BOARDING THE SELF: INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY CONSEQUENCES OF

MISSION BOARDING SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

BY

DOUGLAS M. THORPE

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

1994

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF PRINCETON

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DISSERTATION ADVISER: DONALD E. CAPPS, PH.D.

Abstract of:

BOARDING THE SELF: INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY CONSEQUENCES OF MISSION BOARDING SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

When the children of missionaries ("missionary kids," or "MKs") leave home to attend mission boarding school, the relational context of the school interacts with family dynamics to shape them and their families in unique ways. This study examines the process of "boarding the self" in the Ubangi Academy, a school for MKs in Central Africa.

The theoretical foundation of the study is provided by the contextual family theory developed by Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy and others, especially Barbara Krasner. The contextual approach goes beyond individual and systemic theories, emphasizing the relational dynamics of justice, loyalty and trustworthiness to bring to the foreground the dimension of relational ethics.

The contextual approach assesses the relational context of every individual along four dimensions: facts, individual psychology, systemic transactions, and, as its central focus, relational ethics. In this study the dimension of individual psychology is examined through the self psychology of Stephen M. Johnson. Systemic transactions are examined through Erving Goffman's theory of total institutions. Relational ethics is enriched by H. Richard Niebuhr's theological ethics.

Data for the study were gathered through structured interviews with 16 former students of the Academy and 3 former faculty/dorm parent couples. Four patterns of individual and family consequences of boarding the self were identified. "The Resilient Self in Resources," describes the pattern of students who remained strongly connected to their families during boarding, and achieved solid self-delineation. "The 'Perfect' Self in Silence," describes students who were traumatically cut off from their families by their first boarding experience, becoming vulnerable to destructive idealization and pressures for conformity within the Academy institutional family. "The Passive Self in the Institutional Family," depicts students who were less traumatically distanced from their families and generally content at boarding school, but nevertheless conformed to the institutional family and achieved weak self-delineation. "The Transitional Self in Changing Contexts," describes students who came to the Ubangi Academy only for high school. Their experience in this school had less influence on them and their families than earlier experiences in different contexts.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Table of Contents

Chapter 1

Introduction

I.   Rationale for the Study

A.   Boarding the Self

When the children of missionaries leave home to attend boarding school, they enter a relational context very different from the nuclear family that has shaped their emerging selves to that point. The interplay of family, boarding school, and personal dynamics powerfully shapes students' selves. For some students, the convergence of these dynamics provides an environment that balances the care they receive and the expectations placed on them in ways that promote their health and growth. For others, boarding brings pain and damage to the self and the family.

This study examines the phenomenon I call "boarding the self" in one particular boarding school for the children of North American missionaries in Central Africa--the Ubangi Academy. It describes the relational context of that school and the way that unique context combined with family dynamics to shape its students.

My interest in this topic was originally sparked by a casual comment during a coffee hour after a Sunday morning church service. A friend who is an alumnus of the Ubangi Academy, as I am, remarked that he had just heard of a study of adolescence in mission boarding schools. This study reportedly claimed that, due to the restrictive climate of these schools, missionaries' children (commonly called missionary kids or MKs) did not complete all of the processes of adolescence until sometime between ages 18 and 28. Since I was in my early twenties at that time, I jokingly asked when I could expect to grow up. I did nothing more to pursue the idea at that time, however.

About ten years later, while trying to develop a proposal for a dissertation on MKs, I returned to the idea of delayed adolescence in boarding school. Although I could not locate the study my friend had referred to, the basic idea appeared to have enough validity to warrant more thorough investigation.

Delayed adolescence, however, implies a timetable for adolescence that could be taken as normative in any context. No such timetable exists. Current research on development shows that even if we limit ourselves to the United States alone, there is no one normative timetable for adolescence. Different social contexts and different life experiences provide different stimuli for development and require different rates of development. Dropping out of high school to take a job or have a baby, for instance, is far different from going to college and joining a sorority or fraternity. The pressures created by one situation are often quite unlike those in another, and each situation calls for development of a unique set of skills and resources. No one timetable applies to all American adolescents.[1] And if it is not possible to

---

[1] See, for instance, Joseph F. Kett, <u>Rites of Passage: Adolescence in America 1790 to the Present</u> (New York: Basic Books, 1977) for a history of the concept of adolescence in America. Kett argues that adolescence was first identified as a distinct period of development during the late 19th century, especially in G. Stanley Hall's <u>Adolescence: Its Psychology and Its Relations to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion and Education</u> (New York: David Appleton, 1908).

construct a timetable for all adolescents in this country, extrapolating from American experience to adolescence in another cultural context is even less viable.

When I began to interview former students of the Ubangi Academy I had given up the idea of delayed adolescence, but I was still primarily interested in adolescence. How did this particular context shape adolescent development? In particular, how did UBAC students develop identity and responsibility?

The interviews, though, led me in a different direction. The interviewees generally maintained that UBAC had provided an adequate context for developing identity and responsibility. What several of them pointed to, however, was a deeper issue. They were concerned about their self, the core of their personhood, and the effects of boarding school on their self.

What developed out of the interviews, then, was this study of the consequences of boarding for the self in the relational contexts of family and mission boarding school. The issue here is not timing. It is the question of how the experience of going away to boarding school affects emerging selves and their families. I contend that this process takes four main forms or types: what I call "The Resilient Self in Resources," "The 'Perfect' Self in Silence," "The Passive Self in the Institutional Family," and "The Transitional Self in Changing Contexts."

B. The Ubangi Academy as Relational Context

At the heart of this study lies the Ubangi Academy, a boarding school for MKs. UBAC is a small school, with a total student body ranging in size from 30 to 60 students for all of grades 2-12. The school is operated jointly by the Evangelical Covenant Church and the Evangelical Free Church of America, two denominations with common origins in Swedish Lutheran pietism. (For more on the history and theology of these denominations see Chapter 4.)

UBAC is located between the Zaïre and Ubangi rivers in the northwest corner of Zaïre in Central Africa. Historically, the Ubangi region has had an almost completely agricultural economic base. It is a very poor region, with little industry, abysmal roads, and unreliable transportation by river and air. Government services are minimal, and much of the education and medical care is provided by church-run schools and hospitals. Public utilities provide sporadic service in the largest towns, but in small towns and rural areas all electricity must be generated privately, water must be carried or pumped from streams or wells with private equipment, there is no telephone service, and commodities such as gasoline, kerosene, diesel fuel, and bottled gas are scarce.

The Ubangi Academy was founded in 1949 with one teacher, Dorothy Ford.[2] A two-room storage building was converted into a one-room apartment and a single classroom, while a large house was used as a dormitory. In 1954 a three-room academic building was constructed, followed by a large dormitory. Later expansions have increased the number of classrooms to five, plus a school office and storeroom and houses for faculty. The dormitory is laid out in a long, straight line with girls' and boys' halls separated by living room, dining room, kitchen and dorm parents' apartment in the center.

---

2 My primary sources for this history of the Ubangi Academy are the UBAC Handbook (Karawa, Zaire: n.p., [1989]) and Margaret Nelson, "Twenty-fifth Anniversary for Ubangi Academy," in the "Missionary Newsletter" insert, Covenant Companion, October 15, 1974, 2A.

After offering only the elementary grades for the first eight years, UBAC received its first three high school students in 1957. Political turmoil following the Congo's independence from Belgium in 1960 forced the evacuation of missionaries from the country, so it was not until 1964 that UBAC issued its first two high school diplomas. After a second evacuation in 1964, the school re-opened in 1965 with seven students in grade school only, then with a full student body in 1966, my first year there.

According to the UBAC Handbook, "the goal of the Ubangi Academy is to promote intellectual maturity and to encourage development of Christian character in each student."[3] Instruction follows a basic American curriculum using standard American textbooks. Academic standards are high, with an emphasis on preparation for college.

Most of the students at the Academy are children of missionaries serving with the Covenant or Free Church, although English-speaking children from other denominations also attend. This number usually has included several children of Grace Brethren missionaries in the Central African Republic, the country bordering Zaïre to the north. Occasionally children from other sponsoring groups, including Norwegian and English Baptist churches and Habitat for Humanity, also attend UBAC.

Between 80 and 90 percent of UBAC students any given year are boarders. The rest live with their parents on the Karawa mission station where the Academy is located. Thus a small group of students spends each day in very close contact: studying, eating, playing, worshiping, and working together for 36 weeks out of the year. This network of relationships provides the immediate context for the development of the self, with families of origin and dorm parents involved at a greater distance.

II.   Theory of the Study

A. Contextual Therapy Theory

The central theoretical perspective of this study is provided by the contextual family theory developed by Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy and his associates, especially Geraldine Spark and, more recently, Barbara Krasner. Both Boszormenyi-Nagy and Krasner have been deeply influenced by Martin Buber's concern for the possibility of healing through relationship. Although contextual family therapy was developed for families, not boarding schools, UBAC was deliberately patterned on a family model by its administration and did function in some ways as a large family. A theory of families thus provides a way to understand both the similarities and the differences between UBAC and a family. Furthermore, contextual theory provides a way of speaking of the changes in children's relationships with parents when they go away to boarding school. Contextual theory's interest in intergenerational inheritances, in kin relationships beyond the nuclear family, and in dialogical encounter in all contexts also lends itself to studying an institution such as UBAC.

Contextual theory will be outlined in detail in Chapter Three, but a brief description of it may be helpful here. Contextual theory maintains that people live in a relational context comprised of four dimensions; facts, psychology,

---

[3] UBAC Handbook, (Karawa, Zaïre: Ubangi Academy, n.d.), 1.

transactions, and relational ethics.[4] Facts means what is provided by destiny: ethnic origin, physical health, size of family, etc. Psychology is understood to refer primarily to individual, intrapsychic dynamics. For an understanding of the psychological dimension of UBAC students I will be drawing on Stephen M. Johnson's psychology of the self.[5] The transactional dimension refers to power alignments and communication patterns within systems, the characteristics most schools of family therapy analyze. Given the hybrid nature of UBAC—part extended family, part institution—I have chosen Erving Goffman's sociological theory of total institutions as a tool to assess systemic transactions at UBAC.[6]

The cornerstone of contextual theory is relational ethics, understood as the balance of fairness among family members. The key dynamic of relationships, according to contextual theorists, is merited trust.[7] Patterns of fair interactions build up accumulated merit. Moves toward trustworthiness strengthen the family and each individual within it, while moves away from trustworthiness weaken the family individually and collectively.[8] Accumulated merit from trustworthy acts forms one side of each person's "ledger." The other side is formed by the person's "legacy," "the specific configuration of expectations that originate from rootedness and impinge on the offspring."[9] Each person within the family has a legacy of both debts owed and entitlements. Debts and entitlements must be paid to or collected from the appropriate person, not transferred to someone else, or else the persons involved remain trapped by unfulfilled obligations. Children require and deserve an adequately trustworthy, fair relational context. In its absence they take on facades of "seeming," presenting a false compliance that the context will accept. This study uses contextual theory to assess the relational context of each individual and the effect of the Ubangi Academy on individuals in their contexts.

B. H. Richard Niebuhr's Theological Ethics

The theological ethics of H. Richard Niebuhr enrich the conception of relational ethics for this study.[10] Like Boszormenyi-Nagy and Krasner,

---

[4] Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy and Barbara R. Krasner, "Trust-Based Therapy: A Contextual Approach," American Journal of Psychiatry 137 No.7 (July 1980): 767-768. For other works by Boszormenyi-Nagy and his colleagues that will be used in this project see the attached bibliography.

[5] Stephen M. Johnson, Humanizing the Narcissistic Style (New York: W. W. Norton, 1987).

[6] Erving Goffman, Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates (New York: Doubleday, 1961).

[7] Boszormenyi-Nagy and Krasner, "Trust-Based Therapy," 767.

[8] Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy and David N. Ulrich, "Contextual Family Therapy," in Handbook of Family Therapy, edited by Alan Gurman and David Kniskern (New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1981), 162.

[9] Ibid., 163.

[10] See, in particular, H. Richard Niebuhr, The Responsible Self: An Essay in Christian Moral Philosophy, with an introduction by James M. Gustafson (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1963), and Faith on Earth: An Inquiry into the Structure of Human Faith, ed. Richard R. Niebuhr (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).

Niebuhr was influenced by the philosophical anthropology of Martin Buber. With them, as well as with social psychologists such as George Herbert Mead, Niebuhr shares the view that the human self is fundamentally social in character. The human self emerges in the presence of—and in relationship with— other selves. The quality of the self's closest relationships are extremely influential for forming the self.

Niebuhr conceived of Christian ethics as the attempt of the Christian community to inquire critically into the nature of its moral life through a process of disciplined reflection. Thus a central part of his ethics is a description of the way people actually live. Christian ethics, in his view, "has the task of disclosing the basic pattern, the morphology of the life and action of the Christian community in the moral sphere—the way of thinking and acting that is true to its character as a community of men before God."[11] Niebuhr tends, therefore, to speak philosophically rather than theologically in any narrow doctrinal or Biblical sense. He focuses his reflection within the historic Christian community, but he does so through the broad philosophical themes of responsibility and faith.

Niebuhr's thought will be expounded in more detail in Chapter Three, where the essential harmony between his conception of the self and the conception put forward by the other theorists I use in this study will be evident. Niebuhr's understanding of responsibility will also be compared with contextual theory's idea of give-and-take and dialogue. I will bring Niebuhr into the discussion where his views augment, critique or contradict the views of the others, but I will not attempt a full presentation and critique of his ethics.

III. Method of the Study

When a theory of families is used to study a boarding school that sees itself as a family, a natural method of study would be to observe the whole boarding school family together. That would give the researcher a first-hand experience of group members relating to each other.

Unfortunately, political developments in Zaïre made such a visit impossible. In September of 1991, as I was finalizing my proposal and looking for funding for a trip to Zaïre, elements of the Zaïrian National Army mutinied in the capital city, Kinshasa. Their rebellion touched off massive riots in all the major cities in the country. Nearly all the expatriates in the country left within days. The Ubangi Academy was closed, and all the students, faculty, and administration were flown or driven across the Ubangi River to Bangui, the capital of the Central African Republic, and evacuated by air to the U.S. and Canada with their families. The school remained closed that entire academic year, opening only in late August, 1992.

Since it was not possible to study UBAC in action, I decided to study former students, staff and faculty here in the States. I chose graduates rather than current students for several reasons. Having struggled with questions of selfhood in other contexts after leaving UBAC, former students would be better able to tell me about their sense of self and how UBAC had helped or hindered its emergence. Since I was interested in the process of the emergence of the self, the recollections of those who had come through the process would be more valuable than the time-frozen snapshot of an interview with students in the middle of that process. Also, given the trauma of

---

[11] James M. Gustafson, introduction to The Responsible Self, 8.

the recent evacuation, I expected the students who had been forced to leave
their school to look back at it with a degree of idealizing nostalgia.

I decided to limit the study to people who had been at the Academy for
at least two years of high school during the 1970's and 1980's. The starting
date of 1970 was chosen as roughly marking the beginning of a sustained
period of continuity at the Academy. In the 1960's UBAC was closed twice
during political disturbances. It reopened with a handful of students in the
fall of 1965 and was fully operational in the fall of 1966, but patterns of
interaction were not well established until a few years had passed. Thus the
turn of the decade marks the start of a stretch in which two complete gener-
ations of students completed their eleven years of schooling at UBAC with
relatively unbroken continuity.

On the other end of the study, choosing 1989 as the closing date meant
all my subjects had at least two years after leaving UBAC to deal with issues
of re-entry and cultural adjustment. Re-entry is itself a large issue that is
beginning to be studied, but it is not the focus of this research. Two years
would at least be enough time to get beyond the immediate crisis so that re-
entry did not dominate the interviews.

A. The Interviews

Robert W. White, in his <u>Lives in Progress</u>, wrote, "Any attempt to study
other people must rely heavily on interviews. There can be no adequate sub-
stitute for the obvious procedure of asking the subject to tell all that he can
about himself and his environment."[12] Particularly when examining relational
reality, individuals' assessment of the justice of their most significant rela-
tionships is critical. Psychological traits can be measured with standardized
instruments and systemic transactions can be observed, but the dimension of
merited trust can best be described by the participants in close relationships.

My own training as a pastoral psychotherapist also inclined me toward
the use of interviews as a research tool. I am accustomed to assessing indi-
vidual and relational realities in the give-and-take of a therapeutic conversa-
tion. Interviews, then, formed the core of the research for this study.

1. Focused Interviews

The focused interview, as described by Merton, Fiske, and Kendall, is
distinguished by the following characteristics:

1. The people interviewed have all been involved in a particular
   situation.
2. Elements, patterns, processes and the total structure of the
   situation have previously been provisionally analyzed.
3. Interviews follow an interview guide developed from the previous
   analysis.
4. Interviews focus on the subjective experiences of the subjects
   with the goal of obtaining their definitions of the situation.[13]

---

[12] Robert W. White, <u>Lives in Progress: A Study of the Natural Growth of Per-
   sonality</u>, 2nd edition (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966 <1952>),
   96.

[13] Robert K. Merton, Marjorie Fiske, and Patricia L. Kendall, <u>The Focused
   Interview: A Manual of Problems and Procedures</u>, revised edition (Glencoe,
   IL: The Free Press, 1956), 3-4. The arrangement is mine.

Prior analysis, the second characteristic, sets the focused interview apart from other depth interviewing. Equipped with a provisional analysis of the situation, interviewers can formulate narrower, more focused questions. They can also determine more easily the importance of what is or is not said during the interview. They can elicit greater specificity in responses by asking about specific memories and not just about general reminiscences. "In the focused interview, the interviewer . . . can introduce more explicit verbal cues to the stimulus situation or even *re-present* it, as we shall see. In either case, this ordinarily activates a concrete report of responses by inter- viewees."[14]

From a provisional analysis of a situation an interview guide can be con- structed. An interview guide differs from a questionnaire by being designed to elicit a variety of responses, including some not foreseen by the investiga- tor. Whereas questionnaires force the interview subject to give an opinion of what the interviewer holds to be significant, interviews have the "distinctive merit" of "the give-and-take which helps the interviewee decode and report the meanings which a situation held for him."[15]

The goal of the focused interview is to obtain the subjects' definitions of the situation, not their agreement or disagreement with the interviewer's definition of the situation. The questions in the guide should be relatively non-directive, allowing maximum room for interview subjects to place their experiences into their own framework. The experience being studied will itself supply some limits of relevance for the responses given. Even non-productive digressions can often be handled with indirect questions.

Productive interview materials meet four criteria.

1. Range. The interview should enable interviewees to maximize the reported range of evocative elements and patterns in the stimulus situation as well as the range of responses.
2. Specificity. The interview should elicit highly specific reports of the aspects of the stimulus situation to which interviewees have responded.
3. Depth. The interview should help interviewees to describe the affective, cognitive and evaluative meanings of the situation and the degree of their involvement in it.
4. Personal context. The interview should bring out the attributes and prior experience of interviewees which endow the situation with these distinctive meanings.[16]

Since some of my subjects lived as many as nine years in mission board- ing school, the possible range in the interviews was enormous. This created tension among having enough range in the interviews to ensure that we touched on the relevant elements and patterns, obtaining enough specificity to be able to compare experiences, and going deep enough to describe the rich- ness of interviewees' experience. I'll say more a little later about how I dealt with that.

The interview guide was constructed along the lines suggested by Merton and his colleagues. Provisional analysis of UBAC was based on my experience

---

[14] Ibid., 5.
[15] Ibid., 13.
[16] Ibid., 12. The arrangement is theirs.

there, many hours of informal conversations with people associated with the school, and other people's research into mission boarding school experiences. From that provisional analysis of the situation the interview guide was developed. The guide was organized around the four dimensions of contextual theory; facts, individual psychology, systemic transactions, and balances of fairness. The first two sections were concerned primarily with the objectifiable facts of each person's history. One part asked for basic information about family of origin, years spent in Africa, and current demographic information. The second posed questions about their first experience at UBAC.

The dimension of individual psychology was integrated into the other sections of questions, in keeping with the premise that the self is shaped in relationship. Other studies have examined the psychology of MKs through the use of standardized psychological instruments. I remained aware of psychological considerations during the course of each interview, but a thorough psychological assessment of each subject was not a major part of the investigation. Even in the second follow-up letter and phone calls, which dealt explicitly with the formation of the self, I tried to keep psychological and relational views of the self integrated.

Systemic transactions, contextual theory's third dimension, comprised a major part of the interview guide. In addition to standard systemic questions about roles, myths, rituals, rules, and so forth, I asked about specific areas that my prior analysis had suggested would be noteworthy. Relations between the sexes at UBAC, for instance, turned out to be an area of life shaped in an idiosyncratic way, complete with its own vocabulary. Questions about money revealed that this topic, of such great interest to most American teenagers, played very little role in the lives of UBAC students. Most of them had few opportunities to either earn or spend money in Africa.

It was only after reading the interview transcripts that I decided to use Goffman's theory of total institutions to understand systemic transactions at UBAC. Thus the interview guide did not use his concepts and terms. The interviews themselves, however, suggested the use of a theory of institutions for this dimension.

A fourth section dealt specifically with topics of relational ethics; loyalty, responsibility and fairness, plus identity in close relationships. In addition, throughout each interview I attempted to keep relational ethics and interpersonal dialogues integrated into the conversation. The section on first experience at UBAC, for instance, included three questions on dialogical possibilities within the family; how leaving for UBAC the first time was discussed within the family, what the subjects would say now if talking about that first trip with their parents, and how the parents might respond now to what the subjects had to say. The interview questions are reproduced in Appendix B.

For the dorm parents and faculty the section on facts of history concentrated on each person's training and sense of calling to missionary service, and in particular on how they came to serve at the Ubangi Academy. In the second section they were asked to comment on systemic transactions even though some transactions, such as relations between the sexes, involved them only tangentially. They were also asked to comment on relational ethics in much the same way as the students, with an additional section situating them in the larger relational context of the whole missions enterprise. The interview questions for dorm parents and faculty are also reproduced in Appendix B.

2. Interactive Interviewing Method

Although Merton, Fiske and Kendall value the reports of subjective experience provided by focused interviews, they still operate with too sharp a distinction between interviewer and interviewee and too strong a belief in the objectivity of the interviewer. They write, for example, "Equipped in advance with an analysis of the situation, the interviewer can readily distinguish the objective facts of the case from the subjective definitions of the situation."[17] And in another place, "The interviewer also explains that he is not himself involved in the situation to be discussed."[18]

In my case this second statement is simply not true. I attended the Ubangi Academy as a day student for eight years, beginning in 3rd grade and continuing, except for two years in the United States, through high school graduation. I knew most of the people I interviewed and I am related to three of them. I cannot say that I am not involved in the situation to be discussed. The fact is, I probably would have no interest in UBAC--assuming I had even heard of it--if I had not attended the school myself. Nor am I disinterested in the results of my investigation. This particular context played a role in shaping me, my siblings, and several of my friends. I am deeply interested in understanding--and helping them understand--the ways UBAC affected us. I am also motivated by a desire to tell the stories of a unique group of people whose experiences are little known and even less understood.

If my own person and history cannot be excluded from this study, the real question becomes how I use myself in my investigation. How do I make my own involvement in the processes under investigation work for this research?

In wrestling with a similar set of questions, James Dittes has identified four general ways the person of the researcher can become part of the research.[19] He lays out these four approaches along a spectrum of increasing personal involvement, beginning with the approach he labels "Incongruent." This conventional, "pure," approach fights to eliminate all personal reactions as distortions or contaminations of analyses. It maintains that the experiences and feelings of the investigator should be irrelevant to the conclusions reached.

Dittes writes about this mode: "I have labeled it 'puritan' because it reflects, in my judgment, an exaggerated and irrational fear of human emotions quite as much as it reflects a rational philosophy of science."[20] In this view, the normal, expected emotional reactions of one person to another are suspected, feared, and suppressed. The researcher is expected to be distant, disinterested, and without any emotional response other than a highly intellectualized curiosity. To use this approach to my research on the Ubangi Academy would be to say that my own history there, my relationships with the people I interviewed, and my personal attempts to understand my past played

---

[17] Ibid., 4.

[18] Ibid., 173.

[19] James E. Dittes, "The Investigator as an Instrument of Investigation: Some Exploratory Observations on the Compleat Researcher," in Encounter with Erikson: Historical Interpretation and Religious Biography, ed. Donald Capps, Walter H. Capps, and M. Gerald Bradford (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977), 352-372.

[20] Ibid., 358.

no role in my investigation except perhaps to contaminate my conclusions with pre-existing bias. That would be far from the case.

A second mode of handling the researcher's personal involvement in research can be called "Introductory." In this approach personal history provides the motivation and the occasion for the research, but it does not affect the actual investigation.

> The important point about . . . this approach is that the personal narrative leads us *to*, but *not into* the investigation. It tells us how the researcher was drawn to his subject, or to his subjects, and they to him, how rapport was established, and frequently something of how the investigator felt afterwards. We discover the personal context of the research, but it is left as context. The research itself is essentially business as usual, the investigator's reactions do not become part of his data and do not seem to feed his thinking; it is not evident how data or interpretations would be different if the researcher had not made himself so evident, or if a researcher of quite different personal involvement had been at work.21

This approach would say that my history as an alumnus of UBAC prompted my interest in this subject but did not influence my conclusions. I might report on my years at UBAC, I might describe my personal reactions to the people I interviewed, I might even state how my knowledge of the jargon of the Academy aided my understanding of the interviews. But my observations, conclusions and report would be essentially the same as if I did not have, or did not report, any personal reactions.

The first two types of approaches, with their accent on the great distance between objective investigator and subjective interviewee, have been challenged from many directions. Robert Pirsig, in his recent metaphysics/novel, Lila: An Inquiry into Morals, attacks such supposed objective science through his character Dusenberry. Dusenberry, a professor of English at a college in Bozeman, Montana, has a passion for studying American Indians. He can't get his work accepted by any American anthropology doctoral programs, however, because he is too subjective for their tastes. The novel's narrator, Phaedrus, recalls his conversation with Dusenberry:

> "The trouble with the objective approach," Dusenberry said, "is that you don't *learn* much that way. . . . The only way to find out about Indians is to care for them and win their love and respect . . . . then they'll do almost anything for you. . . . But if you don't do that . . ." He would shake his head and his thoughts would go trailing off.
> "I've seen these 'objective' workers come on the reservations," he said, "and get absolutely nowhere. . .
> "There's this pseudo-science myth that when you're 'objective' you just disappear from the face of the earth and see everything undistorted, as it really is, like God from heaven. But that's rubbish. When a person's objective his attitude is remote. He gets a sort of stony, distant look on his face."22

"Objective" approaches have received some of their sharpest critiques from feminist scholars. Ann Oakley, an English sociologist, has questioned the

---

21 Ibid., 359-360.

22 Robert Pirsig, Lila: An Inquiry into Morals (New York: Bantam Books, 1991), 32. The ellipses are Pirsig's.

artificiality of the boundaries and roles in standard interviewing methodology. According to Oakley:

> The paradigm of the social research interview prompted in the methodology textbooks does, then, emphasize (a) its status as a mechanical instrument of data-collection; (b) its function as a specialized form of conversation in which one person asks the questions and another gives the answers; (c) its characterization of interviewees as essentially passive individuals, and (d) its reduction of interviewers to a question asking and rapport-producing role.[23]

This paradigm, says Oakley, is objectivist, detached, hierarchical and scientific in the sense of a cultural activity valued above individuals' personal concerns. It is stereotypically masculine in its devaluation of intuition, sensitivity and egalitarianism. It neglects important aspects of people's lives, especially their emotions, and thus results in a truncated, not a purified knowledge.[24] We'll return to her constructive proposals a little later.

Skipping over, for the moment, Dittes' third mode of investigators' involvement in their research, we come to the far end of the spectrum, the "Inflated" mode. In their fight against positivism and scientism, some researchers have replaced investigation with personal involvement. Researchers operating in the inflated mode "tend to ask the investigator to *substitute* the immediate experience for the conventional analysis rather than to *supplement* the one with the other."[25] They tend, in particular, to blur two distinctions Dittes would like to preserve; the distinction between the subject's experience and the researcher's experience, and the distinction between the subject's and the researcher's roles.

Collapsing the boundary between researcher and subject can result in the investigator's pre-conceptions and reactions overwhelming the report of the people being interviewed. In such cases researchers prove exactly what they set out to prove, and any evidence to the contrary is disregarded, discounted or reinterpreted.

More commonly, the inflated mode of research results in the researcher's own perspective being surrendered. "The investigator is asked, in one way or another, to experience—and report—what his subject experiences, and to relinquish a separate, autonomous analytic perspective. And, as often as not, he is asked to substitute active participation and partisanship for detached investigation."[26] The skills, vocabulary and perspective that set investigator and subject apart are put aside for the sake of advocacy on behalf of the subject.

The inflated approach to my project would silence my analysis, curiosity and trained speculation for the direct report of the interviewees' experience. It would make me only their spokesperson, not an analyst with my own perspective.

Without using Dittes' categories, Niebuhr criticizes all three of the modes discussed so far, incongruent, introductory and inflated, as attempts to avoid

---

23 Ann Oakley, "Interviewing Women: A Contradiction in Terms", in <u>Doing Feminist Research</u>, edited by Helen Roberts (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), 36-37.
24 Ibid., 38-40.
25 Dittes, 361.
26 Ibid., 361-362.

the subject-object situation of the self and to seek a non-existent knowledge without duality. I'll say more about Niebuhr's anthropology in Chapter Three, but here it's enough to say that in his understanding the self only exists in relation to another self.

> The situation of the dialogue, in which there is no self without an other, no subject without an object and vice versa, is the given situation in which all our knowing takes place. No data are given to us without a sensing, no ideas without a conceiving, no values without a desiring, no world without a knowing, no selves and no gods without a believing. On the other hand none of these activities is present in the self without the objects toward which they are directed. Impatient with this "egocentric predicament" we often seek a knowledge of things as they are in themselves and of ourselves as we are in ourselves. Thus we try to transcend the subject-object situation; but it accompanies us in the very effort we make to get outside it and so we fall either into an inconsistent, self-contradictory objectivism or into an equally inconsistent sub-jectivism.[27]

In contrast to the other three modes of investigation, Dittes proposes what he calls the "Instrumental" mode. Here investigators' personal involvement is taken as an intrinsic part of their investigation. Dittes quotes Robert Bellah arguing that, "reality is seen to reside not just in the object. . . but in the subject and *particularly in the relation between subject and object.*"[28] Neither distant objectivity nor the inflated collapse of distinct perspectives does justice to a relation that involves two people. Trustworthy, reliable information emerges when investigators consider the nature of the relationship between them and their subjects rather than examining only the subjects themselves. True, that relationship may say as much about the investigators as about their subjects, but it does say something about both.

Something like this instrumental mode of using one's self in research has been proposed by feminist scholars. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, for one, calls for scholars to state their commitments openly and drop the rhetoric of impartiality and value-neutrality that hides its biases. She writes, "The notion of objective and disinterested research must be replaced by *conscious partiality.*"[29]

In her research on women's experiences of childbirth, Oakley found three reasons for using her personal reactions more directly in interviewing. First, she regards the textbook method as exploitative in its intent to use subjects only as data sources for the researcher's work. Oakley finds such objectification of interviewees morally indefensible. Second, like Schüssler Fiorenza, Oakley takes a clear advocacy stance for the women she interviews.

> I regarded sociological research as an essential way of giving the subjective situation of women greater visibility not only in sociology, but, more importantly, in society, than it has traditionally had. . . . Note that the formulation of the interviewer role has changed

---

[27] Niebuhr, Faith on Earth, 27.

[28] Robert Bellah, "Christianity and Symbolic Realism" Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 9 (1970), 93, quoted in Dittes, 363. Italics Dittes'.

[29] Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, contribution to "Roundtable Discussion: On Feminist Methodology," Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion 1, no. 2 (1985): 75.

dramatically from being a data-collecting instrument for researchers
to being a data-collecting instrument for those whose lives are
being researched.[30]

A third reason Oakley cites for deviating from orthodox interviewing
practice is pragmatic. Withholding personal information and refusing to ans-
wer questions, as traditionally prescribed, does not build the kind of rapport
that encourages interviewees to reveal themselves at any depth. Simply put,
people feel more comfortable talking about themselves to genuine human beings
than to human tape recorders. Or, to return to Pirsig's Dusenberry:

"So that's why I'm not objective about Indians," he said. "I
believe in them and they believe in me and that makes all the dif-
ference. They've told me things they've said they never told any
other white man because they know I'll never use it against them.
It's a whole different way of relating to them. Indians first,
anthropology second. . . . "[31]

In taking an stance of conscious partiality, both Schüssler Fiorenza and
Oakley come closer to the inflated mode than Dittes recommends. Their
advocacy, however, does not force them to give up their perspective and
skills. It causes them to admit and defend their biases as opposed to hiding
them behind the rhetoric of disinterested, impartial research that tends to
preserve the status quo. It leads Oakley to conclude: "Personal involvement
is more than dangerous bias—it is the condition under which people come to
know each other and to admit others into their lives."[32]

Using the investigator as an instrument of the investigation has not
received the kind of thoughtful attention that would yield a comprehensive set
of guidelines for this mode of investigation. It is, however, a common mode of
assessment for psychotherapists. While some therapists use standardized
instruments or strategies of distance for diagnosis, many rely heavily on
information they obtain through attention to the relationship between them-
selves and their clients. This has certainly been my training.

Furthermore, in Dittes' quote from Bellah the language comes close to
Martin Buber's idea of the "Between," the place where an I meets a You. As
we shall see in Chapter Three, this idea underlies contextual therapy and has
exerted a profound influence on Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy and Barbara Krasner.
A dialogical theory such as contextual theory mandates a dialogical interview-
ing method. If we are to say that the most important dimension of people's
existence is the quality of the dialogues between them and those to whom they
are intimately related, then the method of assessing that reality should also be
dialogical.

The instrumental mode of using my self in my research, then, was the
mode I chose to work in. I used my own history as a UBAC alumnus to bring
me into the research, then I built on that and on the relationships I had with
the people I interviewed to better understand them and their pasts. I trusted
my ability to understand what was said—and unsaid—during the interviews. I
operated out of a conscious desire to help them tell the stories of their lives,
and to tell the story of my own life as well.

---

[30] Oakley, 48-49.
[31] Pirsig, 32.
[32] Oakley, 58.

B. Selecting The Interview Subjects

Primary data for the study were gathered through 15 focused interviews
of 90-120 minutes each with a total of 22 subjects, 16 former students and 6
dorm parents and faculty members. From an initial list of names of just over
100 people who had attended UBAC for high school in the 1970's and 1980's I
mailed letters to 54 whose addresses I could obtain and who were in the U.S.
I also mailed letters to two couples who had served as dorm parents and one
couple who had both taught at UBAC. The response rate was exceptionally
high and overwhelmingly positive. Forty-six former students returned cards,
telephoned, or spoke to me in person to say they were interested in being
interviewed. All three faculty/dorm parent couples I contacted agreed to be
interviewed. Only one card was returned saying the person did not wish to
be interviewed.

Final selection of subjects to interview was made according to several
criteria; gender, denomination, age, and geographical location. I interviewed
nine women and seven men; six whose parents were sponsored by the
Evangelical Covenant Church, four sponsored by the Evangelical Free Church,
and six sponsored by the Grace Brethren. They ranged in age from 37 to 23,
and in high school graduation class from 1973 to 1987. In order to conduct
the interviews in person I only interviewed people who currently lived east of
the Mississippi River. I only interviewed one UBAC graduate who currently
worked for an overseas missions organization. Some others were in the United
States while I was interviewing, but for various reasons we could not arrange
an interview.

All but one of the interviews were conducted in March of 1992, when I
drove in a big loop from Princeton, New Jersey to Chicago and back. All the
interviews were held in the subjects' homes, with the exception of one held in
the interviewee's private office and one held in the visiting room of a prison.
With two exceptions, each person I interviewed served me a meal or a snack.
Four put me up overnight. Often our discussions before and after the formal
interview were as informative as the interview itself. Everyone was willing, at
times even anxious, to talk about UBAC. With the interviewees' permission, all
the interviews except the one in the prison were tape recorded and tran-
scribed for analysis. One woman asked for a copy of her interview tape and
one man asked for a copy of his transcript. I provided each of those, and
also promised to send each subject a summary report at the end of my writ-
ing. The interviews were enjoyable, emotionally intense, sometimes funny,
sometimes nostalgic, sometimes sad, and sometimes angry.

C. Additional Sources of Information

To supplement the interviews I sent two follow-up letters to each inter-
view subject. The first went out soon after the interviews, thanking each
subject for the visit and asking about any thoughts or feelings that had
arisen after our conversation. Three people responded directly to that letter.
One said she had resolved to talk more directly to her parents about her
experiences at UBAC. Another wrote that she felt for the first time that she
could integrate a painful part of her past with her current life. The third
asked that a specific portion of our interview be treated with particular con-
fidentiality.

After I had analyzed the interview transcripts I sent a second letter. By
this time the formation of the self had emerged as the most significant issue
in the interviews. The second letter addressed that topic very directly and

prepared the subjects for a follow-up interview by telephone. Here I traded the wide range of the first round of interviews for more specificity and depth on the issue of the emerging self. The second letter was followed by phone calls to 15 of the interview subjects. These calls were not taped, but I did take extensive notes while we talked. Five people also responded to that letter with letters of their own, including one letter ten pages long. The first letter of inquiry and both follow-up letters are reproduced in Appendix A.

As a sidelight it's noteworthy that in the seven months between the interviews and the second follow-up letter, seven of the sixteen interviewees had moved. The reputation for mobility of adult TCKs (third culture kids, children in the cultural amalgam developed overseas between sending and host cultures) was sustained by this group.

In addition, four people loaned me things they had written for other purposes. These included a diary from high school years, an autobiography written in college, and several pieces of short fiction drawn from boarding school experience. One person sent me two newspaper clippings about MKs. Several people loaned me copies of "Bondeko," UBAC's yearbook, to supplement issues I own. The School Board of the Ubangi Academy also gave me access to the UBAC files at the Department of World Mission of the Evangelical Covenant Church in Chicago.

IV. Limitations of the Study

The study was a retrospective study of a somewhat self-selected sample. It is subject to the limitations as well as the possibilities of such studies.

Since a retrospective study examines events that have already taken place, there can be no manipulation of independent variables nor any control of extraneous variables by the researcher. Thus it is not possible, in a retrospective study, to make claims of causality. After the fact it cannot be demonstrated that the disciplinary strategies of teachers and dorm parents caused students to develop particular types of personalities, for instance, or that the length and frequency of school vacations provided maximal family bonding. A retrospective study also relies on interview subjects' memories, which are subject to distortion and forgetting. The interviews record the impressions and thoughts of subjects, how they experienced and remembered and understood events in their lives. These memories are checked to some extent by the memories of other interviewees and by my own memories, but they remain subjective data.

A retrospective study functions to generate hypotheses that might be tested in further research, not to test those hypotheses. It describes phenomena from the vantage point of those who experienced them, but it does not give causal explanations of those phenomena.

Working with a non-random sample also places limits on the research. If the 16 former students I interviewed had been selected at random from the entire pool of people who fit the criteria for the study, we could say with confidence that they were representative of the entire group. But with interview subjects volunteering themselves for the study, then being selected at least in part by my ability to reach them for a face-to-face interview, we cannot say that they represent the entire group. We can, however, say that their experience is their own and also typifies any other UBAC students who had a similar experience, however large or small that number may be. There were people who experienced the Ubangi Academy in the ways described to me in the interviews. We do not know how many there were, but we do know of at least the ones I talked to and we have a record of their time in that place.

Chapter 2

The Third Culture Context

Research on the third culture and the people who grow up within it is barely fifty years old, but in that time it has grown into a field of study all its own. Studies are increasing in number, scope and sophistication. Sociologists, psychologists, psychotherapists, pastoral counselors, educators, missions executives, TCKs, parents, and even fiction writers are all exploring life in the third culture and its ongoing effects. Specialized areas within the literature are developing for studies of the dependents of personnel in various sponsoring groups: missions organizations, Department of Defense, Federal civilians (most commonly Department of State), businesses, and others who live abroad (for instance, academics on sabbatical leave). Organizations specializing in TCK research and/or care are developing across the country. To date three international conferences have been held to discuss missionary kids alone.[1]

Studies of MKs and other TCKs have identified several key issues. The development of the self in the third culture context emerges as one of the central TCK issues. This issue is often focused most sharply during the period of re-entry, when adolescents leave the third culture for the culture of their parents' homeland. A number of studies have examined the process of adjustment during re-entry. Several of these studies highlight the careful process of identity management by which overseas-experienced youth attempt to fit into their new context without losing touch with their third culture experience.

The issue of self is equally central to a series of studies of the personality profiles of missionary kids. These studies are trying to answer the question, "What kind of personalities do mission field contexts (and in particular, boarding schools) produce?" By using statistical analyses of the results of standardized psychological inventories, some researchers have attempted to identify factors, such as age at first boarding, that correlate with certain personality profiles.

A third area of research has been the mission boarding school itself. The central questions in this research concern the nature of these unique contexts and the forces within them that shape their students.

A summary of previous third culture research shows that a lot has already been discovered, but large gaps remain. Missionary kids have not been studied much in their context. They have been studied during re-entry and they have been studied by individually-oriented psychological inventories, but they have not been examined within their multiple contexts of family of origin, boarding school, and larger third culture. These are gaps the current study hopes to address.

---

[1] International Conferences on Missionary Kids (ICMKs) have been held in Manila, Philippines (November 1984), Quito, Ecuador (January 1987), and Nairobi, Kenya (November and December 1989).

I. Research on Re-entry

A. Theses and Dissertations

The first scholarly examination of re-entry among TCKs was Allen Parker's 1936 study at the University of Chicago.[2] Parker studied the social adjustment of the children of American missionaries upon return from India to the United States. His subjects had all attended Woodstock School, in the foothills of the Himalayas north of Delhi.

Parker's respondents were generally well prepared academically for American college. Social behavior patterns, especially dating practices, gave them more trouble. They also found the hurried, pressured pace of life in the U.S. troubling. They were more inclined to enjoy simpler, more relaxed pleasures of life--bird-watching, hiking, camping, good conversation, art and music.

Eleven years later, Robert Fleming followed up Parker's study in his Ph.D. dissertation at Chicago.[3] Fleming studied eighty-eight alumni of Woodstock to investigate their adjustment upon return from India to the United States.

Like Parker, Fleming also concluded that academic adjustment was not a problem for the subjects. At the time of his study, seventy-eight of the eighty-eight had earned college degrees and twelve were still in school, some for second degrees. Only four had dropped out of college without a degree: two women who got married and two men.

Where the people Fleming interviewed did have trouble was in social adjustment. Various factors--out-of-date clothes styles, accented speech, delayed development in sex education, and an orientation toward adults rather than toward peers--contributed to difficulties adjusting to life in the U.S.

While Fleming was successful in identifying issues in adjustment, he was frustrated in his attempt to identify causal factors in adjustment ease or difficulty. He had hypothesized that seven factors would affect ease of adjustment: choice of vocation, size of college, theological liberality or conservativeness of family of origin, date of attendance at Woodstock, boarding or non-boarding, graduation from Woodstock or a high school in America, and birth order. Only the last factor was demonstrated to have any significant effect, and that was very small, with younger siblings adjusting slightly better than their older siblings.

Despite his inability to verify his hypotheses, Fleming helped set the agenda for forty years of TCK re-entry studies. His frustrations, as much as his findings, reveal several of the issues and obstacles inherent in re-entry studies.

One recurrent issue has to do with the idea of re-entry itself. Many TCKs were born overseas or left North America at an early age. Unlike their parents, they do not regard America as a home they exited and will re-enter. They see themselves as members of the third culture. America is in many ways a foreign land to them. When they leave their third culture home they think of themselves as emigrating, not re-entering.

---

[2] Allen Ellsworth Parker, "An Analysis of the Factors in the Personality Development of Children of Missionaries" (M.A. thesis, University of Chicago, 1936).

[3] Robert Leland Fleming, "Adjustment of India Missionaries' Children in America" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1947).

Another issue centers on adjustment to American culture as a goal. For many MKs, and for their parents, teachers and dorm parents as well, adjustment to American culture is viewed with marked ambivalence. Compared to the third culture of evangelical mission boarding schools, much of America is materialistic, individualistic, unspiritual, morally lax, and sexually permissive. Some MKs report difficulty adjusting to that environment, while others report equal difficulty resisting adjusting. In a less moralistic vein, others have suggested that a cosmopolitan, multi-cultural outlook is more valuable than settled adjustment to one culture. As Ruth Hill Useem has said, "Let them be marginal."[4]

Beyond these issues of re-entry studies lies the further difficulty of attempting to establish the causes of adjustment patterns or other phenomena in the lives of overseas-experienced youth. The range of factors involved is so great that attributing causality to any one of them—or to any combination of factors—is exceptionally difficult. All the factors Fleming identified, plus parents' sponsorship, dynamics in the family of origin, personality, length of time in a boarding school environment, age at first boarding, age at re-entry, and other factors, shape the lives of students in the third culture. Given this complexity, the kind of controlled manipulation of independent variables that would allow investigation of causality is not possible. Statistical analyses can show some correlations that suggest strong relationships, but that is all. And as we shall see, computation of statistical correlations has been much more popular in the psychological studies of personality in the third culture than in the sociological and social-psychological studies of re-entry.

Fleming's study was followed in 1949 by Dolores Ralson's thesis on MK adjustment.[5] Ralson analyzed thirty-four autobiographical accounts of college-aged evangelical MKs. Like Fleming, she determined that these students were most troubled with social adjustment issues: a sense of inferiority, trouble with heterosexual relationships, fear of academic competition, and feelings of estrangement from parents. An exception to these general findings was that MKs raised in Africa revealed feelings of superiority to African nationals.

Twenty years after Ralson's study, Frank Krajewski and Thomas Gleason used a shared data base and sources for their dissertations on TCKs.[6] Much of their information was obtained through a sprawling, thirty-page "Internationally Mobile Students Questionnaire" developed at the Institute for International Studies in Education of the College of Education at Michigan State under the guidance of Ruth Hill Useem.

Krajewski compared academic adjustment of TCKs in college across sponsorship groups. He defined academic adjustment as the level of con-

---

[4] Ruth Hill Useem, interviewed by Sheldon Cherney, n.d., quoted in Ray F. Downs, "A Look at the Third Culture Child," The Japan Christian Quarterly 42 (Spring 1976): 69.

[5] Dolores Elizabeth Ralson, "The Adjustment Problems of American Students Reared on the Mission Field" (M.R.E. thesis, The Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1949).

[6] Frank R. Krajewski, "A Study of the Relationship of an Overseas-Experienced Population Based on Sponsorship of Parent and Subsequent Academic Adjustment to College in the United States" (Ph.D. diss., Michigan State University, 1969). Thomas P. Gleason, "Social Adjustment Patterns and Manifestations of World-Mindedness of Overseas-Experienced American Youth" (Ph.D. diss., Michigan State University, 1969).

gruence among three factors: (1) the facts of one's academic performance as measured by grade point average, (2) the level of education aspired to, as measured by the degree sought, and (3) the perceived self-concept around academic performance. Krajewski found that while missionary kids had high academic aspirations and the highest level of academic performance, their self-concept concerning their performance was the lowest of the five groups. Because of this dichotomy between actual performance and expectations of self, they did not score well on the measure of overall academic adjustment.

Gleason analyzed the same set of data to study social adjustment and worldmindedness, a measure of interest in and identification with parts of the world outside the respondent's country of origin. Gleason developed his index of worldmindedness from items on the questionnaire dealing with feelings of belonging with Americans or foreigners and the perceived desirability of America or overseas locations as places to pursue a vocation, establish residence, or feel at home. In general, positive worldmindedness seemed to correlate with the number of years abroad and with the number of moves the family made abroad. Since the children of missionaries, on average, live twice as long in the host country as other TCKs, have more contact with the host culture, and learn more second and third languages, it comes as no surprise that they ranked highest on the index of worldmindedness, followed by Department of Defense, business, and Federal civilian dependents in that order.

Social adjustment issues for the TCKs Gleason studied included finances (for all students except those of business sponsorship, and a particular problem for missionary kids), "trying to find myself," finding friends with similar background and values, and the related issues of deciding on a future career and selecting a college major.

In 1976 Richard Downie, also at Michigan State, conducted a study of re-entry and identity formation of TCKs.[7] In contrast to Gleason and Krajewski, who surveyed TCKs to identify their concerns, Downie was more interested in how individual TCKs dealt with some of those concerns. He combined episodic life histories with focused interviews to uncover the dynamics of identity formation upon re-entry to the United States. From his investigation Downie reached five conclusions.

1. Upon re-entry to the U.S., TCKs engage in a process of what Downie called "management of their social identity."[8] Realizing that their American peers generally do not understand nor appreciate their experience abroad, they "set aside" their third culture experience when they are in social situations. That experience remains a powerful aspect of their inner life, however, and emerges when they are with other people who have overseas experience.

2. In college these TCKs become socially marginal, "a part of and apart from"[9] the dominant peer culture. They tend to be loners and copers—not isolated but not part of the main social stream, either.

3. TCKs are adept at coping with and adapting to the problems of moving to a new social environment. However, re-entry creates for them a long-term struggle with questions of roots and home and with ambiguous and ambivalent

---

[7] Richard Dixon Downie, "Re-entry Experiences and Identity Formation of Third Culture Experienced Dependent American Youth: An Exploratory Study" (Ph.D. diss., Michigan State University, 1976).

[8] Ibid., 236.

[9] Ibid., 236.

feelings of contrast between America and Americans and their third culture experience.

    4. While American youth overseas are usually clearly identified with their parents' sponsoring group and enjoy the generally high status ascribed to them through that identification, no such clear group identification is available to them upon re-entry. Achieving identity on their own proves difficult for some TCKs.

    5. The life plans of overseas experienced youth commonly express their third culture experience through some kind of internationally mobile lifestyle. This appears to be one way for TCKs to reverse the "setting aside" of their third culture experience.

    Using the self-administered questionnaire from Downie's study, the Internationally Mobile Students Questionnaire used by Gleason and Krajewski, plus focused interviews, Kathleen Jordan further refined the study of adaptation on re-entry and college entrance. Jordan drew on a study by Max Raines at Michigan State that had identified five major transactions undertaken by students entering college. These five are: (1) activating commitment, (2) developing support, (3) adjusting expectations, (4) prioritizing goals, and (5) transposing identity.[10]

    Jordan discovered that TCKs negotiate the major transactions of adaptation to college differently from students without overseas experience. In general they activate their commitment to adjust to the college environment earlier but with more ambivalence than other students. In most cases they have lived overseas with the understanding that they would return to their parents' home country for college. They have a deep commitment to re-entry and college entry. That commitment, though, is colored by their ambivalence about America as a permanent, or even short-term, home.

    In the environment of the third culture, students typically have a support network established and structured through their parents' sponsoring agency. Close contact with parents and other adults results in a focus on adults rather than peers as sources of support.

    This support network is not available after re-entry. The social environment in college is very much oriented toward peers rather than toward parents or other adults. TCKs have difficulty developing support among their college peers, many of whom have different values, interests, leisure activities and senses of self. Third culture students often maintain supportive ties with the third culture network through letters, seeking out others with international experience, or seeking mentors.

    Moving from the third culture to college in America also necessitates a substantial change in expectations, the third transaction. Overseas, students are highly visible representatives of the sponsoring institution, and their behavior is expected to represent the highest standards of the sponsors. In contrast to persons in the host culture, they see themselves as unique and special. They also learn how to observe the behavior of others, assess the expected behavior in a given situation, and adjust their behavior to conform to expectations. As a result, many of Jordan's subjects perceived themselves as observers.

    College takes away the specialness, uniqueness and high visibility provided by the sponsoring group in the third culture. TCKs have to adjust

---

[10] Kathleen Anne Finn Jordan, "The Adaptation Process of Third Culture Dependent Youth as They Re-enter the United States and Enter College: An Exploratory Study" (Ph.D. diss., Michigan State University, 1981), 2.

from sponsorship to individual representation, from observation to active participation, and from feeling connected to the world to connection to the nation. As valued components of life overseas are lost, this process can involve considerable grief. In connection with this adaptive transaction, Jordan mentions the fact that many TCKs are hampered by not having learned to drive overseas.[11]

Prioritizing goals, the fourth transaction, proves difficult for TCKs because they have little or no experience setting goals. In the third culture, where many aspects of personal life are controlled by the sponsoring organization or the host culture, students have few choices to make and much less freedom than their peers in the U.S.

The fifth adaptive transaction, transposing identity, presents third culture students with major challenges. Rather than transposing their identity into a new situation, they suppress the international piece of their identity and add a new piece of identity to the self. They do not easily "own" their new identity and new roles, but deftly imitate the actions of their American peers to produce the behaviors expected of them. All the while, their self-definition remains third cultural. Jordan concludes that while TCKs adjust, "they do not fully adapt to an American identity or sense of self."[12]

One question raised by the current study concerns Jordan's claim that students in the third culture are adult-focused rather than peer-focused. That may be particularly true for students who live with their parents in large cities and move regularly, often the case for the business and Federal civilian sponsorship groups. For boarding students at the Ubangi Academy, who spend thirty-six weeks each year in much more intimate contact with their peers than with adults and have long-term relationships with the same group of peers, the reverse is often true. It may also be true that TCKs find American adults more interested in talking about life overseas than American adolescents, who may be more concerned with conforming to their social group.

Thomas Schulz also focused on the re-entry of MKs in his 1985 study.[13] Schulz's dual concerns were to determine the basic needs of MKs upon re-entry and to identify desired elements in programs designed to meet those needs. He developed a questionnaire and administered it to people attending the first International Conference on Missionary Kids (ICMK) in Manila during November of 1984. His subjects included parents of MKs (fifty-one fathers and thirty-six mothers), professionals who work with MKs (thirty), and MKs themselves (ten).

The five items (out of twenty-one) marked by Schulz's respondents as their highest concerns for MK re-entry were "personal identity," "cultural

---

[11] Ibid., 267.

[12] Ibid., 273. Emphasis Jordan's. Jordan speaks of TCKs "integrating" new pieces of identity into the self. Imitation of behavior and compartmentalization of identity, however, indicate less integration than management of discordant pieces.

One reason the current study was limited to people who had left the UBAC third culture at least two years earlier was to ensure that all research subjects had had at least that much time to work out the place of their overseas experience in their identity.

[13] Thomas N. Schulz, "A Study to Determine the Basic Needs of MKs upon Re-entry to the United States and to Define and Describe a Re-entry Program Designed to Meet the Needs" (Ph.D. diss., University of Nebraska, 1985).

adjustment," "interpersonal relations with peers," "homesickness (nostalgia)," and "adjustment to American materialism."[14] For re-entry programs, the four components (out of twelve) rated most important were "help in 'finding self,'" "introduction to a listening person," "update on American social life," and "introduction to other MKs, TCKs."[15]

Some differences of opinion emerged among the four groups Schulz surveyed. Parents and MKs currently overseas saw less need for re-entry programs than members of families that had been through re-entry. Fathers rated the concerns as less serious than did mothers and professionals who worked with MKs.

Schulz's subjects were highly self-selected by their attendance at the ICMK, and his sample was heavily weighted toward missionary fathers rather than students. Nevertheless, his findings present a useful summary of what people highly interested in MKs believe to be the needs associated with re-entry and re-entry programs. In conjunction with the TCK studies reviewed above, he adds to our understanding of the re-entry process for MKs.

Another study of re-entry among the children of missionaries was carried out by Doris L. Walters, a pastoral counselor and former missionary to Japan.[16] Walters gathered data by sending a wide-ranging, open-ended questionnaire to 200 MKs from three conservative Protestant denominations: Christian and Missionary Alliance, Lutheran--Missouri Synod, and Southern Baptist Convention. The questionnaires asked respondents to write about six areas: life in another culture, furlough, education, religion, re-entry to the U.S., and sense of belonging, plus any one issue they might choose to add. The sixty-nine usable responses were then analyzed for common themes and emotional responses. Walters also interviewed a pilot group of seven MKs.

The first re-entry issue Walters identified was the separation and loss involved in leaving the host country. She chose Job as a representative Biblical character because of the massive losses he suffered, a choice confirmed by the pilot group's ready identification with Job. She then identified taking responsibility as the therapeutic task needed to reintegrate a self confused by separation and loss. Gestalt therapy was her choice for facilitating that process because of its emphasis on awareness in the presence and taking responsibility through self-acceptance that consciously integrates the self.

Walters linked feeling different with different values, the second issue of re-entry, with Jonah as a stranger confronting his past, present and future. She identified changing attitudes as the task related to feeling different. Walters connected changing attitudes with Erik Erikson's idea of basic trust as well as with recent work in Attitude Therapy. Here emphasis here is on acceptance of oneself as different and a trustful, hopeful attitude.

Culture shock and alienation form the third re-entry issue. Walters linked this issue with the prophet Elijah's struggle to overcome self-pity and isolation. She recommended William Glasser's Reality Therapy for therapeutic intervention centered on testing reality and engagement with the world.

Walters' unique contribution is her linking of re-entry issues, Biblical characters who faced similar issues, therapeutic tasks, and suggested

---

[14] Ibid., 69.

[15] Ibid., 81.

[16] Doris L. Walters, <u>An Assessment of Reentry Issues of the Children of Missionaries</u> (New York: Vantage, 1991). The book originated as her D.Min. thesis.

therapeutic approaches. She left some substantial questions unaddressed, however. For one, she did not describe her method of analyzing the written responses. How did she decide that a respondent was describing culture shock and alienation, for instance, rather than feeling different? In addition, her choice of therapeutic interventions needs to be tested. Since most of the members of her pilot group were grappling with all three issues, a single therapeutic approach that addressed all three may have been preferable to three disparate approaches.

B. Articles and Other Sources

In addition to the theses and dissertations on re-entry, scores of papers in journals, book chapters, magazine articles and other writings have addressed re-entry. The following section does not attempt to survey all this literature. It samples some of the writings, especially those focusing on missionary kids, to support or extend the research presented in the theses and dissertations described above and to illustrate aspects of re-entry not examined in those studies.

One of the earliest studies was Howard Bretsch's investigation of academic, social-emotional and social-moral adjustment among ninety-three young adult (mean age twenty-two) MKs.[17] Bretsch's questionnaire was distinguished by the fact that he asked his subjects to answer nearly all the questions twice: once for adjustment on the mission field and once for adjustment upon coming to America. This provided him with a measure of where his subjects felt each issue was more or less problematic.

Bretsch summarized his findings as follows:

1. In response to nearly all of the problems, a greater number of youth were not bothered than were bothered by the problems in the United States <u>and</u> the mission field.

2. Responses to only about half of the items revealed that the problems were significantly greater either in the United States <u>or</u> in the mission field.

3. In every instance where a significant difference existed, the youth were bothered more by the problem in the U.S. than in the mission field.[18]

Bretsch's findings show that in general the people who took this survey felt they had adjusted well to their situation overseas and adequately, but with some difficulty, to life in America. Academic adjustment was ranked as an area of adjustment that did not pose much trouble for this group. Emotional development presented more problems. Just under half of the subjects reported "a lack of confidence in their judgment, . . . an excess of anxiety, . . . wishing they had never been born, and lacking the ability to objectify their problems through confiding in others."[19]

Adjustment in the social-moral area troubled the highest percentage of respondents. When Bretsch factored in the responses to five essay-type questions, he estimated that eighty per cent of those he questioned were

---

[17] Howard S. Bretsch, "A Study of Intercultural Adjustment Problems of Missionary Children," <u>Journal of Educational Research</u> 47 (April 1954): 609-616.

[18] Ibid., 615.

[19] Ibid., 616. Bretsch lumps all these phrases, drawn from his questionnaire, together in one sentence without giving percentages for individual items.

shocked by the social and moral life in the U.S., while very few felt their ethical standards had conflicted with the moral climate on the mission field. This issue may well be, as Bretsch speculated, much more significant for those raised on mission fields than for other TCKs.

Psychiatrist Marjory Foyle studied re-entry and other issues of missionary families primarily through therapeutic interviews. Her presentation to the first ICMK was based on 116 psychiatric interviews (with missionary adults, for the most part), forty-one discussion groups (including mission school staff, teachers and students, parents, and adult MKs) and professional consultations with missions executives and doctors and pastoral counselors who work with missionaries.[20]

The missionary kids Foyle interviewed considered re-entry a major problem, both for home assignment years and for college. They reported four main issues upon re-entry: (1) being oddballs; (2) being different; (3) being ashamed of their parents; and (4) being isolated due to local insular attitudes.[21] While all four are related to experiences of difference and isolation, each issue presented a unique set of challenges to re-entering MKs. Some MKs were actually able to use their "oddball" status to their advantage, joining the oddball group temporarily as they adapted to the new culture, then leaving it when they were ready. Being different, the second issue, was exacerbated by the ignorance and prejudice of peers, who sometimes even expected them to be of another race. (I am reminded of a UBAC graduate with Swedish-American parents from the American Midwest who was told by a college classmate that he spoke "pretty good English, for an African.") At other times they were simply ignored and isolated, the fourth issue, by classmates and teachers with no interest in the world they had experienced.

Foyle's third point, that MKs were sometimes ashamed of their parents, is an interesting observation that does not appear much in the literature. In comparison with other parents in the "home" culture, missionary parents can appear odd, especially if they have picked up unique mannerisms or expressions while overseas. Feeling ashamed of one's parents is not unique to MKs, of course. For many American teenagers shame over one's parents seems to be a ritualized part of adolescent culture. Nevertheless, Foyle's point bears further examination.

In a later work Foyle amplified her comments on MKs' feelings of difference by stating that these feelings are strongest among children in the middle school years, where conformity is presumably a higher priority.[22] However, her claim that students about to enter college found their differences from their peers readily accepted does not square easily with the results of re-entry studies mentioned above.

In another presentation to the first ICMK, David Pollock, director of Interaction, Inc., a youth and family resource organization in Voorheesville,

---

20 Marjory F. Foyle, "Parent/Child Relationships in Missionary Families," in New Directions in Missions: Implications for MKs: Compendium of the International Conference on Missionary Kids, Manila, Philippines, November, 1984, ed. Beth A. Tetzel and Patricia Mortenson (West Brattleboro, VT: ICMK, 1986), 64-69.

21 Ibid., 69.

22 Marjory F. Foyle, Honourably Wounded: Stress Among Christian Workers (n.p.:MARC Europe, Evangelical Missionary Alliance, BMMF Interserve and Evangelical Missions Information Service, 1987), 147.

New York, also addressed the task of re-entry.[23] Pollock placed the adjustments necessitated by re-entry in the context of the recurrent adjustments faced by nearly all North Americans overseas. In comparison to the adjustments made by American students without overseas experience, the adjustments MKs have to make are typically more frequent, more intense, and more likely to occur in clusters. The geographical mobility of missionaries—changing assignments, home assignment, new fields—means that even when MKs are not moving, their friends, teachers and school staff are. In the face of this continuous experience of impermanence and loss, Pollock remarks, "The grief process, in varying degrees, is the constant companion of the third-culture kid."[24]

Not only are the adjustments faced by MKs frequent, they can also be intense. Separations involve members of the immediate and extended family as well as close friends. In addition, separations occur in clusters. Graduation from a mission boarding school, for example, entails the concurrent loss of close friends, an overseas home, culture and lifestyle, and probably further separation from parents as well.

This continuing flow of adjustments may be complicated by theological inhibitions against expressing the pain of separation. As Pollock says, the phrase, "After all, how can you complain when you did it for Jesus?"[25] may express the lament of adult missionaries, but their children share their sense of divine mandate and thwarted complaint.

Re-entry forces a major, rapid, process of adjustment. In contrast to those who see the shock of re-entry as a temporary mental illness or a confused prelude to adjustment itself, Pollock views it as the natural reaction of someone in a learning/growing process that has been accelerated and intensified.

II. Research on Personality

A second area of research into the lives of those who grew up in the third culture has attempted to understand the personalities of TCKs and the way the third culture has shaped them. In contrast to the re-entry studies, which use sociological or social-psychological theories to examine the process of re-entry, many of the personality studies have used psychological tests to measure aspects of personality among TCKs, either while they were still overseas or shortly after re-entry. Many of the dissertations in this area were written at evangelical Protestant schools and deal only with MKs.

A. Dissertations

David Schipper tried to measure the effect of the age when children first went to boarding school on their self-concept.[26] Schipper worked with an understanding of self-concept developed by Maurice Wagner, who posits three basic components of self-concept: a sense of belongingness, a sense of worth,

---

[23] David C. Pollock, "The Re-entry Task," in Tetzel and Mortenson, 395-407.
[24] Ibid., 396.
[25] Ibid., 396.
[26] David James Schipper, "Self Concept Differences Between Early, Late, and Non-boarding Missionary Children" (Ph.D. diss., Rosemead Graduate School of Psychology, 1977).

and a sense of competence. As Schipper understood these, belongingness is similar to what many psychologists call identity, a sense of worth is similar to self-esteem, and competence is like confidence or a sense of adequacy.

To test his hypothesis that early separation from the nuclear family would have an adverse effect on the self-concept, Schipper administered the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale and the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory to the 280 high school students who comprised the populations of four boarding schools in East Asia. To his surprise, the only statistically significant difference he found was between late boarders (first boarding experience in grades seven through ten) and non-boarders on the sense of belongingness. And contrary to his hypothesis, the late boarders had a higher sense of belongingness than the non-boarders. Schipper cautiously concluded that the optimal time for students to enter boarding school may be after puberty. The tentative nature of this conclusion, however, and the slim difference in scores on which it was based, caution against putting too much weight on his proposal.

David Wickstrom, an MK from Nigeria, followed Schipper at Rosemead with an examination of self-esteem and dependence in boarding students.[27] Wickstrom combined six research instruments plus a personal information data sheet into one large questionnaire and mailed 400 copies to acquaintances or heads of psychology departments at twelve Christian colleges. Approximately 175 questionnaires were returned, and 130 of these were deemed appropriate to be included in the study. Concerning the returned but rejected questionnaires, he notes that the majority of incomplete responses seemed to have come from people who would have been in the "late boarders" group, a tantalizing but unpursued observation.[28]

Among the findings in this study, self-esteem was clearly associated with warm, accepting parents who used low levels of punitive or guilt-inducing control. For boarding students, self-esteem was associated with a warm, accepting houseparent with whom a child could identify. Perceived approval by others--houseparents, staff and peers--was also a factor in higher self-esteem.

Contrary to Wickstrom's expectations, boarding was not linked to lowered self-esteem. Like Schipper, Wickstrom actually found slightly higher self-esteem among those who boarded the longest than among non-boarders and late boarders. No clear explanation for these results was available, but Wickstrom speculated that numerous and consistent evaluations by peers help children develop a clear sense of their strengths and weaknesses. Again, though, the difference was too slight to be statistically significant.

Wickstrom concluded that parental acceptance of children and involvement of missionary fathers are critical factors in developing self-esteem--perhaps more important than the fact of boarding or non-boarding. For students who do board, a warm, accepting relationship with houseparents who exercise firm, accepting controls without harshness and guilt inducement is crucial.

---

[27] David Lee Wickstrom, "Self-Esteem and Dependency in Early, Late and Non-Boarding Missionary Children" (Ph.D. diss., Rosemead Graduate School of Psychology, 1978). Wickstrom's research was reported in David Lee Wickstrom and J. Roland Fleck, "Missionary Children: Correlates of Self-Esteem and Dependency," Journal of Psychology and Theology 11, no.3 (1983): 226-235.

[28] Wickstrom, "Self-Esteem and Dependency," 53.

The data in Wickstrom's study raise troubling questions about gender roles and gender socialization among missionaries and their children. For female children, passive approval-seeking dependency was correlated with identification with mother, father acceptance, and psychological control by the father. The disturbing, though hardly surprising, implication is that passivity among female children of conservative Protestant missionaries is modeled on mothers and rewarded by fathers. Because Wickstrom is focused on individual psychological traits, he offers little comment on the social forces in the mission field that support female passivity.

Wickstrom continues to study the children of missionaries. As a member of Missionary Kid - Committee on Research and Endowment (MK-CORE) he works with six other researchers, sponsored and directed by Missionary Kid - Consultation and Research Team (MK-CART), a group of ten evangelical overseas missions agencies. As they develop larger-scale and longitudinal studies of MKs, more detailed and valuable information will become available.

William Viser, like Schipper, used the MMPI as one measure of personality among MKs.[29] Unlike Schipper, Viser studied college students, 234 Southern Baptist MKs (43.3% of the 578 who received his mailed questionnaire) at Baylor University and Dallas Baptist College. Thus his research was in some ways both a re-entry study and a personality study. The frequency of personality problems among his subjects was comparable to that of U.S. norms. Over half of them, however, reported re-entry problems, including a longing for foreign roots, culture shock, and no sense of loyalty or commitment to the local church. The most commonly identified sources for these problems were foreign culture, the high school attended, absence of mother, and "hostile environment."[30]

Viser conducted MK therapy groups in both weekly (six sessions) and intensive (weekend) formats. No difference was reported in the amount of change registered by participants in the two formats. Nor was there any difference between the adjustment of male and female participants.

Another study relying on psychological testing was conducted by Edward Danielson, family counselor at Faith Academy, a mission boarding school in the Philippines.[31] Danielson's study was designed to measure the general psychological profile of missionary kids. He administered the Sixteen Personality Factors test and the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale to 239 adolescent children of American missionaries in three schools on three continents, plus a control group of children of ministers (preacher's kids, or PKs) in the United States.

On the 16PF, significant differences between the groups appeared on six traits. On the twenty-nine scales of the TSCS, nine scores were significantly different. Danielson concluded that MKs compared favorably to the PK group, being more intelligent, more reserved and less defensive, but also less surgent

---

[29] William Coke Viser, "A Psychological Profile of Missionary Children in College and the Relationship of Intense Group Therapy to Weekly Group Therapy in the Treatment of Personality Problems as Reflected by the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory" (Ed.D. diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1978).

[30] Ibid., 114.

[31] Edward E. Danielson, "The Effects of Foreign Residence in Personality Development of the Children of American Evangelical Ministers" (Ph.D. diss., University of Santo Tomas, Philippines, 1981).

(enthusiastic), less adventurous, less self-assured and less controlled (indicating greater self conflict).

When MK scores were compared to U.S. norms, somewhat greater differences emerged. On the 16PF the MK scores differed from the norms on nine factors. On five factors Danielson interprets the difference as clearly favoring the MKs, with that group scoring above the norms on intelligence, ego strength, superego strength or character, strength of self-sentiment and "relaxed." On three of the other four, conservatism, group dependence and self-sufficiency, the difference would not generally be seen as favoring the mission school students. However, Danielson suggests that school faculty and the students' parents probably would be pleased with indications that the children accepted what was taught, depended on the support of fellow Christians, and submitted to authority. Only on the factor of sizothymia (reservedness), with its implications of a "critical, rigid, skeptical and detached nature,"[32] would the consensus be that the trait was a negative factor in MKs' personalities. It could be argued, however, that conservatism, group dependence, lower self-sufficiency, and greater reservedness are indicative of a compliance marked by skepticism and detachment.

On the TSCS the MK group diverged significantly from established norms on four scales. A lower average score on "Behavior" and higher scores on "General Maladjustment" and "Deviant Signs" are troubling, but too general to indicate specific problems. Danielson does not consider these scores indications of significant psychological problems.

Scores did not differ significantly among the three schools. Between boarders and non-boarders the only difference was a slight tendency toward being restrained among boarders and toward being venturesome among non-boarders.

Danielson's work, taken with the other studies reviewed in this section, demonstrates both the utility of psychological testing among the children of missionaries and its potential liabilities.

A key conclusion in each of the studies reviewed here was that no pattern of serious psychological pathology was revealed. Missionary kids were generally within normal ranges of psychological measures, and the incidence of serious personality problems was roughly comparable to American norms. A second conclusion was that boarding school did not seem to be a dominant factor in personality development. These studies reassure MKs and those who work with them that growing up overseas and attending a boarding school are not in themselves sources of inevitable problems.

Despite those reassuring findings, some serious questions remain. The data did show some evidence of personality problems. While Danielson, in particular, interprets nearly all the measured deviations from norms as actually or potentially favorable, they could equally be understood as problematic tendencies among MKs. Danielson's personal stake, as family counselor for an MK boarding school and the father of two MKs, lies in demonstrating the mental health of the children in his care. His bias is hidden beneath the supposed objectivity of his test scores, with their quantitative data subject to statistical analyses.

The failure of researchers to discover any link between boarding and personality is also intriguing. There has been enough report—albeit mainly anecdotal and unsystematized—of deleterious effects of boarding school to

---

32 Ibid., 156, apparently quoting from the 16PF manual.

spur several research projects. Is the "conventional wisdom" on boarding schools wrong? Is there no fire behind all that smoke? Or have researchers been looking either in the wrong place or with the wrong tools? It could be that the personality traits measured in psychological tests are not the aspects of a person's life most affected by boarding school. Or it could be that more sophisticated instruments and more powerful analyses will uncover effects of boarding school not yet revealed.

One other dissertation deserves consideration in this section, though it differs in many ways from the personality studies just reviewed. Carol Herrmann's study of identity formation among MKs shares with the personality studies an interest in childhood foundations of personality, but it also deals with the phenomenon of identity management upon re-entry.[33] Thus it really stands alone in its focus and methodology.

Herrmann wanted to find out how MKs, with their exposure to multiple cultures, form a secure, firm sense of identity. Working with Erik Erikson's concepts of early trust and autonomy as foundations for the formation of identity, she developed an operational definition of a good sense of identity as the ability:

> (1) to adapt to new situations as they arise, (2) to withstand pressures and remain calm in crisis situations, (3) to be free from continual and pressing needs for reassurance, affection and/or approval, (4) to carry out most activities on his or her own and be self-sufficient, (5) to feel attuned to his or her own limits for giving and for receiving in the world-at-large, (6) to leave one place and go to another if this is worthwhile to do so, [sic] and (7) to be a basically trusting person.[34]

To measure identity formation among MKs, Herrmann developed the "Missionary Kid Opinion Inventory." She began with an inventory of identity constructed by Petronilla Smith on the basis of Erikson's theory of identity formation. To that she added Thomas Gleason's "Internationally Mobile Students Questionnaire," plus items of her own drawn from the literature on MKs. Inventories were sent to 241 MKs studying at colleges in the Chicago area. Two hundred fifteen were returned and 209 were usable, a very high response rate even for MKs, who are noted for responding eagerly to surveys.

Herrmann found that, in all the change and potential turmoil of MKs' lives, their ability to form a solid sense of identity was based on the quality of relationships in their family of origin. Respondents who reported that their childhood provided them with many trusting experiences and that most events in their childhood made them more confident in themselves had an easier time forming identity. "Consistent acceptance of and respect for the individual MK as a person and the freedom to test his or her independence within the carefully defined limits of the family"[35] gave MKs the foundation for an identity that developed and solidified in adolescence and early adulthood, even with exposure to multiple cultures.

The major significance of Herrmann's work was to highlight once again the importance of relationships within the family of origin for missionary kids.

---

33 Carol Bernice Herrmann, "Foundational Factors of Trust and Autonomy Influencing the Identity Formation of the Multicultural Lifestyled MK" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 1977).

34 Ibid., 118.

35 Ibid., 3.

She went to a lot of trouble, however, to do little more than verify Erik Erikson's claim that development of basic trust and autonomy in childhood supports the development of identity in late adolescence and early adulthood. Given the size and range of Herrmann's Missionary Kid Opinion Inventory and the size of her research sample, there is undoubtedly an enormous amount of information about the lives of MKs still unanalyzed in her data. Differentiating between boarders and non-boarders, for instance, could add important information on identity formation in the boarding school context. Whether this data will ever be analyzed and published, though, is another question.

B. Articles

Personality development among the children of missionaries has not received as much attention in the periodical literature as re-entry. The topic has been addressed in a number of articles, but few serious studies.

One of the factors that has emerged as a prominent influence in MKs' psychological development is the experience of repeated separation. Boarding school students, even more than other missionary kids, are regularly separated from family, friends, home, and other objects of importance to them. This can lead to hostility, possibly expressed through projection or intrapunitiveness, and/or denial.[36] Theological or cultural restraints on display of anger can channel the anger from separation into passive-aggressive expressions. White also stresses the need for dorm parents to have adequately resolved their own attachment issues so they can balance children's needs for nurture and individuation.

In a study of psychosocial development in adult MKs, Karen Wrobbel and James Plueddemann uncovered interesting data on the long-term effects of overseas experience. Wrobbel and Plueddemann sent their own questionnaire plus the Measure of Psychosocial Development, a self-report instrument based on Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, to adult (over age 23) children of missionaries with The Evangelical Alliance Mission.[37] While the sample group generally showed good psychosocial development, the average MPD scores for MKs 23-49 years old were lower than the test's norm group. "The data indicate that, while the MKs studied are having much positive resolution and scores which fall into healthy ranges on the test, they are not resolving the developmental crises described by Erikson as successfully as their monocultural counterparts."[38]

Several factors correlated positively with better psychosocial development. Those who lived overseas more than eight years scored better than those who were overseas four to eight years. Subjects who re-entered the U.S. after age thirteen scored higher than those who went through re-entry earlier. (Re-entry age and length of time overseas are clearly related.) Boarding or

---

[36] Frances J. White, "Some Reflections of the Separation Phenomenon Idiosyncratic to the Experience of Missionaries and Their Children," Journal of Psychology and Theology 11, no.3 (1983): 17-18.

[37] Karen A. Wrobbel and James E. Plueddemann, "Psychosocial Development in Adult Missionary Kids," Journal of Psychology and Theology 18, no. 4 (1990): 363-374. A less detailed report appeared in Karen Wrobbel, "Adult MKs: How Different Are They," Evangelical Missions Quarterly 26, no.2 (April 1990): 164-170.

[38] Wrobbel, 168.

not boarding yielded no significant differences, but early boarding (first boarding between the ages of five and eight) did correlate with poorer psychosocial development. Early boarders had higher mean scores on all but one of the negative scales, although only the scores for isolation were statistically significant.

Although Wrobbel and Plueddemann had not anticipated the lower levels of psychosocial development among adult MKs, they were not overly concerned by their findings. As we know from re-entry studies, social adjustment is difficult for many TCKs. The authors suggest that the process of setting aside one's third culture experience during a period of adaptation to American college life may delay development. Only after adult MKs have made some adaption to life in the U.S. can they turn their attention back to unresolved issues from an overseas childhood. They quote one MK's comment: "If you had sent the survey five years ago, the answers would have been *very* different. It took me a long time to adjust and my life took some drastic turns before I came to this point in my life.[39]

Clearly, the process of development for MKs differs from the process for their American peers, even if the final outcome is the same. Missionary kids go through different or greater developmental crises that take longer to resolve and that exert an ongoing effect on their lives. This also raises the question of applicability posed by the other measures of personality given to MKs. Can healthy psychosocial development for a multicultural MK be measured on an instrument designed for a monocultural population?

III. Research on MK Education and Boarding School

A. Dissertations and Books

To find out what missionary kids thought of their education in boarding school, David Reynolds surveyed 103 graduates of the Rift Valley Academy in Kenya.[40] Reynolds' sample comprised half the graduates of RVA from a six-year period during which the school received provisional accreditation by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. Reynolds received a 91% response rate (94 of 103) to the questionnaire he developed, evidence of the graduates' eagerness to be heard.

While the graduates' evaluations of specific areas within the curriculum are not particularly relevant to the current study, some of the more general conclusions have broader relevance. In general, the RVA graduates felt their schooling had prepared them well for entry into higher education and employment. They considered themselves successful in their careers or further studies. None of the graduates had dropped out of school for academic reasons and none had been absent from the armed services without leave.

A major concern of the graduates was that students be given more involvement in planning for courses, more latitude in choice of electives and, a point they made often, participation on committees charged with the formulation of rules and regulations that affect students. Fifty-four respondents criticized the rules and regulations, as opposed to only twelve who were

---

[39] Wrobbel and Plueddemann, 371.
[40] David Hamilton Reynolds, "A Follow-Up Study of Selected Graduates of a School in Kenya for Children of Missionaries: 1965-1970" (Ed.D. diss., University of Virginia, 1972).

appreciative. Among graduates from 1969 and 1970, critical assessments of rules and regulations outweighed appreciative assessments thirty-six to three. It may be that the growing resistance to established authority on American college campuses in the late 1960s swelled the number of complaints against the rules and regulations at RVA, but the criticisms directed against the rule structure and the lack of student voice in developing rules were certainly sharp.

Another wide-ranging study of issues in boarding school education was the investigation conducted by D. Bruce Lockerbie during the 1973-74 school year.[41] Lockerbie, a veteran teacher at The Stony Brook School, a Christian secondary school on Long Island, spent three and a half months as a visiting consultant to fifteen Christian schools in Asia and Africa. His report is impressionistic and opinionated, but it does identify general trends in mission boarding schools and offer a comparison of the different schools he visited.

One factor that emerged as consistently detrimental to students was the rapid turnover of teachers and dorm parents in these schools. Young teachers, with little experience, often serving one- or two-year terms, could not build continuity in teaching. Even worse was the turnover among dorm parents. Lockerbie encountered no full-time dorm parents who had served in that capacity more than five years. Most were short-term appointees, often working as dorm parents while they learned the local language or awaited permanent assignment. Students were well aware that dorm parents were only at the school until a more desirable position became available.

In this area the Ubangi Academy (which Lockerbie did not visit) was above the norm, although not without its struggles. With the notable exception of the 1965-66 year, when the Academy reopened after the Simba Rebellion, the primary dorm parents were generally career missionaries assigned to UBAC for a full three- or four-year term. Two couples each served as dorm parents for several consecutive terms, giving the Academy exceptional continuity of leadership.

Turnover among teachers posed a greater problem for UBAC. While a core of career missionary faculty provided continuity, their periodic home assignment years left gaps in the faculty that were not always filled with qualified personnel.

As far as the students themselves were concerned, Lockerbie found them to be psychologically healthy in a very general way.

> We can describe the largest number of students we met by a
> single, unscientific word: *normal.* By this we mean that they
> appear to us to be healthy, well adjusted to their school circum-
> stances, interested in ideas of the worldwide youth subculture,
> largely unconcerned by their present alien status, yet eager to
> identify with their North American or European heritage.[42]

He was distressed, though, by the students' lack of critical thinking. "We find that, on the whole, students at these schools exhibit tendencies toward ready acceptance of narrowly received opinions. . . . Perhaps most alarming is the apparent acquiescence of students to indoctrination under authoritarianism."[43]

---

[41] D. Bruce Lockerbie, Education of Missionaries' Children: The Neglected
   Dimension of World Mission (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1975).
[42] Ibid., 27.
[43] Ibid., 28-29.

Lockerbie was also concerned by how little contact the students had with the national population and how little instruction they received in local language, culture, history, or geography. In most of the schools student life was isolated in almost every way—curriculum, teachers, dress, sport, recreation, music, and worship—from the surrounding culture. Students' only contact with the national people was with people in service positions within the school. As we shall see in Chapter Three, these are signs of what Erving Goffman terms the "enclosure" of people in total institutions, their estrangement from the world outside the institution. Instead of the truly international experience that might have been available to them, students received a parochial American education.

A third study of boarding school experience was carried out by Jeanne Stevenson-Moessner.[44] Among the unique aspects of Stevenson-Moessner's work is the clear attention she pays to the theological dimensions of the boarding school context.

From an initial interview with an adult MK, Stevenson-Moessner developed four independent hypotheses about children of missionaries. Her primary subject population was the student body of the Black Forest Academy, a Canadian, religiously-sponsored high school in Germany, originally founded for the children of missionaries.

To test her first hypothesis, that "the religious profile of the Black Forest Academy missionary children in an overseas situation differs from other children who have grown up in the church,"[45] Stevenson-Moessner used the Youth Research Survey, a 420-item instrument designed to measure the religious profile of adolescents. In comparison to an ecumenical sample of 7050 American youth who attend church regularly, the BFA student population was "decidedly more religious in outlook and in church participation and more mature in values and moral responsibility than the ecumenical norm."[46] However, she could not identify the factors (such as overseas location, missionary environment, theological conservatism, parents' vocation, and school environment) that contributed to this ardent religiosity .

Although the Youth Research Survey considers the religious profile of the BFA students a strength, Stevenson-Moessner raised serious questions about such religiosity. The lack of critical reflection on matters of faith led her to wonder how these students will develop living faith as opposed to traditional attitudes. She also questioned the extent to which this religiosity is a type of group panic and fearful withdrawal from the evil world, or perhaps a nearly fanatical belief or an expression of a need for support, authority and imitation. One intriguing speculation she offered was that religiosity may be heightened by separation from parents. Students may feel less need to rebel religiously against their parents because they already have considerable separation from them and because their peers are all religious.

For her three other hypotheses, Stevenson-Moessner developed a questionnaire/interview guide to compare the Black Forest Academy students with alumni of the Basel Mission's Kinderhaus. The Kinderhaus, which closed in 1948, was home to the children of Swiss and German missionaries to India,

---

[44] Jeanne Stevenson-Moessner, Theological Dimensions of Maturation in a Missionary Milieu (Berne: Peter Lang, 1989). The book originated as her Ph.D. dissertation at the University of Basel.

[45] Ibid., 52.

[46] Ibid., 83.

China and Africa. Kinderhaus alumni spent long periods separated from their parents and residing in a boarding school, but that school was located within their first culture. This allowed some unique comparisons with BFA students.

Hypothesis Two stated: "The 'rootlessness' experienced by many missionary children is not a manifestation of a higher form of spirituality as seen in the later stages of faith development theory, but a distinct cultural phenomenon."[47] According to this hypothesis, feelings of rootlessness were not evidence of a partial experience of what James Fowler calls "universalizing faith," but merely signs of cultural uprootedness.

The feeling of rootlessness described by Black Forest Academy students was revealed not to be a higher form of spirituality. The students lacked both a faithful engagement with the world and a firm sense of identity or self, two prerequisites for universalizing faith. Stevenson-Moessner found that the BFA students were disengaged from the world around them and enclosed in their third culture with its fundamentalistic religion. Their rootlessness was more cultural confusion or homelessness and a search for identity or selfhood than a sense of being at home in a pluralistic world.[48]

The second part of the hypothesis, that rootlessness is a distinct cultural phenomenon, did not prove testable. No meaningful comparison with the Kinderhaus alumni emerged. Thus Hypothesis Two was partially affirmed, but did not yield much new information about MKs.

The third hypothesis predicted that MKs left in the homeland would experience a "call" to overseas missions less than MKs taken overseas. The experimental design was to compare the responses of Kinderhaus alumni and Black Forest Academy students concerning their felt call to overseas missions.

Once again the comparison between the two groups could not adequately address the hypothesis. While Black Forest Academy students were describing their aspirations for a vocation they would not enter for several years, Kinderhaus alumni talked about the vocations they had actually entered many years earlier, vocations profoundly affected by the war. The large time gap also made comparisons with other studies of MKs' return to the mission field problematic.

A final hypothesis predicted that the third culture of the boarding school would be "enclosed," sealed off from the surrounding culture, for religious reasons, regardless of whether the school was located overseas or in the "home" culture. Interviews were analyzed for statements reflecting feelings of being set apart from the surrounding culture, difficult transitions to the world beyond the school, and specific religious or religio-sociological factors which set students apart from age-group peers outside the school.

---

[47] Ibid., 55.

[48] Ibid., 150–51. Stevenson-Moessner is not completely clear about how she reached this conclusion. As evidence that BFA students did not have a firm sense of self she cites "their lives. . . other answers to questions on the questionnaire, and. . . their chronological age."

From the standpoint of contextual theory, as explained in Chapter Three, faithful engagement with the world and a firm sense of identity or self represent the two poles of the dialectic of individuation: due consideration and self-delineation. Taken together these two poles represent a relational ethical stance that considers what each person owes and deserves, each person's responsibility and freedom to discern and to act.

Both groups gave evidence of significant enclosure as attempts by the schools to be "in the world but not of the world," to protect students from the "contaminating" influences of society. Stevenson-Moessner concludes:

> The restrictions took various forms: rules against dancing, against movies, against restaurants, against dating someone from the second culture, against offering classical ballet in the school, against holding hands, against leaving the mission compound, etc. The list is endless and the motivations behind the creation of the restrictions are varied. Whether the individual restrictions are justifiable or not is not the issue under discussion. The point to be made is that insulation or enclosure can occur within the "third" culture and can be intensified on religious grounds, heightening the isolation of the missionary dependents to an even greater extent than the children of business, military, or diplomatic parents.[49]

The complaints of Reynolds' respondents and Lockerbie's concern about enclosure are both paralleled here. A long list of rules and restrictions results in cutting off missionary children from the surrounding, potentially enriching, culture.

One last theme from Stevenson-Moessner's initial interview was not turned into a testable hypothesis. That interview raised the issue of resentment of missionary parents by children who feel they were sacrificed to God or to missions. Stevenson-Moessner notes that the same theme was raised as a "vocal outcry"[50] at the 1979 reunion of the Basel Mission Kinderhaus, but she did not pursue it.

B. Articles

The education of missionary kids has been the topic of dozens of articles. We'll only examine a few articles that have historical importance or add to the information presented in the larger studies.

Among the early pieces on MK education, Clara Orr's 1959 article stands out for the way it presaged much of the research agenda for the following three decades.[51] Although Orr wrote before the Useems had developed the idea of the third culture, she did describe the dual cultural experience of missionaries' children. She also addressed the range of schooling options for young children: home schooling, organizing a community school, national schools, and boarding school, each with its attendant problems.

Without using the term "re-entry," Orr mentioned several of the salient issues in re-entry, including inexperience in dating and paid employment, being accustomed to less freedom of behavior, and ignorance of popular culture, including fashions. As assets of MKs she identified academic strength, good study habits, well-laid religious foundations, self-reliance, and a breadth of exposure to people and places. Each of her observations has been verified and amplified by later research.

A more empirical study of the social-psychological effects of boarding school experience was conducted by Larry Sharp, a veteran teacher and

---

[49] Ibid., 218-219.

[50] Ibid., 234.

[51] Clara E. Orr, "The Education of Missionaries' Children," Occasional Bulletin 10, no. 9 (November 10, 1959): 1-10.

administrator at the Amazon Valley Academy in Brazil.[52] Sharp explored the relationships among worldmindedness, Christian commitment, MK school and involvement in the Brazilian culture in a population of 533 adult children of evangelical missionaries to Brazil. Sharp purposefully restricted his study to adults out of a conviction that the effects of childhood experiences cannot fully be assessed until adulthood.

Not surprisingly, Sharp found that contact with the national culture led to stronger worldmindedness. "MKs who have little contact with the culture will become less and less worldminded the longer they stay in the country. Contact with the local culture is of monumental importance in order to expect an MK to be worldminded."[53] However, cultural involvement also produced weaker Christian commitment.

Missionary boarding schools were positively associated with Christian commitment, but negatively associated with worldmindedness. Sharp did not offer an explanation for this finding, but he did speculate that boarding schools may isolate students from the local culture and foster disparaging attitudes toward that culture. Here again we encounter the theme of enclosure. Sharp also noted that students who boarded at highly regulated, legalistic schools tended to have reduced levels of Christian commitment.

In general, adult MKs who had boarded were more likely to be religiously committed, to feel at home in Brazil, to have missions as a career goal and to return overseas as missionaries, to have had a teacher who powerfully influenced the direction of their life, to be satisfied with "meaning and pur-pose in life," and to be politically conservative. Non-boarders were more worldminded, culture-oriented, accepting of others different from themselves, likely to have a Brazilian "best friend," advanced in heterosexual adjustment, likely to date a non-American, and likely to speak the local language. They had a broader world view, higher educational aspirations, better educated parents, and higher incomes, and were more often in the professions.[54]

The apparent conflict between worldmindedness and Christian commitment raises questions about the evangelical theology of Sharp's subjects, 99.9% of whom said they had been raised as Evangelicals and 97.3% of whom considered themselves to be "born again." The mission context did not have a theology that supported the delicate balance between Christian faith and culture.

In a very different vein, Thomas Moore, speaking to the second ICMK, criticized the artificiality of the third culture fostered in mission boarding schools. According to Moore, TCKs can develop serious identity problems because their identities are formed within an artificial cultural construct. "The TCK will be a misfit in any genuine culture (and experience culture shock), not only because of a faulty education or lack of experiences, but rather because of what he is as a person."[55]

---

[52] Larry W. Sharp, "How Missionary Children Become World Christians: The Role of the MK School and the Local Culture," Journal of Psychology and Theol-ogy 18 (Spring 1990): 66-74. A less detailed report appeared in "Boarding Schools: What Difference Do They Make?" Evangelical Missions Quarterly 26, no. 1 (January 1990): 26-35. I have put Sharp's article in this section to distinguish it from the studies using standardized personality tests.

[53] Sharp, "World Christians," 70.

[54] Sharp, "Boarding Schools," 29,32.

[55] Thomas H. Moore, "MK Education in a Cross-Cultural Context," in Planning for MK Nurture: Compendium of the International Conference on Missionary Kids, Quito, Ecuador, January 4-8, 1987, vol. 2, ed. Pam Echerd and Alice Arathoon (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1989), 113.

For Moore, a far more appropriate goal is the development of true
biculturalism, the ability to be at home in the cultures of both the home and
host countries. Thus Moore calls for an educational plan that would immerse
MKs in the culture of the host country.

Moore's attack on the third culture as a "cultural forgery"[56] is extreme,
but his insistence on fostering a deep understanding of a second culture is a
powerful antidote to isolation and enclosure.

C. Research on the Ubangi Academy

The Ubangi Academy has itself been the subject of one study.[57] Gretchen
Samuelson, a UBAC board member and parent, sent approximately sixty-six
questionnaires to parents of UBAC graduates and pre-schoolers headed for the
Academy. The two aims of the questionnaire were to assess long-term effects
of boarding, especially for those sent in second or third grade, and to evalu-
ate parents' home-teaching experience and plans. Forty-nine questionnaires
(74%) were returned, representing responses from the parents of 145 total
students.

The questionnaire used a 1-10 rating scale, with 1 as negative and 10 as
positive, to rate aspects of home schooling and boarding experience. The
home-teaching experience in general was rated 6.9, with the most frequently
mentioned drawbacks being "lack of time, interruptions, motivating own chil-
dren, lack of peers, and lack of teaching experience."[58] Positives cited
included "seeing my own child learn, spending quality time with my own child
and family."[59]

In the boarding section, the experience of second and third graders was
rated 7.1. The question, "Have your children as adults commented on their
UBAC experiences?" received a 7.9 rating for those who entered in second or
third grade and an 8.9 rating for those who entered later.[60] Reports of
"negative" feelings attributed them to "leaving home (18), dorm life in general
(11), dorm parents or lack of parenting (9), teachers (5), other kids (5),
academic (3)."[61]

One unforeseen finding of this study was the hidden unhappiness of the
youngest boys.

> The only striking response was that apparently boys in 2nd or
> 3rd grade have the hardest time of anyone, and their problems
> didn't tend to show up until their twenties. It was suggested this
> could be due (?) to "mean" junior high boys, boys' tendency to
> immaturity, lack of mothering the girls receive from their big
> sisters, or the boys' inability to recognize their problems and/or
> "cry them out" until later psych classes or parenthood. Of the 35
> boys sent to the dorm in 2nd or 3rd grade, 19 had negative (some
> extremely negative) responses, 7 had ambivalent responses, and 9
> had either positive or no comments.[62]

---

[56] Ibid., 118.
[57] Gretchen Samuelson, "Report on UBAC Questionnaire," Report to the UBAC
    Board, January 1987.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid. Emphasis Samuelson's.
[62] Ibid. The question mark challenging causation is Samuelson's.

This finding occasioned considerable discussion in the school board and a pointed comment in the report from the board chair to denominational officials:

The Board was quite pointed in comments concerning causes of problems our children have in adjustments at any age. There are other causes than a child leaving home at age 7 to go to a boarding school: the make-up of the child; the relationship between parents and child; input of other people, not related to UBAC, in the child's life; experiences while on furlough, and others.[63]

Clearly, the report struck a nerve with parents and board members.

Although Samuelson's study yielded interesting insights into UBAC experiences, flaws in its design caution us against placing much weight on its findings. Besides questions of the validity and reliability of the instrument and its 1-10 rating scale, there is the more serious question of surveying parents to evaluate their children's experiences. The relationship between children's experiences and their parents' experiences is far too complex to extrapolate from one to the other. It may be, as the report concludes, that "not one response expressed bitterness or deep regrets."[64] But these are parents' responses and certainly do not include the feelings of the nineteen young boys who had negative ("some extremely negative") responses. A telling remark appeared in the Cairns letter: "As a mother who sent all 3 to UBAC at 2nd grade, hearing all the comments now, I must not sit and fret about what was done."[65] A question on parents' current concern over their children's UBAC experience could have provided a most illuminating check.

IV. Summary

This chapter has examined research into three main aspects of the lives of MKs and other TCKs: re-entry, personality development, and boarding school. Although the studies reviewed were separated into these three categories for comparison, the issues are intertwined and studies often address more than one of them.

Issues of the self have emerged as a major theme in MK research. Psychological inventories have been used to assess the selves formed in boarding schools, and re-entry studies have examined the process of adjustment to North American culture. The focus of this study, the effects of boarding school on the self in its context, is amply justified by prior research.

Re-entry continues to be a major issue in the lives of TCKs, and therefore to draw considerable attention among researchers. The consensus is that TCKs generally do well academically, but have more difficulty adjusting socially. For many children of missionaries, relations with the other sex and the permissiveness of American society are particularly problematic.

A substantial number of sociological or social-psychological doctoral dissertations on re-entry have been produced under the direction of Ruth Hill Useem at Michigan State University. These studies have shown that TCKs adjust superficially to life in America, but never really adapt. A feeling of "rootlessness," or at best, of portable roots and worldmindedness, persists.

---

[63] Annette Cairns, Covering letter to home boards with UBAC Board minutes, January 22, 1987.
[64] Samuelson.
[65] Cairns.

They hold their third culture experience, their "TCKness," apart as a separate piece of their identity. When they are with other TCKs that piece emerges more strongly. Over time some, but not necessarily all, integrate their overseas experience into their identity in more enduring ways.

The concept of re-entry itself has been challenged by TCKs who claim their true home is overseas. They, and others, have also challenged the assumption that adjustment to American culture is a goal to be pursued.

Future directions for re-entry research include studying MKs who never attended college, identifying overseas variables that affect re-entry (length of stay, location, number of moves, theological context, type of schooling, and so forth), and examining the religious adjustments involved in re-entry.

Research into personality development has been more narrowly focused on the children of evangelical Protestant missionaries. A goal in many of these studies has been to determine the effects of boarding school on personality. So far this has proved surprisingly elusive. Despite a suspicion among many MKs and researchers that boarding schools are damaging to children's development, there has been little firm evidence of what that damage may be or how it may be inflicted. Some studies have pointed to deleterious effects of early boarding, but that has not consistently been substantiated. Other studies suggest that boarding school shapes the process of development along different paths and at different rates rather than altering the eventual outcome. Several studies have pointed to the crucial importance of the family of origin in the personality development of MKs, whether they boarded or not.

In the area of MK education and boarding school, research has confirmed what the re-entry studies indicated about the excellent academic preparation in most mission schools. On the other hand, studies have shown the need for students to be more involved in decision-making, rule-setting, and critical thinking. The general picture that emerges from these studies is of academically solid students who have little experience thinking for themselves about behavior, values, or ideas. In addition, students are often cut off from contact with the surrounding culture, narrowing their world and their education. This cut-off is supported by a theology of separation from the world as well as by the pressure on MKs to remain above reproach in their highly visible roles as representatives of sponsoring mission agencies.

In some cases the clear prejudices of researchers have strongly colored the interpretation of their test data. More frequently, research appears to have been designed to fit the instruments already at hand, instruments developed for populations other than TCKs. This gives rise to a jarring sense of distance between researchers and their subjects. It will be more helpful if future studies raise fresh, insightful questions or propose new theories, then develop new ways to answer those questions or test those theories.

Research to date provides a good starting point for an investigation of the consequences of boarding the self at the Ubangi Academy. We can expect the third culture within the Academy to be a unique blend of elements from the sending and host cultures plus original elements. It will be enclosed from the other two cultures by various barriers, and will control many aspects of students' lives. As a group, UBAC students will be skilled academically but less skilled in critical thinking and in relations with the other sex. They will be ambivalent about the culture of their parents' home country, and upon re-entry will carefully manage their social identity. They will display no pattern of serious psychopathology, but may tend to be conservative, group dependent, and submissive, and possible critical, rigid, skeptical and detached. Family dynamics will be very important for their development, but their frequent separations from their families will have a significant effect on relationships within those families.

Previous studies have generally extracted the student self from both family and school contexts, then studied it as an isolated entity. This study departs from the existing literature on MKs and boarding schools by keeping a focus on the self in its multi-generational family context, even as students enter the boarding school environment. Students may physically leave their parents' home, but they do not exit their familial context. Boarding has consequences for everyone in that context.

The third chapter lays out the principles of contextual theory, including this insistence on considering the ongoing dialogue between self and others in a three-generational family context. The fourth chapter provides a thorough description of the boarding school environment at the Ubangi Academy. That prepares us for the fifth chapter, which describes the consequences for the self in its family context of leaving home to board at the Academy.

Chapter 3

The Self in its Context

        Research into the lives of MKs and other TCKs and the preliminary analy-
sis of the interviews in this study identified the development of the self in
the convergence of mission boarding school and family contexts as a key issue
for boarding students. To understand the way the self is shaped by the
experience of boarding requires a theory that addresses the dynamics of both
the individual and the surrounding family and school contexts. For that we
turn to the contextual theory of Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy and his associates.
        This chapter describes the central principles of contextual theory. It
enriches the four-dimensional approach of contextual theory with the per-
sonality theory of Stephen Johnson, the theory of total institutions of Erving
Goffman, and the theological ethics of H. Richard Niebuhr.

I. Contextual Theory

        The contextual approach is a way of knowing and living that combines
individual and relational realities to form a comprehensive view of human life.
While valuing the insights of both individual and family systems theories, the
contextual approach goes beyond them by insisting on the central importance
of relational contexts in forming, harming and healing people. Emphasizing the
relational dynamics of justice, loyalty and trustworthiness, it brings to the
foreground the dimension of relational ethics missing in other approaches.

A. Martin Buber

        One of the key influences on the development of contextual theory has
been the philosophy of Martin Buber. At the heart of Buber's anthropology is
his view that human beings come to be selves in and through relationships
with other people.
        According to Buber, two types of relation are possible, I-It and I-You.
The I-It relation is characterized by distance, detachment, and judging. It is,
in fact, not really a relationship at all, but rather an experience that takes
place within the I.
        The I-You relation, by contrast, is truly a relationship, an encounter
between two subjects. It is unmediated, a meeting of two subjects who
address each other directly.
        I-It and I-You are not simply two different ways for the same I to relate
to different things or people. If that were so, the It and the You would be
simply two different kinds of objects for the I to consider, while the I would
be essentially unaffected by them. For Buber, however, it is not the I that is
primary but the relations I-It and I-You. "There is no I as such but only the
I of the basic word I-You and the I of the basic word I-It."[1] Thus the I of

_____

[1] Martin Buber, I and Thou, trans., with a Prologue and notes, by Walter
    Kaufmann (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970), 54. Although Kauf-
    mann retains the traditional translation, I and Thou, for the title, in the
    text he always translates the German *Du* as You, which he regards as
    spontaneous, direct, and free of the formality, pomp and dignity associated
    with Thou. See the Prologue, 14-15. I have adopted Kaufmann's transla-
    tion.

the I-You is different from the I of the I-It and only emerges through a relationship with a You.

> Man becomes an I through a You. What confronts us comes and
> vanishes, relational events take shape and scatter, and through
> these changes crystallizes, more and more each time, the conscious-
> ness of the constant partner, the I-consciousness. To be sure, for
> a long time it appears only woven into the relation to a You, dis-
> cernible as that which reaches for but is not a You; but it comes
> closer and closer to the bursting point until one day the bonds are
> broken and the I confronts its detached self for a moment like a
> You--and then it takes possession of itself and henceforth enters
> into relations in full consciousness.[2]

The I-You relationship involves an encounter with one's whole being, with no part of the self left out of the relationship in a defensive posture to which the I can withdraw if threatened. The encounter takes place in the present and in the full freedom and unpredictability of otherness. "The basic word I-You can be spoken only with one's whole being. The concentration and fusion into a whole being can never be accomplished by me, can never be accomplished without me. I require a You to become; becoming I, I say You."[3]

By contrast, the I-It experience involves only part of the self that experiences and uses an object based on what it knows from past encounters with objects. The It remains an object distant from the I and capable of being measured or ordered. This is not necessarily bad. We cannot remain always in the pure present of direct I-You encounter. We inevitably return to the world of It. But we cannot simply stay there either. "Without It a human being cannot live. But whoever lives only with that is not human."[4]

Connected to Buber's understanding of the I-You relation is his idea of dialogue. By dialogue he means more than simply taking turns talking. Alternating monologues, where people speak in turns but address primarily themselves, without truly listening to the newness and uniqueness of the other, is not the same as dialogue. In a monologue each person has already identified the nature or "psychology" of the other and assumes that what is being revealed is merely more of that nature.

By contrast, when listeners listen with their full being, prejudging as little as possible and remaining aware of hearing something new, there is the chance for direct encounter. "There is genuine dialogue--no matter whether spoken or silent--where each of the participants really has in mind the other or others in their present and particular being and turns to them with the intention of establishing a living mutual relation between himself and them."[5]

Dialogue entails a movement of turning toward another. Monologue entails a movement of turning, not so much away from the other, as in on oneself.

Dialogue does not require any special intellectual gifts, only a commitment to living, mutual relation. "The life of dialogue is no privilege of intellectual activity like dialectic. It does not begin in the upper story of humanity. It begins no higher than where humanity begins. There are no gifted and

---

[2] Ibid., 80.
[3] Ibid., 62.
[4] Ibid., 85.
[5] Martin Buber, Between Man and Man, with an Introduction by Maurice Fried-
man, trans. Ronald Gregor Smith (New York: Macmillan, 1965), 19.

ungifted here, only those who give themselves and those who withhold them-selves."[6]

In addition to its influence on contextual theory, Buber's philosophical anthropology raises several issues that are directly significant to this project. His phrase "the constant partner" reminds us that the self, although formed in I-You encounter, does not disappear in the absence of such encounter. The self is not purely social, but is the constant partner that endures. Fur-thermore, if "the I confronts its detached self for a moment like a You," this suggests that not only self-other, but also self-relational experiences may be I-Thou encounters.

In addition, Buber's use of "psychology" is idiosyncratic and requires explanation. He applies the term to attempts to objectify and distance oneself from another person by describing that person's essential, fixed nature. This cuts off the possibility of encountering that person in a fresh, novel, direct way.

Buber's use of "psychology" in this manner points to the inevitable ten-sion, reflected in this study by the identification of four types of experiences among boarding students, between an attempt at genuine encounter and the necessity of categories to organize experience. There is no perfect dialogue, no completely unmediated encounter. Nevertheless, genuine dialogue is pos-sible, and a commitment to it forms the basis of trustworthy relationship.

B. Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy

Building on the insights of Martin Buber as well as psychological theories and clinical experience, contextual theory has evolved over the past gener-ation. The leading figure in the development of the contextual approach has been Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy.[7] A psychiatrist and researcher into the biochemical bases of psychosis, Boszormenyi-Nagy turned in the 1950's to fam-ily therapy and became one of the earliest leaders in the field in the United States. Influenced by Buber's view of the relational base of human existence and R. W. Fairbairn's object relations theory, Boszormenyi-Nagy has gradually moved from a focus on transactions within the system to a concern with the justice dynamics of family relationships.

One of Boszormenyi-Nagy's early discoveries was the importance of loyalty within a family as motivation for behavior. Uncovering the dynamics of loyalty within families helped explain some of the obstacles to success in individually-based psychoanalytic treatment. If an individual's symptoms have some value within a family--at the very least preserving the status quo and keeping the spotlight off other problems--any move toward health by the symptomatic person is effectively an act of disloyalty to the family. Further-more, if treatment proceeds by the formation of a strong transference rela-tionship between the identified patient and the therapist, the betrayal of the family is accentuated. Caught between the desire for symptomatic improvement and guilt for disloyalty to the family, the person cannot move.[8]

---

[6] Ibid., 35.

[7] For a brief history of the development of contextual theory see the prologue to Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy and Barbara R. Krasner's book, <u>Between Give and Take: A Clinical Guide to Contextual Therapy</u> (New York: Brun-ner/Mazel: 1986), ix-xiii.

[8] Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy, "Loyalty Implications of the Transference Model in Psychotherapy," <u>Archives of General Psychiatry</u> 27 (Sept 1972): 377.

Here Boszormenyi-Nagy makes a distinction, drawn from Buber, between guilt feelings and existential guilt.

> The latter obviously goes beyond psychology. It has to do with objective harm to the order and justice of the human world. If I really betrayed a friend or if my mother really feels that I damaged her body and existence, the reality of a disturbed order of the human world remains, whether I can get rid of certain guilt feelings or not. Such guilt can only be affected by action and existential rearrangement, if at all.[9]

Or as Boszormenyi-Nagy and David Ulrich write, "Such ethical aspects as loyalty and ledger cannot be reduced to functions of the superego."[10]

This focus on the ethical and existential issues in close relationship lies at the heart of the contextual approach's divergence from individual and systems-oriented views of therapy. Strategies that alter feelings or systemic structure without addressing the reality of unfairness and exploitation allow existential guilt to multiply, blocking health.

Much of Boszormenyi-Nagy's early writing about contextual therapy was concerned with individuation within a family. In these writings the terminology and thought of systems theory and even individual psychoanalysis exists in some tension with his developing concern for issues of fairness within a family. Thus he can write of moves toward individuation allowing for more genuine encounter, a Buberian idea. At the same time, he can say that greater individuation and genuine encounter gives the therapist and members of the family access to each other's unconscious dynamics, even to the point of "psychotic involvement" or "therapeutic psychosis."[11] In his later work this idea of access to unconscious dynamics becomes much less prominent, while building fair and trustworthy relationships with open dialogue takes center stage.

C. Barbara Krasner

An associate of Boszormenyi-Nagy's who has developed the contextual approach in psychotherapy and other settings is Barbara Krasner. Strongly influenced by Buber's idea of "the Between" as the place where an I can meet a You and by the biblical demand for relational justice, Krasner has brought the contextual approach into new arenas such as Jewish-Christian and Arab-Israeli dialogues.

Krasner's doctoral dissertation correlated aspects of Jewish mystical theology with Boszormenyi-Nagy's relational therapy. She found the two very compatible in their emphases on "healing through meeting," dialogue, vertical and reciprocal accountability, justice, loyalty, and multidirectional acknowl-

---

[9] Ibid., 377.

[10] Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy and David N. Ulrich, "Contextual Family Therapy," in Handbook of Family Therapy, vol. 1, ed. Alan S. Gurman and David P. Kniskern (New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1981), 161. Ledger, in contextual theory, refers to a calculus of the balance between merit and obligation. See below, Sec.II.D.1.

[11] Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy and Geraldine M. Spark, Invisible Loyalties: Reciprocity in Intergenerational Family Therapy (New York: Harper & Row, 1973; repr., New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1984), 128-135.

edgement, negotiation, and reconciliation.[12]   Although Jewish mystics and
prophets did not put forth anything like a fully developed theory of
psychotherapy, Krasner found many of the principles of contemporary rela-
tional therapy present in embryonic form in their work.

Following her dissertation, Krasner has devoted considerable attention to
the theological roots of the contextual approach. She turns to the biblical
idea of reciprocal justice in covenantal relationship as one cornerstone of her
work.

> In religious terms, the basis for dialogue has been established
> through the offer of covenantal relationship: "They shall become
> my people and I will become their God" (Jer. 32:38-42). Covenant
> presumes at least two partners, however unequal or unmatched
> they may be. Covenantal relationship also presumes a justice base.
> It has been argued for thousands of years now that the impulse
> toward justice is intrinsic to the human situation, that it is essen-
> tially inborn. . . . It has also been argued that justice begins to
> be actualized when people recognize its dialogical criteria and find
> the resources to act on them.[13]

Another way to talk about the justice dynamics of relationships is to use
the dialectic of liberation and obligation. "Couched in the language of
covenanted relationship (Exodus 2:24; 3:1-12), the biblical concept of freedom
or liberation is rooted in an assumed dynamic of personal accountability and
mutual obligation that together lead toward realized justice."[14] While liberation
and obligation are often seen as opposite, mutually exclusive aspects of rela-
tionship, they are, in fact, complementary. The biblical tradition of covenant
points to "the paradoxical notion that the fulfillment of relationally incurred
obligation can lead to personal liberation just as a sense of personal liberation
can lead to a legitimate expectation of reciprocal obligation."[15] Bringing to
light the justice of relationally incurred obligations and expectations of
reciprocation lies at the heart of contextual therapy's unique contribution.

II. The Four Dimensions

Boszormenyi-Nagy and Krasner's book, Between Give and Take, offers the
most comprehensive recent exposition of the contextual approach to
psychotherapy. The authors define "context" as "the dynamic and ethical
interconnectedness--past, present and future--that exists among people whose
very being has significance for each other."[16] Thus context has less to do
with geographical proximity or emotional ties than with the fact of relationship
through birth or partnership. Key to the contextual approach is its realiza-

---

[12] Barbara R. Krasner, "Sublime Anthropomorphism: The Significance of Jewish
     Mysticism for Personal and Communal Existence" (Ph.D. diss., Temple
     University, 1975), 203. The phrase "healing through meeting" was used by
     Martin Buber as the title for the posthumously published book by Swiss
     psychoanalyst Hans Trub.

[13] Barbara Krasner, "Trustworthiness: The Primal Family Resource," in Family
     Resources, ed. M. Karpel (New York: Guilford Press, 1986), 131.

[14] Barbara R. Krasner, "Essay I" in "Essays on Relational Justice" with
     Margaret Cotroneo, Foundations 20, no. 4 (Oct.-Dec. 1977): 333.

[15] Ibid., 334.

[16] Boszormenyi-Nagy and Krasner, Between Give and Take, 8.

tion that the relational context of every individual consists of four dimensions: facts, psychology, systemic transactions, and relational ethics.

A. Dimension One: Objectifiable Facts

Objectifiable facts, the first dimension, consists of what is given by biology and personal history: individuals' genetic inheritance, their physical appearance and health, the circumstances in which they were raised, and the historical facts of their lives.[17] Examples of such "pre-existing factors" include ethnic origins and socioeconomic class, the size of one's family, and stages in the individual and family life cycles. Other factors could be the fact of parents' divorce or the circumstances of being raised overseas. Objectifiable facts also includes unavoidable existential conflicts among family members, most commonly seen in differences between the life directions of the generations. The most common unavoidable conflict arises between parents' possessive investment in their children and children's accelerating moves toward independence.

This fundamental existential conflict between generations leads to one of contextual therapy's key insights, namely, that children have a need and a right to receive more from their parents than they give in return. "Raising children to maturity holds many satisfactions, of course, but at the level of reciprocity, care offered to posterity amounts to an essentially unilateral, *asymmetrical* act."[18] This asymmetry of care-giving across the generations does not mean that children do not and should not act in caring ways toward their parents and grandparents. On the contrary, even very young children are capable of considerable caring. Asymmetry of caring does mean that children should be protected from destructive parentification that exploits and depletes them and can lead them to parentify their children in turn.

In the dimension of objectifiable facts it becomes clear that people's actions and decisions can have significant consequences in the lives of all the other people in their family. From a contextual standpoint, actions have consequences for others' lives primarily because of the fact of their relatedness, and only secondarily because of the nature of the action itself.

In our view the consequential nature of relationships is ontological, based on the very fact of *being*. Family relationships are empowered by the fact that the members *are* connected to each other by birth. They are empowered only secondarily by what family members *do* for each other. Simply put, relationships draw their significance from *being* itself.[19]

While past actions may have powerful, permanent consequences, these do not dictate the future. Therapeutic intervention aims at turning consequences back into dialogue and a search for resources remaining in the relationship. "In summary, turning a frozen world of factual consequences into a live commitment to responsible dialogue is the understructure of what, on the surface, might be called 'revitalizing a frozen family system.'"[20]

---

[17] Ibid., 47. The following description of the four dimensions of relational reality in the contextual approach draws heavily on Chapters Four and Nine of <u>Between Give and Take</u>. To avoid cluttering the text with notes I will only cite quotations or paraphrases from that text.

[18] Ibid., 48.

[19] Ibid., 8.

[20] Ibid., 49.

B. Dimension Two: Individual Psychology

Dimension two, psychology, is the only individually-focused dimension of the four. While the entire contextual approach could be considered a psychological theory, in contextual theory the term "psychology" is reserved for individual intrapsychic dynamics and structure. This dimension considers attitudes, motivations, emotions, goals, character traits, defenses, object representations, and all the other structures and functions of each individual's mind.

The contextual approach does not have a theory of individual intrapsychic dynamics and structure of its own as such. Boszormenyi-Nagy and Krasner's understanding of individual psychology, however, is shaped by their attention to relational reality. Even though they have great concern for individuals, they never view the person in isolation. They see individuals as discrete, independent, autonomous selves in the context of an existential, organic, ethical connection with others, especially with members of their family. Thus their view of anger and aggression, for instance, differs from that of a psychodynamic approach that considers aggression a basic drive. "From a contextual vantage point, aggression, like all other expressions of *affect*, constitutes a *relational indicator*. The angry person is more likely to have a creditor's claim on relationship and his guilt-laden partner is more likely to be on the debtor side."[21]

Relational and psychological realities interact and affect each other, but they are not identical. For example, feelings of loyalty and trust or a sense of entitlement, as psychological phenomena, are different from the relational essence of loyalty or trust or entitlement. What is purely personal is not the same as what exists in "the between." Or to use the example from Buber cited above, guilt feelings are not the same as existential guilt.[22] If the feelings are removed without the fact of relational injury being addressed, the relationship and the individuals involved in it can only be further damaged.

This distinction between the personal and the relational, coupled with the recognition of individual psychology as a key dimension of the human context, provides a necessary corrective to any tendency to move too far in the opposite direction from the autonomous self and see the self as purely social. The functions of the individual mind are shaped by a person's intimate relationships, but many aspects of psychological functioning are unique to each individual and are enduring. Indeed, we might say that to speak of a self at all is to speak of that which endures and knows its continuity and self-identity, even if the presence or impact of other people is simply internal. Or as Boszormenyi-Nagy and Krasner write, "Somewhere between birth and death, people have to come to terms with the *delineation of a unique self*, one that is set apart from the world and from other selves."[23]

Furthermore, two people are always ethically distinct, even if they experience themselves, psychologically, to be inseparable. The most profound connection, rooted in the fact of being, does not negate the ethical distinction between people.

---

[21] Ibid., 51.
[22] See above, Sec.I.B.
[23] Boszormenyi-Nagy and Krasner, <u>Between Give and Take</u>, p.75.

1. Self Psychology: Stephen M. Johnson

The dimension of individual psychology obviously includes an extremely wide range of phenomena and an equally wide range of psychological theories. Preliminary analysis of the interviews, coupled with other research into the experiences of MKs and other TCKs indicated that the development of the self was a crucial issue in boarding school. Thus the analysis of the dimension of individual psychology will concentrate on the self at the Academy.

To focus the analysis of this second dimension I am using the self psychology of Stephen M. Johnson.[24] Johnson is trying to integrate the conflict model of traditional psychoanalysis, the deficit model of ego psychology, object relations, and self psychology to describe the widespread injuries to the self he calls "the narcissistic style." This integration, as well as his interest in the interplay between the relational environment and the developing self, facilitates the further integrations between individual psychology and relational ethics undertaken by contextual theory and crucial to this study of the self in boarding school.

A basic principle of developmental psychoanalytical psychology is that the naturally evolving developmental requirements of each child must be met with caring responses appropriate to each phase of development. The nature of the developmental requirements and the responses needed changes as the child develops. Thus while a newborn infant's essential need is for relatively immediate gratification of basic desires for food and physical comfort, further development calls for other kinds of interaction as well. Children of two to six months, for example, need to have their illusion of symbiotic unity with their primary parent maintained in order to experience the safety, security, and relative invulnerability that builds basic trust in the world.

No child's hopes, needs and illusions can be perfectly gratified, however. At each phase in development the child will be frustrated by the failure of the care-giving person or persons to meet all expectations and needs. Yet if these failures are what Heinz Kohut termed "optimal frustrations"[25]—not overly traumatic and balanced by substantial gratification—the child will respond by building ego structure and experience of self. "All analytic developmental theorists seem to agree that it is during these very moments of frustration that the infant begins to build her ego and her sense of self."[26]

A key time in the development of the self comes in what Margaret Mahler has called the rapprochement period (approximately ages 15-24 months), when a child begins to confront the issues of separateness, vulnerability and limitation. One defense against these painful realities is provided by the grandiosity and elation of the preceding "practicing period" (when the child learned to walk and developed other competencies). A second defense is idealization, at first coupled with the continuing illusion of oneness with the other, and later separated from but still idealizing the parent. Yet a third defense takes the form of "splitting," isolating good and bad representations of self and/or other and holding in consciousness only one side of the polarity at a time. As consciousness develops further, the child eventually

---

[24] Stephen M. Johnson, Humanizing the Narcissistic Style (New York: W. W. Norton, 1987).

[25] Ibid., 20.

[26] Ibid., 21.

will integrate both sides into one ambivalent representation of self, parent, and finally, others.[27]

Optimal development at this stage requires that the child's relational environment provide "more freedom, more support for the development of autonomous functions, greater permission to experience and react to the frustrations of life, but with appropriate limits attuned to his developmental level."[28] Both grandiosity and idealization must be gradually, supportively challenged and neutralized.

In such a supportive, optimally frustrating environment a "true" or "nuclear" or "real" self emerges. The true self knows and expresses its own feelings and can act on them. It accepts the ambivalence of its own nature and of the nature of its context. Over time it comes to know its own truth and act on it. As Johnson defines it:

> The true or nuclear or real self is an amalgam of the expression of innate capacity, the fine-tuning and maturation of identification, the neutralization of grandiosity to the expression of ambition, and the maturation over an entire life span of values which are arrived at by a functioning self within a social context. . . .
>
> At the "lower" level, it is an experience of wholeness in the body, groundedness in one's reality, continuity over time, and cohesiveness. At the "higher" level, it is the experience of integrity, meaningfulness, and purpose in the context of a lifetime. Thus, in a sense, the experience of a whole self integrates the body-mind duality and, though we can have words for that duality, the *experience* of self in its most complete form is not dualistic, but unitary.[29]

If the parenting figures cannot accept the child as he or she is, if they attack the child's grandiosity or repel the child's idealization, the self may be deeply injured. Children grow up--and continue as adults--looking for themselves in expressions of either grandiosity or idealization or both. Johnson identifies the life theme of the former as "I am nothing unless I am perfect," and the theme of the latter as "I can be nothing without the perfect other with whom I can either merge or from whom I can derive the guidance and confirmation that will make my life meaningful."[30] Often the same person expresses both themes.

In extreme narcissistic disorder no sense of the real self exists. More commonly, in what Johnson has named the narcissistic style, people are aware of their real self while at the same time rejecting that self in response to rejection from the relational environment.

> The narcissist has buried his true self-expression in response to early injuries and replaced it with a highly developed, compensatory false self.
>
> Narcissistic injury can take an infinite number of specific forms, but essentially it occurs when the environment needs the individual to be something substantially different from what he or she really is. Essentially, the message to the emerging person is, "Don't be who you are, be who I need you to be. Who you are

---

[27] Ibid., 27,28.

[28] Ibid., 7.

[29] Ibid., 61.

[30] Ibid., 28.

disappoints me, threatens me, angers me, overstimulates me. Be what I want and I will love you."[31]

2. Self Psychology in Contextual Perspective

Although even classic Freudian drive theory addressed the impact of the relational context on the developing person, Johnson has pushed the connection between context and evolving self farther. From a contextual perspective, one further connection must be made. Johnson's understanding of the relational environment's role in forming the true or false self must be further integrated with "a *supra-individual regulatory force,* that is, what Buber termed the 'justice of the human order.'"[32] Environmental failure that leads to narcissistic injury does more than produce a false self. It also constitutes an injustice against the child and damages what Boszormenyi-Nagy and Krasner call "the context of residual trustworthiness."[33] It is not just the individual's self that is damaged. The interpersonal relationship between the individual and closely connected others is also damaged. The trust that sustains the self is linked to feelings of trust, but it is founded on having experienced trustworthy close relationships. A true self emerges where a child has received the care she or he deserves in the family context. A false self emerges where a child has been unjustly used to fulfill the needs and wants of parents. Healing the resultant false self can best be done not simply by addressing the self, but by addressing the justice of the relational context. Addressing injuries and searching for caring and evidence of merit can free up resources for reworking relationships and allow the true self to develop or emerge.

When we look at individual psychology in the context of the Ubangi Academy, we clearly are not dealing with individuals during the rapprochement phase of development. Neither are we dealing with adults, though. The youngest children at the Academy were seven years old and the oldest eighteen. What we see is a reworking of the issues of the emerging self in a new context. Leaving home to attend boarding school raises in unavoidable fashion the issues of separateness, vulnerability and limitation first thrust into prominence during the rapprochement phase. Furthermore, the self does not develop once and for all at one period in development. As Johnson points out, the true self is an amalgam of components over an entire life span. We will be looking at the forces within the boarding school context that shaped selves in various fashions, that formed and deformed the context of residual trustworthiness throughout the time students boarded.

C. Dimension Three: Systemic Transactions

Systemic transactions, the third dimension, deals with the patterns, power alignments, and communications that form the core concerns of classical family therapy approaches. All the familiar concepts and terms of systems theory and family therapy apply to this dimension: homeostasis, feedback, rules, roles, rituals, enmeshment, boundaries, double-binding, triangles, and so on. These are used in an attempt to understand the regulation of behavior at a

---

[31] Ibid., 39.

[32] Boszormenyi-Nagy and Krasner, <u>Between Give and Take</u>, 27.

[33] Ibid., 27.

supraindividual level. Power, and arrangements around power, are the focus
of this level of analysis.

Although any one of a number of family systems theories could provide a
helpful framework for understanding the transactional dimension of UBAC, this
study uses the sociological theory of total institutions formulated by Erving
Goffman. While the Ubangi Academy tried to model itself along the lines of a
family, in important ways it was not, and could never be, a family, a point
made repeatedly by former students in the interviews. Goffman's work illumi-
nates some key differences between UBAC and a family in the transactional
dimension. When we come to relational ethics, this difference between a total
institution and a family will be vitally important.

1. Total Institutions: Erving Goffman

Goffman defines a total institution as, "a place of residence and work
where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider
society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally
administered round of life."[34]

Total institutions, to a greater degree than other institutions, provide an
enclosing, encompassing world for most aspects of their residents' lives.
Often that enclosure is most clearly demonstrated in physical boundaries and
barriers to contact with the outside world; a prison wall or the clearly-
delineated boundaries of boarding school grounds that cannot be crossed
without special permission. Barriers of culture, religion and language may
also be used to reinforce enclosure.

This encompassing nature of total institutions stands in great contrast to
life outside them.

> A basic social arrangement in modern society is that the individual
> tends to sleep, play, and work in different places, with different
> co-participants, under different authorities, and without an over-all
> rational plan. The central feature of total institutions can be
> described as a breakdown of the barriers ordinarily separating
> these three spheres of life. First, all aspects of life are conducted
> in the same place and under the same single authority. Second,
> each phase of the member's daily activity is carried on in the
> immediate company of a large batch of others, all of whom are
> treated alike and required to do the same thing together. Third,
> all phases of the day's activities are tightly scheduled, with one
> activity leading at a prearranged time into the next, the whole
> sequence of activities being imposed from above by a system of
> explicit formal rulings and a body of officials. Finally, the various
> enforced activities are brought together into a single rational plan
> purportedly designed to fulfill the official aims of the institution.[35]

Total institutions are bureaucratically organized so that blocks of people
can be handled together in like fashion. One effect of this arrangement is
that the compliance of large groups with regulations can be monitored by a
few people "under conditions where one person's infraction is likely to stand

---

[34] Erving Goffman, <u>Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients
and Other Inmates</u> (New York: Doubleday, 1961), xiii.

[35] Ibid., 5-6.

out in relief against the visible, constantly examined compliance of the others."[36]

Another effect of total institutions is particularly significant for this study—their impact on the family. To the degree that a total institution encompasses the people on the inside, it necessarily separates them from their family (although not from the ongoing effects of their early years and inter-nalized expectations). The more UBAC served as an encompassing "family," the more it cut off students from their families of origin.

Total institutions do not completely substitute their unique culture for another, they do "disculturation" or "untraining"—"the removal of certain behavior opportunities and . . . failure to keep pace with recent social changes on the outside."[37]

When people enter a total institution their sense of self, supported on the outside by social arrangements, is challenged by the institution. Goffman has identified six steps in the stripping or mortification of the self that occurs upon entrance to a total institution.

1. Placing a barrier between inmates and the wider world.
2. Admission procedures designed to shape the inmate to fit the adminis-trative machinery of the institution.
3. Dispossession of personal property.
4. Personal defacement in the form of taking away the "identity kit" by which people maintain their personal front. (Eg., requiring uniforms or military haircuts)
5. Humiliating postures and verbal responses.
6. Exposure of body, actions, thoughts and possessions to alien and con-taminating things. (Eg., limited privacy, exposure of information about the self, physical exposure in communal showers or open bathrooms, pressure to eat food or take medication one does not want, and forced social relationships and intimacy.)[38]

To these direct assaults on the self Goffman adds another entire category of less direct assaults. He concludes, "Total institutions are fateful for the inmate's civilian self."[39]

When we look more closely at the transactional dimension of life at the Ubangi Academy we will see that it had many, but not all, of the features of a total institution. While certainly not as inimical to civilian selves as, for instance, a jail, it nonetheless exercised a much more profound effect on the self of each student than a typical non-boarding public school would have.

2. Total Institutions in Contextual Perspective

From the perspective of the contextual approach, a narrow focus on transactions within a system, whether using family systems theory or Goffman's sociological theory, reduces life to a power-based feedback system and ignores key aspects of relational reality. To Boszormenyi-Nagy and Kras-ner, power-based transactional patterns generally can only account for short-term behavior, not for the deep, underlying directions of people's lives. Close relationships are built on more than power, something transactional analyses

---

[36] Ibid., 7.
[37] Ibid., 13.
[38] Ibid., 14-35.
[39] Ibid., 47.

tend to miss. Furthermore, given their focus on the concepts of circularity and feedback, "systemic conceptualizations tend to ignore the *forward-thrusting, unidirectional consequences* of each generation's effect on subsequent generations."[40]

In addition, any tendency to regard the family (or the school) as an isolated, closed feedback system makes it into a homunculus and centers attention on the behavior of this acting, deciding unit.

> But the relationship as a whole can hardly be explained away as a
> power struggle or as forces of a self-maintaining feedback system.
> To reduce human struggle like that and to ignore the existential
> perspectives of each striving and feeling individual is to trivialize
> life. This kind of reductionism is akin to explaining a city's traffic
> pattern as a self-sustaining dynamic rather than as a composite of
> cars, buses and trucks driven by people motivated to earn a living
> by getting to work.[41]

Power is certainly one extremely influential dynamic in relationships. But concentrating only on the power dynamics of a system ignores the relational resources within it and the threats of unrelatedness, fragmentation and abandonment that are more compelling than power. It is this level of resource and threat that is primary in the lives of students in mission boarding school.

From a contextual perspective, rigid repetitiveness of behavior, often identified as a system's "pathology," is not the basic problem and altering this behavior is not the goal of therapy. A more appropriate goal is uncovering relational resources that can turn frozen consequences back into dialogue and build trust among family members. A total institution, in other words, may isolate people from the outside world and dictate many aspects of their behavior, but it does not end the dialogue within the family.

D. Dimension Four: Relational Ethics

This insistence by the contextual approach on the centrality of relational resources sets it apart from other theories and forms its fourth dimension, relational ethics. This dimension is concerned with the justice of human relationships. It addresses trust earned through caring and through balanced fairness that considers each relating member's claims and contributions.

Contextual theory asserts that the relationship between family members is fundamentally existential and ethical.

> True meeting between parent and the dependent or independent
> child is never simply psychological. It is also always ethical, that
> is, the parent-child relationship is rooted in the soil of earned
> merit. The ethical dimension of reality is an existential link
> between them that is unbreakable and is accessible to both of
> them.[42]

While relationships within the family of origin form the laboratory where children first encounter the ethics of human relating, other relationships have an ethical dimension as well. The ethical dimension of relationships outside the family lacks the existential, ontological basis of family relationships, but it is still an integral part of all human encounter.

---

[40] Boszormenyi-Nagy and Krasner, <u>Between Give and Take</u>, 55.
[41] Ibid., 168-169.
[42] Krasner, "Trustworthiness," 134.

The following sections identify key terms and principles of the contextual approach; ledger and legacy, merited trust, asymmetry of care, parentification, loyalty, individuation, and genuine dialogue.

1. Ledger and Legacy

Contextual therapists speak of relational ethics in terms of a "ledger" of accumulated merit and indebtedness. Part of the ledger consists of entitlements and debts inherited in one's "legacy," the facts of Dimension One, including familial expectations. Each child starts life with certain entitlements and certain obligations as conditions of birth into a particular family at a particular time and place. To this opening balance are added credits for caring actions and debits for care received or manipulative use of others.

> Each person maintains a bookkeeping of his perception of the balances of past, present, and future give-and-take. What has been "invested" into the system through availability and what has been withdrawn in the form of support received or one's exploitative use of the others remains written into the invisible accounts of obligations.[43]

Although these accounts of obligation are usually held between people in a search for fair consideration, they can get diverted into another relationship. A creditor in a relationship, unable to get satisfactory recompense from the original debtor, may turn against an innocent third party and seek substitutive revenge there. In this "revolving slate," ". . . the unsettled account that stands between a person and the original 'culprit' can revolve and get between him and any third person. An innocent third person may be used (scapegoated) as a means for balancing the account."[44]

Recently contextual theorists have downplayed the bookkeeping metaphor of relational ethics. They still speak of ledger and legacy and revolving slates, but they have less discussion of a relational accounting that attempts to balance out debts and entitlements on a ethical bottom line. More prominent now is a concern with merited trust and trust-building dialogue based on ledger, legacy, and revolving slates. Perfect fairness in any relationship is an unachievable, idealized goal, but a commitment to justice for each person is possible. Accounting and accountability remain the media of fair give and take.

2. Merited Trust or Earned Entitlement

In contrast to systemic-transactional approaches which typically postulate competition within families for a limited pool of power, the contextual approach views merited trust as an expandable commodity. Caring actions not only aid the one who receives care, they also bring benefit to the care-giving person in a two-fold process Boszormenyi-Nagy calls "direct" and "indirect" return. Direct return is reciprocal care from the person who benefited from an action, straight repayment across the ledger. Indirect return refers to the enhanced personal freedom that comes from caring, giving action that is not directly repaid. This is not a stimulus-response model of teaching caring through

---

[43] Boszormenyi-Nagy and Spark, 39. See also Boszormenyi-Nagy and Ulrich, 163.

[44] Ibid., 66.

rewards. Nor is it a form of "bribing the superego." It is an ethically-derived personal freedom that is paralleled by but different from a psychological freedom to act.[45]

Mutual consideration of another's merit and entitlement, then, becomes a principle and powerful goal in contextual therapy. "Contextual therapists operate out of a conviction that all family members gain from trustworthy relationships, which are the outcome of 1) due crediting, 2) responsible responding, and 3) care about a fair distribution of relational burdens and benefits."[46]

Trustworthy relationships require recognition of the merit of other persons' actions. Caring, trustworthy acts are properly credited, then responded to with reciprocal caring. Each partner merits trust and earns the entitlement to be cared for in return. The give-and-take of entitlement and responsibility must be fairly distributed, or trust is undermined.

This concern with merited trust and earned entitlement contrasts with power-based theories of motivation (Dimension Three). The contextual approach focuses on resources for mutual care and trust-building, not on competitive strategies for manipulation.

> The dimension of merited trust or *earned entitlement* exists in diametric opposition to the dimension of *power-based expediency*, social superiority, successful exploitation, and winning against a weaker competitor, among other like characteristics. On a purely linear, material basis, the more one person can extract from another person, the better off he is. In contrast, benefits derived from earned merit are based on what one receives through the process of caring or giving.
>
> Expedient power confrontations may and do describe most of the dynamics of give-and-take in business or in political life. It is obvious, however, that they cannot be applied to how adults relate to small children without incurring the risk of serious and lasting consequences to the formation of their trust. Nor can the relationship between man and woman remain trustable if it is simply based on power operations.[47]

Relational ethics also challenges views of altruism or self-sacrifice that do not consider mutual claims. Self-sacrifice puts the apparent beneficiaries in perpetual, unrepayable debt, while making the sacrificing person a relational creditor. This is a powerful but ultimately costly position. "As far as we can tell, the paradigm of unrelieved, one-sided giving is an unrealistic and potentially destructive one that is fraught with the dangers of depletion and guilt-evoking control."[48]

Earned entitlement not only differs from power-based manipulations, it also differs from a psychological sense of entitlement (Dimension Two). A chronically exploited child may not have a feeling or sense of entitlement, but ethically that child is entitled to repayment for the exploitation suffered. Relational entitlement (or guilt) must be worked out in the "between," in the relationship between two people, not in one person's psyche.

---

[45] Boszormenyi-Nagy, U.S. Summer Seminar of The Institute for Contextual Growth, Inc., July, 1993. I have not seen the terms "direct return" and "indirect return" in print yet.

[46] Boszormenyi-Nagy and Krasner, <u>Between Give and Take</u>, 58.

[47] Ibid., 60.

[48] Ibid., 59.

People's life interests and goals will clash, but the very act of acknowledging others' claims and contributions, rather than overpowering them or giving in to them, is a liberating and healing resource. Due crediting and responsible responding, though, require that people assess and analyze their own sides in relationships as well as the merit of their relating partners. They require a commitment to justice for oneself as well as for others.

3. The Asymmetry of Care and the Danger of Parentification

Another key realization of the contextual approach, first mentioned in connection with unavoidable conflicts in Dimension One, is that caring is skewed from preceding generations to following generations.[49] Children are born entitled to care from their parents, care they usually cannot repay. While even young children are capable of caring action, and grown children often care for aging parents, sometimes for many years, it is unfair to expect children to fully repay their parents' care. But repayment for care can be made by caring for the next generation.[50]

To speak of repayment being made to following generations, contextual theory expands the idea of ledger beyond the interindividual. Justice is not only measured between persons, it is measured on the scale of what was referred to earlier, using a phrase of Buber's, as the "justice of the human order."[51] This "supra-individual regulatory force,"[52] is a sense of justice born into all individuals that lets them determine whether or not their claims for entitlement and due crediting are being honored and whether they are honoring others' claims. Contextual theory's point is not that all people are born with an identical sense of justice, but that intrinsic to human nature is the ability to assess claims of justice in relationships and the desire to live in a trustworthy, fair interpersonal context. Perfect justice in the distribution of the benefits and costs of relationships is an impossibly idealized goal. Fairness, however, requires that the needs and contributions of each relating member be considered.

Contextual therapists are greatly concerned with the misuse of children in close relationships. Children whose parents assign unobtainable goals or overburden them with demands for emotional support are particularly at risk.

> Adult attribution of idealized relational traits to their children
> amounts to a direct road toward their parentification and to their
> subsequent scapegoating as failures. For all of the danger implicit
> in *destructive idealization*, it is a common occurrence in families
> and is typically beamed at one designated child, often an adopted
> child.
>
> Fair distribution of burdens and benefits in a family also
> requires that no member be adjudged an *absolute "monster."* It is
> easy to scapegoat a rotten egg, and it lends to satisfying feelings
> of self-righteousness.[53]

From destructive idealization it is a short step to parentification, "the relational misuse of small children to satisfy the possessive, dependent,

---

[49] See above, Sec.II.A.
[50] Boszormenyi-Nagy and Krasner, <u>Between Give and Take</u>, 48, 100.
[51] Ibid., 27. And see above, Sec.II.B.2.
[52] Ibid., 27.
[53] Ibid., 65.

destructive, or sexual needs of one or several adults."[54] Parentified children become persuaded that their world is untrustworthy, manipulative and exploitative. They lose their ability to trust and to seek justice through mutual caring. Sensing the futility of pressing their claims for care in healthy ways, they learn destructive patterns of relating which, in later relationships, fail to earn them constructive entitlement from those who would be inclined to give them due credit.

Parentified children in particular, but adults who are victimized and depleted as well, become destructively entitled, justified in seeking repayment from those nearby without remorse for harm they might do. Destructive entitlement arises from injustice that is neither acknowledged nor redressed. It accrues between the victim and the victimizer, but also between the victim and the justice of the human order, leaving a person entitled to claim restitution. Nevertheless, despite the validity of a destructively entitled person's claim for revenge, revolving the slate to extract compensation from third parties cannot be morally justified.[55]

Destructive idealization and parentification are the ethical side of relational contexts that damage the self. What is manifested psychologically as rejection of the emerging self and a demand that the child be who the parents need her or him to be is seen ethically as an unjust overburdening of the child. The effect on the self is just one part of the damage to the balance of fairness between the adults and the child.

Not all parentification is harmful, however. Temporary crises or other situations that require unusually responsible behavior from a child can actually enhance the child's self-esteem. Much depends on the way a child is "recruited" into an over-responsible role and given credit for responding.

> An important criterion of destructive parentification lies in relational factors rather than in a role shift itself. If the child is acknowledged for his helpful and useful availability, the experience is incorporated into his future self-confidence and sense of competence. An overt request for help is already an implicit acknowledgment. By contrast, withholding acknowledgment, coupled with guilt-bound allegations, is a tremendous combination of destructive, if effective, manipulation. The more subtle the imposition of guilt, the more the child is entrapped in destructive parentification. . . . Acknowledgment or crediting is the opposite of guilt inducement.[56]

4. Loyalty and its Configurations

Another key to relational reality in the contextual approach is loyalty, "a preferential commitment to a relationship, based on indebtedness born of earned merit."[57] More than simple attachment or attraction, loyalty involves relationships made and sustained in preference to claims by third parties. Loyalty means choosing to be concerned or invested in a particular relationship, perhaps in response to received care or experienced trust. Parents are ethically obligated to care for the children they beget. Children's commitment to parents is earned by care they receive. Spouses earn loyalty through faithfulness in keeping trust.

---

[54] Ibid., 189.
[55] Ibid., 111.
[56] Ibid., 125.
[57] Ibid., 15.

Here again the difference between relational ethics (Dimension Four) and individual psychology (Dimension Two) or power dynamics (Dimension Three) is significant. From a relational perspective loyalty is not based on a feeling of attachment or loyalty, although such a feeling may exist. Neither is it based on dependence or submission of a weaker person to someone more powerful. It is based on embracing common expectations.

Contextual therapists assess three primary configurations of loyalty; loyalty conflicts, invisible loyalties, and split loyalties. Loyalty conflicts involve the clash between vertical and horizontal attachments, typically between loyalty to family of origin and loyalty to spouse, friends, or job.[58] Part of the turmoil of adolescence for many youths is the conflict between loyalty to family and emerging loyalty to peers. In the context of mission boarding school, loyalty conflicts often arise between parents' commitment to missionary service in remote posts and their attachment to children they must send away to school. Childrens' loyalty to parents may also be undermined by the potentially intrusive expectations of the school. Loyalty conflicts are obstacles to trust and intimacy, but they may be hard to identify.

Indirect, hidden, and often covered by resentment or disdain, invisible loyalty impairs investment in current relationships or activities.[59] Any disturbed, "acting out" behavior that serves as a lightning rod to protect one or both parents--for example, school phobia or juvenile delinquency--is likely motivated by invisible loyalty. Invisible loyalty also emerges as an issue between marriage partners or other intimately related couples. Unsurfaced and unsettled ledgers between parents and their adult child impede the attachment of that child to a partner. As Boszormenyi-Nagy and Spark put it, "To some degree all marriages are burdened with the spouses' unsettled accounts of loyalty to their families of origin. The more such loyalties are hopelessly denied or wishfully given up, the more they will overburden the hidden accounts of the nuclear family's marital and parenting roles."[60] A father's mistreatment of his children, for instance, may stem from invisible loyalty that protects his abusive parents from his rage.

Split loyalties develop in the context of triangulation in the transactional dimension.[61] A child caught between father and mother and forced to choose one of them is required to betray the other parent. The parents are each asking the child to be more trustworthy than they are, a destructive form of parentification. The child's sense of the basic trustworthiness of the relational environment is damaged.

5. Individuation

From the contextual perspective, individuation is a relational as well as an individual process. The poles of self and relational context must be considered together. "Psychic and social development," write Boszormenyi-Nagy and Krasner, "are essentially indivisible."[62] Individual intrapsychic functioning and close relationship are integral, interlocking parts of each person's existence.

---

58 Ibid., 192.
59 Ibid., 193 and 417 (glossary entry for "invisible loyalty").
60 Boszormenyi-Nagy and Spark, 134.
61 Boszormenyi-Nagy and Krasner, Between Give and Take, 191.
62 Ibid., 75.

In the dialectic between relating selves there are two major options for individuation: self-delineation and due consideration.[63] Self-delineation refers to the process of defining one's unique self through the existence of otherness and difference in one's relating partners. The facts of one's history and one's unique psychological tendencies come together with close relationships that ground meaning and identity.

> On the one hand, individual identity is a person's own unique, psychological product. On the other hand, personal identity is influenced by chance circumstances, like being born to loving, caring parents, as well as by one's gender, religion, race and ethnicity. A person's background lends itself to meaningful identity. So does the quality of his or her significant relationships. By virtue of their mutual availability, relating partners establish a foundation and ground for each other's meaning and identity. The formation of the self requires a dialectical antithesis with the existence of the other or non-self. Personal meaning intertwines with relational modes.[64]

Here the influence of Martin Buber is felt clearly. A person requires another to become, yet the person becomes someone other than the second person and can only relate to that person by becoming a self. "It is true that the child say *Thou* before it learns to say *I*; but on the height of personal existence one must be truly able to say *I* in order to know the mystery of the *Thou* in its whole truth."[65]

Self-delineation through close relationships contrasts with attempts to view the self in isolation. At the same time, it contrasts equally with purely systemic formulations that view individuals as interchangeable units within a transactional system.

If self-delineation forms the "centripetal" pole of individuation, an equally important factor is the "centrifugal," other-directed concern of due consideration. "An equal if opposite criterion of genuine autonomy lies in a person's capacity to consider the consequences of a relationship from the partner's vantage point as well as from one's own."[66]

Care for others has significance in both the psychological and relational-ethical dimensions. It both satisfies a psychic need to be useful and adds to the earned entitlement of the caring person. The ability to offer due consideration to closely related others, as well as to oneself, is evidence of individuation and differentiation. "The ability to recognize and utilize trust resources requires an autonomous self as well as a will to reciprocity. It requires, even demands the inner strength for self-assessment as well as the courage to hold accountable those people for whom we care."[67] By contrast, attempts at self-validation through scapegoating others form invalid strategies that reduce people's ethical worth and call into question their individuation.

---

[63] The text of <u>Between Give and Take</u> calls these two poles self-delineation and self-validation. But Krasner, in comments on an earlier draft of this chapter, wrote, "Some of us have seen delineation and validation as self-serving without the implied reality of due consideration which then validates the self."

[64] Boszormenyi-Nagy and Krasner, <u>Between Give and Take</u>, 75-76.

[65] Buber, <u>Between Man and Man</u>, 175.

[66] Boszormenyi-Nagy and Krasner, <u>Between Give and Take</u>, 77.

[67] Krasner, "Trustworthiness," 127.

6. Genuine Dialogue: Direct Address vs. Seeming

A sixth key principle in contextual theory is genuine dialogue. Genuine dialogue between people goes well beyond open communication. Dialogue is an ongoing process of reciprocal, responsible consideration of both parties' interests and contributions.

> Genuine dialogue, however, goes . . . to the realm of "the between."
> Here two people are constantly involved in a reciprocity of self-aimed (centripetal) exchanges which we characterize as mutually self-delineating and self-validating. The context of self-validation, rooted in the quest for justice in the human order, addresses the relative legitimacy of each partner's claims *for himself but in consonance* with the terms of the other. Relational claims are predicated on each person's right to both distance and intimacy, i.e., to separate identities and assertions as well as to reciprocal accountability. The genuine human dialogue can be called the dialogue of claims for equitable justifiability.[68]

Recently Krasner has used Buber's term "direct address" to describe the methodology of genuine dialogue. Direct address is a willingness to state the terms on which one is prepared to relate, in the expectation that one's partner(s) will do the same. Direct address depends on "knowing one's truths and terms for relationship, embracing and disclosing them, and testing them in circumstances loaded with possibilities of many-sided injuries and potential retribution."[69]

In the absence of direct address, dialogue deteriorates into "seeming," a cycle of false appearances and unstated claims.

> Seeming is the inauthentic stance of the would-be authentic person who longs to connect but despairs of ever truly doing so.
> Succumbing to a mandate to please, constrained by unreworked split and conflicting loyalties, and blindsided by the demands of felt or real unrelenting obligation, people take on a facade of seeming. Far from offering a safe haven, however, seeming corrodes being and corrupts the vision of healing through meeting.[70]

Seeming erodes the vital association between people and undermines the security of close relationships. It offers the illusory security of an impaired dialogue. Ethically, it conceals the truth of the self by maintaining stagnation and disengagement in relationship.

Contextual theory's understanding of genuine dialogue parallels Johnson's conceptions of the true and false self. The true self is the psychic structure developed through experienced fairness and needed for sustained direct address. The narcissistic style, with its burying of true self-expression and display of a false self, describes the psychological process of a person involved in seeming.

The direct address needed to overcome seeming requires a courageous choice for the two stages of dialogue—self-delineation and due consideration—

---

[68] Boszormenyi-Nagy and Krasner, <u>Between Give and Take</u>, 90.
[69] Barbara R. Krasner and Austin J. Joyce, "Ethical Imagination: Repairing the Breach," excerpted from <u>Truth and Trust in Contextual Therapy: Mastering Direct Address</u> (New York: Brunner/Mazel, forthcoming).
[70] Ibid.

that address each relating person's contributions to both caring and injustice. This is a difficult choice fraught with the danger of continued exploitation. The choice for dialogue, however, is a personally redemptive choice, regardless of outcome. Ideally, of course, an effort at just relating will begin the process of rebuilding trust and redressing injustices. But even if the relating partner does not respond to an attempt at direct address, the person who initiates the move toward dialogue is at least partly relieved of the weight of guilt in the broken relationship.[71]

E. Contextual Therapy

In the broadest terms the goal of contextual therapy is to build trust among family members. Contextual therapy aims to restore in each family member a responsible concern for balances of justice in the family. It seeks to develop a "self sustaining continuity of responsibly caring relationship"[72] that enables each family member to earn entitlement through the give-and-take of self-delineation and due consideration. In the language of contextual theory:

> The basic goal is rejunctive effort, that is, finding options for giving and receiving among family members. This is fostered by (1) encouraging open negotiation of ledger issues; (2) exploration of loyalty and legacy impasses, especially sources of destructive entitlement; (3) "deparentification" . . . through acknowledgement; and (4) actions that address inequities. The ultimate rejunctive goal of (5) self-validation provides leverage for any intermediate goals.[73]

Contextual therapists operate with multidirected partiality, an attitude of concern for everyone potentially affected by therapy and a methodology of sequential siding with each family member. Multidirected partiality, and contextual therapy's assessment of family functioning, always extends over at least three generations, even when only a single client is in the therapy session. Multidirected partiality elicits the claims, interests, and aspirations of each person in turn. It refrains from judging the merits of each side, instead building trust through genuine concern for each side and for responsible intermember dialogue. Refraining from judging, however, is not the same as impartiality or neutrality. Nor is it unconditional positive regard. Multidirected partiality is sequential partiality, empathy, and acknowledgement, accompanied by a demand for accountability.

Contextual therapy is resource- and action-oriented, asking what people have done and could do for each other. It credits past injury and exploitation and attempts to help people face realistic guilt for actual harm done to others. It identifies pathology for itself and as a guide to rebuilding. It focuses, though, on possibilities for rejunctive effort.

All four dimensions of relational reality are considered in therapy and interventions can be made on any level. The course of therapy is guided,

---

[71] Margaret Cotroneo and Barbara R. Krasner, "A Contextual Approach to Jewish-Christian Dialogue," Journal of Ecumenical Studies 18, no.1 (Winter 1981): 44.

[72] Boszormenyi-Nagy and Krasner, Between Give and Take, p.104.

[73] Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy, Judith Grunebaum, and David Ulrich, "Contextual Therapy," in Handbook of Family Therapy, vol. II, ed. Alan S. Gurman and David P. Kniskern (New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1991), 216.

however, by ethical considerations. Thus while an individual, intrapsychic focus may be temporarily adopted in therapy, it is always adopted in order to benefit everyone to whom the client is intimately connected, not the client alone.

Ethical considerations require that strategies of personal gain at the cost of disloyalty to one's family be avoided. It is a basic contextual principle that efforts to honor loyalty and exonerate a parent lead to personal gain through earned entitlement. Offspring's attempts to be fair, to understand the fundamental truths of their parents' lives, can help release them from chronic resentment or shame or repetition of their parents' destructive behavior and can earn them freedom in current relationships. Exoneration is not based on a denial of parents' injustices. It considers a person's destructive entitlement and ambivalence, resentment, rage, shame, or guilt toward parents, then encourages probing behind them to understand the reality of the parents' lives. Encouragement of attempts at exonerating parents requires a well-honed sense of timing to know when a client is ready to move beyond stagnant cycles of blame.

Contextual therapists do not relabel or reframe except as an intermediate step. They do not judge the fairness of sides nor prescribe tasks on a transactional or power basis. While they may suggest or encourage particular actions, they do not actively restructure the system in a way that fails to require family members to be accountable for the consequences of the change. Contextual theory holds that a dialogic stance is self-validating regardless of outcome and that symptomatic change is secondary to a concern for consequences. Thus contextual therapists move beyond interpretation in service of insight and prescription in service of behavioral change to activation of dialogue in service of responsibility.

> Ethically, then, the therapeutic effort to change patterns rooted in profound, justifiable mistrust may eventually prove successful to some degree but is never an easy task. A therapist may lead her client to a renewed risk of trust. Obviously, though, how relatives respond can never be guaranteed. What can be promised is the return intrinsic to a dialogic stance regardless of the interpersonal outcome of a person's actual attempts. The very process of risking trust anew results in a buildup of self-esteem that comes from relying on one's own entitlement. Furthermore, the attempt itself helps a person gain freedom and relief. All in all, renewed efforts at risking trust invariably constitute a fresh motivational basis for adopting new and constructive relational patterns, particularly those having to do with the dialogic phase of self-validation.[74]

Risking trust as a motivational basis for new relational patterns that aid self-validation--that is contextual therapy's hope for every member of the family.

III. Contextual Theory and the Theological Ethics of H. Richard Niebuhr

Contextual theory, especially in Barbara Krasner's writing, has been shaped to a great extent by the Judeo-Christian theological tradition and particularly by the prophetic demand to do justice. It is both unusual and refreshing to see a psychotherapeutic theory claim religious and theological roots. Contextual theory uses theologically important concepts and raises

---

[74] Boszormenyi-Nagy and Krasner, <u>Between Give and Take</u>, p.219.

theological issues. At several points it runs parallel to key aspects of the theological ethics of H. Richard Niebuhr.

A. Justice and Responsibility

The central theological issue in the contextual approach is justice, defined as right relationship, an equitable balance of giving and receiving care in a specific context. Although perfect justice is unattainable, a degree of fairness sufficient for human life can be realized by those who seek it. Seeking justice, though, requires a conscious choice, an action of the will. For Krasner, this is the act of return, *teshuvah*, called for by the prophets of Israel.[75] Contextual therapy operates with the assumption, supported by clinical experience, that people can choose to seek justice and can move toward greater relational fairness.

Contextual theory's view of justice as a relational quality closely resembles H. Richard Niebuhr's ethics of response. Niebuhr contrasts his ethics of responsibility with both deontological and teleological ethics. Deontological ethics proceed on the basis of rules, of what is lawful, right. They stress what should be done to live under the law. Teleological ethics proceed toward goals and ideals. They stress the good to be aimed for, the ideal.

An ethic of response, on the other hand, proceeds on the basis of dialogue and answers to prior action. It stresses the fitting response. As Niebuhr defines it, "The idea or pattern of responsibility, then, may summarily and abstractly be defined as the idea of an agent's action as response to an action upon him in accordance with his interpretation of the latter action and with his expectation of response to his response; and all of this in a continuing community of agents."[76]

Relational justice, or, to use Niebuhr's term, responsibility, is a lived-out reality within human relationships, not a set of rules to follow nor an ideal goal. It is a quality of relationships that depends on a commitment to interpret and test the actions of others and then act in a way that seeks fairness. It requires self-understanding—knowing one's grounds for relating and presenting them in anticipation of an ongoing dialogue. "Responsibility," writes Niebuhr, "lies in the agent who stays with his action, who accepts the consequences in the form of reactions and looks forward in a present deed to the continued interaction."[77]

In Niebuhr's ethics, as in contextual theory, responsible responding enhances personal freedom. Niebuhr's description of a process that "recalls, accepts, understands, and reorganizes the past instead of abandoning it"[78] strongly resembles contextual therapy's idea of acknowledging past injury and earning entitlement through due crediting and exoneration of parents.

The contextual approach also speaks of justice not only between two individuals but on the scale of the "justice of the human order."[79] Operating in

---

[75] Barbara R. Krasner, "Report," <u>Conservative Judaism</u> 33, no.1 (1978): 7. See also Krasner, "Sublime Anthropomorphism," 204.

[76] H. Richard Niebuhr, <u>The Responsible Self: An Essay in Christian Moral Philosophy</u>. intro. James M. Gustafson (New York: Harper & Row, 1978 <1963>), 65.

[77] Ibid., 64.

[78] Ibid., 102.

[79] See above, Sec.II.B.2.

the world is a framework of interpersonal justice larger than simply the level of fairness between two people.

Thus justice or responsibility is not an objective principle apart from the relational context, but a quality of the relationship. It can only be assessed within a context—primarily the original three-generational family context but also other contexts such as the boarding school.

Niebuhr makes a similar point when he says that the I and the You in relation are at the same time in relation to many other people and things. No relating pair ever respond to each other in isolation from their broader relational contexts

> When the Thou is present to me as a knower, it is present as the
> one that knows not only me but at least one other; and it knows
> me as knowing not only the Thou but something besides it. This
> encounter of I and Thou takes place, as it were, always in the
> presence of a third, from which I and Thou are distinguished and
> to which they also respond.[80]

In Niebuhr's anthropology, then, the essential form of the life of the self is not merely dialogic but triadic. Even in the direct dialogue of an I and a You the presence of other people and objects and concerns is implied. Furthermore, any relationship is always located within a broader relational, ethical context that transcends it.

For Niebuhr, this transcendent relational context refers to or implies yet larger contexts, leading back to the largest and most general reality. "The process of self-transcendence or of reference to the third beyond each third does not come to rest until the total community of being has been involved."[81]

Although Buber does not speak of the triadic form of the life of the self, he also sees human relationship pointing beyond itself. He begins the third part of <u>I and Thou</u> with the oft-quoted line, "Extended, the lines of relationships intersect in the eternal You."[82]

Neither Buber nor Niebuhr, though, wish to make either an argument for the existence of God or a simple identification of the ultimate context of life in the conventional terms of any religious tradition. Niebuhr's personal conviction of the reality of God was firmly established. But his conviction was a faith claim, a personal, confessional response to the mystery of life, not an absolutistic claim about ultimate reality. As Gordon Kaufman writes:

> It would be more accurate, I think—and more Christianly modest—
> to interpret faith at its most primordial level as response to the
> ultimate mystery of life, response to our sense of an ultimate
> *unknowing*. For as Niebuhr wrote in his essay on "faith in Gods
> and in God" (<u>Radical Monotheism</u>, 122), "We may not be able to give
> a name to [this final reality], calling it only the 'void' out of which
> everything comes and to which everything returns, though that is
> also a name."[83]

Contextual theory makes no claim about the nature of the ultimate context of life, but it does make claims of a transcendent nature, positing the reality

---

80 Niebuhr, <u>The Responsible Self</u>, 79.
81 Ibid., 87.
82 Buber, <u>I and Thou</u>, 123.
83 Gordon D. Kaufman, "Response to Hans Frei," in <u>The Legacy of H. Richard Niebuhr</u>, ed. Ronald F. Thiemann (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 29. Material in brackets is Kaufman's.

of a universal dynamic of justice. It operates with the assumption that the dialogue between an I and a You takes place within the larger context of a "supra-individual regulatory force." This overarching dynamic of justice can be clinically observed, but its ontological grounding cannot be conclusively established. Following Niebuhr, we can say that life in all its mystery has within it an order of justice. The total community of being is at its heart an ethical community. Niebuhr's theology and contextual theory come very close at this point.

Niebuhr's reference to self-transcendence also parallels contextual theory's idea of the development of the self. The give-and-take of self-delineation and due consideration in the process of individuation are self-establishing and self-transcending activities.

Niebuhr, however, takes self-transcendence and the ever-widening circle of social contexts farther into the realm of social justice than contextual theorists have gone. Despite the contextual approach's concern for inter-personal justice within a context of the justice of the human order, its theory of social justice remains largely undeveloped. Krasner and Cotroneo's articles on Jewish-Christian dialogue have touched on that one area, but issues of racial, economic and gender justice in society have not received focused attention from contextual theorists. The effects of legacies of oppression by race, class and gender on possibilities for interpersonal justice remain critical areas of needed consideration and research.

B. Trustworthiness, Trust, and Faith

Contextual theory's conception of trustworthiness and merited trust has important parallels in H. Richard Niebuhr's understanding of faith. In con-textual theory, trustworthiness means ethical merit earned through long-term, reliable, fair consideration of the balance of give-and-take in a relationship. Trust is the response to experienced trustworthiness. As Niebuhr points out, the ethical element of trustworthiness, a psychological sense of trust, and a conscious act of belief come together in a relationship of faith.

> The self not only acknowledges the other as another knower but in believing and disbelieving him, it trusts or distrusts him as another self that has the double freedom of being able to bind itself by promises and yet to break them also. Faith is present here in the reciprocal action of *I* and *Thou* in which an *I* trusts a *Thou* and so acknowledges the latter as a person--one who has the fidelity-infidelity of moral personality. Trust is a response to and an acknowledgment of fidelity. The two are so interrelated in the reciprocal action of selves that one cannot speak of faith simply as the trust which appears but must speak of it also as the fidelity to which trust is the response.[84]

Faith points to the freedom of the self to make promises, to make certain promises instead of others, (loyalty, in contextual terms) and to break prom-ises and violate trust. Faith always exists in the mixed situation of trustworthiness and untrustworthiness, trust and mistrust, belief and disbelief--in relationships with other people as well as in relationship with being itself. The capacity for faith, as trust, emerges through experienced

---

[84] H. Richard Niebuhr, <u>Faith on Earth: An Inquiry into the Structure of Human Faith</u>, ed. Richard R. Niebuhr (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 47.

fidelity, experienced care and justice in relationships from infancy on. For contextual theorists, as for Niebuhr, trust is a response that is earned by healing through meeting. Trust in being itself emerges out of experienced consideration of self and other in the penultimate contexts of life.

IV. Contextual Theory in the Study of Mission Boarding School

Using contextual theory for a study of self-development in a mission boarding school requires, first of all, seeing each student in a three-generational family context. This is often difficult. UBAC is by nature a form of mild total institution. As such it cuts students off from their family con-texts and shapes them to a new context. In the interviews students often portrayed themselves as essentially alienated from their parents from the moment they first arrived at the Academy. Nevertheless, even though stu-dents leave their families' homes to go to school, they bring their families with them internally. Even when children are away from their parents for ten weeks at a time, their family remains their primary context.

Contextual theory also requires that we examine the school itself within its several contexts. UBAC is a school for the children of Evangelical Protestant missionaries in Africa. This implies geographical, historical, theological and sociological contexts for the school and its students. We must ask about the ethics of relationships within those particular contexts, not in some other context such as the United States. What was fair in the multiple relational contexts of the Ubangi Academy?

Contextual theory also leads us to assess each student and the school as a whole in four dimensions; facts, psychology, transactions, and relational ethics. In the dimension of facts we will examine the larger contexts men-tioned immediately above, as well as the family histories of the interview sub-jects. In the dimension of psychology we will focus on the development of the self in UBAC students. For systemic transactions we will look at aspects of a total institution at UBAC, as well as the interactions of each family. In the ethical dimension we will look for the way each child's relationship's with fam-ily members are affected by boarding. We will also look at quality of the dialogues around issues of fairness in the Academy itself.

Contextual theory has been developed as an approach to therapy with individuals and families, not as a research tool. Its primary concern lies with uncovering relational resources for overcoming relational stagnation and unfair burdens. Yet its claim that present freedom is directly linked to interpreting and re-interpreting past injuries as well as past contributions means that it always has an interest in researching the history of relationships.

In studying the Ubangi Academy I was not engaged in therapy. Because the school was temporarily closed, I was not even able to interact with the institutional family of the school at first hand. Of necessity the interview subjects and I had to look back. Also of necessity, we were severely limited in the degree of dialogue we were now able to open up within families and between widely scattered people who were very important in each other's lives while at UBAC. Many of the families of interview subjects are now scattered over hundreds, even thousands of miles. On only one occasion was I able to interview a former UBAC student and parents together. UBAC peers are equally scattered. UBAC is not a family, and while its impact in people's lives endures, the relationships formed there often do not last. Old ledgers go unreworked as people lose contact. But the primary intergenerational context of each student's family remains the key context in which injuries and con-tributions related to boarding are worked out. Through the contextual

approach's emphasis on dialogue and the ethical dimension of relationships, this study revealed powerful forces in the lives of boarding students at the Ubangi Academy.

Chapter 4

UBAC Life

I. Introduction

A boarding school organized on a family model to educate the children of Western, evangelical missionaries in Central Africa is a unique hybrid. Like any total institution, the Ubangi Academy influenced or controlled many aspects of students' lives, from their daily routine and schedule to their beliefs and values. It also cut students off, to varying degrees, from their families of origin. Like a family, the Academy engaged students and staff in the give-and-take of interpersonal relating, with genuine options for giving and receiving care. It is best described, then, as an institutional family.

This chapter describes the dynamics and values of the UBAC institutional family. It begins by locating that institutional family within the larger context of the sponsoring missions in Zaïre. It then traces the course of a typical week at the Academy, and ends with an examination of the value system of the Academy. The focus is largely sociological and descriptive. In terms of the contextual approach, it deals mainly with Dimension Three, power and communication transactions, although relational ethics are considered as well. It sets the stage for the following chapter, where case studies will highlight the personal and interpersonal consequences of boarding in this environment.

II. The MK Legacy: Call, Higher Loyalty, Separation

A missionary kid's journey to the Ubangi Academy began long before the plane flight or truck ride to Karawa. It began long before an MK packed clothes and chose personal treasures to bring to school. The trip to UBAC began when an MK's parents first answered the divine call to missionary service.

For some missionary parents the call came through direct requests: a mission board writing to ask a teacher to join a faculty in the Congo, a veteran missionary challenging a person with needed skills to go to Africa, a nudge from a friend when a missions conference speaker called for a commitment. Other stories told of indirect but equally powerful appeals through books or simply through the example of missionaries. For a small but ever-increasing number, missions service meant a return home, a partnership with missionary parents in work overseas.

In the interviews the UBAC graduates almost always knew the story of their parents' call to missions, and they recounted the stories with pride. "I think the older you got, too, the more you realized, the more respect you had for them for answering God's call and trusting him."[1] Even interview subjects who no longer supported the evangelistic project of their parents still honored their parents for their commitment.

For all students at UBAC, a central feature of their legacy was the fact of their parents' service as evangelical missionaries in Central Africa. The Evangelical Covenant Church and The Evangelical Free Church of America, the two denominations that operate the Academy, have common roots in a pietistic movement in the State Lutheran Church of Sweden. The spread of pietism to

---

[1] Terri Halpern, 24. Passages from interviews will be cited by interviewee's name (initials, in subsequent references) and the page number in the interview transcript.

Scandinavia from the European continent in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries gave rise to a network of "conventicles," small cells of lay people gathering regularly for Bible reading and fellowship. Many of these groups of "readers" with their biblicistic slogan, "Where is it written?" eventually left the State Church and formed their own associations.

In the United States, pietistic Swedish immigrants formed the denominations that were the forerunners of today's Free Church (established 1884 and merged in 1950 with the Norwegian-Danish Evangelical Free Church Association) and Covenant (established 1885). The Free Church is now an association of approximately 1100 autonomous congregations. Key tenets of official Free Church doctrine are laid out in a twelve-article "Statement of Faith" that includes an affirmation of the inerrancy of the Scriptures and a premillennial eschatology.[2]

The Evangelical Covenant Church is similarly congregational in polity, although more centralized as a denomination. It is evangelical in theology but non-creedal, having as its only official theological position the statement that "The Bible, Old and New Testaments, is the Word of God and the only perfect rule for faith, doctrine, and conduct." The Covenant Church recognizes the practice of infant baptism, a position that sets it apart from most other evangelical denominations.

The theological ethos of the missions programs of these two denominations is illustrated by the following excerpt from a letter from the Administrative Assistant for Zaïre in the Covenant Church's World Missions Department to the chair of the UBAC School Board.

> Unfortunately, we don't have a lot of persons that would fit the dorm assistant role who have applied. Ray and I talked to a girl on Friday afternoon who might be interested – but I don't think we are. She believes that Jesus Christ is the answer for her life, but really can't say that He is for anyone else. She does not really believe in the lostness of people without Christ, and has real questions about whether there is an eternity or not. The love of God can be seen in other religions like Buddhism, too. Her application raised enough questions that we felt we needed to talk to her face to face, and the interview left even more questions in our own minds. Without a conviction that Jesus Christ is the only answer to lost and sinful men everywhere in the world, we do not feel we can encourage her as a part of our STM [Short-Term Missionary] program.[3]

In this passage the evangelical insistence on the sinfulness of humanity, God's judgment on sin, and the necessity of faith in Jesus Christ for justification and salvation from sin are all clearly taken as essentials of the mission endeavor. The basic impetus for missions in Africa is unstated, yet evident-- to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ "to lost and sinful men everywhere in the world."

An evangelical commitment, and an obligation, to serve God in overseas missions, then, formed an early entry on the ledger of each UBAC student. Often this was couched in terms of Jesus' "Great Commission," his last words to his disciples in the Gospel of Matthew:

---

2 This is the Evangelical Free Church of America (Minneapolis: The Evangelical Free Church of America, n.d.), 4-5.

3 Barbara Z. Johnson to Ruth Hill, May 29, 1988, UBAC file, World Missions Department, Evangelical Covenant Church.

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on
earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all
nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I
have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the
very end of the age."[4]

To the legacy of the call was added the fact of leaving North America for
Africa. The meaning and impact of this action varied greatly from family to
family. For the few missionary parents who were themselves MKs, it meant a
reunion with their parents, or at least a decision to follow their parents'
vocational lead on another field. For the majority, though, it meant sepa-
ration, for four years or more, from parents, siblings, and extended family.
In most cases the extended family supported the decision to go to Africa, but
sometimes they resisted it angrily.

In the 1950s, when the parents of several of the UBAC graduates inter-
viewed first went to the Congo, the trip required long voyages by boat. Mis-
sionaries did not return to America before their year of home assignment
except in extreme emergencies. As one UBAC staff member commented, "In
those days you were out there to stay, regardless of whether you lost your
parents or whatever. You just didn't go home."[5] Modern travel has made it
easier to go between North America and Africa, but even by jet airliner the
trip is a major undertaking. There are still virtually no telephones in the
Ubangi, and mail often takes three weeks in each direction.

The legacy of call, then, entailed a further legacy of separation from fam-
ily. Inherent in this legacy of call and separation were a tension between
loyalty to family of origin and loyalty to the higher call of God. The words of
Jesus were sometimes cited in support of a higher loyalty: "Another said, 'I
will follow you, Lord: but let me first say farewell to those at my home.'
Jesus said to him, 'No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit
for the kingdom of God.'"[6] Or, "Everyone who has left houses or brothers or
sisters or father or mother or children or fields, for my name's sake, will
receive a hundred-fold, and will inherit eternal life."[7] In the words of a
UBAC dorm mother, "There was a certain feeling then that the Lord's work
came first. It was sort of a theology that we grew up with."[8]

Students arrived at UBAC with this legacy of departure and this knowl-
edge of a higher loyalty. Added to this legacy was the fact of being sent to
boarding school. Separation from the extended family was repeated in sepa-
ration from the nuclear family for four school terms of eight to ten weeks
each year. A total of thirty-six weeks of every fifty-two, about two-thirds of
each year, was spent apart.

Loyalty was an issue in the relationship between parents and child, much
as it was between parents and grandparents. The higher calling of God com-
bined with the necessity of education to require separation. Parents tried to
provide the best possible experience for their children by sending them to a
good school. Yet the caring implicit in providing a good education in a set-
ting where children would be looked after could not hide the fact that going

---

4 Mt 28:18-20 NIV.
5 Felicia Mayes, 8.
6 Lk 9:61-62 NRSV.
7 Mt 19:29 NRSV.
8 Helen Berg, 31.

away meant separation and loss. Neither could it hide the fact that children would be receiving care from dorm parents, not biological parents.

This conflict of loyalties was reflected in a comment by Grace, a graduate of the early 1980s:

> I always knew that they didn't want to send me away. That they didn't want to send me away, and that they were in Zaïre because they had a more important thing to do. Not more important than their kids, but they had a duty to do. And because they had to perform that duty, the circumstances were such that my going to school worked out better than my staying at home.[9]

Sending children to boarding school invariably altered family dynamics, as we shall see in the next chapter. Children brought their families to UBAC internally, through memories and feelings (Dimension II), roles and communication (Dimension III), and balances of fairness (Dimension IV), but all three were affected by departure for boarding school. Loyalties were conflicted, roles and communication patterns were disrupted, feelings got colored by grief or excitement or guilt, and memories faded. A common fear among the youngest boarders, in fact, was that they would forget what their parents looked like and not recognize them at the end of the school term.[10]

The departure of a child created a break in direct relating that could not be completely restored during school vacations. Several UBAC graduates spoke of feeling like guests in their parents' home when they returned from school.[11] Linnea offered this advice to parents to counter the temptation to avoid all conflict during breaks:

> When they come home for vacation, allow them to voice [their complaints] and don't treat them like guests, but allow them to be a family. If there's a conflict, deal with it but don't hide it under the table and say, "Oh, it's not there." You don't have to make the two weeks perfect.[12]

With this complex legacy of calling and leaving, of higher loyalty and separation, children of missionaries set off each August for the Ubangi Academy. The rest of this chapter describes life for boarding students at the Academy. This is the institutional family context in which MK selves were boarded.

III. A Week in the Life of the Ubangi Academy

The official day at the Ubangi Academy began at 6 a.m. with the clanging of the wake-up bell on the front porch of the dormitory and the arrival of the Zaïrian workers. The unofficial day began well before six. Studious or

---

[9] Grace Palmquist, 34. For more on the familial interaction concerning Grace's boarding school experience see Ch.5, Sec.II.

[10] See, for instance, Ruth E. Van Reken, Letters Never Sent (Elgin, IL: David C. Cook 1988), an "autobiography by epistle" written by an adult MK to express the feelings she had as a young student in boarding school. The letter dated March, 1952 reads in part: "I'm scared about your coming. When I close my eyes, I can't remember what you look like. What if I've changed so much that you don't recognize me? Will I know you when you walk by? What if we can't find each other?"

[11] See, for instance, Julie Faxon in Ch.5, Sec.V.

[12] Linnea Hallberg, 43.

pious high school students regularly set their alarms for five-thirty or even five o'clock so they could spend time in personal devotions or study before class. The unvarying tropical sunrise found the dormitory porch and grounds dotted with students poring over Bibles, textbooks, or both. One UBAC graduate said:

> I'd read the Bible every day and I couldn't quite figure out--I never really got into it but I thought it was very important to do this, so every morning I'd get up [at] 5:30, read the Bible, pray, usually fall asleep while I was praying. But it was <u>very</u> important to me to do this.[13]

Students grabbed a light snack on their way to classes at six-thirty, while the dorm mother and her Zaïrian kitchen staff prepared breakfast. The workload of the dorm parents was enormous. All the food for thirty to fifty-five people for three meals plus two snacks a day had to be prepared from scratch. This included the most basic food preparation: butchering livestock and poultry for meat, buying fresh produce from women in the area, and baking all the bread and pastry. Laundry presented its own set of challenges in the tropics: heating water on an open fire, hanging all the wash on lines, ironing everything (with charcoal irons) to kill insect larvae, and sorting clean clothes according to the student number in the hem or collar. The dorm father was responsible for maintaining the classroom building, the dormitory and cookhouse, three faculty houses, the workshop and other outbuildings, and the grounds, powerplant, and other equipment. He also handled the book-keeping, often taught a class, and sometimes supervised construction of a new building. In addition, dorm parents often tried to retain a connection to the national church by attending regional "Big Sundays." Starting in the late 1970s the dorm parenting position was usually shared by two couples, but before that it was a six-and-a-half day-a-week job with little time to rest. During school terms the dorm parents had off only one afternoon and evening a week and one weekend a month.

In general, the dorm parents considered themselves adequately supported by the mission boards, the parents, and the students themselves. The dorm parents interviewed gave credit to all three groups for their support. In fact, one couple stated that UBAC's financial support could have sustained a somewhat more comfortable lifestyle at the school. However, the contrast between UBAC's standard of living, simple as it was, and that of the local schools for Zaïrian children was already so great they did not feel they could spend more money at the dorm.

With regard to support from the students themselves, this same couple said the following:

DMT You talked about trying to give the kids a sense that you cared for each of them as individuals. How could they care for you?

HB Well . . . just their affection, you know. I can remember one dorm daughter would always come after every meal and sort of pat me a little bit on-- "Thank you for the nice meal." And there were a couple that at different times--I don't know that they were in the dorm at the same time, one was one of the earliest young women, would come and just give me a little peck on the cheek. So I think those were, were things that really were very helpful and meaningful to us during our years at UBAC too.[14]

---

[13] Carol Lindstrom, 14.
[14] Peter and Helen Berg, 34.

When that support was lacking, though, or when the demands became simply overwhelming or unfair, the dorm parents' destructive entitlement could give rise to a backlash against the students. If they had been sufficiently provoked, whether by a major incident or simply by the proverbial "last straw," they might chastise the whole group at a meal. Although rare, these occasions remained vivid memories for several former students because of the feelings of guilt that descended on everyone.

GP   Aunt Sarah would cry.

DMT   She would cry?

GP   She would cry. If she was really upset about something, if she felt like somebody had really, well, somebody had really just been insolent, just, just, disrespectful, irresponsible, and she was really upset, she would cry.

DMT   And then what?

GP   Nobody ever had an answer when she cried. Everybody just felt terribly guilty, no matter whether they were guilty or not. Everybody just felt terribly guilty.[15]

Some former students defended the dorm mothers' tears as generally well-deserved and, moreover, as a relational approach preferable to impersonal punishment. Terri depicted the legitimate guilt feelings resulting from abusing the dorm mother's trust.

DMT   The consequences, I mean, what you mentioned was not so much punishment as feeling stupid.

TH   Or feeling like you'd disappointed them in a big way. Yeah. Aunt Sarah would cry and you'd just be, like, "Oh man." You know, you'd feel really terrible. At least I did. But I would feel like, "Oh man." I snuck out one night and, you know, then you felt just really bad, like you really disappointed them and they had trusted you and you had misused that trust, or abused that trust. Yeah, you just felt like, I don't know, it was a serious thing.

DMT   So the most serious consequence was really the relational consequence, not the individual punishment. Not physical punishment or lack of, or greater restrictions or whatever kinds of things, it was that relational kind of thing--

TH   Mm-hm.

DMT   of you disappointed them and made them feel bad. That's interesting. That can be pretty heavy, too, for the kids.

TH   I felt that with my parents. . . . That would always affect me more than yelling at me.[16]

Others responded like Michael, who described "all the kids saying, 'Geez, this is dumb. And not knowing whether to feel guilty or revolted or sorry for Aunt Sarah."[17] To these students, the dorm mother's tears were manipulative attempts to transfer to the kids some of the burden of the dorm parents' destructive entitlement.

---

[15] GP, 21. By long-standing tradition, missionary children in the Ubangi call all adults "Aunt" or "Uncle" with the exception of Academy teachers, who are called by title (Miss, Mrs., Mr.) and last name. Note that Grace makes a clear distinction between the existential guilt of the disrespectful student and the guilt feelings of the rest of the student body.

[16] TH, 39-40.

[17] Michael Nelson, 19.

At eight o'clock the day students, "mission kids," or "station kids,"
headed back to their homes for breakfast while the "dorm kids" gathered in
the central dining room for their meal. In keeping with the family model for
the dorm, students and dorm parents ate meals together. One student from
each table carried food in from the kitchen rather than having everyone go
through a cafeteria line. After a brief devotional lesson and table grace, the
food was served and polished off in a rush.

Following breakfast the dish team for the day assisted the Zaïrian staff
with clean-up. Each student was assigned to one of the six dish teams and
each team was organized, informally but invariably, in an age-based hierarchy.
One of the rites of passage in Academy life was being named captain of a dish
team, a clear marker of having become one of the oldest kids in the dorm.
The captain parcelled out the tasks, reserving rinsing and drying for older
kids and delegating putting away clean dishes to the youngest members.
Teams competed furiously for speed and efficiency.

While the dish team was at work the other students concentrated on
cleaning their rooms in preparation for the daily room check. They swept the
ever-present African sand off floors, made beds tightly, dusted dressers and
window sills, tidied drawers, emptied wastepaper baskets, retrieved clean
laundry from the numbered boxes in the hall, and straightened their closets.
There was competition in each age bracket to have the best room check chart
at the end of each school term. As one graduate put it:

> Something that I remember so vividly is the whole, the "X"s and
> "O"s. . . on your dorm room wall. The beds had to be made just
> right, the dusting, the sweeping. And like everyone, I wanted to
> have the best, and so I tried to make sure I had all zeros across
> the whole thing, and then you get some little surprise, who knows
> what. It wasn't worth whatever it was we did, but [we did] every-
> thing just perfectly because that was another status symbol, to
> have all the zeros and to have the perfect room for nine months. .
> . . That was a huge status symbol.[18]

At nine the bell rang again, signaling class time until noon. The second,
third, and fourth grades shared a room and a teacher, as did the fifth and
sixth grades. Junior high and high school classes were paired up (seventh
and eighth together, ninth and tenth, eleventh and twelfth) for Bible, English,
social studies and science, but separated for foreign languages and math. The
curriculum at the Academy was geared toward college preparation, and
academic standards were high. High school students were expected to take a
full schedule of classes, including three or four years of French. Some stu-
dents were excused from a fourth year of high school math and/or science,
but it was not uncommon for students to have six courses, band or choir, and
one study hall each day.

For the "big kids" (junior high and high school) the last period of the
morning was usually reserved for band or choir rehearsal. Band and choir
were not mandatory, but a majority of students played instruments and nearly
everyone sang in the choir. End-of-term concerts for parents were major
events, and singing or playing for Sunday evening services in the dorm living
room provided other chances to perform.

Midday dinner was the biggest meal of the day, followed by dish team
chores and the sacrosanct hour of siesta from one to two o'clock. Another

---

[18] Scott Okin, 25.

bell announced a return to classes until 3:30 for grade school or, some years, 3:50 for high school.

Two afternoons a week the junior high and high school had physical education. The Academy grounds contained a large playing field, a smaller field, a tennis court and a basketball court. In contrast to most American schools, the dominant sport at UBAC was soccer. There was no league for organized competition, so games were generally pick-up matches among the students, augmented by occasional games with local Zaïrian schools and a joint Zaïrian-UBAC team in the 1980s.

Every afternoon that day's student "host" and "hostess" were responsible for setting the tables for supper and helping out in the kitchen. Other students were assigned to sweep the classrooms, erase the blackboards, and clean the blackboard erasers. Otherwise afternoons without physical education were quite open. Boys would often play sports, or with permission from the dorm parents they would go hunting, ride motorcycles, or walk to the villages to speak with Zaïrian friends. Girls had fewer after-school options, but would also often spend the afternoon outdoors, even if reading or doing homework.

The five-thirty bell called everyone in for supper, followed by dishes, showers and group devotions. Evening devotions were the central ritual gathering of the UBAC "family." They were a time for singing, Bible stories, instruction, and, when necessary, reiteration of the rules or announcement of new policies and procedures.

Devotions led directly to bedtime, seven-thirty for the youngest kids, followed by fifth and sixth graders at eight and junior highs at eight-thirty. Older students tackled any homework they did not finish during study hall or siesta. Until the mid-1980s the UBAC generator was always turned off at 9 p.m., so everyone had to go to bed when the lights went out. With the completion of a hydroelectric plant to supply continuous power to the entire Karawa mission complex, lights-out was no longer so unequivocal, but bedtime remained nine o'clock.

On Friday nights bedtimes were pushed back so students could play outdoor games. Friday nights were also the favorite time for "figs," school slang for the UBAC equivalent of dates. At Karawa there was, as several interviewees said, no place to go on a date and nothing to do if you got there. There were no restaurants, no movie theaters, no concerts, no ice cream parlors, no school dances—none of the places or events frequented by American teenagers on dates. There were, however, endless warm evenings. A typical UBAC fig entailed walking out to the soccer field in front of the dormitory, sitting on one of the log bleachers, and talking. Literally. An adventurous fig meant asking permission to walk up and down the airstrip. The social pressure against sexual activity was so strong that several of the people interviewed had figged for considerable periods of time and never ventured beyond holding hands. Not one had so much as heard of any UBAC students having sexual intercourse.

Saturday morning everyone was assigned a job. Saturday jobs represented an attempt by the dorm parents to let each student contribute in some small but concrete way to the dorm family. For little kids the standard Saturday job was shelling enough peanuts to fill a soup can. Since shelling peanuts was also a common punishment for infractions of the rules, the Saturday morning requirement could swell to two or three cans. Shelling peanuts, in fact, was the one part of UBAC life mentioned by every single person interviewed. At the dorm, peanut butter was both an earned treat and a reminder of the consequences of misbehaving.

For the older girls, Saturday jobs often involved work in the kitchen or special cleaning projects. The older boys mowed the lawn and the athletic

field, painted, changed oil in the academy pick-up truck or light plant, and so forth. Saturday afternoon half the students—big kids one week and little kids the next—went swimming at either Zulu Falls or Lake Kwada.

A typical Sunday included worship in the Karawa church at eight-thirty, followed by Sunday School back at the dorm, in English, for the younger kids. Volunteers from the high school sometimes traveled to surrounding churches to teach Sunday School and accompany congregational singing on their instruments. An extra half-hour of siesta after dinner gave way to a relaxed afternoon, an early supper eaten outside on nice evenings, and a worship service with the missionaries at seven in the dorm living room. The week started again with the bell at 6 a.m. Monday.

The weeks at UBAC were very full. The hour of siesta was the only quiet hour of the daytime, and older students usually used siesta to catch up on homework. With thirty to fifty-five students in constant motion, the buildings and grounds were always filled with activity. The pace and overall level of activity resembled that of a summer camp, except that the Academy was in session thirty-six weeks each year. As a faculty member expressed it, "When the kids are there it's, it's not chaos, but it's activity, activity and schedule and noise and a lot going on."[19]

Tiny rooms offered scant space for personal belongings (and not a single electrical outlet, only bare bulbs with pull cords, a design flaw that irked dorm parents and students alike and was only remedied in 1993). The limited privacy afforded in bedrooms and bathrooms marked another of the "mortifications of the self" characteristic of a total institution.[20]

Despite the rapid pace of life at the Academy and the fact that students only lived there for two-thirds of each year, UBAC was often one of the most stable environments in its students' lives. At the very least it stayed in one location and the daily routine remained relatively stable from year to year. The UBAC graduates in this study moved an average of nearly ten times, to eight different places, before they finished high school. One alumna moved fourteen times, to twelve places, by age eighteen.

Students responded to the flux in their lives by clinging to traditions at the Academy. Saturday trips to Lake Kwada and Zulu Falls, the spring play, Christmas and graduation concerts, the Santa Lucia festival, and the high school trip were all cherished traditions. Any proposed change in these activities met staunch resistance. Even changes in the buildings and grounds of the Academy were resisted. Dorm parents described the uproar that arose when they removed the broken concrete patio and surroundings trees from the front lawn of the dorm.

> I remember the uproar when he took up that cracked cement by
> the patio. But he left the fireplace. That has to stay. I mean, if
> anybody ever took that fireplace away, that would be it.[21]

Although the fireplace had not held any kind of a fire for twenty years or more, it was a sacred spot to present and former UBAC students alike. Home base for games of Hide-And-Go-Seek, best vantage point for watching the sun rise over the valley, and rendezvous point for figs, the fireplace had to stay.

One factor bolstering UBAC's stability was the long tenure of its primary dorm parents. From the early 1960s through the late 1980s two missionary

---

[19] Phyllis Strom, 6.
[20] Goffman, 14-35. See above, Ch.3, Sec.II.C.1.
[21] FM, 30.

couples served as dorm parents the vast majority of the years. They were able to establish stable procedures and traditions that boarding students could rely on from year to year. In contrast to the situation in many mission boarding schools, these dorm parents made their service at UBAC the focus of long stretches of their careers. Students knew they were being cared for by dorm parents committed to the Academy, not simply by missionaries awaiting final posting or learning the local language.[22]

IV. The Value System of the Ubangi Academy

A. Family Harmony

When UBAC staff and graduates were asked to describe the dominant theological theme or strand at the Academy, their responses went well beyond theology in any strict sense. The themes they listed were really the core elements of the school's value system. Academy values were described with such diverse terms and phrases as "live to honor God," "fear," "get along," the importance of daily personal devotions, "love one another," the necessity of a personal conversion experience, "Christian living," "responsibility," "passive girls," and "a lot of guilt."

As varied as they were, these attempts to articulate the value system of UBAC clustered around several themes. The importance of Christian faith and spiritual growth was one common theme, although it was not listed as frequently as might be expected in a mission boarding school. The most commonly mentioned theme was the description of the Academy as a family, with the corollary theme of the need for harmony within the institutional family. Scott put it this way:

> What keeps coming back to me is love. Not necessarily love God
> was the biggest thing, but, "We're a family," you know. "Try to
> treat each other with a little respect and like a family."[23]

In this comment both the theme of UBAC as a family and the idea of love and respect within that family were reflected. These were, of course, the central tenets of the dorm parents' philosophy of boarding school life.

HB   It was a challenge to us to go there and make it as much like home as possible, instead of a regimented group with demerits and all those kinds of things, which we didn't feel was a part of family living.

And moments later:

HB   We really felt that UBAC should be as much like a happy family as possible, and that we would try to make it that.

And a little later:

DMT   You used to tell the kids that when they came at first, though, right? Like the first night at devotions or something, that that was your philosophy of running the place.

HB   Yes, that was a big family.

DMT   How did they respond?

HB   Well, I think we felt they responded positively.[24]

---

22 Cf. Lockerbie, 19, and above, Ch.2, Sec.III.A. In the fifteen schools Lockerbie visited he met no dorm parents who had served full-time for more than five years.

23 SO, 19.

24 Bergs, 5–6, 14.

This philosophy of trying to make the Academy as much like a big family as possible went essentially unchallenged for over twenty years. In the early 1980s the proposed publication of the first UBAC Handbook touched off a heated debate among faculty, dorm parents and board members about the nature of the school. Those who favored publishing a handbook claimed that UBAC, like any institution, needed clear, well-understood rules to maintain order and properly prepare new students and staff. Others argued that UBAC was a family, and families did not write down and publish their rules, they treated each other with love and respect. The Handbook controversy was described in an interview with a faculty couple.

CS   One of the new missionaries wanted, said, "We've gotta have a handbook here." He was on the school board. And Hank Williams was against it. He says, "Families don't have rules."

PS   Not written down in a book.

CS   "Don't have rules written down in a book. That isn't the way a family operates." And he was very much against it. He says, "We in the Ubangi Academy are a family. We don't have rules. We treat each other just as you would treat other people in your family. How would you treat your brother and sister in your own house? That's the way you should treat a person here. . . ."

. . . .

PS   And some of us old-timers were very, very against the whole thing of writing it down, getting it published as a book. And we fought tooth and nail to prevent the whole thing.

CS   We lost. [laughs]

PS   We lost, but I think it was only handed out that one year, and it never--ever surfaced it again. I don't even know if they even have a copy of it anywhere. I never got a copy of it.[25]

The institutional family provided some genuine options for giving and receiving among students and between students and dorm parents. We have already quoted one dorm mother on the caring expressed by students through simple thanks for a meal or a quick kiss. Another dorm parent couple described the caring of the kids like this:

DMT   What was there for the kids to do--like you said some of them could be so sweet and helpful--what kinds of things were possible for them to do to show that they cared and. . .

TM   I think one of the sweetest things that ever happened when--was it our anniversary? When they, a couple of senior girls invited us to go to another house and they had it fixed up real nice for our anniversary and they served us like waitresses.

FM   They were all dressed up.

TM   Yeah. And it was really, it was really nice.

FM   They had a whole dinner prepared and they were all dressed up. There were so cute.

TM   It's a fond memory.

FM   Yeah, so a lot of things. Helping around. . . .

    When we butchered I usually tried to fix corned beef, you know, make my own corned beef. And the kids loved it. I mean, it was one thing, and so we would have corned beef sandwiches. We would try to have lettuce from the garden and all of the pickles

---

25 Carl and Phyllis Strom, 16-17.

and everything to go with it. Well, it was one of the favorite
meals. And especially the older guys. They would flop all that
corned beef on there--sandwiches.

TM Dagwood sandwiches.

DMT Dagwoods, yeah.

FM I remember Greg. . . he looked, you know, and--'cause we let all
the kids go through the line first--and he, "Aunt Felicia, you've
gotta get some. Isn't there any left for you?" They were coming
back for seconds. He said, "You'd better take yours," before the
big boys would come back and clean up the platter and I wouldn't
have any left. And you know, I was so touched by that. I
thought, "Here's this high school kid concerned that I get some,"
you know. And this kind of an attitude where--sometimes when
they're living in a big group like that it's "everything that I can
get for me." And some of the kids have a tendency to become a
little bit greedy. And so it's refreshing to see when a kid really
thinks about somebody else besides themselves and sees that their
needs are met. And then sometimes these--the kids would come in
the kitchen and say, "Can I help you with something? Can I fix
something? Do you need some help?" And that was neat. And if I
was rushed for something, you know, like a meal preparation or
something, I'd say, "Come here and stir this for me," and a kid
would come and do it without complaining or grumbling and with a
smile on his face, and that was fun. It's the kind of a thing that
you appreciate.[26]

The themes of loving one another and getting along within the family,
however, were challenged by some UBAC graduates as false or legalistic. In
various ways, several former students expressed their opinion that these
themes were used to induce conformity in order to make it possible for one
overworked adult couple to manage a large number of kids. The theme of love
could become an ideology of compliance.

Sections from two of the interviews illustrated this most clearly. First,
from Carol, a graduate of the early eighties.

DMT What would you pick as the heart or the central theme, theological
theme at UBAC?

CL While I was there it was definitely one of loving one another. I
thought it was very superficial, this Christian love, and feeling, I
mean, a lot of guilt. Feeling many times like what it meant to be a
Christian was that you had to behave in certain ways, you needed
to confess every time you did something wrong or you did some-
thing that you felt was wrong. Following the Bible very literally,
doing a lot of Bible study, a lot of praying, a lot of devotions, and,
just a very very legalistic approach.

And about a minute later:

CL I felt like there was a lot of overt attempts to make things very
smooth, and make everybody be nice, and like each other. And I
felt that way, it was important to me to just be nice and like
everybody and make everything work nice, you know, so we can all
have a happier existence. But it very quickly broke down, just all
the time. And I felt like there wasn't much honesty expressed in

---

[26] Trent and Felicia Mayes, 44-45.

terms of who people were and letting people say who they were and how they felt and what was going on. And if you did complain you usually got stomped on. You were looked on as being very ungrateful, and I felt there was a lot of pressure just to comply and make things run smoothly and not stress out the dorm parents or stress out whoever was in charge because they had too many things to be worried about. And they did, I mean, they had a lot. And they did have a heavy responsibility, but unfortunately, that doesn't make it any easier for the kids.

DMT   That translated, then, into you had to sort of look out for them by not rocking the boat, not making waves for the dorm parents who were always, already so stressed.

CL   Right. Or, my tending to just avoid them altogether and not really get to know them very well. And vice versa. Not wanting them to be really involved in hardly anything I did.[27]

Kathryn spoke in language that was similar to Carol's, although even less theological.

DMT   What would you pick to be the biggest theme, the central theme. . . of UBAC's theology?

KN   Everybody get along.

DMT   Everybody get along?

KN   Uh-huh. Yeah. There were rules there for everything.

DMT   Yeah.

KN   There were rules for how to get along. If you broke the rules this is what happened to you, so you would get along. Getting along was very important, because it, the place had to run, you know.

DMT   Okay. Getting along in the sense of following the rules that allowed you to live harmoniously. Not necessarily getting along in the sense of truly loving each other or positive relations or openness with each other.

KN   No, no, no, no, no. [both laugh]

And thirty seconds later:

KN   Oh yeah, it's very repressive. Oh yeah, it was like a little--you know how I view it, it's like a little Moonie camp. No, I mean, you don't have to tell Uncle Hank and Aunt Janine that. I love them dearly. But, you know, you have that many kids, you only have two adults really looking after them who are responsible, you have to make it work. And you were, we were fed information and we spit it out.[28]

Both women gave the dorm parents considerable credit for the difficult job of caring for as many as fifty-five kids. At the same time, they clearly pointed out the way the ideology of family harmony was used to constrain expression of true feelings and opinions and to cover over differences or disagreements. In their experience dialogue and direct relating were rare ("there wasn't much honesty expressed in terms of who people were;" "my tending to just avoid them altogether"). Seeming was the norm ("pressure just to comply and make things run smoothly;" "very repressive").

In the language of conformity, pressure to comply, and smooth running, in the "army of people around to socially reinforce,"[29] and especially in the

---

27 CL, 17,18.
28 Kathryn Nordlund, 15-16.
29 KN, Letter of October 29, 1992.

"Moonie camp" label, we have a description of a total institution, not a family.
The metaphor of the Academy as a family was deconstructed by its students.
In place of the family image they offered a picture of an institution with
blocks of people organized "under conditions where one person's infraction is
likely to stand out in relief against the visible, constantly examined compliance
of the others."[30]

Sandra made the connection most clearly:

I really think it's got a lot in common with a low-security prison.
I do! It's the same. You can't leave the place unless you get
permission. "You have to do all these little things, and then we'll
be moderately pleased with you, but we won't expect a lot."[31]

When I mentioned that Erving Goffman used the term "total institution,"
she replied, "Oh, yeah. It about totalled me!"[32]

UBAC staff also wrestled with the tension between familial and institu-
tional realities at the school. The family living philosophy that worked when
the boarding population numbered in the twenties became much more difficult
to sustain with forty or fifty students in the dormitory. Adding a second
couple to the staff to help with the work created its own tension with the
family model.

There's just one thing that really bothered me at the dorm. There
was a while where we had two sets of parents, you know, dorm
parents. And I felt like this was not conducive to a real home
situation. You don't have two sets of dorm--parents in a home.
And if our philosophy is to keep this home as much like a family as
possible, it used to bother me when the kids would say, "Are you
off or are you on?" You know, "Who's on duty?" It sounded like
an institution.[33]

In Carol's case, as we shall see in the next chapter, she eventually
became cut off from the dorm parents, conforming but aloof and distant.
Kathryn, whose story we will also explore in more detail in Chapter Five, was
also distant from the dorm parents, reluctant to bring a serious problem to
their attention.

If getting along within the institutional family was the cornerstone of the
value system of the Academy, the chief "sin" was disrupting the harmony.
Other actions, such as sexual activity beyond chaste limits, were certainly also
regarded as serious breaches, but even transgressing the bounds of sexual
propriety could be taken as disruptive more than immoral.

Kathryn put it this way. "Breaking the rules. Not getting along. Any-
thing that would interrupt the harmony, I think, was viewed as the biggest
sin. And there were a lot of ways of doing that, you know."[34]

Kathryn's definition emphasized the total institutional aspect of the
Academy, highlighting stepping out of line, breaking the smooth ranks of con-
forming residents and disrupting the life of the institution. Lars, a mid-
seventies graduate, took a different tack that stressed due consideration for
the dorm parents: "Probably the biggest sin would have been not respecting

---

[30] Goffman, 7. See above, Ch.3, Sec.II.C.1.
[31] Sandra Young, 28.
[32] Ibid., 28.
[33] FM, 40.
[34] KN, 17.

the dorm parents at all. Not respecting them. You know, just throwing all respect for dorm parents and teachers and other grown-ups out the door."[35]

Faith, another mid-seventies graduate, used very similar relational language. The worst sin at UBAC, in her experience, would also be a rebellious rupture of relationship with the dorm parents.

> I could see rebelling against the dorm parents as being something that would be really--I mean in a major way just saying, you know, "Too bad for you," and talking in a very disrespectful manner to them as being something that would just, everybody would be horrified. . . . Again, the relationship-type issue of, you know, really butting the system.[36]

Michael described the relational dynamics between dorm parents and students at some length:

MN Biggest sin would be disappointing the people to whom you were supposed to be responsible. So even if you--oh, if you went out and got drunk, the biggest disgrace wouldn't be that you did something bad, the biggest disgrace would be that they trusted you to be out in the villages and they trusted you to know better than to find masanga [palm wine], and they trusted you to resist temptation, and you disappointed them.

DMT So the thing was made very personal, very relational.

MN I think so. . . . Because you really did get the impression that if you did--at least this is the impression I remember, or pick up-- that the worst thing about not having your room clean, or something, wasn't that you got demerits and it wasn't that you wouldn't win the coveted candy bar at the end of the term, it was that Hank and Janine would have a talk with you and tell you how disappointed they were in you. And you would sometimes like to be able to say, "Yeah. I know the rules. I don't want the candy bar. I'd rather keep my room a little bit messy, thank you." But--

DMT Yeah. "And I don't want to be responsible for your disappointment." I mean, that's your problem. If you want to get disappointed--

MN Well it, and--we point this at UBAC, but I'm sure that part of this was active in my own upbringing. Mom could spank me and send me to my room and I would be mad and I'd be unhappy, and I'd just take it, and Dad could come in and say, "Son. I'm disappointed in you," and I'd just cry. 'Cause I had let down, I had let down Dad. And, you know, I had a very strong personal relationship with my parents, so that was probably understandable and appropriate. And not all the kids had the same relationship with the dorm parents or the teachers, and so they were probably trying to make it like a family, and in some senses it wasn't gonna work.

DMT Yeah. But again there's this sort of relational exchange going on that if you're disobedient you're burdening the parents, the dorm parents. They're going to be disappointed. So you have to take a sense of responsibility for them that seems at time to have gotten heavy. But that--I think there's sort of a give-and-take to that

---

[35] Lars Olsen, 21.
[36] Faith Strelnick, 44.

too. I'm wondering what you got for being--and what the dorm
parents got. I mean, what was the other side of that, of being
responsible?

MN   You mean, when you were responsible, what kind of reward did you
get?

DMT   Yeah.

MN   Oh, well, mostly you got, not just the approval of Hank and Janine,
but you got the approval of all of your peers, 'cause all of your
peers bought into this also and thought that having perfect scores
was a pretty good thing to do, and going on the Sunday School
thing and memorizing the most verses and all that stuff got you
social status 'cause it was mostly a shared ethos.[37]

Michael's comments capture both the possibilities and the limits of the
dialogue between dorm parents and boarding students. At its best this was a
genuine give-and-take of real giving and receiving. When the dorm parent-
student relationship was not well established, though, the dialogue could be
shallow and even cynical, ritualized and institutional rather than personal.

As a sidenote, it's interesting to note that in their depictions of chief
sins, as with their descriptions of central theological themes, students
responded to a theological question with answers that addressed moral or
value issues. In part this may have reflected their stage of moral and faith
development when they were last at the Academy. But this expansion of
theology and theological language to encompass morality and values also
accurately represented the language and thought of the Academy. All serious
concerns were considered theological concerns. Sometimes girls even met
boys' requests for figs with the reply, "I'll pray about it." While that was
more often a technique for avoiding an unwanted liaison than a search for
divine guidance, it was an indication of how widely theology could be con-
strued in an evangelical institution.

B.   Repression of Sexuality

A value system centered on structuring the dormitory like a giant family
had a profound effect on relations between the sexes. This was Grace's com-
ment on the subject:

They tried to keep the girls and the boys apart. I think that they
tried to sort of maintain an atmosphere so that--well, I think there
was an atmosphere maintained there in which a person had a hard
time finding out anything about sexuality. About themselves and
sexuality. I mean, I had no clue about anything, really, until I
was--I don't know, long after I left UBAC.[38]

And in her follow-up letter:

We learned to completely ignore the sexual side of life. This is
probably the largest area that I feel kids from UBAC are
underdeveloped. I don't necessarily mean experience wise. I mean,
we were sheltered from all aspects of sexuality so much that we
had no schema to hang information on. Or such schema as we had
was created from such distorted images that we really couldn't
think about the issue.[39]

---

[37] MN, 22-23.
[38] GP, 19.
[39] Palmquist, Letter, October 30, 1992.

Or here's Kenneth, a late-seventies graduate: "There couldn't be hardly a more weird place in the world to date, to learn the whole process of dating and relating to the opposite sex."[40]

In part that "weirdness" was the result of a lack of opportunities to learn about sexuality and dating. There was almost no contact with young adults who could model courtship behavior. There were, of course, no movies or TV shows either, although most UBAC graduates considered that a plus.

There were other factors as well that made any kind of dating behavior difficult. A striking lack of privacy meant that any conversation between a boy and a girl was immediately public knowledge and was usually taken by the other kids as evidence that the two were going steady. The lack of opportunities for casual dates forced a rapid conversational intimacy. All the potential items of "small talk" were already known, so there was no time for gradually getting acquainted. Jealousy within a small community was also a factor. Parties sponsored by faculty or missionaries on Karawa station pro- vided some of the few opportunities for socializing as a group.

Beyond these factors, part of what Grace called being sheltered from all aspects of sexuality was the result of a deliberate repression of sexuality. There was no sex education in the Academy and almost no attempt to aid teenagers in learning courtship behavior. Sexuality was mentioned only rarely, and then usually in a tone of disapproval of sexual activity.

This situation was, of course, not unique to the Ubangi Academy. Research on MKs, going all the way back to Fleming's 1947 dissertation, has consistently identified relationships with the other sex as a problematic area for MKs. What was perhaps unique at UBAC, however, was the fact that the very act of "figging" confounded the mythology of the UBAC family. Intimacy between the sexes took on an almost incestuous tone that challenged the dorm parents' attempt to operate the dormitory as a family. As Kathryn said, "They wanted us to believe we were more like brothers and sisters, although that didn't always work, you know."[41] A dorm mother's comments reflected the tension between teenagers' natural inclinations to romance versus the exclu- sion of those without partners:

> Some years it would be real nice because everybody would do
> things together, which was healthy. And then there would be
> years when there would be all this coupling up. And then
> inevitably there'd be two or three who would be left home doing
> nothing. And it created a hard atmosphere for Friday nights,
> 'cause that was the night they could have a fig. And those that
> got left found it hard. And it--kind of divisive. So we always felt
> relieved when it didn't develop quite that way.[42]

In the 1970s figging was little regulated. In the eighties the UBAC School Board formally restricted dating to students in grades nine through twelve.[43] The dorm parents added rules eliminating figs on Saturday evenings and after the Sunday evening service. The UBAC family tried to tried to restrict the romantic and sexual bonds between institutional siblings.

---

[40] Kenneth Hefley, 25.

[41] KN, 22.

[42] FM, 19.

[43] UBAC Handbook, (n.d.), 9.

C. Academics and Athletics

As an academic institution, the Ubangi Academy placed a high value on intellectual ability and school performance. This value was shared by teaching faculty, dorm parents and students alike. In the interviews academic ability was frequently listed as one of the primary markers of status among UBAC students. Competition for grades and recognition was intense. Scott had this to say about academics:

> I guess a lot of it was, number--because it was an educational school, that a lot of stature came with doing well at Ubangi Academy. If you were considered someone who did real well you were looked up to. And if you did really, if you were academically proficient, that got a lot of respect from a lot of people. And of course, you know, I think it was common, everyone would know how everyone else was doing in the school 'cause it was so small. So everyone knew the super-brights and everyone knew the average and below. And so that was something that was, I think that was really a big thing.[44]

As in many American schools, math and science were valued above the humanities, and there was a distinct, though not iron-clad, gender differentiation between the areas.

DMT How do you think the gender roles and the division along gender lines expanded or limited your options?

GP Well, you know, I just thought of another thing. I don't know how exactly this got passed on, but the deal with math and science classes. If anybody ever didn't take physics it was a girl. And I was scared to death to take physics. . . . But I think it was a psychological thing at the beginning that physics was not a girl's subject. And I didn't take senior math either. And I think it was partly for the same reason.

DMT That it wasn't a girl's subject.

GP It wasn't a girl's subject. I mean, Ingrid did it. But it wasn't a girl's subject.[45]

Linnea expressed a similar opinion:

LH And I know there was this kind of, also this thing where you had to be, you were supposed to be a good student. Everybody was supposed to be a good student. But, and you didn't talk about it, didn't brag about it, and certainly if you were a wo--a girl you weren't supposed to brag about it or make it known. Even though we would know, you knew that Phyllis was good in English and Gretchen was a good math student. But the guys were more lauded as they could--I think they had more opportunity to show their stuff.[46]

Among the students athletic ability was also a significant path to status. As in American schools, this applied considerably more to the boys than to the girls. With the strong emphasis on academics, though, status gained through athletics only lasted for the afternoon and evening. At 6:30 the next morning the scientists and mathematicians were back on top.

---

[44] SO, 11.

[45] GP, 24.

[46] LH, 15.

D. Traditional Gender Roles

The gender dichotomy that pertained in the areas of academics and athletics also applied to leisure activities. During free hours the options available to the boys far outweighed those open to the girls. In several of the interviews with female UBAC graduates the fairness of this disparity was challenged. Boys had much more freedom to go off the grounds of the Academy and to interact with the Zaïrian people. Boys usually were taught to drive. Girls almost never were. A Pioneer Girls club for grade school girls helped while it was in operation but did not equalize the situation. As Kathryn recalled in a letter she wrote after her interview:

> Boys had infinitely more room to maneuver in outside contacts.
> Being male really set them apart. I have always been envious of
> that status. The boys were able to interact with African life, go
> hunting, get to know the African men on a much more personal
> level than girls. I remember us wanting to go to the village and
> we were denied unless a "big boy" went with us, which of course
> would have taken all the fun out of it. Anyway I have always
> sensed a real intimacy with the African culture when boys speak of
> the past that was always denied the girls.[47]

In part, the dichotomy between the freedom available to girls and boys reflected the real threat of harassment or violence against female expatriates, a threat that has grown in the last decade. A couple of incidents of physical harassment, although relatively minor, pushed dorm parents to take steps to protect the girls. But restrictions on girls also reflected the deeper division between the genders that suffused every aspect of Academy life, from choice of musical instruments to jobs to classes. As we have noted, high school boys were urged to take more years of science and math, the most valued subjects, in the expectation that they would enter professions that need such an education. Girls were more often excused from advanced science and math and steered toward traditional women's vocations or marriage and motherhood. Boys participated in the sports that brought most recognition. A daily diary kept by a high school girl contains entry after entry that reads, "Watched boys play soccer [basketball, softball]."[48] There are no entries that read, "Played soccer while boys watched us."

While UBAC boys had higher status and more freedom, UBAC girls did better at supporting each other across age-group divisions. Even outside the arranged "big sister/little sister" pairings, the older girls spent more time with younger girls than older boys did with younger boys. Carol mentioned both the formal pairings and the more informal contacts with younger girls when she was older. "You became somewhat of a big sister to the little girls. There was the big sister/little sister program, but also informally [you] definitely felt like you were a role model for the younger kids."[49] Female graduates rarely mentioned the hazing, random but sometimes cruel, that male graduates described among the boys.[50]

---

[47] KN, March 22, 1992.
[48] Faith Strelnick, personal diary.
[49] CL, 22.
[50] See also the study of UBAC by Samuelson in Ch.2, Sec.III.C.

E. Separation From the World and Enclosure

The Ubangi Academy lived in uneasy tension with both the host culture of northwest Zaïre and the sending culture of North America. Its values and its role in the mission enterprise of evangelism and conversion led it to distance itself deliberately from both cultures. Boarding students had little contact with Zaïrian people apart from dish teams and casual contacts with other men who worked for the dorm. A few of the boys made friends with Zaïrian boys their age, and in the 1980s a bi-racial soccer team provided more contact. Hunting also brought many of the boys together with Zaïrian men. Few girls had Zaïrian friends at Karawa, though some had more contact on vacations at their home station. High school students could also go to village churches on Sunday mornings to teach Sunday School and accompany congregational singing on their musical instruments. But on the whole the students in the dorm had very little involvement with Zaïrian people, life, and culture.

One student described UBAC as "a clean colony," set aside from the world in an attempt to create a truly Christian environment.[51] Grace portrayed the Academy in these terms:

GP When I look back on it, I don't know, UBAC was some sort of enclave, you know, just a--we were completely separated from the Zaïrians, completely separated from the Zaïrians. The only ones we ever saw were ones who worked at UBAC.

DMT How did you relate to them?

GP I tried to be friendly, but most of the time I didn't know any of their names even, any of the workers' names. I really didn't.

And thirty seconds later:

DMT How much do you think you learned about Zaïrian culture or history?

GP I would say almost nil. I really think so. I really think almost nil, I mean--every--and I don't know where I got this impression from, whether it was from UBAC or whether it was from my parents or a combination of all of the above, but I was sort of under the impression that all of the things the Zaïrians did, social activities, all of their social activities and things that they did were things that people shouldn't do. Dancing, drinking, I mean.

DMT So you weren't encouraged, you were discouraged from even learning about the social activities of the Zaïrians.

GP Sure, sure. Then, how can you learn about the people?[52]

UBAC was not only cut off from the Zaïrian people and their culture, it was also cut off in many ways from American culture as well. The interview with Grace continued:

DMT The other part of it was about UBAC seeing itself in relation to the world outside Zaïre.

GP Again I think I sort of felt like UBAC was the--a sort of small community which had the best elements of, which had the best elements morally, which had the best elements of the Western culture kind of thing. The people, the behavior--I don't know, it's funny. I felt like when you left from there you were the cream of the

---

[51] Adrian Fox, 15.
[52] GP, 22.

crop. If you had gone to UBAC you came out cream of the crop.
A good, educated, responsible person. So, people would come from
the States and be "statesie" and, ooh, they were just--I didn't
understand them, and I didn't like them. I thought they were, or
the things that they did were always bad, they were always bad,
the things that they--or the ways that they dressed, or the ways
they talked, the interests they had, they were always bad.[53]

Michael offered his own perspective on the results of UBAC's isolation:

One of the things that growing up in the jungle did was to not
give us a very wide experience of other kinds of people. Sounds
strange, 'cause we're surrounded by Ngbakas and Mongbandis
and--but we really never had, never knew any Catholics. Or Jews.
Or even Italians. . . . So I was thinking that it's really weird that
we grew up with such a narrow cross-section of the people that I
encounter every day now.[54]

This cut-off from both the sending culture and the surrounding culture
is part of the process within total institutions that Goffman calls "disculturation," "the removal of certain behavior opportunities and . . . failure to keep
pace with recent social changes on the outside."[55] For UBAC students, disculturation meant that much of the opportunity for personal, cultural enrichment through contact with a different society went unrealized.

But the disculturation of UBAC students was far from total. While staff
members wanted UBAC to be something of a "clean colony," they also knew
that the third culture of the boarding school was only a temporary context for
its students. When students left the Academy they would have to be able to
function in American society. As one faculty member said:

CS   The more or less general way of thinking that everybody more or
      less got into by the time Easter comes around, again is this
      "statesie" versus UBAC thing. Hey, the way the people in the
      States do things is a little bit weird and it takes a little while to
      get that out of you kids and get you back into the right way of
      thinking. But yet, at the same time, UBAC was trying--and I don't
      know as we could say this was something we were doing overtly,
      although it was subconscious there in all of us--were trying to get
      you ready to go back to America. So we had a Halloween party
      even though there's an awful lot of people who said, "You shouldn't
      have Halloween parties. That's worshipping the devil." You know,
      you're dressed up in cool costumes and had fun on Halloween. We
      had initiation because it was something that is done here in
      America, in college, if not in high school. So we wanted to get the
      States out of you, but at the same time we wanted preparation for
      the States. So the textbooks that we were using were stateside
      textbooks. We weren't using textbooks from a Christian publishing
      company which were teaching necessarily a Christian point of view
      because you were going to go back to a public school and this is
      the textbook you were gonna have. So we were trying to get you
      ready for the States. College or high school. But at the same time
      we were trying to get that stateside influence out of you.[56]

---

[53] Ibid., 22.
[54] MN, 1.
[55] Goffman, 13. See above, Ch.3, Sec.II.C.1.
[56] Carl Strom, 31.

In the '80s the cultural contacts shifted to include more contact with American culture at the expense of awareness of Zaïrian culture. More frequent travel to and from America, an increase in the number of short-term missionaries, and the proliferation of portable, affordable electronic equipment to play pop music all contributed to a greater familiarity with contemporary American life. At the same time, UBAC students' contact with Zaïrian people and culture decreased. Fewer students spoke Lingala fluently and fewer spent time in the villages. Even the joint soccer team proved a mixed blessing. Difficulty with crowd control at games on the Academy field led to calls for the erection of a fence around the UBAC property. The Academy became more cut off from its immediate surroundings, more enclosed, even as it became a little more open to America.

V. Summary

The Ubangi Academy was a small, intense world of its own. The model of a family combined with the obvious realities of a total institution to form a hybrid institutional family. This tension between familial and institutional realities ran throughout the interviews.

UBAC was a family of families, formed by students and dorm parents who brought with them legacies, feelings, roles, and balances of fairness from their own families. Going away to boarding school continued a legacy of calling and separation in service of a higher loyalty to God that began with parents' call to the mission field. In the institutional family biological families were subjected to deconstructive pressures. Siblings, even siblings of the same sex, roomed separately, ate at separate tables except when random seating assignments placed them together, played separately, and often worshiped separately. Loyalty to age-group peers contested with sibling loyalty. Most importantly, direct relating between parents and children was sharply curtailed and not fully restored during vacations. This type of cut-off between people on the inside and people on the outside is one of the central characteristics of a total institution, and UBAC followed the pattern. Students were removed from their primary familial contexts, afforded limited opportunity for interaction with parents, and placed under pressure to conform and "seem."

Dorm parents faced the physically and emotionally grueling task of caring for thirty to fifty-five students. Requesting them to take on that task could be construed as a form of parentification by the mission and school board. Treating UBAC as a big family gave opportunity for some genuine give-and-take between dorm parents and students. The dorm parents made a massive effort on behalf of the kids, and they did receive some caring in return, especially from the older girls. But the family model could not change the ratio of one couple to as many as 55 kids. There could never be the same amount of direct relating between students and dorm parents as in a normal size family. And on occasion, when dorm parents were not adequately supported, their considerable entitlement could turn destructive, leading to guilt-induced parentification of students.

Days at UBAC were full and the pace of life was rapid. There was little time or place to withdraw in privacy. Students were, as one person said, constantly on display—to each other, to the dorm parents and teachers, to other missionaries, and to the Zaïrians. This meant they were also constantly available to each other. When you arrived at the dorm you immediately had friends, whether you liked them or not. Kids had to make things work among themselves, and somehow they usually did.

With all the flux in their lives, UBAC students often became strongly attached to the settings and routines of the Academy. They resisted change in their institutional family. UBAC was the most stable context outside their nuclear family, so they wanted it to stay the same.

A central value of love and respect provided the foundational ideology for the institutional family. Love and respect sometimes formed the foundation for relating. At other times these were mere slogans used to pressure students to conform to UBAC norms. Pressure for conformity could be intense. It was reinforced theologically and guaranteed in practice by the virtual absence of options for social support and validation.

Relations between the sexes were shaped within the twin contexts of a pietistic repression of sexuality and a family model of the Academy that looked askance on romantic attachments between pseudo-siblings. The resulting pattern of "figging" was idiosyncratic and restrained.

Academic pressure was intense, and students' relative levels of academic performance were commonly compared by their peers. Status among one's peers could also be gained through athletic ability, especially skill at soccer.

While conformity restricted all students' options for behavior, belief, and thought, girls were most seriously confined. Even their movement on and off the UBAC campus was regulated far more than boys'. Female students were more often excused from advanced science and math classes, and were consistently steered toward traditional women's roles and occupations.

UBAC lived in an uneasy middle ground between its American roots and its African surroundings, intrigued yet suspicious of the former and involved in the transformation but also service of the latter. Both outside cultures were held at arm's length, forming a third culture that nurtured Christian faith and kept kids safe, but also missed opportunities for enrichment.

This was the context in which the subjects of this study boarded their selves each year. The next chapter takes up the individual stories of students and their families and develops a typology of the consequences of boarding at the Ubangi Academy.

Chapter 5

Cases and Consequences

I. Introduction

Each August a new group of students arrives at the Ubangi Academy
from widely scattered mission stations and the institutional family is
reconstituted. Though the students leave their families of origin behind, in a
real sense they come to UBAC accompanied by their families, bringing parents,
siblings, and grandparents with them through history, feelings and memories,
roles and communication, and ledgers of fairness. Though they all enter the
same school, in the interaction of their individual selves and their unique
families with the Academy it becomes a different context for each student.
The consequences of boarding the self are different for each student and each
family.

This section presents four pictures of the consequences of boarding the
self at the Ubangi Academy. Each type is based on one or two principal case
studies, augmented with the stories of others whose experience was similar.
The four types are called "The Resilient Self in Resources," "The 'Perfect' Self
in Silence," "The Passive Self in the Institutional Family," and "The Transi-
tional Self in Changing Contexts." Each of the first three types was
represented by three of the graduates interviewed and the fourth type was
represented by four graduates. Of the remaining three interviewees, one was
a mixed resilient/transitional self, one never boarded and so was not included
in the types, and one was not included because the interview could not be
recorded and there was insufficient data.

"The Resilient Self in Resources" describes the experience of the UBAC
students whose self-delineation was strongest. These students received
strong parental support well before they went to the Academy, and remained
engaged with their parents through their first separation and on during their
years at the dorm. As a result, they were able to engage the institutional
family in challenging dialogue at several points, to give and receive
throughout their time at the Academy. They developed resilient selves, able
to face the demands on them and to individuate well at school and home.

"The 'Perfect' Self in Silence," by contrast, refers to the students who
most obviously presented wounded, conforming selves to the Ubangi Academy.
In this section's two central cases, both featuring female students, the first
experience of boarding at the Academy was traumatically painful. Feeling
abandoned at boarding school, these girls abruptly cut their emotional ties
with their parents and dissociated from their pain. The one male student in
this type did not experience a traumatic first visit to the Academy, but
eventually was equally cut off from his parents. This cut-off decimated the
direct relating between these students and their families, resulting in the
non-dialogical distance I call silence. In that silence all three were vulnerable
to the destructive idealization by the Academy that these students called the
demand for perfection.

"The Passive Self in the Institutional Family" falls somewhere between the
first two types. These students fit well within the UBAC institutional family.
They were welcomed, supported and at home there. Like the resilient stu-
dents, they were relatively comfortable with their boarding experience. Like
the 'perfect' students, however, they did become distant from their parents,
albeit more gradually than that group. Without an ongoing dialogue with their
parents they did not delineate themselves well, accepting the identities and
roles assigned them by the school. In the interviews they often presented

themselves more as children of the Academy institutional family than as children of their own families, ascribing more importance to the give-and-take with the dorm parents than to relationships with their parents. Although most have fared well, in the central case in this section a female student's passivity and distance from familial support played a role in her serious depression.

"The Transitional Self in Changing Contexts" describes students and families on whom UBAC left relatively little mark. This section concentrates on the stories of the children of Grace Brethren missionaries who came to the Academy from the Central African Republic, although some Free Church and Covenant MKs fit this type as well. The Brethren students first came to UBAC late in their school careers--rarely before seventh grade and often not until high school. The dynamics of the school and of each class were well established by the time they joined, so they had difficulty breaking into the institutional family. For the most part they remained on the fringes. Even when they participated fully in life at UBAC, for them it remained just another place they had to live for a few years, never a second home. Other contexts were more influential. They passed through and moved on.

II. The Resilient Self in Resources

Grace's parents, like so many, were headed to the mission field before they ever met each other. They did not know where they would go, they did not know which mission board they would join, but they knew they would go. When they eventually joined a mission board it was with the understanding that they would be going to South America. A missionary to Zaïre convinced them they were needed more in Africa, so they changed their plans.

Grace's parents began planning for her schooling even before they completed language study in Belgium. When she was in first grade, taught at home by her mother, the whole family visited the Ubangi Academy. Grace remembers her excitement about that visit. She made friends with one of the second-graders, and began to look forward to coming to the dorm the next fall.

Back home, the family maintained an ongoing conversation about their options.

GP I think I remember Mom saying, "Now you don't have to go if you don't want to." But I wanted to go, so--and I don't remember how I made my decision, but I wanted to go.

DMT But it was an open thing of conversation in your family. You don't have to go if you don't want, but you can go.

GP Right! And I think another thing of open conversation was that Mom wasn't sure if--she didn't know what she wanted to do. She was very upset. She would be very very sad at me leaving. And that I knew, I think, too. For some reason I think I knew--I mean, I know I knew that. But I decided to go anyway.[1]

Although Grace knew her mother would miss her when she went off to school, she also knew she was not responsible to take care of her mother or to try to ease her mother's grief. In fact, she wondered in the interview if she might not have taken her mother's anticipated sadness as some sort of motivation for actually going away. As best as she could recall, though, her

---

[1] Grace Palmquist, 7-8.

primary motivation for going to UBAC was to be with all the other kids. Gaining some independence from her parents was a secondary consideration, and their feelings were not a significant factor in her decision. She knew her mother would be sad, but she knew her mother could cope with sadness.

Grace's preparation for going to UBAC was handled carefully. She saw the Academy the year before she went, the family had open discussions about her leaving, she knew how her parents, and especially her mother, felt, yet she was not parentified into taking responsibility for their sadness, and she was promised that if UBAC did not work well the family would find an alternative. Grace went to UBAC with a secure base of reliable parental caring behind her, confident of her parents' support.

> I've always said that it was a fine experience for me. It's not
> always a good experience for all kids, but I thought it was a fine
> experience for me, and I thought that the reason it was okay for
> me was partly because I didn't feel rejected. . . . I mean, I never
> felt sent away.[2]

In sharp contrast to two students we will encounter in the next section, Grace never felt sent away or sacrificed to her parents' higher calling. She knew they had an important obligation to fulfill, but she was no less important to them because of their strong commitment to the mission. Watching her mother struggle with the decision to let her go away for second grade, Grace realized her mother was attempting to honor both loyalties. She knew any decision would consider her fully.

Despite her parents' careful preparation and clear support, Grace's first year at the dorm was often hard. She remembers being sick to her stomach often. She said, "I was always getting sick, I was always throwing up. I didn't feel bad, but all of a sudden, wyrrupp."[3]

The night before Grace's interview I had been talking about homesickness with some of her UBAC contemporaries. One of them brought up Grace's name: "Grace was never homesick," she said, "she was just sick."

When I mentioned that comment to Grace she replied:

> You see, I was just thinking about that just now. I don't know.
> Now, the funny thing is, I only remember crying once in second
> grade, when my parents came to visit, you know, some program or
> other, and they were going to leave and I was supposed to be put-
> ting away, doing dishes, I think it was right after breakfast, or at
> lunch. Anyway, they were leaving and I remember I was sitting on
> one of their laps just crying, crying, crying, crying, crying, and
> knowing that I was going to get in trouble because I was supposed
> to be putting away, but I was crying on my parent's lap. That's
> one time I remember crying.[4]

Grace went on to say that the dorm helper that year remembers her crying a lot, but she does not. She only remembers throwing up. Clearly she was often unhappy, but those memories have faded.

During that first year, one of the big challenges to Grace was keeping her person and her room neat and at least moderately clean. Her struggles with the chores of daily maintenance were an area of shame.

> I lived with Helen Sundquist one of those terms my second grade
> year, and I remember that Aunt Sarah was just appalled at how our

---

[2] Ibid., 34.
[3] Ibid., 9.
[4] Ibid., 10.

room was. And we were in bed one night and she came down with
Aunt Ruth Jacobson or someone and we had a drawer open and it
was full of dirty laundry. And we had forgotten to put it out or
something, I don't know, and it was--I don't remember what she
said, or anything, but we just lay in bed and we were terribly
embarrassed that this other lady was there, also a stranger, and
we had done this terrible thing in not putting out our laundry.[5]

All things considered, though, Grace remembers her first years at the
Academy as an essentially positive experience. She never went through the
searing pain of perceived abandonment described by some students, so she
never cut the ties with her parents as they did. Grace remained connected
and the ledger between her parents and her remained open to reworking and
renegotiation. She had a secure base for facing the UBAC institutional family.

Early in the interview, Grace presented herself as a conformist who tried
her best to fit into the mainstream of UBAC life. Her phrase for the dominant
theological theme of the dorm was "live to honor God." She elaborated on that
theme.

That would mean obeying all the rules at the dorm. It would mean
studying very hard at school and working very hard to get good
grades, to succeed. It would mean cleaning your room well. It
would mean doing the duties that you have, like doing the dishes,
doing them well, doing them immediately, not complaining about it.
It would mean respecting the dorm parents.[6]

In return for living to honor God she gained the respect and affection of
the adult missionary "aunts" and "uncles." This began with the dorm parents,
but it extended to the missionaries on Grace's home station.

I think I liked them. I think I got their love. Yeah. That they
cared about me. And when I went back home that I could enjoy
being with them. I mean, we did stuff with them, various ones.
But, they would have the kids over for supper, or this or that, so
it was, yeah, it was--I think a similar relation to what someone
might have to a real aunt or uncle, or a neighbor, a close neigh-
bor, you know, that kind of thing. So I guess, just their love,
their care.[7]

From Grace's perspective, this was often part of a reliable, personal give-
and-take between her and the dorm parents or other missionaries. At other
times, though, it was more like an impersonal pressure to conform. In a
follow-up letter she expanded her description of the pressure to conform and
the ways conformity was expected. Her letter revealed the cost in restricted
self-delineation of these pressures.

The first idea that comes to my mind is that NO ONE was
encouraged to be different than anyone else. The only exception to
this was that if a person wanted to follow the expectations more
than the norm this was encouraged. . . . Any other kind of devia-
tion from normal was not encouraged. Examples: everyone had to
be in choir--even Steve North before he absolutely refused.
Everyone (almost) was in band. Everyone took all subjects whether
really required or not. Everyone always went to devotions, came to

---

[5] Ibid., 11.
[6] Ibid., 15.
[7] Ibid., 16.

every meal, ate as much oatmeal as they were told to, etc. Following the rules was the way to gain trust and everyone had to gain trust before they would be considered a "real" person. . . .

What was a person supposed to be like? Obedient to the letter of the law, even the letter of the tiny laws. Never walk outside barefoot. Always ask permission to go on the mission. Be in bed on the dot, etc. This applied to a person's thoughts also, in my opinion. A person was not supposed to think bad thoughts about other people. A person was not supposed to get angry and always consider the other person first. These two final things certainly did not encourage a sense of self. If I was trying to control my thoughts in those two areas, when was I to think about myself as an additional entity in the issue?[8]

A certain "boys will be boys" atmosphere allowed male students to test the limits to some degree, but even they were expected to be highly conforming. Conformity was heavily reinforced through theology. "Christianity (and thus life) had only one acceptable way, therefore the real life was trying to conform to the mold. Conformity was directly proportional to maturity."[9]

Grace addressed the cost to the self of conformity.

With all of this conforming to expectations, I feel that a person's self really got ignored. And the most ignoring of the self came in the teenage years when a person is supposed to be discovering him/her self. We learned to ignore our feelings and thoughts. We learned not to think too deeply about things because then we might find discrepancies in adult words and behavior.[10]

For a while Grace would even slap her own cheek if she said something she shouldn't have said. The behavior control of the institutional family had been so effectively internalized that she would punish herself for not conforming to expectations.

As the interview progressed and Grace talked about her later years at UBAC, she began to speak less of her conformity and more about her developing sense of difference from the expectations of the institutional family. Her tone changed when we began to talk about her images of God. As a teenager Grace envisioned God as holy, and therefore to be respected and obeyed. When I pointed out how similar this image sounded to a dorm parent, she replied,

Yeah, perhaps, but more dependable, more just, maybe. I think I thought of him as being--never making mistakes, always making the right decision about something or having the correct [information] about something, whereas dorm parents weren't necessarily always right. And then I would, I could disagree with them. At least, I don't know if I ever did. Oh, yeah, not too often face to face. At least--but I could.[11]

Here Grace was talking in the language of relational ethics. God, to her, was dependable and just, and deserving of respect and obedience. Dorm parents were fallible, but they did allow for disagreement.

Grace went on to recount one incident when she took on a dorm father directly.

----

8 Palmquist, Letter, October 30, 1992.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid.
11 GP, 17.

GP I yelled at Uncle John once, Uncle John Rockport. I yelled at him,
    and then I left, I went down the hall. I didn't give him any
    chance to answer me back.
DMT Do you remember what it was about?
GP Yeah. . . . I was tussling around with Gary Lawson in the living
    room, you know, tussling around. I mean, I don't know what we
    were doing. But Uncle John came out and said that it wasn't
    appropriate. And I, I was already mad at him for I don't know
    what--there was a lot of things everybody was mad at them for
    that year, so--and I think I was probably mad about something else
    that was restricting people's actions. It might have been that some
    other people were yelled at for being too noisy or doing something
    in the living room, right? And I was feeling like, heck, if you
    can't live in the living room, then what's it for, pray tell, and
    where else are we supposed to live? Where else are we supposed
    to see anyone else besides girls? Where else was there to con-
    gregate? I mean, I think I was feeling all those kind of things.
    So I don't remember what I yelled at him about, except I must have
    said that there was nothing wrong with it, that we were just goof-
    ing around. . . . So that's what I yelled at him about.[12]

Yelling and walking away is not exactly dialogue, but it was a way of
testing the relationship. Grace declared herself and was heard. She was con-
sidered, not punished.

As she tested her relationship with the dorm parents, Grace began to
gain some perspective on UBAC life. She did not usually assert herself in
public, but she began to offer herself some consideration in various situations.
She began to ask what was fair and right for her. She gained some critical
distance from both the dorm parents and the most rebellious students
(primarily boys), giving each side due consideration, then taking her own
position based on what she felt to be fair.

I always felt responsible for helping the dorm parents feel good.
So I would always do my jobs very well, right away, sometimes help
extra in the kitchen, or something. But I was kind of in the mid-
dle. I would listen to the rebels and listen to what they had to
say, and sometimes agree with them, but I would also try to be
rational and try to explain maybe where the dorm parents were
coming from.[13]

Reflecting on that in-the-middle position, Grace said, "When I think about
it now I felt pretty--I don't know if lonely is the word, but just, I felt, by
myself for various lengths of time. It was just me taking care of me."[14] What
she did not add was that she was also trying to take care of both the dorm
parents and the older boys. There was some degree of parentification in this,
but it did not seem particularly damaging to her.

Grace's ability to consider her side and assert herself was rooted in her
mother's consideration of her before she ever went to boarding school. She
was supported from those early years in thinking about what would be fair
for her in relationships. As she entered adolescence, her mother further
encouraged Grace's efforts at self-delineation and due consideration.

---

[12] Ibid., 18.
[13] Ibid., 27.
[14] Ibid., 28.

When I was about twelve I remember Mom saying something about that I was old enough to--asking me for my opinion about something, and saying that I was old enough to have input, or to give opinions that she would consider, that she would think about.[15]

This kind of early parental support emerged in several interviews as a key to self-delineation at UBAC. Timothy, a contemporary of Grace's at the Academy, also entered UBAC with strong backing from his parents. Timothy first attended the Academy in fifth grade, but he entered as a day student, not a border. He found his classmates arranged in well-established cliques, yet open to letting in a new person. In time he was able to find a secure place in the social structure of the school.

During his four years as a day student Timothy gained some critical distance from the UBAC system by living at home, out of the institutional family. His parents supported him by their own demythologizing of the larger missionary context.

TW   Dad had this expression. . . , and I think about it a lot. He said that missionaries live like brothers and sisters but don't fight like brothers and sisters. And I think that's true.

DMT   They live like brothers and sisters but don't fight like--what do they fight like? Or don't they fight?

TW   They don't fight. They avoid conflict.[16]

Timothy furthered demystified the missionary context by identifying other prominent myths on his own.

TW   I think that somehow there was a myth that . . . the adult is always right. The adult is always right. And the child, no matter what happened, you really didn't, it wasn't up to you to go against an adult. And that, and too, you weren't really supposed to question the roles, I don't think. I don't think you were.

DMT   So there's, yeah, a myth that the adults were always right and that the rules that were in place were right and that the kids were--

TW   And that they had actually been well thought out, you know.[17]

And a bit later:

TW   I think too that it was a myth, and I don't think it was a legitimate myth, was that, the myth was that you don't ask questions, really. And the myth was that--or you don't question your faith, really. But the myth, too, was that if you questioned it that people wouldn't know how to react. And I think people would have been more open to it if we had pursued it. I think that was a myth too.[18]

After four years at Karawa, Timothy' parents were transferred to another mission station. Timothy entered the dormitory for two years. Although never stridently rebellious, he began to resist some of the pressures of the Academy institutional family. He complained to a member of the school board that he didn't think the dorm parents were doing a good job. When the board member answered that the board had chosen this couple for the job, Timothy challenged him, replying, "Well, I don't think [so]. I think they were

---

[15] Ibid., 28.
[16] Timothy Walsh, 21.
[17] Ibid., 22.
[18] Ibid., 23.

kind of somebody that would do it. I don't think you really chose them."[19]
On another occasion he and his girlfriend had a long conversation with the
dorm parents about new restrictions on dating that had been enacted
primarily to reduce the time a second couple spent together.

On both of these occasions Timothy found he was listened to carefully.
He did not get the action he desired, but he did get a thorough hearing. The
system was restrictive and controlling, yet there was some room for a strong
self to be heard and considered. The context was not completely institutional
and rule-based. There was room for dialogue. Contrary to the myth, ques-
tions could be raised and would be considered.

For Faith, a student from the Grace Brethren mission in the Central
African Republic, resiliency of self meant resisting pressure from her peers
more than pressure from the dorm parents or teachers. Faith's family did not
go to Africa until she was ten years old, so she did not experience an early
separation from her parents. She attended the Grace Brethren grade school
in the Central African Republic for several years, had another year of school
in America, then transferred to UBAC when her family returned to Africa. By
the time she entered the Academy she was already in high school.

Although moving to Africa meant separation from her parents, Faith felt
their relationship actually improved when she went away to school.

> I felt that our relationship with our parents changed for the posi-
> tive, definitely, Africa over Stateside. Once we got there, in other
> words. And I don't know if it was because of taking them for
> granted. . . or if it was because we didn't have so many of the
> buttin' heads interactions. But I really felt that the time that we
> spent in Africa drew our family closer than we'd ever been.
> Obviously we didn't spend as much time together, but when we
> were together--and we used to never do this in the States--we'd
> get together on the front porch frequently, almost every night of
> vacation, get the guitars out, and we'd sing. The whole family!
> We'd sing and we'd talk and we'd tell stories. We didn't do that in
> the States.[20]

Her first few years in the Brethren boarding school Faith had found
leaving for school very painful. She was comforted by realizing that her
parents were also grieving her departure.

> It was real tough in fifth and sixth grade for me to leave. And I
> remember one time, when we were getting ready to get on the
> truck, I was back in Mom and Dad's bedroom just bawling and
> bawling 'cause I didn't want to go, and my dad came in and he
> said, "You really need to go," you know. And he hugged me and,
> and I looked up and he was sobbing. My dad! And all of a sud-
> den I just thought, "Oh no, my dad's sobbing!" And that was the
> first time it ever dawned on me how difficult it was for them. And
> that gave me a whole new--then I didn't want to cry anymore
> 'cause I didn't want to make him cry. It really affected me. And I
> really thought, "Boy," you know. "It really is tough for them."
> And I could really respect what they were doing. I didn't think of
> the whole situation as being rebellious against them: "Why do you
> make me go?" But realizing, I guess, that they had to do this and

---

[19] Ibid., 22.
[20] Faith Strelnick, 23-24.

it was something they didn't really want to do. And that did make
a big difference, I think, for our relationship.[21]
    This incident could have been parentifying if Faith had been made to feel
responsible for her father's grief, but in the Strelnick family the pain of
leaving was so open and so multi-sided that it became a trust-building
honesty. The shared grief confirmed the family members' loyalty and sup-
ported an honest dialogue between parents and daughter. As a teen, Faith
said, she never rebelled—or even wanted to. "And I think maybe part of that
was that drawing together of, you know, they're on our side. We can do this
together."[22]
    When Faith arrived at UBAC, then, she had a well-established sense of
self, supported by a solid, open relationship with her parents. At UBAC she
found herself subjected to strong pressure to conform to social expectations,
pressure that came more from the other kids than from the adults. In a
follow-up letter Faith wrote, "I did feel a pressure to conform. I went along
for a while, but I couldn't stand it! It wasn't me! I dropped the guards, I
feel, and for the most part acted myself (goofy, odd, speak my mind). . . ."[23]
    Later in the letter Faith clarified both the source of her self-confidence
and the difference between resisting her peers and rebelling against the dorm
parents.

> Coming as a 15-year old I felt a little more confident, I think, to
> buck the system a little and buck tradition at times. (I'm a little
> that way to this day. . . .) I certainly was not a rebel, however,
> and had no interest in breaking established dorm rules, just those
> unspoken social "rules."[24]

    In contrast to Timothy and Grace, Faith's main tension was with the pres-
sure for conformity applied by her peers, not with the expectations of the
dorm parents. Secure in herself, sustained by the loyalty and care of her
parents, she could buck that system and eventually win recognition from her
peers for being her own person. "[I] came to a point of realizing that I was
accepted and I was an acceptable person the way I was. I didn't have to
change. I didn't have to be different for people to like me."[25] And in her
letter: "Looking back, I feel pretty comfortable with who I was at UBAC. It
was definitely a high point in my life."[26]
    For Grace, the years after she left UBAC have taken a painfully ironic
turn. The resilience of her self was nurtured by honest, caring consideration
from her parents, especially her mother. But dialogue between them
eventually stalled and stagnated. During her first year in college Grace met
people who thought and acted very differently from her yet still considered
themselves good Christians. Then she realized that people who did not con-
sider themselves Christians at all could be good people. She was forced to
reconsider substantial portions of her value system. That led her to question
her parents' missionary enterprise.

> My big problem with this missions business is that everyone thinks
> that, "I know exactly how everybody should be and I'm going to

---

[21] Ibid., 24-25.

[22] Ibid., 25.

[23] Strelnick, Letter, November 3, 1992.

[24] Ibid.

[25] FS, 49. "Accepted" is a key word for the resilient selves, much as "pain"
    is for "perfect" selves.

[26] Strelnick, Letter, November 3, 1992.

show you what you should be like. I'm going to tell you what you
should be like." And I don't think that that's, I don't think that's
at all appropriate.[27]

For several years Grace kept her opinions hidden from her parents,
afraid of their reactions. When her relationship with a man who is not a
Christian began to grow serious, she decided to open the topic with her
parents. Grace recounted the story of that exchange with evident concern for
her mother, coupled with frustration and longing for a closer relationship.

GP   So I wrote to them and explained to them to some extent. But what
      does she say? They both just, they both are just certain that
      what they believe is the right thing and everybody has to believe
      it, and anybody who doesn't believe it MUST believe it.

DMT   It comes with a real sense of imperative.

GP   Absolutely. It's either you must believe it or else this is what's
      going to happen to you. Yeah. It's that cut and dried. It's you
      must believe this or else you're lost for ever. And we will just—
      we will just—I don't know—stand by what we think forever, hoping
      that you will end up agreeing with us.

DMT   They're, I mean, they sound kind of fixed there and you either
      have to come to that—there's no movement on their side.

GP   Absolutely none.

DMT   You don't sound too inclined to move, all the way to there.

GP   No! No! It's not a good situation. It's not a good situation for
      Phil, you know, I mean, you can imagine, so they're not all inclined
      to move. And we had a discussion not long before they went to
      Germany—and I end up just being quiet there because I know that
      they're like, you know, I know what they're like. So I'm not going
      to bother trying to convince them some other way, because I know
      they're not going to be convinced. . . . Other people can't be the
      way they want to be. Everybody must believe this way. That's
      why they do what they do. That's why they're missionaries.

DMT   There's no allowance in there for dialogue about this. It's, I
      mean, it sounds very monological.

GP   It is. It's very monological, there's no dialogue. There's no
      dialogue. . . there's just no flexibility. No, no allowance for dif-
      ferences of opinions about beliefs, specifically. . . .[28]

With dialogue about matters of religious belief cut off, Grace finds herself
estranged from the center of her parents' lives.

      They're missionaries because they know that this is the truth for
      the whole world. And, this is the most important thing in life. So,
      this is the main topic of conversation. This is the main focus of
      their lives. So, I really have very little connection, I feel, with
      them at all, specifically my mother, because that is her whole life.
      If I don't agree with that, then what can I talk to her about? And
      what can I listen to her talk about?[29]

Conversation has been reduced from the open dialogue of early years to
nervous chatting, "filling up the space," in Grace's words. The space grows
wider, more difficult to fill. As Grace becomes convinced that she "knows
what they're like" she cuts them off from her side.

---

27 GP, 23.
28 Ibid., 12-13.
29 Ibid., 13-14.

Sometimes this estrangement is painful. Other times it's simply taken for granted, a part of a boarding student's history. Grace wrestles with the whole range of emotions and ethical struggles stirred up by the situation. What does she still owe her parents? What does she have the right to expect from them? How much of the guilt she feels is truly warranted?

DMT Boy, that's a tough one, isn't it, to be that cut off from your parents?

GP Yeah. But I don't know. It doesn't seem—it does bother me, but on the other hand it doesn't bother me that much. I don't know if that's really true that it doesn't really bother me that much. But they're never around anyway, and they haven't been around since second grade. So, it's not that strange.[30]

Not that strange, perhaps, but no less tragic for that reason. Feelings of intimacy are gone, but the inescapable connection of the fact of their existence remains.

Supported by her parents, Grace's resilient self emerged in family, Academy and college contexts. In fact, she closed her letter with a second postscript added a week after the body of the letter: "Amazingly, after all I've said, I still liked UBAC!"[31]

When she developed beliefs at odds with her parents, though, both sides pulled back, torn between their differing convictions and the connections between their lives. The resiliency her parents helped establish in her proved too threatening when it led to resistance to their missionary enterprise.

Timothy continues to test with his parents the limits of the dialogue they can have about his experiences at the Academy. Shortly after he graduated from college, a few years before the interview, they had a series of long conversations about life at UBAC. Timothy remembers his parents' reactions when they heard some of his thoughts and feelings. "I remember Mom said something to the effect, 'Here we've given our whole lives over there, and then to think that we have not taken care of things at home.' That, I think, was really hard for them."[32] Yet the tension over UBAC remains. When Timothy told his parents he was to be interviewed about the Academy, their first comment was, "It's all positive for you, I expect."[33] Timothy's sensitivity to his parents' feelings of guilt sometimes makes him wish it was all positive for him, but he cannot say it was. He and his parents continue to engage gingerly, to test what their relationship will bear.

III. The 'Perfect' Self in Silence

"I remember thinking, 'I can't tell [my parents] how bad I feel, 'cause they'll feel so miserable.' But then again I was afraid that maybe they wouldn't feel miserable."[34]

Here was the essential dilemma of the young boarding student. While she was intensely miserable away from home, loyalty to her parents compelled her to hide her pain in an attempt to spare them. At the same time, she

---

[30] Ibid., 14-15.
[31] Palmquist, Letter, November 7, 1992.
[32] TW, 27.
[33] Ibid., 26.
[34] Sandra Young, follow-up interview.

struggled to know what her parents' act of sending her to boarding school meant for her relationship with them. Did they still care enough about her to sense her pain? Would it have mattered to them if they had known how badly she was hurting? Or were their loyalties elsewhere? Were they so focused on their vocation that they were immune to the pain of their child?

Unasked, the question went unanswered. The little girl wrote every week--letters describing how happy she was and all the wonderful things she was doing. Only occasionally did she let her sadness show by writing, "Do you love me, yes or no?" with spaces to check one,[35] or by ending a letter, "Can I come home now, please, please, please?"[36]

Home for a weekend, Sandra loved the first day. Saturday night she began to cry, anticipating the hurt of leaving Sunday afternoon. If she was just going to cry the whole weekend, her parents warned, maybe she had better not come home for weekends any more. She learned not to cry, as much to spare her parents reminders of their loss as to keep her weekend privileges.

Years later, now an adult, she asked her mother about those letters she had sent from school. Her mother still had them all, neatly bundled in a trunk in an uncle's attic, but said she could not read them because they were so filled with her daughter's unspoken sadness. Mother offered a brief glimpse into her pain, then closed it off and did not mention it further. Her daughter did not ask again. Mother and daughter remained disengaged, driven apart by an ancient, unhealed split. What might have been said if one of them had dared break the silence?

Kathryn Nordlund's connection to the mission field began long before she was born. For many years Kathryn's mother had wanted to be a missionary. Mrs. Nordlund's high school dream, in fact, had been to go to China. The Communist takeover ended that dream, and when she fell in love with a college classmate who planned to go to the Congo their future was settled. Answering the call of God, they left their parents and siblings in the United States and took their two children on the boat across the Atlantic.

Kathryn and her younger brother were born during that first term in the Congo. While both of their parents worked full-time in evangelism and literacy training, the children were cared for by a Congolese "mobateli" (literally, "care-giver"). Kathryn now credits her mobatelis with helping her develop the profound respect for the sanctity of the earth and its people that sustains her now that she has left the organized religion of her parents.

By the time Kathryn was seven, old enough to go to the Ubangi Academy, she had inherited her family's legacy of leaving in service to God. She had visited grandparents in the States while on home assignment, so she knew her parents had left their parents. She had watched her older brother and sister go away to the Ubangi Academy for two-thirds of every year she could remember. She knew it was her turn to go next, and she was excited about the dorm.

When it came time for second grade, though, her mother decided Kathryn was not yet ready to go. Kathryn was home-schooled one extra year. Looking back, she recognizes the concern and loyalty that led her mother to devote a large portion of an extra year to teaching her at home. The imperative of mission and leaving was challenged by the needs of a child, and her mother chose for her over work.

---

[35] Allison Stone, 15.
[36] Young, follow-up. See also Van Reken, especially Chapter One.

The following year Kathryn went to the Academy. She recalls growing excited about going to the dorm, packing her bags, and making the trip with several other kids, but she remembers little else about preparation for school. Her first night, however, remains a vivid, dramatic memory.

KN Yeah, I remember the night I got there I was just scared silly because--even though my brother and sister were there, there was no connection with your familial, with the members of your family, with your sibs. It was as if they didn't exist. So I felt really alone, and I was terrified. And I remember crying. It was at night. I remember crying. And I remember the next day feeling incredibly homesick and crying, just laying on my bed and just sobbing. And Rebecca Sundstrom came in. And she sat down on the bed. And she talked to me for a long time. And when she left I decided I would never be homesick again. And I quit crying. And I never--I never allowed myself to be homesick after that. It was pretty dramatic.

DMT Yeah! That's pretty--How did you do that? How does a little kid just say, "I won't be homesick again?"

KN Little kids are very powerful. Yeah. It was a defense mechanism and it worked.

DMT What did you have to give up to stop being homesick?

KN Ah, boy. I had to give up caring, I think, caring for my parents, you know, and that sense of wanting them. I had to give up a sense of dependence. . . . I think I gave up being a child.[37]

The anguish of a child's homesickness and her power to dissociate from her pain remain startling, even in the transcription of an interview many years later. That pain was merely hidden from consciousness, though, and it stayed within Kathryn, surfacing strongly after she left Zaïre. Speaking about the center of her person that remained constant in the various contexts she occupied in college and beyond, she said:

What comes to me is, what my core was was my pain and my grief. And somehow it doesn't sound like it's making any sense but it does make a certain amount of sense, somehow--if I could tap into that and learn, learn to live enough so that I didn't feel as much pain and as much grief--but yet not do anything to negate it, then I'd be okay.[38]

The pain of separation and loss became a touchstone for Kathryn. If she was able to keep in touch with her pain, without denying it so completely she lost contact with it, yet without being overwhelmed by it, she felt she was living from her center.

To this point Kathryn was speaking in the language of individual psychology, describing the personal, emotional costs of boarding for her. Connected to her homesickness and dissociation, though, was an equally powerful, abrupt cut-off in her relationship with her parents that resulted from her dramatic decision to give up caring for them. Near the end of the interview she said:

When I left my folks when I was eight to go to school, I basically broke off communication with them. So even when I went home

---

[37] Kathryn Nordlund, 10.
[38] Ibid., 29.

there was really no communication. And so it's almost like being
orphaned, in a sense, and you really have to rely on yourself.[39]

Once that break had been made and Kathryn had come to rely on herself,
it was extremely difficult to restore communication with her parents. During a
year of home assignment Kathryn was so overwhelmed by a large American
high school she cried in class every day. Yet she never told her parents
anything about her struggles.

I never told my folks about any of this. I didn't tell them about
my cultural shock. I didn't tell them about my crying spells. I
didn't tell them about feeling out of it. I didn't--I never involved
my parents in my life, ever.[40]

Twenty years later, when Kathryn and her sister began discussing with
their parents the consequences of going away to boarding school, their mother
spoke of the pain of the cut-off from the parents' side. As Kathryn told it,
"She said, 'How do you think I felt when I would go visit you at the dorm
and you would say you had to go play with your friends?'"[41] Clearly the
defensiveness went deep and the cut-off endured.

Sandra used equally striking language to describe the pain of homesick-
ness and its long-term results. The first night in the dorm she was
miserable, but she did not mention it to anyone. The next morning her
mother, who had accompanied her to UBAC, came by to see her before return-
ing home. "It was very matter-of-fact, I think. And my mother. . . was very
matter-of-fact, too. And she said, 'Don't start crying or I'll cry,' so I
didn't."[42]

By connecting the suppression of her pain to her mother's wish not to
cry, Sandra revealed the dynamics of loyalty operating in both her and
Kathryn's experiences. The girls' silencing of their pain made it possible for
their parents to send them to boarding school. They supported their parents'
mission and saved their parents from stronger feelings of guilt by putting on
a matter-of-fact, unpained air. Both sides colluded in avoiding grief, and
both sides eventually paid the cost. That cost was steep.

Sandra portrayed the cost largely in individual terms, though the rela-
tional aspects were clear. Near the end of the interview, speaking of life at
UBAC, she directly addressed the costs:

SY You were supposed to love God, which is really funny. But--I don't
know that I felt particularly encouraged, at any time, to love
anybody. [cries] It just cost. I tried not to love my parents
after a while. I pulled it off, too. Enough to manage.

A few minutes later she turned to longer-term costs:

SY If you feel really, really homesick and really, really shitty 'cause
you love somebody and you can't be with them, you aren't gonna
invite it. You're gonna discourage it as much as you can. And I
just wonder if that isn't why, partly why, a lot of us don't--or at
least me, anyway, ah, caring connections, don't make them, proba-
bly.

DMT You attribute it to that early time at the dorm, your first time
there when you were so homesick that you couldn't make bonds
with people there.

---

[39] Ibid., 35.
[40] Ibid., 35.
[41] Ibid., 13.
[42] SY, 5.

SY Yeah, but because I found out how painful it was to get screwed
over it. Which is—I don't think I have ever wanted to feel that
screwed over by anybody ever again, you know. And you can if
you care a lot. And I wouldn't be surprised if there's a connec-
tion.[43]

Kathryn directed her attention more to the costs in the parent-child rela-
tionship than did Sandra. She also tied it to the theological imperatives of
the mission enterprise.

And it also, I think, is hard for the parents to look at for the same
reason, because they don't know how to separate or look at what
God is to them, you know. It's like they can't acc--you know, if
their kids are saying, "This isn't right. You're making this up.
This is wrong! It's not a contest between us and God," you know.
Well, how are they supposed to feel then? You know, they feel
defensive. I don't think they can look at it either.[44]

Kathryn credited her parents for the tough position they were in, caught
between loyalties to their children and to God. At the same time, she was
angry at having paid the price, both in her relationship to her parents and in
her relationship to God.

[My parents] felt again everything was God's will, you know.
That's one reason I'm really anti-religion. I cannot believe the
blindness of raising children and saying, "Well, God's will is that
we send you away to school." Or, "God's will is that you're second
best." Or, "God's will is this--" It's bullshit. It's absolute
bullshit crap. And that is a source of real anger with me.[45]

Kathryn recounted a story her father had told about God providing for a
missionary family to be stationed at Karawa so the children could live at home
while attending the Academy. "And you know, my dad is saying, 'Isn't that
wonderful for this woman?' And I'm thinking, 'What do you mean? You make
choices!'"[46] To Kathryn, attributing decisions to God's will indicated a failure
to take responsibility and a lack of self-delineation.

On the shaky foundation of her traumatic first days, Kathryn entered the
life of the Ubangi Academy. There she quickly learned "how to do it right,
how to get along," how to be "perfect."[47]

KN I got good grades. I was always perfect. I did everything perfect.
I never broke a rule. Oh, it just makes me sick to think of how
perfect I was. It just, it was my driving force. I couldn't make a
mistake.
DMT What's behind that, "couldn't make a mistake"? Or else what?
KN Or else I was diminished in the eyes of Aunt Janine and Uncle
Hank, the eyes of the kids, the eyes of God.
DMT Pretty much all the way around.
KN Uh-huh. Yeah.
DMT So, pressure to be perfect.
KN Perfect, absolutely perfect.[48]

---

43 Ibid., 28,29.
44 KN, 13,14.
45 Ibid., 13.
46 Ibid., 13.
47 Ibid., 20.
48 Ibid., 18-19.

Kathryn developed a closeness with one of the dorm mothers that was positive for both of them.

KN I'd say Janine and I had a fairly close relationship. For some
    reason I always felt okay with her, you know. I didn't feel like
    she was my mom or that she could ever fill that position, but I felt
    pretty good about that.

DMT What did you get from Janine?

KN I got physical touch, like an arm around the shoulder. And she
    always seemed genuinely interested in how I was doing.

DMT What do you think she got from you?

KN Perfection. I didn't cause any trouble for her. [laughs] I, well, I
    think she got from me a lot of warmth, too. And I don't know how
    much of that she really got from people.[49]

Kathryn's relationship with the dorm mother was an authentic give-and-take of real emotional connection. Along with Kathryn's warmth, though, the dorm mother also got "perfection," her concentrated effort to cause no trouble. Looking back, she labels her attempts to make no waves "a price to pay," "terrible," "really awful." "But I think [about] it, my doing that, I think, 'God, you were sick.'"[50]

For Kathryn, family dynamics and boarding school dynamics converged destructively at this point. The failure of direct relating in her family clearly began before she left home. When the pain of leaving home and her isolation from what support remained in her family context were added to that stagnant pattern of relating, Kathryn was left vulnerable to pressure to act "perfect" in order to win some measure of approval and affection. In a follow-up letter she wrote, "I needed acceptance and that was one way I felt I could get it, by not making mistakes and thereby gaining approval. In light of the shock of leaving home, I guess it was one way for me to fulfill some needs."[51]

Kathryn's language at this point closely paralleled Stephen Johnson's description of the life theme of the false self expressed in grandiosity: "I am nothing unless I am perfect."[52] Kathryn was acting on her perception of the essential false self-producing message: "Don't be who you are, be who I need you to be. . . . Be what I want and I will love you."[53]

Kathryn's own need to get approval apart from her family came together with the Academy's need to have students behave well enough to get along with only two adults. A central dynamic of the institutional family was that, as much as the dorm parents might give, they were overmatched against the needs of 30-55 students. Students had to be destructively idealized so the place could run. That is the nature of a total institution. Kathryn and Sandra were more vulnerable than most, so they were most likely to act "perfect" in order to get what they could from the dorm parents.

---

[49] Ibid., 30-31.

[50] Ibid., 32.

[51] Nordlund, Letter, March 22, 1992.

[52] Johnson, 28. See above, Ch.3, Sec.II.B.1. The other pole of the false self,
    its expression in idealization, "I can be nothing without the perfect other
    with whom I can either merge or from whom I can derive the guidance and
    confirmation that will make my life meaningful," is reflected in the inter-
    views by several graduates' descriptions of their relationships with Jesus
    Christ.

[53] Ibid., 39. See above, Ch.3, Sec.II.B.1.

Idealizing pressures in the institutional family came in several forms. When Kenneth was in second grade he was given a copy of the four Gospels in a new translation. Inside the front cover his teacher had inscribed a single verse: "You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."[54] He commented, "When you have a parent there that's one thing, but when you have God, the Lord, the Lord Almighty being the one that's calling the shots, and being subjected to that from an early age, that's quite a weight for a child to bear."[55]

Kenneth's understanding of the perfection required of him included his conviction that certain thoughts and feelings were not permitted.

What was [the] central thing there was the whole way, the incredibly repressive sort of micro-culture. And in terms of normal, in terms of feeling and emotions, what one was allowed to feel, what one was—what was wrong to feel, you know, just a lot of weight put on that.[56]

Sexuality, anger, and doubt were most subject to repression. It was not simply that they were not talked about, but that Kenneth felt pressure not to deal with them at all, not even internally.

KH I think repression is probably the most, if I can put any word on our background, that would be the word that I would say is certainly the largest negative aspect about that culture.
DMT Repression. So, there were things that were not allowed to be brought into the dialogue, into the relationship.
KH Yeah. Or even—yeah—in the relationship but also just in terms of dealing with oneself, one's own relationship with oneself.[57]

When guilt or fear were the primary inducements to repression and "perfection," idealization had greater consequences. Kenneth spoke of what he termed "a culture of fear" that encompassed not just UBAC, but the missionary culture and the pietistic religious culture around it. In Kenneth's experience this culture of fear was expressed through fear- and guilt-induced conformity to the idealized expectations of perfection.

Guilt, Kenneth thought, was often diffuse but pervasive at the Academy. He went on to say, "I think that sense of guilt was just really strong for somewhat, oftentimes nebulous [reasons]. . . . I think there was an incredible sense that you were not worthy."[58] And a minute later, with biting irony: "It was not a lot, that I remember, in terms of celebration of one's goodness."[59]

Sandra described guilt and release from guilt with a colorful flair.

SY Grace, statement of grace? Or feeling of grace? The only times I ever felt any sort of grace were probably after my latest conversion orgasm, when for a couple of hours I might think, "Yeah, this time I really got saved." But otherwise, no. I don't think grace existed.
DMT You talked about conversion orgasms in—quite a striking phrase.
SY Well, I just think they're orgies, and I think that they replaced orgies that maybe people, other kinds of people in different situa-

---

[54] Mt 5:48.
[55] Kenneth Hefley, 17.
[56] Ibid., 17.
[57] Ibid., 18.
[58] Ibid., 20.
[59] Ibid., 21.

tions have a release of pressure. And when the pressure of guilt builds up as high as it does, the release of getting saved again is as close to an orgasm as I can think of offhand.[60]

For Kathryn, destructive idealization reached its climax in her involvement with a troubled classmate. Jim had returned from a year in the U.S. addicted to alcohol. Despite the considerable logistical difficulties of obtaining alcoholic beverages at UBAC, he occasionally managed to get enough to get drunk. Kathryn became involved with Jim's drinking because she was "figging" with Jim's roommate, Loren. Our conversation about the situation began when I asked about myths concerning the dorm.

KN I'm sure there's just loads of them. I think it was all assumed that we were all good little Christians. I don't think that was true. Oh, probably a myth would be that no one at the dorm would ever do drugs or, you know, drink or anything like that. I don't-- probably it didn't happen very often, but I know for a fact that Jim was drinking when he was out there. I don't think anyone ever knew about it. They should have known about it. They should have known about it, 'cause he was so messed up. There was nothing--Loren and I, Loren Larson and I were involved with that, with him, when he was, when this was going on. We didn't know what to do. We didn't know who to go to. We didn't know what to do about it. And he was drinking palm wine.

DMT And you knew that at the time?

KN And we knew it. And we didn't know what to do about it. We felt we couldn't go to the doctors. We felt we couldn't go to the dorm parents. We felt we couldn't go to the teachers. And this man needed help.

DMT Yeah, he needed serious help.

KN Yeah, no kidding. So that's a myth, I suppose.

DMT Yeah. And you couldn't go to them because, what?

KN Because we didn't know what would happen to him. We felt that he would probably be treated as a criminal or something. We didn't know what the consequences were. All we wanted was for him to get help, but we didn't know anyone who would be capable of doing it. . . .

DMT And you didn't trust that the people who were responsible would handle it well.

KN That's right. We talked about it. We tore our hair out trying to figure out what to do. We tried throwing his palm wine out, and he always had some more hidden somewhere. And then he'd promise not to drink it and then he'd drink it again. And then it was always a big crisis, you know, because he was drunk.[61]

In a follow-up letter Kathryn returned to the situation with Jim and Loren:

Part of our decision was based on the overriding factor that life at the dorm and life in general among the missionaries was that everything was "perfect." This attitude of course had the effect of

---

[60] SY, 14. Sandra was not the only UBAC graduate to speak of multiple conversions or of conversion followed by recommitment or rededication. Some students were even converted more than once by the same evangelist!

[61] KN, 20-22.

blinders to any inconsistencies in that perfection; e.g., kids couldn't talk about their pain. I think it was very dangerous because I have heard of things that happened to people that should have been dealt with, but unfortunately, there was no hole in the glass ceiling where one could wave a red flag. I remember that this had a terrific impact on Loren's and my decision-making process. We viewed the missionary system as having no room for error, therefore what would they do with our evidence? Ignorance is bliss.[62]

Here again, family dynamics converged with Academy dynamics in an unhealthy way. Protectiveness such as Kathryn and Loren displayed is typically learned in the family of origin as a stagnant expression of relating. This pattern came together with their experience of the Academy. In the context of the Academy, but equally important, in the larger context of the entire missionary endeavor, these students saw no room for personal problems or failures or weaknesses, whether by students or adults. In their view, the "missionary system" had "no room for error," no place for pain.

Kathryn and Loren may well have been wrong. In a serious crisis such as teenage alcoholism UBAC and the larger mission may well have responded much more positively and helpfully than they expected. But by the time they had spent six or eight years at UBAC and twice that many on the mission field, Kathryn and Loren had tested their context many times and had observed its response to student failures to live up to its ideals. They keenly felt the destructive pressure of idealization, the demand to "seem," to appear to be more than they were to support overburdened parents and dorm parents. They maintained the facade.

The "perfection" of its students allowed the Academy to maintain its illusion that all its students were faithful Christians, content in their situation, good examples to the Zaïrians of Christian morality. It allowed the dorm to continue functioning with only three adults. It also allowed missionary parents to continue in their work on remote mission stations. And it helped the mission downplay the pain of parents who sent their children to boarding school.

Such perfection carried a steep price tag, however. It required a falseness, a dissembling between boarding students and their parents and dorm parents. It required presentation of a "perfect" self that the context would accept. It required "seeming," "the inauthentic stance of the would-be authentic person who longs to connect but despairs of ever truly doing so."[63] Kathryn and Loren saw no way to be authentic, to connect with adults about their greatest concern. They despaired of doing anything but maintaining the myth of perfection. They disengaged from the adults around them, kept up a facade of perfection, and were lost in the silence.

Now that Sandra and Kathryn are adults, the consequences of boarding their selves have emerged more clearly for each of them. Sandra's early disengagement from her parents has endured. She despairs of ever connecting with them, while questioning how much she really wants to engage them directly. It may be easier to have them out of her life altogether, she believes. That ancient and ongoing fracturing of her primary relationship has tainted all her subsequent relationships. She finds further vulnerability in close relationships threatening, and she engages slowly.

---

[62] Nordlund, Letter, March 22, 1992.
[63] Krasner and Joyce. See above, Ch.3, Sec.II.D.6.

Not surprisingly, neither Kathryn nor Sandra have children of their own, although both are married. Both engaged in protracted searches for a vocation before settling on careers shortly before their interviews. Constrained by the ledger of pain between them and their parents, both women have struggled to establish themselves securely.

As Kathryn and her siblings have moved into early and middle adulthood and wrestled with the impact of their time in Africa, they and their parents have broken the silence and opened new levels of dialogue. These conversations have brought a measure of healing to those key relationships.

> I feel like I honor them for—or I feel, I feel I understand that
> they thought they were doing the right thing. And when I look at
> where their heart was, when I look at what they accomplished. . . ,
> just the sense of what they did with themselves—and they have
> gone through a lot of pain over what has happened with their chil-
> dren. We've all had very difficult times, all four of us. And I
> think it took them a while, but they realized that there was con-
> nection between the problems we have had and the life we had with
> them. And I've worked things out with my parents as an adult.[64]

Although this statement still carries some overtones of blaming, the silence around "perfection" is gone. In its place trust is emerging slowly as an open, painful, healing dialogue allows imperfect, connected members of a family to acknowledge each other's contributions to pain and caring within the family. Kathryn has invited her parents back into her life, giving them her honesty and her willingness to hear their side. They have responded with the same.

For Kenneth, too, recent years have brought the beginnings of a healing dialogue with his parents. Near the end of the interview our conversation turned to the cost of Kenneth's boarding school experience to his relationship with his parents. He first replied by speaking about his sadness at having missed out on time with them and his need to heal that sadness by himself, without their help. As he went on he turned more to the resources remaining within the family and the healing that had already taken place.

DMT If you told them about this, or if you have told them about your
     sadness, how might they respond to that?

KH I think they'd be sad too. Yeah. I think they would feel their
    own—I think they would also feel like they, that they also feel like
    they were failures, which is not what I would want to portray to
    them.

DMT Yeah.

KH It's just, it's just—this is the way it was. This is—there's
    certainly no sense in which they're going to be a part of the heal-
    ing, there's just no way that—you cannot make up for that deci-
    sion. The only way that that can be healed is through each one of
    us parenting ourselves. . . .

DMT I think that's true to some degree, although I think to some
     degree being able to say that to them, recognizing that they will
     be sad, and yet continuing to relate to them, rather than you
     having to pay the cost of bearing not only your own sadness but
     your concern for their sadness and their feeling of failure, I
     guess. . .

---

[64] KN, 6.

[end of Side III]
      You've been over some of that.
KH   Yeah, I was going to say, we had quite an amazing time over
      Thanksgiving. . . . Some of these issues came up. . . . So it was
      an initial sense of maybe, . . . beginning to acknowledge that . . .
      yeah, there's been pain, but there's also been wonderful things.[65]
      As the ledger of sadness and separation is addressed between Kenneth
and his parents, it becomes possible for both sides to acknowledge the pain
and the joy of being part of their family. The loyalty within the family
remains a primary resource for everyone as they break the silence.

IV.   The Passive Self in the Institutional Family

      In contrast to the first two groups of students, those whose ongoing
dialogue with their families supported strong self-delineation at the Ubangi
Academy and those whose traumatic cut-off from their families left them vul-
nerable to pressure to appear "perfect," a third group passed through the
school with little turbulence. This third group was at home in the Academy in
a way the other three groups could never be. They slipped easily into the
main stream of Academy life, they were popular with their peers and with the
adults, and they left UBAC feeling good about their time there.
      Fitting easily into the institutional family, however, was potentially costly.
It was easy for these students to drift away from their families, take on a
persona that fit the school, lose themselves in the life of the Academy, and
only notice the loss much later.
      It would be only a slight exaggeration to say that mission boarding
school was Carol's destiny thirty years before she was born. Her maternal
grandparents had met in Nigeria between the wars, married, and settled into
mission work and raising a family. Carol's mother and uncle, Kari and Jon,
learned a local dialect before they learned English, and sometimes had to
enlist their mobateli to translate for their parents.
      Before Kari and Jon were old enough to start school, their family was hit
with a tragedy no less disastrous for being so common among early mis-
sionaries to Africa. Their father returned from an evangelistic trip with a
severe case of cholera. Powerless to treat the disease, and far from even
rudimentary medical facilities, the family and their fellow missionaries could
only watch him weaken for days, then die.
      Although the family stayed in Nigeria for two more years to continue the
work in the national church, they were forced to return to the States when
support funds dwindled at the start of World War II. For the next fifteen
years, while the children grew, their mother spoke longingly of Nigeria and
the work she had begun there. She waited impatiently until both her children
were enrolled in college, then boarded a boat for Africa.
      As might be expected, Carol's mother grew up "mission minded." Her
childhood prayers were full of petitions for the people of Africa. When she
was old enough to learn to sew she made blankets for orphans in Taiwan,
hoping she would someday live within sight of those orphanages.
      Kari's plans changed when, in college, she met a young man who had also
felt the call to the mission field. They decided to go to the Congo, where his
skills as a carpenter could be better used.

---

[65] KH, 33-34.

They were married the week after they graduated from college, and spent the next year studying missions and raising support from local churches. The following summer they, too, caught a boat for Africa. Stopping for a month in Nigeria to visit Kari's mother, they continued down to the port of Matadi, near the mouth of the Congo River. Three weeks later they were in the Ubangi.

Like her mother, Carol spent the days of her childhood in the company of her mobateli. Also like her mother, she observed the loyalty conflict between service to God and time with children.

Carol brought all this legacy to the Ubangi Academy when she arrived to start second grade in the early seventies. She also brought all the preparation three older siblings could cram into her. She was coached ahead of time through the whole routine of room check, laundry, dish teams, bed changing, and so forth. She heard endless vacation-time stories of exploits at the dorm. She was anxious to go.

> I really wanted to go to the dorm, because Mary and Jeff and Lin-
> nea built it up as being a really really fun place to be. And so I
> really wanted to go. I thought it sounded like a great place to be.
> . . . A lot of kids I played with, they were all older than me . . .
> so they were all at the dorm, so I wanted to go.[66]

At the dorm Carol was homesick, but not overwhelmed or traumatized by grief.

> For myself, I don't think it was really traumatic for me. I remem-
> ber being homesick a lot. It was usually for the first couple of
> weeks when I'd get to the dorm, like each term, I'd be really
> homesick. But after that I usually had a fairly good time for the
> rest of the term till I went home. And then when I'd get back to
> the dorm the whole enormity of it all would set in again for about
> two weeks, and then I'd forget again. But yeah, I do think seven
> is too young, yeah. Because I think it is important to have a lot
> of interaction with an adult, and be able to work through some of
> that stuff and have that support and know that there's, have an
> adult figure there with you. And being in a dorm where there's
> like 50 kids sharing one set of parents that aren't your own
> parents, you know, it's not the same. And you really need that.[67]

Carol was accustomed to being cared for by people outside her family, so that did not surprise her. She also had her sisters and brother to look out for her at UBAC. When she was homesick, though, her pain was sometimes met with theologically-reinforced denial.

CL Whenever we got homesick--okay, I do remember being comforted by
    Aunt Sarah a couple of times and being told, "Just think how much
    worse your parents are feeling than you are feeling." And that
    didn't help me at all, really. That wasn't what I needed to hear.
    And basically to tell me to stop feeling sorry for myself, but it's
    really my parents that are suffering much worse than I am and
    they're doing God's work and all of this, and that you were,
    you're, this is selfish of you to be crying. I remember getting
    that message.
DMT You needed to take care of your parents. . .
CL Yeah.

---

[66] Carol Lindstrom, 4.
[67] Ibid., 5.

DMT by stopping crying.

CL Or maybe it wasn't Christian, or that I wasn't understanding what
it meant to be a missionary and to be doing God's work and that,
you know. They're here doing God's work and you should not step
in the way of that. That's much more important than you are.[68]

The theological imperative of missions was used to stifle honest expression of
pain, the pain of parents as well as the pain of children.

At other times, though, Carol remembers the dorm parents showing real
concern and making an extra effort for the younger kids.

One night a week the dorm father would come down and kiss all
the little girls goodnight, and that was always a big event. We'd
all hide sometimes and he'd give us whisker rubs and we just
thought it was great. . . . That was really important to us.[69]

When asked to comment on her years at UBAC before adolescence, Carol
offered this summary: "I just remember having a really good time playing a
lot of games and just having a good time with my little friends. Doing a lot
of things in groups." And right after that: "I would say I was fairly content.
Yeah, there's nothing to really—I had very good feelings about it, very posi-
tive."[70]

Athletic and pretty, a decent student and a promising musical talent,
Carol was always a member of the "in" group of her class. Although in the
interview she was uncomfortable discussing questions of popularity and status
at the Academy, she did concede reluctantly that in high school she had been
fairly high on the UBAC ladder.

I think, like in tenth grade, let's say, I think I was at a fairly
high status. You know, this conversation is gross to me. [laughs]
I mean, like, thinking about all these statuses and all this, but
anyway. At that time I guess I would say that I thought I was
pretty high. I thought, I mean, I was like who was in. [Lists
several families who were "in."] I was dating Brian Erhardt, I was
in. I was also—and our family had been in Africa for a long time,
and I think that gives you a certain in.[71]

Being "in" at the Academy brought status among the students, but status
of a shaky, often tentative nature. As Kenneth explained, there was sharp
pressure to conform to social norms or risk losing one's place in student
society.

KH There were certain "cool" figures, and if you got to run with the
cool gangs, [you would] go out and do stuff like that. But if you
weren't cool enough then you sort of had to find your own place.
So there, it was an exclusion kind of way in terms of a pressure, a
certain exclusionary pressure that I think was really pretty
traumatic on many young people's psyches, including my own at
times. I think it must have affected the other person too, because
part of being in the "in" clique too was sort of a sense of knowing
the other side of the coin and how that affected you and you
deliberately excluded others from your little clique. . . . That
pressure not to be out was one pressure. And try to be cool.

---

[68] Ibid., 30.
[69] Ibid., 12.
[70] Ibid., 8.
[71] Ibid., 11.

DMT Almost like shunning, or something.

KH Yeah, yeah, yeah. You wanted approval. You wanted to be, you
wanted, there was a strong approval, I think. There were not a lot
of people who sort of did their own thing.[72]

With no alternatives to the company of one's UBAC peers, the risk was,
as Kenneth put it, that "if you were out, you were really out."[73] Fitting into
the institutional family brought a reminder of the cost of not fitting in.

In many ways, then, Carol was at home in the UBAC institutional family.
She looked forward to going as a second-grader, she was supported by
solicitous older siblings, and she did not suffer overly much from homesick-
ness. Through the years she found her way into a secure position in the
society of the Academy. Commenting further on her sophomore year, Carol
remarked, "I remember that being a fairly nice year, too. I felt pretty good
within that system."[74] Carol slipped into the stream of UBAC life, and it
carried her along smoothly. If she had grown distant from her parents she
did not particularly notice it.

It was only after Carol graduated from UBAC that she began to question
the value of going so easily with the flow of the Academy. She realized she
had become very passive, especially in relation to her male peers.

CL Girls should stay in the kitchen, girls shouldn't talk. I'm not really
sure why I felt that, but I didn't used to think that I needed or
wanted to participate in conversations a lot of times. Especially
when I was in high school, I really felt that way. I think when I
was younger—well I know when I was younger I was very
vociferous and I'm not really sure why I changed, but I did.

DMT At some point you picked up the idea that girls should be passive
and that guys should dominate conversations.

CL Oh yeah, definitely! I was incredibly passive when I was in high
school.[75]

Carol attributed her passivity to several factors. Being the youngest
child, she thought, may have given her a natural tendency to be a follower.
In addition, when her parents attempted to reduce the academic pressure on
her by telling her that grades mattered little as long as she was doing her
best, she took that as meaning achievement mattered little to them. Her senior
year, when the science teacher told her she did not have to take physics, she
understood that as his way of saying she was not intelligent enough to take
physics, so she was humiliated rather than relieved. Her response was to
pretend she didn't care about science.

Carol also tied her passivity to patterns she observed in her family.
Over time she watched her mother gradually acquiesce more and more to her
father.

Just watching my mom, I felt like she was getting less and less
vocal in a lot of things she did when I was in high school. I felt
like she was deferring to my dad a lot more often to make various
decisions. And I'm just, I wonder sometimes if I got that somewhat
from her. And I know she would make statements about, you know,
"That's your decision," or "You lead on that," and she very much

---

[72] KH, 12.

[73] Ibid., 11.

[74] CL, 9.

[75] Ibid., 13.

assigned certain roles to my dad and she would stay more in the kitchen and do things like that. And she never wanted to have positions--well she had positions on the council and things, but usually behind the scenes counseling Dad on various things, and then he was the one who was actually on various committees.[76]

At the Academy, passivity among the girls was directly linked to Christianity. "It was something, something about my perception of what it meant to be a Christian. And it was very important to me to be this very conservative, sweet, wonderful Christian."[77] Carol also linked passivity with the large number of rules regulating every aspect of life at the dorm. "I think all those rules do make you become more and more passive, or just take away all that sense of self-actualization after a while."[78]

Julie, a Grace Brethren student at UBAC in the early '80s, also spoke of the linkage among Christianity, rules and passivity. For her the greatest danger was that she would become spiritually passive, content to live in the reflected spirituality of Christian kids around her.

It's so easy just to fit in, to manage just to obey the rules and just be good. But really being on fire and really, you know, relating and having this really hot relationship with Christ, it was pretty--it could be really difficult. And it was very easy just to get lazy, just sit back, go with the flow, say the right things, pray, sing along with them. But inside you could be as dead as a doornail.[79]

Halfway through her senior year of high school Carol slumped into a serious depression that lasted a full month. She lost weight, her energy and motivation levels dropped, and she clung to the dorm helper, a young woman she had known years earlier.

DMT How about the depression, what was that over?

CL You know, I'm not really sure. I remember feeling like I had a lot of stock placed in religion and I just wasn't getting anything out of it whatsoever. And I was kind of depressed and trying to figure--. It came on, actually, when Mom and Dad weren't in Zaïre, when they came back for Dad's operation. And so, it might have been triggered somewhat with just having no family there, I don't know, and it just kind of seeped into my head or something. I don't remember consciously thinking, "Wow, this is kind of scary. I'm sitting here by myself." But I think that might have triggered it off. And just feeling like "Wow, there's, like, nothing here." And so then I found myself turning more to religion and to the Bible. I'd read and I'd read and I'd read. All these Psalms and all these different passages of Scripture. And they meant absolutely nothing to me. I was just looking at them going, "This is really stupid. And I've been thinking, I've been believing in all this and none of it really was helping me, you know, making me feel any better at all." And I thought--and so I think that really tore out a lot of, ripped out a lot of confidence or a lot of security right out from under me. And that was where a lot of my relationship

---

[76] Ibid., 14.

[77] Ibid., 13-14.

[78] Ibid., 28.

[79] Julie Faxon, 45.

with Sonja was, on a religious level or spiritual level. We'd do Bible studies together or things like that. And she was having a fairly good experience with religion at that time, you know, and so I remember having a hard time trying to explain to her that this wasn't making sense to me, and this isn't really helping me, and I don't know what to do, and just really feeling like, "I just don't even see why I'm living. I don't see the reason to be."[80]

Carol believed that the dorm parents were too busy to be concerned with her struggles.

I felt there was a lot of pressure just to comply and make things run smoothly and not stress out the dorm parents or stress out whoever was in charge because they had too many things to be worried about. And they did, I mean, they had a lot. And they did have a heavy responsibility, but unfortunately, that doesn't make it any easier for the kids.[81]

Carol pulled away from the dorm parents and did not try to involve them in her depression. She did not test their response. Again, the dorm parents most likely would have come through in a serious case such as her depression. But Carol's perception was that the dorm parents did not want to hear about her troubles because they were overworked and not genuinely connected to her. "My perception is that I didn't feel like the dorm parents were approachable in terms of what was going on in my life and I didn't feel like they really were my parents in a lot of ways, and that I could ever go and talk to them about anything that I was thinking of."[82]

Earlier in the interview Carol had described a similar dynamic in her relationship with her parents. "I don't remember consciously feeling like I needed to protect them just that, more like, you just don't talk about things that are negative."[83] Having drifted into a stagnant mode of relating at home, she carried it over to the Academy as well.

The depressive episode eventually passed, aided by Sonja's support and the return of Carol's parents from the States. But by the time Carol graduated from UBAC her passivity had slipped into fatalism.

I was very fatalistic by the time I finished high school in that whatever happened, happened, and that I could not really control much of anything. And I just, I've had a few people point it out and I realized more and more that I didn't, there's something in me that didn't think that I could ever change things.[84]

The conviction that she could not control anything important left Carol ill prepared to be in college and on her own.

CL It's very easy to be passive, you know. And I'm sure that was attractive, fairly attractive to me. It was just, kind of the easy route to go. I didn't have to make major decisions then, you know, whatever happened I could just--.

DMT It just seems to be that the trade-offs, it seems to be sort of a costly one, I mean, you get--it's easy but it's sort of infantilizing.

_____

[80] CL, 20.

[81] Ibid., 18. See above, Ch.4, Sec.IV.A. for a longer quotation from this portion of the interview.

[82] Ibid., 28.

[83] Ibid., 7.

[84] Ibid., 7.

CL Uh-huh, yeah. And it's very demeaning. It doesn't do anything
    for one's esteem, that's for sure. And I think that's why I did go
    to college a total wreck. And feeling very at a loss and just kind
    of like, "Oh my goodness, I have to make decisions, I have to, like,
    decide what I'm going to do every day and, like, I have power over
    my destiny." I just did not know how to handle that at all.[85]

Fitting in so smoothly had worked reasonably well for many years. But
when Carol was no longer supported by the familiar context of the Ubangi
Academy, when she faced the unfamiliar world of college, she was at a loss.
The very model of a modern missionary kid, she was hard pressed to find
direction for her life.

Unlike the resilient selves who were well self-delineated at the Academy,
or the students who tried to be "perfect" in the way the institutional family
required, Carol never felt tension between UBAC and her self. She felt no
tension, though, mainly because she had little sense of herself as a distinct
self. When I asked what message she received from UBAC about her self she
replied, "I almost felt like I didn't get a message."[86] Conformity to the wishes
of the institutional family brought her praise within the Academy, but did not
teach her to think for herself or make her own decisions. At the same time
she slipped away from her family and the quality of her dialogue with her
parents declined. Self-delineation through otherness was opposed by the
pressure to conform. This suppression of difference also made it difficult to
consider others. Without a delineated self of her own Carol could not ade-
quately consider the ethical claims of others, and was therefore blocked from
earning entitlement. Depression was a natural consequence of conformity that
impeded both the centripetal and centrifugal aspects of her individuation. As
Boszormenyi-Nagy and Krasner write, "The classic symptoms of depression are
consistent with a lack of inner freedom."[87]

The change for Carol began in college. Although she arrived "a total
wreck," the small, Christian college provided a good transition between the
UBAC institutional family and independent life. After struggling at first, she
successfully worked her way through a tough program and launched a career,
and now is considering graduate school. She maintains her interest in Africa
through friendships with African students at a nearby university, but has
little contact with former UBAC students. Although deeply spiritual, she has
little interest in organized religion and has rejected her parents' evangelical
heritage.

Carol has frequent contact with her parents by phone and sees them a
couple of times each year, but that relationship remains guarded. Although
Carol never felt traumatically cut off from her parents, she does feel that the
family simply drifted apart while she was at school. When I asked her what
she would say if she could talk to her parents about leaving home for UBAC
at age seven, she balanced her side of the experience with credit for the care
her parents put into the decision:

    I guess I would say that I think it's not a really good age to send
    somebody to the dorm, but ask them how they feel about it. And I
    do believe that they thought it was the right thing to do at that
    time. And, so, in that way I don't hold it against them. I mean, I

---

[85] Ibid., 15.

[86] Lindstrom, Telephone interview, November 1, 1992.

[87] Boszormenyi-Nagy and Krasner, <u>Between Give and Take</u>, 188.

feel like they, I'm sure--but I've never asked them this so I'm making this assumption--but I would assume and I feel like they probably thought about it quite a bit before they did decide that they were going to send their kids to this dorm, and that that was what people were doing, so they thought, "Well, okay, I guess that's what you do. . . ." I've never talked to my folks about it, I never have, really.[88]

A few days after her interview Carol called her parents to talk about the things that had come up during our conversation. It was their first frank conversation about her childhood and its continuing effects. Carol and her family are beginning to explore the resources in their relationship, as well as the hurts. Where that relationship will go is still an open question. But Carol is no longer passively relating to the institutional family, apart from her own family. She is gaining freedom to act as she defines herself and faces her parents in new ways.

V.   The Transitional Self in Changing Contexts

If the students in the first three groups were adopted children of the UBAC institutional family, members of the fourth group were visiting cousins. These students first arrived at the Ubangi Academy late in their schooling, in junior high or high school, and stayed only two, three, or at the most four years. For them UBAC was a strange, exciting world that they visited for a short time before moving on. Other contexts were more important to them and their families.

Most of the students in this fourth group were children of missionaries with the Grace Brethren Church in the Central African Republic. Their own, small, boarding school at Bata, C.A.R., varied widely in size from year to year but ended after junior high, so they came to the Academy for high school. Not all Grace Brethren students belonged to this group, though. Some engaged the Academy context fully in the time they were there, as we have seen. Not all the members of this fourth group were Grace Brethren students, either. A few Covenant and Free Church students belonged to this group, students who stayed only a short time or otherwise held themselves apart and remained very little affected by the Ubangi Academy.

Scott was a "lifer." When he graduated from high school he had spent fifteen years in Africa and only three in the United States. Apart from one year in grade school and one year in junior high, he had received all his education in mission boarding schools.

Scott's father had always said there were two things he wanted to avoid at all costs: missions and Africa. Growing up in California farm country, his dream was to become an agriculturist. Under pressure from his father he reluctantly enrolled in a fundamentalist Protestant Bible college. During his first year a dynamic speaker convinced him he was being called to the mission field in Africa. He finished his year in Bible school, then transferred to a state university to specialize in tropical and semi-tropical agriculture. Married right after graduation, he and his wife moved to Winona Lake, Indiana, for a year of study at Grace Theological Seminary, then headed straight for Africa.

Once in the Central African Republic, Scott's father quickly made a reputation as a powerful evangelist for new methods of agriculture. His con-

---

[88] CL, 5.

viction of the possibilities of better farming and his passionate enthusiasm for new crops and techniques gave him a persuasive power that overcame the people's distrust of innovation. He was widely recognized in the western part of the country as a Johnny Appleseed-like figure in a rusty Ford pickup.

Scott's father was often gone from home, touring the villages preaching crop rotation and fertilizer use. While he was gone, Scott's mother always had her hands full with the five kids and her literacy training for the African women, but she managed. When he returned, the tension level in the family could mount rapidly. Accustomed to being the sole, unchallenged authority in his work, he allowed no one to question him at home. Although not a large man, he had a farmer's powerful frame and strong hands, and he used them on his children to enforce his demands. Scott recalled his father's violence:

> I had so many insecurities—and not really, I'm not blaming them on
> UBAC, I'm blaming it on my parents, brought up the way I was
> raised. And, you know, you just don't use a belt on your son time
> after time after time, break—my father broke his hand over my
> head—I mean, you just don't do this to a person and expect him to
> come out normal. . . . I would have been better off without a
> father. And that's my honest belief. Because my father had no
> time for children. The only time he came to the house was after all
> his work was done, he'd be late for supper, and five kids. You
> have five kids in seven and a half years, they're gonna fight and
> tussle, you know. . . . That's the only thing I remember about my
> father in my early childhood is disciplining us.[89]

Scott learned to keep his mouth shut and stay out of his father's way whenever possible. "I would never converse with my father in any matter, serious or light, I just wouldn't converse with him 'cause I just didn't have any—I didn't—I just couldn't talk to him. We didn't have a talking relationship."[90]

The nature of Scott's relationship with his mother is unclear. In the interview she is a shadowy figure, hidden by the focus on her husband and mentioned only in passing. Scott appears to have been caught between his parents in some way, but this is not clear.

Going away to boarding school might have brought Scott some relief from his father's bullying, but the family was located on the same mission station as the Brethren school. Scott remained at home, attending the school as a day student every year except one, when the family was temporarily transferred to a new region.

When Scott was finishing ninth grade, the last year offered by the school at Bata, it was taken for granted in the family that he would go over to the Ubangi Academy the next year. There was no conversation, no discussion of options. Scott was simply told where he would go the following year.

DMT How was this handled in your family? What kinds of conversations
    did you have in your family about your leaving?

SO It's unfortunate, but I really think we really just didn't talk, just
    didn't talk about it. People always ask me, "What was it like out
    there?" And all the things had to do with this: there was never a
    choice or a matter in it. It was just done. You know, "This is
    what you're doing," and you never had a choice in the matter.[91]

---

[89] Scott Okin, 28-29.
[90] Ibid., 6.
[91] Ibid., 5-6.

And right after that:
SO In my family you just did what you were told, no questions asked.[92]
      Despite the lack of choice--or even conversation--regarding schools, Scott
was excited to be going across the river to UBAC. The last year at Bata he
had been the only one in his class, and he was lonely for some classmates.
The prospect of living in a school with fifty students held considerable
appeal.
      In retrospect, Scott's first trip to the Academy carries a certain comic
overtone. He left Bangui, capital of the Central African Republic, in the little
bush plane, worrying how he would fit into a new group of peers. By the
time they landed at Karawa an hour later a more urgent problem had
appeared--he had serious motion sickness.

      I had all these fears, too, of going into a new environment. Very
      self-conscious and, and "What am I, what's happening, what's going
      to happen to my life now?" . . .
            I remember the plane going down and taxiing into the little
      thing and getting out. And there was like, Oh my goodness!
      There had to be fifty kids or forty kids. And I wanted to get in
      the jungle and just vomit, and there was like three or four
      Africans there, and I was heading over there, a couple of them
      gave me a hug. And that was the very first thing I remember
      about it.[93]

Although Scott had little contact with the Zaïrian people in his three years at
UBAC, he always remembered the kindness of the three or four who comforted
him when he first got off that plane at Karawa.
      When Scott arrived at the Academy he was struggling with insecurity and
self-doubt. In his family, nothing he did right was acknowledged.

      You know, it's like my dad always said. I remember once, when we
      got into some discussion. . . he was like, "Well Rick does every-
      thing well." Exactly like that. "Rick does everything well."
      Sports, education, relationships, you know, everything. That was
      exactly the statement. Basically why don't you just say, "Scott,
      you're a fuck-up and Rick does everything well," you know? That
      was the way it was.[94]

Scott desperately wanted to fit into life among his peers at the Academy.
He described himself at that time as someone "just seeking for any type of
gratification or any type of acceptance by anyone. And I was willing to do
stupid things [because] I just wanted to have friends. And just because I
had no acceptance and no approval at home."[95]
      Scott tried to fit in by giving other people what they wanted from him,
but in key areas he simply could not do it. His freshman year at the school
in Bata had left him ill prepared for the academic pressure at UBAC, and
although he enjoyed sports, his body developed slowly, leaving him behind his
classmates athletically as well.
      In a phone call following the interview Scott described himself as a per-
petual outsider, not in the group, not part of the team--the same place he
held in his family. Although he tried to be what he felt UBAC wanted him to

---

[92] Ibid., 6.
[93] Ibid., 5.
[94] Ibid., 31.
[95] Ibid., 7.

be, he could not. He now considers himself to have been the chosen scapegoat, the butt of jokes. That would be bad enough anywhere, but at UBAC, where students spend twenty-four hours of every day with each other, he could find no escape.[96]

Despite feeling excluded by the other kids, and despite his struggles in the classroom, Scott was quick to give credit to the UBAC faculty for their support. "Mr. Strom and Miss Axelson and Joanne Storer, they all did a terrific job for me. I mean, I had some emotional problems and I have no fault at all with any of the education the teachers--I think they all did a terrific job."[97]

The kindness of a dorm mother who spotted Scott's distress also made a deep impression.

> Janine Williams . . . came in a couple of times, I remember distinctly, with ice cream. And it was only two or three times my senior year, but she came in and she gave me ice cream, like at 9 o'clock at night or 9:30 at night, just as, just being nice. And I've never forgotten that. . . . It was just a little, a token of appreciation for something I did that day, whether it was helping around, doing something extra beyond the normal. I remember it had chocolate sauce on it, it was great. I mean, to me, just that little bit of ice cream probably would be like giving my son a bike. To me it was just unbelievable. I was just, it was just great. Such a dessert that had just, you know, something came out of heaven.[98]

Scott's complete lack of any sense of entitlement in this quotation is stunning. That a bowl of ice cream could be an unforgettable gift "out of heaven" to a high school senior is a striking sign of someone with no sense that he can and should receive care. His actual entitlement on an ethical level and his conscious sense of entitlement were worlds apart.

Another source of support for Scott during his UBAC years came from his image of God as a heavenly father who, in contrast to Scott's own father, loved Scott as fully as he loved any other person.

DMT When you were in high school at the dorm, how did you think
     about God? What was God like for you?

SO When I was at the end of my rope . . . and I was just like, "I'm a
    failure," you know, "How are you going to do anything with me?".
    . . I knew that there was someone who didn't love someone else
    more than he loved me. And I always felt in God's eyes that I was
    an equal son of his with someone else. And so I never, when it
    came to God I never felt like I was second best. And I think that
    is the way that I looked at God is that I always would come to God
    on even terms and I wasn't less important to God than other people
    were. Because I think that was one of my biggest things was I
    always felt I was a little less than other people when I was at
    UBAC. And so I always felt--and with God I could talk to him and
    pray and read my Bible and feel like I wasn't less important than
    other people and he would listen to me just as much as he would
    listen to other people.

---

[96] Okin, Telephone interview, November 7, 1992. On the subject of constant intimate contact with the same group see above, Ch.4, Sec.III. and Goffman in Ch.3, Sec.II.C.1.

[97] SO, 9.

[98] Ibid., 15-16.

DMT   What would you say to God?
SO   I'd ask for help mostly. . . . I can remember vividly just praying,
      asking for help, you know, in whatever it was, whether it was
      being accepted or trying to do a little better in school. Because
      that was the ultimate pressure that my parents always put on me.
      Just trying to do better.[99]

By finding fairness and acceptance from God, Scott was able to receive some
care. It gave him a much-needed boost in self-esteem.

Scott arrived at graduation still searching for himself. When I asked him
how he figured out his identity at the dorm he replied, "I never did, I don't
think. I never did figure out who I was. I was just passing through."[100]
Always moving on, a self in transition through changing contexts, he was
never truly at home in the Ubangi Academy.

Scott's situation was extreme in some respects because of the abuse he
endured from his father. Yet the experience of the transitional self passing
through the Academy was typical in many ways of the experience of other
students from the Grace Brethren mission.

Like most of the Brethren students, Julie was excited by the prospects of
moving from the small school at Bata to the larger Ubangi Academy to start
seventh grade. "I remember thinking that it seemed like an incredibly special
place. And I wanted to be there because people seemed to be having a lot of
fun."[101] Although she was intimidated at first and homesick enough to cry
herself to sleep each night her first week, she soon entered the flow of dorm
life and felt more comfortable.

The Academy was not only bigger and busier than the Brethren school, it
was also more intense academically. Teachers' expectations were higher and
the other students also expected a lot of themselves and competed actively for
grades. For Free Church and Covenant students who had entered that
environment in grade school, this emphasis on school work was well ingrained,
but for those who entered in junior high or high school it could be shocking.
Julie commented, "I have never seen a place where people were more
scholastically competitive." And a little later, "I struggled with it all the way,
the whole time I was there." With good humor she added, "And then I wasn't
athletic, either, you know. So here I was, basically this bomb in the two
highest categories in the school. So if it wasn't for my social skills [laughs] I
probably would have been a total reject."[102]

When I asked her what she might have said to God during her years at
UBAC, the pain under the humor emerged.

We laugh now. We sit and we laugh and we chuckle, but, you
know, I felt out of it. I felt humiliated in high school that I wasn't
getting these straight As. I mean, my closest friends were straight
A students and were athletic and were beautiful. . . . I was sur-
rounded by these people and it was just like, my friends all, they
all dated, they all had their figs or whatever. I never dated
anybody. I had a crush on a couple people, but it was like
nothing ever really came of it, you know. And it was just like, I
just felt really, really out of it. I really struggled with my self-

---

[99] Ibid., 21-22.
[100] Ibid., 27.
[101] JP, 17-18.
[102] Ibid., 29,30.

esteem. I still do. It's something that I'm coming out of, you
know, I'm growing up. But I probably would have just said,
"Why?" "What's going on?" you know. "Why can't I be like this
or that? Why can't I be like this person? Why can't I make the
great grades? Why do I have to sit down here in study hall? I'm
trying. I'm trying as hard as I can. Why am I not athletic. Why
don't--why can't I get out and play soccer with everybody else in
the afternoon?"[103]

Where Julie did find a place in the Academy was in music and
photography. She also felt well accepted by the Free Church and Covenant
students from the very beginning, unlike Faith, who said, "I felt like there
was a little bit of a stereotype of the "Bangui" kids. And it wasn't a positive
stereotype. The stereotype was basically social outcast ding-dongs type."[104]
All three Brethren women I interviewed agreed, though, that the prejudice at
UBAC was directed much more against the Brethren boys than against the
girls. Whether that said more about the Covenant and Free Church boys
already at UBAC or the Brethren boys who came over the river, none of the
three could decide.

After four years at UBAC, Julie returned with her family to the U.S. and
finished high school in America. She enrolled in a college near her parents
and was living with them at the time of the interview. While she hadn't
noticed much change in her relationship with her parents during the time she
was actually at the Academy, she is starting to see it now.

I guess I feel something like my parents don't really know me
because they missed out on the four years that I was away from
them. Because I wrote them letters and stuff, but that's not quite
the same as actually being there. . . . So all they really got from
me was my, was what I wished to tell them in letters from UBAC. I
think I'm noticing it now because it's just like, we're sort of start-
ing to get to know each other.[105]

Although Julie spent every UBAC vacation with her parents, those weeks
together were altered by the realization that they were only temporary breaks
from the routine of separation. Julie described it as feeling like she was a
guest in her parents' house.

And it's really like you were a guest, 'cause you're only there for
two weeks, and what's that? You know, two weeks is not a very
long time. And then you'd pack your bags and you'd be out of
there again, so it was kind of like we were, I was like a stranger
in my parents' home. But it never hits you then.[106]

Five years after Julie left Africa she is beginning to think through some
of the effects of her life at UBAC for her and her parents. She has begun to
talk with her parents about those years and their consequences.

JF I was like a stranger in my parents' home, you know. But it never
    hits you then. These are not things that I thought when I was
    there. It's just now that I've been out, that I've been away from
    UBAC, and all of a sudden it's like--well, not all of a sudden, but
    over a period of the four or five years since I've been gone these

---

[103] Ibid., 47.
[104] FS, 32.
[105] JF, 18-19.
[106] Ibid., 19-20.

things are coming to me, and I'm sure over my lifetime I'll still be discovering things and influences because of my, because of those years. . . .

DMT Do you talk about this with your folks now that you're living with them?

JF Oh, yeah, now, finally after five years. Just this afternoon, in fact, Dad and I were having a conversation about stuff like that, and it's the strangest thing, because I never thought, really thought like this when I was actually out there. Of course you do think of some of the ramifications, or whatever. You talk about them when you're at school. But I never used to sit around thinking, "Oh my, all the psychological things that I'm going through," you know. But now that I'm in college, and as I'm maturing, I guess, you start to think about stuff like that. And yeah, I'm starting to talk about it with Dad and Mom and they're beginning to realize that, "Yeah, we weren't there." I mean, "We didn't really know what was going on." They sent me treats and stuff like that, but it's not the same. . . .

But it's not—I mean, it's not bad. And I don't want you, I mean, I'm not like—I am in no way one of these MKs who's resentful that I was sent away from home. There's just, there's no way. I mean, I'm just so thankful. I love UBAC. I love the friends that I made there. They're still my friends. They always will be. And it was just like—that was just the way it was. I mean, if I, if Mom and Dad hadn't been missionaries and we'd sat here in the States, I'm sure something else would have happened to me, you know what I mean? You know, I feel like I got the good end of the stick. I sometimes feel sorry for kids who weren't able to live overseas. They missed out, man. You know what I mean? . . .

So there's good and bad in life, and that's part of the bad of being an MK is that your parents miss out and something happens to your relationship with your parents, but you've got to work through it.[107]

Or as she said a little later in the conversation. "Sometimes I look back and I think that UBAC is like the closest thing to Utopia that I'll probably ever get on earth."[108]

Julie's comments mix nostalgia with genuine thankfulness. Her transition through boarding school was costly to both her and her parents, but it also brought some gains. Now she and her parents have begun a dialogue that is strengthening their connection.

When Scott left UBAC he had little sense of direction for his life, but he was resolved to succeed at something. In college his relentless determination emerged and carried him through four tough years. He paid his own way through school, working nights on a factory assembly line, coming home each morning just in time to shower before classes. Commenting on those years he said, "I have a tremendous will inside me that no matter what happens, eventually I'm going to come out of this and be better for it."[109]

Scott gained self-confidence from his success coping with the double demands of school and work. A helpful pastor, and later a psychotherapist,

---

[107] Ibid., 19-20.

[108] Ibid., 35.

[109] SO, 32.

gave him more strength. Scott found a job he loved to do and rose rapidly through the company. He met and married a woman whose accomplishments would, a few years earlier, have intimidated him so much he would not have dared speak to her. They soon had a son, and a second boy was born shortly after our interview.

Eventually he found the courage to confront his father. He invited his father to go hiking with him for a day. On their lunch break he began to talk.

SO I said, "Dad, you had no reason to beat me the way you did. There's no reason for that." I said, "You know, you've created a person who is just seeking for any type of gratification or any type of acceptance by anyone. And I was willing to do stupid things that I, I just wanted to have friends. And just because I had no acceptance and no approval at home."

DMT What kind of response did you get?

SO When I did that?

DMT Yeah.

SO I think--well, my father cried. He wept. . . . I said, "Dad, it's time we had a heart-to-heart talk." And I said, "But first I want you to know that I've borne a lot of crosses," and I said, "I've gone to psychology. I had a psychiatrist talk to me and try to cover up some of my problems. Because I made some mistakes in life because I so much wanted to be accepted. . . ."

When I spoke to Dad he apologized and--his comeback was simply that, "Your older brother Ian was very strong-willed. I could beat him or use a belt on him and he'd do the same thing over again." And I said, "Well Dad, when you're disciplining a child and you discipline him in anger," I said, "that's wrong, number one. But number two. . . I would do something wrong in the morning and you'd smack me then, and then that night you'd smack me again. Let me, torment me for a whole day." I said, "How do you expect to have a father-and-son relationship like that? . . . Cause the worst thing to me--and I would cry over this--the worst thing to me is if I ever felt my son would feel toward me the way I felt toward you, Dad." I told him that. I said, "There would be nothing worse in my life than if my son felt toward me the way I felt toward you. I didn't even like you." And that hurt him for me to say that to him. But I wanted to be honest with him. I said, "I love you now." And I said, "We have a relationship now." But I said, "Everything was more important to you than your own children. You did this, you did that. Everyone respected you and you were a great man of God, but your children always came last. . . ." And so we just, that's the conversation we had.

DMT That's a courageous conversation to have with your father.

SO Right. It was. But . . . I don't know how to say it, but I had to-- for me to feel clean I had to get it, get my disenchantment or my disappointment or my frustration--I had to get it out and ask forgiveness for the way I had acted, I had felt toward him, because I was sinning in the way I felt toward Dad.[110]

In that courageous, painful exchange the first steps toward healing a fractured relationship were taken by both sides. Scott claimed his side in the

---

[110] Ibid., 7-9.

relationship and challenged his father to face the consequences of his violence. At the same time he offered his father his honesty and his attempt to be fair, and he realized the pain his father experienced when Scott described how he had felt. His father responded by beginning to acknowledge the effects of his actions on his son. It was a dramatic ethical engagement that sliced through much of the wall between them.

There are still scars on Scott's psyche and in his key relationships. He likes to be by himself a lot because, as he put it, "I wouldn't let myself down."[111] Yet Scott is also healing, showing remarkable resiliency. His life now provides some measure of recompense for the miseries of early years. "Someone puts you down forever and ever and you can say, 'One day I'm going to have the last word on it.' And that's what I feel my life has been."[112] Most remarkably, Scott and his father have worked out a solid, mutually respectful relationship. Scott makes the expensive transatlantic phone call to Africa twice a month, arranging shipments of tools, seeds, equipment and books to his father's agriculture program. He still hears the imperial tone of command in his father's voice, but it is tempered with thanks and pride and it has lost its power to intimidate him.

The Ubangi Academy received Scott at a time when he was in tremendous emotional pain. Searching for himself, battling insecurities and a pervasive fear of failure, locked in a ledger of exploitation by his family, he had neither the skill to fit in nor the strength to hold himself apart. He was scapegoated by his family and his peers, but he also received some care from perceptive adults at the Academy.

Scott rarely sees other UBAC graduates except for one Grace Brethren MK he has known for twenty-five years. He never talks about the past, and almost never thinks about the Academy. In the end, UBAC was mainly just another phase he passed through, a transit lounge to be endured. Scott made almost no mark on the Academy, and the Academy made little mark on him.

> It certainly wasn't UBAC's fault that my years at UBAC weren't that
> terrific, you know. It's certainly not. I mean, I'm thrilled I went
> to UBAC. I certainly didn't want to stay in C.A.R. And I had a lot
> of great times there. I had a lot of fun times there. It just could
> have been, for me, a lot better if circumstances were different.[113]

For Scott the interview was one more step of healing the memories and the broken relationships of his childhood and youth. It could have been a lot better, but it wasn't. It can still be good enough.

VI. Conclusion

A. Summary of the Interviews

Boarding students at the Ubangi Academy were shaped by the convergence of dynamics in their families of origin and dynamics in the institutional family of the school. Four patterns of the self in its context emerged from this interaction.

Students who received strong parental support that was not traumatically cut off at their first boarding experience were able to engage both family and

---

[111] Ibid., 8.
[112] Ibid., 32.
[113] Ibid., 31.

Academy contexts in a self-delineating dialogue that resisted pressures for conformity. This group, "Resilient Selves in Resources," may have felt restricted and cramped by the demands of the institutional family, but they remained resilient, strengthened by continual reworking of the ledgers of obligation and entitlement between them and their parents. Ironically, in one of these families the dialogue that sustained a UBAC student has given way to conflict now that life after UBAC has taken her in directions that challenge her parents' convictions.

Students whose arrival entailed a traumatic cut-off from their parents were particularly vulnerable to the destructive idealization they called the demand to be "perfect." They most clearly engaged in "seeming," hiding behind suppressed pain and external conformity as their dialogue with their parents fell silent. Only now, twenty to thirty years after they first arrived at the Academy, are some of these "'Perfect' Selves in Silence" engaging their parents in conversations about their early years.

A third group, "Passive Selves in the Institutional Family," shared some of the characteristics of each of the first two groups. They found in the Ubangi Academy a comfortable home, and often appeared to relate most directly to that context. When they began to grow distant from their families, though, they failed to delineate themselves well and passively accepted their place in the institutional family. In the central case in this section, distance from the family of origin and passive acceptance of the strictures of the institutional family contributed to a serious depressive episode.

The fourth group, "Transitional Selves in Changing Contexts," passed through the Academy without fully entering its life. These students came late, when their selves were already well established. They always remained, to some degree, outsiders to the Academy family, related more strongly to family and other contexts than to UBAC. They passed through UBAC with gratitude because it provided them a stepping stone from an even smaller school to the larger world of North America. In this section's central case a history of scapegoating and violence was successfully challenged by a graduate's courageous confrontation of his father.

The evangelical theology of the mission context played a complex role in the lives of these students and their families. For some its emphases on the vital importance of the missionary enterprise and the necessity of submitting to God's will served to enforce conformity and passivity. The centripetal, self-delineating pole of individuation was quite weak in this theology. Several students described their understanding that the mission theology pressed them and everyone else to be as "perfect" as possible. To them there appeared to be little room for failure or error. For other students an image of God served as a touchstone of fairness and a source of alternate values that could challenge the Academy.

Whether they viewed the Ubangi Academy as minimum-security prison or Utopia, students and families inevitably were shaped by their years at the school. The consequences of boarding the self endure for all involved.

The enduring nature of the consequences of boarding the self raises one further issue. Although this study has been primarily retrospective, looking back at the experiences of boarding students, we cannot leave our focus in the past. For H. Richard Niebuhr, ethics are not concerned with what one ought to have done in the past, but with what one will do in the future to respond to the past. Contextual theory makes a similar point with its insistence on seeing every person in a three-dimensional context. For the subjects of this study the crucial third generation is the generation of their children. How are the former students of the Ubangi Academy responding to

their past? How are they shaping an ongoing dialogue with school and family contexts that will carry on into the future? What choices are they making for the generation that follows them, in response to the choices that were made for them?

The interviews addressed the future in two ways. The last question in most interviews asked what the person would say to a family headed for missionary service in the Ubangi. This question yielded a direct but hypothetical statement of each person's view of the future. In a less direct way the interviews also elicited data about the interview subjects that implied their decisions for the future. This included information about marriage, children, vocation, church involvement and interest in missions.

The three people of the first type, "The Resilient Self in Resources," were facing the future with confidence in its security and reliability. Faith wrote, "I'm finding myself much less critical of myself than I used to be and certainly much more capable of speaking out in groups and even taking a leadership role."[114] All three were stably married and all three had established vocations. One had children, two were involved in their church, and one was interested in supporting missions.

When asked what they would say to a family planning to go to the Ubangi, they responded with generally positive comments about the prospects of boarding. Grace commented that second grade is too young and that parents should take every opportunity to send mail or visit, but that as long as children did not feel rejected they could do well.[115] Timothy replied that, given the chance, he would board at UBAC again. He wondered, though, if he and others who held that opinion would make the same decision for their children.[116] Faith added that, with proper preparation for boarding, children could find UBAC a "wonderful place."[117]

As a group the second type, "The 'Perfect' Self in Silence," were having the most difficulty envisioning and trusting in a secure future. These people had been the slowest to settle on vocations and the most geographically mobile. None of the three owned property. They were the only group without children even though two of the three were married. They had the least church involvement and the least interest in missions.

Two of the three would have been mildly discouraging of parents' plans to send their children to UBAC. Kathryn addressed the question passionately: "I would say, 'Your life with your children is very short and it's very precious, and you should guard it with all your strength. Don't let anything take it away from you. Keep your children well. Teach them. Raise them. Give them a lot of love.'"[118] When asked if that could be accomplished with the children boarding at the Academy, she replied that she wasn't sure.

Kenneth would also have tended to dissuade parents, although for different reasons. For him it was more the sheltering, restrictive aspects of the Academy, the lack of exposure to a range of ideas and opinions, that would be troubling.[119]

Sandra reacted most forcefully to the question of sending children to UBAC. "I'd say, 'Don't be crazy. Your kid didn't ask for this and he doesn't

---

[114] Strelnick, Letter, November 3, 1992.

[115] GP, 34.

[116] TW, 43.

[117] FS, 52.

[118] KN, 36.

[119] KH, 35.

deserve it.'"[120] For her, no future involving the Academy or any other board-
ing experience could be considered.

The three people of the third type, "The Passive Self in the Institutional
Family," varied considerably in the choices they had made concerning the
future. Two were married and one had children. All three were relatively
settled in their vocations and two had incorporated their internationally mobile
experience into their vocation in some way. (Although the numbers in this
study were too small to make any definitive statement, in the whole population
of former boarding students this may be the type most likely to return to the
mission field.) Two were involved in churches and one was very supportive
of missions. Two were in somewhat stagnant relationships with their parents,
while one was well engaged.

Attitudes toward future boarding also varied widely in this group. Lin-
nea would not have actively encouraged parents to board their children, but
she would have regarded it as a possibility, provided they encouraged free
expression of thoughts and feelings by the children. Carol and Allison took
strongly opposite stands. Carol exclaimed, "Don't go, you're crazy. . . . How
does this affect your children? How do you see your family?"[121] Allison,
responding to a somewhat different question about her own experience, said,
"Would I do it all over again the same way? I would say definitely yes. I
wouldn't choose to have it any different."[122] More to the point, she would
have wanted the same experience for her own children.

The fourth group, "The Transitional Self in Changing Contexts," contained
two of the youngest people interviewed, as well as two of the oldest. This
wide gap in ages, twelve years between oldest and youngest, made it hard to
generalize about this group's stance toward the future. The two older people
were settled into vocation, church, and location. Both had children, and one
was married while one was divorced. The younger ones were both single and
considerably less established. One was settled in a career and quite active in
church, while the other was just beginning to develop a sense of vocation and
claimed no church involvement. Perhaps most significantly, and most in keep-
ing with the dynamics of this group's boarding experience, only the youngest
person in this type continued to think often of UBAC and to seek out former
Academy friends. The others had turned their attention to life in the United
States. Scott, for instance, said in a follow-up telephone conversation, "I
never talk about my childhood now. My good life started about ten years ago.
I don't want to look into my past."[123] Three of the four expressed a lot of
interest in missions, but none was currently actively involved in missions nor
pursuing mission service. Scott's assistance to his father's work formed the
one exception, though he was the one who indicated the least amount of inter-
est in missions. In general, all four were actively engaged in dialogue with
their parents, Scott through the dramatic incident reported earlier in this
chapter, Julie in recently-broached areas, and Adrian and Terri in ongoing
relationships that had never been badly broken.

Only two people in this type directly answered the question about advice
to a missionary family. Adrian replied, "Go for it. Definitely."[124] Julie con-
curred. "I'd say send them."[125]

---

120 SY, 29.
121 CL, 30.
122 AS, 15.
123 Okin, Telephone interview, November 9, 1992.
124 AF, 24.
125 JF, 52.

For members of all four groups the legacy of their boarding experience continued to affect their plans and visions for the future. The "resilient selves in resources" were generally invested in extending their legacy into the future of family, church, and work. The "'perfect' selves in silence," by contrast, were much more tentative about the legacy they would pass on to children, church, and vocation. The "passive selves in the institutional family" showed the most variety of stances toward the future, evidence of the distinctive personalities that had emerged after they left the boarding school. They were most likely to have incorporated their internationally mobile experience into their future plans. Among the "transitional selves in changing contexts" there was also considerable variety of future plans. In keeping with the central dynamics of this type, their futures were generally more profoundly affected by contexts other than UBAC.

B. Conclusions and Suggestions for Further Study

This project arose from a conviction that the stories of the students of the Ubangi Academy deserved to be told. Too many UBAC graduates, like too many missionary kids from other fields, were speaking of the pain they had experienced growing up on the mission field. They had been wounded, and their wounds had been denied. They, and I, wanted their story to be told so we could understand what had happened to them and cut through the denial of their pain.

It may be that some of the interviews over-emphasized the injuries and disappointments of the students. However, several interview subjects expressed anger at having repeatedly been told how fortunate they had been to have attended the Academy. They wanted to break that kind of idealization and tell their side.

At the same time, this project was never a search for someone to blame. It would be convenient to lay responsibility for the vicissitudes of students at the feet of the Academy dorm parents. But that would be false. The dorm parents I knew and interviewed had taken on an enormous task and performed it faithfully. They had tried to treat the boarding students like members of their own family living in their home. Every interview mentioned some point of genuine caring on the part of the dorm parents. Former dorm parents were keenly aware of their limitations in the position. If they could be faulted for anything it would be for colluding with the larger mission context in ignoring how overwhelmed they were by the job. If dorm parents (and faculty) had spoken out more loudly when they were given the impossible job of caring for as many as 55 people with only three adults, it might have given the students more permission to speak of their own distress. Instead the dorm parents, like many of the other missionaries, overworked themselves. Students were then idealized and parentified in turn.

The destructive idealization and denial of distress at UBAC paralleled dynamics in the larger mission context. Although this study could not give the broader context the attention it deserves, these parallels point to a need for more study of the relational context of the mission field. There are many hurting individuals and families on mission fields. The continuing idealization of missionaries by sponsoring churches and mission boards mutes the cries of missionaries in pain. Missionaries collude in this silence.

The family model for the Academy was humane and welcoming, but impossible to sustain as anything more literal than a broad metaphor. Like all metaphors it was partly true and partly false. The Academy was by nature a total institution. Its students were strongly enclosed physically, culturally

and theologically. The family mythology, when it was used to deny the reality of enclosure, became another tool for cutting off dialogue. The theological context of the larger mission contributed to this cut-off of dialogue. An early phrase of Boszormenyi-Nagy's, "collusive postponement of mourning," is appropriate here. Dialogue about losses was collusively curtailed, at considerable cost to families. When this collusion was broken, even many years later, there could be powerful healing.

The family model for the dorm also implied a conflict of loyalty between the dorm and families of origin. Parents and dorm parents wisely minimized this conflict, never splitting children's loyalties with a forced choice. Nevertheless, the conflict is built into the boarding situation and merits open discussion within families sending children to boarding school as well as in the boarding school itself.

Dynamics within the family of origin emerged as the single most important factor in a boarding student's experience. Children who were well prepared before going away to school, had their experience and feelings validated by their parents, and were allowed to know their parents' grief without being made to feel responsible for it generally fared best. Children who experienced their first trip to the Academy as a traumatic abandonment that could not be acknowledged by the adults suffered most from boarding.

Although this study did not attempt to determine the best age for first boarding among children who must go away for school, the interviews provide some support for the emerging consensus among researchers that fourth grade (age 9) is the best age for children to begin boarding. Some children undoubtedly are ready to leave home two or even three years earlier than that, but the students in this study whose first experience of boarding was most damagingly traumatic were two female students who went to UBAC at ages seven and eight. That, of course, raises thorny questions about how to educate MKs up to that age, an issue we cannot consider here.

A related issue, also unaddressed by this study, is the effect of UBAC on its day students and their families. The lives of "station kids" were also shaped by the Academy, but without the crucial dynamic of boarding. For that reason this group has been left out of this study.

The interviews revealed several incidents and experiences of serious concern to anyone interested in the mental health of MKs. Although not all of these incidents made it into this write-up, there were two accounts of dissociative responses to the pain of separation, one account of physical abuse and one of sexual abuse (both in the family of origin, not at UBAC), one account of serious depression at UBAC, one of a post-graduation depression that required hospitalization, and one of alcoholism at the Academy. Five graduates spoke of going through personal psychotherapy as adults. If this sample is at all representative, it indicates that the mental health of missionaries and their children requires focused attention.

More research is needed on preventive care for boarding missionary kids, but much could be done now. Preparation for boarding should begin early, with discussions of boarding and a visit to UBAC in the third or fourth term of the year before a student is to board. The Academy could arrange a three-day weekend for prospective students, with visits to classrooms and a taste of the dorm routine. Preparation by parents should also include informing children of any options to UBAC the parents are willing and able to consider, and inviting children to speak of their thoughts and feelings about going away to school.

At least one parent should accompany a child on the first trip to UBAC. During that first school term parents should visit at least once. Eight weeks

is a long, long time to a young child. Three or four weeks is a more comprehensible period. Parents should give their children permission to talk or write about their feelings without censoring them to protect the parents. In several of the interviews in this study it was the self-censorship and denial of pain, more than the actual homesickness, that was damaging.

The youngest boys would benefit from a mentoring arrangement similar to the girls' big sister/little sister program. Among the older kids, integration of Grace Brethren and other students who come to UBAC at a later age remains a partially-realized goal that requires further action.

Students should also be connected more to both Africa and their parents' American (or European) home. Since contact with the U.S. has increased in recent years, exposure to Zaïrian people, history and culture is currently the greater concern.

Before they are thrown into leadership of the institutional family, dorm parents deserve specific training. A seminary education for the husband and nurse's training for the wife are not adequate preparation for the job. Dorm parents should have experience in an American boarding school and specialized education in human development, group process, nutrition and maintenance/repair of household equipment. One of the dorm mothers interviewed specified that prospective dorm parents should have experience running a household in Zaïre before they try to manage the dormitory. Dorm parents should have enough staff to be available to the students without severely overworking themselves. While being "on" or "off" duty may make dorm parents feel the Academy has become too institutional, that is preferable to placing on them the burden of being on duty night and day for ten weeks at a time.

One of the strengths of UBAC during the two decades studied was the continuity of its dorm parents. This record for consistent leadership will be hard to match in the 1990s, with greater turnover among missionaries in Zaïre and political instability in the country, but it is just as vital now as ever.

Care for boarding students is a major part of care for missionary families, but not the only part. This is not the place to address that topic except to say that, given the centrality of families in shaping the experience of their children who board, care given to missionary parents can be expected to benefit their children in boarding school as well. If the family context is well cared for, boarding the self could be a less painful process for all.

Chapter 6

Concluding Personal Statement

It is never possible to be completely objective about human lives. When we write about people we know it is even more difficult. It seems appropriate, then, that I end by being as clear as I can about my loyalties and loyalty conflicts as they relate to this dissertation.

The Ubangi Academy has been a part of the life of my family for almost 30 years. My three siblings and I all graduated from UBAC. My mother has given thousands of lessons on the UBAC pianos, directed the choir, and even conducted the band for a while. My father has given medical treatment to any number of UBAC students and staff, and has probably logged more hours on the concrete tennis court than anyone in school history. When my parents retire from the mission field in a few short years, that rich connection between my family and the Academy will pass into history.

The history of my family's relationship with the Ubangi Academy lies behind my work in this study. Even though my siblings and I never boarded, the ties are many, and they run in many directions. They have influenced this study in several ways.

I started looking into the consequences of boarding at the Ubangi Academy because I could see some of those consequences in the lives of people I knew well. I am married to a UBAC alumna, and she and I remain in contact with several of our contemporaries from the Academy. It was in the company of these people that I first heard of, and first witnessed, the consequences of boarding. This study began with their stories, in an attempt to let their experience be known. Some of them, as the preceding chapters have testified, described mainly positive consequences from their time in boarding school. Others found the consequences painful. Their stories raise questions for me. What do I owe my UBAC peers? What have I received from them? How is this research a part of our give and take?

Their stories were just one side of a multi-sided situation. The stories of UBAC students involved the stories of parents who sent them to school with mixed feelings and dorm parents who received them. These people also had a side. Furthermore, I also had a relationship with many of them. They were my "aunts" and "uncles" on the mission field. They were the dorm parents who fed me cookies at snack time, gave me trombone lessons, and taught me woodworking. What do I owe them for the care they gave me? What have I given them, first as a UBAC student and now, in this document? I hoped to give them credit for the costs they paid in sending and receiving students to board. When the trajectories of their lives as missionaries and their children's lives in boarding school collided, my loyalties became conflicted.

The UBAC parents and dorm parents were also colleagues, and often friends, of my parents. My parents are diplomatic, skilled at soft words that turn away anger. Sometimes they hide their own anger or disapproval in order to get along with others. They are also very loyal to their denomination and mission. They taught me to think for myself, but also to seek consensus and to restrain my criticism when my opinions clashed with others'. It is hard for me to be critical around them. I would like not to give offense to them or their friends, yet I would also like to state my terms more boldly than they. It is hard to speak openly with them through generations of Scandinavian reserve and the six-week turnaround time for international mail. I hope to trust more of myself to the thin blue aerograms I mail to Africa.

What will my parents' retirement and departure from Karawa mean to me? It will further cut my ties to a place that was once home. It will also remind

me that I have not chosen to follow their path to Africa. For me, as for many MKs, missionary service is a natural option, and a choice against it feels somehow disloyal. We search other paths for our loyalty. I know that my vocation as a minister and psychotherapist has been profoundly affected by their commitments. I hope their retirement allows us more time together to connect more deeply, to close some of the distance opened by 9000 miles of separation.

In the end, I hope this study has contributed to the understanding of the consequences of boarding for students and their families. I also hope that for the families involved it has catalyzed a new level of dialogue between family members. I am encouraged by reports that the interviews themselves stimulated some self-disclosure. A few days after our conversation Kathryn wrote: "I was surprised by the aftereffects. I had a sense of 'belonging' once again. Something I haven't felt in years."[1] I hope she can use that renewed sense of belonging to risk new engagement with her family. Carol reported that after her interview she found the courage and purpose to speak frankly with her parents about her boarding experience. She was surprised by her parents' openness to hearing her side.

This is my statement in the scholarly conversation about boarding. It is certainly not a last word. I hope for other voices to continue the dialogue.

---

[1] Kathryn Nordlund, letter 3/22/92.

APPENDIX A

LETTERS SOLICITING INTERVIEWS

105 Farber Road - 6B
Princeton, NJ 08540
609-734-9026
February 8, 1992

Dear ,

    Mbote mingi! I'm writing to enlist your help with research I am doing as part of my work toward a doctorate in Pastoral Theology at Princeton Seminary. For my dissertation I'm studying adolescence in the context of mission boarding school, focusing on Alumni of the Ubangi Academy.

    Here's where you come in. I need to interview people who spent at least part of their adolescence at UBAC. For my purposes that means anyone who spent two or more years in high school at UBAC during the 1970's or '80's. (I also plan to interview some of the teachers and dorm parents from that time period.) Would you be willing to talk with me about your time at UBAC? It will involve about a 90-minute conversation, in person if possible or over the phone if I can't get to where you live.

    Also, if you've written anything about your time at UBAC, I would love to see it. This could be journals, articles for magazines, letters you wrote from the dorm or later, or even an autobiographical essay written just for this occasion. I welcome anything between one page and fifty, and will be sure to return it to you when I'm through. All written and/or interview material will be kept confidential, and identities will be disguised in my dissertation.

    Please send back the reply card whether or not you're interested in being interviewed so I won't have to trouble you with a follow-up call or letter. I'll work out the logistics of places, dates and times for interviews when I've heard back from enough people to set up a travel schedule. I'm convinced that UBAC was a unique school, certainly in comparison to schools in the States or Canada, but also among MK schools. What I hope to find out is how that unique environment shaped our growing up.

Yours,

Doug Thorpe

105 Farber Road - 6B
Princeton, NJ 08540
609-734-9026
April 24, 1992

Dear ,

    Hi again from Princeton. I've been back about a month now, trying to catch up on work I left behind and at the same time starting to transcribe the interview tapes. Thanks so much for the interview. I haven't done enough analysis yet to draw any conclusions from the interviews except to say that everyone single person I talked to mentioned shelling peanuts on the porch. Funny what lingers in our memories. I'll let you know what I find when I get farther along.

    I'm interested to know if you had any thoughts about or reactions to the interview. Did you think of anything you wish you'd said? Have you thought or felt differently about UBAC, yourself, and/or your family since then? If anything else comes to your mind concerning UBAC, relationships there, its after effects, or the after effects of the interview, I would be interested in hearing about it.

                Yours,

                Doug

1501 Lawrenceville Rd - 1S
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648
609-771-1562
October 24, 1992

Dear ,

   Thanks again for the interview last March. I have now transcribed and read all the interviews and started writing the actual dissertation. If I'm diligent and fortunate (and don't play any golf!) I just might get done in time to graduate next May.

   I'd like, if I may, to push just a little deeper with you into one particular area, and to use my own experience at UBAC to illustrate. My research has come to focus on the development of the self in the UBAC context. What kind of messages did you get about who you were and should be? Where did those messages come from? How did they get transmitted to you? And how well did those messages fit you? Could you become your true self at the dorm?

   For myself, I think my mode of operation at the Academy was to figure out the rules, figure out what other people wanted me to be, then give them that. I was pretty good at it, so I got plenty of affirmation. But it cost me a strong sense of my real self. Even now, in proposing and researching this dissertation topic, I have found myself spending more time worrying about what other people will think of my work and what they want me to say than what I want to find out and who I am.

   Psychologist Stephen M. Johnson writes, "Your attempt to be who I need you to be is the false self." That's what I'm talking about. Johnson also writes, "Essentially, the message to the emerging person is, 'Don't be who you are, be who I need you to be. Who you are disappoints me, threatens me, angers me, overstimulates me. Be what I want and I will love you.'"

   Is this the message you heard? If not, what message did you hear about your self? And how did you respond?

   I'll call you in a couple of weeks to see what you think. If you want to write me instead, that would be great too. And thanks again for your help.

                              Yours,

                              Doug

   P.S. September 18-20 I attended the Second International Conference of Global Nomads International (GNI) near Washington, D.C. GNI calls itself "a non-profit organization serving those who have lived outside their passport country during pre-adult years due to a parent's occupation." It was a great weekend. You can get information on membership and chapters of GNI near you from GNI at P.O. Box 9584, Washington, D.C. 20016-9584.

APPENDIX B

Interview Questions
March 12, 1992

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Family of Origin
      How many in your family?
      What is your place in the birth order?
      Year your family went to Africa?
            How did your parents' decide to go to Africa?
      Parents' vocations?
      Home station(s)?

What years and grades were you at UBAC?
When and where was your family on home assignment?
Have you ever been back to Africa? When? In what capacity?

Demographic information
      Age
      Occupation
      Current location   Urban,   suburban,   rural
      Education level
      Marital status
      Children?
      Church affiliation?
      Ivolvement in local church   None   Some   A lot
      Interest in religion   None   Some   A lot
      Interest in missions   None   Some   A lot

II. FIRST EXPERIENCE AT UBAC

When you first went to UBAC
      What age/grade?
      How was your leaving home handled in your family?
      What did you and your parents and siblings say about your going?

      Did you go with anybody? Whom?
      What were your first impressions of UBAC?
      Whom did you first meet at the dorm?
      How did you handle your thoughts and feelings those first days?

                  Express? (to whom?)   Keep quiet?   Deny?

      What do you think about the age at which you were sent to the
      dorm?
                  Right?   Too early?   Too late?

If your parents could be here now, what would you say to them about your
first year at UBAC (and the age at which you went)?
What might they say in reply?

III. ON TO ADOLESCENCE - SYSTEMIC DIMENSION

When you were in high school:

Describe the roles students played (activities and qualities that brought status)
> What roles were held in high esteem? (eg., soccer star, pianist) low?
> Where were you on the ranking?

What were the traditions and rituals (repeated, patterned actions)?

What myths do you remember? (commonly believed false assumptions)

What sorts of thing were divided along gender lines? (eg., roles, jobs, privileges, status, activities, dress code, band instruments)
> How did the sex roles available limit or expand your options?

In general, what were relations between the sexes like at the dorm?
> How did you relate to the other sex? Did you date at UBAC?
> How well did UBAC prepare you for dating, courtship, and marriage?

How did you mark transitions in your development?
> What were the rites of passage, or markers of maturing? Physical?
Social?   Eg., When did you get a driver's license? (a big marker in the U.S.)
> How were boundaries between age groups marked off at the dorm?

How did you learn to handle money?
> How much did you have at UBAC? What did you spend it on? How did you decide where to spend it?

Theology
> What was the heart or center of the theology at UBAC?
> What were the biggest sins? Virtues?
> What kinds of things made you guilty? Ashamed?
> What helped you feel forgiven? (Source of grace)
How important was Christian faith to you? Did you have regular
> personal devotions? Did you have any conversion experiences?
> What was God like for you as an adolescent? If you talked to God,
> > what did/would you say? What did/would God say in return?
> How well do you feel your faith fit with the general tone at UBAC.
How do you think UBAC related to influences from the world?
> Imagine a conversation between UBAC and the world.

What were your relationships with Zairian people like? What kinds of
> give and take did you have with Zairians?
> Relationships with Zairian culture? (music, folklore, crafts, history)
> How much contact did you have with Zairians your own age?
> > More contact at home station than at UBAC, or less?
> What myths were there about Zaire and Zairians?
> How well do you think UBAC taught you about Zaire?

IV. RELATIONAL ETHICS

Loyalty

>   To whom or what were you primarily loyal, and who was loyal to
>   you?
>   What kinds of issues did loyalty conflicts center on?
>   (eg., siblings/peers, dorm/home, parents/dorm parents, God,
>   denomination, Zaire/U.S., languages [French/Lingala/Sango/
>   English], sports...)
>   How did these different loyalties work for you but also make you
>   work for them?
>   Where did you feel you belonged or were most "at home?" (UBAC,
>   parents' mission station, U.S./Canada)

Responsibility

>   What new options for action/ideas/beliefs became available to you in
>   adolescence?
>   How did the give-and-take of entitlements and obligations shift?
>
>   If we define responsibility as assessing situations, weighing
>   responses, and choosing one option, (instead of simply following
>   rules) how did you learn to do that?

Identity

>   How did you find out who you were?
>   How did you assert your developing autonomy?
>
>   Part of our identity is our sense that we are worthwhile because
>   we can care for other people and expect caring from them.
>   Who cared for you, and whom could you care for?
>   What kinds of activities were available by which you could delineate
>   yourself by showing your ability to act caringly and respon-
>   sibly, or failing and losing credit?

Justice/Fairness
What were the most important rules?
>   How were infractions of rules dealt with? What kinds of punish-
>   ments were used?
>   To whom could you address concerns about fairness?
>   How might it have gone?
>   How would it go now if you had the chance? What would you say
>   and what would you expect to hear in return?

What else should I have asked?

What would you say to a family going to the Ubangi for the first time with
kids the age you were when your family first went?

Interview questions (faculty/staff)
March 12, 1992

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

What year did you first go to Africa?
    Why did you go?

What did you do before going to Africa?

What was your training/education for your position at UBAC?

What years were you at UBAC?
    If you did not go to UBAC first, why did you switch?

II. FIRST EXPERIENCE AT UBAC

When you first arrived at UBAC
    What were your first impressions, first thoughts and feelings?
    How did you handle your first thoughts and feelings?

        Express? (to whom?)   Keep quiet?   Deny?

How ready were you for your job at UBAC?

How did your family talk about what it would mean for you to be at UBAC?

III. UBAC AS A LARGE FAMILY - FOCUS ON ADOLESCENCE

Describe the roles students played (activities and qualities that brought
    status)
    What roles were held in high esteem? (eg., soccer star, pianist)
    low?

What were the most important rules?
    (dorm parents, in particular) How did you decide what the rules
    should be?
    How did you maintain the rules and keep discipline?
    What was it like to have to keep discipline for so many?

What were the traditions and rituals (repeated, patterned actions)?

What myths do you remember? (commonly believed false assumptions)

What sorts of thing were divided along gender lines? (eg., roles, jobs,
    privileges, status, activities, dress code, band instruments)
    How did the sex roles available to the kids limit or expand their
    options?

What were relations between the sexes like at the dorm?
    How well did UBAC prepare students for dating, courtship, and
    marriage?

How did the students mark transitions in their development?
    What were the rites of passage, or markers of maturing? Physical?
    Social? (Eg., a driver's license is a big marker in the U.S.)
    How were boundaries between age groups marked off at the dorm?

Theology
    What was the heart or center of the theology at UBAC?
    What were the biggest sins? Virtues?
    What helped you feel forgiven? (Source of grace)
    What was God like for you while you were at UBAC?
        If you could have talked directly with God, how might that
        conversation have gone?
    How well do you feel your faith fit with the general tone at UBAC.
How do you think UBAC related to influences from the world?
    Imagine a conversation between UBAC and the world.
    How were these outside influences dealt with?

What were your contacts with Zairian people like?
        What were the terms of the give-and-take?
    Contacts with Zairian culture? (music, folklore, crafts, history)
How about the adolescents' contacts with Zairian people and culture?
    How much contact did they have with Zairians their own age?
    What myths were there about Zaire and Zairians?
    How well do you think UBAC taught students about Zaire?

IV. RELATIONAL ETHICS

Summarize your responsibility in one sentence.

What parts of your work were most rewarding? Least?

Where did the pressures on you come from? Who had a claim on your
    energy or time?
    Where did you get support? Who cared for you?
How fair were the expectations on you?
    To whom could you address questions of fairness?
    How would it go now if you had the chance? What would you say,
    and what would you expect to hear in return?
    How did you reconcile the demands of work, family, school board,
    mission board, national workers, etc.

Loyalty in adolescence
    What kinds of issues did loyalty conflicts center on?
        (eg., siblings/peers, dorm, parents/dorm parents, God,
        denomination, Zaire/U.S., languages [French/Lingala/Sango/
        English], sports...)
    What were the lines of alliance among the kids? How were they
    established and maintained?

Responsibility in adolescence
    What new options for action/ideas/beliefs became available to
    students in   adolescence?
    What new obligations did they have?
    How did the interplay of entitlements and obligations shift?

    If we define responsibility as assessing situations, weighing
    responses, and choosing one option, (instead of simply following
    rules) how did students learn   to do that?

Identity
    How did students find out who they were?
    How did they assert their developing autonomy?

    Part of our identity is our sense that we are worthwhile because
    we can care for other people and expect caring from them.
    Who cared for the adolescents and whom could they care for?
    What kinds of activities were available by which they could
        delineate their selves by showing their ability to act caringly
        and responsibly, or failing and losing credit?

What else should I have asked?

What would you say to a family going to the Ubangi for the first time with
kids the age yours were when you first went?

APPENDIX C

Interview Summaries: Demographic Information and Key Themes*

	Places lived	Schools	Years UBAC	Denomination	Revisited Africa
Julie Faxon	----	----	4	GB	1x, 5mos
Adrian Fox	~4	~6	2	GB	1x, 18mos
Linnea Hallberg	13	9	2	ECC	no
Terri Halpern	----	----	2	GB	1x, 1yr
Kenneth Hefley	~2	~4	9	ECC	5x
Carol Lindstrom	~11	4	8	EFCA	1x, 2yrs
Michael Nelson	~9	6	7	ECC	3x, 1yr+
Kathryn Nordlund	10	6	7	ECC	1x
Scott Okin	5	5 or 6	3	GB	----
Lars Olsen	10	~4	7	ECC	2x, 3yrs
Grace Palmquist	4	3	9	EFCA	1x, 1yr
Allison Stone	~10	3	----	EFCA	several years
Faith Strelnick	----	----	2	GB	2x, 1yr
Timothy Walsh	8	6	6.5	ECC	1x, 6wks
Sandra Young	~12	5	7.5	EFCA	1x, 5wks

*Note: Some categories omitted to preserve anonymity.

	Education	Marital Status	Current denomination	Church involvement	Interest in Religion
Julie Faxon	working on a B.A.	S	GB	None	Some
Adrian Fox	B.A.	D	GB	Some	A Lot
Linnea Hallberg	B.A.	M	ECC	A Lot	A Lot
Terri Halpern	B.A.	S	GB	Some or A Lot	A Lot
Kenneth Hefley	M.S.	S	None	Some	Spirit, transcendence
Carol Lindstrom	B.S.	S	None	None	A Lot (spirituality)
Michael Nelson	Ph.D.	M	ECC	A Lot	Some
Kathryn Nordlund	A.A.	M	None	None	A Lot (spirituality)
Scott Okin	B.A.	M	ECC	Some	----
Lars Olsen	B.A.	M	ECC	A Lot	A Lot
Grace Palmquist	M.A.	M	None	None	Some (not personal, academic)
Allison Stone	B.A.	M	EFCA	----	----
Faith Strelnick	B.S.	M	GB	Some to A Lot	A Lot
Timothy Walsh	B.A.	M	ECC	A Lot	A Lot
Sandra Young	M.A.	M	ECC	Some	Some

	Interest in missions	Graduated	Pre-UBAC Conversation	Homesickness	Age sent
Julie Faxon	A Lot	USA	Visited UBAC	Strong one week	12
Adrian Fox	A Lot	UBAC	By letter at prior school	Maybe	16
Linnea Hallberg	Some	USA	Visited UBAC	No	14 "Right or Late"
Terri Halpern	A Lot	USA	Visited UBAC	----	14 "Right"
Kenneth Hefley	None (service, yes)	UBAC	Doesn't remember	----	----
Carol Lindstrom	None	UBAC	Siblings praised dorm	Strong each term	7 "Early"
Michael Nelson	Some	UBAC	----	----	----
Kathryn Nordlund	None	UBAC	Doesn't remember	Strong	8 "Early"
Scott Okin	Some (in family)	UBAC	"No choice"	----	15 "Right"
Lars Olsen	A Lot	UBAC	----	No	8 "Right, fine age"
Grace Palmquist	None	UBAC	Early. Mom worried	Sick, not homesick	7 "Early"
Allison Stone	A Lot	UBAC	----	Some	7
Faith Strelnick	A Lot	UBAC	No option	----	16
Timothy Walsh	Some	UBAC	----	No	10 "Right"
Sandra Young	None	UBAC	Matter-of-fact	Strong	7 "Early"

	Image of God	UBAC themes	UBAC sin	Personal theme	UBAC myths
Julie Faxon	Yardstick	Christianity lived, lifestyle	Spiritual laziness	Utopia	----
Adrian Fox	----	Clean colony, Jesus Christ	Egotism	Late developer	----
Linnea Hallberg	Loving but not personal	Don't question	Sex	Pleasing	Christians always happy
Terri Halpern	Not personal	----	Lacksadaisical, not on fire	Follower	----
Kenneth Hefley	----	Repression, fear, guilt, personal relationship with Jesus Christ	----	Perfect	Family. No cost to dorm parents' family
Carol Lindstrom	Strong presence, sin-oriented	Love (phony), legalistic, guilt	Question, rebel	Passive	Zaïrians cheat
Michael Nelson	Shepherd, Light, Father	Responsibility	Disappoint	----	Evil spirits, all happy and mature
Kathryn Nordlund	Friend	Get along, rules	Break rules, disrupt	Perfect	All Christians siblings
Scott Okin	Loved Scott equally	Devotions, family	----	Just passing through	----
Lars Olsen	Friend	Conversion, be good	Disrespect dorm parents	Blinders, outsider	----

Grace Palmquist	Holy	Live to honor God, duties	Kissing	Rebel? outsider	----
Allison Stone	----	----	----	----	----
Faith Strelnick	Not per-sonal	Christian living	Rebellion, bucking system	Goofy	----
Timothy Walsh	Legalistic	Don't rock the boat	Talk back	----	Adults always right
Sandra Young	All-seeing, waiting for screw-up	Fear, passive girls, rules	Attitude, anger	No grace	Americans superior. God on students' backs

	Status Keys	Boys' themes	Girls' themes
Julie Faxon	Competition	Boy/girl split traditional	-----
Adrian Fox	Zaïre time, academics, seniors	Few boy/girl differences	-----
Linnea Hallberg	----	----	Pleasing, conform
Terri Halpern	Athletics	----	----
Kenneth Hefley	Age, hunt, bike, "fig," spiritual. Brethren, "Statesie" low	Hunt, mobility, Africa, language	Sheltered, confined
Carol Lindstrom	Leaders, spiritual, dating, time in Zaïre, age	Hunt, motorcycles, soccer, mobility	Organize, piano, passive, quiet
Michael Nelson	Soccer, music, academics	Hunt, motorcycles, drive, mobility	Dress code
Kathryn Nordlund	----	----	----
Scott Okin	Academics, sports, motorcycles	Jobs, more leeway	Dress code
Lars Olsen	Sports, age, spiritual, academics, toe line	Didn't consider status difference between genders	----
Grace Palmquist	Studies, respect of dorm parents	Dish captain, math & science	Obedient, trusted down boys' hall
Allison Stone	----	----	----
Faith Strelnick	Studies, athletics	Manual labor	Kitchen work
Timothy Walsh	Athletics, humor	Athletics, humor	----
Sandra Young	Boy: hunt athlete. Girl: smart, pretty	Drive, mobility, hunt, meet Africans, science & math	Arts, piano, sewing

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

MISSIONARY KIDS, THIRD CULTURE KIDS, THE UBANGI ACADEMY

Austin, Clyde. "Interpersonal Stresses from Living in a Cross-cultural Environment." In New Directions in Missions: Implications for MKs. Compendium of the International Conference on Missionary Kids, Manila, Philippines, November, 1984., Eds. Beth A. Tetzel and Patricia Mortenson, 132-48. West Brattleboro, VT: ICMK, 1986.

Austin, Clyde N. Cross-cultural Reentry: An Annotated Bibliography. Abilene: Abilene Christian University Press, 1983.

Austin, Clyde N., and Billy Van Jones. "Reentry Among Missionary Children: An Overview of Reentry Research from 1934-1986." Journal of Psychology and Theology 15, no. 4 (1987): 315-25.

Bachmann, Theodore E., comp. "Doctoral Dissertations on Mission." International Bulletin of Missionary Research 7 (July 1983): 97-99, 104-34.

Beck, James Romaine. Parental Preparation of Missionary Children for Boarding School. Taiwan: Mei Ya Publications, 1968.

Bower, Eli M. "American Children and Families in Overseas Communities." National Institute of Mental Health 37 (July 1967): 787-96.

Bressler, Ralph E. "MK Education - What's the Score?" Alliance Witness 108 (November 1973): 18-20.

Bretsch, Howard S. "A Study of Intercultural Adjustment Problems of Missionary Children." Journal of Educational Research 47 (April 1954): 609-16.

Buffam, C. John. The Life & Times of an MK. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1985.

Cairns, Annette. Covering Letter to Home Boards with UBAC Board Minutes. January 22, 1987.

Chester, Raymond M. "To Send or not to Send? Missionary Parents Ask." In Helping Missionaries Grow: Readings in Mental Health and Missions, edited by Kelly S. O'Donnell and Michele Lewis O'Donnell, 258-65. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1988.

Church, Clarence, ed. Other Words 6 (July-August 1980).

Curryer, Jeanie. "From MK to OK." Good News Broadcaster March 1982, 14-17.

Danielson, Edward E. The Effects of Foreign Residence in Personality Development of the Children of American Evangelical Ministers. Ph.D. Diss., University of Santo Tomas, Philippines. 1981.

_____. Missionary Kid - MK. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1984.

Downie, Richard Dixon. Re-entry Experiences and Identity Formation of Third Culture Experienced Dependent American Youth: An Exploratory Study. Ph.D. Diss., Michigan State University. 1976.

Downs, Ray F. "A Look at the Third Culture Child." Japan Christian Quarterly 42 (Spring 1976): 66-71.

Echerd, Pam, and Alice Arathoon, eds. Planning for MK Nurture. Compendium of the International Conference on Missionary Kids, Quito, Ecuador, January 4-8, 1987, Vol. 2. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1989.

_____, eds. Understanding and Nurturing the Missionary Family. Compendium of the International Conference on Missionary Kids, Quito, Ecuador, January 4-8, 1987, Vol. 1. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1989.

Fleming, Robert L. Adjustment of India Missionaries' Children in America. Ph.D. Diss., University of Chicago. 1947.

_____. "Adjustment of Missionaries' Children in America." Educational Administration and Supervision 33 (October 1947): 349-60.

Foyle, Marjory F. Honourably Wounded: Stress Among Christian Workers. n.p.: MARC Europe; Evangelical Missionary Alliance; BMMF Interserve; Evangelical Missions Information Service, 1987.

_____. "Parent/child Relationships in Missionary Families." In New Directions in Missions: Implications for MKs. Compendium of the International Conference on Missionary Kids, Manila, Philippines, November, 1984., Eds. Beth A. Tetzel and Patricia Mortenson, 64-69. West Brattleboro, VT: ICMK, 1986.

Gleason, Thomas Patrick. Social Adjustment Patterns and Manifestations of Worldmindedness of Overseas-experienced American Youth. Ph.D. Diss., Michigan State University. 1969.

Gotaas, David, ed. "Missionary Life as MK's See It." Moody Monthly 73 (June 1973): 73-78.

Hayashida, Nelson, and Sandra Hayashida. "Roots MK Style." The Commission 42 (July 1979): 20.

Herrmann, Carol Bernice. Foundational Factors of Trust and Autonomy Influencing the Identity Formation of the Multi-cultural Lifestyled MK [missionary Kid]. Ph.D. Diss., Northwestern University. 1977.

Hewes, Gordon W. "The Ecumene as a Civilizational Multiplier System." The Kroeber Anthropological Society Papers 25 (1965): 73-110.

Hill, Brian V. "The Educational Needs of Children of Expatriates." In Helping Missionaries Grow: Readings in Mental Health and Missions, edited by Kelly S. O'Donnell and Michele Lewis O'Donnell, 276-304. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1988.

Holzmann, John A. "What About the Kids? MK Education Symposium." In Helping Missionaries Grow: Readings in Mental Health and Missions, edited by Kelly S. O'Donnell and Michele Lewis O'Donnell, 266-75. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1988.

Huntington, Ellsworth. "The Success of Missionary Children." The Missionary Review of the World 58 (February 1935): 74-75.

Irwin, Mrs. Franklin. "Those Exotic MKs." Alliance Witness 110 (March 1975): 16-18.

Jordan, Kathleen Anne Finn. The Adaptation Process of Third Culture Dependent Youth as They Re-enter the United States and Enter College: An Exploratory Study. Ph.D. Diss., Michigan State University. 1981.

Kenney, Betty Jo. The Missionary Family. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1983.

Krajewski, Frank R. A Study of the Relationship of an Overseas-experienced Population Based on Sponsorship of Parent and Subsequent Academic Adjustment to College in the United States. Ph.D. Diss., Michigan State University. 1969.

Livingston, David, and Arnold Pearson. "Should Missionary Children Be Sent Away?" Eternity 19 (April 1968): 18-36.

Lockerbie, D. Bruce. Education of Missionaries' Children: The Neglected Dimension of World Mission. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1975.

Lockerbie, Donny. "Missionary Kids Are Just Kids." Eternity 27 (1976): 22-23.

MacNeill, Evelyn. "Home is Where I Hang My Hat." Japan Christian Quarterly 42 (Spring 1976): 88-91.

Marlowe, Barbara. "Don't Panic!" Japan Christian Quarterly 42 (Spring 1976): 79-81.

Narramore, Clyde. Child of the Missionary. Pamphlet 24. Rosemead, CA: Narramore Christian Foundation, 1966.

Nelson, Margaret. "Twenty-fifth Anniversary for Ubangi Academy." Article in the "Missionary Newsletter" Insert. Covenant Companion October 15, 1974, 2A.

North, Floyd H., ed. Special Issue on MK's. The Commission 34 (August 1971).

_____, ed. The Commission 38 (January 1976).

O'Donnell, Kelly S. "Developmental Tasks in the Life Cycle of Mission Families." In Helping Missionaries Grow: Readings in Mental Health and Missions, edited by Kelly S. O'Donnell and Michele Lewis O'Donnell, 148-63. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1988.

O'Donnell, Kelly S., and Michele Lewis O'Donnell, eds. Helping Missionaries Grow: Readings in Mental Health and Missions. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1988.

Orr, Clara E. "The Education of Missionaries' Children." Occasional Bulletin 10 (November 1959): 1-11.

Parker, Allen Ellsworth. An Analysis of the Factors in the Personality Development of Children of Missionaries. Master's Thesis, University of Chicago. 1936.

Pollock, David C. "The Re-entry Task." In New Directions in Missions: Implications for MKs. Compendium of the International Conference on Missionary Kids, Manila, Philippines, November, 1984., Eds. Beth A. Tetzel and Patricia Mortenson, 395-411. West Brattleboro, VT: ICMK, 1986.

Ralson, Dolores Elizabeth. The Adjustment Problems of American Students Reared on the Mission Field. Master's of Religious Education Thesis, Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary. 1949.

Reddekopp, Abe, ed. The Gospel Message 88 (Spring 1980).

Reynolds, David Hamilton. A Follow-up Study of Selected Graduates of a School in Kenya for Children of Missionaries: 1965-1970. Ed.D. Diss., University of Virginia. 1972. Dissertation Abstracts International, 1972, 33, 3421A-3422A (UMI No. 72-33,381).

Samuelson, Gretchen. "Report on UBAC Questionnaire." Report to the Ubangi Academy Board. January, 1987.

Schimmels, Mary P., comp. Kids of the Kingdom: A Working Bibliography on Missionary Kids. Wheaton, IL: The Billy Graham Center Library, Wheaton College and Evangelical Missions Information Service, 1991. [Available from EMIS, Box 794, Wheaton, IL 60189].

Schipper, David James. Self Concept Differences Between Early, Late, and Non-boarding Missionary Children. Ph.D. Diss., Rosemead Graduate School of Psychology. 1977.

Schulz, Dorris M. A Study of Third Culture Experience in Relation to the Psycho-social Adjustment of Returned Church of Christ Missionary Families. Ph.D. Diss., University of Nebraska. 1986.

Schulz, Thomas N. A Study to Determine the Basic Needs of MK's Upon Re-entry to the United States and to Define and Describe a Re-entry Program Designed to Meet the Needs. Ph.D. Diss., University of Nebraska. 1985.

Sharp, Larry W. "How Missionary Children Become World Christians: The Role of the MK School and the Local Culture." Journal of Psychology and Theology 18 (1990): 66-74.

_____. "Toward a Greater Understanding of the Real MK: A Review of Recent Research." In Helping Missionaries Grow: Readings in Mental Health and Missions, edited by Kelly S. O'Donnell and Michele Lewis O'Donnell, 219-28. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1988.

Shepard, Frank G., Jr. An Analysis of Variables of Self-perception and Personal Ambition in Overseas-experienced American Teenagers. Implication for Curricular Planning. Ph.D. Diss., Michigan State University. 1976.

Smit, Harvey A. "That Happy Yet Lonely Feeling." Japan Christian Quarterly 42 (Spring 1976): 82-87.

Smith, Truman S. "MK Weekend." The Commission 36 (January 1973): 26-27.

Stevenson-Moessner, Jeanne. Theological Dimensions of Maturation in a Missionary Milieu. European University Studies. Berne: Peter Lang, 1989.

Sweet, Jim, and Siegfried G. Enge. "Parents to MKs." The Commission 42 (February 1979): 32-33.

Taylor, Margaret Hopper. "Personality Development in the Children of Missionary Parents." Japan Christian Quarterly 42 (Spring 1976): 72-78.

Taylor, William David. "Reflections of an MK: Breaking Out of Tricky Bubbles." Evangelical Missions Quarterly 27 (April 1991): 140-44.

Tetzel, Beth A., and Patricia Mortenson, eds. New Directions in Missions: Implications for MKs. Compendium of the International Conference on Missionary Kids, Manila, Philippines, November, 1984. West Brattleboro, VT: ICMK, 1986. [Distributed by Missionary Internship, Colorado Springs, CO].

This is the Evangelical Free Church of America. Minneapolis: The Evangelical Free Church of America, n.d.

UBAC Handbook. Karawa, Zaïre: N.p., [1989].

Useem, John, Ruth Hill Useem, and John Donoghue. "Men in the Middle of the Third Culture: The Roles of Americans and Non-western People in Cross-cultural Administration." Human Organization 22 (Fall 1963): 169-79.

Useem, Ruth Hill. "Third Culture Kids." The Window January 22 1978.

Useem, Ruth Hill, Thomas P. Gleason, Frank Krajewski, Frank Shepard, and et al. Third Culture Children: An Annotated Bibliography. [East Lansing]: Institute for International Studies in Education, Michigan State University, 1975.

Useem, Ruth Hill, and Richard Dixon Downie. "Third Culture Kids." Today's Education September-October 1976, 103-05.

Viser, William C. It's OK to Be an MK: What It's Like to Be a Missionary Kid. Nashville: Broadman, 1986.

_____. A Psychological Profile of Missionary Children in College and the Relationship of Intense Group Therapy to Weekly Group Therapy in the Treatment of Personality Problems as Reflected by the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory. Ed.D. Diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. 1978.

Walters, Doris L. An Assessment of Reentry Issues of the Children of Missionaries. New York: Vantage Press, 1991.

Wenner, L. N. "American Youth Overseas." Adolescence 5 (Winter 1970): 427-50.

Werkman, Sidney. Bringing up Children Overseas. New York: Basic Books, 1977.

_____. "Hazards of Rearing Children in Foreign Countries." American Journal of Psychiatry 128 (February 1972): 106-11.

White, Frances J. "Characteristics of a Healthy Mission System." In Helping Missionaries Grow: Readings in Mental Health and Missions, edited by Kelly S. O'Donnell and Michele Lewis O'Donnell, 142-47. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1988.

Wickstrom, David L. Self-esteem and Dependency in Early, Late and Non-boarding Missionary Children. Ph.D. Diss., Rosemead Graduate School of Psychology. 1978.

Wickstrom, David Lee, and J. Roland Fleck. "Missionary Children: Correlates of Self-esteem and Dependency." _Journal of Psychology and Theology_ 11, no. 3 (1983): 226-35.

Wrobbel, Karen. "Adult MKs: How Different Are They?" _Evangelical Missions Quarterly_ 26 (April 1990): 164-70.

CONTEXTUAL THEORY AND THE SELF

Boszormenyi-Nagy, Ivan. "The Concept of Change in Conjoint Family Therapy." In _Psychotherapy for the Whole Family_, edited by A. S. Friedman, et al. New York: Springer, 1965.

_____. "The Concept of Schizophrenia from the Point of View of Family Treatment." _Family Process_ 1 (1962): 103-13.

_____. "Contextual Therapy: Therapeutic Leverages in Mobilizing Trust." In _Family Therapy: Major Contributions_, edited by R. J. Green and James L. Framo, 393-415. New York: International Universities Press, 1981.

_____. "Contextual Therapy: The Realm of the Individual: An Interview with Margaret Markham." _Psychiatric News_ 16, no. 20 and 21 (1981).

_____. "The Ethical Dimension of the Contextual Approach: A Presentation at the Harvard Medical School." Paper Presented at Symposium on Self-Esteem and Values. Boston, 1983.

_____. "Family Treatment in Schizophrenia." Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association. Chicago, 1960.

_____. _Foundations of Contextual Therapy_. Collected Papers. New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1987.

_____. "From Family Therapy to a Psychology of Relationships: Fictions of the Individual and Fictions of the Family." _Comprehensive Psychiatry_ 7 (1966): 408-23.

_____. "Loyalty Implications of the Transference Model in Psychotherapy." _AMA Archives of General Psychiatry_ 27 (1972): 374-80.

_____. "Relational Modes and Meaning." In _Family Therapy and Disturbed Families_, edited by G. H. Zuk and Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy. Palo Alto: Science & Behavior Books, 1967.

_____. "A Theory of Relationships: Experience and Transaction." In _Intensive Family Therapy_, edited by Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy and James L. Framo. New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1986 ⟨1965⟩.

Boszormenyi-Nagy, Ivan, and Barbara R. Krasner. _Between Give and Take: A Clinical Guide to Contextual Therapy_. New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1986.

Boszormenyi-Nagy, Ivan, and David N. Ulrich. "Contextual Family Therapy." In _Handbook of Family Therapy_, edited by Alan S. Gurman and David P. Kniskern. New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1981.

Boszormenyi-Nagy, Ivan, and Geraldine M. Spark. _Invisible Loyalties: Reciprocity in Intergenerational Family Therapy_. New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1984 ⟨New York: Harper & Row, 1973⟩.

Boszormenyi-Nagy, Ivan, and Barbara R. Krasner. "Trust-based Therapy: A Contextual Approach." _American Journal of Psychiatry_ 137 (1980): 767-75.

Boszormenyi-Nagy, Ivan, and James L. Framo, eds. _Intensive Family Therapy_. New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1986 ⟨1965⟩.

Buber, Martin. _Between Man and Man_. With an introduction by Maurice Friedman. Translated by Ronald Gregor Smith. New York: Macmillan, 1965.

_____. _I and Thou_. Trans, prologue by & notes by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Scribner's, 1970.

Cotroneo, Margaret, and Barbara R. Krasner. "A Contextual Approach to
     Jewish-Christian Dialogue." Journal of Ecumenical Studies 18 (Winter
     1981): 41-62.
Ducommun-Nagy, Catherine. "Couples: A Contextual View of Relationships."
     Journal of Couples Therapy 1, no. 1 (1990): 71-76.
Evans, Richard Orson. Legacy and Launching: Personal Authority as a Trans-
     generational Factor in Adolescents Leaving Home. Ph.D. Diss., The Iliff
     School of Theology and University of Denver. 1990. UMI AAC9115296.
Friedman, Maurice. The Healing Dialogue in Psychotherapy. Northvale, NJ: Jason
     Aronson, 1985.
_____. "Martin Buber and Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy: The Role of Dialogue in
     Contextual Therapy." Psychotherapy 26 (Fall 1989): 402-09.
Goffman, Erving. Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients
     and Other Inmates. New York: Doubleday <Anchor Books>, 1961.
Hycner, Richard H. Between Person and Person: Toward a Dialogical
     Psychotherapy. Highland, NY: The Gestalt Journal, 1991.
Johnson, Stephen M. Humanizing the Narcissistic Style. New York: W. W. Norton,
     1987.
Kohut, Heinz. Self Psychology and the Humanities: Reflections on a New
     Psychoanalytic Approach. New York: W. W. Norton, 1985.
Krasner, Barbara R. "Christians and Jews in Context." Witness 65 (January
     1982): 15-17.
_____. "Religious Loyalties in Clinical Work: A Contextual View." Journal of
     Jewish Communal Service 57, no. 2 (1981-2): 108-13.
_____. "Report." Conservative Judaism 33, no. 1 (1978): 6-21.
_____. Sublime Anthropomorphism: The Significance of Jewish Mysticism for
     Personal and Communal Existence. Ph.D. Diss., Temple University. 1975.
_____. "Towards a Trustworthy Context in Family and Community." Journal
     of Christian Healing 5 (1983): 39-44.
_____. "Trustworthiness: The Primal Family Resource." In Family Resources,
     edited by M. Karpel. New York: Guilford, 1986.
Krasner, Barbara R., and Margaret Cotroneo. "A Contextual Approach to
     Jewish-Christian Dialogue." Journal of Ecumenical Studies 18 (Winter
     1981): 41-62.
_____. "Essays on Relational Justice." Foundations 20 (October-December
     1977): 333-51.
Krasner, Barbara, and Margaret Roache. "Relationship Dynamics and Our View
     of the Middle East." Journal of Ecumenical Studies 12 (Spring 1975): 257-
     60.
Krasner, Barbara R., and A. Shapiro. "Trustbuilding Initiatives in the Rabbinic
     Community." Conservative Judaism 33, no. 1 (1978): 6-21.
Lapsley, James N. "The 'self,' Its Vicissitudes and Possibilities: An Essay in
     Theological Anthropology." Pastoral Psychology 35 (Fall 1986): 23-45.
_____. "Spirit and Self." Pastoral Psychology 38 (Spring 1990): 135-46.
Rosenberg, Morris. Conceiving the Self. New York: Basic Books, 1979.
Rosenberg, Morris, and Howard B. Kaplan, eds. Social Psychology of the Self-
     concept. Arlington Heights, IL: Harlan Davidson, 1982.
Strauss, Jaine, and George R. Goethals, eds. The Self: Interdisciplinary
     Approaches. New York: Springer-Verlag, 1991.
van Heusden, Ammy, and ElseMarie van den Eerenbeemt. Balance in Motion:
     Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy and His Vision of Individual and Family Therapy.
     New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1987.

THEOLOGY

Fowler, James W. To See the Kingdom: The Theological Vision of H. Richard Niebuhr. Nashville: Abingdon, 1974.

Harrod, Howard L. The Human Center: Moral Agency in the Social World. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981.

Niebuhr, H. Richard. Faith on Earth: An Inquiry Into the Structure of Human Faith. Edited by Richard R. Niebuhr. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.

_____. Faith on Earth: An Inquiry Into the Structure of Human Faith. Edited by Richard R. Niebuhr. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.

_____. The Meaning of Revelation. New York: Macmillan, Collier, 1941.

_____. Radical Monotheism and Western Culture. New York: Harper & Row, Torchbooks, 1960 <1970>.

_____. The Responsible Self: An Essay in Christian Moral Philosophy. With an introduction by James M. Gustafson. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1963.

Ramsey, Paul, ed. Faith and Ethics: The Theology of H. Richard Niebuhr. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957.

Thiemann, Ronald F., ed. The Legacy of H. Richard Niebuhr. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991.

INTERVIEW METHOD

Dittes, James E. "The Investigator as an Instrument of Investigation: Some Exploratory Observations on the Compleat Researcher." In Encounter with Erikson: Historical Interpretation and Religious Biography, Eds Donald Capps, Walter H. Capps, and M. Gerald Bradford. Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977.

Fiorenza, Elisabeth Schüssler, contributor. "Roundtable Discussion; on Feminist Methodology." Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion 1, no. 2 (1985): 73-76.

Kett, Joseph F. Rites of Passage: Adolescence in America 1790 to the Present. New York: Basic Books, 1977.

Merton, Robert K., Marjorie Fiske, and Patricia L. Kendall. The Focused Interview: A Manual of Problems and Procedures. Report of the Bureau of Applied Social Research, Columbia University. Glencoe, IL: The Free Press, 1956.

Oakley, Ann. "Interviewing Women: A Contradiction in Terms." Chapt. 2 in Doing Feminist Research, edited by Helen Roberts, 30-61. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981.

Pirsig, Robert M. Lila: An Inquiry Into Morals. New York: Bantam Boks, 1991.

Savin-Williams, Ritch C. Adolescence: An Ethological Perspective. New York: Springer-Verlag, 1987.

White, Robert W. Lives in Progress: A Study of the Natural Growth of Personality. 2d ed. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966 <1952>.