Educational Alternatives: A Selected Study of Their Application in Latin America

By
James E. Van Arsdall

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of The Graduate College in the University of Nebraska In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements For the Degree of Master of Arts

Department of History and Philosophy Of Education Under the Supervision of Professor Edward J. Nemeth

Lincoln, Nebraska May, 1975
Acknowledgements

The writer wishes to make several acknowledgements regarding the writing of this thesis. The first goes to Dr. Edward J. Nemeth, without whose encouragement, inspiration and patience this thesis would never have been completed. Second, the writer wishes to thank Linda McFarland for the typing of the final manuscript, and Jim McFarland for his assistance in finding a typist. A further note of recognition should go to Dr. Erwin H. Goldenstein, who encouraged the writer to attempt graduate work at the University of Nebraska. Finally, the writer would like to thank his parents for their patience, sacrifice and understanding.

Jim Van Arsdall
# Table of Contents

Acknowledgements ........................................................................................................... 2

Forward .............................................................................................................................. 6

Chapter I. Introduction ...................................................................................................... 8

The Concept of Alternatives in Education ........................................................................ 8

   Explanation of the Concept ...................................................................................... 8
   Popularization of the Concept .............................................................................. 10

The Need for Educational Alternatives .......................................................................... 12

   Prohibitive Costs .................................................................................................... 12
   Social and Economic Equality Concerns ............................................................... 16
   National Equality and Development Objectives .................................................. 18
   Psychological and Aesthetic Factors ................................................................. 19
   Institutional “Mindlessness” ................................................................................ 20
   Ineffective Pre-employment Preparation ............................................................... 21
   The Capabilities and Characteristics of
      Contemporary Educators .................................................................................. 21
   World Needs and Political Demands for Education .............................................. 23

Alternative Proposals ..................................................................................................... 24

   School Proposals .................................................................................................... 24
   Freedom Academies ............................................................................................... 25
   Counter-culture Schools ......................................................................................... 25
   Public Alternative Schools ..................................................................................... 26
   Open Classroom Schools ...................................................................................... 26
   Educational Vouchers ............................................................................................ 28
   Deschooling Proposals ........................................................................................... 29
   Reference Services to Educational Objects .......................................................... 31
   Skill Exchanges ....................................................................................................... 31
   Peer Matching ......................................................................................................... 31
   Educators at Large .................................................................................................. 32
   Non-formal Education ............................................................................................. 34
   Private Business ...................................................................................................... 35
   Military Training ..................................................................................................... 36
   Private Voluntary Organizations .............................................................................. 36
   Mass Media ............................................................................................................. 37
   University and Governmental Extension Services ............................................... 37
II. Educational Alternatives in Latin America:

Alternative Schools in Latin America .................................................. 39

Brazil ................................................................. 39
Other Alternative Schools ........................................... 40

Deschooling in Latin America ....................................................... 41

Mexico ............................................................... 43
Peru ................................................................. 45
Brazil and Chile .................................................... 46

Non-Formal Education in Latin America ........................................... 48

Argentina ............................................................ 48
Bolivia .............................................................. 50
Brazil .............................................................. 50
Chile .............................................................. 53
Colombia ............................................................ 54
Costa Rica ........................................................... 56
Cuba .............................................................. 56
Ecuador .............................................................. 57
El Salvador .......................................................... 59
Guatemala ............................................................. 59
Guyana ............................................................. 60
Honduras ............................................................ 61
Mexico .............................................................. 61
Nicaragua ............................................................ 63
Peru .............................................................. 63
Venezuela ............................................................ 66

The Involvement of the United States in Latin American Non-formal Education .................. 67

III. Educational Alternatives in Latin America:

Program Accomplishments ......................................................... 69

Alternatives and Educational Costs ............................................. 69

Alternatives for Social and Economic Equality ......................... 71

Alternatives for National development and International Equality .... 73

Alternatives and Psychological Aesthetic Concerns .................... 74
Foreword

The research for this thesis began as an attempt to review and analyze the literature on "educational alternatives" initiated by the "alternatives in education seminars" held at Cuernavaca, Mexico, from 1968 to 1972 under the supervision of Ivan Illich and Everett Reimer. The author's original purpose was to summarize the proceeding of these seminars (school criticisms and alternative proposals) and to analyze their application in Latin America (the area to which the seminars were addressed). However, after initial review of other literature on "alternatives in education," it became apparent that only the terminology can be traced to the work of Ivan Illich and Everett Reimer. Other writers have enlarged the concept of alternatives in education to include programs, proposals and ideologies different from the original positions taken in the Cuernavaca seminars. Yet, despite this diversity there are similarities. All authors take the position that traditional schools must either be improved, replaced, complemented, supplemented or in some way altered. Most authors severely criticize schools. Nonetheless, proposals for alternatives and their application, at least in Latin America, fail to deal directly with the failures of schools that the advocates of alternatives give as the very reasons for their programs' existence.

Chapter I of this thesis presents the basic criticisms of schools made by the advocates of educational alternatives and categorizes the various proposals for alternatives to schools. Chapter II examines the implementation of Chapter I's categories in Latin America. Chapters III and IV demonstrate the illogic of the educational alternatives literature; that illogic being that while the existing programs referred to as educational alternatives may be making contributions to world education,
to this point, at least in Latin America, those programs do not deal directly with the school criticisms which are given for the existence of such alternatives. In short this paper asserts that even based on the criticisms of the schools found in “educational alternatives” literature, the educational alternatives which have been proposed and/or implemented are not viable alternatives to schools.
Chapter I

Introduction

The Concept of Alternatives in Education

Explanation of the Concept

Throughout the world, alternatives are now being proposed to the existing systems of formal education. Critics assert that educational institutions must either be improved, complemented, supplemented or replaced.

Alternatives in education according to researchers at Michigan state University have the following characteristics:

1. [They] are not likely to be identified as “education.”
2. [They] are usually concerned with immediate and practical missions.
3. [They] usually occur outside of schools. Any situation which affords experience may be employed as the learning site.
4. Proof of knowledge is more likely to be by performance than by certificate.
5. [They] usually do not involve highly organized content, staff or structure.
6. [They] usually involve a degree of voluntary participation.
7. [They] usually involve part-time activity by participants.
8. Instruction is seldom graded and sequential.
9. [They] should be less costly than formal education.
10. [They] usually do not involve customary admissions criteria. Potential students are those who require the available learning or who are required by the situation to have it.

11. Selection of mentors is likely to be based more upon demonstrated ability than on credentials; and voluntary leaders are frequently involved.

12. [The are] not restricted to any particular organizational, curricular or personnel classification; and they have great promise for renewing and expanding any of them.

13. [They have] potential for multiplier effects, economy and efficiency because of [their] openness to utilize appropriate personnel, media and other elements which may be available in a given situation without concern for externally imposed. Often irrelevant and usually expensive criteria and restraints.¹

The center for International Education at the University of Massachusetts has reported that educational alternatives can serve societies in the following ways:

1. [They] can complement schools (e.g. through youth movements, etc.) by providing additional education for youngsters lucky enough to be in schools.

2. [They] can supplement schooling (e.g. through civic service corporations, farm schools, night schools, correspondence courses, etc.) for those having left schools, including particularly dropouts.

3. [They] can replace schooling (e.g. in rural animation programs, youth settlement schemes, radio clubs, rural youth clubs, etc.) for those who have no opportunities to attend regular schools.²

Although not mentioned in the above quotation, another means by which educational alternatives may serve societies is to aid in the improvement and liberalization of existing school systems. Through educational alternatives tied directly to the existing schools those institutions may be made more responsive to the public as well as more enjoyable places both for students and teachers.

Alternatives in education like alternatives of any kind imply a variety of ways of accomplishing a specific objective. In the case of education we are speaking of improved and revised alternatives to society’s present educational institutions.

**Popularization of the Concept**

The popularization of the “alternatives in education” concept can be traced to Ivan Illich and Everett Reimer. Ivan Illich was born in Vienna in 1926 and came to the United States in 1952 to serve as a parish priest to Puerto Ricans in the New York City area. In the late 1950’s he was appointed Vice-Chancellor of the Catholic University of Puerto Rico. While in Puerto Rico he organized a training for Catholic priests with Spanish-speaking parishioners. Since 1960 Illich has been Director of the Center for Intercultural Documentation in Cuernavaca, Mexico.\(^3\)

Everett Reimer was appointed Secretary of the Puerto Rican Committee on Human Resources in 1954. In this position he assessed the manpower needs of the island and recommended an educational program to meet those needs. In the early 1960’s Reimer took a position with the Alliance for Progress. By the end of the decade he had joined Illich at Cuernavaca.\(^4\)

---


Between 1968 and 1972, Illich, Reimer and others\(^5\) interested in the improvement of education (primarily in Latin America) began work at Cuernavaca on the development of alternatives to traditional schooling. Everett Reimer first used the term “alternatives in education” in an essay published by the Cuernavaca Press in 1971.\(^6\) The Cuernavaca seminars of 1968-1972 popularized that terminology and it is now associated with a variety of educational methods and a multitude of educational goals; and has become a part of the lexicon of educational terms throughout the world.

\(^5\)Participants at the seminars included Paulo Freire, Peter Berger, Jose Maria Bulnes, Joseph Fitzpatrick, John Holt, Angel Quintero, Layman Allen, Fred Goodman, Gerhard Ladner, Didier Piveteau, Joel Spring, Augusto Salazar Bordy, Dennis Sullivan and Paul Goodman.

\(^6\)Everett Reimer, *An Essay on Alternatives in Education* (Cuernavaca, Mexico; CIDOC, 1971).
The Need for Educational Alternatives

Whether in the developed world or in developing nations, schools are now under attack. Critics charge that schools are excessively expensive, provide a stifling educational environment and are run by the wrong types of individuals. In addition their attacks concentrate on the inadequacy of schools as instruments for social and economic equality, national development, human student treatment and employment preparation.

Prohibitive Costs

One point that most educational critics agree upon is the tremendous costs of schools. Pessimistically Everett Reimer has stated:

The conclusion is inescapable: no country in the world can afford the education its people want in the form of schools. Except for the United States, Germany, Japan and a few other nations, . . . no country can afford the schools its people are now demanding from their political leaders.\(^7\)

For example, U.S. expenditures on education over the past fifty years have increased tremendously as illustrated in Table 1. Table 1 represents a real increase (in 1967 dollars) of 2,859 per cent and an average per annum increase of fifty-seven per cent. For the period 1950 to 1970 alone these statistics represent an increase of five hundred per cent or twenty-five per cent per annum.

---

\(^7\)Reimer, op. cit., p. 4.
Table 1
Total Governmental Expenditures on Education in the United States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Actual Dollars (Billions)</th>
<th>Consumer Price Index&lt;sup&gt;9&lt;/sup&gt; 1967 = 100</th>
<th>Adjusted to 1967&lt;sup&gt;10&lt;/sup&gt; Dollars (Billions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>$1.0</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>$1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>72.1</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>88.7</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>56.6</td>
<td>116.3</td>
<td>48.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statistics from the United States are representative of what is happening throughout the world. The Director of UNESCO’s International Institute of Educational Planning, Philip Coombs, states that:

Virtually everywhere, educational expenditures have been rising for the past ten to fifteen years, not only in absolute amounts, but as a percentage of GNP, national income and total revenue.<sup>11</sup>

The Chairman of the 1972 UNESCO International Commission on the Development of Education, Edgar Faure, points out that in 1968 public expenditures on a world wide basis for education totaled $132 billion compared with $54 billion in 1960. Those statistics represent a 1960-1968 annual increase of 11.7 per cent in expenditures against a 4.5 per cent annual increase in enrollment. Faure notes further that is he could obtain data from the People’s Republic of China, the Democratic Republic of

---


<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

Korea and North Vietnam, his estimate for world annual expenditures would probably be well over $200 billion.\textsuperscript{12}

Since the Cuernavaca seminars were concerned primarily with Latin America, it is now appropriate that we look at that area of the world. Some of the earliest data available on Latin America is that provided by Don Adams and Robert M. Bjork. The following statement is taken from *Education in Developing Areas* by Adams and Bjork:

Data are available on the amount of money devoted to education by most Latin American nations in 1938, 1953 and 1957, converted to constant currency. Using 1958 expenditures as an index (1958 = 10,000) the range in median increase between 1938 and 1957 was from 13.05 to 163.05 with the smallest increase going from 23.6 to 129.9 (Panama) and the greatest from 1.3 to 579.8 (Paraguay). The 1953-1957 increases, considering the short time span, are even more dramatic. The median nation, Colombia, was spending 1.6 times as much in 1957 as in 1953. the range was quite large going from Haiti (1.2) and Panama (1.3) to Brazil (5.2), Chile (5.5) and Paraguay (5.8).\textsuperscript{13}

Philip Coombs demonstrates that there have been even more dramatic developments since the 1950's. According to his statistics, many Latin American countries which were devoting one to two per cent of their GNP’s to education several years ago have the total public revenues.\textsuperscript{14}

Statistics found in the 1972 edition of *America En Cifras*\textsuperscript{15} and the 1972 Statistical Yearbook\textsuperscript{16} would seem to indicate that to continue to build schools based on the United States model of universal compulsory education may eventually bankrupt increased that figure to as much as five per cent of the GNP and twenty-five per cent of

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{14}Coombs, op. cit., p. 59.
\end{footnotesize}
some nations in Latin America. In 1969 fourteen Latin American nations spent a greater percentage of their total governmental expenditures on schools than did the United States; only two nations in the region spent a lower percentage. Despite those expenditures, no Latin American nation had a percentage of its population in schools comparable to that of the United States.

In the future Latin America will experience even greater financial problems. Recent projections prepared by the Ford Foundation indicate that by 1980 school costs in Latin America will be three times the amount spent today. This figure will represent a higher amount than that spent in many economically developed nations.\(^{17}\)

Considering the statistics provided in the last few pages, a realistic reaction would seem to be that appraising the tremendous additional demands which will be made on all levels of government, one must wonder how long the present percentage levels of expenditures in Latin America can continue and beyond that how these percentages can possibly be raised as the Ford Foundation indicates they should be.

The words of Marvin Grandstaff in *Historical Perspectives on Non-formal Education* seem to summarize the situation quite well:

> Even in the most developed countries there are limits to the amounts of money that can be devoted to education, either in absolute terms or in proportions of national wealth. It is suggested here that one appropriate way to focus on the problem is to emphasize the search for educational modes that couple effectiveness with low per capita instructional unit costs.\(^{18}\)


Social Equality and Development Objectives

Another reason for the development of the educational modes favored by Grandstaff involves the relationship between schools and the population’s attainment of social and economic equality. School critics charge that schools serve essentially a maintenance function in this relationship.

During the administration of President Lyndon Baines Johnson, James S. Coleman was asked to conduct an extensive study of the lack of availability of equal educational opportunities in the United States. This study, released by the Government Printing Office in 1966 as Equality of Educational Opportunity, concluded that family background and peer group influences contribute more to school success than do opportunities within the school. In the same year a British parliamentary commission, using studies conducted in England, produced the Plowden Report, which contained conclusions similar to those made by Coleman and his associates.

Christopher Jencks carries this thesis further by asserting that family background is also a major determinant in economic and social success outside the school. Working with Coleman’s data as well as with additional studies conducted since 1966, Jencks and his assistant researchers have written Inequality, which contends that if Americans are really interested in social and economic equality they should look to institutions other than schools.

---

19 Coleman is Professor of Social Relations at Johns Hopkins University.
22 Jencks is an Associate Professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and a Lecturer in Sociology at Harvard University.
24 Jencks advocates redistribution of personal income.
Ivar Berg theorizes that industry, not the schools, made the immigrant a member of the American middle class and the schools only kept the successful immigrant in that position. Berg concludes his famous book, *Education and Jobs: The Great Training Robbery* by stating that the individual who has seen schools as the means by which merit might ultimately conquer unearned privilege” must “now acknowledge that he is the defender of a very dubious faith.”

Schools do not provide people with the programs necessary for realization of their life situation and for the modification of the situation. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, he speaks of world populations in terms of “oppressors” and “oppressed.” Urban and rural masses, according to Freire, have been deprived of a voice in matters which concern them. They have been taught by their superiors to talk only in terms of rationalizations and mythologies. Schools, according to Freire, are instruments of the “oppressors.”

Ivan Illich and Everett Reimer also assert that schools deal only with rationalizations and mythologies. According to Illich and Reimer, schools teach even those who attend very little. Reimer has made the following statement concerning

---

25 Ivoar Berg is Associate Dean of Faculties and Professor of Sociology at Colombia University.


27 Paulo Freire spent 17 years in devising and refining a program to attack massive illiteracy in Brazil. After the military seized control of the Brazilian government in 1964, Freire spent five years in Chile and a short time at Harvard University. In 1970 he become the head of the World Council of Churches’ Education Division.

schools in Latin America:

In 1960, half the children who entered school in Latin America never started the second grade and half the second graders never started the third. They did learn, however, how unsuited they were to school, how bad their manners, and how stupid they were in comparison to those who went on to higher grades.  

Schools serve an essentially maintenance function in relation to social and economic inequalities. In the controversial text, The Great School Legend: A Revisionist Interpretation of American Public Education, Colin Greer states that “schools do the job today that they have always done . . . select individuals for opportunities according to a hierarchical schema which runs closely parallel to existing social class patterns.”

Greer concludes his book with the following statement:

I am not at all certain about the ability of public schooling to effect radical social change. I see the public school to date as a terribly limited, reflexive institution, slavishly serving society rather than leading it.

National Equality and Development Objectives

Schools are also considered by many critics as questionable institutions for the attainment of national development and equality among nations. World schools are at

---

29 Reimer, op. cit., p.8.
31 Greer is Executive Editor of Social Policy Magazine and Director of the University Without Walls in the City University of New York.
32 Greer, op. cit., p. 153.
33 Ibid.
the center of what Philip Coombs has described as a “world educational crisis.” Coombs summarizes his description of the crisis by stating:

That there is indeed a crisis in education’s ability to match performance with expectation. The crisis takes two forms. The first is the world-wide disparity between the hopes of individuals and needs of society, on the one hand, and on the other, the capabilities of the educational system. The second is an even greater disparity between the developing countries, faced with the cruel restraints of grossly inadequate resources and the developed countries, which are increasingly preoccupied with their internal needs.34

Edgar Faure echoes the Coombs position in his statement that:

Statistics disclose a dual picture. One shows the constant increase in the demand for knowledge and in the number of those who want (or ought) to go to school, together with the unprecedented expansion of educational activities in recent decades. The other depicts the many dead ends to which this expansion appears to be heading, and the flagrant inequalities in the geographical and social distribution of available educational resources.35

Psychological and Aesthetic Factors

Schools are criticized even in nations which have adequate educational resources. Many educational critics are concerned neither with national development, educational costs, nor socioeconomic equality. They are concerned instead with the atmosphere in which education occurs.

Probably the first of the contemporary school critics to speak out on this issue was the planner, builder and educator, Paul Goodman. Since the early 1960’s, Goodman has accused schools of not allowing individuals to perform with “grace, force

34 Coombs, op. it., p. 4.
and beauty.\textsuperscript{36}

Charles Silberman\textsuperscript{37} has chastised schools for being “the kinds of institutions one cannot really dislike until one gets to know them well.”\textsuperscript{38} In \textit{Crisis in the Classroom} he states further that:

Because adults take the schools so much for granted, they fail to appreciate what grim, joyless places most . . . . are, how oppressive and petty are the rules by which they are governed, how intellectually sterile and esthetically barren the atmosphere . . . .\textsuperscript{39}

\textbf{Institutional “Mindlessness”}

According to Silberman, a matter of concern for all those associated with educational programs should be why they are doing what they are doing. Silberman accuses school personnel of not asking themselves this question. He sees the central defect of the school to be one of “mindlessness.” In Silberman’s words:

If [teachers, principals and superintendents] make a botch of it, and an uncomfortably large number do, it is because it simply never occurs to more than a handful to ask why they are doing what they are doing – to think seriously or deeply about the purposes and consequences of education.\textsuperscript{40}

Basically Silberman sees existing schools as being educational institutions without clear goals and directions.

\textsuperscript{36}Paul Goodman has written two books and one article which deal directly with education: \textit{Growing Up Absurd} (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1960), \textit{Compulsory Mis-Education} (New York: Horison Press, 1964), and “Freedom and Learning: The Need for Choice,” \textit{Saturday Review}, May 19, 1968, pp. 73-74. He has also made reference to educational problems in his many books and articles devoted to general social criticism. Charles Silberman\textsuperscript{37} has chastised schools for being “the kinds of institutions one
\textsuperscript{37}Silberman is a member of the Board of Editors of \textit{Fortune Magazine} and has taught at both Colombia University and the College of the City of New York.

\textsuperscript{39}Ibid., p. 10.
\textsuperscript{40}Ibid., p. 11.
Ineffective Pre-employment Preparation

One of the goals of schools might be the effective pre-employment preparation of students. Unfortunately, the school's record in this area is not very good. From extensive data based on industrial, governmental and military records, Ivan Berg has concluded the following concerning education and jobs:

1. A growing number of workers have more education than they need to perform their jobs well.
2. An employee's productivity depends more on experience than on levels of formal education.
3. High job turnover and high job dissatisfaction are positively associated with high levels of education.
4. Academic credentials are important for getting jobs, but not for performance on the job.\(^4\)

The Capabilities and Characteristics of Contemporary Educators

One reason that schools have not been able to accomplish the tasks mentioned in the last several pages relates to the characteristics of the educational professionals who run them. According to Ivan Illisch and Everett Reimer, contemporary educators, whether they be teachers, counselors or administrators, have ten basic characteristics:

1. They have clients supplied to them. Their captive audience is required either by legal or cultural pronouncement to attend the educator's ritualistic exercises.
2. They distribute programmed, canned and extremely structured subject matter. In so doing, they prepare individuals in the schooled society for the manufactured and prepackaged products of the larger society.

\(^4\)Berg, loc. Cit.
3. They serve a custodial function. In many instances, acting as a “baby-sitter” is the teacher’s major role. It is also the school’s major financial liability.

4. They serve as moralists. Through their words and actions, they preach a national and class-oriented gospel.

5. They serve as therapists. They see their role as a curative one. They see their clients as patients who need to be either healed or protected.

6. They design and engineer life. They measure experience, divide life into segments of the clock and concern themselves with all elements and traditions which the larger society says is necessary for structure and security.

7. They have been certified by other educators and in turn certify their successors as well as the novices of other professions.

8. They are concerned with student discipline, public relations, hiring, supervising, firing, curriculum making, textbook purchasing, the maintenance of grounds and facilities, athletic competition and record keeping. These activities have siphoned money from the schools and have, in fact, eliminated the school’s true educational role.

9. They control and are controlled. Their activities are determined by trustees, legislatures, parents, politicians and others outside the educational setting. They follow a structure which is essentially of their people’s design.

10. They function as questioners, whose questions propound orthodoxy. Rather than answering questions in ways which provoke further questions, contemporary educators tend to ask questions which serve as barriers to the flow of relevant information. These questions tend to imitate the style of a religious catechism.42

To remedy the poor state of affairs as Illich and Reimer see it, they state that education must be “deschooled” and also that the professionals who now manage and operate our educational institutions must be replaced by a new breed of “educator.”

World Needs and Political Demands for Education

Throughout the world people are demanding from their political leaders an expanded and more efficient system of education. Education (more specifically schools) are associated in people’s minds with social and economic equality, national development and equality among nations, employment and a multitude of additional benefits which are tied to the western view of the “good life.”

However, these are the challenges which world education will face in the coming decades:

1. Until the end of this century the number of people of school and university age will increase at an average annual figure of 36 million.43

2. In 1970 there were 783 million illiterates in the world; by 1980 that figure should rise to 820 million.44

3. Wastage rates will remain a significant problem; for one Latin American completed cycle of primary education, there are ninety uncompleted ones.45

4. Few literacy campaigns have done more than enable illiterates to decipher words. They really haven’t taught people to read.46

World needs and political demands for education can never be met by schools. According to the International Commission on the Development of Education:

For hundreds of millions of illiterate people in the world, schools can no longer be of help. In the developing countries, nearly half the children of primary school age are condemned to no matter what happens, to grow up without ever having attended a class.47

---

43 Faure, op. cit., p. 27.
44 Ibid.
45 Ibid.
46 Ibid.
47 Ibid.
A portion of a quotation from Marvin Grandstaff’s Historical Perspectives on Non-formal Education already cited in this paper seems to summarize the situation quite well:

One appropriate way to focus on the problem is to emphasize the search of educational modes that couple effectiveness with low per capita instructional unit costs.\textsuperscript{48}

Throughout the world schools are under attack. With those assaults, however, have come the search for the educational modes favored by Grandstaff. In the next section of this chapter various categories of such “educational alternatives” shall be examined.

**Alternative Proposals**

Educational alternatives may be classified into three categories: (1) school proposals, (2) deschooling proposals, and (3) non-formal education.

**School Proposals** Over the last several years a variety of school changes have been proposed. The purpose of these changes is to establish schools that eliminate the alleged impersonal atmosphere, age-grade regimentation and the overly formal methods of the traditional setting.

Mario D. Fantini in this article, “The What, Why and Where of the Alternatives Movement,”\textsuperscript{49} describes the components of the movement as freedom academies, counter-culture schools, public-alternative schools, open classroom schools and educational vouchers.

\textsuperscript{48}Grandstaff, op. cit., p. 12.

\textsuperscript{49}Mario D. Fantini, “The What, Why and Where of the Alternatives Movement; Education Digest, September, 1973, pp. 2-5.
Freedom Academies  The United States civil rights movement of the 1960’s and the desegregation movement led to a boycott of public institutions by blacks and whites alike. As a result many black revolutionaries and sympathetic volunteers opened institutions known as “Freedom Academies.” These institutions originated in stores and churches; they offered programs tailored to the child’s perceived needs, curriculum specifically geared to black self-determination, and the opportunity for community-school interaction.

Counter-Culture Schools  At about the same time that Freedom Academies were being established, the counter-culture movement described in the works of Charles A. Reich and Theodore Roszak was sweeping the United States. Believing that there was a change taking place in basic American values, many individuals came to view public schools as repressive, authoritarian institutions which did nothing more than reflect the values of a past America. As a result, originators of the “counter-culture” schools began to stress such activities as highly individualized tutorial work, social travel and learning with adults in a community situation. In addition they emphasized programs which involved craftmanship and communal living. Advocates of counter-culture schools found support for their position in the writings of such men as A. S. Neil and Jonathan Kozol. In March, 1970, Donald W. Robinson reported that

---

over seven hundred freedom academies and counter-culture schools existed in the United States and were having an influence far beyond their numbers.\footnote{Donald W. Robinson, “Alternative Schools, Challenge to Traditional Education,” \textit{Phi Delta Kappan}, March, 1970, p. 347.}

**Public Alternative Schools** Evidence of that influence was the establishment in the early 1970’s of public, tax-supported alternative schools in the United States. Like freedom academies and counter-culture schools, these institutions were concerned with emphasizing freedom for the child, opposing authoritarian methods and meeting student demands for relevance.\footnote{Ibid.}

One of the best know alternative schools is the Parkway Program in Philadelphia. In this “school without walls” students take courses in language arts and mathematics. They also select electives and are required to do some type of work in the community.\footnote{John Bremer, \textit{The Parkway Program} (Philadelphia: the Philadelphia Public Schools, 170).}

Another alternative school is John Dewey School in New York City. Here students spend a quarter of their time in independent study. A in the Parkway Program, students at John Dewey are also provided opportunities to work in the local community.\footnote{Sol Levine, “the John Dewey High School Adventure,” \textit{Phi Delta Kappan}, October, 1970, pp. 108-110.}

**Open Classroom Schools** Public schools which operate according to “open classroom” concepts are also educational alternatives. In 1970 Charles Silberman advocated that the twenty-five percent of primary schools in England which used such methods as the
“free day,” “integrated day” and which had been labeled as “free schools” and “informal education” be used as the models for the remaking of American education.\textsuperscript{58}

Theoretical support for these methods, according to Silberman, can be found in the writings of Rousseau, Montessori, Dewey, Bruner and Piaget. The foundation of their operations are the assumptions that the “child is the principal agent in his own education and mental development . . .”\textsuperscript{59} and that childhood is “something to be cherished, a conception that leads to turn to a concern with the quality of the school experience in its own right, not merely as preparation for later schooling or for later life.”\textsuperscript{60}

As was stated above the Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget ahs had a tremendous impact on British informal education. Central to the functioning of the “open school” is the knowledge that although children progress through basically the same “developmental stages,” they go through these stages at varying times on different fronts. The teacher in the open classroom, then, must match “what is to be learned, the way it is to be learned and the stage the child is in. . . .”\textsuperscript{61}

This type of alternative school and its methods differ from the formal classroom and its “chalk and talk” methods. The open classroom has no desks, only tables and chairs; no rows of chairs, only interest areas. Materials are not only in the classroom; they spill over into closets, cloakrooms, halls and lobbies. Advocates of the open

\textsuperscript{59}Ibid., p. 215.  
\textsuperscript{60}Ibid., pp. 208-209.  
\textsuperscript{61}Ibid., p. 217.
classroom claim that it creates an atmosphere of spontaneity, curiosity and love of learning that does not develop in the traditional setting. In the United States open classroom concepts are being used by the federally sponsored Follow Through Program and in many local primary schools.

**Education Vouchers**

A final concept which should be considered under the alternative schools category is the educational voucher. Advocates of this concept feel that public schools should be competitive. They advocate that monies collected for public education be given to individual students who can then spend that revenue in the school or schools of their choice. A program of this type has been implemented in the Alum Rock School District of San Jose, California.

Advocate of alternative schools are concerned with the improvement of the school as an institution. These individuals feel that schools can be changed to offer more relevant materials, to relate more to the community, to be more flexible and less authoritarian, and finally to offer choices both within and between schools. The predominant concern of alternative school advocates is not with educational costs, but instead with a more liberal curriculum. Advocates of alternative schools never question the potential of the school or the assumption that education through schools is necessary.

---

62 Ibid., pp. 210-264.
Deschooling Proposals

As a result of their work on the problems of education in Latin America, Ivan Illich and Everett Reimer have come to question what the advocates of alternative schools dare not question. They now doubt the viability and workability of schools no matter how much those institutions are improved. Illich and Reimer also see little logic to the direction in which modern societies are moving.

Both Illich and Reimer see modern societies as being dominated by “manipulative” institutions. They describe these institutions as “highly complex and costly production processes in which much of the elaboration and expense is concerned with convincing consumers that they cannot live without the product or treatment offered by the institution.”

According to Illich and Reimer, societies must move toward more “convivial” institutions “which facilitate client initiated communication or cooperation.”

To the men at Cuernavaca, schools like all manipulative institutions are destined to extinction. In the words of Illich, “The disestablishment of schools will inevitably happen and it will happen surprisingly fast.”

Illich and Reimer are concerned with what type of institution will replace schools and beyond that what type of society this institution will help create and maintain. They

---

65 Ibid.
66 Ibid., p. 148.
have described their educational proposals as “bridges to nowhere” to serve “a society which does not now exist.”

According to Illich the educational revolution which he and Reimer propose has the following goals:

1. To liberate access to things by abolishing the control which persons and institutions now exercise over their education value.

2. To liberate the sharing of skills by guaranteeing freedom to teach or exercise them on request.

3. To liberate the critical and creative resources of people by returning to individual persons the ability to call and hold meetings, an ability now increasingly monopolized by institutions which claim to speak for people.

4. To liberate the individual from the obligation to shape his expectation to the services offered by an established profession by providing him with the opportunity to draw on the experience of his peers and to entrust himself to the teacher, guide, advisor or healer of his choice.

To replace schools, Illich and Reimer propose a network of “learning webs.”

More specifically they advocate four basic types of convivial institutions: (1) reference services to education objects, (2) skill exchanges, (3) peer matching and (4) access to educators at large.

---

67Ibid., p. 105.
Reference Services to Educational Objects

Reference services to educational objects can either provide directories to items of educational value or actually provide the object itself. Illich claims that many objects of educational importance are now controlled by the military, various branches of government or private corporations. As examples he cites laboratories, automobile repair centers and certain technical libraries.

Skill Exchanges

Skill exchanges can provide people who want to learn a skill with access to those persons who have mastered the skill and have the ability to demonstrate it. Access to many skills is now limited because it is in the economic best interest of skilled persons to keep their numbers small. Access is also limited because persons who acquire knowledge or skills outside the formal schools are not allowed to demonstrate these abilities. To remedy this situation Illich and Reimer propose the establishment of “skill centers.” At these centers each individual will be given a basic educational credit and the opportunity to increase that credit by demonstration of the skills he or she has already acquired. Paramount to this position is the stipulation that persons who will be allowed to demonstrate and serve as skill models are selected only on the basis of actual performance.

Peer Matching

Peer matching can provide methods by which individuals having similar interests can communicate. Technical operation of this system will make use of computers, bulletin boards and advertisements in magazines and newspapers. The
people who use these services will identify themselves by name and address and then describe the activity for which they seek a peer.

**Educators at Large** Finally Illich and Reimer claim that through deschooling our present educational professionals (see pp. 17018) will be replaced by a new breed of educator. A major difference which separates the educators proposed by Illich and Reimer from our present educators concerns the source of financial support. Present educators are supported from above: support for the proposed educators will come directly from their clients. By means such as educational vouchers, prospective learners can pay for the services of educators. These clients, conversely, will have the choice of not receiving the services, not paying for them and unlike in the present system, not being penalized for the refusal.

The Illich-Reimer typology of educators may be differentiated into three categories: (1) educational administrators, (2) pedagogical counselors and (3) educational initiators or leaders. The proposed educational administrators will be technicians and architects, who will create and operate the various educational networks. With an understanding of knowledge, society and people, educational administrators will know how to detect barriers to relevant information and how to eliminate these barriers. Of paramount importance is the stipulation that these individuals know how to stay out of the learner’s way and in no way direct or determine his studies. Basically the role of the proposed administrator will be to provide the tools necessary for any educational adventure.
The pedagogical counselors will serve as guides. While the administrators will be primarily concerned with the technology necessary for operation of the educational network, these guides will focus on individualized educational programs. Prospective learners will designate their goals and the counselors will help them find the path to these goals. The pedagogical counselor will also “diagnose educational difficulties and prescribe effective remedies.” In addition these individuals will not have to “suppress [their] opinions and values in favor of [their] clients” but instead would be “free to make value judgments because [their] clients will also be free.”

The educational leader of initiator appears to be the weakest like in the Illich-Reimer typology. The functions proposed for these educators are massive and, at times, vague. Reimer says that educational leaders will be “required to discover, reveal and proclaim the truth that could set men free.” Illich claims that the activities of educational initiators would be “luxuries,” “forms of leisure” and meaningful exercises both for the leaders and their followers. To those tasks Reimer adds the requirement that these individuals be able to “be questioned and then to answer in such a way as to provoke ever deeper questions.”

---

70 Ibid., p. 128.
71 Illich, Deschooling Society, p. 146.
72 Reimer, op. cit., p. 31.
When Illich and Reimer speak of education, they refer to a life-long process which is more adult than child-centered. In fact they see childhood as being a creation of the school.\textsuperscript{73} Central to their program for deschooling are two assumptions: (1) control of modern societies must be switched from manipulative or authoritarian institutions to convivial or democratic ones; (2) the school which is a manipulative institution is being and should be replaced.

Non-formal Education

Researchers at Michigan State University have defined non-formal education as “a deliberately planned educational effort having identifiable sponsorship, goals and programs” but being “outside the formalized, hierarchical structure of the graded school system.”\textsuperscript{74}

Ted Ward and John M. Dettoni have stated that the following are the promises of non-formal education:

1. [It] promises to be a more effective approach to solving certain problems of education for national development and individual growth.

2. [Its] education is functional and practical, i.e. related to the life-needs of the people.

3. [It] seeks to maintain a cost-effective consciousness of what it does in order to provide the most effective and purposeful consequence with the most efficiency.

\textsuperscript{73}Illich, Deschooling Society, p. 38.

4. [It promises] innovativeness, the mentality that looks for new, renewed or rejuvenated approaches to old problems.

5. [It] offers a more eclectic multi-disciplinary approach to the problems of development in a country.

6. Non-formal education promises to produce short-term effects as well as long-term ones.

7. Non-formal education can assist in the decision-making of educational and developmental funding agencies on both a national and international level. . . . Effects can sometimes be seen in literally a few weeks or at most a year or two which allows for funding agencies to make assessments and reassessments of the programs over a relatively short period.

8. [Related to 7] non-formal education provides a more rapid and immediate measure of the effectiveness of instructional design.\textsuperscript{75}

In the early 1960's, Professor Harold Clark of Colombia University conducted a study of such programs in the United States. According to that study, there are at least three “non-formal” educational systems: one run by private business, a second by the military and a third by private voluntary organizations.\textsuperscript{76}

Although the Clark study was not concerned with such agencies of the mass media as radio, television and the press, these institutions represent a fourth system of non-formal education. University and governmental extension services represent a fifth system.

**Private Business.** For decades private businesses around the world have been engaged in the training of their employees. There is evidence that in the United States


\textsuperscript{76}Coombs, op. cit., p. 140.
more money is spent on this form of education than on formal schooling. International corporations offer to their employees literacy and numeracy courses in addition to specific job related exercises. A great impetus to this form of non—formal education has been the passage in various countries (Mexico, Great Britain, Colombia, Venezuela, etc.) of laws requiring worker development courses which are cooperative efforts by the industry and national governments.\footnote{Eugene Staley, Planning Occupational Education and Training for Development (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971).}

Military Training. Military services provide a wide variety of training beyond the basic combat skills. Traditional programs have emphasized technical skills and literacy. Settlement of frontier areas has also been the aim of many military programs such as those in Colombia. In many cases, soldiers have also been used as literacy teachers (Cuba, Iran, Colombia, etc.). One authority considers military training as a leveling influence, being the only avenue open to disadvantaged members of the population to obtain advancement in society.\footnote{Hugh Hanning, The Peaceful Uses of Military Forces (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1967).}

Private Voluntary Organizations. Churches, theaters, youth organizations, YMCA’s, YWCA’s and other private organizations play educational roles. A demonstration of the power and potential of these organizations is that the Clark study found that in the United States “the amount of Sunday School” space in the churches of some communities “equaled the classroom space of local public schools.” Clark also found that “private yacht clubs were giving the same navigation courses as the Naval Academy at Annapolis.”\footnote{Coombs, loc. Cit.}
Mass Media. Radio, television, newspapers, films and periodicals also make deliberately planned educational efforts. According to Charles Silberman, “journalists, editors, television writers, directors and producers, network executives, newspaper publishers, filmmakers, et. Al. rarely think of themselves as educators”\(^8\) however, “students probably learn more about certain subjects from [these institutions] than from schools.”\(^9\) To go beyond Silberman’s statement, in areas of the world where individuals do not have classroom opportunities, media, particularly radio, is probably the primary instrument used for the transmission of lateral knowledge.

University and Governmental Extension Services. Since the late nineteenth century, extension divisions in the United States, which are cooperative efforts by universities and governmental departments, have offered the means by which individuals can expand their knowledge and skills without entering a classroom. The British Open University has attempted to open higher education to individuals from all walks of life. The Open University uses television, radio, correspondence work and meetings with tutors at local study centers to provide a wide ranged of opportunities for life-long education.\(^8\) Many of the extension functions of universities in the United States and the British Open University are now being duplicated in other areas of the world.

---

\(^8\) Silberman, op. cit., p. 36.
\(^9\) Ibid., p. 32.
Basically what differentiates the advocates of non-formal education from the advocates of alternative schools and deschooling is the flexible position which they take. Advocates of non-formal education do not reject schools; yet, they are not schools’ staunch defenders. In the words of Cole Brembeck, Director of The Institute for International Studies at Michigan State University:

Our work in the area of alternatives has been largely in the direction of inquiries into different aspects of non-formal education. We have not really taken up the deschooling issue as such. We have, rather, worked on the assumption that schools are learning in proper perspective with respect to total, nation-wide learning systems.\(^{83}\)

Proponents of the extended use of non-formal education are aware of the tremendous amount of structured learning which now takes place outside the school. They feel that because of the rapidly rising costs of schools, what must be done is to incorporate the schools and these out-of-school activities into what Brembeck has described as a coordinated “nation-wide learning system.”

In this chapter various proposals for the solution of educational problems have been described. In the next chapter the degree of implementation of these educational alternatives shall be catalogued in relation to the area of the world for which Illich, Reimer and others at Cuernavaca first considered alternatives necessary. In the next chapter we shall survey “Educational Alternatives in Latin America.”

---

\(^{83}\) Quotation taken from a letter of April 18, 1974 from Dr. Brembeck to the author.
As noted earlier, from 1968 to 1972, Everett Reimer, Ivan Illich and others participated in seminars on the future of education at the Center for Intercultural Documentation at Cuernavaca, Mexico. During that period and as a result of those meetings the term “educational alternatives” was popularized. Because Illich and Reimer have been primarily concerned with the problems of education in Latin America and also because the term “educational alternatives” grew out of and was popularized by their work, this chapter will consider the various categories of alternatives already defined in relation to Latin America. This chapter is essentially a review of the literature on alternative schools, deschooling and non-formal education in their Latin American context.

### Alternative Schools in Latin America

There is a scarcity of examples of alternative schools for the Latin American area. It is difficult to determine whether this is a result of lack of establishment of such schools or simple lack of documentation.

**Brazil**

One of the best documented examples of a Latin American alternative school is in Brazil. From August of 1962 to December of 1965, the Ford Foundation and the Brazilian Ministry of education initiated “a program of compensatory education for children from poorer areas.” The aim of this program was to “fulfill their the children’s
specific needs and permit them to develop their potential capacity to the greatest extent, while taking into account their present interests and those of the community.”¹

For this project three hundred urban children from the most deprived backgrounds were selected. These children were then provided with an open-classroom atmosphere, a balanced diet, dental and medical treatment, recreation and access to guidance counselors. In addition normal school hours were expanded to include holidays and evenings. The results of the program were gratifying. The slum children demonstrated progress comparable with that of other children from average backgrounds.

At the end of 1965 this project was slated to become a model for teachers of slum children throughout Brazil. Unfortunately this development did not take place because of the loss of the project’s major financial supporter. Project funding for the period 1962 to 1965 had been provided by the Ford Foundation in cooperation with the Brazilian government. When, as a result of changes in the Brazilian government in late 1965, discord developed between the Ministry of Education and the Ford Foundation, the Foundation withdrew its support and the project was terminated.²

Other Alternative Schools

Guerilla institutions comparable to American freedom academies and counter culture schools may exist in Latin America. If they do, however, their operations are not mentioned in any of the literature reviewed by this writer.

²Ibid.
The objective of an enhanced cultural identity, something that is stressed by freedom academies, is served in Latin America by institutions such as the Argentinean “Street Theaters.” Street theaters are not, however, schools and for that reason will be considered later in this chapter under the title of “non-formal education.”

No reference is found in the available literature to the actual implementation in the Latin American area of any program making use of educational vouchers.

Evidently the alternative schools concept does not have a great deal of appeal to nations which are experiencing the types of educational problems now confronted by the Latin American nations. Contrasting the many examples of alternative schools in the United States, Great Britain and other developed nations to the lack of such examples for Latin America and realizing that the advocates of alternative schools are not really concerned with monetary educational costs, one can only assume that alternative schools are simply expensive reactions to the harshness of the traditional public and private school systems of the developed world.

Deschooling In Latin America

Attempting to find examples of this category of educational alternatives is even more difficult than attempting to explain what “deschooling’ is. To find examples of Illich-Reimer alternatives, we must find “convivial” institutions that are not schools and which have as their major objective societal transformation.

---

3Thomas J. La Belle, Development of Special Multi-Disciplinary Competence for Analysis of Effective Alternatives to Process of Traditional Education (Los Angeles: Latin American Center, University of California, 1973). pp. 72-73.
In February, 1974, identical letters were sent by the author to both Ivan Illich and Everett Reimer. In those letters the following questions were asked:

1. Using the “Illich-Reimer” alternatives as standards, what innovations and experiments have you evaluated against them?

2. What models for learning webs, skill exchanges and peer-matches now exist in Latin America and are being used for what you would consider constructive educational purposes?

3. If workable models for these convivial institutions do exist, to what extent do you consider them to be a result of your work at Cuernavaca?

Ivan Illich replied to these questions in late April by simply transmitting several copies of Cuernavaca publications which restated the deschooling proposals. He made no reference to actual implementation.

On July 5, 1974, Everett Reimer in a letter mailed from his home in Puerto Rico replied directly to all three questions. The following quotations are taken from that July letter. Numbers refer to the original numbers of the questions in the letter of February 2, 1974.

1. We, neither Illich nor I, have evaluated any innovations against our standards. That is not our way of working. Perhaps it ought to be but it isn’t.

2. So many learning webs, skill exchanges and peer matches now exist in Latin America that we know only a tiny fraction of them. I judge the total by analogy from a rough count of such innovations in North America described in a book called Something Else4 . . . . We obviously cannot evaluate those we don’t know and as I said, we aren’t in the evaluating business. I would say that all of these innovations serve constructive purposes in that they stimulate thought and action. They are not substitutes for schools. Schools are necessary for the survival of and for individual survival in our present society. Real education will hasten the downfall of this society which is doomed anyway by its own excuses. The

problem is not one of alternative institutions within the present society but rather one of recasting the existing society.

3. We feel that our work has had something to do with the proliferation of educational innovations, but also that most of them would have occurred whether we had lived and published or not.⁵

To paraphrase Reimer, he sees his and Illich’s proposals to be for a society that does not exist, but instead is being created by the reaction of individuals to the bankruptcy of existing institutions. Despite, however, Reimer’s statement that he is not concerned with alternative educational institutions within our present society, there have in fact been at least three instances in which Illich-Reimer alternatives have been attempted.

Mexico

The first was the establishment by Ivan Illich of the Center for Intercultural Documentation. This institution in Cuernavaca, Mexico began as a training center for Catholic priests working in Latin America.⁶ It has evolved into a kind of anti-school. CIDOC is part language school, part conference center, part college, part library and part publishing house. It is also a center for free and often radical discussion among intellectuals from all continents.

At Cuernavaca Reimer and Illich follow their own guidelines regarding certification. The Center’s faculty is not permanent; scholars are invited in for periods of

---

⁵Letter of July 5, 1974 from Everett Reimer to the author.
one to three years. Among the senior staff only Illich and Reimer hold college degrees. The chief administrator, Valentine Borremans, was trained in a French convent school, worked in a bookshop, served as a deep sea diver and has played washboard in a jug and. Other staff members include a librarian with a sixth grade education who is there because he has developed a simplified cataloging system, a Mexican printer with limited formal education who manages the publishing operations and a former Belgian resistance fighter who conducts some of the seminars.

The major portion of CIDOLC’s financial support comes from the tuition charged by the language school. Language courses, primarily Spanish, are taught by native speakers who have demonstrated both language and instructional proficiency.

Scholars who have worked at Cuernavaca include the Jesuit priest, Alejandro del Correa, who advocates violence for social progress; Francisco Juliao, a Brazilian peasant organizer; Harvey Cox of the Harvard Divinity School; Don Sergio Mendez Arceo, the Bishop of Cuernavaca; Michel Novak, a former editor of Commonwealth and the Reverend Joseph Fitzpatrick of Fordham University.7

CIDOC is not a school in the Illich sense of the word. It is not “an age-specific, teacher related process requiring full time attendance in an obligatory curriculum.” It is, however, a school in a broader sense. The Center for Intercultural Documentation is a doctrinal institution which operates only for those adults who have had some type of Preparation, whether that preparation be formal or informal.

Peru

In the early 1970’s proposals were made by a Peruvian reform organization which called for implementation of Illich-Reimer alternatives on a much larger scale than that of the Cuernavaca operation. In an article written for the New York Review in 1970 Ivan Illich enthusiastically reported that the President of Peru had agreed to accept recommendations from his commission on education which would have abolished schools in favor of free educational opportunities throughout life. These recommendations called specifically for the mass distribution of educational objects such as tape players and repairable equipment.\(^8\)

Several months later, however, in an essay written for the book, After Deschooling What?, Illich gave the following pessimistic appraisal of the Peruvian situation:

Upon seizing power, the military junta in Peru, immediately decided to suspend further expenditures on free public schools. They reasoned that since a third of the public budget could not provide one full year of decent schooling for all, the available tax receipts could better be spent on a type of educational resources that might make them more nearly accessible to all citizens. The educational reform commission appointed by the junta could not carry out this decision because of pressure from the teachers of the APRA, the Communists, and the Cardinal Archbishop of Lima. Now there will be two competing systems of public education in a country that cannot afford one.\(^9\)

Review of the final draft of that reform commission report reveals that Illich’s statements are correct. The report calls for an expanded primary and secondary school program alongside an equally expanded system of adult education through


correspondence and extension courses. No mention is made of educational object distribution.\textsuperscript{10} In Peru we have the unusual example of a progressive military regime being thwarted by conservative civilian and church authorities.

\textbf{Brazil and Chile}

The Brazilian experiences of Paulo Freire are an exact reversal of the Peruvian situation. In Brazil the conservative military government aborted a progressive literacy program directed by a Catholic priest.

When Joao Goulart became President of Brazil in September of 1961, the Brazilian Bishops’ Conference sponsored a Basic Education Movement with the goals of eliminating illiteracy and also of raising the peasants’ social and political awareness. The Freire literacy method which grew out of that movement uses materials which examine the actual conditions of the peasants’ life. Charts show all sides of the village existence. Basic readers contain stories which are harsh and uncomplimentary. Underlying the entire program is the need for change and the inference that only the people can initiate that change.

When Goulart was overthrown by the Brazilian military in 1964, use of Freire techniques were outlawed. Paulo Freire was jailed, only to be released when he promised to leave the country.\textsuperscript{11}

\textsuperscript{10}Comision de Reforma de la Educacion, Reforma de la Educacion Peruana (Lima: Ministerio de Educacion, 1971).
Continuing his work in Chile, Freire developed Spanish versions of his materials and further perfected the entire process. After a time, however, the Ministry of Education in that country also became disenchanted with his work.\footnote{Thomas G. Sanders, Literacy Training and Conscientizacion: The Paul Freire Method (Santiago, Chile: Institute of World Affairs, 1968), p. 14.}

Freire advocates techniques which seek to build on a basis of confidence and dialogue between learners and instructors. He claims and has demonstrated in Brazil and Chile that any adult can be taught to read in forty hours or less if the words he is reading are charged with political and social meaning. Instructors using his methods move into villages, discover words which designate current important issues, teach villagers to read, write and discuss these words, and then let the people move and act on the situation from there. After being involved in this type of program, many Brazilian peasants organized political and labor organizations and began to bargain with the government and their employers.

This type of reaction to the status quo is an action that many governments cannot and will not tolerate. It is societal change as advocated by Illich and Reimer and it is the type of action which caused Freire to be forced to leave first Brazil and then Chile. It is perhaps an unusual complement to the effectiveness of the Freire methods that in his present position with the World Council of Churches, Paulo Freire cannot really be expected to see them. In fact literacy teaching by Freire methods and its intended results are so highly regarded that no nation dares implement them.\footnote{Thomas G. Sanders, Literacy Training and Conscientizacion: The Paul Freire Method (Santiago, Chile: Institute of World Affairs, 1968), p. 14.}
Non-Formal Education In Latin America

Non-formal education has been and is being used in the Latin American area. Unlike the alternative schools and deschooling categories, there are many examples of non-formal education and its implementation. This situation is as it should be. As stated earlier in Chapter I, the advocates of non-formal education call only for the coordination and improvement of existing programs and concepts. The question is not whether non—formal education exists or not, but instead whether that coordination and improvement has actually taken place. Since there are many examples of non-formal education and since the writer feels that the questions of coordination and improvement can only be answered through a full review of the case studies on non-formal education in the Latin American area, the remainder of this chapter shall be devoted to that type of review.

Argentina

At the present time two graduate students from the University of California at Los Angeles are attempting to assess the impact of the theater as an instrument of non-formal education. From initial studies these individuals have theorized that: (1) the performing arts have helped to create a sense of civic responsibility as well as a national Argentine culture. (2) the theater has helped eliminate illiteracy and has transmitted knowledge about correct health practices and (3) the performing arts have

---

helped promote conscientization and revolutionary ideals throughout the country.\footnote{La Belle, op. cit., pp. 71-73}

Another student from UCLA is engaged in a case study of non-formal education and the assimilation of the Eastern European Jewish immigrant into Buenos Aires society. His major concern is the role of business enterprises in this assimilation. Initial results indicate that “recruitment of a work force, the character of labor organizations, residential patterns and the status accorded to various occupations are important in the establishment of a class structure and determine the nature of assimilation.”\footnote{Ibid., pp. 22-23.}

In Case Studies in Non-formal Education Russel Klies outlines the details of a project conducted by the Organization of American States from 1952 to 1962. This project involved OAS training of professional extension personnel in Argentine, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay. Project trainees assisted in the establishment and improvement of youth clubs, homemakers’ clubs and farmers’ committees. Results of the project as derived from local interviews indicate improvements in attitudes toward change and substantial increases in local incomes.\footnote{Russel Klies (ed.), Case Studies in Non-formal Education (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 9174), pp. 60-61.}

An additional study with Argentina as the major emphasis is that being conducted by Jerry I. Porras of UCLA. It deals with managerial training in this area. No results are available.\footnote{La Belle, op. cit., p. 28.}
Bolivia

Catro Uriona Fernandez is concerned with the Bolivian cooperatives as instruments of non-formal education. He sees them as agents for rapid social and economic development.\(^{18}\) Orlando Fals-Borda disagrees with the Uriona position because he sees cooperatives in Bolivia and throughout Latin America as failures. He attributes this failure to a Latin American weakness to copy European cooperative methods not appropriate to the Latin American situation.\(^{19}\)

Another study of importance is that of Gibril Balde. He has observed how Bolivian Indians have been taught by OAS representatives to use and appreciate movies. Using many of the traditional methods of the Bolivian story teller, these representatives intertwine discussions, still pictures and finally movies. Bade sees the positive response of the Indian to these techniques as an indication that programs of this type can improve the lives of these isolated people.\(^{20}\)

Brazil

Brazil provides a wealth of examples of non-formal education. According to the country’s 1937 Constitution, “It is the duty of industrial and economic syndicates in the sphere of their specialties to set up apprenticeship schools for their associates.”\(^{21}\)


\(^{19}\) Ibid., p. 209.

\(^{20}\) Ibid., p. 243.

Before the 1937 Constitution had gone into effect the railroads had taken a lead in the development of Brazilian industrial training. As early as 1934 the railroads had set up a Railroad Center of Occupational Instruction and Selection to provide general and apprenticeship training.

It was not, however, until 1942 that the Brazilian government began to take an active interest in industrial training. In that year to implement the 1937 Constitution the Brazilian Service of Industrial Training was created. This organization is run by representatives of industry, labor and the government. Its purpose is the organization of industrial training and the design and improvement of courses designed specifically for industry.

SENAI has served as a model for the Colombian National Training Service, the Venezuelan National Institute of Educational Co-operation, the Chilean National Commission of Vocational Training, the Peruvian National Service of Industrial Training and Work and the Argentine National Service of Technical Education. All these organizations are autonomous public corporations and are financed by a tax on the payrolls of private industries.

The major objection to SENAI and the organizations which have copied it, is that, although they train many workers and potential workers, these organizations reach only a small minority of the population. The 34,000 individuals trained every year by SENAI, in fact, represent only ten per cent of the industrial labor force. 22

---

The Brazilian military services which at times work with SENAI are another example of non-formal education. Brazil operated military and naval academies as early as 1814. During the nineteenth century and into the present century, these academies provided most of the country’s civil engineers. Today the Brazilian military operates seven colleges and numerous other schools which combine a basic education program with military instruction.²³

Officials of the Brazilian county health departments have also been involved in programs of non-formal education. In the early 1950’s these organizations established community health centers which, among other things, distributed health education materials. Reactions to these activities demonstrated that inhabitants of rural communities, when given the chance, would be willing to assist in both the planning and implementation of health programs that were oriented to specific local needs.²⁴

A related example of the use of community development as an instrument of non-formal education involves the Brazilian effort to colonize the northwestern section of this enormous country. Lyra Srinivassen has reported that through this effort, a welcome side effect has been improved agricultural, civic and health knowledge in the colonized areas.²⁵

²⁴Klies, op. cit., pp. 102-103.
To supplement the studies on non-formal education in Brazil which have already been conducted, four individuals from UCLA are at present involved in separate studies on additional aspects of Brazilian non-formal education. Alan Michael Wilson has theorized that labor union, student and professional theaters have had a tremendous impact on Brazilian national life and culture. David Lopez is concerned that Brazilian industry and SENAI may at times be duplicating each other. Ralph Edfelt has a similar concern. Finally Jan R. Van Orman fears that both SENAI and private industry may be duplicating the results of a third out-of-school training effort, the Brazilian Manpower Training Program.

Chile

Examples of non-formal education for Chile are less numerous than those for Brazil. Excellent examples, however, do exist. Officials of INACAP, the Chilean training program modeled after SENAI, study the kinds of tools mathematical operations and various other skills needed for competence in different occupations. Based on this information, these officials then make recommendations as to how training programs should be developed.

In addition during the rule of Salvador Allende, the former Marxist president, non-formal, in-service training programs for the reorientation of teachers were used to promote socialism in the country. Much of this work was modeled after Cuban efforts of

---

26 La Belle, op. cit., p. 72.
27 Ibid., p. 19.
28 Ibid., pp. 27-28
29 Ibid., p. 22.
30 Staley, op. cit. p. 57.
a decade earlier. The program emphasized planning and research for the creation of new mass socialist culture. Literacy aspects of the operation made use of the Paulo Freire methods discussed under deschooling.\textsuperscript{31}

**Colombia**

Like Brazil and unlike Chile, examples of non-formal education in Colombia are numerous. One of the oldest and most effective of these programs is Accion Cultural Popular (ACPO). The origin of this radio literacy program can be traced to the efforts of Father Jose Joaquin Selcedo. In the late 1940’s this Catholic priest and amateur radio operator initiated a program which used radio receivers and intermediates in an effort to eliminate illiteracy in the rural areas. By 1963 UNESCO had seen the value of Selcedo’s program and agreed to sign a contract the Colombian government to provide expanded radio service to the rural areas. The voice of ACPO is Radio Sutatenza which has eight transmitters located strategically throughout the country. Radio broadcasts from these locations provide thirty minute programs devoted to literacy or advanced subjects to several fields. The local priest is the key to the entire radio program. He encourages groups to establish radio schools and supervises the initial organization of these schools.\textsuperscript{32}

The Colombian National Training Service, mentioned earlier, is another example of non-formal education. In 1967 this organization known as SENA sponsored a program which specified requirements for particular jobs, designated what criteria was


being used for promotion and then used this information to design relevant training programs.\textsuperscript{33}

Colombia’s armed forces also provide programs of non-formal education. Basically the military has three educational objectives: (1) to provide training for professional servicemen, (2) to provide fundamental instruction for those who will later reenter civilian life and (3) to provide information and aid to individuals in areas under colonization. Training for the professional servicemen is provided in traditional military institutions. Training and education for recruits returning to civilian life are provided by a program sponsored jointly by the military and a division of SENA. In relation to the third objective, the Colombian Army, Navy and Air Force provide information and aid in the areas of hydrography, medical and dental services, engineering, agricultural improvement and livestock management. In conjunction with this third objective, the military along with local industries, schools and churches, assists the nation’s youth corps programs.\textsuperscript{34}

As was the case for Argentina and Brazil, the Colombia theater can also be considered as an institution providing non-formal education. Students from UCLA have concluded, in fact, that university, barrio and campesino theaters in Colombia have an impact for beyond their numbers.\textsuperscript{35}

\textsuperscript{33}Staley, op. cit., pp. 47-48.
\textsuperscript{34}Hanning, op. cit., p. 83.
\textsuperscript{35}La Belle, op. cit., p. 73.
Costa Rica

Although Costa Rica has an excellent system of formal education, the nation has had only one well documented example of non-formal education. In 1948 as part of the Organization of American States’ Technical Cooperative Program, the Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Service, a division of OAS, Launched a project the purpose of which was to improve communications between researchers and technicians. This program was expanded in 1956 to include Brazil, Colombia, Honduras and Nicaragua, in addition to Costa Rica. It made use of five consultants from Michigan State University, who trained local extension workers in the use of the best known and most effective methods available for transmission of new farming ideas to inhabitants of rural areas. Summary reports from the Organization of American States indicate that the project was a success. Trainees stated that they had profited from the group activities associated with the program, liked the visual aids used and enjoyed the opportunity to better understand human communications.36

Cuba

Since the Cuban Revolution of 1959, Cuba has been the site of various examples of non-formal education. The most famous of these is “Escuela A. Campo.” In this program all urban secondary students are required annually to go to the countryside for a six week period. In the field, while continuing their formal studies, these students are required to assist in the harvest of sugar, coffee, citrus and other agricultural items. Since Cuba is still essentially an agricultural nation it is hoped that

through "Escuela Al Campo" Cuban education can be made as practical as possible. Unfortunately, there have been reports that as a result of this program drop out rates among secondary students have increased significantly.37

Another example of Cuban non-formal education has been the effort at literacy training through the government supported establishment of local newspapers. These papers contain locally written articles of regional significance. Indications are that this has been an extremely effective program at least in relation to deciphering and writing skills. Critics have charged, however, that the progress is only a smokescreen for political indoctrination.38

Ian McColl Kennedy of UCLA feels that the Cuban Courts have also served an educational function. Especially since 1959, according to Kennedy, Tribunals, the Audiencia, the Revolutionary Tribunals and the Labour Councils have had a tremendous educational impact on the total Cuban socio-political process.39

Ecuador

An area of Latin America which has an organized non-formal education system somewhat different from that of Cuba is Ecuador. Through the cooperative efforts of the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education and the Center for International Education at he University of Massachusetts, Ecuadorian Indian communities have been introduced to the dynamics of change as well as to basic literacy and mathematical skills.

38Ibid.
“El Robo,” simulates crime in the rural areas of Ecuador.
This program makes use of three basic techniques. The first is the use of standard American family games which have been revised to simulate certain critical aspects of life in rural Ecuador. One of these games, “Hacienda” is played somewhat like Monopoly. It has characters taken from actual rural situations and is designed to stimulate discussion and action. Another game “Cooperative” simulates many of the conflicts that would be encountered in an actual cooperative. A third game, “Feria,” reflects market forces and their influence on market situations. A fourth game, “Nutrition,” is concerned with health problems in a rural community. A fifth game,

The second technique employed by the Ministry of Education and the Center for International Education is designed around romantic magazines called “fotonovelas.” Twelve thousand copies of a magazine of this type were published in 1972 and distributed throughout Ecuador. Titled “Manuel Sarti,” this magazine, based on rural life in Ecuador, was designed to raise the campesinos’ respect for themselves while at the same time serving to acquaint urban Ecuadorians with conditions in the rural areas of the country.

The third aspect of the joint Ministry of Education-University of Massachusetts program was modeled after Radio Sutatenza in Colombia. The Radio Mensaje Project makes use of cassette recorders which are loaned to rural communities. On these recorders rural residents prepare messages which are submitted for weekly broadcast during a program called “Farmers’ Message.” According to Ecuadorian statistics more than half of the people who listen to these recorded messages are illiterate. Yet, a majority of the same individuals when contacted in 1973 stated that the radio messages had enabled them to make certain agricultural improvements which greatly changed
their daily lives. A side effect of the Radio Mensaje Project has been the development by certain village inhabitants of the simple electronic skills necessary for repair of the recorders.\textsuperscript{40}

**El Salvador**

While most of the experimentation related to communications in Colombia and Ecuador has been concerned with the educational uses of radio, in El Salvador that type of research has been devoted to television. In 1969 a program funded by the United States and the Organization of American States was inaugurated. This program was slated to provide televised instruction to both secondary day and all levels of night students. Early indications were that the small geographic size of El Salvador and the country’s acute need for secondary instructors would make this type of program practical. Later results, however, have demonstrated that the program asked for too much in too short a time.\textsuperscript{41}

**Guatemala**

While El Salvador has experimented with educational television, Guatemala has been concerned with other means of out-of-school literacy acquisition. From 1962 to 1965 a low cost AID survey was conducted with the objective of determining what factors outside the school contribute to literacy competence. Results indicated that the family environment was the major determining factor. Literacy projects initiated since 1965 have used the information as a basis for their operations. It is now realized that

\textsuperscript{40}James Hoxeng, *Let Jorge Do It: An Approach to Rural Non-formal Education* (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts, 1973).

students can be reached only by first reaching their parents.\footnote{42}{Peter C. Wright and others, The Impact of a Literacy Program in a Guatemalan Ladino Community (Tampa: University of South Florida Press, 1967), p. 15.}

The theater is also seen as a major agent for non-formal education in Guatemala. In fact, the Guatemalan government has attempted to use the theater to both combat illiteracy and transmit valuable information throughout the country. Studies are now being conducted at UCLA which attempt to measure the success of that government effort.\footnote{43}{La Belle, op. cit., p. 74.}

Among Indian tribes music is an additional educational medium. Various tribes use music both as a means of communication and as a method of transmitting cultural values from one generation to the next. Results of recent studies indicate that this form of non-formal education may have an impact among Indian tribes equal to that of the formal educational structure.\footnote{44}{Ibid., pp. 74-75.}

\textbf{Guyana}

An excellent example of the type of training that can be provided by private industry is found in Guyana. There, since the late 1950’s, Brookers Sugar Estates Ltd. has conducted an education and training program for its employees. Brookers offers professional training to mechanical, electrical and chemical engineering; personnel management and accounting. The company also operates an Eastern Caribbean Farm Institute providing further instruction in agriculture, science and management. Other educational aspects of the Brooker operation include an Apprenticeship Training Centre and a three year retraining program for older employees.\footnote{45}{Lauwerys and Scanlon (eds.), op. cit., p. 342.}
**Honduras**

Like Colombia and Ecuador, Honduras has made extensive use of radio stations and private receivers. The program “Familia Gomez: has introduced many Hondurans to the basic principles of health and nutrition.\(^{46}\)

Private industries, especially the United Fruit Company, have also been instrumental in the establishment of educational programs for the Honduran population. In addition to the training programs operated by United Fruit, the company was also responsible for the founding of the Pan American School of Agriculture in 1941. This institution located in Zamora trains students from Honduras as well as many other Latin American nations.\(^{47}\)

**Mexico**

The Mexican firm, Fibros Quimicas, has been involved in an extremely innovative employee training program. In 1961 twenty-two workers were sent to a sister plant in the Netherlands for training as foremen and supervisors. Four years later, according to company reports, these same individuals had advanced rapidly in the plant hierarchy and had a better overall view than their associates of industry operations.\(^{48}\)

American companies which conduct training in Mexico include International Business Machines, Nestle and Ford. IBM concentrates on engineering, sales and administration. Nestle runs an institute outside of Mexico City at which instruction is given in administration, marketing, production and other specific job related skills.\(^{49}\)

\(^{46}\)Center for International Education, *Non-formal Alternatives to Schooling* (Amherst, Massachusetts; University of Massachusetts, 1973), p. 32.
\(^{47}\)Waggoner and Waggoner, op. cit., p. 83.
\(^{48}\)Ibid., pp. 352-358.
\(^{49}\)Ibid.
Ford has one of the oldest and largest training programs in Mexico; the company conducts courses in heat treatments, metallurgy, shop mathematics, industrial engineering, quality control, staff supervision, human relations, labor relations, first aid, safety and sales.\textsuperscript{50}

Another example of Mexican non-formal education was the Pueblo Project of 1967. This project had the following objectives: (1) to develop a strategy for increased yields of basic food crops, (2) to train individuals who could maintain that strategy and (3) to convey relevant information to the Mexican small farmer. The Pueblo Project made use of farm associations, group discussions, field days, radio programs and films. Twelve percent of the farmers in the Pueblo area participated; ten percent increased their maize production. As a further example of the program’s success, after it was terminated, credit institutions and agri-businesses were willing to make loans in the Pueblo area.\textsuperscript{51}

Mexican governments have supported other programs of non-formal education. Since the regime of President Obregon self-help efforts have been backed by all levels of government as well as by private agencies. Most of these programs have concentrated on community development in the areas inhabited by the Indian masses.\textsuperscript{52}

The Mexican military has also been an active participant in educational programs. Military schools were the first in all Mexico to be concerned with techniques

\textsuperscript{50}James Hoxeng, “Pre-occupation and In-industry Education,” Sundry Papers I (Amherst, Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts, 1970).
\textsuperscript{51}Klies, op. cit., p. 66.
of instruction. Today the Army provides both technical and cultural instruction. It is also involved in country-wide literacy efforts.\textsuperscript{53}

\textbf{Nicaragua}

The Nicaraguan military is also making educational efforts. The Military Academy of Nicaragua established in 1939 offers a secondary school curriculum devoted to both academic and military subjects. The total enrollment of the Academy in 1967 was ninety-four students. The Academy’s budget for that year was approximately $192,258.\textsuperscript{54}

\textbf{Peru}

Peru probably has more examples of non-formal education than any other Latin American nation. One of the oldest documented examples was the Vicos Project directed by Dr. Allen R. Homberg. Holmberg came to Peru in 1949 as an Assistant Professor of Anthropology on leave from Cornell University. By 1952 thanks to financial support provided by the Carnegie Corporation and the Peruvian Institute of Indian Affairs he was patron of a hacienda and held feudal power over 1,700 Peruvian Indians. This hacienda known as “Vicos” was owned by the Peruvian Benefit Society and rented out on a ten year lease. According to the terms of the lease, each of the Peruvian families in the area owed Holmberg three days work a week.

Health and nutrition levels for the Vicos Indians were extremely low. Worse still they lacked the basic competencies necessary for the improvement of these conditions. Probably due to the failures of former Vicos patrons, the dominate Indian attitude was one of pessimism.

\textsuperscript{53}Klies, op. cit., p. 251.
\textsuperscript{54}Waggoner and Waggoner, op. cit., p. 97.
Dr. Holmberg rented Vicos with the objective of improving these peoples’ lives. He gradually began to change Vicos meeting sf rom periods of passive listening by the Indians to ones of active discussions of hacienda problems. After abolishing his right to Indian service, Holmberg declared that hacienda land was community property and that the sale of hacienda products would go for the eventual Indian purchase of Vicos lands by the Benefit Society. In addition Holmberg demonstrated new methods of cultivation, fertilization, spraying and harvesting.

As a result of Holmberg’s work Vicos was finally acquired by the Indians in 1962. When he left the area the people of Vicos had enough to eat, shelter from the elements and the freedom and skills necessary to make their own choices.\(^{55}\)

Rolland G. Paulston feels that the Vicos project and programs like it may “offer the best opportunity to circumvent the elite dominated and increasingly dysfunctional formal school system.”\(^{56}\) Certainly Homberg reached the Vicos Indians in a way that formal institutions had failed to reach them.

Turning to other areas of Peruvian non-formal education, Susan Bourque of Smith College has analyzed organizations such as the National Federation of Peruvian Peasants, the Association of Leagues of Advanced Peasants and the Institute of Rural Education. She sees these organizations as educational institutions with great potential for the assimilation of the Peruvian peasant into a national system and culture.\(^{57}\)

The Peruvian National Service of Industrial Training has similar potential. Modeled after SENAI in Brazil, SENATI provides skill training, technical instruction and

\(^{56}\) Paulston, op. cit., p. 167.
\(^{57}\) Ibid.
general education for Peruvian employees and future employees. Ray L. Garrison has concluded that this program is well-managed, well-adapted to the needs of workers and assures job placement. He notes, however, that SENATI programs are expensive, slow to accept change and offer little for lower-level employees.\(^{58}\)

As is the case in so many other Latin American nations the Peruvian military is also an active participant in the country’s educational programs. The Peruvian Army’s pre-release training arrangements are unquestionably the best in Latin America. Thousands of soldiers spend the last three months of their military career in vocational centers which offer training in carpentry, plumbing, electricity and masonry. Recently courses have also been added in such fields as farm equipment operations and maintenance, animal husbandry and food preservation. In addition the army trains soldiers to return to their communities as literacy instructors.\(^{59}\)

The military is also active in community development programs. A drive to bring civilization to the Amazon region is under the overall supervision of the Peruvian Navy. In 1964 a gunboat visited various river towns. In collaboration with the Ministries of Education, Health and Agriculture, personnel for this vessel gave medical, sanitary, educational, agricultural and veterinary assistance and instruction.\(^{60}\)


\(^{59}\)Staley, op. cit., pp. 121-122.

\(^{60}\)Hanning, op. cit., p. 179.
Venezuela

While major efforts in Peru have been directed toward community development, those in Venezuela have had an industrial development orientation. On August 22, 1959, the Venezuelan National Institute of Educational Cooperation was founded. Like similar organizations in other Latin American nations, INCE is supported by levies on industrial payrolls, mandatory contributions by employees and matching funds from the State. According to INCE laws, apprenticeships must be provided for selected youth between the ages of fourteen and eighteen. These apprenticeships may be conducted in private businesses, at centers run by the INCE or in privately supported training centers. The content of these training programs is based on recommendations made by such organizations as the Venezuelan Ministries of Education and Labor, the National Institute for Cooperative Education itself and a host of private industries. Additional financial assistance for INCE work has been provided by the United States Agency for International Development. Suggestions for the improvement of Venezuelan industrial training as well as a detailed description of industrial change in rural Venezuela are contained in a report by the Institute of Technology at Harvard University.

---

61 Lauwerys and Scanlon, op. cit., p. 230.
62 Ibid., pp. 231-232.
63 Paulston, op. cit., p. 105.
In addition to the education in conjunction with industry described above, Venezuela has other examples of non-formal education. A report by Susan Castillo to the Latin American Center at UCLA firmly documents the educational role of the theater in Venezuela.\textsuperscript{66} Another report submitted to the same organization by Leroy Hoinacki analyzes the educational role of the Catholic Church and its International Center for the Formation and Training of Christian Democratic Activists. From the International Center have come many Venezuelan political leaders.\textsuperscript{67} At the present time, Venezuelan agricultural extension programs are being studied to determine their educational functions. No conclusions are however, available from the study.\textsuperscript{68} Finally, Thomas C. Nicholson has analyzed the educational role of the Venezuelan Armed Forces both through their military schools and through the community development programs of the Fuerzas Armadas de Cooperación.\textsuperscript{69}

The Involvement of the United States in Latin American Non-formal Education

Many of the programs already reviewed in this chapter receive support of some type from either the United states government or other U. S. agencies. Assistance to the Venezuelan INCE from the U.S. Agency for International Development is an example of the first type of support; the work of the University of Massachusetts in Ecuador is an example of the second.

\textsuperscript{66}La Belle, op. cit., pp. 70-71
\textsuperscript{67}Ibid., p. 23.
\textsuperscript{68}Ibid., p. 41.
\textsuperscript{69}Klies, op. cit., p. 252.
Another way that the United States is involved in Latin American non-formal education is through U.S. businesses operating in the area. According to Organization of American States statistics, over one hundred U.S. firms conduct training programs for their Latin American employees.\textsuperscript{70} Additional information on training of this type can be found in the Stanford Research Study entitled Management Education and Recruitment Sources in Latin America.\textsuperscript{71}

Finally the United States is involved in Latin American non-formal education through the work of its military forces stationed in the area. Since the early 1960’s, through the Military Assistance Program, seventy-six Civic Action Mobile Training Teams have been sent to various Latin American nations. Assigned to these teams are U.S. military experts in such areas as government affairs, civic action, engineering, public health, sanitation, agriculture, education and public relations.\textsuperscript{72} Also working under the auspices of MAP, the United States Army School of the Americas, located in the Canal Zone, has provided courses ranging from sanitation to resource management for over 29,000 Latin American soldiers and civilians.\textsuperscript{73}

Thus we have reviewed the documented examples of educational alternatives which either exist or have existed in Latin America. How well do these alternatives deal with the criticisms of schools made in Chapter I? That question shall be dealt with in Chapter III.

\textsuperscript{71}Stanford Research Institute, Management Education and Recruitment Sources in Latin America (Stanford: Stanford Research Institute, 1968).
\textsuperscript{72}Hanning, op. cit., pp. 219-221.
\textsuperscript{73}“School of the Americas Begins 24th Year of Instruction,”: Southern Command News,, February 9, 1973, pp. 1 and 3.
Chapter III

Educational Alternatives in Latin America:
Program Accomplishments

The Cuernavaca seminars of the late 1960’s and early 1970’s popularized the term “educational alternatives.” Chapter I of this thesis reviewed the various school failings which have caused individuals to call for “alternatives in education.” This chapter shall examine the accomplishments of Latin American alternative schools, deschooling and non-formal education in dealing with the societal needs which schools have failed to meet.

Alternatives and Educational Costs

Critics of schools state that the major function of the school is custodial care rather than training or learning. Many of these critics further state that this function is the major cause of high cost school operations. Whether these views are reliable or not, it is clearly demonstrated (See Chapter I) that the costs of schooling have far out-distanced both the cost of living and actual educational productivity.\(^1\) As a result, UNESCO, leader Edgar Faure and others feel that the limits of school expenditures are being reached and the world must now look to educational alternatives for financial conservation.\(^2\)

---

\(^1\) Table 1 illustrates the rise in educational expenditures in the United States from 1920 to 1970. The statement that educational expenditures have far out-distanced educational productivity is based on Edgar Faure’s reference to “the many dead ends to which this expansion appears to be heading.” (See Chapter I.)

\(^2\) See Chapter I for a discussion of “Prohibitive Costs.”
Alternative schools, however, may be equally as expensive. Advocates often overlook cost factors; they concentrate instead on the classroom atmosphere. Consequently most alternative schools have developed in the world’s wealthy nations. Our one Latin American example demonstrates why this has been the case. Termination of funding from the Ford Foundation caused cancellation of this relatively small project. Funding of such a program on a larger scale from the resources of a developing nation is impractical.

Financing deschooling programs may also be impractical. Clearly convivial institutions will not have the school’s custodial duties. Educational costs will, however, remain. Unfortunately, the advocates of deschooling have really never indicated how their educational institutions will be supported. Freire’s efforts in Brazil and Chile received public assistance. The Peruvian experiment presumably would have received similar support had it ever gone into operation. CIDOC, on the other hand, is supported entirely from tuition from its language students. It is in the area of cost determination and source that deschooling encounters its greatest obstacles. The Freire programs in Brazil and Chile and Illich-Reimer efforts in Mexico were/are relatively small projects. At present we can determine neither the source of financial support for large nation-wide deschooling programs nor what degree of support will be necessary.

Conversely it is in relation to cost factors that non-formal education would appear to have its greatest potential. Since non-formal education makes use of existing programs which already have educational and industrial functions, theoretically if these programs are improved and coordinated, financial conservation would result.
Data compiled by Michael E. Burns unfortunately does not justify that assumption. His research shows instead that the expenses associated with many programs of non-formal education match and even exceed the costs of schools. Burns attributes his surprising estimates to two factors: (1) imperfect cost benefit analysis and (2) lack of true coordination and improvement. Additional support for the Burn’s position can be found in the Lopez and Edfelt studies on SENAI in Brazil and the Garrison study on SENATI in Peru. What these studies indicate is that while non-formal education may have the potential to deal with cost factors, to this point its programs certainly have not done so. Coordinated and improved programs of non-formal education may be less costly than formal education; however, data from existing programs certainly does not justify that assumption.

Alternatives for Social and Economic Equality

Schools are criticized not only for their expense, but also for serving essentially maintenance functions in relation to social and economic inequalities. The Plowden and Coleman reports indicate that family background contributes more to school success than do opportunities within the school. Jencks carries this thesis further by asserting that family background is also a major determinant in economic and societal success outside the school. Berg theorizes that industry, not the schools, made the immigrant a member of the American middle class. Freire feels that schools do not provide people

---


4See Chapter II for a discussion of the Lopez and Edfelt studies on SENAI and the garrison study on SENATI.
with the programs necessary for the realization of their life situation and for the modification of that situation. Illich and Reimer assert that schools deal only with rationalizations and mythologies. Greer feels that schools can never really help poor people.\(^5\)

Despite the claims of their advocates, however, there is little evidence that Latin American educational alternatives deal with demands for social and economic equality. Alternative schools definitely create an atmosphere which fosters social equality in the classroom. There is no evidence, however, that this atmosphere has been or can be transferred outside that specific situation.

Deschooling has as its philosophical goal the creation of a more equalitarian society. However, with the exception of the Freire efforts, in actual performance our examples of deschooling don’t even appear to be oriented toward equality. Peruvian deschooling, because it was prematurely terminated, cannot really be evaluated. The Center for Intercultural Documentation demonstrates, despite its staff makeup, elements of philosophical and academic elitism; the institution works only with those who have previous preparation.

Non-formal education does not have an elitist orientation. It, however, like deschooling, works more efficiently with individuals who have previous preparation. Because non-formal education’s goals are short-term and concrete, it like education in schools, is more of a selection process than a creative one. Non-formal education makes use of the most competent people whether it has trained them or not.

\(^5\)See Chapter I for the Plowden, Coleman, Jencks, Berg, Freire, Illich, Reimer and Greer positions on education for social and economic equality.
Consequently only in isolated cases with a few individuals can non-formal education be considered an instrument for the attainment of social and economic equality.

**Alternatives for National Development and International Equality**

Schools have also been considered by many scholars as questionable institutions for the attainment of national development. Greer asserts that in the United States schools did not build an industrial nation. He feels, instead, that schools only maintain and improve upon situations that have been created by other societal factors. Faure, Reimer and Illich assert that schools can only increase the inequalities which now exist between the “have” and the “have not” nations.⁶

Unfortunately, there is no evidence that Latin American educational alternatives can deal with the tasks of national development any better than have schools. The advocates of alternative schools are not really concerned with development. In fact, alternative schools are not really concerned with development. In fact, alternative schools with our one Brazilian exception, are found mainly in developed nations such as the United States and Great Britain. The philosophy of alternative schools calls not for national development, but instead for a more liberal humane and complete school atmosphere.

The concern of the advocates of deschooling is likewise not really with development in the traditional sense. Illich and Reimer have stated that they are interested in reversing the negative developmental trends which they have observed in

---

⁶See Chapter I for the Greer, Faure, Reimer and Illich positions on school and national development.
nations such as the United States. Illich and Reimer are concerned not with socio-economic development, but instead with a more person-centered equalitarian society.

Non-formal education would seem to be the category of educational alternatives most equipped to deal with the problems of national development. There is no doubt that business and industry are prerequisites for development. It is obvious that knowledge and skills acquired on the job contribute to national development. It is also obvious that non-formal education when it is concerned with community matters also contributes to national improvement. When industrial development or training is removed from direct contact with the task at hand and when community improvement limits itself to school-like matters; then, however, non-formal education experiences many of the problems experienced by schools. Non-formal education in this case also assumes an entirely maintenance function.

Alternatives and Psychological Aesthetic Concerns

Many educational critics are concerned with societal needs other than educational expense, socio-economic equality and national development. They are concerned instead with the atmosphere in which education occurs. Goodman asserts that schools do not allow individuals to perform with “grace, force and beauty.” Silberman feels that schools are joyless places with oppressive and petty rules and an atmosphere that is sterile and barren.

\(^7\) See Chapter I for the Illich-Reimer person-centered equalitarian society proposals.

\(^8\) See Chapter I for the Goodman and Silberman arguments.
Alternative schools deal with this criticism adequately. In fact the philosophical foundation of the alternative school concept is the creation of a more humane school atmosphere. Unfortunately, because of the lack of examples of alternative schools in Latin America, it is difficult to gauge the impact of alternative schools on the Latin American classroom atmosphere. From our Brazilian examples we do know, however, that children profited enough from the open classroom situation that it was necessary to extend normal school hours. This development certainly would not have occurred had the children not enjoyed the school setting.

Deschooling philosophy would also appear to be oriented toward an enjoyable educational atmosphere. Our examples of deschooling in Brazil, Chile, Mexico and Peru do not, however, demonstrate techniques which are less repressive, less harsh or less impersonal than are the techniques or rules associated with traditional schools. Regulations and individual contact at Cuernavaca, in fact, almost mirror traditional school situations.

Neither is the educational atmosphere associated with programs of non-formal education any more enjoyable than that associated with schools. Since non-formal education is concerned with the short-term acquisition of knowledge and skills necessary for productivity and development, it concentrates more on ends than on means. When a comfortable atmosphere contributes to the program’s stipulated ends then that type of atmosphere will be encouraged. If the atmosphere does not make those contributions, then it is really not a matter of the program’s concern.
Alternatives and Institutional Mindlessness

A matter of concern for all those associated with educational programs should be why they are doing what they are doing. Charles Silberman has accused school personnel of not asking themselves this question. In short, he has accused schools of being institutions without goals.\(^9\)

The same criticism may be made of alternative schools. Most institutions of this type demonstrate a greater concern for the classroom atmosphere than for the results of that atmosphere. Advocates of alternative schools are concerned with means but not with ends.

Unlike the advocates of alternative schools, the advocates of deschooling have a definite end in mind; they desire a more person-centered, equalitarian society. Nevertheless the goal stated in the literature does not appear to be the goal of the existing convivial institutions cited by Illich and Reimer as models for the educational institutions in their proposed society. Illich implies this in his statement that educational alternatives are for a society that does not now exist. Reimer admits the flaw then he asserts that the question is not one of educational alternatives within the present society but alternatives for an altered society. Neither Illich nor Reimer actually specify how their society will be created or the present society destroyed. Both seem to hope for divine intervention of some type.\(^10\)

Non-formal education does not require the divine creation of a new society. The goals of non-formal education can be and are being met within the present societies.

\(^9\)See Chapter I for the Silberman position on institutional “mindlessness.”
\(^10\)See Chapters I and II for this Illich-Reimer position.
The reason for the existence of most programs of non-formal education is, in fact, the attainment of short-term production and development targets. Without that attainment most of those programs would cease to exist.

Alternatives and Work

One of the short-term objectives referred to above is employment. Schools have been accused of not being able to prepare individuals for employment. Berg demonstrates that an employee’s productivity depends more on experience than on levels of formal education; that high job turnover and high job dissatisfaction are positively associated with high levels of education and that a growing number of workers have more formal education than their jobs require.¹¹

There are no indication, however, that alternative schools give students any better employment preparation than do traditional schools. Our Brazilian example demonstrates immediate superior academic performance but gives little indication that that performance can later be converted to job opportunities or competencies.

Deschooling is concerned neither with employment nor the efficiency of the market place. Its major goal, as has been stated many times in this paper, is the reversal of present trends toward consumer oriented and industrial societies.

It is in the area of employment opportunity and competency that non-formal education shows its greatest potential. Programs of non-formal education relate directly to work because they are a part of work. Whether associated with industrial training,

¹¹See Chapter I for the Berg position.
military training, community development or other activities, learning in programs of non-formal education grows out of the productive process; that productivity is as important to the program as are its educational functions.

**Alternatives and Future Educators**

Ivan Illich and Everett Reimer have stated that present educational professionals should be replaced by a new breed of world educator. Unfortunately the educational alternatives which have been implemented have not produced the educational administrators, pedagogical counselors or educational initiators favored by these men.\(^\text{12}\)

Alternative schools call for more humane and individualized instruction. They operate, however, as do schools under the direction of traditional teachers and administrators. Because these individuals have clients, supplied to them, are supported. From above, serve a custodial function, serve as moralists and therapists, design and engineer life, are certified by others, are concerned with traditional educational matters and finally control and are controlled, they are really not that different from other contemporary educators.

In actuality contemporary educators have also been involved in the implemented Illich-Reimer proposals for deschooling. Although allowances have been made at Cuernavaca for more liberal certification procedures, deschooling has produced a moralizing and therapeutic climate not even matched by schools.\(^\text{13}\)

---

\(^{12}\) See Chapter I for the contemporary-future educator differentiation.

Although non-formal education probably does the best job of involving a new breed of individual, neither has it completely reached that goal. Non-formal education is not concerned with certification, but instead with performance. Non-formal education further does not serve a custodial function. In addition non-formal education does not take place in a moralizing climate. However, because non-formal education is directed toward societal improvements along an industrial and western oriented design, individuals associated with this form of educational alternative, also distribute a programmed, canned and extremely task oriented subject matter. Non-formal education prepares individuals for the manufactured and prepackaged products of the larger society. Non-formal education is concerned with that preparation because without it, most of the programs with which non-formal education is associated would fail to exist.

Alternatives to Meet Needs and Political Demands for Education

Many assumptions made by the advocates of educational alternatives can neither be substantiated nor refuted. Basing their claims on six factors: (1) an acute scarcity of resources, (2) the inertia of schools, (3) yearly increases in the number of world illiterates, (4) the increasing percentage of the world population which is of school and university age, (5) the dehumanizing atmosphere of schools and (6) the high wastage rates which are associated with schools, these individuals claim that world needs and demands for education can never be met by schools and consequently can only be met through alternative educational systems.
While the claim that educational needs and demands are beyond the capacities of schools may be true and while the six factors listed above definitely pose problems for world education, any assertion that the alternatives which have been proposed at present can meet those demands and overcome those factors rests on very shaky ground. Alternative schools are expensive institutions and for that reason can be supported only in the wealthy developed nations. The advocates of deschooling offer a great deal, but to this point have produced very little.

Non-formal education presents a brighter picture, but not an ideal one. Many of the proposals and examples placed under the title of non-formal education are actually much older than is the popular use of the term “educational alternatives.” Non-formal education has been a major factor in past industrial and technical education. It has also made contributions to education through community development and similar programs. Recent discussion concerning non-formal education is important and beneficial not because it offers something new, but because it reminds people that such programs exist and should be considered a part of world education. We must, however, go beyond those simple reminders.
Chapter IV

Conclusions

To date, the educational alternatives that have been proposed or implemented in Latin America do not appear to be viable alternatives to schools. Latin American educational alternatives do not deal adequately with the very criticisms which their advocates make of schools. Most likely, alternative schools will not replace schools; although they very well might improve upon the existing school structure by making classrooms more humane and joyful places for both students and teachers.

Deschooling, even though its advocates make the most severe criticisms of schools, tends to have many of the problems associated with traditional schools and has adopted a great deal of the ritual and moralization of schools.

Neither does it appear that non-formal education will replace schools. It might, nonetheless, serve effectively as a means to supplement and complement them. We must thank the advocates of non-formal education for reminding us that structured programs of education exist and have existed for many years outside the school. The question is not, however, whether non-formal education exists or not; but rather whether its programs have been or can be improved and coordinated. In relation to Latin American educational alternatives, it is difficult to provide a definitive answer for that question. One problem in dealing with non-formal education in that geographic area is the lack of a concrete directory for the existing programs. In Chapter II, the author attempted to create such a directory. Unfortunately, because that chapter is based entirely on existing literature, it is only as good as the availability and accuracy of such literature. A preliminary task for others interested in non-formal education, as well as
alternative schools and deschooling in Latin America, should be the creation of a similar
directory based on both analysis of literature and direct field contact with the existing
programs. Without such a complete directory, not only is additional research difficult,
but also coordination and improvement of existing programs appears futile.

Another problem associated with non-formal education is its apparent lack of
potential for dealing with social and cultural education. This type of individual
development has been and probably will continue to be achieved outside of all
organized programs of education. It is part of what the Greeks called “paideia,” the
sociologists term “socialization,” the anthropologists call “culture” and what educators
are now beginning to refer to as “informal” education.

True education is a very complex process. Today as never before the realization
must be made that many factors are involved in that process. People learn in schools;
they learn from the mass media; they learn through work; they learn through life in their
communities and most of all they learn from their home and family. In short they
acquire knowledge and skills from every corner of their environment.

What is needed is more than additional proposals for alternative educational
methods. A paramount goal of all those concerned with education should be
alternatives to our traditionally biased, academic and elitists conceptions of schools and
education. When that attitude is created, it may be necessary to improve and
coordinate the forms of education that already exist; but most important of all will come
the potential for the utilization of the knowledge and skills now acquired everywhere,
everyday.
Bibliography


