As a result of a study of forty alternative schools spread across the eastern half of the United States, the author concluded that contemporary alternative schools represent as much a rejection of how conventional public schools are organized as an indictment of teaching methods and curricular offerings in these schools. While educational history records a variety of "alternatives," few of the precursors of recent alternative schools attempted to alter the administrative structure of schooling. Only in the past decade has the modern faith in the bureaucratic management of education been challenged. The author suggests that the "organizational" dimension of contemporary alternative schools might be more significant historically than their radical pedagogical practices or unusual learning opportunities.

DANIEL LINDEN DUKE*

Challenge to Bureaucracy:
The Contemporary Alternative School

In an effort to better understand the current wave of public and nonpublic alternative schools, a study was undertaken that focused on various aspects of one particular type of alternative — the contemporary alternative school. Unlike traditional-type alternatives (including parochial, military, and "prep" schools), Summerhillian boarding schools, and compensatory alternatives (which seek to supplement conventional public schools by catering to students with particular problems), contemporary alternatives attract competent students from middle class backgrounds on a non-sectarian basis. A review of the history of educational experimentation reveals only a handful of earlier schools with similar characteristics. Most of these precursors to contemporary alternatives appeared during the progressive era in education that spanned the two world wars.

A major portion of the author's study concerned the administrative organization of contemporary alternative schools. A randomly selected sample of forty public and nonpublic alternative schools located in the eastern half of the United States provided the basis for the study. Each school was visited and extensive interviews were undertaken. Data collected during the visitations were compared to the existing body of literature on alternative schools. What emerged was a fascinating portrait of some striking efforts to alter the administrative organization of American public education.

Administrative organization or "structure" concerns who makes organizational decisions and how they are made. In discussing the growth of the conventional public school, Michael Katz writes:

> The structure of American urban education has not changed since late in the nineteenth century; by 1880, the basic features of public education in most major cities were the same as they are today.[1]

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[1]Michael B. Katz, *Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools: The Illusion of Educational Change in America* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971), p. 105.

Katz later states:

> Consider, for instance, the kindergarten, the junior high school, industrial education, testing, the new math. Each has brought about change; but — and this is the important point — it is change *within* a given structure that itself has not altered. That is the basis on which we can claim continuity in American education over almost a century.[2]

Contemporary alternative schools may deviate from conventional public schools in terms of specific educational goals and specific pedagogical features. Research by the author, however, revealed that many of the goals and pedagogical dimensions of contemporary alternatives have precedents in earlier efforts to improve the quality of education. The administrative organization may be a different matter, though. While previous innovative schools have experimented with new ways of grouping students and unique curricula, they have lacked imaginative approaches to decision making and management. At least one observer argues that the structure of these recently established alternative schools is their *most* innovative characteristic:

> The revolt is no longer against outdated curricula or ineffective teaching methods — the concerns of the late 1950s and early 1960s. The revolt today is against the institution itself, against the implicit assumption that learning must be imposed on children by adults, that learning is not something one does by and for oneself, but something designated by a teacher.[3]

To some degree this analysis is overstated. Contemporary alternative schools represent not only a challenge to the structure of schooling, but to the goals and methods that have characterized the institution of the American public school. The writer is correct, though, to imply that recent educational change is not simply directed at the typical problems of schools — to matters of curriculum content, instructional techniques, test scores, and broad educational priorities.

The Administrative Organization of Conventional Public Schools

Though no two public schools are identical in all respects, there is justification for speaking of a conventional public school "model." Nowhere is public education more "conventional" or standardized than in the area of administrative organization.

The typical public school is organized along bureaucratic lines. Once, some small schools were operated less bureaucratically, but over the last century the trend in public education has been toward consolidation of schools and centralization of authority. In 1930 there were approximately 150,000 one-room schools. Three decades later there were about 15,000. The number of school districts dwindled from 130,000 to 20,000.[4]

Consolidation and centralization are two traits of the process of bureaucratization. Most bureaucracies can be characterized by six basic qualities first outlined by Max Weber:

1. Division of labor and specialization of tasks.
2. Hierarchical authority structure.

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[2]*Ibid.*, pp. 105-106.

[3]Bannie Barrett Stretch, "The Rise of the 'Free School'," in *Schooling in a Corporate Society: The Political Economy of Education in America*, ed. Martin Carnoy (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1972), p. 211.

[4]Patricia Cayo Sexton, *The American School: A Sociological Analysis* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1967), p. 72.

3. Formal system of rules and regulations governing official decisions.
4. Separate administrative and productive staffs.
5. Impersonal, universalistic orientation to clients.
6. Career employment for bureaucratic officials.[5]

That public schools conform to these traits is attested to by most researchers. In a typical reference, Ronald Corwin's *A Sociology of Education*, the author writes:

> Authority tends to be organized along hierarchical lines in public schools. In large systems there are several levels of authority, perhaps including a department head, assistant principals, system-wide supervisors and other assistants to the superintendent, school board members, lay advisory committees, and county and state supervisory agencies. Officials at each level face the dual problem of satisfying their subordinates and their superiors.[6]

Corwin goes on to observe that the school's authority structure sometimes can differ from its power structure. He cites the instance of a secretary who handles scheduling of classes and a custodian who determines how space is assigned.

In the conventional public school, the teacher's role is that of a "functionary." Sloan Wayland argues that the teacher is a "replaceable unit in a rationally organized system, and most of the significant aspects of work are determined for him."[7] Rising teacher militancy and union activity are resulting in more power for teachers as a group; yet individual teachers still function largely at the discretion of the school administration. That students, in turn, are accorded so little responsibility by teachers is due partly to the fact they themselves are delegated so little.

Citizens are not any better off than teachers. The power they exercise is largely negative. They can reject board members, bonds, and budgets, but rarely can they exert a positive or innovative influence over the school system. Parent-teacher organizations and citizens' advisory groups seem to exist more for the efficient dissemination of information from above than the generation of pressure for educational improvement from below.

Types of Administrative Organization in Contemporary Alternatives

To determine whether contemporary alternative schools constitute a genuine challenge to the conventional bureaucratic organization of schooling, a pilot study was undertaken in which a sample of ten alternative schools were visited. Lists were made of all the people involved in making decisions and of the formal arrangements (committees, meetings, boards of trustees, etc.) whereby decisions were reached. It soon appeared that specific patterns existed among those who made decisions and the mechanisms by which decisions were made. Additional schools were visited. Nine variations of administrative organization emerged. These nine were later found to encompass all of the forty schools in the study group.

The name for each of the following "types" of administrative organization is based on the group or groups of people most closely involved in operating

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[5]Peter M. Blau, "Weber's Theory of Bureaucracy," in *Max Weber*, ed. Dennis Wrong (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970), pp. 141-142.

[6]Ronald G. Corwin, *A Sociology of Education: Emerging Patterns of Class, Status, and Power in the Public Schools* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1965), p. 23.

[7]Sloan R. Wayland, "The Teacher As Decision-Maker," in *Curriculum Crossroads*, ed. A. Harry Passow (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1962), p. 43.

and maintaining the alternative school. Naturally, organizations evolve over time. Many contemporary alternatives undergo extensive alterations in governance and day-to-day decision making. In the April 1975 issue of *Educational Researcher*, Terrence Deal attempts to outline the steps through which a typical alternative school goes during its early development. As for the present study, the data that follow are intended to depict schools only at the time of their observation.

Parent Cooperative type (PC). Teachers and parents share decision-making authority. They enjoy one vote apiece. Many decisions are made in large-group meetings on a consensus basis. This type of administrative organization is designed to stimulate a feeling of community reminiscent of the traditional New England town meetings. In many cases, parent cooperatives can be seen as "surrogate communes."[8]

Parent-Teacher type (PT). This type differs from the previous one in that there is a distinct division of responsibilities between parents and teachers. Parents typically meet as a group or in committees to handle matters pertaining to hiring, finances, and facilities. Teachers deal with day-to-day decisions, including ones concerned with discipline, evaluation, and academic program.

Parent-Teacher-Administrator type (PTA). This type of administrative organization is identical to the previous one except that decision-making power is shared with an elected or appointed administrator. The administrator may be a parent volunteer, a teacher, or a person hired especially for the position. The administrator functions more as a coordinator than as a leader.

Teacher-Administrator type (TA). A division of responsibilities exists between the teaching staff and an elected or appointed administrator. This type resembles the conventional public school model, but for the fact that teachers generally exercise more decision-making power in the alternativ school setting.

Headmaster type (H). Most decision-making power is vested in the hands of the headmaster or principal. Traditional alternative schools often are characterized by the headmaster type of administrative organization. Typically, the headmaster is accountable only to a Board of Trustees.

Teacher type (T). Teachers exercise virtually complete control over decision-making processes. Often, the teachers themselves have children in the school.

Student type (S). Though they rely on adults as resource persons, students make most of the decisions pertaining to school policy, programs, and evaluation. This type of administrative organization is found exclusively at the secondary level.

Student-Teacher Cooperative type (STC). Similar to the parent cooperative format, this type involves minimal division of responsibility between teachers and students. They share decision-making power with every person exercising an equal vote. Again, this type of administrative organization is found only at the secondary level.

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[8]The term "surrogate communes" is the suggestion of Professor Mauritz Johnson of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the State University of New York at Albany.

Student-Teacher-Administrator type (STA). A division of responsibilities exists between the three parties. Students make decisions with teachers concerning day-to-day operations. Teachers determine the academic program and the bases for evaluation. The elected or appointed administrator coordinates school affairs, handles finances, and sets broad policy.

In addition to these eight types of administrative organization, contemporary alternative schools also may be characterized by no stable patterns by which decisions are made.

Data on Types of Administrative Organization

The following chart records the results of an analysis of the administrative organization among the sampled schools. The schools are classified according to their *original* format. Obviously, many of the forty schools experience changes in the people who make decisions. These changes tend to be in the direction of more divisions of responsibility and generally decreasing parental involvement. The influence of teachers over decision-making processes seems to increase over time.

TABLE 1

Administrative Organization in Contemporary Alternative Schools

Type	Public Elementary (5)	Nonpublic Elementary (15)	Public Secondary (6)	Nonpublic Secondary (6)	Nonpublic Combined (8)
PC	0	7	0	0	2
PT	0	2	0	0	3
PTA	1	3	0	0	0
TA	4	0	1	1	0
H	0	0	1	0	0
T	0	2	1	0	1
S	0	0	0	1	0
STC	0	0	0	3	2
STA	0	0	3	1	0
No stable adm. org.	0	1	0	0	0

No type of administrative organization predominates in all contemporary alternatives. Public alternatives are not represented in certain categories, notably parent and student-teacher cooperatives. Parental involvement, in fact, does not characterize public alternatives in general. Parents are also absent from decision-making processes in most secondary schools, no doubt because students are old enough to assume this kind of responsibility themselves.

What is most significant about the data is that very few contemporary alternative schools opted for a conventional type of administrative organization. Six schools, including four out of five public elementary schools, chose a relatively conventional teacher-administrator type of administrative organization, though, even in this instance, the teachers tended to exercise more power than in most conventional public schools. One school manifested the head-

master type of administrative organization. Otherwise, the remaining thirty-three alternative schools represent efforts to involve groups of people typically left out of the mainstream of educational decision making — parents, students, and, to a lesser extent, teachers. The next question concerns the ways decisions are made by these groups. Do these decision-making processes reflect a similar rejection of the conventional bureaucratic format of most public schools?

Data on Decision-Making Processes

The previous discussion pinpointed the different arrangements of people involved in operating contemporary alternative schools. Nothing was said about the decision-making procedures they utilize. A variety of processes and special roles can characterize educational decision making. Those that were anticipated to exist in contemporary alternative schools are listed below:

1. Meeting of the school community at large.
2. Elected or appointed committees.
3. Faculty meeting.
4. Advisory groups (i.e., PTA groups).
5. Elected Board of Trustees.
6. Appointed Board of Trustees.
7. Elected or appointed Coordinator.
8. Headmaster (broad discretionary powers).
9. Autonomous teachers.
10. Cluster or team planning among teachers.
11. Consultant advisory service.

These decision-making processes and provisions do not represent all possibilities. They represent only the ones occurring in the greatest frequencies in the pilot studies and the existing literature concerning alternative schools. The following chart is based on the actual decision-making processes that characterized the sampled schools at the time of their establishment. It should be noted that virtually every school in the sample underwent changes in these processes during its first year or two of operation. More than one decision-making process can characterize a particular school in the sample. Thus, it is possible for a given contemporary alternative school to reach decisions by meetings of the school community, faculty meetings, and the actions of an appointed Co-ordinator.

Knowing the legal constraints on the organization of public schools, it is not surprising that public alternatives do not evidence exactly the same distribution of decision-making arrangements as nonpublic alternatives. Public alternative schools are more directly accountable to a central or district administration, which includes a superintendent or chief school officer and an elected Board of Education.

Nonpublic schools also exist under the aegis of a local educational authority, but often they enjoy more organizational latitude. Few state departments of education have rigid guidelines governing the structure of nonpublic schools. The only administrative requirement for incorporation as a school typically is the selection of a Board of Trustees. Many alternative schools appoint a Board of Trustees on "paper," while actually relying on other decision-making processes. Otto Kraushaar outlines the decision-making processes found in most traditional alternative schools:

TABLE 2

Decision-Making Processes in Contemporary Alternative Schools

D-M Process	Public Elementary (5)	Nonpublic Elementary (15)	Public Secondary (6)	Nonpublic Secondary (6)	Nonpublic Combined (8)
School Meeting	1	13	3	6	5
Committees	2	2	0	1	3
Faculty Meetings	4	7	5	3	5
Advisory Groups	2	0	0	0	0
Board of Trustees (elected)	—	3	—	2	2
Board of Trustees (appointed)	—	2	—	0	2
Coordinator	2	3	4	4	4
Headmaster or Director	3	2	2	0	0
Autonomous Teachers	3	0	2	0	0
Teacher Teams	2	1	1	0	0
Consultants	2	0	1	0	0

The governance of most private schools is on paper relatively simple. The typical independent school operates on the basis of a charter which provides for a self-perpetuating board of trustees. In principle all powers and policy decisions are the board's, though in practice it delegates full administrative authority as well as certain policy-making powers to the school head, to be exercised by him at his discretion but with the advice and consent of the board. The head is thus the pivot of the organization as well as the primary channel of communication between the school and its various constituencies.[9]

He describes faculty influence as primarily informal, based on "working agreements" with the head. As for parental or student involvement in decision making, Kraushaar finds that, in traditional alternative schools, "parents and students usually have little or no power in the sense of a right to vote on matters of substance affecting the school."[10]

Having noted the characteristics of conventional public schools and traditional nonpublic schools, it is interesting to shift attention back to the numerous ways in which contemporary alternative schools — both public and nonpublic — are organized. Contemporary alternatives generally minimize or reject entirely the trappings of bureaucracies: centralization of authority, specialization of function, and standardization of procedures. Earlier, it was seen that parents, students and teachers have been brought more directly into school governance. This movement to increase participation in decision making is accomplished through the "town meeting" approach in many nonpublic alternative schools. Frequently lasting hours, these meetings provide an opportunity for all members of the school community to air grievances, socialize,

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9Otto F. Kraushaar, *American Nonpublic Schools: Patterns of Diversity* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972), p. 265.
10*Ibid.*

express opinions, and suggest improvements. Decisions often are reached by consensus, though this process is an arduous one for many groups.

In public alternatives, on the other hand, increased participation in decision making is achieved largely through a reduction in the power of administrators and an increase in the opportunities for faculty members and, occasionally, students to influence school policies. Working as a faculty, on committees, in clusters or teams, and as semi-autonomous professionals, teachers in public alternative schools generally enjoy much more decision-making responsibility than their colleagues in conventional public schools and traditional alternative schools.

Students also enjoy increased involvement in decision making, both in public and in nonpublic alternatives. Instead of electing members of "rubber stamp" student councils, students in secondary alternative schools created in the last eight years have found themselves operating town meetings and committees, voting on the hiring of teachers and courses to be offered, and contributing to the development of school rules and regulations.

Though seven schools in the sample employed administrators reminiscent of the traditional Headmaster, seventeen public and nonpublic alternatives opted for a Coordinator instead. Five of these Coordinators were elected, while the others were appointed. The role of Coordinator differs from that of Headmaster, Director, or Principal in that it involves more maintenance functions and fewer leadership functions. Coordinators see that meetings are scheduled, tuitions are collected, newsletters are mailed, and materials are purchased.

The data on who makes decisions and how they are made clearly indicates that contemporary alternative schools are not simply reactions against pedagogical aspects of conventional schooling. Contemporary alternatives constitute a direct challenge to the way schools have been organized and administered.

Historical Antecedents

Educational history reveals that many, if not most, of the goals and pedagogical methods characterizing contemporary alternative schools have been incorporated in earlier efforts to transform the schools. Do recent attempts to alter the decision-making structure of schools also have such precedents?

Lately, the decision-making structure of schools has received considerable attention by historians and sociologists who find in the ways institutions change clues to social developments. Most of the writing concerns public education, though Otto Kraushaar provides an analysis of organizational change in nonpublic schools:

> By way of summary, one can see a gradual but significant shift toward an increase in sharing power or influence among various constituencies of the nonpublic school. In the nineteenth century, the governing boards of schools, normally containing a generous complement of clergymen, commonly shared the decision-making powers in important matters with school heads, who were frequently invested with dictatorial authority. Since then, the growth of academic professionalism has greatly increased the faculty's influence in decision-making, so that the prevailing pattern finds the school head, no longer the benevolent autocrat of old, sharing his powers with the faculty, while the trustees' rule is (except among the Protestant schools) restricted to choosing a new head, watching over the institution's financial welfare and real estate, and advising on matters which the school head brings to their attention. In the process of gradual democratization the teachers and, to a still limited extent, the students have acquired a stronger voice, usually at the expense of the authority form-

erly exercised by the head and the trustees.   Parental influence is generally somewhat
stronger in the church schools than among the independents, and in the parent-owned
Protestant schools there is considerable parent-involvement in school affairs.[11]

Kraushaar detects the gradual evolution of nonpublic school organization in
the direction of more participatory decision making. He offers little evidence,
however, to indicate that such a movement was actually afoot before the mid-
sixties. With a few exceptions at the time of the utopian experiments of the
previous century and during the more recent era of progressive education,
nonpublic alternatives have not experienced fundamental organizational
changes of the types embodied in contemporary alternatives. Most of the
experimental alternative schools of previous years limited their innovations to
new approaches to child development, instructional techniques and curricula.

In regard to public education, the works of Michael Katz, Joseph Cronin,
Richard Pratte, and Joel Spring strongly imply that the administrative organ-
ization of public schools likewise has not changed markedly in almost a
century.

The growth of the public school in nineteenth century America was an
event long memorialized by educational historians such as Ellwood P. Cubberly
as the triumph of a free society and the very embodiment of democracy.[12]
Revisionist historians are less enthusiastic. They suspiciously note that the
public school adopted a bureaucratic form of organization at the same time
that the nation was undergoing an industrial revolution. Sheer coincidence is
not advanced as an explanation.

Arnold Foster contends that the fantastic growth in production during the
last half of the nineteenth century was due as much to the American genius
for bureaucratic organization as to sheer Yankee inventiveness.[13] Were students
subject to the same "laws" that applied to manufacturing? Was it only natural
that an organizational model that worked so well for developing industries
would be adopted by public schools?

Pratte and Katz point out that the bureaucratic model was not the only
alternative available in the late eighteen hundreds. Pratte states:

> Public schools might have become supplementary agencies, like libraries, attached to
> a small neighborhood community. Schools might have become coordinating agencies,
> serving to guide and direct students into a variety of educational experiences provided
> by the economic cultural, political, etc., institutions.[14]

Katz indicates that the bureaucratic model was simply one of four available
organizational forms, the others being paternalistic voluntarism, democratic
localism, and corporate voluntarism.

A combination of *noblesse oblige* and benevolent autocracy, paternalistic
voluntarism can be interpreted to be the precursor of compensatory alterna-

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11*Ibid.*, pp. 267-268.
12For a discussion of misconceptions concerning the rise of the American public school,
see Colin Greer's *The Great School Legend*: *A Revisionist Interpretation of American
Public Education* (New York: Basic Books, 1972).
13The author wishes to extend his appreciation for these ideas to Professor Arnold Foster
of the Department of Sociology, State University of New York at Albany.
14Richard Pratte, *The Public School Movement*: *A Critical Study* (New York: David
McKay Company, Inc., 1973), p. 56.

tive education.[15]   Students from poor families and orphans went to these schools in order to be "salvaged" from lives of utter despair and trained for the semi-skilled jobs that constituted the backbone of American industrial ascendance.

The first option to paternalistic voluntarism was democratic localism, born out of the era of Jacksonian democracy.[16]   Katz paraphrases theorist Orestes Brownson's description of this organizational model when he notes that "each vital interest remained within the smallest possible unit, of which the very smallest would be the [school] district."[17]   Democratic localism, for all its encouragement of citizen participation and cooperation, still was a relatively inefficient form of administrative organization.   It became more practical, as the United States grew in population and school districts burgeoned, to seek alternatives.   Katz concludes:

> For, in the last analysis, the rejection of democratic localism rested only partly on its inefficiency and violation of parental prerogative.   It stemmed equally from a gut fear of the cultural divisiveness inherent in the increasing religious and ethnic diversity of American life.   Cultural homogenization played counterpoint to administrative rationality.   Bureaucracy was intended to standardize far more than the conduct of public life.[18]

This process of cultural homogenization is discussed at length in Cronin's, *The Control of Urban Schools.*

If paternalistic voluntarism and democratic localism were too unsophisticated or inappropriate for a growing industrial nation, incipient bureaucracy still had to contend with corporate voluntarism.   This organizational model, when applied to schools, was based on a self-perpetuating board of trustees.   Finances were derived from endowments and tuition payments.[19]   Corporate voluntarism characterized most secondary schools and colleges up until the late nineteenth century.   It continues to linger in the form of voucher schemes, tax credit systems, and other "free enterprise" solutions to current educational problems.

Eventually, the bureaucratic organizational model prevailed, despite the existence of alternatives.   Why was this model selected?   Was the choice an accident, the only logical choice, or the product of a dark capitalist conspiracy?   Pratte correctly observes that a shift as sweeping as that "from an unsystematic pattern of schools to a full-scale bureaucratization of schools represents a major ideological commitment."[20]   Katz reiterates this observation:

> Bureaucracy is not a neutral form; it represents the crystallization of particular social values.   In America those values have expressed, and worked for, class interests.[21]

While none of the revisionist historians suggests that the commitment to bureaucracy was the product of a carefully planned conspiracy of industrial and business interests, each notes that the people who were in a position to make educational decisions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries represented upper middle class economic interests.

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[15]Katz, *Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools* . . . pp. 7-15.
[16]*Ibid.,* pp. 15-22.
[17]*Ibid.,* p. 17.
[18]*Ibid.,* p. 39.
[19]*Ibid.,* p. 22.
[20]Pratte, *The Public School Movement* . . . , p. 55.
[21]Katz, *Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools* . . . , p. 6

Horace Mann and Henry Barnard, among others, championed bureaucratic organization, seeing in it the virtues of efficiency, economy, and freedom from ward politics. It was this last aspect of American urban education that has received the most attention recently. As large metropolitan areas absorbed more and more immigrants, they came under the control of ethnically-based ward bosses. School boards reflected neighborhood power patterns. Labelled as corrupt and inefficient, these Boards of Education, as well as ward politics in general, became the subjects of a major crusade in the late nineteenth century. Reformers from various upper middle class backgrounds — businessmen, professors, and civic leaders — sought to centralize urban education, thereby reducing the number of neighborhood school boards and wresting control from working class interests. Cronin concludes that:

> . . . the move from ward-based school boards to central boards also shifted power from the working class to the upper class and to more cosmopolitan professionals who claimed to be revolted by disclosures of inefficiency and corruption. Henceforth, the schools would be run by a "guardian" class who because of their own superior education presumably knew what kind of schools should be maintained.[22]

That public education is still in the hands of special interest groups is the contention of Joel Spring. He does not see the bureaucratic form of organization as the culprit. Rather, he argues that the subtleties of "the process of schooling," a somewhat ill-defined construct, are to blame for the failure of public schools to develop alternatives for students from various socioeconomic backgrounds. He states:

> The significance of the American high school was not the content of its curriculum but the social process of clubs, student government, differentiation, and all the extra-curricular activities which socialized the individual for the benefit of the corporate state.[23]

What Spring and a number of other observers of American institutions seem to ignore is the intimate relationship between organizational goals, processes and structure. For example, bureaucratic structure, presumably designed to provide for the efficient coordination of services, winds up exerting a pervasive influence over the very nature of the services themselves.

The Influence of Structure on Function

The development of most organizations is considered to be a relatively invariant series of steps: selection of goals, selection of an administrative structure to facilitate the achievement of the goals, selection of personnel to staff the organization, and actual operation of the organization. Rationally-conceived organizations imply the choice of decision-making models which promise to best serve the goals of the organizations. The assumption is that the goals dictate the appropriate form of administrative organization, not the reserve. This assumption, however, is not always valid. Structure can dictate function. The goal of student literacy, for instance, can be influenced by a bureaucratic organization in ways different from a democratic or a paternalistic organization. Bureaucracies especially are noted for the phenomenon of "goal displacement," whereby the original goals or functions of the organization are subordinated to the internal goals of perpetuating the existing organization and maintaining stability.

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[22]Joseph M. Cronin, *The Control of Urban Schools* (New York: The Free Press, 1973, p. 57.
[23]Joel H. Spring, *Education and the Rise of the Corporate State* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), p. 148.

The close relationship between structure and function in educational organizations has been recognized by a few astute observers in the past. For example, radical Spanish educator Francisco Ferrer, before he was hanged in 1910 for treason, wrote that "the organization of the school, far from spreading the ideal which we imagined, has made education the most powerful means of enslavement in the hands of governing powers to-day."[24] Bureaucratization means centralization, and, where centralization occurs, the tendency is for individual participation in decision making to be reduced.

A. S. Neill also evidenced an understanding of how the processes by which educational decisions are made influence *which* decisions are made. Aside from Ferrer, Neill, and a few muckrakers like Upton Sinclair, the majority of those who have witnessed the educational process in this century seem more concerned with teaching techniques, testing, and curriculum content than with the administrative organizations of schools.

John Dewey, that most erudite of educational theorists, virtually ignored the structure of schools. His primary contributions are summarized by Harry Broudy. He contends that Dewey persuaded the most famous educators of the three decades from 1930 to 1960 that "learning academic subjects was not the primary goal of schooling" and that "the method of problem solving so successful in the sciences could be adapted to group thinking about social problems."[25] Only one of the ten accomplishments of progressive education listed by Lawrence Cremin was concerned with administrative matters. This accomplishment encompasses the growth of school administration as a profession independent of teaching and the subsequent increased bureaucratization of public education.[26] Michael Katz concludes that progressive education failed to alter the structure of American education:

> It failed partly because it suffered from the weaknesses of earlier reform movements. It failed as well because it did not even try. For the most part, progressivism represented a conservative movement that accepted the structure of American education as it was and tried to work changes within that framework.[27]

Progressive education embodied no belief in town meetings, parent cooperatives, or schools run by students and teachers. John Dewey issued no challenge to the principle of hierarchical organization or injunction to work toward participatory democracy in the operation of schools.

Through the decades of the forties and fifties, the stress in education circles continued to be placed on curriculum content, instructional methodology, and other pedagogical matters. The extent of most educators' interest in school administration was a relatively naïve faith in the fact that bureaucratic organization ensured business-like efficiency.[28]

Spring is probably correct when he characterizes criticism of schools in the past fifty years as "shallow."[29] It is too simple to presume that the constant

[24]*Ibid.*, p. 139.

[25]Harry S. Broudy, *The Real World of the Public Schools* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1972), p. 197.

[26]Lawrence A. Cremin, *The Transformation of the School* (New York: Vintage Books, 1964), p. 308.

[27]Katz, *Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools* . . . , p. 113.

[28]Daniel C. Lortie, "The Cracked Cake of Educational Custom and Emerging Issues in Evaluation," in *Readings in Curriculum Evaluation*, ed. Peter A. Taylor and Doris M. Cowley (Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Company Publishers, 1972), p. 67.

trend toward the bureaucratization of education has not exerted a marked influence over the functions of public schools — an influence many regard as deleterious. Particularly in the past decade, critics of American education have impugned the bureaucratization of public schools and called for radical changes. The most radical proposals are those advocated by Ivan Illich and Everett Reimer. These men suggest the need for dismantling schools as institutions and establishing informal networks of educational resource centres and systems of apprenticeships. Other proposals, represented by contemporary alternative schools, call for the continuation of schools, but the development of new, more democratic decision-making structures. One spokesman for alternative schools, Robert Riordan, captures the essence of these more moderate critiques:

> The reader will note that we devote more of our discussion to issues of *process* — who makes decisions, how people relate to each other, and how the school defines itself relative to the system — than to program content. This emphasis is consistent with the general emphasis in alternative schools, which frequently develop out of a concern with the so-called hidden curriculum: the effect of the structure and process of schooling independent of curriculum content. Therefore, their concern is not so much with designing effective learning packages, but with creating a setting where students can play an active, creative role in deciding the direction their education should take. They wish to create a school community which is iteslf a model for that process in its relations with other institutions.[30]

Though he uses the term "process," Riordan essentially is speaking about the administrative organization of contemporary alternative schools as their "critical" factor.

Others are recognizing that basic changes in education cannot occur without transforming the processes by which educational decisions are made and increasing the number of people involved directly in making decisions. At the first International Convention on Options in Public Education, held in Minneapolis in the fall of 1973, a number of speakers and participants addressed themselves to the necessity of structural change in schools.[31] Don Davies, previously a top-level bureaucrat in the Office of Education and now in charge of Yale's Institute for Responsive Education, expressed the belief that many contemporary alternatives are the reactions of well-to-do white parents to the "encrusted bureaucratic structure" of public schools and to growing teacher professionalism — two dimensions of public schooling that serve to separate those who "consume" education from those who "produce" it.

Dwight Allen, Dean of the innovative School of Education at the University of Massachusetts, disagreed with Davies. He argued at the convention that the problem with education today is not that bureaucrats and militant professionals are in control, but that no one is in control. One of the disturbing challenges of a bureaucracy such as the public school system is to locate someone who actually is accountable to the public for his actions.

Besides Davies and Allen, others spoke about the need for organizational change. Vernon Smith, a Co-Director of the National Consortium on Options

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[29]Spring, *Education and the Rise of the Corporate State*, p. 147.

[30]Robert C. Riordan, *Alternative Schools in Action* (Bloomington, Indiana: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 1972), p. 10.

[31]The author was a participant in the convention and had an opportunity to discuss at length issues concerning contemporary alternative schools with many people active in the development of these schools.

in Public Education, contended that people have been concerned with the functions of schools since the days of Socrates, but that the average person still has little to say about what schools accomplish. Along with Mario Fantini, Smith considered the culprit to be the "institutional arrangement" of public schools. Decision making in schools must become more accessible to the public, lest the schools serve as a blatant contradiction to the ideals of a democratic society. Ironically, many of the people who attended the convention accused Smith and the other people who planned the affair of being inaccessible to outside influence, particularly influence from persons active in nonpublic alternative education.

Harold Hodgkinson offers one of the best statements describing the intensifying interest in the need for structural change in schools:

> We spend, in education, considerable time formulating the functions we wish the schools to perform. Every college catalog, every high-school brochure gives a very clear, often noble and inspiring view of the functions that school or college performs. What is being suggested here is that the educational structure may not be well adapted to meet these functions. There is a real dearth of thinking about alternative ways of structuring educational institutions so that they might fulfill, in a more genuine, effective way, the functions we now say (and fervently hope) they do.[32]

Hodgkinson concludes that we "need to give thought to both structure and function, realizing that new functions may well require new structures."[33]

The increasing awareness of the need for structural change is being expressed in professional circles by social scientists and innovative educators. Community pressures for greater control over local schools, demands for accountability by professions and exploration of voucher schemes are manifestations of a similar awareness on the part of laymen.[34] People want more responsive, less impersonal schools, not to mention other public service organizations. While many people acknowledge that the bureaucratic form of organization promises greater efficiency than most other forms, they seem to question whether efficiency is the supreme value.

Unlike the varied goals and pedagogical dimensions of contemporary alternative schools, their variety of structural options — from town meetings to Co-ordinators to committees of students, parents and teachers — lack significant precedents in American educational history. Little attention has been paid previously to increasing the participation of students, parents and individual teachers in educational decision making. Why contemporary alternative schools suddenly should have undertaken to increase participation and, in so doing, alter the administrative organization of schools deserves the careful study of historians of education and other researchers. Allen Graubard initiated the quest for an understanding of the development of alternative schools with the observation that:

> Until we get clear on why centralization took place . . . we will be misconceiving the significance of radical school reform and its potential. To ascribe some abstract "lust for control" to all bureaucracies can obscure the analysis of who gets controlled and

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[32]Harold L. Hodgkinson, *Education, Interaction, and Social Change* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1967), p. 78.

[33]*Ibid.*

[34]For information on vouchers and related developments, see David L. Kirp's "Vouchers, Reform, and the Elusive Community," *Teachers College Record, 74* (1972), 201-207.

who does the controlling of the bureaucracy and for what purposes and in whose interests.[35]

The reaction against bureaucratic organization is not limited to the realm of education, as recent events have dramatized. Though theorists and researchers often treat them as such, schools do not exist in isolation.

RESUME

D'une étude réalisée sur quarante écoles alternatives dispersées dans la moitié est des Etats-Unis, l'auteur conclut que ces écoles contemporaines représentent autant un rejet de la façon dont les écoles contemporaines représentent autant un rejet de la façon dont les écoles publiques conventionnelles sont organisés, qu'une accusation du programme et des méthodes d'enseignement offerts dans ces écoles. Alors que l'histoire de l'éducation témoigne d'une grande variété d'écoles alternatives, peu d'entre les précurseurs de ces récentes tentatives essaient de changer la structure administrative de leur ensignement. C'est seulement dans la dernière décade que la foi moderne en l'organisation bureaucratique de l'éducation a été contreversée. L'auteur suggère que l'importance de ce caractère structuré des écoles alternatives contemporaines peut être plus significative historiquement que leurs méthodes pédagogiques de base, ou leurs possibilités d'étude peu courantes.

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[35]Allen Graubard, *Free the Children: Radical Reform and the Free School Movement* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1973), p. 36.