and negative effects. It is in this light that one
can examine what the superintendency does to the superintendent.

However, it can be concluded from this study's findings, that
another process also occurs. The school superintendent adds to the
role a "sub-identity" which is "...a cluster of all the attributes
manifested by a person, not the minimal requirements of the position." 77

76 D. Miller, "The Study of Social Relationship: situation,

77 Ibid.
A sub-identity consists of a person's traits and describes what they are like and how they do things." The job, more than simply a role, permeates one's identity; i.e., the bulk of the superintendents' attributes is the consequence of a continual adaptation to the criteria needed for attaining and retaining their ultimate success—the superintendency.

The two suggested categories are integrally related and overlap profusely, but for the purposes of analysis, it is assumed the dichotomy will help clarify the discussion. The encompassing issue for the conclusions and speculations within the first category is role conflict. Role conflict is a major cause of the contrasting needs listed on page 95; for example, "status, respect, prestige and recognition" versus "responsibility to and time with family." Clearly, the spouse/parent role conflicts with the work/professional role. The nature of this conflict has been illustrated throughout Chapters IV and V. Needing further analysis are questions such as the following: Why were certain roles and needs met, and not others? What are the conditions under which one choice or set of choices dominate? Helpful to an understanding of these issues is the theory of conflict resolution proposed by Gross.

According to Gross, the choice between a certain role and an equally valued one, depends on a person's perception of the expectations of significant other people. If the expectations of "others" are legitimate, a person feels the "others" have a right to expect a certain behavior or attitude. On the other hand, if the person feels the others will apply strong sanctions unless he/she fulfills a certain expectation, then he/she will behave so as to minimize negative sanctions and maximize positive ones. The influence of these two dimensions is related to the person's orientation; the

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78 Ibid.

79 Gross, op cit, p. 281-318. Note: The following two paragraphs will be loosely quoting the elements of Gross' theory of conflict resolution.
that is, a person having a moral orientation, stresses the right of others to hold a certain expectation, while a person having an expedient orientation gives priority to the possible negative sanctions because this type of person's primary desire is to be self-protective and to provide the best defense in the face of negative sanctions.

For the superintendent, the significant others are his/her family, on one side, and people related to the work role, on the other. The expectation of each is that the superintendent spend more time relating to them and their concerns. The findings in Chapter V show that the superintendent has given the work role higher priority than the spouse/parent role. Before examining this choice, the following points of information should be noted. First, Gross concluded that his theory could not take into account, and was not applicable to inter-role conflict (the different expectations arising out of a person holding two conflicting positions). His theory did predict with statistical significance for conflict limited to one's performance within a single position; i.e., intra-role conflict. Second, Gross stated that his theory had not taken into account the person's own expectations or internal sanctions. This writer does not intend to improve Gross' theory or to propose a set of rules at all. Gross' framework is used in this discussion simply to help explain the responses of school superintendents in the present research. As such, for this discussion, expectations will mean both the superintendents' own, and those of others.

It is this writer's opinion that school superintendents assign greater legitimacy to work role expectations because of a reverence for the work ethic, a belief in their own importance as public servants, and because they feel they must do it for the sake of their families. This does not mean that they necessarily prefer giving more time and importance to the work role, although this could also be true. In fact, it is possible that some superintendents believe their family expectations are more legitimate, but at the same time, they
suppress this and replace it with the rationale of obligation to the job. There are demographic and social-psychological factors operative here. The reality is that 98% of all superintendents are men and all the superintendents in this sample are men. Traditional socialization patterns assign the breadwinner role to men, and reward them for their achievements at work. For men, the most important parts of their identity are enveloped in their professional identity. As a result, obligation to the work role can be rationalized in terms of support for, but simultaneously at the expense of, the family role it is intended to benefit.

The negative sanctions applied by work role "others" are more of a threat to a superintendent than negative family sanctions. The work role sanctions are potentially a painful blow to the superintendent's professional self-image and perhaps a fatal blow to his chances to maintain (or attain) the success and status which he has expected, has been expected of him, and has been (or will be) achieved. The potential negative sanctions applied by one's family usually don't appear immediately, and are more easily rationalized when one's job is in the higher echelons of status and importance. Some superintendent's families feel that the superintendent does more for the children of others than he does for his own.

The role conflict discussed above is an inherent characteristic of the superintendency for people with spouse and/or family. The resolution of the role conflict must take into account the superintendents' personal needs. Setting aside for a moment the issue of conflicting roles and turning to the lists of unmet and met needs, we can find much to be said about each list and their inter-relationship. A job in which the unmet needs are fulfilled during the job is clearly an exception to the rule. It is reasonable to expect that most jobs would not oppress an individual to the degree that the unmet needs, or at least some of them, could not be met during leisure hours. In the case of blue collar workers, physical exhaustion from oppressive
Most Common Met Needs

(19) Status, respect, prestige and recognition;
(19) Self-satisfaction, self-esteem, self-importance, ego needs;
(13) Standard of living;
(12) Important contribution to the field and to fellow men;
(8) Power, need to run things and be boss;
(6) Fulfilling life, personal accomplishments.

Most Common Unmet Needs

(20) Responsibility to and time with family;
(19) Cultural growth (travel, reading, writing, theatre, concerts);
(13) Recreational needs, hobbies, vacation time;
(10) Physical exercise and health;
(5) Personal growth and emotional needs.

working conditions easily dissipates the fulfillment of personal needs during non-work hours. With regard to highly educated professionals such as school superintendents, job oppression is only half the problem; that is to say, while physical exhaustion definitely occurs, there is an additional type of exhaustion—voluntary exhaustion—which affects school superintendents. The conclusion being proposed is that school superintendents are well aware of the choices they make in allowing certain needs to be met at the expense of others. Superintendents complain most about the demands of their job on their time—yet they give it! They also claim their job robs them of personal lives—yet they do little to prevent it!

The research study by Ginzberg, referred to throughout this study, offers some insight into the nature of the superintendents' choice and abandonment of needs.

Values are generalized principles to which the individual has committed himself [herself]; in turn these help him [her] to choose and order the alternatives that he [she] encounters in any number of life situations. Since individuals hold more than one value there are frequently pulls and counterpulls. ...Values are evolved during the course of an individual's development as he [she] accepts some and rejects others from among those which are strongly held by persons close to him [her] and by the society in which he [she] lives. The individual must organize his [her] values into some type of system, ...he [she] can handle more readily any situations involving choices in terms of values which are important and others
that are less important to him [her].

In the case of school superintendents, the choices they made while attaining and retaining the superintendency seem to be based upon a clear and consistent prioritization of values and needs. To this writer, school superintendents emerge as "upward mobiles" who have been imbued with a strong positive identification with the system's values. The following excerpts are instructive of the values one might expect of school superintendents after reading the text of the interviews in this research. First, the author of The Eye of The Hurricane describes a feeling of "life influence" that drives people such as college presidents and school superintendents to

...work at a pace so furious that it destroys or pains other aspects of their lives. No one else has the same sense of total opportunity and total challenge; we must reach for them, and reach again and yet again. ...Never ending challenge and task is our way of life and we are privileged to serve in a profession of life influence. ...Let that be our challenge and at the same time our reward. ...No one within the profession has the same measure of influence and prestige.

The amount of self-importance in the above excerpt is astounding. Not to be outdone, Burbank, carrying the banner of grandeur, describes the kind of man who should strive for the superintendency:

Lesser men may be intimidated by this exposition of risks and perplexities. Men for these challenges will be those who welcome the call to battle in this high type of public service.

Lastly, in the name of sacrifice for success, one superintendent delivers an inspirational address to an organization of superintendents and illustrates the value orientation that is foremost when the "going gets rough":

80 Ginzberg, pp. 113, 114, 175, and 215.
82 Knox, pp. 141-147.
83 Burbank, p. 117.
...what other position, public or private, offers a greater opportunity to do more good for more people than that of the superintendent of schools? There isn't any. Why? Because no other position allows a single person to have so much influence on the lives of young people. ...do what I do when I think someone has taken a "cheap shot" at me. I visit a classroom in a building that I've helped build, taught by a very capable teacher whose appointment I've recommended, who is supervised by a principal I've selected and recommended to the Board of Education, and who is using a program of studies developed during my term in office. 84 ...Then, I just sit for a few minutes...and enjoy, enjoy.

These excerpts shed some light on the values of men who have devoted large amounts of time and energy to their work, who have been able to delay gratification and make other sacrifices for the purpose of attaining certain goals, and who have actively sought opportunities and taken risks in the interest of self-advancement. The superintendents interviewed for this research have spent most of their lifetime adhering to a value structure which encouraged their drive to attain certain work roles. Culminating in the superintendency, these work roles offered as their reward, varying degrees of status, self-esteem, power and the other "met needs" listed earlier.

These rewards were not without their costs. Unfortunately, the awareness of these costs usually came in retrospect. The following quotation speaks for itself:

Many a man...wishes he had not been so blinded by his ambition in his twenties. His need to prove himself deprived him of irreplaceable experiences with his wife and children. "If I had only known then what I know now about what is important in living."85

The next quotation is a response to one of the interview questions in this research. It is one of the few statements revealing any awareness of the economic and sex role realities germane to the superintendent's

84 School Superintendent, 1975. Confidential
problems.

We are stuck. Of course we can move, but at what price? In middle-class society we keep on going in our same job because of our numerous responsibilities. We as men get ourselves hooked by a wife, a house, cars, college, insurance, etc. We are no longer free because we are controlled by the physical things.

Most superintendents believe in the values that shaped the various work-related choices they have made, but, at the same time, they continue to feel, and in some cases believe, that something is wrong. The "something" has been more than adequately described in the responses to questions 12 (Which of your personal needs are and are not being met by your present job?) and 14.b (What have been some of the "bad" effects of your job on your view of yourself?). More succinctly, however, the lingering feeling of something wrong is based on the undeniable fact that the superintendents have borrowed on their personal lives to invest in their professional lives. "Not only does the job monopolize the man and preclude adequate rest for him, conversely it robs his wife and children of his presence and participation in family life." There is often no turning back—children have grown, marriages have soured, health has deteriorated, and age sometimes precludes the type of recreational and cultural enjoyment originally desired. The last three quotations illustrated that how and why people choose one need instead of another, is of greater consequence than can be imagined at the time. Whether one looks at ego rewards or monetary rewards, the superintendent is still caught in a maze. "We as superintendents, have so much invested in our lives by virtue of the job we choose; for example, prestige, mortgage, children, and college." To continue to provide for his family in the life style they and he have come to expect (and may be locked into), he must spend more time at work. If he spends more time

86 Burbank, p. 92.

87 Interview response, Appendix F, question 21.
at work, he loses the rewards of his family role and seeks even greater financial security to compensate for his guilt as a father/husband. If he reduces the amount of time spent at work, he risks losing the ego rewards of the work role which have been a major factor in the development of his self-image and upon which he has become somewhat dependent. Therefore, any attempt to equalize the balance between career fulfillment and non-work fulfillment leads to diminished reinforcement for the role that has been the mainstay of his sense of well-being and survival—i.e., the work role.

By considering the issue of what the superintendent does to reach and retain the superintendency, we have also to some extent been analyzing the following: many superintendents are aware that they have failed in their personal lives for themselves and their families, yet, at the same time, they and society consider themselves successes in their professional lives. This is an unfortunate dualism especially for a work role like the superintendency which has such a pervasive effect on personal lives. The issue is summarized more lucidly below:

To play his role as a bureaucrat [superintendent] at all adequately is to pay a heavy social and psychological price. ...he will invariably be forced to neglect non-occupational roles that are more continuous with his sense of self than with his profession. When those sentiments and roles having no connection with the job are very meaningful to him, the official becomes less of a bureaucrat [superintendent]; on the other hand, if his bureaucrat [superintendent] role has been deeply internalized, he will be anxious and unhappy about subordinating it to other things. He can attempt to stabilize the conflicting values and roles within himself or deliberately pick and choose among them. When this occurs, bureaucracy [the superintendency] may be said to have changed the personality of its officials.88

While helping to summarize the pattern of attitude and behavior discussed in the first half of this chapter, the quotation above also

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serves as an introduction to the question: What does the superintendency do to the superintendent. It lends support to the idea that people can, in effect, "become" the roles they play in carrying out the functions of society. To assume or "become" the characteristics of the work role, requires the success-bound attitudes and behavior described earlier in this chapter, together with a job so physically or psychologically demanding that it has the effect of saturating one's personality. "As the job situation grows into an extension of the ego, the person can't simply be one way at home and another at work; the work person dominates and takes over." Superintendents, particularly, are quite vulnerable to such an infection due to their "track record" on the "career escalator," their confidence in their own ability, and their desire to retain the respect of the educational and larger community. It may also be true that such immersion in the work role signifies that "...many professionals prefer to derive their personal satisfactions from work and workplace." Based on their responses in the interview, it appears that superintendents' behavior corresponds to this pattern, with the result that increased time pressures often create continuous and hopeless feelings of being trapped. "It's hard to admit a boxed-in feeling," said one superintendent. At the same time, however, the pressures to "love it or leave it" mount, and the superintendents feel compelled to reaffirm the choices they have made. This need to reaffirm and justify often leads to setting new goals in order to earn the rewards (and thereby the satisfactions) they hope to receive from the job. It is a cyclical pattern. Superintendents are enslaved to the culture of highly educated professionals the way "laborers are enslaved to the clock and the machine," but superintendents believe that they like it because

89 Ibid., p. 188.


of the prestige society gives it and because of what they are supposedly and may in fact be doing.

This chapter has attempted to a degree to amplify why superintendents act and react the way they do. A gap exists, however, in our understanding of what is entailed in the process that causes the erosion of new untarnished superintendents—that is, superintendents who have not yet been so immersed in the job that they are "becoming the role." The responses to question 7.d (What is it really like to be a superintendent?) adequately describe some of the frustrations and problems in performing the superintendency, but the picture that is drawn lacks the pungency and the coherence of the following excerpt from "Between Boredom and Terror: The Credibility and Survival of the Professional." Though it is not intended to refer to a school superintendent specifically, it is a cogent summary of the role which a school superintendent steps into and the manner in which he/she responds.

...excellence must take the form of credibility. Credibility calls for perpetually selling oneself. It takes extra energy to sell oneself in a variety of ever changing situations. Credibility can be acquired rapidly through an appropriate mix of psychopathic behavior, chutzpah, and controlled aggression and manipulation. It involves impressions and facades hopefully backed up by past performances or future promise. Credibility is transitory. It can decay over time. It can also evaporate instantly as a result of a traumatic circumstance. Credibility calls for constant updating and therefore requires constant competition. He competes with himself, his peers, competitors, and superiors. The first sign of blood from weak or damaged credibility draws the sharks and vultures ever waiting in the wings. The man who lives by credibility faces the continuous prospect of losing it. On the other hand, to be credible, he must be able to lose it, or he can't afford to play the game. 92

In light of the disillusioning tone of this analysis, what are the prospects for the superintendency and the superintendent? If one

agrees with Hughes' description of a career as "the moving perspective in which the person sees his life as a whole and interprets the meaning of his various attributes, actions, and the things which happen to him," then it is necessary for superintendents to engage that "perspective" by means of a dialogue and/or self-inspection, and determine a preferred state for themselves. This process is especially important during one's middle-life period when the major value orientations of life are up for reshuffling. The superintendent, for example, in practical terms must decide whether it is time to leave the job, or whether to demand a more realistic job description from the school committee. The risk is one of job security because the position is always in demand. Furthermore, dissatisfactions voiced by a superintendent are almost always interpreted as the "gripes of a man who can't hack it," and are, in effect, quashed by conformity.

The obstacles are not always external pressures. For example, superintendents constantly plea for more administrative assistants and complain of the sheer overload and magnitude of their role, yet they are reluctant to try (and even have resisted) the "team" or "cabinet" concepts for the superintendency. Ironically, when people do achieve a situation of greater autonomy and authority, they often fail to recognize their power and responsibility to create the changes they've been demanding. The superintendency remains as an antithesis to a system of distributed responsibility. These conditions suggest the need for a more realistic and honest allotment of power and effort.

It is quaint to think that one man can comprehend and control the diversity and complexity of the modern organization. Having a finger in every pie is fast becoming an outmoded occupational disease of chief executives.

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94 Hoenninger, p. 19.
The superintendents fear the loss of power, prestige and other rewards which are the legacy of this prominent position. They have "made it" professionally and they usually run one of the largest organizations in their town or city; any sharing of power feels like a demotion. School committee members and many educators, as well as superintendents, are reluctant to deliberate the contention that "90% of the trouble with chief executives' jobs is rooted in our superstition of the one-man chief." They continue to believe that someone can be found who can do the job.

To improve their lot, superintendents must agree to relinquish the chief-executive structure or demand a more realistic job description from their employers, the School Committee. As they now appear, superintendency job descriptions are hyperbolic. They primarily attract "the leadership types" (see above, p. 77) who delude themselves to believe that their quest for the superintendency is in the interest of making a greater contribution to the education of young people and to the improvement of society. If superintendents as a group decide they want job changes, and come to believe that they themselves cannot change the job without policy changes by the School Committee—and if the School Committees refuse to promote on-the-job regeneration and other changes—it is not inconceivable that superintendents will become unionized. The many years of cultural indoctrination, economic seduction, societal expectations, and work role legacies, have permitted traditional "overwork" complaints to reach the level of despair described in answers to question 12 and 14.b, and have prevented their alleviation.

Before turning to the section on implications for further research, it is necessary to clarify the context in which conclusions and speculations have been made. Though the conclusions may seem too stark or gloomy to be generalizable, it is not the intent of this

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study to claim, for example, that all superintendents are dissatisfied and suffer from the pains of inter-role conflict. The aim is to show that some superintendents experience problems in meeting the demands of various competing roles and expectations, and that these difficulties do have negative personal and social consequences. The issues of representativeness and generalizability are unavoidable in a study of this nature. It has already been noted that this sample of superintendents is not random, and that the coding process is not totally objective. Rather than try to show how the sample could be considered representative and the data should be generalizable ... etc., this writer suggests that more attention be given to the following paraphrase of an excerpt from The Hidden Injuries of Class. We need to traverse the traditional line of thinking and turn the matter around to ask what is representative or characteristic of American society in its impact on the people interviewed. It is not so much as a replication of other superintendents that their thoughts and feelings ought to bear a larger witness, but as focused points of human experience that can teach something about a more general problem of success and sacrifice in the social order.97

Implications for Further Research

This investigation of a relatively unexamined area was undertaken with the expectation that the findings would serve as a stimulus and a guide to more controlled and sophisticated inquiry, and a more intensive analysis. "As the amount of existing data increases and theoretical formulations are offered, it becomes possible to test specific hypotheses."98 The findings and analysis in the present study suggest numerous implications for further research.

98 Sarata, p. 21.
In addition to the school superintendents' reported satisfaction with their jobs, the findings also clearly illustrate the existence of dissatisfactions which were previously unreported, and the continued presence of problems which are traditionally associated with the superintendency. Some scholars may wish to undertake further research concerning the reliability of these findings. Others may wish to accept the findings and proceed with follow-up studies utilizing various combinations of the data. Both attempts should be made for they would reflect the state of the controversy over the value of data of this kind. In either case, the methodological concerns in studying the superintendency (discussed in Chapter II) should be reviewed. In an article on interpretations of the meaning of work, Kahn suggests three research models which could be applied to further study of the superintendency.

1. Establish cause of satisfactions [dissatisfactions] by means of correlations or other measures of association between descriptive characteristics of jobs and the affective responses of job holders. This is a preferable approach especially if job descriptions are not based only on statements of the same person who attests to his own dissatisfaction or satisfaction.99

2. Develop a set of measures to describe the major characteristics of jobs (demands and opportunities), and of individuals (need-value preferences and abilities) in commensurate forms.100

3. Conduct pilot studies on experimental changes in the definition, conditions, time requirements and rewards of work. These should be field trials with full evaluative research to determine effects not only on job satisfaction [dissatisfaction] but on the functioning of the individual and the family in their major life roles.101

The third model is the most striking to this writer because it suggests

99 Kahn, p. 181.
100 Ibid.
101 Ibid., p. 203.
a focus on one of the major implications of this research; specifically, how is the functioning of the superintendent's family affected by changes in the definition, rewards, and conditions of the superintendent's work.

With regard to specific issues, the present findings and analysis suggest that further research should be focused on the question of the superintendent's value scheme and its relation to the crucial personal choices he/she makes. Implied here are concerns such as the effects of sex role stereotypes, and the consequences of one's choice of lifestyle. The findings are also replete with references to educational issues and organizational functions of the superintendency which have traditionally needed study and experimentation. On a more general level, Freidson suggests that we may see

a new kind of profession emerging in the future, one which is in some ways less autonomous and dominant, but in other ways, freed from circumstances which have in the past prevented members [superintendents] from performing effectively the functions for which they possess true expertise.102

In light of this prediction, the controversy concerning school superintendents as educators or business managers, and the question of the superintendency as a job for one person or a team of people, are both fertile ground for further research in terms of either psychological or organizational variables. Perhaps what is really needed is a closer look at the superintendency as it is lived by one superintendent; that is, a detailed description of a period of time in the work and non-work life of a superintendent, with the emphasis on how and if he/she manages to "call it a day."

From a broader perspective, the presentation and analysis of school superintendents' feelings and attitudes ideally has generated provocative concepts and propositions which will provide support for further study of:

an emerging integrative social-psychological framework

102 Freidson, p. 19.
for examining the work experience of highly educated professional people;

the training of American school superintendents and other public educational leaders;

the continuing self-education and survival of those superintendents already in office.

The goals of this research study will have been met, however, if it has stimulated a greater awareness and appreciation of the following thought (with particular reference to the superintendency)

...the relationships between the work and non-work areas of life will be even more important for determining not only the life of the individual but also the quality of the society.\textsuperscript{103}

\textsuperscript{103} Ginzberg, p. 199.
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APPENDIX A

INSTRUMENTATION:

THE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
NAME

AGE

MARITAL STATUS

# OF CHILDREN

COLLEGES (undergrad and grad/professional training)

DEGREES AWARDED and DATES GRANTED

NAME and SIZE of SCHOOL DISTRICT (or SCHOOL)

URBAN or SUBURBAN?

IS YOUR PRESENT POSITION TENURED?

HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU BEEN A SUPERINTENDENT?
1. a When did you first decide to enter the field of education?
   b Was this career your first choice? Why?
   c What was your first job? (whether or not in education)
   d What were the sources of satisfaction?
   e How did this job influence your thinking about work and your career?
   f Why did you switch to your next job?

2. Second job
   a What were the sources of satisfaction?
   b How did this job influence your thinking about work and your career?
   c Why did you switch to your next job?

3. Third job
   a What were the sources of satisfaction?
   b How did this job influence your thinking about work and your career?
   c Why did you switch to your next job?

4. Had you planned your career to the extent that you always knew you wanted to reach your present position? Please explain your answer.

5. a How, if at all, did graduate school and/or professional school prepare you for the position of superintendent?
   b What about your work didn't it prepare you for?

On a scale of 1 to 5, with one being very dissatisfying and five being very satisfying, how would you rate the preparation you received?

1 2 3 4 5
6. Recent writers have said that highly educated professional people have the following problem: at the same time that society views their work as interesting, fascinating and challenging, most professionals, over time, come to view their work in less positive terms and, therefore cannot talk as candidly about their feelings about work. How do you feel about this?

7. Concerning your present job——

a Some researchers have posited that there is a form of psychological obsolescence and intellectual starvation in highly educated professional people resulting from pressures, bureaucratic obligations, lack of time and a lack of desire to keep up with or adapt to changes in their field. How do you feel about this with regard to your job?

b To be more specific now, I'd like you to evaluate the following aspects of your job from the standpoint of a satisfaction-dissatisfaction dimension.

Workload - (How much time do you give beyond what is required?)
Salary - (Does it reflect the worth of your job?)
Relationship with Others - (administrators, teachers, parents, and community)
Autonomy - (freedom to perform the job in your own way)
Continuing presence of a sense of challenge and novelty
Others - (any other aspects you believe should be considered)

Would you please rank these aspects according to your satisfaction with them (one is most satisfying, five is least satisfying).

c Do you think most of the superintendents you know feel similarly/differently? How might you explain those who feel differently than you do?

d Suppose someone was told to come to your office for advice about becoming a superintendent. If he/she said, "I've read what the books and articles say about the superintendency, but I am hoping that you can tell me REALLY what it's like to be a superintendent," what would you say?

e Taking into consideration all the factors about your job, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with it?

Would you rate that on a scale of one to five?

1 (very dissatisfied) 2 3 4 5 (very satisfied)
8A. Having attained the leadership position you are in, is it all that you expected it to be?

YES  NO

B. Can you recall those aspects of your job and those feelings about your job that:

a. were not imaginable to you before you started the job?

b. are contrary to and different from your original expectations and goals?

9. In a recent magazine article, Kenneth Lamott proposed that every American worker be given a sabbatical once every seven years. Regardless of the specific merits of that proposal, do you feel that you need a sabbatical? Why?

10.a What tasks or events make a week unusually interesting/uninteresting for you?

b. In terms of your specific job, what would you recommend that would make it more satisfying? For example, could you suggest two major changes?

11. In many previous studies, analysts have attempted to distinguish between the "personal" and "situational" factors affecting one's attitude toward his/her job. In this case I would like to try to distinguish, to the extent that it is possible, between work skills and personal skills.

a. "Work skills" have often been described as those skills emphasized in professional training. Of the work skills you feel competent in performing, which ones are you NOT using in your job? Which of your work skills are being utilized in your present job?

b. What are your personal skills and strengths which are NOT being utilized in your job? Which of your personal skills and strengths are being utilized in your job?

c. Do you, and, if so, how do you expect to someday use your presently unused work skills and personal strengths in another job situation?
12. Which of your personal needs are not being met by your present job? Which are being met? How do you feel about this?

13. Some people say that it is impossible, psychologically speaking, to separate the world of work from that of friends, family, and other social relationships. That is to say, what happens at work affects and is affected by what happens outside of work. Others say that it is possible and necessary to separate the two. What is your experience?

14. There is general agreement that one's work or job inevitably affects how one thinks about and values one's self (for example, one's values, sense of well-being, lifestyle). The effects are almost always mixed: some of the effects on the self are seen as "good," others are seen as "bad." This has come out rather clearly in our work with physicians, lawyers, etc.

   a What have been some of the "good" effects of your job on your view of yourself?

   b What have been some of the "bad" effects?

15.a Some superintendents are frustrated about having so few "yardsticks" to help them and others determine the quality and acceptability of their job performance. Others feel that the ambiguity is simply a part of the nature and the "level" of their work. How do you feel about this?

   b Using your own "yardsticks," how do you evaluate your job performance?

16. How long did you originally expect to be in your present job in this town (city)?

17.a For some superintendents, talking about past and present jobs has been pleasant and positive, but they have expressed concern about their future. Do you share this concern? How do you find yourself thinking about your future?

   b All in all, would you say, then, that the superintendency

       ______ was better than you expected

       ______ fulfilled your expectations

       ______ was not as good as you expected
18. In our interviews with various professional groups, some individuals have said they have a need to get into a new kind of work or career, not because what they are now doing is terribly unsatisfactory or unchallenging, but rather because they feel they have mastered their present job and would like to try something different.

a. Regardless of how you feel about your present occupation, would you rather be involved in some other kind of work/some other kind of role?

b. What are the circumstances that would enable you or deter you from changing jobs (either within or outside of your field)?

19.a Some people feel that the job of running a school system or a school has a great many similarities to the job of a business executive or high level manager. Others feel that jobs in human service organizations such as schools and school systems are not comparable to those in business. What is your thinking on the subject?

b. Are there any external factors or conditions which impinge on your work over which you have no control? If so, what are some?

20. Reflecting on your whole career, are you aware of changing values about work in yourself or in your staff?

21. As was mentioned in the cover letter, this research is part of a larger project which involved job satisfaction interviews with doctors, lawyers and other highly educated professional people. Now that we have almost completed the interview, can you tell me, from your personal experience, if you think we are on the road to something important? For example, is it only the blue collar and middle level white collar workers who suffer from alienation and other factors of job dissatisfaction?
APPENDIX B

THE OPTIONAL QUESTION (#22)

&

THE RESPONSES
Among the vast majority of educators and historians, it is generally agreed that historically speaking, the educational system was called on to service the industrial order and in fact, the education system looked toward management techniques of industry as its ideal of excellence and source of administration. However, whether or not the above relationship still exists today is a frequently debated question. Does your experience as an educational administrator persuade you one way or the other?

--- The Chicago school system since it is so antiquated turns out lots of laborers. I'm not sure if it is planned, or if it is just avoidance by people who have money and send their kids to prep school. My career development approach is to open it up and give people a good look at what the options are.

--- New management techniques now being considered by educators are advantageous.

--- There are many necessary characteristics of our educational system which by design service the needs of the capitalistic economy. For example, the shape of school schedules and the holding-power of mandatory attendance. Schools administer more than 1/2 of manpower training monies; we pay youth to work with the condition of remaining in school. What we do and why is meant to serve the military industrial capitalistic system. Schools are established by the state to meet the needs of the state and the purposes of the state are to support the capitalistic system. If schools were solely in this direction they'd be missing the achievement of other goals in areas such as values and aesthetics.

--- This is not as true as it once was. In this town many students will leave here and go to college or go to work. 15 or 20% won't be able to get jobs.

--- This relationship still exists today, yes. It's very overwhelming to attempt to use schools to fight a system with which we disagree. We end up trying to use the same techniques of military-management that are traditional in the schools.

--- The influence of industry is stronger today, with the purpose to train high school students for managerial roles.

--- It is a role of schools to get kids ready to participate in the job market after high school or college: School also delays entry into the job market which helps the economy and helps regulate the labor force. In this school district we are doing more today than ever to help kids question the establishment and the capitalistic system. In general, however, the rest of the country is doing very much of the above, therefore the
description is true. In general industrial society sees public schools as carrying out their needs and therefore it allows us to continue. If industrial society saw public schools as antithetical to society, we'd be eliminated. If we get modified or changed radically, it may be because industrial society has decided we are not as cooperative as we should be.

--- I don't think industry devised the educational system. It was more a result of the work ethic and teachers' upbringing.

--- We are headed back to an emphasis on career education. Liberal studies have fallen out of grace.

--- In public schools we are no longer expected to prepare kids for the world of work the way we used to be. However, attitudes and work habits are subconsciously and indirectly related to business.

--- Business expects a certain outlook from youngsters coming out of schools. For example, "What is the role of a fireman, police-man, etc." The increase in career education is a result of the interaction of industry with education. We should be interacting even more to predetermine some of the skills that they are looking for.

--- We should have more input from the industrial community.

--- Yes the relationship still exists. We train kids for vocations and occupations.

--- Yes. It has to be. As industry has its ups and downs, schools are influenced. As the economy slows down, spokespeople call for cutbacks. When the economy slows, the first things cut out of the schools are aesthetics. Industry is bearing the results, and not liking it, of a whole surge toward unionism. Students have perhaps learned from the lesson of collective bargaining. Students are coming to jobs with more demands.

--- There has been some change. Schools have a greater responsibility to help kids make good choices about how to use leisure time. But at the same time, the emphasis is now even greater on saleable skills.

--- Yes. The relationship is that there are basic skills required for our jobs throughout society and therefore, schools should do it. There has to be this relationship. It's part of the overall society.

--- Yes and no. Management style is still with us. Preparation for the industrial order has changed the system since World War II.

--- Education has changed from management techniques to a concern with training kids to be prepared for total society. The relationship that does exist has a positive effect of vocational and
career education and a negative effect of narrow training for specific jobs that leaves students with very little else.

---- It does appear that many public schools do mold themselves after many of the industrial concepts.
APPENDIX C

INSTRUMENTATION:

THE COVER LETTER
I am writing you about a research project being conducted by Ray Reisler, Jr., a doctoral candidate in the Center for Leadership and Administration in Education at the University of Massachusetts. The focus of his study is to obtain a better understanding of how education administrators conceptualize and experience their jobs and their own development in those jobs over time. He would like to explore "what the superintendency does to superintendents as reported by the individuals themselves." For example, do superintendents still enjoy the degree of satisfaction in their jobs that they had expected or that they had once experienced?

This research is part of a larger project being conducted by Professor Seymour Sarason of Yale University. That project is an attempt to analyze and explain the work experience as self-reported by doctors, lawyers, and other highly educated professional people.

I believe Mr. Reisler's study to be an extremely worthwhile effort and one which potentially will make an important contribution to the better understanding of leadership positions in education. Mr. Reisler will call you soon in order to make an appointment to see you. I hope you can give the time to discuss a number of questions with him. Within a reasonable period, he will have some results to share with you.

Sincerely,
APPENDIX D

INSTRUMENTATION:

ORAL INTRODUCTION AT THE
BEGINNING OF THE INTERVIEW
The focus of this research study is to obtain a better understanding of how educational administrators experience their jobs, and their own development in those jobs, over time.

Though there is an abundance of studies about the job satisfaction of blue collar workers, and a steady interest and growing documentation of attitudes toward work held by middle level white collar workers, remaining basically unstudied are feelings and attitudes about the significance of the "work experience" as self-reported by highly educated professional people. Most studies of school superintendents have relied on the views of parents, teachers or other administrators, and not on the self-perceptions of the superintendents themselves. Some people are saying that job dissatisfaction among professional people is a real phenomenon. Others say it is an overrated phenomenon. What is striking, however, is how little is known until we sit down with the people in these jobs and record their thoughts and opinions.

Approximately 90% of the studies referred to above have been conducted by means of questionnaires. Questionnaires, however, are highly impersonal and leave much to be desired if the respondent is being asked to reflect upon his/her feelings and sincere beliefs. In addition, questionnaires, as opposed to interviews, do not allow for immediate clarification and follow-up. Therefore, I would like to talk with superintendents for approximately two and a half hours, ideally in an atmosphere free of the pressures and interruptions of a school day. If a question is not clear, please let me know. If my questions are standing in the way of what you think I want to know, or should know, please tell me whenever it occurs to you. Finally, I want to stress the confidentiality of this interview. I wish there was a better way to emphasize the importance I attach to the issue of confidentiality. Let me say that for the purpose of this research your name is simply a number and will not be known by anyone else.
APPENDIX E

TEXT OF THE INTERVIEW RESPONSES:

PART I
Note: Throughout the data in Appendices E and F, the numbers in parentheses following a statement or set of statements—for example (5)—refer to the total number of times the respondent indirectly or directly mentioned that item. The symbols ——— and * * * * indicate that the statement(s) of a new respondent, or a new grouping of respondents, is (are) beginning.

1.a When did you first decide to enter the field of education?

During:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate School</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First teaching job</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After dissatisfaction with first career choice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.b Was this career your first choice? Why?

Only four respondents came into education after starting another career. The other 26 all started their first jobs in education but arrived there in a variety of ways.

"Switch-Ins"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>———— Tired speech pathology for a few years but didn't feel comfortable working with spastics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>———— Wanted the Air Force but flunked out of pilot training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>———— First tried insurance work and made plans for law school, but didn't like it after a while and switched.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>———— Started a business career until I decided to go back to college at age 30.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"No Choice"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>———— Last thing I wanted to be was a teacher. But in 1941, only job I could get was teaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>———— I wanted anything but teaching. However, I took the teaching job after leaving the Navy because it was all I could get.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
"In College"*

*This group all had their first jobs in teaching after deciding on education in college. However, all of them switched to education from another major while in college.

----- First choice was medicine. Didn't have enough money. Switched to education.
----- Medicine was first but I couldn't do it. Switched.
----- Medicine was first choice, but in Army I did some teaching and was thrilled.
----- Started as pre-med, but didn't do well.
----- Switched from political science.
----- First I wanted to be a veterinarian.
----- First I considered medicine and business, but I started dating an education major.
----- Wanted to be a professional baseball player. Almost chose it.
----- In college I was pre-med and I switched.
----- I first tried business but soon rejected it.

The remaining respondents chose education from the start, with no changes.

_1.c_ What was your first job? (Whether or not in education)

_All_ the superintendents began their careers in education as teachers for an average of 5 years.

_1.d_ What were the sources of satisfaction?

_All_ the superintendents said they liked teaching. Their sources of satisfaction for their total teaching experience were very similar to each others, and all fell in or close to the following four statements:

1) love, thrill, fun and enjoyment
2) close relationships and involvement with kids.
3) seeing children learn, grow, respond, and develop their values.
4) extra curricular stuff and the chance to identify with kids.
Notes: 1) The data following in questions 1.e and 1.f is broken down into the predominant responses of the whole sample. Many of these items were repeated again and again, sometimes in different words by the various respondents.

2) For the purposes of reporting the data, question 1.f really means--why did you switch from teaching jobs to administrative jobs or graduate school?

1.e How did this job influence your thinking about work and your career?

Made me want to be able to influence teacher behavior.
Confirmed my choice of education as my career.
Made me realize I wanted to know more and that I wanted to be an educational administrator.

1.f Why did you switch from teaching jobs to administrative jobs or graduate school?

Personal Reasons
Status, ego-growth and career ambition
I wanted to run the whole ship and be top dog
Lacked control over my own time
More responsibility and more money
Opportunity for advancement
Competition and more challenge
Wanted a more affluent community
My moves were determined by the Order
I was offered a fellowship for graduate school

Educational Reasons
Felt I could have greater impact as an administrator
Dissatisfied with those providing leadership and a strong belief that I could do better
Felt I could have greater impact on change in the profession
Teaching was just a stepping stone toward becoming a superintendent
I wanted to be of greater service to a greater number of people
Educational Reasons - continued

If I shared my skills with more people, I'd make a greater contribution

My capabilities were such that I knew I should go higher

Effective good teachers should become principals

Teaching is a dead-end job

I'd have greater input into the total system

Note: For the purposes of reporting the data, questions 2.a and 3.a combined should read—What were the sources of satisfaction in your successive administrative jobs? Similarly, the questions 2.c and 3.c combined should read—Why did you switch to your successive administrative jobs?

2.a & 3.a What were the sources of satisfaction in your successive administrative jobs?

Immediate involvement in issues

Reaching kids

Being able to bring order out of chaos, resolve tensions and organize a school system

More decision-making and the realization that I am a good administrator

Running a large school system and having more responsibility

Personal and professional satisfaction

Program, curriculum and staff development

Implementing my beliefs and working on new ideas

New experiences, excitement and intellectual stimulation

Working with adults and the larger community

2.c & 3.c Why did you switch to your successive administrative jobs?

My ideas were no longer accepted. Difficulty with the school committee

I knew I could improve a school system. I wanted more influence and I wanted to run things

Family situation and money
More decision-making and more responsibility. I wanted to be the chief designer of educational programs.

I always wanted to be the superintendent. Career advancement and expanded horizons

To be able to affect change, be a change agent and influence a larger school system

I wanted to be able to utilize my skills and what I had learned

Wanted to share my expertise and offer more in the way of instruction

Challenge and prestige. Ego-fulfillment. Personal growth.

4. Had you planned your career to the extent that you always knew you wanted to reach your present position? Please explain your answer.

12 Yes  17 No

Comments From Those Superintendents Answering Yes

------ Always aware of professional growth. Planned to move up.
------ Always my goal to be a superintendent.
------ All other jobs stepping stones.
------ Wanted to be a superintendent; 1) for money; 2) I could make a contribution to Public Education; 3) Superintendency gives real influence
------ Since Harvard program in administrative careers
------ Since graduate school
------ Since Columbia administrative program
------ From beginning of graduate studies
------ I always knew where I was going and about when I was going to do it.
------ Knew I wanted to be a superintendent and that's why I went to Harvard. My present position is not my last. I want other jobs. I'm in a mid-stage in my career.
------ High Aspirations! Initiative and determination. Upward view of profession. Volunteered for an administrative function when I was a principal. Requested people from outside to be brutally frank with me and give me ways to improve. I sought help!
------ Yes, since getting my college degree.
Comments From Those Superintendents Answering No

----- I've done what I wanted when I wanted.
----- Between principalship and Columbia
----- Was trained in psychology. Didn't think I'd be administrator. Coincidence and aggressiveness in speaking out about what was needed and what was wrong led to present position.
----- Only considered it when faced with the choice
----- Chance, association and contacts
----- Turning point in career combined with economic problems
----- Didn't intend to be administrator but constantly was moved up
----- Not until became High School principal
----- Accident, unplanned
----- Wanted to try new administrative experiences
----- Never planned it this way. It was the immediacy of certain issues that brought me to this position.
----- Not planned. It was a combination of aspirations and luck and being successful.
----- I took it one step at a time and at each step I looked at and evaluated that point in my life and the possibilities at that time.

5.a How, if at all, did graduate school and/or professional school prepare you for the position of superintendent?

----- It broadened me rather than really prepared me.
----- There were some dominating and influencing people. I would not have been as well prepared without graduate school.
----- Personal contact with two or three professors during my Ph.D. was very influential.
----- It started opening doors of possible ways to go. It aroused my curiosity.
----- Graduate school did an excellent job. It helped me to pull together the whole system; forced me to think in terms of major concepts. I got what I wanted.
----- Very much so! Courses did a great deal. Associations with meaningful models was important.
It gave me a broader scope. It gave me research capabilities and a statistical background. The ability to use computers has also been helpful.

It helped me understand the issues.

It helped me ten years ago but only minimally today.

Very well!

It gave me a broad overview of the operation of an educational system.

It exposed me to good ideas and good people. It gave me vehicles and mechanisms to get where I am.

My masters did prepare me. It prepared me quite well because I already had five years of teaching experience before I went to graduate school.

It did a decent job of going over professional skills such as school finance, administration, etc. The most valuable part was my work in the field; it gave me practice in human relations.

My training was very adequate.

Fairly well, for the times.

Not well enough.

Experience with management of research and study of institutional adaptability was a good foundation. The majority of courses were not so valuable.

It made a significant contribution in background material.

It only gave me the ticket to the job!

Preparation was good in Philosophy and curriculum and instruction and school management.

It gave me guidelines and principles that I could use.

It gave me good field experience in good company.

Badly!

It was not practical at all

Not that much

Zero to 10%

It didn't.
Summary - Question 5.a

Broadened me; gave me important overviews (6)
Inadequate (5)
Contact with certain people (4)
School Management, finance and administration (3)

5.b What about your work didn't it prepare you for?

------ Negotiations and law.
------ Business administration! Public relations!
------ Group dynamics. Problem solving. Organizational stuff.
------ The whole show.
------ Budget and financial matters; law and bargaining; the politics of education.
------ It didn't prepare me for handling people, human relations, diagnosing students' problems, group dynamics, dealing with fiscal matters or school law.
------ Relating to people, perceptions of power structures, personnel selection, or dealing with the mundane realities of the job.
------ Administrative work and human relations.
------ Social dynamics and politics of education
------ Almost everything! Graduate school was totally irrelevant. The only thing it taught me was educational finance.
------ It didn't prepare me for the hate, rancor and jealousies I have to deal with. It didn't prepare me for labor management relations.
------ It failed to give me adequate knowledge of child development. It also failed in process issues such as underachieving kids, metropolitan collaboration, and collective bargaining.
------ Human Relations, budget management, P.P.B.S., and systems analysis.
------ Finances, staff interaction.
------ Collective bargaining and school finance.
------ Human Relations.
It didn't prepare me for political responsibilities, legal matters, or curriculum planning.

It didn't prepare me for contemporary trends in terms of negativism toward education.

Human dynamics and relations, political reality.

It didn't prepare me for real life experience; the minutia, the controversy, the political groups.

Politics of education, race relations, labor relations.

A realistic understanding of the job, for example the family sacrifice involved.

Everything

They skipped two important areas, race relations and collective bargaining.

Practical things, the reality of conflicting values, etc.

Dealing with budgets, buildings, personnel administration, and curriculum.

Personal problems.

Summary - Question 5.b

Public Relations, Human relations and group dynamics (11)
Budget and fiscal matters, and business administration (8)
Labor Relations (7)
Politics (6)
Organizational development stuff (5)
Curriculum and student related (4)
Law (4)
Mundane or day to day realities (4)
Problem solving (2)
Race relations (2)
Everything or Anything (2)
On a scale of 1 to 5, with one being very dissatisfying and five very satisfying, how would you rate the preparation you received?

1) one
2) three
2.5) two
3) five
3.5) two
4) eight
4.5) one
5) five

Mean = 3.5

6. Recent writers have said that highly educated professional people have the following problem: At the same time that society views their work as interesting, fascinating and challenging, most professionals, over time, come to view their work in less positive terms and, therefore, cannot talk as candidly about their feelings about work. How do you feel about this?

Group I: "True for others but not for me"

------ I can talk about everything. It's a very satisfying job.
------ Doesn't apply to me, but does tend to apply in general.
------ I don't agree. A superintendent is as important as he believes he is.
------ I wouldn't feel inhibited.
------ No problems like this for me.
------ Yes, in general for other superintendents but personally no.
------ Not true for me, but a superintendent who isn't too confident or who's concerned about his status and job, might have trouble admitting job dissatisfaction.
------ I agree with the assumption in general. On balance, it doesn't inhibit me. Other superintendents probably do have trouble being candid.
------ Might exist for some people but not for me.
------ Personally--not applicable.
------ I can talk candidly about my job.
------ While in general I accept the statement--because of (a) the peter principle (b) Reisman's The Lonely Crowd (c) I suspect human characteristics are distributed along a normal curve which suggests that the bulk of population is not like me--I find it has very little application to me, and
Group I - continued

very little application to highly educated professionals I know.

Most superintendents can talk candidly about job dissatisfaction.

I can talk candidly about my job.

Group II: "Cannot talk candidly"

Many superintendents, as they grow older, feel a lack of appreciation and just reward and therefore a degree of cynicism sets in. But if you talk candidly, it could be seen as a selfish complaint.

Not being able to be candid is true for me. Wish I could say how boring my job is at times.

Yes, I am reluctant to be candid in public.

For me, I can't be candid about my relationships with the school committee. No problem being honest with you (the interviewer) but publicly a superintendent can't downgrade his role. He must motivate and give confidence to people. A griping superintendent can't be a leader. Institutional expectations prevent superintendents and public officials from releasing emotionally like doctors and lawyers can.

Superintendent meetings become mutual gripe sessions because we, unlike doctors and lawyers, affect everyone in town and have the whole town as clients. There is only one superintendent but there are many doctors and lawyers. I agree with the assumption about problems with being candid. I think most other superintendents also have this dilemma.

Yes, it is hard to be honest.

As a school superintendent, a public official, I can only be candid with my wife.

Group III: "Society's view of the job"

Most people see the job of superintendent as less satisfying than I do; the public's view of the superintendent is different than mine. I'm not trusted or respected. If I go up in a puff of smoke, I'd be charged with being a pollutant.

Society's image of the superintendent has diminished.

The superintendent is looked upon as the highest paid official in town who isn't worth what he's paid.
Group III - continued

---- Society's image of the superintendency is not that glorious.

---- I don't think society feels that way (interesting, challenging, fascinating) about this job.

---- Many people would never take this job, I don't think many people really think about the superintendency as it is assumed in the question.

---- I feel the image of a school superintendent is prestigious but not a great job to be in.

---- Majority of the public doesn't understand the job. They see the job in terms of dollars and cents and not on a human basis. They think I'm mechanical.

---- School superintendents are public figures, highest salaried officials paid by taxes and are therefore the focus and target of blame.

7.b To be more specific now, I'd like you to evaluate the following aspects of your job from the standpoint of a satisfaction-dissatisfaction dimension.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workload</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with Others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrators</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge and Novelty</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novelty</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The respondents were asked to rank the categories from 1 (most satisfying) to 5 (least satisfying). The results were:

1. Relationship with Others (most satisfying)
2. Challenge and Novelty
3. Autonomy
4. Salary
5. Workload (least satisfying)

7.e Taking into consideration all the factors about your job, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with it? Would you rate that on a scale of one to five?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>very dissatisfaction</td>
<td>very satisfied</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 ..........</td>
<td>6 superintendents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 ( \frac{1}{2} ) ..........</td>
<td>2 &quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 ..........</td>
<td>13 &quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ( \frac{1}{2} ) ..........</td>
<td>3 &quot;</td>
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<td>3 ..........</td>
<td>4 &quot;</td>
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<td>2 ..........</td>
<td>1 &quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 ..........</td>
<td>1 &quot;</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean = 3.8

Miscellaneous Comments:

Reasonably satisfied here overall; I like it generally; more than average; there are lots of goods and bads but in general I'm satisfied, though I could only do this job for a period of time; those who are dissatisfied have turned off to the job and are overwhelmed by the complexities of it; job satisfaction of superintendents must be internal and built into themselves.

8A. Having attained the leadership position you are in, is it all that you expected it to be?

Yes: 22

Miscellaneous Comments:

----- Because I've been realistic about what it would be; no dreams about job.
----- Pretty much
Miscellaneous Comments - continued

-------- Had very few expectations
-------- Knew what I was getting into because I was an assistant superintendent. More I saw as an assistant, the more I wanted it.
-------- Didn't have any great expectations. No job is that great.
-------- Knew it wasn't going to be a bed of roses.
-------- It has demanded much more of me than I ever expected. Never wanted as much limelight as I have gotten.
-------- Even more

No: 6

No Answer: 2

-------- Had no expectations

17.b All in all, would you say, then, that the superintendency

  7  was better than you expected
  18 fulfilled your expectations
  4  was not as good as you expected
  1  ("no expectations")
7.c Do you think most of the superintendents you know feel similarly/differently? How might you explain those who feel differently than you do?

**Out of 30 Respondents:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>See Themselves</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When describing their own satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the 5 aspects of their job in question 7.b, two-thirds of the respondents reported they were satisfied, while one-third reported they were dissatisfied.

However, when describing how they think other superintendents feel about the 5 aspects of the job listed in question 7.b, two-thirds of the respondents believed their colleagues to be dissatisfied, while only one-third of the respondents believed their colleagues to be satisfied.

The following are statements of superintendents who feel generally satisfied with the 5 aspects of their job listed in question 7.b. Their statements are an attempt to explain those superintendents who feel differently than they do:

------ Maybe they've been a superintendent in the same community for a long time and have developed a hostile political climate.

------ Other superintendents lack staff help.

------ Most superintendents deal primarily with detail work and don't get themselves excited.

------ Most of them are really bored. They put out the same fires all the time. Many turn to booze and hang onto their jobs because of family, ego, and salary. Also, if you've held the top position where do you go?

------ Dissatisfied superintendents are a bunch of tired men pounded from pillar to post. They are men who have had security and power slowly eroded and taken away from them. They are sick of "sucking hine tit."

------ Maybe, they're simply not cut out to be a superintendent.

------ The biggest concern of many superintendents I know, is retirement. They're threatened by the things I think are legitimate and they worry needlessly. They don't realize that you make your own workload.
Working conditions in their towns are probably much less satisfying than here.

Maybe other superintendents are uncomfortable with the growing participation of teacher unions and the larger community. This often results in a loss of power and authority. I, however, find it a challenge.

They're probably in the wrong business. They're caught up with prestige and power.

Some of them are not willing to give extra time needed; therefore they're forever behind and dissatisfied. Their interactions with the School Committee and the public are probably negative.

Most of my colleagues say that the job is not worth it and that they would not make the same choice over again. However, I would do it all over again.

Most superintendents don't see the job as I do. They get tied up with minutia and disturbed by unimportant things. Most superintendents I know are not students of education or philosophy, and don't represent a combination of as many backgrounds as I bring into it. They are more managers and less likely to look at education philosophically.

They are more reactive than proactive, more outer-directed than inner-directed. They are also more controlled and less autonomous.

Others have different backgrounds than me. I was a Latin/ Greek student in college. I have more political skills. They should have this. Also many of them became superintendents when they were too old. They see the job as nice and cushy; i.e., sort of a reward for all their plodding and striving.

Others haven't pulled together their own expectations and goals. They haven't employed their total faculties to resolve problems. Also, they don't have as much desire to broaden themselves through the study of other disciplines.

Dissatisfied superintendents probably feel insecure about their jobs and confused. Perhaps the difference is that I have no children and my wife works. We have greater mobility.

They must have their own distinctive values and style of operation.
The following are statements of superintendents who feel generally dissatisfied with the 5 aspects of their job listed in question 7.b. Their statements attempt to explain those superintendents who feel differently than they do:

----- Differences are probably due to personality and different communities.

----- Either they have a community where they have greater control and can meet more of their personal needs or people in their communities are sleeping.

----- They've been in their jobs for years and are complacent, secure and content, but they are out of touch. They will wake up one day. I hear more and more grumbling all the time.

----- It depends on too many differing variables.

----- They're new on the job. It's like first love or a honeymoon.

----- Those who are satisfied see the role differently. They probably love the mundane stuff and hire consultants to do the real stuff.

88.a Can you recall those aspects of your job and those feelings about your job that were not imaginable to you before you started the job?

Note: Each paragraph (-----) begins a set of responses which were believed to have some similarities to each other.

----- Budget formulation; financial problems; outside economic forces.

----- Staff problems; unethical conduct of staff.

----- Encroachment of state laws which add new constraints and dimensions; legal problems; state laws.

----- Workload; never could imagine putting together system wide (as opposed to school wide) problems.

----- Riots; police; knowing a gun is at your back; racial conflict; problems of community confrontations; individual and multiple school disruptions.

----- Student problems.

----- Minutia; administrivia; mindless paperwork

----- Teachers unions; recent changes in teacher bargaining; militancy of teachers; collective bargaining--fact that I
would be placed in the role of enemy of the teacher-worker (forced into that position by the law); negotiations; teachers strikes; the severe separation in public school administration between active teacher representatives (union reps) and the central administration. The superintendent is perceived as the enemy.

Continuing need to defend the obvious against severe critics; minority rules—that such a small percent who are discontented could control any given segment of society; didn't realize power of special interest groups, frustration of not being able to have your own way; hadn't thought the superintendency was that involved in financing or politics.

Never believed that people could become so personal about issues and programs. Thought they would be more rational; behavior of people sometimes shocking; fear for family, and need for police protection; to protect their and my well-being; personal gossip about you and your family; pure hate, the depth of hostility on the part of the opposition in the community; viciousness of public.

People's myopic responses to innovation; commitment to varied forms of learning by teachers and parents; how one approaches people is as important as what one approaches them with; Didn't expect I'd have to be a public relations salesman, educating adults.

Political intervention; I wasn't aware of how important the patronage system is to the elected school people. Couldn't believe how often they would mention a desired appointment to me; I couldn't imagine the interrelatedness between the economic sustenance of a community and its education system. For example, which book companies and other businesses get contracts from the school system; political reality; prevalency of the desire for personal patronage on the part of school committee members; the degree of political influences coming to bear upon the selection of staff.

How much I liked the job; didn't think self-esteem would be as positive

Superintendent floats in and out, constant change, no daily contact; as superintendent I am a part of 31 schools, but I'm not really a part of any of them.
The variety of problems. The degree to which the superintendent can shape the position to be what he wants it to be; never realized the power of the position for effecting change.

Principal really has more power than a superintendent; never realized the extent to which people in the superintendent's office were so ineffective when I was a High School principal; declining position of authority.

Didn't know what the hell I was getting into; times have changed; never realized it was so demanding of time and personal commitment; time commitment; intense personal pressures; personal aspects of job.

Need to be yourself, retooled and growing. Now feel there must be professional growth.

Warding off executive paralysis at the point of making threshold decisions.

No; Almost none; none; had pretty good idea about it; to a very small degree.

Can you recall those aspects of your job and those feelings about your job that are contrary to and different from your original expectations and goals?

CURRICULUM ASPECTS: We haven't any planning about work and careers for our youngsters; I was completely unaware of anything about learning disabilities; the community school concept and open-campus high schools; the development of modern high schools has not met my expectations.

IDEALISTIC ASPECTS: I didn't know I couldn't get perfection; I thought the truth and the good would be clearer to everyone; that you must work with individuals and groups who have goals opposite to your own.

POWER AND AUTHORITY: The inability to control circumstances which then control you; the realization that the things I thought I could do for students are very constrained and controlled by outside forces; it takes so long to bring about change, even longer to bring about meaningful change; I expected more direct control over running the school system; I didn't expect the power of town boards to frustrate me; politics; I expected to be able to make much more impact on good changes for students and teachers; I originally thought that this would be a high level educational leadership position; instead it's a high level coordinating leadership position; I expected the superintendent to have more influence with his staff than he does; I thought
there would be a greater ability to lead; I assumed this was a straightforward leadership position; interference from Washington. I thought I'd have more power to change things.

RACIAL ISSUE: I didn't think that my credibility among my peers would be measured by my attitudes toward blacks; the importance of the black-white issue; Didn't think I'd have to defend the town against its racist image.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE: I was naive about school committees; Surprised that school committees agreed so consistently with my ideas; the role of the relationship between the school committee and the superintendent; I had hoped it would be easier to bring school committees around; my relationship with the school committee and the effect politics has on them as elected officials diminishes a lot of what I'd like to do; the resistance of the school committee to receive and consider my recommendations.

NO DIFFERENCES: No; no real shocks; Not much, fairly high correlation; things are very similar, my goals were well identified before coming here; No, I thought it was a job where you could make a change and I did; None; No, by the time I became a superintendent, I knew what reality was.

PERSONAL ASPECTS: Personal toll; I felt I could control the time over the job better than I have; Hadn't anticipated the distrust and questioning of my integrity; Didn't expect the pressure it would put on my kids.

COMMUNITY ISSUES: I am too progressive for this type of student and this type of community; I expected greater community involvement; I expected that the community was different, i.e., less structured, less military discipline, more individualism.

BUDGETARY PROBLEMS: Money problems; thought I'd have more access to resources; huge budget increases.

SATISFACTION: Much of what gave this job satisfaction at the beginning is no longer as much fun, after nine or ten years it's a bore; The way I spend time is so different from what I expected when I began, many of the things I do didn't even exist then; I expected to bring about a higher degree of change and innovation; Way back when I started, the superintendency used to be a nice job, easier, then in the 1960's that changed, the pressure to improve schools, the flurry of new ideas, the superintendency became a nightmare.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONCERNS: I'm buried in budgets, negotiations and the busy nothings of education which only affect students indirectly and unfortunately are the primary concerns of communities.
 DECLINING ENROLLMENT
NEGOTIATIONS

19.b Are there any external factors or conditions which impinge on your work over which you have no control? If so, what are some?

ECONOMIC FACTORS: Inflation, recession, tax rate, financing, and the financial structure of education in general. (16)

LAWS: federal, state and other mandatory requirements, such as civil service requirements and certification standards, "Too many constraints." (16)

POLITICS: political scene, patronage, political structure of education, body politic, elections, and Board of Education. (12)

LABOR RELATIONS: negotiations, teacher unions, collective bargaining, union contracts, and merit-promotion programs. (11)

DECLINING ENROLLMENT: (5)

SCHOOL COMMITTEE: More wants than resources, choice of bosses, length, time and selection of meetings. (4)

COURT DECISIONS: students' rights, race relations. (3)

PUBLIC ATTITUDE: social trends and patterns, folkways and mores of the community, social movements, the press and special interests.

CITY ADMINISTRATION: town meetings, town board system of checks and balances, insurance.

MISCELLANEOUS: vandalism, student motivation, current fads in education, lack of authority.

9. In a recent magazine article, Kenneth Lamott proposed that every American worker be given a sabbatical once every seven years. Regardless of the specific merits of that proposal do you feel that you need a sabbatical? Why?

28 Respondents said they needed or could use a sabbatical. 1 Respondent said he needed only a couple of weeks. Another felt it couldn't hurt, but it was a luxury.

COMMENTS:

Yes. It is essential because at the level of the superintendency I need continued knowledge and education. I sometimes stifle and stultify the ideas of my staff because of my ignorance. I become unaware of making good choices. I need reflection and
COMMENTS - continued

relaxation. A sabbatical would give me a better opportunity
to determine the direction of education.

***

The superintendency is too demanding of time. A sabbatical would
provide a broader perspective which could help my ability to
help people. It would also offer a chance to read, write, reflect
and for cultural growth.

***

The job wears me down. It's a mankilling job. A sabbatical
would be rejuvenating, provide academic stimulation, increase
my imagination and my awareness of new educational techniques.

***

Certainly. Great idea. After so many years one begins to
wear out their welcome. Superintendents usually make enemies,
not friends, because of their decision-making. So many of the
decisions are common-sense ones and there are so many that it
becomes a bore. I'd like to travel and do further study. I
tried to take a course a few years ago and didn't have time.

***

I need to take some courses away from the responsibilities of
running a school system. Need to see the job from a new perspec-
tive. Can't do it in the eye of the hurricane.

***

Could by very valuable. I've often needed time off in the past
30 years. With me, it's a need to get away from myself for
awhile. My kids are grown. I've remarried. I could use it.

***

Absolutely important in a job like this. I get lost in the
forest, so to speak. It's important for me to keep up to date
and abreast of the changes, yet I don't have time.

***

Superintendents need a brief rest period--like a couple of
weeks to disappear especially after crucial issues.

***

It would offer an opportunity to study, to confer and to add
physical and mental energy, new perspectives and new ideas.

***
No, I don't really need one although I would like one. I would do it if it were a sabbatical which involved the study of superintendents and of other school systems. It would give me time to read, to share ideas and to reflect. I would improve my background and increase my knowledge to make decisions. It would also give me a fresh outlook.

***

A superintendent must retrain himself periodically. Brief workshops and conferences are not enough time. We need a large bloc of time for reflection and thinking and re-tooling. Right now, 90% of what I do is what other people have put before me and created. A sabbatical, perhaps for half a year, is critical if a superintendent is to be able to have the insight to initiate new directions and long-range planning. It would also be revitalizing for a superintendent to have the time to produce something in writing.

***

I'm forever catching up. I diminish in effectiveness over time. I need to get away, step back from the bull-shit and contemplate my navel if nothing else.

***

Superintendents get out of touch with the literature and the cutting edge of the profession. We need an uninterrupted period to study, to write, and to take time to think through major issues. The job is debilitating. I allow myself to become overly concerned with unimportant things. I am too close to the situation and that prohibits me from seeing the big picture. I need to get away from the routine, the daily operation, the pressures and take a look at what is happening. The bag of tricks a superintendent starts with gets smaller as the pace of the field gets faster. The superintendent is even more demanding and requires even more knowledge than medicine or law. A sabbatical would allow a superintendent to spend more time with his family and it would also allow time for travel to study what is being done throughout other school systems. The self-refreshment, the new perspective, and the renewal that might result from a sabbatical should be considered advantageous to the school system as well as to the superintendent.

***

The job is a back-breaker and a sabbatical would allow the time for physical and mental regeneration and renewed vigor. The pressures of the job do not allow enough time for me to pursue new topics and new techniques and explore analogous systems. I would like to be able to see new methods instead of simply reading about them.
The superintendent needs to get away from the phone and the day to day problems in order to re-charge himself, to upgrade his skills, to continue to learn and very much to be able to make a significant contribution to new knowledge. I also think it would be in the best interests of the board of education and the public for superintendents to be able to maintain strong knowledgeable leadership. To do this a superintendent needs time to adapt to the learner's role again.

***

I think a sabbatical should be required. The intensity and the time demands of the superintendency cause a tremendous physical, emotional and social drain. This drain and fatigue results in a tendency to become more conservative and more apt to compromise.

***

It's too easy to rely on old ways and proven ways of doing things. I need the opportunity to concentrate exclusively on the conceptual framework of my field as opposed to being dominated by implementation tasks.

10. What tasks or events make a week unusually interesting/uninteresting for you?

**Uninteresting Tasks or Events:**

- Filling out forms and reading bureaucratic garbage (10)
- Routine administrivia; same old shit; repetition (10)
- Budget (7)
- Trivial, boring personal and personnel grievances (6)
- Negotiations (6)
- School committee meetings filled with speeches and mundane questions (4)
- Writing reports; filling out questionnaires from Graduate students; and other correspondence (4)
- Nothing is uninteresting (4)
- Petty internal politics and bickering (2)
- Myriad of committee meetings with some people who have diarrhea of the mouth. (2)
- Dull boring purchase orders, bids, census data (2)
- School cultural events; ceremonial functions (2)
Uninteresting Tasks or Events - continued

"Re-inventing the wheel" with new School Board members
Fighting the civil service (contractual) nuances and grievances—If you've heard one, you've heard them all.
The custodial priorities of elementary school principals
The concerns of principals in general
Ones that don't involve problem-solving or decision-making

Interesting Tasks Or Events:
Working with staff development (teachers and administrators) (9)
Program and curriculum development and innovation (8)
Program implementation and evaluation—long and short range (6)
Solving plethora of problems and making decisions (5)
Consulting with outside professionals (3)
Interaction with kids and visiting schools (2)
Management by objectives (2)
Selecting administrative personnel
"Selling" plans and programs to the community or staff
Using human relations skills
Open education and the establishment of a learning community

10.b In terms of your specific job, what would you recommend that would make it more satisfying? For example, could you suggest two major changes?

I would put someone in charge of contract negotiations in order to relieve the superintendent of that responsibility; sufficient staff to do research work such as turning out reports at the request of the School Committee; there is in-bred leadership here and I'd like to bring in better administrators from outside our system.

* * * *

I would work out with school committee some arrangements whereby every couple of months, the superintendent should go away for 4 or 5 days; reduction in superintendent's expected activities; I would work by the courage of my convictions, in
order to remove so much of the anxiety caused by this job.

** ** **

To sit down and talk with school board members in an unofficial way with no newspaper people around; get the Board of Education to set up a policy booklet in order to formalize their policies!

** ** **

I need an administrative assistant; I wish this town were closer to a major city. The educational setting here is not stimulating enough.

** ** **

Provide a training program for the school committee that would enable it to function as an enlightened Board of Directors. School Committee should be less concerned with the day to day administration of the schools; Reduce the number of night meetings significantly.

** ** **

I recommend appointed school boards--because so many people get elected to school boards for their personal "trips"; I would like to have other staff members deal with maintenance, physical plant, and other such problems; I would change some aspects of the budget-making process.

** ** **

Get rid of aldermen; i.e. abolish relationships with politically motivated people whose minds can't change, and who have an axe to grind; More time to think and to make choices; More undefined time, i.e. time that is not scheduled.

** ** **

I would delegate to the superintendent the right to approve payment of all bills; Give superintendent the right to appoint teachers; Hopefully the effect of both these changes would be to take power away from school committees.

** ** **

A budget sufficient to run many inservice training programs and an inservice institute that would pay people extra money for attending; I would try to reduce the organization paranoia that comes from misunderstandings within the system. A lot of rumors and distortion despite very open channels of communication; I would change the present orientation toward legalistic approaches (e.g., contracts and grievances). As we have become less autocratic, we haven't become more democratic; rather, we've become more legalistic.
Better and new buildings— they do make a difference; the politics of the community

* * * *

School Committee which would devote itself to a policy making role rather than an administrative role. A more gracious and positively reinforcing school committee and staff; More assistance to the superintendent personally. I need an assistant to deal with everyday nitty gritty issues; then, I could be reading and thinking ahead for the purposes of long range planning.

* * * *

Some way that the "public" could be forced to read the publicity I put out to explain what I'm doing; Restrict school committee members from bringing up pickayune items at public meetings; I'd reduce or eliminate the debilitating effect of (a) the demand for participation and involvement at all levels; (b) contractual constraints; and (c) civil liberties awareness which increases the amount of time needed to bring about significant changes.

* * * *

I would change the narrow scope of the job targets I set for myself with school committee in any one year; I would delegate authority and responsibilities better.

* * * *

Quality of school committee members; they should leave the administration of schools to the superintendent; When I delegate jobs, I should improve quality of what I deem acceptable work from my staff; My expectancies are often not met by the staff; I would have the public accept resolution of their complaints at a lower level of decision-making. They bring superintendent into everything unfortunately.

* * * *

Hire a business manager; More direct meetings with various sub-groups and staff, because present communication from superintendent to these sub-groups and staff doesn't filter down as much as I'd like.

* * * *

Legal definition of the differences in the roles of superintendent and the School Committee. School Committee is a hobby for some of them; Less emphasis on going to night meetings constantly; More opportunity to be in contact with staff members.

* * * *
Assistance in dealing with administrivia.

* * * *

Availability of an administrative assistant who would be a complete confidant. I need help in ordering my day and getting rid of minutia; I would spend 1/2 my time in curriculum and instruction.

* * * *

I would change the present situation in which powerful political individuals on school committees want to be involved to an unhealthy degree in the day to day affairs of the school system administration. I am a bureaucrat and this hinders my ability to lead effectively; Give principals more autonomy. School committee policy prohibits this; Enable superintendents to make organizational changes that he believes are desirable. My powerlessness to do this is a major pain for me!

* * * *

Drawing a more direct line between system accomplishment and my role in that accomplishment. More reward and recognition; An opportunity to share with others what it is I can contribute.

* * * *

More time to meet with staff and help them solve their problems; I would get more involved in curriculum development and evaluation.

* * * *

More money for me. More status!; More understanding school committee; More money for the system.

* * * *

Get rid of School Committee--it slows progress! Public Relations--need for support staff in this area. Would help communication to community, parents, teachers, etc.; Superintendents should be required to keep up teaching (at college or secondary level) and/or continue to be in a learner's role by taking workshops and courses; I'd much rather be creating or participating in the creation of interesting activities than administering them for the 11th time.

* * * *

There should be scheduled and forced time away from job (school committee mandated); School Committee insistence on the superintendent taking time off for family and hobbies; A shift to more state level support.

* * * *
Reduction of evening meetings; Reduce School Board's dependence on town government.

* * * *

More reasonable time—workload; An opportunity to engage in post-doctoral work on a regular basis; Opportunity to involve family in a more normal way.

* * * *

More assistance in handling non-educational aspects. More administrative assistants for administrivia. This would give me more time to get into schools and help with curriculum; School budget takes up major portion of time. Too much! We don't have fiscal independence. Budget must go from Board of Education to the town council to the town meeting.

* * * *

More monetary assistance from Federal government. This causes superintendents to spend their time politicing and lobbying rather than being an educational leader which is what we are trained to be; Better graduate programs to prepare administrators. Would allow me to set up a better staff. Now I have to train all my staff myself.

* * * *

The chance to select a more competent staff; Increased communication—internally and externally.

* * * *

Greater assurance of personal loyalty from among those upon whom my ultimate success is so heavily dependent (central staff and school committee); If statutory patterns of governance would cause the authority for educational decisions to be less fragmented. More power to the superintendent! (School systems in Mass. and R.I. are outgrowths of town meetings; therefore the powers are very fragmented. Land, budget, etc. are all caught up in town functions).

* * * *

19. Some people feel that the job of running a school system or a school has a great many similarities to the job of a business executive or high level manager. Others feel that jobs in human service organizations such as schools and school systems are not comparable to those in business. What is your thinking on the subject?

14  Similar  7  Not comparable  9  Mixed
Similarities To The Job Of Business Executive:

personnel matters (8)
  * * * *

budgetary matters (6)
  * * * *

labor negotiations (3)
  * * * *

allocating limited resources (3)
  * * * *

organizational techniques such as planning, coordinating, program development. (2)
  * * * *

I am a high level manager with total responsibility for large systems. (2)
  * * * *

both have very similar functions. Both are system executives and are judged by the extent to which they steer their institutions through changing times. Both jobs have universal functions of managers such as goal-setting, personnel matters, program development and relating to a client system.
  * * * *

both are controlled by a Board, have huge budgets, branch managers (principals), products (kids), clients (parents and taxpayers), goals and focusing resources.
  * * * *

business practices such as managing a contract, taking bids, purchasing of supplies, building maintenance and construction.
  * * * *

unitary approach of business, P.P.B.S. and flow charts.
  * * * *

hierarchy of administrative decisions
  * * * *

accountability to a School Committee (Board of Directors)
  * * * *

both jobs affected by legislation and taxation
  * * * *
Similarities To The Job Of Business Executive - continued

time pressures

* * * *

technical skills

* * * *

relating to staff and working toward objectives within budgetary constraints

* * * *

major problems are all the same if you eliminate balance sheets.

* * * *

Dissimilarities To The Job Of Business Executive:

more direct and active public control of education (7)

* * * *

amount and means of product evaluation (6)

* * * *

the fact of profit-motive (5)

* * * *

education is not a finished manufactured product (4)

* * * *

salaries (3)

* * * *

decision-making (2)

* * * *

direct contact with the public, continuously, such as open meetings. (2)

* * * *

outcomes are harder to measure in education

* * * *

I have 5,300 different products—all non-standardized parts

* * * *

very few things are subject to data processing as in business.

* * * *
Dissimilarities To The Job Of Business Executive - continued

- cost effectiveness measurements are not comparable

- school executives can't use management by objectives (M.B.O.) exclusively

- education is a public service organization

- goals of business usually have unanimity, while the goals of the school system do not.

- school executives have more constraints.

- sources of revenue—public finance

- the political base of a school superintendent

- a school executive's constituency is constantly in a state of change.

- freedom of movement seems much greater in the private sector.

- judgments are less emotionally wearing.

- innumerable differences within the field of education

- a business' board of directors doesn't usually attempt to get involved in day to day affairs.

- system of governance
16. How long did you originally expect to be in your present job in this town (city)?

- No idea: 4 superintendents
- 3 years: 3
- 3-6 years: 1
- 4-5 years: 3
- 5-6 years: 8
- 6-8 years: 1
- 7 years: 2
- 10-15 years: 1
- 12 years: 1
- Until retirement: 2
- Indefinitely: 1
- Not as long as I have: 1

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<th>Original Expectations</th>
<th>Actual # of Years in the Job</th>
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<td>Until retirement</td>
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<td>Not as long as I have</td>
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17.a For some superintendents, talking about past and present jobs has been pleasant and positive, but they have expressed concern about their future. Do you share this concern?
17.a - continued: How do you find yourself thinking about your future?

**Statements Revealing Concern About The Future:**

----- My future should be changing soon. A manager can't be most effective for longer than five years. No chief school executive can remain objective about his staff and his programs. There should be a clean slate every five years. Therefore, I'm looking for a new job in the field of education.

----- Yes, I'm concerned about the future and retirement. I'm concerned about the tentativeness and the turn-over in this job. I'd like to obtain job security. I've had other opportunities but I'm restricted to the state because of the retirement benefits. My job security means my family security.

----- I have a consistent concern for professional growth and I work at it constantly. For me to move it would have to be a superintendency in a much larger city with a much larger salary.

----- I've done about every job in public education. What else am I going to do? I'm so prepared. Larger superintendencies are open to me but I'm not sure I want them. The superintendency is not the most direct road to making great impact on kids. We're tied down to so many non-educational functions. I'll probably remain a suburban superintendent.

----- Yes, I'm concerned about the future. I shut myself off from much advancement because I lack a Ph.D. and now the economic conditions are worsening. I don't think this town will fire me, but I don't want to be here in "gratuity years" where you're simply tolerated until its time to retire. Therefore I'm open to the possibility of moving to a new situation.

----- I have a lot of uncertainty about the future. I know that the same kinds of relationships and problems that I have now will be there in another superintendent's position also. A superintendent comes into a new job with a basket of good will. With each decision a bit of that basket is eliminated. Therefore my personal dilemma is what I want to trade this set of problems for another set? The two main factors driving me to move are, 1) a better relationship with a school committee, and 2) less irrational conflict based on personal, rather than objective criteria. A university setting would satisfy my power and ego and action-oriented needs. I'm still really confused however.
Statements Revealing Concern About The Future - continued

------ Yes I think about the future because I can always lose this job. If I don't lose it, then I'd like to retire from this town. At fifty-five when I retire I'd like to do something else just for the pleasure of doing it. For example, a business opportunity which would involve talking to people without much responsibility.

------ I'm concerned. The job lacks security and is always in jeopardy. If I lost my job in the next few years, I'd try a new field, but otherwise I won't try to move. I'd like to be able to have job security at an earlier age, it would enable me to spend more time with my wife in our later years and make up for the sacrifices she and I have had to make.

------ I've thought about the future and my physical and mental strength carefully in the last few months. I've planned to retire at fifty-five irrespective of the retirement bill if I can last that long. Then I'd like to try college teaching and a significantly reduced pace.

------ I only have one lung and I've worked it hard. I'm fifty years old and soon won't be marketable. I've been careless about what will happen to me about retirement and what will happen to me when I can't produce as much money for my family.

------ I'm undecided about wanting to stay here. Besides I don't think I can last here and I'm not sure if its good for me. Possibly another superintendency or maybe a college presidency.

------ I love my job each and every day. But since more of my friends are in sales I'm going to fall back on my own competitive philosophy and compete with these guys in sales and make more money than them. I need that carrot held out for me and something to keep me young.

------ I'm 48 and I'm just beginning to worry about the future. I would like to stay in this job until my children finish their present schools. However the politics of this city is coming to be hostile to me. I'm lucky to be here this long. I don't really know what I want to do next. I know I don't enjoy the superintendency as much anymore, but I don't want to leave this area. I have good standing in Massachusetts and I'm afraid of having to start over again. Yes, its an unsettled future. Once in a while I think about wanting to take law courses and go into the field of arbitration and collective bargaining.
Statements Revealing Concern About The Future - continued

I've been given notice by the school committee that they will not renew my contract. Needless to say I'm concerned about my future. I'm thinking about shifting gears and dropping down into a lower level position in order to get away from the negotiations and school committees and budgets and all that non-meaningful stuff.

I don't want to perpetuate myself in a job as I see many superintendents doing and use that as a reason to stay. I've rarely thought about this issue until now. But after two or three years in this job perhaps it would be good for the school system and for me to move. At fifty-two I have one more move left. I had wanted to spend my last 8 years teaching part-time, writing, and consulting. But the economy makes that very limited right now.

I don't know how long I want to go through this crap year in and year out, fighting fires which I have no way of controlling and which only merge again. In the long run, that is unsatisfying! But I suppose I like to do what I do best and therefore I'm resigned to doing the superintendent's job. Also I don't want to do it anywhere else but this town.

I'd really like to move on. Much of what I'm doing now is repetitious of what I've been doing for a long time.

I want to retire as soon as possible. I'm not sure I have the mental strength and stamina to continue to be as effective. I've already started to plateau. I don't want it to get worse.

Statements Revealing Confidence Or No Real Concern About The Future:

I haven't given the next eleven years much thought except for the fact that I'd like my son who is in junior high school to graduate from this town's high school.

This job is still challenging and as long as its challenging I'll stay in it.

No tremendous concern about the future. On occasion I'm apprehensive about the changing role of the superintendent and unions and school committees. But I've made sure my retirement is in good shape.

I've no worries about the future. If I did I'd be looking for new challenges.
Statements Revealing Confidence Or No Real Concern About The Future - continued

I've no real concern about the future. I'll go on to a larger, more responsible, more highly paid superintendency someday. I don't care about lost tenure because I don't care how long I stay here. However, to go beyond my original expectation of three years, it would mean I've made substantial changes in the power base of this community.

I have no real concern about the future. I could easily move to a similar affluent community, but I don't want it. In a few more years after I've completed some more of the goals I've set for myself in this community, I'd like to move to a city. I'd like to try a different kind of job in the field of education.

As long as the personal challenge of this job continues, and it has, I don't have any concern about the future.

No, it's not a major concern. If the job terminates, I'd retire or find another job. When I came here I gave up tenure anyway.

I'm quite confident about the future. But I'd like to do some writing someday. There's no time in my present job to do writing. I'm also interested in issues of law and also selling. I'd like to be able to have a choice, but there are no supports in our society for helping people relearn.

No concern. I'm open to a lot of alternatives and not just in the field of education. But I plan to stay here at least another seven or eight years.

Not concerned. On the contrary I never wanted to live in anticipation of retirement but I'm doing it now.

15.a Some superintendents are frustrated about having so few "yardsticks" to help them and others determine the quality and acceptability of their job performance. Others feel that the ambiguity is simply a part of the nature and "level" of their work. How do you feel about this?

Group I: "Frustrated About Having So Few Yardsticks."

It bothers me. I think it is a big problem in education. The most frustrating part of the job is not being able to show clearly that you're doing a good job. Is anyone
Group I: Frustrated About Having So Few Yardsticks" - continued

looking for and do they care about the small signs of a good job?

There is a lack of yardsticks, yes. The job requires too much self-motivation and self-judgement. There is no external evaluation. There is no contract here so I don't even get the feedback of contract renewal.

Although evaluation is an on-going process, school committees don't make their evaluations by concrete criteria and to a degree that is unfortunate. Lay people are doing evaluation.

The nature of the work makes it hard to measure. It is problematic because despite how you spell out role and job descriptions measuring it is difficult because of the element of public satisfaction. Right now I am not satisfied with the amount of evaluation.

We need more precise measuring. Present measures are external to the job.

I tell my staff that I want appraisal of my work, but very few have been candid. In fact it's rare.

My concern is that there are so many yardsticks. Evaluation of the superintendency is very ambiguous because it is based solely on the perceptions or opinions of the school committee. Evaluation changes as the school committee does. What you do right one year is wrong the next. If you can't live with that, you'll be unhappy.

Sometimes we perceive more satisfaction about the job than there is. We get so much shit and so little reinforcement. Most communities and school committees don't think positively.

Group II: "Ambiguity Is A Part Of The Work."

Ambiguity? Yes, it's a part of the job. The board can dismiss you at any time for any reason, it depends on your personality.

It's very ambiguous. Very subjective. They're not evaluating me versus any real objectives. All this is O.K. with me.

Yes ambiguity is part of the job but I wish there were some things more clear. It would be desirable if there were better measurements of my job. There are times when I'm insecure or unaware of a direction to go in. What can you do?
Group II: "Ambiguity Is A Part Of The Work" - continued

----- It's a part of the work. Success or maturity is governed by the capacity of the individual to live in this job. I'm not troubled by it. One big problem is trying to attach yardsticks to everything!

----- The latter is true. A Superintendent must be a perceptive generalist. I request an annual evaluation from my school committee. I reduce my job to finite goals and expectations.

----- Yes, it's part of the job but it doesn't have to be so ambiguous. Yardsticks are fuzzy but judgements and evaluation can be made.

----- Yardsticks are not there. At the present time I don't want more. I don't want to be evaluated until I've completed the foundation. No formal evaluations now.

----- The latter is closer to the truth. This work is not easily measured. Most people evaluate on how they feel and not on how they think; therefore an important part of a superintendent's bag of tricks is to learn how to make people feel good.

----- There aren't many yardsticks but I don't want or need them anyway.

----- There is no formal evaluation but I don't feel the frustration.

----- You must be able to live with ambiguity. I get feedback from the school committee once a month but I hear all different sides of the spectrum.

----- You have to have a tolerance for ambiguity in this job. Personally I have never been threatened by ambiguity.

----- I agree that ambiguity is part of the level of the work.

----- It is very ambiguous! No clean clear measuring devices. It is very difficult to evaluate and any evaluation is dependent on the community.

----- The yardsticks are how the town accepts your performance and this includes intangibles that can't be measured. There lies the ambiguity in the job. Superintendents are good and bad for the same things to different people. There are no standards, only controversies. Standards of one community are distasteful to others. Standards are set by the community and since no two communities are the same there are no larger yardsticks.
Group III: "There Are Enough Yardsticks."

There are enough yardsticks if you want to have them. I tend to develop relationships in the community to add yardsticks. I also asked former board members for feedback.

I have requested an annual evaluation from the committee. There are enough yardsticks if you set them up.

There are some yardsticks. I've insisted on an annual evaluation, using objectives of my two and three year plans. I'm only concerned about my employer.

Yardsticks are not unavailable. However, performance on them has nothing to do with the real reason you continue in your position.

There is plenty of opportunity for you to get feedback, to set up targets, and to be evaluated.

This business is crisis oriented. Yardsticks are based on the particular assignments of that year and the resolution of crises.

I set up my goals and objectives every year and then sit down with the school committee. It's hard to get them to do it, for them it's boring. I send them rating charts.

I've worked out a Management By Objectives system for myself. I've clarified roles and expectations and am evaluated by the school board on this basis; this reduces the frustration level.

I use a Management By Objectives system. The yardsticks are there if you use M.B.O. It lessens ambiguity.

15.b Using your own "yardsticks," how do you evaluate your job performance?

Group I: Personal

I have a self-evaluation program. (2)

my behavior against recognized good superintendent behavior

I know when I'm doing well generally. I don't need to ask someone.

amount of applause for my opening day address

when a critic gives some approval
Group I: Personal - continued

----- personal success; whether or not I feel comfortable and am enjoying the job.
----- public recognition; positive communications with the public
----- intuition
----- I use the growing edge concept of Paul Mort.
----- The extent to which my behavior causes the school system to adapt to changing needs
----- The extent to which I can keep up with the times
----- My tolerance of diversity within the system
----- Approbation of colleagues

Group II: Programmatic

----- My own sense of what kids are doing, for example individual student success (2)
----- Success with budget stability (2)
----- completion of long range goals
----- comparing with the characteristics of a healthy institution
----- whether or not problems are solved
----- where I am on my five year plan and the vitality of program development
----- Amount of time spent on educational matters versus labor negotiations
----- the town's acceptance of school budget
----- If I continue to feel a sense of satisfaction that the school system is improving
----- compare myself to other superintendents with regard to:
       (a) designs for learning
       (b) understanding the structure of knowledge
       (c) management systems
----- If I've made a difference, i.e., impact of my programs and ideas (2)
----- How the community is accepting the educational programs.
----- I judge myself on results, such as programmatic success and the number of tasks completed.
Group II: Programmatic - continued

----- Whether or not the system is meeting my own goals and objectives
----- Success in public relations
----- I put my objectives in writing and then look at accomplishment versus set tasks.
----- Measurement of my sense of being able to anticipate needs before they occur. Needs assessment.
----- Measurement of fiscal resources.

Group III: Staff and School Committee

----- I review my targets with the school committee in periodic feedback sessions.
----- In my contract I demand one or two meetings with the school committee on review.
----- Success in the area of conflicts
----- Success in politics with the school committee
----- Reactions from schools and principals; principals evaluate me twice a year.
----- Development of a good administrative team, and utilization of its strength
----- The growth of my staff, its achievement, enthusiasm and quality.
----- Intuitive feeling from school committee members
----- How often the staff is utilizing grievance procedures
----- The general pace of change and the feeling of my own staff about change
----- If the school committee candidates whom I support win their races
----- If my recommendations have been rejected or if there has been a crisis with the School Committee
----- The number of followers I have and people's response to my ideas
----- The number of people involved in decisions
----- Satisfaction and acceptance of others
----- Helping the school committee work together
Group III: Staff and School Committee - continued

------ Whether or not my staff supports me, does well, and if
my staff is pulling together.

------ Job satisfaction of others.

------ Dialogue with others; interaction with staff, public and
school committee.

------ Am I influencing people; how well do I motivate people.

------ Are effects worth the effort; do things get done?

7.d Suppose someone was told to come to your office for advice about
becoming a superintendent. If he/she said, "I've read what
the books and articles say about the superintendency, but I am
hoping that you can tell me really what it's like to be a
superintendent," what would you say?

Statements About The Superintendency Which Appear to Stem From
Or Describe The Frustrations And/Or The Pressures In The Job:

------ School superintendency is deeply political, and the job
will differ depending on the community (town) you are in.
(4)

------ You must be clear about your educational priorities and
philosophy, how much you'll put up with, and try to match
it with the community you might work for. Premarital
intercourse is advisable before this marriage. (4)

------ Physically and psychologically taxing and exhausting;
very hectic (2)

------ Must work within the parameters of the school system, local
town and state "structure" and you can't be too single-
minded. (2)

------ Must make many compromises, some very unpleasant (2)

------ Watch out for your health (2)

------ Must have high tolerance for ambiguity (2)

------ You need human relations skills; "process" is more impor-
tant than "content" when dealing with people. (2)

------ Takes too much time to bring about significant changes.
This is very frustrating. (2)

------ It is a high-conflict environment in which you must be a
manager of conflict of values and change. (2)
Statements About The Superintendency . . . - continued

----- If you are honest to the job, you will give up a lot of things you cherish and value in your private life. (2)

----- Too many night meetings. Extremely time consuming (2)

----- Unless you decide that things will be accomplished through others and not by yourself; you'll have trouble.

----- Lots of drawbacks and problems

----- Play to win but learn to accept the setbacks.

----- A good superintendent, like a good electrician, survives to collect his pension.

----- Go back and read a lot more.

----- Must have a fairly even temper

----- Be young, like to work really hard and be involved in a lot of controversy.

----- Get some personal growth training (even psychotherapy) in order to increase your self-acceptance. Otherwise you spend your time being defensive.

----- It requires good listening skills

----- Must have a facility for resolving conflict

----- Be aware of the endless expectations of your numerous and various "publics." Attempt to be objective.

----- The growing impact of social forces (e.g., desegregation, and equalizing expenditures) that impinge directly on the system

----- You must be thickskinned and have a strong stomach.

----- You don't have absolute control.

----- It is a diverse environment socially, educationally and politically which you must live with and protect.

----- More business-oriented than you'd anticipate

----- The job can be demeaning.

----- If you become a superintendent, you will become "the Superintendent" and will be stuck with that close personal identity.

----- There is much distrust of the superintendent; people are convinced you're on the take.

----- Be aware of the negative consequences of your "publicness" for your family; e.g., harassment of your children.
Statements About The Superintendency . . . – continued

------ Lonely job. Public servant
------ Requires you to learn how to lose and win gracefully
------ Must expend great effort to get the community involved
------ You have the huge responsibility of being the last level of appeal.
------ You should learn to be secure with ambiguous remote educational goals and poor evaluation.
------ You should be tough in your convictions and have physical and intellectual tenacity.
------ You have to help keep the job challenging or it'll become dull.
------ Must understand labor relations
------ Don't become a superintendent if you want to raise a family.

Statements About The Superintendency Which Appear To Stem From Or Describe The Pleasures And/Or Rewards Of The Job:

------ Highly rewarding to see your programs accomplished even if it takes a long time of frustration. (3)
------ Frequent moments of exhilaration, satisfaction and prestige. (2)
------ You will be involved in an extremely important area in which you still can affect change. (2)
------ It is a most satisfying and challenging job, even with its problems. (2)
------ The job is thoroughly interesting and exciting and self-satisfying. (2)
------ Financially rewarding
------ You must take the initiative.
------ If you can regard it all as a game, you'll stay sane and have a job.
------ Decide what type of person you are and with whom you can and want to work.
------ Must continually try to have a good working relationship with the School Committee.
------ You must maintain the status quo but constantly be on the cutting edge of things.
Statements About The Superintendency . . . Pleasures - continued

----- Must have an ability for switching crises and problems into positive challenges.

----- The opportunity is there to make the job what you want. Very self-directed position.

----- It's a lot of fun for the first 10 years.

----- It would be most rewarding to have an internship experience with a superintendent as part of your training.

----- Must have perceptive generalist capabilities in curriculum, finance, and public relations.

----- The key to success in the long run is your ability to be a student advocate.

----- People become superintendents to meet basic personal needs such as to be a leader and to be an influence.

----- The job compels you to have a sound knowledge of the political process.

----- The job is the best textbook in human relations.

----- Job helps you develop an understanding and willingness to accept the multiple values of the people who want to influence you.

----- Must be able to speak, write and listen intelligently in a wide assortment of areas. Must be poised, have a good sense of timing, be able to organize your thoughts on your feet, and know when to be decisive; i.e., when to act and when to delay.

----- Must have a lot of professional integrity and be able to internalize the rewards.
APPENDIX F

TEXT OF THE INTERVIEW RESPONSES:

PART II
Interview Responses

Question 7.a

Comments - A: Superintendents who feel that psychological obsolescence is a major factor in their job.

I don't find I have the same commitment. I get tired easily, and say the hell with it. Let someone else do it.

* * * *

I lose a little piece of my soul every day due to the pressures. I'm always manipulating various group's realities to make them more responsive. I've become a marginal person, a personal sacrificer. The job has taken a terrible psychological toll on me and my family.

* * * *

Night meetings. Patronage. The constant relating to other people and their foibles and fears; that is exhausting and takes a real toll.

* * * *

Yes. Definitely! Mental fatigue, frustration and personal fatigue are all psychologically obsolescing. Constant criticism has created a self-doubt and defensiveness in me. As a result, recently I find myself manifesting annoyance with people. The public sees this and they sit around just waiting for you to retire.

* * * *

Superintendents job can't be done within a normal work day. I'm tired, physically and mentally drained but even with the drawbacks I love the job.

* * * *

I agree totally. I'm dissatisfied with the restrictions on my playing a stronger leadership role, with not being able to read or keep up, with not being a well-known and important superintendent among superintendents.

* * * *

Accurate. No time to broaden myself. There's a psychological obsolescence in my personal make-up. I'd be a better person if I had more time for music and other cultural growth. Perhaps that would make me a better school superintendent, a more interesting person and better able to lead.

* * * *
Comments - A - continued

I've tended to become a more "other-directed" person through compromise and politicking with various publics.

* * * *

I increasingly lash out in an impatient irritable way with the staff. The job has taken a toll on me physically. I can't stay awake when I get home. Often I take a drink to relax, and then I feel even more tired and have less patience with my family. Many superintendents I know become heavy drinkers to relieve tension.

* * * *

The constant pressure to satisfy a politically split community--like being a juggler--takes an unbearable toll.

* * * *

Conflict resolution constantly tests your entire value system with the issue of "expediency versus right." And because groups function differently than individuals, it is terribly draining.

* * * *

Comments - B: Superintendents who do not feel the effects of psychological obsolescence in their job.

Graduate school took a much greater toll and gave far fewer kicks.

* * * *

There's no question that job takes a toll, especially through mental fatigue and public abuse, but the toll for me has been minimal. I'm resilient. I have developed mechanisms to stay well. No problems.

* * * *

I don't really obsolesce. I try to cover all the bases.

* * * *

I know the job has a high risk for psychological obsolescence, but I take precautions. I am still pretty together after 9 years. In fact I'm just as good as I was 9 years ago.

* * * *
Comments - B - continued

The pressures on the job sap my energy and strength but I draw on my own resources based on my dedication.

* * * *

Comments - C: Superintendents who do not feel that intellectual starvation is a major factor in their job.

I never put the literature away until I've read it so that I have a talking knowledge in many areas.

* * * *

I make sure my staff teaches me and informs me. Superintendents think they are supposed to say that they need more time for study. It's more professional.

* * * *

It's hard to keep up but I try to budget 10% of my time for intellectual growth. There are also some good conferences and workshops. Not enough though. Reading suffers.

* * * *

There's no intellectual starvation. I've made it my job to keep up reading, travel and music. The job has enhanced my intellectual growth.

* * * *

I do lots of reading and I'm surrounded by top notch people. I make a deliberate attempt to build-in intellectual stimulation.

* * * *

I do read but I must discipline myself. However, I don't do nearly as much as I'd like.

* * * *

I've found the time to keep up in my field, by reading and being at conferences. However, to do the readings outside my field that I like is impossible.

* * * *
Comments - D: Superintendents who feel that intellectual starvation is a major factor in their job.

There's no real intellectual consideration made by the school committee. It's purely values based on public demand. A lay group like the school committee and also the whole public is what I deal with most. Definitely not an academic setting. No real intellectual in-depth analysis.

* * * *

True. I don't do nearly as much intellectual growth activity as I ought to (such as reading literature or taking education courses and workshops).

* * * *

Extremely true. Pace of job makes such a demand that it is impossible to keep up with the literature. I end up playing tapes in the car but I'm years behind.

* * * *

Yes. It's a liability in the job and I'll feel it more and more as I get on in years.

* * * *

Very real issue! Need sabbatical very badly. Superficiality in reading. Very difficult to be the continual students which we should try to be.

* * * *

I agree. There's nothing intellectually satisfying about job. Constantly re-inventing, re-educating and re-explaining. Still trying to talk people into things 10 years old. School committee issues start over and over and over again.

* * * *

Yes. Shows the need for a sabbatical. I have no time for spare time reading or for concerts and plays. My family discussions are lacking. My kids are way ahead of me. I am not aware of events outside my field.

* * * *

True. An operational job like superintendent includes 60 hours a week, days and nights, crises, little time to think and plan.

* * * *
Question 11.b The Number of Persons Who Reported That They Utilized All Their Personal Skills and Strengths In Their Job: 13

Least Used or Unused Personal Skills

---- I don't use personality related skills such as caring and warmth. Can't afford the luxury of emotions in making decisions. I'm task oriented, anyway.

---- The substance of my caring for people isn't used enough. For example, my sensitivity and sense of humor.

---- My personal warmth. The person I really am. They get a wrong impression of me.

---- My personal approach and warmth in dealing with people.

---- Sense of humor.

---- I am warmer, more sensitive and more affectionate than my current job situation allows me to be. Personal strengths in communicating with people, especially when I initiate.

---- Relating to young people

---- My ability to motivate staff directly

---- Direct consultation with staff; small group leadership; ability to motivate people.

---- My personal ability to inspire, motivate and organize.

---- My capacity for definitiveness in decision-making; mediating and group skills.

---- I can't use my full-fighting ability because as a superintendent so much in the public eye I must be diplomatic and tactful.

---- Public relations and media related skills such as public speaking ability and persuasiveness

Most Used Personal Skills

---- Empathy and the ability to read the other person's feelings

---- Honesty, candor, and the whole repertoire of human relations skills used in motivating people

---- Leadership and integrity

---- Relating to people on a personal basis

---- Empathy and understanding and other inherited skills

---- Keen sense of personal relationships
Most Used Personal Skills - continued

---- Sense of humor; persuasiveness
---- Salesmanship
---- The ability to feel free and be myself without inhibitions
---- It calls on every god damn thing you got, including the bad ones.

Question 11.c

Yes: 16   No: 10

1/3 of those answering yes, indicated that use of the skills would come after retirement. Some others reported they still hope to use their unused skills in their present job.

Comments of YES Respondents

---- It's important to someday use them again.
---- Teaching at a university; more time for curriculum development
---- Some other public service work such as staff work to an elected official or foundation work
---- I'll use them again in another superintendency. I'm wed to the profession and not the place or particular job.
---- I'll try to build them into my next job.
---- I assume I will if I move to another community.
---- Within a few years, I'll change to a career in business.

Comments of NO Respondents

---- No, I don't use this environment to get personal satisfaction. I have institutional behavior.
---- As time goes on, less and less hope of ever using them again.
---- I had hoped I could use my presently unused work skills in this job, but I don't believe they can be considered any longer as part of today's superintendency.
Question 12

Other Met Needs and Comments

Exercise! I must be in top physical condition to continue as family breadwinner and keep up with the job. Job time to go to conventions, meetings, etc.; interacting and working with people; while meeting authority needs I relinquish anonymity; opportunity to effect change; the environment requires the exchange of ideas in a rational and fair way with a set of ethics and principles. I have a great need for this; to relate to bright people; doing job well and becoming more skilled; organizational development; competitive needs, leadership; the desire to be a key part of decision-making; seeing people grow—perhaps the masculine way of having babies.

Other Unmet Needs and Comments

Greater understanding by my friends of the complexities of the job; need for more understanding; privacy time, and not feeling like I'm an outsider; I need more time and more trusted close friends; more of a sense of personal identity; more wealth because no matter how hard I work or well I do, my salary hardly changes; trusted informal relationships and deep friendships; anonymity and time to be alone; this is one of the few jobs of its kind where there is only one in the town; job security; to be less public and constantly observed; need to withdraw and gain perspective; being able to trust people's motives; geographic needs; academic aspects of being an educator; fulfilling marriage and fulfilling superintendency at the same time.

Question 13


Everywhere I go I'm known, because I'm such an extremely public figure. I'm not permitted an escape from my role. My wife is continuously talked to and questioned as the superintendent's wife. My social relationships are mostly school related. My kids also feel that their behavior must be modified.

* * * *
Although I live away from the community in which I work, psychologically I'm one person and the job is very much a part of my family, friends, etc.

* * * *

Great difficulty in separating job and life. My family is affected simply by the perceptions of others. I wish there was a way to separate the two. Perhaps by not living in your work community.

* * * *

My work tends to shape my circle of friends. What my wife and I enjoy outside of work is even somewhat related to work. The job itself would be more refreshing if I could get away from this kind of concentration. School functions take away from family time.

* * * *

The nature of the job creates such demands that I couldn't successfully separate work and outside-of-work stuff. My family would get to know my colleagues through phonecalls if nothing else. I would end up being an advisor to my friends on the staff. I had to spend some time with central staff and Board of Education in social settings. My wife was sensitive to aspects of her relationships that might be affected by job decisions I made.

* * * *

The job overlaps a great deal with my friends and social relationships. In addition my family has had to put up with the burdensome time requirements. But now that the kids have grown up, I make the separation between job and homelife more easily.

* * * *

Telephone calls at home. Critical decisions. The media. My whole life has been consumed by my job. Everywhere, people confront me, because they all see themselves as "experts" in education. I don't associate socially with school people outside of work.

* * * *

My family has had to live with the good and bad of the job. There's been no separation between job and family. It's impossible. In no way can I leave the job in the office when I go home. There is overlap with friends and social relationships. But, sad but true, I don't have many friends because I don't
Comments - A - continued

have time to keep them. I can count my real friends on one hand. And with those, it is necessary to keep education out of it.

* * * *

It is extremely difficult to separate the two especially when you're a public official in a small town. People associate the superintendent with the schools. Everywhere people are desirous of discussing school matters. My family is definitely affected by my job. Kids in school. Interruption of family life for job necessities is more than frequent. I'm resigned to it, however. It's a crummy situation, but I'm trying to control it.

* * * *

It is impossible to make a strict dichotomy but it is necessary to try. For example, with most of my friends, there's no connection between my job and those relationships. Socially, however, I'm always the superintendent. My family is subjected to unpleasant stuff sometimes. Time pressures cause me to often cancel family functions. I'd love to be incognito. I can't testify on town issues as a citizen-resident. To relax and vacation, I must remove myself from the community.

* * * *

Comments - B: Those Who Feel It Is Possible and Necessary To Separate The Two

Yes. To the maximum extent possible. I try to structure my social life around non-school types. I build many social relationships around my wife's friends. I work hard at this and I generally succeed.

* * * *

It has taken me years and a divorce to achieve it, but finally now I look forward to time away from the job because I can leave the job in the office. I even sleep well now.

* * * *

I feel I've been able to separate the two. I've tried hard not to get involved socially with school people. However, my family might not agree as much.

* * * *
Comments - B - continued

Yes and I work hard at it. It is done with a purpose. My friendships in the community are with people outside of this kind of work.

* * * *

I've separated the two. I completely forget the office when I go home or go out socially. I don't allow non-work time to be interfered with.

* * * *

Comments - C: Those Who Do Not Feel It Is Necessary To Separate The Two

My closest friends are school administrators. It feels good. Not problematic at all. But most importantly I don't live in the town where I work.

* * * *

Yes to both. They're tied together. I try to keep it cohesive. I have two social circles—-one with people within the school system and one outside.

* * * *

I've pretty much been able to keep it separate, but I'm not sure it's necessary. There is some overlap, but no real need for separateness.

Question 14.a What Have Been Some of the "Good" Effects of Your Job on Your View of Yourself?

I found that my mind and body are more capable than I gave them credit for. I have imparted my successes to others. The good effects are my own self-respect and community recognition.

* * * *

A strong sense of self-worth.

* * * *

Much accomplishment. Status among peers. Status in the community. Good relationships with employees. Refusal to compromise my values.

* * * *

Makes me feel proud given where I come from culturally. I'm proud of my upward mobility and my competitiveness. I have a messianic tendency. I feel I can do a lot of people a hell of a lot of good. The job has given me that opportunity and it makes me feel good.

* * * *
The importance of the job and my ego growth have taught me that I can do things better than others. However, I often should let others do it anyway and help them grow. I'm more sensitive to the needs of others, less selfish, more secure—no longer climbing to the top of the ladder. Now I'd rather help others climb.

* * * *

It's given me an opportunity to answer my deep personal need to be of more help to more kids. It's helped shape my humanitarian values, my self-esteem and my confidence.

* * * *

The job is a leveler. Makes me more tolerant, more introspective, and more desirous of knowledge. I like the problems of the job. If it was static, I'd leave it.

* * * *

In the job, I try to bring out and practice the desirable human qualities in me so that I'm not like the administrators I don't like. Makes me feel creative, fresh and bright.

* * * *

The highly intellectual, motivated, stimulating people I work with give me strong feelings of satisfaction.

* * * *

Humanistic values. Strong sense of self. I never would have understood the feelings of others as well had I not been responsible for them.

* * * *

Pride. Psychic income when I am held in esteem and have personal recognition.

* * * *

I feel like a good guy. Have self-respect and financial responsibility. I adequately provide for my family.

* * * *

The fact that I was able to respond to the needs of the job made me feel confident, competent, and more comfortable as a person.

* * * *
This job has only good effects on my view of myself. Allows me to do what I like to do best and get paid for it. Also, I have not capitulated and played the role of good superintendent by going to Rotary, church, etc.

I am less naive and more practical. I realize now the place of Theory X leadership (more authoritarian). That is, I now willingly accept that the autocratic part of me is O.K.

I found people who wanted to be friends not only in good times. Reinforced my desire to exercise power and persuasion in order to help people.

Self-esteem. Public speaking confidence. Have met very fine people. I feel proud about my effect on people. Strengthened my values. Heightened my concern about inequities. I have grown as a person. I see political issues more clearly.

I was selected above 200 other people for this job. This gave me an incredible boost of confidence and self-respect.

Question 14.b What Have Been Some of the "Bad" Effects?

I don't feel I'm balancing my life enough to be a vital healthy human being. My desire to plan and to see a project to the finish is frustrated by the inability to get psychological closure. That is to say, tasks don't seem to be completed. I only accomplish pieces. For me, the nature of the job has meant that I have not been able to realize my full potential because I haven't had the freedom to explore all the potentials available to me.

I'm a workaholic. I have a desire to keep on working. I must force myself to take time off. From working so much I get muscle spasms which are psycho-somatic. But I put up with all the frustrations because of my over-all love for work and for the job.
I don't like having people treat me as a whipping boy because, for example, of the high tax rate. I become dejected and paranoid from the personal and professional attacks. I lose confidence in my own ability. And I often feel alienated and unappreciated.

* * * *

Constantly being the center of criticism makes me wonder if I'm right. All the criticism can get to me. Makes me more wary and sensitive. I also wonder whether the commitment I've made is appreciated and therefore whether the job is worth it. Seventy-five percent of the people here would say that my commitment here is unrealistic and too much. I believe it isn't. But that contradiction makes me wonder sometimes. I'm also concerned about the distorted image I feel people have when they see me as an aggressive politician. Unfortunately there is little hope that that will change. I'm resigned to it.

* * * *

The job has caused me to become too materialistic and has increased my impatience with teachers. The conflict is that for me my job is my whole life but for others their job is not their whole life. My own high standards increases my disappointment with others.

* * * *

First I've become less idealistic. Second, what I also feel badly about is going home and feeling under a lot of pressure when there are three small children who will be up for only a few more hours. I need "air time" with my wife. I spend the whole damn day solving problems and listening to the problems. At home I do a lot of the same thing. The dust finally settles at around nine or ten.

* * * *

I get bad feelings about making decisions I don't like, like hiring or firing. Also there were negative effects of my job on my first marriage. I continued to grow and my wife was not growing. There was a conflict of values. My position was intellectually stimulating and growing while my wife's wasn't.

* * * *

I can't think of anything terribly negative except that the superintendency is a lonely job. And I get tired easily and my nervous energy gets drained. Nervous energy is not as recuperative as physical energy. That's why a sabbatical would be good.

* * * *
Question 18.a

Comments: Those Who Said YES To Some Other Kind of Work

---- Yes, I'd like to try my skills in another field. I'm not sure I want to continue to "carry the torch" as a public servant.
---- Yes, I'd like to have a position of similar importance in business.
---- Yes, because of my competitive urge. I reached the top here; therefore I want to reach the top in something else.
---- Yes, I'd like something completely different, but where I'd also be involved with people, e.g. owning a ski resort, I really want to get away from the superintendency.
---- I'd like to try something different like law, marine science, or even a vocation.
---- Perhaps I'd try a business career in 5-6 years. There would be more mountains to climb, so to speak.

--- Comments: Those Who Said YES To Some Other Kind of Role

---- Yes, I want to move on to a job that would let me have a broader impact on public education than simply running the schools in one suburban town. I want to extend some of my success and skills to a higher education setting; e.g., training principals.

* * * *

---- The very emotional characteristics, values, concern, and interest in people necessary to do this job (along with the desire to show sensitivity and to help) are the very characteristics which lead to the demise of the person doing the job. Yes, I'd like to switch to education-related jobs like educational law if I had the time to learn. I should let someone else try this job.

* * * *

---- I'm still interested in my present job but definitely in the future I'd like to switch roles and move on to a new challenge.

* * * *

--- Comments: Those Who Said NO To Some Other Kind of Work or Role

---- I haven't yet mastered my job.
---- No, I'm satisfied with my present position and there are aspects
Comments: Those Who Said NO.... - continued

of the superintendency I'd still like to change.

---- No, I'd like the same kind of work in a new location.
---- No, my job here is fun even though it isn't rewarding.
---- I have mastered my job but I have managed to keep creating new challenges. I have a sense of obligation here for 3 or 4 more years.
---- I feel I've mastered it, but there is so much more to be done.
---- I've made and found new challenges for myself.

Question 20

Comments - A: Are You Aware of Changing Values About Work in Yourself?

I'm not as enamored of work as I used to be. I'm tired! More difficult now to willingly spend as much time as I used to. I don't want to do this job for another 10 years. The challenge is still there for those administrators who want to "move up." But many others have reached the top or their top--sort of an early retirement--and they feel a lot of boredom. How do they maintain their motivation. I have a friend who wants to be a teacher or a diagnostician but right now he's a middle aged bored dentist.

* * * *

I no longer place such a high monetary value on work. The worth of the individual has increased.

* * * *

I always used to work till I dropped but as I have become more skillful and can control time better, I'm more inclined to accept that less work is O.K. for me.

* * * *

I'm less inclined to work as hard or to consider it the "end-all." My value system is presently in conflict with the question of people wanting more pay for less work.

* * * *

I'm becoming less enthusiastic about work. Until now I've always been a "workaholic." I no longer have the energy. Health plays an influential role and takes a heavy toll.

* * * *
Comments - A - continued

I've become more addicted to work; i.e., I'm dissatisfied when I spend a lot of time on something insignificant. My original work value was for sail-boating and a jet-set life. Work has now become part of my life.

* * * *

I've always had high values concerning wanting to work hard and liking work.

* * * *

I believe in hard work and wish more people would also.

* * * *

Comments - B: Are You Aware of Changing Values About Work In Your Staff?

For many people, the value change is that work should be less rigorous and less compulsive.

* * * *

I see my staff wanting less work for more money. It results in, among other things, less contact with students.

* * * *

The teaching-education profession has changed. People are much more dependent and security-oriented.

* * * *

My staff has changed in that they now value hard work more than before I came.

* * * *

Young staff are asking for money for every single extra duty. More for less! Younger teachers are more aware of their job rights, with better student-teacher relationships and with individualized instruction. Older teachers, by and large, haven't changed their values about work.

* * * *

Staff has a more realistic approach to the job and the outside life. Put in a good day's work but don't go overboard. This description applies to administrative staff; however, teachers are more selfish.

* * * *
Comments - B - continued

Staff has moved from a work ethic orientation toward a more money, less work principle.

* * * *

People from the depression see jobs as tremendous opportunities. The younger generation believe in doing their own thing, and they have a more money less work attitude which is the object of labor unions today.

* * * *

There's a slow moving away from enormous numbers of work hours. Staff have broadened into other things and are less solely work oriented.

* * * *

My staff has changed from lack of spontaneity and desire in work to one where they are producing more and enjoying it.

* * * *

Staff values are turning toward less productivity (quantity versus quality) with more leisure time, while management personnel are demonstrating greater fervor, energy and productivity.

* * * *

Question 21

Comments: From Your Personal Experience, Do You Think We Are On The Road to Something Important?

Yes, you're onto something. It is being constantly verified by increased dissatisfaction in the fields of law, medicine, and other bookish fields. We, as superintendents, have so much invested in our lives by virtue of the job we choose--e.g. prestige, mortgage, children and college. It becomes hard to admit a boxed-in feeling. The job is both debilitating and exhilarating.

* * * *

All levels of workers suffer from factors of job dissatisfaction. But chief-executive types can't admit it because the school committee (or Board of Directors) want highly motivated "gung ho" leaders.

* * * *
Comments: From Your Personal Experience... - continued

Yes, you're on the right track, but I'm not sure that blue collar workers are not just gripers as opposed to real dissatisfiers. Perhaps also, the grass is always greener on the other side. For example, I might leave this job for more money even if the new job was less satisfying.

***

At lower levels, I think dissatisfaction increases. Superintendents are satisfied. Custodial staff and cafeteria workers are not. However, the degree of dissatisfaction is increasing at this level. It ties in with societal changes. The new struggle for superintendents is to learn how we can effectively work together, with each other and with others. We have been autocratic for too long and are now undergoing a revolution.

***

I've seen so many of my colleagues, and myself, become dissatisfied that your study is really welcomed by me. More research is needed. Too many of us stay too long.

***

There are highly compensating factors—specifically money—for highly educated professional people, which lower level workers don't usually enjoy. I do have some dissatisfaction, but because of my salary, it is not as harassing. I simply become more demanding in what I want from the job.

***

Yes, there are satisfaction differences. We have a major advantage; we are decision-makers and have more choices. Hopefully this inquiry will be publicized and lead to better superintendents.

***

There are some common factors of job dissatisfaction for all levels of workers; however, what must be remembered is that for a school superintendent, "no day is the same." There is total variety and that variety keeps your mind at work. There is not the mindless duplication and repetition that exists in blue collar and middle level white collar jobs. Our job includes a challenge that is required for the human nervous system to be able to get charged for work every day.

***

All levels of workers suffer from factors of dissatisfaction. Your inquiry should prove quite significant. You must make the finished product succinct if it is to have impact. If the
hypothesis of discontent bears out, and your study has some impact, I think superintendents might, for example, strike out individually for more control over their working conditions.

***

I am a highly educated professional and I feel alienated. Maybe your study will show how much of the superintendent job is spent reacting and/or managing as opposed to the image that we are leading.

***

I believe there is probably more dissatisfaction with highly educated professional people, because we are so much more aware of the total milieu and our personal capabilities/incapabilities to deal with it. This can lead to frustration.

***

Perhaps there's more dissatisfaction at this level of work because we are more intellectually able to ask ourselves introspective, searching questions. However when the answers are not good, we can hide the disillusionment better. Superintendents may not be knowingly dishonest. It is the self-perception of their position that is blocking. It is so hard to separate dissatisfaction with oneself from dissatisfaction with one's work.

***

Yes, alienation and other factors of job dissatisfaction are a major factor in the school superintendency. But a sense of insecurity inhibits us from talking candidly. I'm so highly paid and get so many benefits that I shouldn't complain. Maybe it is also that highly educated professional people don't want to admit a mistake in a career choice over which they had control.

***

I think you'll find a higher degree of job dissatisfaction among superintendents than you might expect. There is only a small core of people in leadership roles that are extremely refreshing, vibrant and satisfied. They are the shapers of institutional policy and direction. The absence of this capacity to shape policy and direction is the source of dissatisfaction.

***
Your research is not something important to me. I think the frustrations are more often in the superintendents themselves and not in the job. It is also important to consider who you work with. Do your personal needs and political persuasions mesh with the people you work with. Furthermore, more people could change jobs if they really wanted to.

* * * *

Most of my colleagues, both friends and those I meet at meetings say the job isn't worth it and they would not make the same choice over again. But I wonder to what degree they are dissatisfied and to what degree it is a mask. I believe that they don't leave their jobs because they like the money and the prestige and they are willing to pay the price for it.

* * * *

Yes, you're on the right track. Chances are you'll get findings similar to those of C. Wright Mills in *White Collar*.

* * * *

In my own case, there is no job dissatisfaction. The only time I'm dissatisfied is when the job impinges on my family obligations. There is merit to your study because it may confirm that we have some people in the superintendency who shouldn't be there.

* * * *

It's important and worthwhile to discover whether or not highly educated professionals also suffer from factors of job dissatisfaction. There is a high price paid by superintendents. I know many with serious family problems. But the human species responds to ego-satisfying situations, and this job is that. For the job not to cause marital problems, one's wife must give up a lot of her identity and take on a subservient role of giving and going to "necessary" functions and parties.

* * * *

If a superintendent has altruistic goals, has accomplished most of his objectives and has survived, by definition I think he's satisfied. However, that doesn't mean you're not on the right track. I think you are. Especially today because of the repeated tendency to look negatively on people with authority like superintendents. Many people give him scorn and accuse him of rip offs (taxes). You are considered bad because you're powerful. It's a shame because you work your tail off for a long time to get to be superintendent and when you're there, you can't do all you want to do and it's not all you thought it would be.

* * * *