KINSHIP AND POLITICS IN A MIDWESTERN UNIVERSITY CITY

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is an ethnographic study of kinship and municipal politics in a Midwestern American University city and it is based on anthropological fieldwork undertaken between January 1989 and July 1990.

The research on kinship is drawn from information gathered from a sample of white middle-class informants. The kinship relations of these informants were characterized by great practical and ideological variation, and their views are described by two competing models. On the one hand there are those who invested kinship relationships with strong social and moral meaning and believed that they were grounded in and determined by natural facts. In contrast, there were those who downplayed the natural basis of kinship relations and stressed the right of every individual to seek self-fulfilment unfettered by familial restrictions.

The study of municipal politics is based on a strategically selected sample of individuals and groups belonging to all of the different political factions in the city. Municipal politics attracted a relatively large amount of interest among residents and the political conflicts were related mainly to the rate and quality of the city's economic growth. Despite the existence of a significant movement supporting "controlled growth", the advocates of growth dominated city politics, and economic development was regarded by the majority of informants as both the inevitable and desirable result of social evolution.

There was no direct correlation between kinship and political ideology: those who supported economic growth took a plurality of positions on kinship matters and the same is largely true for their political opponents.

To my parents

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INTRODUCTION

PART ONE - KINSHIP

INTRODUCTION

1. THE NATURE OF THE INVESTIGATION

The aim of the field investigation recorded in the following pages was the study of different aspects of the social life of middle-class informants in an American urban environment. The scope of the study and the particular areas of investigation were not determined in advance as they were considered to depend on the location of the study and the interests of the informants who would provide most of the data.

It had been decided from the outset that a location for my study should be found in the "common-denominator of America, the Middle West"[1] , and I took Kansas City as the point of departure. The city to be selected had to be relatively large to ensure that the observed phenomena would not be markedly untypical, although small enough to permit the investigation of the whole urban area.[2] Lawrence, the city that I chose, is not of course a typical city and, strictly speaking, such a city does not exist. Being a university city, Lawrence is obviously atypical in some ways, but other cities in the area could be equally considered as atypical for different reasons. The city's demographic and geographical characteristics clearly enlist it with the metropolitan areas[3], where the vast majority of Americans reside.[4] Lawrence had 65,608 inhabitants in 1990, a large percentage of whom were born in various parts of the country. It is a geographically distinct city, but commuting to other major metropolitan areas is easy, and a large part of Lawrence's residents (and my informants) work in other cities and retain considerable ties with individuals in other cities and states.

To study a city as a whole of course, "one would have to take into account all its people . . . and follow them through all domains of activities, not only as they make a living but also as they run their households, deal with neighbours, burst against each other in the city square, or simply relax,"[5] and be able to trace the various interrelations between the different social domains and groups. Such a complete study of a city as large as Lawrence cannot be undertaken by a sole researcher and was not attempted. Instead,

research was mainly confined to the middle class[6], and concentrated on kinship and political relations.

The first part of the thesis is dedicated to kinship and it is based on information gathered from a relatively small sample of white middle-class informants. The kinship relationships of the people that I first met in Lawrence differed in many ways both from my experiences of growing up in a Greek family and from the picture of American kinship relationships that I had formed through my readings of American ethnography. Hence I decided to focus on kinship. As the research progressed and I became acquainted with more people, I realized that there were great differences in the kinship life of my informants, and I became aware of the existence of competing models of kinship relationships. The kinship relationships of some of my informants resembled the Parsonian description of American family life[7], whereas the family life of others differed significantly from it. The presentation below follows the developmental cycle of the nuclear family, and the different practices and ideological opinions are discussed in each section. Chapter 1 examines ideas and practices about love and marriage, chapter 2 is dedicated to the study of the relations between parents and children, and finally, chapter 3 examines the period of the children's emancipation from the parental family as well as relations among the wider group of relatives.

The second part of the thesis is dedicated to political relationships and focuses on municipal politics. It is based on information gathered from the same sample of informants as the first part, but also on data from an additional number of informants who were selected for their involvement in Lawrence city politics. Lawrence city politics attracted a fair deal of interest among its residents, and there was considerable conflict, which was predominantly related to the rate and quality of the city's economic growth. The pro-growthers who were organized in the Chamber of Commerce, the civic clubs, and other organizations represented the dominant view, but there was also a strong neighbourhood movement whose representatives were known as supporters of "controlled growth", and a significant number of individuals and groups who rejected growth altogether. Chapter 4 discusses the most important pro-growth organizations and examines different aspects of the pro-growth ideology. Not all of my informants,

however, were interested in local politics or participated in political organizations. Chapter 5 examines some of the different patterns of public participation by presenting the views and practices of various informants from the milieu of the pro-growth organizations. Finally, chapter 6 presents the neighbourhood associations, examines the ideology of controlled growth, and ends with a study of the most important radical political group of the city.

The remainder of the introduction describes Lawrence and my main informants, as well as the methodology of the study.

2. THE CITY SELECTED

2.1 A first impression

Lawrence is the major university town in Kansas. Kansas University and Haskel Indian Junior College[8] make the city the educational center of the state.

Lawrence is situated very close to the geographical center of the United States, in the center of the most populated part of the state between Kansas City and Topeka. An interstate freeway and state highways connect Lawrence with both cities and make commuting easy. Kansas City, 34 miles east of Lawrence, is the major metropolitan city between St Louis, Missouri, and Denver, Colorado, and it has a population of about 1,300,000. Topeka, 28 miles west of Lawrence, is the state capital. It has a population of about 130,000 and it is the political and administrative center. Kansas City is growing towards Lawrence and Lawrence is growing westwards towards Topeka but large rural areas still separate Lawrence from the other two cities.

Lawrence, which is one of the most historic cities of Kansas, is a surprisingly livable city. Visitors have called it the "best-kept secret in the country," and indeed the city is impressive for the beauty of the Kansas University campus, the historic atmosphere of the downtown and the surrounding neighbourhoods, as well as for its economic vitality in contrast to the relative stagnation of most other cities in the area.

Driving to Lawrence from Kansas City you begin to see the university ten miles away rearing up on Mount Oread, the highest hill in the area. The university occupies a 1000-acre ridge that has been beautifully landscaped

through the efforts of generations. The buildings flow down the sides of the hill into Lawrence. Downtown and the old city neighbourhoods are in the east, whereas suburbs which were mostly built during the 1970's and 1980's, spread in the west.

At the outskirts of the city where homes give way to cultivated land or in North Lawrence by the railway station with the old grain elevator, the landscape seems to have remained unchanged for decades. Parts of downtown, which was refurbished in the 1970s, are reminiscent of old paintings and photographs, and many 19th century houses and other buildings still stand in the university campus and in the neighbourhoods surrounding downtown. But one cannot escape the feeling of being in a modern growing university city. Downtown is not only impressive for its historic atmosphere but also for its large bank and office buildings and its great variety of shops and services. Fine examples of 19th century architectural styles have been maintained in the older neighbourhoods but in Alvamar, the most prestigious suburb of Lawrence built around a golf course, one can see striking modern houses some of which sell for more than one million dollars. The landscape at the entrance of the city where a large chemical plant is located (as well as in other parts of Lawrence) is distinctly industrial, and 23rd Street (the other important commercial street of Lawrence besides dowtown's main street) with its fast-food restaurants, drive-in facilities, and large supermarkets is almost indistinguishable from such commercial roads in innumerable other American cities.

A colourful student and city crowd fill campus and downtown streets during the day and city life continues until late in the night. Traffic problems are insignificant in comparison with larger cities, although in the evening when people returned home from work there was some congestion in the main city arteries. Lawrence offers "cultural" and entertainment opportunities rarely found in a city of its size, and it is the center of continuous activity by innumerable groups having the most diverse views and objectives.

2.2 The historical background

Since the first settlement in Lawrence, the social and economic life of the city

has undergone consecutive changes, the full discussion of which surpasses the scope of this introduction. Here I am mainly concerned with the economic history of the city and I distinguish four different periods.

The Early Period

Lawrence is built on land that was originally reserved for native Americans. The founding of the town is related to the events that preceded the American civil war. In December 1853, Senator S. Douglas introduced a bill to organize the territory of Nebraska, of which present-day Kansas was to be a part. In January 1854, a revision of the bill came before the Senate. The new bill (which became known as the Kansas-Nebraska Act) called for the creation of two territories to be called Kansas and Nebraska. The bill, which was supported by the administration of President F. Pierce, specifically repealed the Missouri compromise[9] and called for the use of "popular sovereignty": the resident voters would decide for themselves whether or not slavery would be allowed in the territories.

The introduction of the Kansas-Nebraska Act renewed the debate over slavery and it was followed by lengthy and bitter debates in Congress. Anti-slavery newspapers in the North violently attacked Douglas, the South, and the Pierce administration, while newspapers in the South and the Missouri border replied with equal force. On May 26, 1854, the bill passed Congress and it was signed by the President a few days later.

When the territory was opened, the only white residents were missionaries, people dealing with Indians as agents or traders, and the federal army. The first settlers in the Kansas Territory came from Western Missouri, and most - although not all - were sympathetic with the institution of slavery and saw the possibilities of extending slavery into Kansas. The towns of Atchison and Leavenworth were first settled primarily by Missourians and most of the public statements on politics that came from these settlements were pro-slavery.

In the North however, it was feared that the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act opened the way for the institution of slavery in the West, and antislavery forces were mobilized to prevent it. Even before the Act was finally approved, the Massachusetts legislature chartered the New England

Emigrant Aid Company, the aim of which was to help people, "who hated slavery and who would drive the hideous thing from the broad and beautiful plains"[10], settle in the new territory. The company transported prospective settlers to the West at reduced rates and helped them found a number of towns.

The first party sent west by the Emigrant Aid Company left Boston on July 17, 1854 and arrived in the area where Lawrence stands today on August 1. Parties continued to arrive during the following months, a town association was formed, and the name of Lawrence was given to the town to honour Amos Lawrence, one of the principal backers of the Emigrant Aid Company. By the end of the year the new town of Lawrence was taking shape: many of the settlers had constructed log cabins; a hotel and a meeting house were built; and there were two newspapers claiming Lawrence as their place of publication.

The town's early years were marked by strife between anti-slavery and pro-slavery forces. The highly publicized campaign of the New England abolitionists made Kansas territory a symbol in the issue of slavery and provoked the reaction of pro-slavery forces in bordering Missouri who sought to influence events in Kansas. A long conflict that often escalated into violence began over the control of the territorial legislation and lasted until the end of the civil war.

Lawrence became one of the principal centers of the abolitionists and wielded considerable political influence. Being close to the Missouri border it was particularly vulnerable to raids by pro-slavery forces and, in 1863, in a raid that focused nation-wide attention on Lawrence, the whole city was burned and over 150 men were killed.

Lawrence was rebuilt with sturdy determination and was by the end of the civil war one of the principal trading and industry centers in the area. New houses and other buildings were built (some were even shipped ready-made from the East) and many businesses were established. A large number of business enterprises flourished in this early period specifically because they had a competitive advantage. A private bridge was built across the Kansas river in 1864 and the railway reached Lawrence in the fall of that year.

The economic growth of the town accelerated in the post civil-war period. The end of the civil war in 1865 brought an influx of new settlers and the

population grew from 1,645 in 1860 to 8,320 in 1870. The arrival of the Union Pacific Railway contributed much to the town's growth and reinforced the belief of the town's leaders that the economic future of Lawrence was dependent upon the town becoming a regional railroad center. (Kansas City's population was only 32,263 in 1870.)

Industrial Growth and University Expansion (1870-1900)

Despite considerable efforts however, Lawrence soon lost out to Kansas City and the negative impact of this failure combined with the economic depression of the early 1870s led to a decrease of the population. (The population fell to 7,268 in 1875.) Small businesses that were geared to the local market and filled the needs of the first phases of settlement started to decline, and they gave way to a new wave of industrial development in the late 1870's and the 1880's.

The river was dammed in 1879 and began to produce water power that attracted new industries in Lawrence. Barb wire, shirt and chemical companies, as well as a vinegar factory, a milling firm, a paper mill and a cannery were among the manufactures that flourished during that period in Lawrence and remained active until the end of the century. Five banks were in operation and the Chamber of Commerce had been organized in 1878.

The city experienced significant development during this period. The city water system was completed in 1887, and by the end of the decade many houses and businesses had electricity and telephone service. A number of public buildings were completed and many of the now historic houses of Old West Lawrence were built. There was also during this period a change towards more marked social stratification reflected in the residential patterns. Businessmen and professionals tended to live west of the business district, between downtown and the university, whereas workers and foreign immigrants made their homes to the east of the town.[11]

Moreover, the state university had started to grow and become a factor in the local economy and society. Lawrence was selected by the Kansas legislature as the location for the state university in 1863. The town provided 40 acres of land and Lawrence citizens raised $15,000 for the university's endowment fund. A Board of Regents was appointed, a

building was constructed, and the university opened in September 1866 with three faculty members and 49 students. Student enrolment grew in the following years, a new large building was constructed in 1872 and the university held its first commencement in June of 1873. More buildings were constructed in the 1880s, faculty expanded and student enrolment rose to 582 students in 1883.

The Decline of Industry (1900-1940)

The population of Lawrence remained largely stable during this period growing at a slow rate from around 11,000 inhabitants in 1900 to 14,267 in 1939. Industrial activity rather shrank. The change of the economic environment, due to technological developments, the improvement of transportation, and the end of state protection, favoured larger industrial developments of towns such as Kansas City and drove many Lawrence industries off the market. While industrial activity diminished, the university continued to grow and during that period became the "major industry" of Lawrence. Enrolment grew from around 1,000 students in 1892 to 2,756 in 1912 and 4,345 in 1939, and university employees grew from 45 in 1892 to around 600 in 1939. Apart from the university, most businesses were small and Lawrence became the educational center of the state and a commercial and trading center for the surrounding rural region. A new High School, a hospital, and many new university buildings were constructed during this period and the city was served by three major railways and automobile roads running in every direction.

The Post-War Period

The Second World War marked the beginning of a new phase of economic and population growth that has steadily continued until the present. In 1942 the population of the city increased considerably as a result of the location sixteen miles East of Lawrence of a large munitions plant that employed more than 15,000 people. Many of those employed by the plant chose Lawrence as their residence and Lawrence turned into a "boom town". In

addition, the war had a significant impact on the university. The student enrolment grew steadily during the war years and showed a dramatic increase during the period that followed the war due to the "G.I. Bill" that helped many returning veterans attend college. (The university's enrolment grew from 6,300 students in 1945-46 to 11,000 in 1948-49.)

The new opportunities opened by the Second World War mobilized the Lawrence business community which decided to promote the city and actively seek its economic growth and development. The Chamber of Commerce established in 1949 the "Lawrence Industrial Development Corporation" which aimed at the attraction of new industry to Lawrence, and in 1950 the city's government was changed to the Commission-manager form which was considered more appropriate for a growing city. As a result of those efforts a number of large industrial plants were established in the city during the 1950's and the 1960's, and local businesses grew in number and size. Major modern highways linked Lawrence with Kansas City and Topeka and suburban development started in the West and the South. The population reached 32,858 people in 1960 and 45,698 in 1970. Growth continued steadily, although at a lower pace, during the 1970's and the 1980's and the city's population reached 52,810 persons in 1980 and 55,700 in 1985.

The favourable geographical location of Lawrence and the presence of the university make the city attractive to both residents and investors. Lawrence has grown fourfold since 1940 and Douglas County, where Lawrence is situated, was during the 1980's the second fastest growing area in Kansas after Johnson County, which is a part of the Kansas City metropolitan area and subject to different dynamics. According to the American Bureau of Economic Analysis "between 1985 and the year 2.000, the fastest growth in Kansas in personal income and jobs will occur in Lawrence."

The university is the largest employer and the basis of the local economy. With 4,175 employees and 26,350 students (in 1989) it exerts a unique influence on Lawrence. A large part of the city's growth is due to the university's expansion and the existence of the university has played an important role in the attraction of new businesses in Lawrence. The public sector accounts for around 35.6 percent of the total employment[12] but there is also a vigorous and diverse private sector. There are 22 firms in the county having more than 100 employees, 3 of which have more than 500

employees. Hallmark Cards is the largest with more than 1,000 employees, and there is also a paper producing industry, two chemical plants, and a large number of smaller industries and business, some of which are very successful. Manufacturing accounts for 14.1% of the total employment; retail and wholesale for 22%; services for 16.6%; transportation for 4.6%; construction for 3%; and finance, insurance and real estate for another 3%. The city was considered by some to be "underretailed" during my fieldwork, although total retail sales amounted to $347,204,000 (in 1985).

2.3 Census Data.

Lawrence had a population of 65,608 in 1990, of whom 26,350 were students at Kansas University or Haskel Indian Junior College. 87% of the population are white; 5.5% are black; 2.9% are American Indian; and 2.7% are of spanish origin.

Although my informants used to say that Lawrence was the most cosmopolitan city in the area, the vast majority of its residents (94.3%) were born in the United States. Kansas University draws faculty and students from 96 countries, and in 1987 it ranked 39th among American universities in the number of international students, although this only accounted for 6.5% of its students.

Lawrence has a highly mobile and diverse population. Most Lawrencians (52.8%) were born in Kansas, but a large percentage of the population (46.2%) come from all over the country. Moreover, a relatively large percentage of the population are newcomers. Only 51.5 percent of Lawrence inhabitants aged 5 years and over lived in the same county in 1985.[13] Around half of the newcomers come from some other Kansas county whereas the remaining half come from all over the country.[14]

The majority of Lawrencians lived in 24,513 separate households, but there was also a large number of people (10,574) who lived in group quarters (university dormitories, institutions for the elderly, etc.). 42 percent of the population aged 15 years and over were married, 47 percent were single, and 11 percent were widowed or divorced. The vast majority (85%) of the persons aged 25 years and over were high school graduates, and almost half

of them had completed at least four years of college.

Unemployment was very low (3.5% during most of the 1980's), but a considerable number of Lawrence residents worked in other cities. The city is perceived as "a nice place to live" and it has attracted a large commuting population from Kansas City and Topeka and increasing numbers of retirees. A 1987 study by the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce found that in 47% of the households of people who had moved to Lawrence and bought houses since 1983, at least one family member worked out of town.

The mean household income, which is $34,996, is lower than the national or the state average mainly due to the large number of students. 25.4% of Lawrence households had a medium income of less than $20,000 in 1989, 15% had incomes between $20,000 and $30,000, 31.5% had incomes between $30,000 and $50,000, and 28.1% had incomes exceeding $50,000.

3. METHODOLOGY

The objective of the fieldwork was to collect data on middle-class kinship and city politics. Although the two tasks required different actions on my part they were also complementary. Research in politics led often to the collection of data relevant for kinship and many informants appear in both parts of the thesis.

3.1 Research in Politics

Different research techniques were used for the collection of data relevant to my political study. My first aim was to observe the local political events and become acquainted with active participants in city politics from all different political milieux. Although the size of the city permitted the easy identification of the local political forces and the direct observation of most of their activities, it was not possible to observe everything and interview everyone, and only a sample of groups and individuals were actually studied.

The beginning of my fieldwork in Lawrence coincided with the opening of a political campaign for three of the five seats of the Lawrence City Commission. The campaign attracted my interest, and after following the

events for a few days through the press, and being one of the very few attendants of a City Commission meeting, I decided to begin my research by visiting the local paper. One of the journalists who covered local politics spoke with me for about half an hour and provided me with a first picture of the local political scene and a list of names and organizations.

I decided to follow the campaign as best as I could and I dedicated a large part of my time during the first three months of my fieldwork to this end. The campaign permitted me to see the political forces in action and become acquainted with individuals from all different political areas. I followed various events related to the campaign (candidate forums, speeches, receptions, neighbourhood meetings, etc.), and interviewed many of the candidates as well as other related people (Chamber of Commerce representatives, downtown businessmen, neighbourhood activists, city administrators, etc.). My interest in politics continued until the end of my fieldwork although I also spent time studying other aspects of the city's life. I continued to follow closely the city's political events, to meet new people, and to return to informants that I had met during the first phases of the research.

The main supporter of growth was the Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber of Commerce is a large organization with a many-sided presence in the social life of Lawrence. Although I could not participate in Chamber meetings which were generally confined to its members, I became acquainted with the Chamber of Commerce supported candidates in the city elections, I interviewed the executive director and other Chamber officials, and I became over time acquainted with two ex-presidents of the Chamber (this is a prestigious position alternating every year) and many of its members.

The other important category of organizations that supported economic growth were the civic clubs. Civic clubs are predominantly middle-class organizations the aim of which is to foster a certain public ideal and provide service to the community. There are more than twenty civic clubs in Lawrence most of which have large memberships. Civic clubs were traditionally separated by gender and the division between men's and women's clubs persisted to a large extent in Lawrence.

Men's clubs meet once a week during breakfast or lunch in one of the city's large hotels. They have selective memberships and differ widely in prestige.

The most prestigious club was the Rotary and the Kiwanis and the Lions followed. Among men's clubs I decided to focus on the Rotary. The Rotary club of Lawrence is a large club (of about 200) that includes in its members some of the most powerful citizens. All pro-growth politicians, the editor of the local newspaper, the city manager, the chancellor and other leading officials of the university, the executive director of the Chamber of Commerce, the most important judge, the head of the police, the most important developers, and the top executives of local industries were among its members. I was introduced to the officials of the club, was invited to 5 meetings of the club and, by the end of my fieldwork, knew more than a dozen Rotarians and had interviewed several of them.

Among womens' clubs I focused on the Altrusa. The Altrusa is "the first service organization of business and professional women"[15] in the country and it was founded in 1917. The Altrusa club of Lawrence is one of the best known women's civic clubs[16] and had 45 members during my fieldwork. Some Altrusans were professionals or operated their own businesses, whereas most had middle managerial positions in various organizations. Most Altrusans were married and had children and grand-children but there were also single and divorced women in the club. The members of the Altrusa met regularly twice a month, usually in one of the two Lawrence country clubs, and occasionally organized other charitable and recreational activities. I was introduced to the club by a Kansas City friend and, being very warmly received, decided to regularly follow its activities. I participated in almost all Altrusa meetings that took place during my fieldwork, became acquainted with most members of the club, participated in many conversations and interviewed certain members of the club.

The supporters of "controlled growth" organized mainly in the Lawrence Association of Neighbourhoods (L.A.N. - a coalition of 13 neighbourhood associations formed in 1987) were the most important opponents of the Chamber of Commerce. Since the early seventies many mainly old-city neighbourhoods have formed associations that lobby on neighbourhood issues and support city politicians. The fact that Lawrence is perhaps the only city of its size in the country without a shopping mall is an indication of the strength of the local neighbourhood movement.

I contacted the L.A.N. early in my fieldwork and continued my research

until the end. I became well acquainted with the three most important L.A.N. supported politicians during my fieldwork (M. Carpenter, J. Burns, M. Stewart), conversed with them on different occasions, visited them in their homes, and interviewed them a number of times. I also interviewed other neighbourhood activists such as the president and other officials of L.A.N. and the presidents of many neighbourhood associations, and I was present at a number of board and neighbourhood association meetings.

I became particularly well acquainted with a group of political radicals who participated in L.A.N., but also followed their own independent political action. The group had a long-standing presence in Lawrence politics and most of its members were well known political activists.

The most active members of the group were in frequent contact and shared a great deal of their social life. During my fieldwork, and for many years before that, they had met regularly every Friday evening at a campus bar for an hour or two of beer drinking and usually political conversation. Those meetings were widely known and often various friends or other independent activists showed up to socialize or to discuss the current political events.

I regularly participated in those Friday evening meetings and other more closed meetings that took place in private homes and became well acquainted with most members of the group. I followed them in various political and other activities, became acquainted with their families, and interviewed several of them.

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Lawrence political leaders were in most cases easily accessible and keen to provide information on the main questions of my study. Some individuals kindly refused to be interviewed, although most of the people that I approached, including some of the most prestigious individuals of the city, such as the editor of the city's only daily newspaper and the presidents of the Chamber of Commerce and the L.A.N., were more than welcoming to a social researcher from the London School of Economics. Interviews were not usually preceded by a deeper acquaintance with the informant and they were confined to political matters.[17] Questions of political strategy were not directly relevant to my research (that mainly focused on political ideology) and they were avoided, at least at the initial stages. Some of my informants

were aware that I also met their political opponents and they were somewhat restrained towards me. This natural suspicion however, eventually dissipated when it became evident that I did not intend to pass information from one side to the other.

The degree to which I was able to directly observe and participate in political activities varied. For example, it was easier to obtain an invitation for an Altrusa than for a Rotary meeting and easier to observe the internal functions of the L.A.N. than those of the Chamber of Commerce. All possible opportunities were taken to participate; local political events were noted and attended, and with the exception of the internal functions of the Chamber of Commerce, I participated in the activities of most other important political groups in the city. An important part of the political activity of course, takes place in closed meetings that usually remain secret from the community. The investigation of this activity was not a primary target of my research and the information related to it was usually collected from informants in interviews and its source is always given in the text.

Apart from participant observation and the use of interviews for collecting data, I subscribed to the *Journal-World*, the Lawrence daily newspaper, and all the articles that appeared in the newspaper during my fieldwork and were relavant to local politics were cut and classified. I also followed the local radio and television stations and collected a large amount of other relevant material such as newsletters of organizations, political pamphlets, and city publications.

3.2 The research in kinship

But my research was not only concerned with politics and was not confined to political organizations. In parallel to my political research I tried to become acquainted with a sample as varied as possible of middle-class families and individuals for my study of kinship relations. All my informants were white and clearly belonged to the middle class in terms of occupation, income, and education. Almost all were born in the country and did not consider themselves to be ethnic.[18] Around half were born in Kansas and the remaining came from all around the country.

But even confined in this way, the Lawrence middle class remains a

heterogeneous population. The isolation of all factors relevant to kinship behaviour and ideology was almost impossible, and various factors were taken into account for obtaining of as random a sample as possible.

My informants differed in terms of age, marital status, and family stage and were chosen from different milieux. Some belonged in closely-knit families and had strong "family values", whereas others were more sceptical about family, and kin played a more marginal role in their life. Around one third of my informants were members of the mainline protestant churches of Lawrence but others were Catholics, Evangelicals, Jews, or even members of some new-age group.[19] Still others did not go to church and were not religious. Some of my informants were members of neighbourhood associations, some participated in civic clubs or the Chamber of Commerce, whereas others were not socially or politically active.

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The first half of my research in kinship was almost exclusively dedicated to participant observation. The social life of a modern American city differs of course from the traditional anthropological field-site and social phenomena are not observable in the same way. As R. Firth writes, in a modern urban environment "most kinship behaviour occurs in private, is relatively infrequent and is interspersed with a whole range of other sorts of behaviour in all sorts of contexts : work, recreation, religious activities."[20] Gaining access to private households was relatively difficult and depended on the establishment of friendship relations with some or all members of a household. Personal factors thus tended to influence the selection process, although it must be also noted that, particularly as time passed, most of my informants were more than accomodating and enthusiastic about a social researcher studying their milieu.

The degree to which I was able to establish close ties and directly observe kinship relationships varied. Informants belonged in different social milieux and the observation of the activities of one family or one group of informants usually precluded the observation of the activities of other informants and groups. As a result, only a limited number of households could be intensively studied and close relationships were established with the members of about 10 households. Information was also gathered from a much larger sample of informants whom I knew less well, and as Hannerz

observes[21], it was possible to formulate intelligent questions and get valid responses from even utter strangers. In the remaining pages of the introduction I present the informants who provided most of the data for my kinship study and discuss certain methodological questions.

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My initial efforts to become acquainted with families were met with only limited success and the only people that I seemed to meet were students or single individuals. Things however soon changed as I joined a church and other organizations and started participating in the meetings of a Sunday School.

Some of my best informants were members of the First Methodist church, one of the oldest, largest, and most influential congregations in Lawrence. The church had more than 1,600 members around 600 of whom regularly attended Sunday services. Apart from organizing two services every sunday, the church sponsors a great number of charities and other groups and the church building is the center of constant activity all through the week.

I approached the Methodist church during the first month of my fieldwork and followed its activities until the end. I regularly attended the Sunday service and I became a member of and followed the activities of the "Peacemakers", one of the Sunday schools that met for about an hour every Sunday before the 11 o'clock service.

Although the composition of the Peacemakers changed somewhat from one Sunday to the other, a core of about 10-15 couples, most of whom had children still at home, regularly attended the meetings. Most men were successful professionals or executives, whereas women's professional status varied. Some of the women stayed at home, others held traditional female occupations and a few had demanding careers. A wide range of topics, from theological and social issues to matters of everyday experience, were discussed in the meetings of the Sunday school, and data relevant for both areas of my research was collected. Marital and family relationships, life-crisis difficulties, work related problems, status uncertainty and the like, were probably the single most discussed topics.

I participated in the meetings of other church groups (a bible-study group, a men's group, etc.) and sporadically attended the activities of the single's group of the church (workshops, social meetings, etc.). I became acquainted

with the minister and other officials of the church and participated in many church activities. I met many people in the church and some of my best informants come from this church.

Richard and Louise Baker, a retired couple that regularly attended the Sunday School as well as other church activities, were among my best informants from this milieu. Richard Baker was a doctor and Louise was a housewife. The Bakers had only recently moved to Lawrence from Topeka and lived in one of the most prestigious western suburbs. I was introduced to them in late January 1989 and I kept seeing them until the end of my fieldwork. Apart from seeing them every Sunday in the church, I was in regular contact with them and met them approximately once a week in the context of various activities. I often had lunch with them after the Sunday service, visited in their home, and participated in social and family functions. I met their children and their families as well as many of their friends and acquaintances; particularly well acquainted I became with their still unmarried son Bob who lived in Kansas City and sometimes spent the weekends in Lawrence with his parents.

Carl and Linda Ackerman were another couple from the Peacemakers with which I became very well acquainted. Carl and Linda were in their early fourties and they had three children still living at home. Carl was the executive director of a large Topeka hospital and Linda, after having stayed for many years in the home with the children, was a law student. Linda had grown up in Hutchinson (a town in central Kansas) whereas Carl moved there when he was a teenager. They married after they finished college and they had lived in many different cities in Kansas and other midwestern states. Carl and Linda invited me in their home after our first meeting in the Sunday school and they gradually became my best informants. I regularly visited their home, participated in family and other activities, and interviewed them extensiviely. I was included in family vacations, spent important holidays with them, and met most of their relatives and friends.

Apart from my research in the Methodist church, I also attended services in the other three mainline Protestant churches and became through various connections acquainted with members of the Episcopal and the Congregational Church. One of my best informants from this milieu, the views of whom are often presented in my study, was Father Newman, the

minister of the Episcopal church. Father Newman, who was initially from Witchita, was divorced and had two sons. I met him early in my fieldwork and interviewed him a number of times in his office. He was in his mid-fifties and before becoming a full-time minister had taught for many years in the Religious Studies department of the University of Kansas.

Although I have not studied a Catholic milieu in depth, some of my informants were raised Catholics and a few belonged to one of the city's Catholic churches. The Nolans, who were related to the Wheelers (see below), were active in the Catholic church as well as in other civic groups. They were in their mid-forties and had two teen-age children. Tom was a top executive in a Kansas City firm and Sue was a special-education instructor. Although I never formally interviewed them, I spent a fair amount of time with them, accompanied them to church, participated in family functions, and exchanged gifts with them.

Mary Boyd, a 25 year old librarian from Kansas City was another Catholic informant with whom I became well acquainted and whom I interviewed a number of times. Mary was raised in a large Catholic family and lived in Lawrence with her boyfriend, an ex-hippy who worked for a computer company. She had a strong faith and sometimes attended services in the Catholic church of Lawrence, although she did not consider herself to be a member of any congregation.

Although I have not studied an Evangelical milieu in depth (I only a few times attended services at the First American Baptist Church of Lawrence), some of my informants were practicing members of Evangelical churches. The Linsers are an example. Professor Linser and his wife were both raised Mennonites and they were active members of their church. After living for years in Lawrence, they had recently moved back to Newton (Mark Linser's native community, a predominantly Mennonite city in central Kansas), and kept only an apartment in Lawrence. Most members of Prof. Linser's natal family lived in Newton and his brother was operating the family farm. The Linsers had three children only one of whom still lived with them at home. I stayed in the Linsers' home in Newton for five days and I kept seeing Prof. Linser until the end of my fieldwork. During my stay in Newton I attended a service in an Amish church, a bridal shower in a Mennonite church, a charity dinner in the farmhouse of an Amish family, and I interviewed two of Prof.

Linser's Mennonite friends.

I also became acquainted with the family of the priest of the Mormon church in Topeka, and particularly with one of his daughters, Jennie, who was a graduate student in Lawrence. The family was originally from Utah and had moved to Kansas in 1985. Jennie who still lived with her parents was in her early twenties and had four siblings. I met most of the members of Jennie's family, spent a lot of time with her and some of her friends, and interviewed her a number of times.

Not all of my informants however were members of a church. Jim and Debby Wheeler, a couple who lived together without being married for about two years, were not members of a church or any other city group and spent most of their free time with the group of Jim's professional associates who were also his long standing friends. Jim who was in his mid-forties had a managerial position in a moving company and his salary permitted him to have a large home in one of the best western suburbs, whereas Debby, who was a few years younger than Jim, worked in another company in the same field. Both Jim and Debby had children from previous marriages, but only Debby's 13 year-old son lived permanently with them. Jim's sons were attending college in other cities and were only occasionally staying in their father's home. I was introduced to this family early in my fieldwork by one of Jim's sons and I became well acquainted with all members of the household. I often stayed in their home, spent a lot of time with all of them, participated in family functions and became well acquainted with most of their friends. I also attended the couple's marriage which took place in September 1989 and interviewed Jim's sons extensively.

Another non-religious couple I knew were the Sullivans. Pamela and Larry had grown up in other midwestern states and moved to Lawrence in 1970. Both had administrative positions in the university and they lived in a western suburb. They were in their late forties and had two sons who lived independently in Lawrence. I met Pamela in one of the first meetings of the Altrusa I attended, and we remained friends until the end of my fieldwork. I often visited her home, met all members of her family and interviewed both Pamela and her husband.

The Taylors are another family that moved to Lawrence because of the university. Prof. Taylor and his wife, who were in their early fifties, had lived

in Lawrence for about 30 years and they had three children, one of whom was adopted. They were politically liberal and have always been very active in various organizations including the congregational church, although they did not attend church services during my fieldwork. I met Prof. Taylor during the second half of my fieldwork and he volunteered to become an informant. I met his wife and children and interviewed him a number of times in his office.

I also knew a lot of Kansas University students. Most students tended to socialize with other students and were only marginally interested in the affairs of the city; thus they could not contribute to my political research. Some students however were excellent informants in kinship matters and their views are presented in the first part of the thesis. Most of my student informants belonged to a group of about ten graduate students (consisting of married and unmarried couples as well as single individuals) who often spent weekends and important holidays together. I participated in many of the group's gatherings and interviewed some of its members.

Finally, some of the families and individuals that appear in the first part of my thesis belonged to the group of the political radicals. I became well acquainted with many members of the group, I was introduced to members of their families and I was often included in social gatherings and family functions. Margaret Tolbert, a 35 year-old librarian, was one of my best informants from this milieu. Margaret, who was born and had spent most of her life in Lawrence, was single and lived alone in one of the old-city neighbourhoods. She was very active in alternative political and social organizations and had a lot of friends in the city. Her mother and brother lived in Lawrence and she had two sisters living in other states. I spent a lot of time with Margaret, I met all members of her natal family as well as most of her friends and had many discussions with her on different matters.

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Participant observation was complemented by informal interviews. Most interviews took place during the second half of my fieldwork and they were tape-recorded. Most of my informants were very comfortable with the tape recorder and seemed to forget its presence. Some informants used tape recorders in their work or were interviewed in the past by other researchers, and almost all understood the purpose of my research and the need to collect

accurate data. In most cases interviews were preceded by an earlier acquaintance with the informant and I mostly interviewed the informants that I knew well.

Interviews were relatively unstructured as their aim was to collect qualitative material. They were scheduled in advance, and each one was dedicated to a particular topic and usually lasted for about an hour. Informants were encouraged to talk freely and, within obvious limits, talk about what they wanted. As I already knew most of them, interviews were relatively relaxed and questions could be formulated in a "language" easily understood by the informant. But, although interviews were unstructured, this did not mean that the collected information was arbitrary. An aid-memoire was gradually developed consisting of a series of questions relating to the most important aspects of the study, and a number of key questions were put to all informants who were interviewed on a particular topic. The questions to be asked in a particular interview were usually prepared in advance with the help of the aid-memoire and the information known about the informant, and a number of files containing all the information about an individual or a family were created.

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The conclusions of the study in kinship primarily concern the families and individuals who were intensively studied. Nevertheless, I believe that they can probably be extended to the whole of the white middle class of Lawrence. My sample is not a statistically random one and does not permit accurate quantitative estimations. However, during the whole of my fieldwork I compared the ideology and the behaviour of my main informants with that of other informants from the same or other milieux and tried to have enough informants from the different categories I distinguished. I do not of course claim to have exhausted the existing variation but I am fairly certain that my informants are not exceptional and that their behaviour and ideas reflect the views and practical dilemmas of the majority of the white Lawrence middle class.

The political study mainly concentrated on Lawrence city politics but it is more generally relevant. The political situation of Lawrence is partly due to the presence of the university and differs from that of other cities in the area. However, a controlled growth movement is not unique to Lawrence and

such movements abound in many especially Western American cities.[22]

NOTES

1. Lynds 1929: 8.
2. The geographer Schmiedeler writes about Lawrence: "Lawrence is large enough to possess a variety of diverse socioeconomic features and population characteristics, yet small enough so that a study of the entire urban area would be feasible" (1985: 12).
3. The American census designates a city as a "Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area" when it has a population in excess of 50,000 inhabitants. No direct relationship between geographical and social characteristics is assumed, although factors like the size and the density of a city's population certainly have an impact on social life, and they were considered in the selection of the research location. A relatively large distinct city located within a more densely populated area was concidered to be the ideal research site, and Lawrence was selected for better approximating this definition than other cities in the area.
4. In 1980, 74.8% of the population of the United States lived in Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas.
5. Hannerz 1980: 297.
6. As S. Ortner observes, the first thing that strikes an anthropologist reading the ethnographic literature on the United States writen by both sociologists and anthropologists, "is the centrality of 'social class' in sociological research and its marginality in anthropological studies" (Ortner 1991: 165). Anthropologists tended until recently to study the marginal areas of American society and when concerned with the cultural mainstrem they did not bring class into analytic focus at all. (W. Lloyd Warner's studies of "Yankee City" and Schneider and Smith's "Class Differences and Sex Roles in American Kinship and Family Structure" are two notable exceptions.)

But social class cannot be ignored. Despite the prevalence of an egalitarian ideology all through American history and of the conception that America was the "land of opportunity", most of the historical evidence suggests that

since the second half of the nineteenth century, class divisions began to appear more clearly in the United States and to resemble more closely those in the European societies (Bottomore 1991: 33-35, Wright Mills 1951: 13-33, Cott 1977: 3).

The literature on the definition of social class in western industrial societies is vast but we can distinguish two main approaches: Marxists base class categorization upon the different major roles taken by people in the productive processes of society and tend to assume that there is a correspondance between the class position of individuals and their political and social ideology, whereas those influenced by Weber stress stratification by prestige (or status) and emphasize primarily similarity of way of life and common cultural patterns. The two approaches can be combined but they can also lead to very different conceptions of the nature and the reality of social stratification: whereas those influenced by Marx believe that western industrial societies are clearly marked by class divisions, some of those influenced by Weber view social hierarchy as a continuum of prestige ranks without any sharp breaks. The latter view is supported by arguments pointing to the large number of middle-class persons in the total population, the high level of social mobility, and the existence of a high standard of living that has resulted in the loss of the identity of the lower class as a distinct social stratum and its merging into the middle class.

However, most of the existing evidence for the United States suggests that, although the standard of living has increased as a whole, the gulf between working class and middle class remains very wide, and a significant part of the population subsides below what is officially considered the poverty level (Polenberg 1980: 261). Social class is considered therefore to be an important variable of the analysis and the study has mainly focused on the middle class.

In American society of course, social classes are only analytical categories. As they are not constituted or supported by any specific legal or religious rules, and there is a considerable amount of social mobility, class boundaries are less precisely defined. Different criteria have been proposed for the demarcation of the boundaries between the working and the middle class (Bottomore 1991: 43, Giddens and Held 1982: 93-186), but their discussion largely surpasses the aim of the present introduction.

It suffices to say that my evidence from Lawrence confirms the view of

most social scientists that, although stratification according to production role and stratification according to prestige are distinct, they are nevertheless closely connected (Firth et al 1969: 18-19, Bottomore 1992: 26). For the most part informants could be unambiguously placed in one class on the basis of most ordinarily accepted criteria (such as income, occupation, education, and consumption patterns), although there were also cases more difficult to place. Significant numbers of people might belong in those intermediate categories, but such informants were avoided in the present study.

Most of the informants of the present study clearly belonged to the middle class in terms of income, occupation, and education. Exact income levels could not be ascertained for all informants but the consideration of other factors (such as the type of occupation, the place of residence, and the patterns of consumption) provided a safe indication of an informant's income. Most of my informants had distinctly middle-class occupations (such as professionals, managers, businessmen, high administrators, and university professors) and were college educated, and more than half of them had post-graduate degrees.

7. For the Parsonian model see introduction of part 1 of the thesis.

8. Haskel Indian Junior College is one of the most important american-indian educational institutions in the country and it had an enrolment of around 800 students in 1989.

9. In 1820 when Missouri was admitted as a slave-holding state, Maine was also granted statehood, thereby maintaining an equal number of free and slave states in the Union, and slavery was prohibited north of $36^0\,30'$ (the northern boundary of Missouri).

10. Dary 1982: 22.

11. MacNall 1988: 137.

12. Employment data are for October 1988 and their source is the Kansas Department of Human Resources. In addition to the university, Lawrence public schools have 850 employees, Haskel has 175 employees, and the City and County government employ 707 persons.

13. The high percentage of people who came to Lawrence from other states can be only in part attributed to Kansas University, as the percentage of out of state students in Lawrence campus was only 31.5% in 1987.

14. Around half of those coming from other states lived in 1985 in some

other midwestern state, one fifth lived in the West, one fifth in the South, and the remaining one tenth lived in the East.

15. From the Altrusa encyclopedia, p. 3.

16. I have no evidence that womens' civic clubs were hierarchically stratified as men's clubs were.

17. In some cases however, acquaintances developed, I got invited into people's homes, and data that was also relevant to kinship was collected.

18. Most of my informants did not stress their ethnic background and did not consider themselves to belong to any ethnic group. The majority were of mixed ancestry, usually northern European, and their ancestors have been in the country for many generations. The American sociologist S. McNall writes about Kansas: "Though Kansas was a state of immigrants, those immigrants were almost exclusively native-born Americans. At no point did European immigrants ever constitute more than 13.3 percent of the total population, a figure that was reached in 1870. In 1890, this population of the foreign born came primarily from - in descending order - Germany, England, Sweden, Ireland, Canada, and Russia (the Mennonites), with lesser numbers from Scotland, Switzerland, Denmark, and Bohemia." (1988: 72)

19. There are around 45 established Christian churches in Lawrence representing around 30 different denominations. Christian churches can be classified in many different ways. From a theological point of view the most important divisions are, on the one hand, between Protestants and Catholics and, within Protestantism, between mainline denominations that take moderate positions on theological and social matters and fundamentalist (or evangelical) denominations that insist on the literal interpretation of the Bible.

Earlier studies suggested that mainline Protestant denominations gathered the most affluent and influential part of local communities and this was to a certain extent true in Lawrence. (Wuthnow 1988: 83-84, Lynds 1929: 332-343, Varenne 1977: 99) Four mainline protestant denominations included in their membership a large percentage of the Lawrence middle class and were considered to be the most prominent in the city. They owned large buildings in central city locations and each one of them had more than 1,000 members. The Congregational is the oldest church in the state and it is considered the most influential church in Lawrence. (The Congregational church is mostly concentrated in New England; its rank in Lawrence reflects the New England

past of the city.) It is followed by the Episcopal, the First Presbyterian, and the First Methodist.

However, as often observed, there is no simple relation between social class and church membership. Churches in Lawrence have much larger memberships than most other organizations and they are more socially and ideologically mixed. Although to a much lesser degree than in the past, family tradition still plays a role in church affiliation and influential people can be found in almost every of the city's congregations. Moreover, social and ideological differences, between the leading mainline Protestant churches on the one hand and the Catholic church and a number of Evangelical denominations (like the American Baptist) on the other, have diminished in important ways. (See also Wuthnow 1988: 71-99, and Bellah et al 1985: 237-243).

Easter 1989 was jointly celebrated in Lawrence by the four mainline Protestant chuches, the Catholic, the Lutheran, and the Disciples of Christ churches. The social composition of the suburban West Lawrence Catholic church, in which I attended services a number of times, did not significantly differ from that of mainline protestant denominations and many of the traditional barriers separating Catholics and Protestants seem to have been lifted. An obvious example is the selection of Carl Ackerman (see below), a Methodist, for a position - the direction of St Francis Hospital - traditionally reserved for a Catholic, or the organization of joint services between Catholics and Protestants. (This has also been observed by Varenne. See Varenne 1977: 98).

20. Firth 1969: 36.

21. Hannerz 1980: 313.

22. Savitch and Thomas 1991: 202-234.

PART ONE - KINSHIP

INTRODUCTION TO PART ONE

Even in my small middle-class sample, there was great diversity in both ideological opinion and the reality of kinship life. Lawrence middle-class society cannot be regarded as an undifferentiated milieu where, in kinship as well as in other matters, a general normative expectation for all adults prevails. On the contrary it is a complex environment where alternative practices and ideologies co-exist and often compete within different middle-class milieux.

The most meaningful way to present this variation was to order my observations under two main categories. The first category I distinguish I call "traditional". I use this term because the informants that I classify in this category felt that they were carrying through a tradition and they were regarded as traditional by other informants. They usually had strong, articulated views about kinship matters, that were logically consistent and constituted a model. It is to the views of those informants that I refer whenever I use the terms "traditional" or "traditional model". The existence of milieux in which a conservative kinship ideology prevails has been indicated by other researchers of American society both in the past[1] and more recently.[2]

I met most of the informants that I call traditional in religious milieux. Some were practicing Evangelical Christians although most belonged to the conservative faction of the First Methodist Church of Lawrence. The First Methodist Church however, cannot be considered as an unequivocally traditional milieu. Although the church is to a geat extent a carrier of tradition, and most of my Methodist informants were influenced by traditional kinship ideology, different views that often radically diverged from the traditional model were explicitly allowed in the church.

Like in the mainline churches, the views of people in most other milieux of my fieldwork, such as the civic clubs or the Lawrence Association of Neighbourhoods, can be regarded as being shaped both by tradition and by an

ongoing process of change. Alternative views to the traditional one originated from various places (therapists, feminists, etc.) and perhaps dominated the mass media, although there were also strong proponents of traditional kinship ideology in printed press, radio, and television. In certain milieux, like that of the Wheelers or the political radicals, many traditional notions were commonly regarded as authoritarian and perhaps absurd and they were rejected in both word and deed.

Domestic units do not usually include other relatives beyond the nuclear family and were isolated by varying degrees of distance from other relatives. The first two chapters are dedicated to the study of "nuclear family units". I use the term nuclear family unit instead of nuclear family because the constitutions of the households that I studied varied widely, and did not in many cases correspond to the picture of a married couple living with their biological children that is usually associated with the term nuclear family.[3] Chapter 1 examines love and marriage whereas chapter 2 is devoted to the study of relationships between the members of nuclear family units. Finally, chapter 3 examines the period of children's independence from their natal family (another term for nuclear family unit of orientation) as well as kinship relationships with relatives beyond the nuclear family.

NOTES

1. Cheal 1991: 37 and 127.

2. Bellah et al 1985: 93, Cheal 1991: 127.

3. The most influential proponent of the nuclear family thesis was the American sociologist T. Parsons. Parsons' nuclear family thesis contains two related claims. On the one hand, it is an interpretation of American family life in the context of a structural functionalist theory of social evolution. On the other it is a claim about empirical reality and a description of family life. Parsons saw the process of historical transformation in western societies as one of progressive "functional differentiation" and argued that industrialization has removed many functions from the family. Parsons believed that the "isolated nuclear family" characterized the American family life, and particularly the middle-class family life, and claimed that there was a functional correspondance between the nuclear family pattern and industrial

economy.

According to Parsons the nuclear family - the unit consisting of parents and their still dependent children - is in the United States relatively isolated from other relatives and constitutes the only independent residential and economic unit. The tie between husband and wife is the central family relationship and descent ties are relatively de-emphasized. Husband and wife are in a "structurally unsupported situation" and thus "the marriage relation is placed in a far more strategic position in this respect than is the case in kinship systems where solidarity with 'extended' kin categories is more pronounced" (Parsons 1956: 20). Parsons thought that differentiation of the sex roles was necessary, because otherwise competition for occupational status between spouses would undermine the solidarity of the marriage relationship. To use his terms, envisaged a role-relationship between husband and wife, with the husband going out to work and exercising "instrumental leadership" at home, while the wife more intimately connected with early child care concerned herself with "expressive leadership".

CHAPTER ONE
LOVE AND MARRIAGE

1. INTRODUCTION

Both practice and ideas about love and marriage varied widely. I begin my presentation with the traditional model whereas subsequent sections are dedicated to alternative conceptions of love and marriage. Section 2 examines alternative to the traditional forms of relationships whereas sections 3 to 5 concentrate on alternative to the traditional views of marital commitment and obligation.

2. THE TRADITIONAL MODEL

Marriage is associated, among traditional informants, with the creation of a family and it is considered the natural destination of every human being. At about the time of the completion of college education people of both sexes are considered physically and intellectually mature and they are expected to marry and have children. The family is considered the fundamental institution of society, and thus, an individual, by marrying and raising a family, is believed to contribute to both the personal and social good. Marriage is considered necessary for individual physical and psychological health and unmarried people were seen as unfortunate and/or socially irresponsible.

The newly-wed couple is not in most cases expected to live in close proximity to either set of parents, and spouses are expected to function as one unit and rely on each other for the fulfillment of some of their most fundamental needs. Sexual relationships are considered proper and legitimate only within marriage and spouses should ideally be for each other the main source of emotional support and security.[1] Husband and wife are expected to assume different although interconnected tasks and work harmoniously together for the realization of common goals. Given the highly mobile nature of the middle-class population, the relative absence of kin from the everyday life of the nuclear family, and the relatively short

duration of child-rearing, the tie between husband and wife becomes in most cases among traditional informants preeminently important, providing the most enduring relationship in society.[2]

The ideal reason for the selection of a spouse is "love".[3] People often said they had chosen each other because they were "in love" with each other. In theory to be in love is a feeling of attraction for another person that cannot in the last analysis be rationalized. One "just falls in love" and knows by an unanalyzable intuition when the right person comes along.[4] This feeling that happens naturally between men and women is the ideal instigation of marriage. A romantic story is often found in the beginning of traditional marriages. The Bakers who met in a hospital in Baltimore and married eight years later are an example. Paul (a graduate student in Kansas University and youth minister of the First Methodist Church) often said he was in love with the girl that he intended to marry. Compared with my prior experience in a Greek church, it was a surprise to see couples holding hands or lightly embracing during the Sunday services of the First Methodist Church.

But romantic interest should not be the only grounds for the choice. This is a crucial decision that requires serious and responsible consideration. Traditional informants, implicitly and often explicitly, pointed to other factors, besides romantic love, that should be taken into account in the choice of a partner. Similarity in background, religion, education, and experience were regarded as essential conditions for a successful marriage and tended to influence the course of "true love". Parents encourage their children to seek friendships with the "right" people of the other sex and warn them against the development of relationships when there are great differences in class and education. Young people themselves do a good part of their search in those milieux where compatible partners are more likely to be found.[5] Dr. Baker was very proud for his older son's marriage. James had met his wife in a Methodist church in Kansas City and the two families had connected particularly well. Dr. Baker said that his son and daughter-in-law "fitted well together" because they had "a lot in common", and he was concerned that his younger son Bob, who was still unmarried, would find someone equally compatible.

What leads to marriage is "dating". Dating is a period of courtship that

begins upon graduation from Junior High School (at the age of about 15) and ideally ends in marriage around the time of college graduation. Linda Ackerman described the day of the Junior High School graduation dance as a very special one in her daughter's life. The dance marked the official beginning of dating and Tina (Linda's daughter) wore a long dress for the occasion. At the other end, the few years following college graduation are considered the ideal time to marry and start a family. According to the Lawrence newspaper, "commencement weekend" (the weekend during which graduation ceremonies take place at Kansas University) is a popular time for couples to marry on campus.[6]

Dating is socially, but not sexually, promiscuous, and, if kept within accepted limits, is encouraged by even the most conservative of parents. The spouse is ideally the first sexual partner. In the environment where Linda grew up "you're really not allowed to think sexually of anyone who isn't a potential life partner". A number of young informants from traditional families - both men and women - said they thought sexual relationships were appropriate only within marriage. Dating consists of a highly patterned set of activities, that usually begins with the formal invitation from a young boy to a girl for an evening's public entertainment, and develops in the successful cases into a relationship. Dating is seen by traditional informants as a search for compatibility and an exercise in the selection of a suitable partner. During the first phases of dating people have no obligations to each other and young people of both sexes are expected to date a number of partners.

Marriage is regarded by traditional informants as an enduring relationship founded on a set of common goals and interconnected obligations.[7] Husband and wife are expected to have children and raise a family. This involves earning a living, having a house, and creating an atmosphere of care and stability. Love and understanding are expected to naturally flourish from their common experiences, and their relationship is expected to grow and deepen as they work together for the realization of their common goals.

Marital love is contrasted in the traditional model to romantic love and it is related to wider social and religious responsibilities. Romantic love is considered too unstable a basis for an enduring marriage and for a marriage to last, it must develop into "real love". Father Newman attributed the occurence of many divorces to a romantic conception of marriage. He told

me: "They have a secular idea of marriage: romance. Of course if you marry for romance it's gone in a year. If it doesn't develop into love, you don't have a marriage".

Traditional informants often spoke about their "commitment" to their marriage and used also other terms and expressions like "loyalty", "fidelity", and "remaining true to your vows".[8] A marriage cannot be based on immediate feelings which are by their own nature unstable, but on a conscious decision to keep the relationship in spite of the difficulties that might appear. Commitment implies the willingness to stay together through good and bad times, and fulfill the marital obligation independently of the ups and downs of the personal relationship. "Sticking with one's commitment" may sometimes require emotional self-denial but it provides the only stable basis of marriage.

The marital bond has an almost mystical meaning for some informants. It is regarded as a "spiritual union", a lifetime commitment to the relationship with the other person. Tracy, a young mother who regularly attended the meetings of the Peacemakers with her husband, told me: "Commitment is sticking around when it's no fun. It is having something deep inside you that says: I believe in this relationship whether it's uncomfortable, whether it's bad, or whether it's happy. It's that feeling inside you which says: we are meant to be connected spiritually till we die."

Traditional informants often related the marital commitment to Christian faith.[9] The wedding takes place in a church and relatives and friends are invited to witness the ceremony. Love is seen as the willingness to sacrifice oneself for others and it is considered to be only possible when individuals share a commitment to something that remains unchanging and is larger than themselves. Paul told me: "The key to a strong relationship is a strong commitment to a belief in Christ and living a Christ-centered life as an individual, and making a commitment to share that Christ-centered life with another person. It's only by having that Christ-centered life together that you're really able to really love and care for anyone and grow with anyone."

To neglect one's marital obligation in any way, as for instance by acting only on emotions, was seen as a "selfish" attitude. According to traditional informants individual satisfaction "has to be balanced with the sense of responsibility and concern for other people with whom one is relating so that

the individual is not unrestrained. The individual should always think whether or not his action is consistent with the good of the rest of the family and society in general" (Dr. Baker).

In that context love was thought to lead to permanent relationships. Husband and wife are partners for life, "in sickness and in health, for better and for worse, until death do us part." In the words of Father Newman: "In a marriage you are contracting the trust and the relationship is there that regardless of what happens the two of you are bound together." However, divorce is envisaged even among the more traditional of my informants although it is considered a much more serious disruption than it would be in other milieux, and it is regarded as a "disfunction"[10] with serious social and psychological consequences. Paul told me: "I have a basic promise that when I get married that would be the one marriage that I'll have. I have to honestly say though that as I take those vows this is exactly what I feel but who knows what that other person will do and what would happen in that marriage and maybe divorce would be an option."

3. ALTERNATIVE VIEWS

3.1 Alternative Forms of Relationships

But purely traditional conceptions of marriage were only held by a minority of informants. Although many people were influenced by the traditional model, the views of the majority of my informants differed more or less radically from it.

The majority of my informants, from all different milieux of my fieldwork, did not regard marriage as an inevitable part of the life course. One does not necessarily have to marry. Even Father Newman told me: "Marriage is not for everyone. You don't have to feel incomplete. Some people do not marry and some people are not intended to."[11]

Single people were more widely accepted and many formal and informal groups consisted of both married and unmarried persons.[12] I knew a number of people in their 30's and 40's who were single. Some were divorced and others had never married. They lived on their own and had rich social lives. Being single does not necessarily entail the absence of sexual and emotional

relationships and is regarded as a possible lifestyle other than conventional monogamy.

Marriage is regarded as but one valid option among others. One may choose to abstain from sexual relationships or to have permanent or more ephemeral relationships with one or more persons of the other or even the same sex[13] without being or intending to get married. Social mores are much more permissive and sexual relationships between unmarried people are generally tolerated if not, in some milieux, actually encouraged. The degree of sexual freedom or permissiveness differs but even the Methodist minister, in a speech to the single's group of the church, avoided taking a position about sexual relationships between unmarried people and left the matter open to individual judgment. Particularly among students, it is not rare for people to establish short-lived sexual relationships without intending to get married.

Most of my informants, however, longed for a permanent relationship with someone else and valued relationships that had a prospect of continuity. One does not find oneself alone. Love, the close erotic and emotional relationship between a man and a woman, is one of the greatest personal ideals, a necessary component of hapiness without which one is essentially lonely and incomplete.

However, a love relationship, even a permanent one, does not necessarily imply marriage or the creation of a family. (On that see also next chapter, section 2.1) Some people may have sexual relationships and even live together for many years without being married. Among previously married and divorced people or couples who do not want children cohabitation is not uncommon. For some cohabitation may be a trial period before marriage. Excluding students, I knew three couples who lived together without being married. Jim and Debby lived together without being married for about two years. Both had children from prior marriages although only her son lived permanently with them during my fieldwork. Debby who felt rather uneasy about the arrangement told me that they were exceptional whereas her sister who was present said that she knew of other such couples in the same street. Cohabitation is generally acceptable. J. Durbin, the most important developer in Lawrence and a highly respected and influential man in Lawrence, lived with a woman without being married.

Despite the relative frequency of cohabitation most informants considered marriage the necessary ending of a successful relationship. According to those informants, only marriage actively shows the commitment partners have to each other. Father Newman told me: "Outside marriage there is no real commitment." Moreover, marriage is generally related to social respectability and entails important legal and economic rights and obligations. Debby was clearly unsatisfied with their present arrangement and she was very happy when the marriage was announced.

3.2 The Importance of Personal Relationships

Within this more permissive atmosphere the marital commitment takes new connotations more or less radically dissenting from the traditional model. In general most people valued family life and associated dating with marriage and marriage with the creation of a family. However, contrary to traditional informants for whom marriage is founded on common goals and a strong sense of obligation, other people stress the importance of the personal relationship.[14] The relationship between the spouses cannot be taken for granted and cannot be ignored. Dating, marriage, and the creation of a family were not seen as an almost automatically unfolding process but as different stages of a successful relationship, separate decisions a couple may take as their relationship unfolds and their commitment deepens.

A wedding does not bind the spouses in "wedlock." The personal relationship is dynamic and can develop in different ways. New problems demand new solutions and bring about changes that may put the relationship in question. "In a wedding what you have is a possibility of a marriage, you have the seed of a marriage when people get married; it's got to grow and develop, both of them have to grow and develop; when they get through they will have something totally different" (Father Newman). Most people are not sure when they get married that the marriage will last.[15] Almost half of the marriages break and nearly one marriage in three is a remarriage after divorce for one or both partners.[16]

The following extract from an interview with Linda shows the change of attitude very clearly : "One time I tried to talk to my mother about being very

unhappy in my marriage and that was ten years ago. She just kind of patted me on the back and she said: 'Linda, that's the way it is. Look at the nice house you have, look at the cars you have, look at how proud you can be of your husband. And, she said, we women, we don't complain when we don't have it that good', and I went: 'But shouldn't we complain when we don't love the one we live with, don't we have the legitimate right to try and change it when our relationship in that nice house is not good.' But part of her code is to ignore the relationship. My generation doesn't feel that way. For us relationships are much more important but that's still in transition."

Informants often expressed great scepticism about the traditional marriage ideal, particularly when they considered their parents' marriages. Both Carl and Linda were critical of their parents' relationships, which in their eyes appeared to be stale and repressive. They said that their parents had very little communication with one another and to a large extent concealed their difficulties from the outside world.

The greater importance of relationships is also expressed in wedding ceremonies. Charles, the minister of the First Methodist Church, told me that most couples today want the wedding ceremony to reflect their personal histories. They retain parts of the traditional ceremony while they change others and add new parts expressing their own personal history and feelings. Many weddings are performed in private houses, hotels, and public buildings by a judge or some other specially appointed official, and the phrase "till death do us part" is usually omitted.

Whether the wedding takes place in a church or not, marriage is considered in most of the cases a secular affair of two individuals. Interestingly enough, this was the understanding of some of the ministers. Father Newman told me: "The Church doesn't marry them, they marry each other and the church simply blesses the marriage." He also said that most people marry in a church because of "respectability" or "custom", or because "very often people have some sense of a sacrament and a covenant kind of thing."

But although most informants stress the importance of the personal relationship between the spouses, the sense of permanence and the degree to which marriage is founded on obligation differ. I distinguish two main attitudes.

3.3 Between Love and Obligation

The examples of the Taylors and the Ackermans that follow illustrate the first attitude. Although such informants would not accept insoluble marriage, they had a sense that the relationship should last. The importance of personal relationships is emphasized but views of marital obligation akin to the traditional are also expressed. A marriage is something more than an ephemeral romantic affair and creates important common concerns and responsibilities binding the spouses together. Divorce remains a legitimate possibility although it is considered a serious disruption and spouses must do all they can to avoid it and "save" the marriage.

The Taylors have been hapilly married for around thirty years and they have three children. Since they have fallen in love with each other at college, their relationship has continued to grow and deepen. Love has been in this case the basis of a strong, enduring relationship and has led to the creation of a stable and happy family. The views that I present in the next paragraphs were recorded in different interviews with Professor Taylor.

Prof. Taylor stated from the beginning of an interview that "the meaning of a successful marriage is a satisfaction and a hapiness that each person has with the other, a relationship that is satisfying to those two people." But he also stressed the binding character of commitment and the importance of children and other shared interests developing from the marriage. A good marriage is based on love but also on a sense of obligation transcending immediate feelings. As his relationship with his wife unfolded smoothly, the maintenance of a good relationship and the pursuit of common goals were intrinsically related and hard to distinguish.

For Prof. Taylor "being in love", which is a feeling that cannot be rationalized, is the essence of a good relationship. He said: "Everytime I have ever been in love, I fell in love on the first sight." Falling in love is a precondition of the commitment: "Commitment has got to come after the falling in love. It's almost ludicrous to think that you would commit and then fall in love." Moreover, being in love is a necessary element for the maintenance of the relationship, especially during the first years where the sense of common history and shared interests is relatively weak: "Is it

possible to get through the first years without being in love and sustain it? I don't know. I've been married to her for nearly thirty years but I am still very attracted to her so that I don't know that that fades away. Very frequently it happens to me, I enjoy this very much, at a dinner party, or a cocktail party, I look around the room and I say 'oh gosh, my wife is the most beautiful woman here.'"

Prof. Taylor described his relationship with his wife as one of love, of physical and emotional attraction, caring feelings and joyful sociability. The Taylors had common interests and ideas and shared almost every aspect of their life: "We share a lot of interest to the point of working together, writing together, constantly talking about work, projects, intellectual problems. We share the same politics, same ideas about community service, political action, and we do that together."

But he also said that the children are a very important element of their relationship acting as a cement and a bulwark. "I am of the opinion, although there are many cases to the contrary, that if you don't have children then the initial commitment that a couple makes to one another is often not strong enough to carry through a whole lifetime together. But if you have children then that makes for a new commitment, a commitment to the children that you share, the two of you. The parents have jointly a commitment to raise the kids, not only to raise them, but to raise them in an atmosphere of stability and love and that sort of thing. And that of course deepens the commitment to each other and establishes a new interest that they have."

Prof. Taylor's understanding of marital commitment resembles the traditional one. Contrary to what most people marrying today believe, Prof. Taylor and his wife had the expectation that their marriage "was going to work". He said: "You make a sort of an open ended commitment where no matter what happens you are going to be there for that person, you are going to fulfil those obligations. I am talking about an open ended commitment as in the vows in the marriage ceremony. No matter what, I will stand by you and not only as long as you satisfy those requirements and do as you said you would." But he also added that "that person [the spouse] should behave in a reasonable way" although he or she "is allowed more latitude than just a normal friend." According to Prof. Taylor one of the most important

obligations of commitment is "sexual fidelity or at least not blatant and frequent infidelity" and he thought that "romantic interest in other people is probably the bigest reason for divorce."

***

Relationships however, are not always easy. What happens if the relationship does not work? Should the spouses accept the situation fatalistically and stay in an unhappy marriage or should they try to improve the relationship and divorce if they fail to do so? The answers to these questions differed. The example of Carl and Linda that follows is indicative of the considerable efforts that many married couples make in order to maintain a satisfying relationship but also of the fact that divorce remains a legitimate possibility even when there are children from the marriage.

Carl and Linda were married for twenty years before they divorced sometime after I left Lawrence. Their marriage has never been a happy one, although as they both used to say they "worked well together". They started having marital difficulties soon after they got married and problems continued throughout their married life. Their relationship was maintained despite their problems for a number of reasons. They both had an almost traditional sense of commitment and spent a large part of their social life in traditional community settings which tended to reinforce their marriage. Children represented an important joint commitment. Finally, Linda was economically dependent on Carl. During those years they both, in their own ways, did all they could to sustain the marriage and they had followed therapeutic programmes with different therapists for extended periods.

However, at the time of my fieldwork they were almost clearly heading toward the divorce. Although they kept living together and functioned as a couple, their problems continued during my fieldwork and often escalated into serious conflict. Linda, who expressed most of the disatisfaction was almost convinced that their marriage could not work anymore and they eventually divorced sometime after I left Lawrence. Carl saw it as a breach of commitment stemming from Linda's midlife crisis, whereas she accused Carl of neglecting her emotional needs for many years and damaging her self-esteem. Carl had made many concessions in recognition of Linda's sacrifices during the first years of the marriage but Linda, although she had a strong sense of obligation and feelings of guilt, had almost made up her mind that

she could not live with Carl anymore and that she needed a relationship with a man she could love.

Although the main instigator of the divorce, Linda experienced it with a lot of pain and said that she had tried every possible solution and undergone every sacrifice before finally deciding to breach her commitment and divorce. She told me: "If you are truly committed it is a real struggle to change your mind. But it does happen. With me when that happened, it happened after time and time and time again experiencing such intense pain with sticking to the commitment that it was almost to the bottom line : are you going to be committed and totally lose yourself." She also said that she shared this experience with other women she had known: "In some of the marriages I know I see people who have some very unhappy marriages that are saying I'm gonna give it not just a few more months but a few more years. If it stays at this level for several years then I cannot handle it."

The example of Carl and Linda shows some of the ambivalence of therapy. In the traditional discourse marital difficulties are regarded as "dysfunctions" amenable to some kind of treatment.[17] Family therapy can be seen from this angle as an effort to diagnose and reduce marital dysfunctions. Spouses facing marital difficulties who seek the help and advice of a therapist are considered to show their commitment to the marriage and their willingness to work for its maintenance. Both Carl and Linda viewed the counselor as an objective specialist who could help them to improve their relationship.[18]

However, the therapeutic discourse of Linda (as well as that of many other informants) confirms Bellah et al who view the current dominant therapeutic discourse as a way of thinking about relationships that rejects or radically qualifies traditional notions of morality and advocates, directly or indirectly, an alternative ideal of marriage.[19] Contrary to the traditional discourse which emphasizes moral obligation, therapy stresses individual autonomy. The main common objective of different therapeutic discourses that were current among my informants in Lawrence was to teach individuals to accept and love themselves and set their own values and practical objectives independently of other people's opinions and standards. The individual is regarded as the source of his or her own morality and the role of the therapist is not to judge but to help clients make their own

judgments.

Linda treasured therapy. It had helped her build her self-confidence and assert her independence. She complained that her parents and Carl had always been damaging for her self-esteem. Therapy helped her to become autonomous, define her boundaries, and protect her integrity. It taught her to accept herself and define her own wants and needs independently of anyone else's standards. Against the moral invocations of the traditional discourse, Linda tried to be "non-judgmental" and she was suspicious of "critical" and "judgmental" people who wanted to impose their views on others.

3.4 Communication

But there are other informants for whom the personal relationship appears to be the essence of a good marriage. For those informants the duration of the marriage is contingent upon the partners continual satisfaction with the relationship, and divorce does not appear to have the dramatic character we witnessed earlier.[20] Pamela told me: "I think that people are just much less up to even toy with the idea of living very long in an unpleasant people relationship. I don't think that they feel it's worth it." This attitude is perhaps more characteristic of childless marriages, second and third marriages or relationships of cohabitation. However, many people believe that it is better for the children if disagreeing parents divorce. And although as we saw some people may stay in a bad marriage for the sake of the children, in other cases divorce can happen at anytime irrespective of the existence of children. Many women hold jobs. Some said that they did not quit their job when they got married because of the uncertainty about the duration of marriage. Indeed in some circles divorce and remarriage are very frequent. Among the friends of Jim and Debby more than half of the people, including both of them, were divorced, and some more than once. I even heard of married couples who had separated by letter.

A wedding ceremony I witnessed during the first months of my fieldwork is indicative of an understanding of marriage in which the relationship between the partners is all important and no external constraints are recognized. The wedding took place on a farm a few miles outside Lawrence and I was taken along by a group of students. The couple were former Kansas

University students and now lived in Kansas City. A large group of people, many of whom belonged to the "counter-culture crowd" of Lawrence, were invited. The ceremony took place in the open by an old farmhouse, in an area especially prepared by the bride and the groom themselves. They told us during the ceremony that this field was a shrine of their love as they had worked together for many months preparing it, and they had made love many times on the site. The ceremony, that was conceived, writen, planned, and organized by the couple, was a celebration of their love. Assisted by their close friends, they read love poems from various sources, played music, and expressed their love for each other in various ways. No other authority, except their own free will, was recognized in the proceedings. The "minister", who was present because of legal requirements, played in the wedding, along with some other people, the role of a musician. He was the leader of a local rock group and had acquired the license to perform weddings after he had read a counter culture self-help book.

The wedding ceremony I just described was impressive, among other reasons, for its romantic atmosphere and its almost complete identification of romantic love and marital commitment. However, most of the informants who rejected traditional notions of marriage, equally rejected purely romantic views of relationships. Romantic love appeared to be a false and unattainable ideal and emotional attachments to unsatisfactory relationships were not regarded as love but as "infatuation". What was prevalent instead was an attitude strongly influenced by therapy.

A clear example of this understanding of love and marriage is given by Melanie. For Melanie, a young graduate student from Kansas City, a marriage or any serious commitment cannot be based on obligation but on a healthy, growing relationship. She felt people need not marry if they do not want to have children and she thought that children are an important joint commitment of the parents. However, given that she had grown up in an unhappy family in which her parents stayed together for the sake of the children, she was very ambivalent about whether children should be a serious impediment against divorce.

Commitment does not have, for Melanie, the open ended sense of the traditional model. It depends on the successful unfolding of the relationship and should not be sustained by external constraints. As in a good market

relationship what partners can only promise to each other is that they are going to be honest. She told me: "To me what commitment really means is being honest with each other, I mean try to be as honest as possible and have a real, genuine desire to communicate in a constructive way."

The ideal of "communication" implies that partners have "genuine" relationships, in which they are involved emotionally, and not relationships sustained by external constraints or based on mutual psychological deficiencies. According to Melanie (and other informants influenced by therapy) communication is only possible when people "can be who they are" in a relationship, and allow others do the same. In order to be able to communicate, people must have a clear sense of their own wants and values, and sufficient self-security and self-acceptance to feel complete independently of somebody else's love. Self-sacrifice, which is in the traditional model an ideal and the ultimate proof of love, seems undesirable and even suspect.

Retaining personal autonomy was for Melanie self-evidently important: "You are happy when you realize your uniqueness, when you can really feel your own sense of self as separate from others". The partners, as portrayed by Melanie, do not merge in a common unit as in the traditional marriage but remain autonomous throughout the relationship. One should accept that other people may think differently and may have different reactions and needs stemming from their different personal histories. "We can never be sure of what is best for the other person, when that person is ready to change, and how much change he or she can take."

For Melanie, commitment is a gradual process and cannot be made once and for all. The relationship exists only as the expression of the free choices of the people who make it up and needs to be reaffirmed every day. "The commitment is during the time you are committed. You can't expect to say I am committed to you for life, and then you end up abusing each other emotionally or whatever. That's unhealthy; you have to end it. But if it keeps on going in a nice good way then you stay committed. You just stay committed for however long it's good or it feels good. You have to constantly be asking yourself : do I really enjoy being with this person, do I feel good being with this person?"

The commitment is open to change. Individuals are seen as "constantly changing in different ways"; people can "grow together" or they can "grow

apart". A relationship should help one realize his or her life programme and if it fails to do so it should end. Every relationship brings into light different aspects of the self and every person constantly seeks the other who will express the self more roundly by uniting the greatest number of desirable qualities. Partners are depicted as maximizing individuals who rationally calculate costs and benefits and accordingly decide about the continuation of the relationship.[21] Melanie told me: "As a unique individual I have aspirations and ambitions that I want to be realized. If I am with somebody that fosters those things in me and I foster their ambitions in them then I am going to be content. If I am with somebody who tries to stifle me then forget it, there is no reason to be with them."

* * *

The signing of prenuptial agreements before many marriages is a clear expression of this more contractual understanding of marriage. Jim and Debby signed a prenuptial agreement and I knew other people who had made very specific agreements before marrying.[22] Prenuptial agreements set the terms of the marital relation and usually specify the economic relationship of the spouses, the couple's place of residence, issues related to the care and custody of children, and other factors. According to some of my informants, there are even prenuptial agreements that specify "who's going to cook the meals on which day or who's going to take the garbage out".

The signing of prenuptial agreements has been stimulated by the great frequency of divorce and the problems associated with it. Some of my informants were strongly in favour of the idea, and some of the married ones regretted the fact that they had not made a prenuptial contract. As a marriage can end at any time, prenuptial agreements permit people to set the terms of an eventual separation in advance. Individuals cannot rely on tradition or faith and need not rely on existing marriage and divorce law. Instead prenuptial agreements give them the opportunity to determine by voluntary agreement the form of their relationship. Spouses, like partners in a business relationship, are free to break their commitment, if only they are willing to pay the price for doing so.

Other informants however strongly disapproved of prenuptial agreements and were critical of those who made them. For example, these agreements appeared in the eyes of Pamela as limiting the marital commitment, and she

thought that the persons who make them "enter marriages much like they lived a business partnership." In similar manner, Prof. Taylor thought that "there is an amount of mistrust in contracts" that is not suitable to a marital relationship. He also told me: "In a contract you are committed only to what you specify. Marriage ought to be an open ended commitment by each person to the maintenance of the relationship. You don't specify in advance what your duties are and what your rights are. They are diffuse."

4. CONCLUSION

Traditional informants associate marriage with procreation and consider it the natural destination of every human being. They stress the unconditional and permanent character of marital commitment and the importance of responsibility and self-sacrifice for the maintenance of the marriage. Marital love is contrasted to romantic love and has spiritual dimensions. For traditional informants love is a matter of will and action rather than feelings, and marriage is primarily based on the successful fulfilment of interconnected family roles and a strong sense of moral obligation.

Purely traditional views of love and marriage were only held by a minority of informants. Most of my informants regarded marriage as just one valid option among others and alternative to the traditional forms of relationships were widely accepted and frequently practiced. But despite the relatively high frequency of cohabitation, most informants considered marriage to be the ideal ending of a successful relationship.

Enduring marriage however, although highly valued, was difficult. More than half of the marriages dissolve and even in traditional milieux young people were uncertain about the duration of their marriages. Contrary to traditional informants for whom marriage is founded on common goals and a sense of obligation that should ideally transcend immediate feelings, most other informants stressed the importance of personal relationships for the achievement of marital hapiness and the continuation of the marriage. For most of my informants marriage is something more than a love relationship and should not end with the first difficulty but views about marital obligation differed.

Informants like Prof. Taylor and the Ackermans emphasized the

importance of harmonious and satisfying personal relationships between spouses, although they also expressed views of marital obligation akin to the traditional. These informants had an expectation that their marriages would last and regarded children as well as other shared interests developing from the marriage as important factors binding the spouses together. But the case of a complete failure of the personal relationship cannot be excluded. Divorce remains a legitimate possibility, although it is considered a serious disruption and spouses are expected to do all they can to avoid it and save the marriage.

But there were other informants who almost completely rejected any language grounding the permanence of marriage in something larger than the satisfactions provided by the personal relationship. For those informants - most of whom were influenced by therapy - the ideal of communication between autonomous, psychologically mature individuals replaces entirely traditional notions of marital obligation. Commitment cannot be made once and for all and it is open to change. A marriage should not be sustained by external constraints and its continuation, like the continuation of every other partnership, should depend on the free choice of the partners. Although this attitude is perhaps more characteristic of childless marriages or relationships of cohabitation, the frequent practice of divorce and remarriage among the people of certain milieux of my fieldwork can be seen as setting a socially accepted lifetime pattern of being married successively to more than one spouse.[23]

NOTES

1. Schneider 1980: 38.
2. See Seeley et al 1956: 162. Also Parsons 1956: 20.
3. Romantic love was by the nineteenth century the culturally recognized basis for the choice of a marriage partner and in the ideal marriage was to continue for a lifetime. See Bellah et al 1985: 89. Also Cott 1977: 76-80.
4. Lynds 1929: 115.
5. This attitude was recorded by the Lynds (1929: 115) and M. Mead (1949: 325).
6. *Journal-World,* 20.5.1989.
7. The views of marital obligation of my traditional informants resemble to

the views of a group of Evangelical Christians studied by Bellah et al (1985: 93-97).

8. The word "commitment" was by far the most commonly used term, designating marital obligation, by traditional as well as other informants. The word was also used in other contexts. People said they "had a commitment to" or "shared a commitment with" their spouse, their relatives or their friends, or that they had "made a commitment" to their marriage, their work, their studies, etc. According to some of my informants, the wider use of the term is relatively recent; "commitment" has in common usage replaced other terms like "loyalty" and "fidelity" that have a strong moral connotation.

9. Bellah at al 1985: 96-97.

10. See note 17 of this chapter.

11. According to D. Yankelovich, a well known American specialist in survey research, in the late 1950's around 79% of a national cross section of Americans severely criticized those who preferred the single state, stigmatizing them as 'sick" or "neurotic or "immoral, 20% were neutral and fewer than 1% approved the unmarried state. By the late seventies, condemnatory attitudes shrunk from 80% to 25%, 61% felt that marriage was up to the individual, and 14% praised the choice of the unmarried state as a valid and possible way of life (1987: 104).

12. This contrasts with a situation like the one described in Crestwood Heights where "there is lack of secondary institutions, capable of absorbing unmarried individuals" (Seeley et al 1956: 162).

13. Homosexual relationships were more generally tolerated, and the right of every individual to define his or her sexual identity was even defended by the minister of the First Methodist Church.

14. This change of attitude has been observed by Veroff et al 1981: 140-141. See also Bellah et al 1985: 85-112.

15. When a national sample was asked in 1978 whether "most couples getting married today expect to remain married for the rest of their lives," 60 percent said no (Bellah et al 1987: 98).

16. 709 marriages took place in 1988 in Douglas County and there were given 400 divorces and annulments. The numbers for 1989 were respectively 748 and 333.

17. This is revealed in the fact that when there are marital problems families

are characterized as "dysfunctional". The word was widely used by traditional and other informants whenever families or individuals were identified as exhibiting certain pathological characteristics. The term implies that while positive functioning is normal, negative functioning is abnormal and therefore amenable to some kind of treatment (Cheal 1991: 36).

18. There is that sense in the following extract from an interview with Father Newman: "Most people need to go to a psychologist built into the marriage once a year just to evaluate it, to see how the marriage is going. If they've got good communication they could do it by themselves but most people can't."

19. The term therapy is admittedly a sweeping term for a great variety of discourses. However, as Bellah et al have persuasively argued, and as the evidence of my fieldwork amply confirms, therapeutic discourses of different theoretical persuasions and levels of sophistication have certain important points in common. Often using the same expressions, different therapists or informants invariably emphasize individual autonomy and self-acceptance, deny the existence of absolute moral truths applicable in all situations, and profess communication as a means to achieve harmony in different kinds of human relationships. (See Bellah et al 1985: 97-102 and 121-123. See also Rief 1963: 8-24, Cheal 1991: 145 and Coles 1987: 185-186).

Therapeutic ideas were widely disseminated in Lawrence. Therapeutic books were sold even in supermarkets, therapeutic articles were published in every newspaper, and therapeutic ideas had strongly influenced the mainline religious and civic discourse.

The First Methodist Church provides an example. "The Dance of Anger", a therapeutic book writen by a Topeka-based psychologist that had gained some national fame, was found in the libraries of the most different informants and was presented in the Sunday School. A group of people from the church had travelled to Topeka to listen to the author presenting her new book. Charles, the minister of the church, was a fully trained psychologist and both his sermons and his counselling philosophy were strongly influenced by therapy. Charles used to say that he was a sinner and "a believer in the radical message of Jesus", and thought that the purpose of the church was "to afflict the comfortable and comfort the afflicted". However, he criticized a Christian creed "wrapped around laws and being good", and thought that the psychological problems of many members of his congregation were due to the

authoritarian ways they had been brought up. According to Charles, most people seeking his advice suffered from low self-esteem and an inability to deal with feelings and particularly anger. Charles did not distinguish between "spiritual" and "psychological growth" and described such growth as "believing more in myself and what I am preaching, loving myself better, and knowing that God accepts and loves me as I am and all I need to be doing is be faithful."

Therapeutic speeches also regularly formed part of Altrusa's programme. The following "accent", as it was reported in the Altrusa newsletter, is an exampe : "The Altrusa accent was given by Melissa Emert of the Vocational Services Committee. It was titled, 'Prescriptions for the working woman,' and consisted of tips on maintaining a well balanced life. She read a poem with a message about the importance of living your life in such a way that you are able to have a good self-image and self-respect." In another case the following poem was read:

LETTING GO

To "let go" does not mean to stop caring,
it means I cannot do it for someone else.
To "let go" is not to cut myself off,
it's the realization I can't control another.
To "let go" is not to enable,
but to allow learning from natural consequences.
To "let go" is to admit powerlessness,
which means the outcome is not in my hands.
To "let go" is not to try to change or blame another,
it's to make the most of myself.
To "let go" is not to care for, but to care about.
To "let go" is not to fix, but to be supportive
To "let go" is not to judge,
but to allow another to be a human being.
To "let go" is not to be in the middle arranging all
the outcomes, but to allow others to affect their
own destinies.
To "let go" is not to be protective,
it's to permit another face reality.

To "let go" is not to deny, but to accept.
To "let go" is not to nag, scold, or argue.
To "let go" is not to adjust everything to my desires,
but to take each day as it comes.
To "let go" is not to regret the past,
but to grow and live for the future.

-author unknown-

20. This attitude was recorded by M. Mead (1949: 336-337).

21. See Swidler 1987 118-119. Gorer has also described dating as a contest in which "the victor is the one who makes the other lose self-control without losing it him (or her) self" and in which "the ideal date is one in which both partners are so popular, so skilled, and so self-assured that the result is a draw" (1964: 117).

22. Although those agreements are not always notorized, they are, according to a informant, "very formal, deliberate kind of agreements, that partners agree to renew periodically" (Pamela).

23. Sociologists have given the names of "serial monogamy" or "sequential polygamy" to this pattern. See Goldthorpe 1987: 232.

CHAPTER TWO
PARENTS AND CHILDREN

1. INTRODUCTION

The second chapter of the first part of the thesis is dedicated to the study of nuclear family units[1] and it is to these units and the relationships between their members that I refer whenever I use the terms "family", "family relations" and "family life" in this chapter. Section 1 examines general ideas about the family whereas section 2 is dedicated to the description of the different conceptions of family roles. The last two sections of this chapter are concerned with child-rearing. Section 3 discusses the relative isolation of children from the adult world whereas section 4 focuses on the relationships between parents and children.

2. FAMILY IDEOLOGY

2.1 Traditional Views

Traditional informants highly valued family life and considered it the only appropriate social unit for the sound development of both children and adults. To marry and have children is considered the natural destination of every individual. This was revealed, among traditional informants, both in parental expectation and in the attitude of younger informants. Dr. Baker told me: "This child is now an adult, would become a parent hopefully, and will enjoy what we have been able to enjoy as parents in their own right."

The traditional attitude was described as the dominant one in the generation of the parents of my adult informants.[2] Although referring to the past, the two following extracts help to elucidate the traditional attitude. When asked why people have children Linda told me: "Because that's what you do. That's the rule. You are a regular person. In my parent's generation if you didn't have children people would really look down on you. Why didn't you have children? What's wrong with you? Don't you like children,

can't you have children, do you have a defect in your emotions or your body?" Informants also often stressed that not only was it required to have children at that time, but also the size of the family was socially prescribed. Tony, a young recently married graduate student, told me: "The ideal family has two to three kids. If you had too many children then you're not being socially responsible. On the other hand couples who didn't want to have children, particularly at that time, were looked upon as being selfish because they didn't want to share their life with anybody else."

The newly married couple is expected to maintain a separate dwelling removed by varying degrees of distance from that of each set of parents and to be economically independent. The house is the centre of family life and it is ideally located in the suburbs.

The house in the suburbs is thought as the only proper location for the raising of a family. Ideally suburbs are exclusively residential areas with only single-unit dwellings. The existence of other activities (productive, commercial, recreational, etc) or of apartment buildings (where unattached persons may live) within the confines of an area, lower its status and make it less desirable for a family to live. The various areas of Lawrence are hierarchically ranked according to the degree they approximate to this ideal, to the degree, that is, that they are "retreated" from the city.[3]

This is not accidental but reflects the sharp ideological disjunction between the private world of the nuclear family and economic and social life in general. The family is regarded by traditional informants as an institution fulfilling a specialized function. The family is not in most cases a productive unit. As we will see in more detail in the next section, the economic support of the family is the main responsibility of the father whereas the wife and mother is expected to stay in the home and create there, away from the distractions and the possible harmful influences of social and economic life, an atmosphere of stability and support for her husband and children.

The two primary responsibilities of the family are the socialization of children and the fulfilment of the sexual and emotional needs of the adults. Some informants were directly echoing functionalist views about the family that are widely disseminated by the media and are a part of formal education. Paul (the youth minister of the First Methodist Church), in the course of an interview, recalled his high school instruction and told me: "The family starts

up with the need for shelter and then the need for food and then it moves up to the need to be cared for, the need to be encouraged and, I'm not using all the correct terms, the need for stimulation and the need to learn. The family can provide that."

The family has the primary responsibility for the raising of children and its role in their healthy development is considered paramount. It is the father and mother who must legally assume the child's economic support and bear the responsibility for his or her socialization and education. They should create a private environment of stability and support and provide their children with all opportunities for development and education that will permit them to become independent and function fully in the larger society.

But the family is also considered important for the adults. The family is regarded as a private "haven" and an emotional refuge from a competitive and potentially hostile society. It gives meaning and purpose to the life of adults and constitutes the only unit where some of their most fundamental physical and emotional needs can be properly met. Without a family one is, as it were, incomplete, lacking the support needed for healthy growth. It is the family which ideally gives emotional security, enabling the individuals comprising it to play their roles in the larger society.

Dr. Baker told me: "In our family we are very much aware and concerned about the importance of family life toward the development of individuals as well as of the family; we feel that the opportunities to learn from each other, to share with each other our experiences are very important for us as individuals. I think that such things as feeling a sense of stability and support and caring kind of feelings can happen within the family that you may not get it anywhere else."

The relationships between the members of the family have for traditional informants a special quality that distinguishes them from most other relationships. They are regarded as "natural" relationships, relationships, that is, that are based on known biological facts and, as such, are permanent and cannot be altered. Each member of the family should act towards the others with love as the guiding principle. Love in this context signifies trust, support and affection, and it is ideally unconditional and enduring. Whereas work or other relationships may be contigent on performance and pursued for utilitarian reasons, a family's acceptance is unconditional and asks for no

return.[4] Paul told me: "If that family decides that they are not going to be there for you, that is conditional, that's not a family."

This quality is seen to be built in the biological facts themselves.[5] Parents and children are regarded to be of the same flesh or as Schneider writes of the same "biogenetic material".[6] This biological unity is a symbol of their social unity and it is regarded as a "natural" substratum from which cognatic love "naturally" springs and develops. Physical similarities between parents and children were identified and cherised and children were often thought to take after their parents because of physical heredity. Paul told me: "I am their first son, they are my natural parents, they have an incredible amount invested in me as a person."

Religious and civic rhetoric stress the importance of family life for both individuals and society. A good citizen and a good professional is a person with "a solid family life": "A Rotarian is a person of good character and good business or professional reputation. It is obvious that one cannot sit back and relax for between these lines are written diligence, hard work, a solid family life, and a very natural communication with one's fellow man."[7] Moreover, the wives of professionals, corporate executives, etc. are expected - and this can influence their husbands' careers - to participate in civic and professional organizations and functions, and generally produce a public image of sound and wholesome family life.

Traditional informants considered the family "the cornerstone of society" and attributed many present social evils to the decline of family values. Dr. Baker told me: "We talked about it, quite a little bit in our own family and feel that what the problem in our country currently is, is the fact that many families have become dispersed and they are no longer what we call a traditional family unit. So many individuals are living alone, so many families have had disruptions like divorce, separations and a lot of people have grown up without having the feeling of belonging to a unit like a family, to having had the support of family members through crises and through happy times."

2.2 Alternative Views

Some aspects of the traditional family ideal were shared more widely among my informants. The family was generally seen as a place of "love and nourishment" and most of my informants were married, had children and valued family life highly. However, most people do not have the strong, articulated pro-family discourse of traditional informants, and attitudes about family depart in some important ways from the traditional model. Families were not always regarded as providers of care and support, but also as potentially neglectful and harmful, and family obligation was often seen to contradict with individual self-fulfilment.

Many informants viewed the creation of a traditional family not as a social duty or a natural destiny but as an option open to individual choice. Not everybody has to marry and not every couple has to have children. Sexual intercourse does not necessarily entail procreation as there are effective contraceptive methods and the possibility of abortion. For an individual or a couple the decision to have children is one possible alternative among others. It is a choice rather than the normal and necessary step for personal well-being and fulfilment. People may remain single or couples may choose not to have children. Women can have careers, and marriage and procreation do not represent their only available option. Margaret (a member of the group of the political radicals), for instance, did not see motherhood as a biological instinct in women and thought that if one wanted children one could adopt them anytime. Melanie was not certain whether she wanted to have children or not. She told me: "I only want to have children if I really want to, and if I feel I am ready, and to know that I could be a good parent. I think I have to feel very good about my career, I feel that strongly, good with whoever I'll be married to, I have to feel this security."

The traditional expectation to have children is regarded as a reflection of a need of the past. Children no longer represent security in old age and they are not needed to work on the farms. Linda told me: "I imagine that [the traditional expectation to have children] came from a society of pioneers that needed children for the workforce. Back in the early days in the Midwest, if there was an orphan child, people would almost bet on it to adopt, because

they needed one to work on the farm."

The traditional family is not unambivalently seen as contributing to the well-being of the individual and some of the most important dilemmas can be seen in the views of people who do not want to have children of their own. Some of my informants - a minority - were explicit about not wanting children and a few had even sterilized themselves. Their reasons for this choice may differ.

Some were among the political radicals. Their scepticism about family life was related to their political philosophy. The traditional family was seen critically, as an institution perpetuating inequality between men and women and indoctrinating children in the norms of a "repressive society". They viewed the world as unjust and overpopulated and they were pessimistic about its future.

For others their reason for not wanting to have children had more to do with the calculation of costs and benefits. Child-rearing was often seen as an exacting and uncertain enterprise, entailing many sacrifices and offering little reward to the parents. Children were regarded as restraining the parents from full participation in the adult world and as competing rather than contributing to their growth. Henriette Clifford (Linda Ackerman's doctor who lived in the same Alvamar neighbourhood as the Ackermans) succintly summarized these dilemmas: "It costs so much, in time, energy, and money itself, to bring kids up now; trade offs have to be made, in terms of career, success, standard of living."

Not only have attitudes towards family life changed, but the very essence of family relationships is differently perceived. Family bonds are not so much regarded as "natural" relationships based on biology, but as "social" bonds created by choice.[8] This can be seen if we consider attitudes towards adoption. According to some of my informants attitudes towards adoption have importantly changed during the last decades. Whereas in the past adoption was regarded as a misfortune for both the parents and the children, today it is more generally considered an equally valid way to have children and create a family. In the past the fact that a child was adopted was usually kept secret from neighbours and friends and the child itself, whereas today people tend to be more open about adoption and tell the child the truth from an early age.

Adoption was quite frequent among my informants and most adopted

parents or children that I knew seemed to attach no particular significance to the lack of biological connection. The Taylors offer an example. Prof. Taylor and his wife, responding to a perceived need for adopted parents, decided, after having two biological children of their own, to adopt a third child of Mexican American extraction. Prof. Taylor said that he did not know of any couple "that would go to adopt a child first off without seeing of having a child of their biological own" but also that, for his wife and himself, the fact that their adopted son was not their biological child "was not a big deal" and "didn't really matter". He also told me: "There is a feeling on the part of some people including some of my relatives that there is a difference between the biological child and the adopted child. That the adopted child is not quite of the same status, not quite as fully as the biological children and, of course, I don't like that at all."

This change of perception can be also seen in the case of step-relationships. Given the great frequency of divorce and remarriage, "family units" are often consisted of persons who are not biologically related. Step-relationships varied enormously depending on a lot of factors such as the age of children at the time of the remarriage, the attitude of the biological and the step-parents, the degree of personal compatibility and so on. In many cases they were regarded as equally valid relationships, the kinship terms were used, and the family appeared to be a matter of choice and commitment rather than biological relation. Amy, a graduate student, told me: "I think there are lots of different kinds of families. There is my real family, or my birth family, or natural family, and that would be, you know, a father and a mother and their children. But families don't allow that now, because so many people get divorced that families end up a mother and her two children and her second husband, so the father is not the real father of those children. So family ends up becoming something that, I think, we can create. And we use the terms of 'father' and 'mother' and 'brother' and 'sister', and we refer to those in terms of the natural family, but it's something that you create and that you choose."

3. FAMILY ROLES

There was great variation in the conception and implementation of family roles in almost all milieux of my fieldwork and this section is devoted to the

description of this variation.

Contrary to the picture supplied by the Lynds from the 1920s and 1930s[9] or that of Seeley et al from the 1950s[10] where the traditional division of family roles is clearly the predominant, and married middle-class women in employment are rather the exception, the picture that emerges from my fieldwork in Lawrence is much more complex. The traditional differentiation of family roles has been forcefully criticized by the feminist movement[11] and women's right to participate in the occupational world was acknowledged in almost all milieux.

In Lawrence an atmosphere of pluralism prevailed in almost all milieux of my fieldwork and couples were in most cases free to determine their respective family roles by themselves. Some people may claim that women's employment is responsible for what they see as a decline in family life and consider women's employment incompatible with it. However, the traditional conceptions of family roles have been so powerfully criticized that their advocates seemed rather to be on the defensive. An editorial in the local newspaper defended the woman's right to stay at home in the face of feminist critiques rather than attacked feminist views. It stressed "the right of women to choose" and defined it as following: "That means the right not only to choose an ambitious career but also to choose a more traditional role. Sometimes it means giving a woman the right to choose different paths at different times in her life. One part of her life might be directed to child-rearing, while another portion is dedicated to the workplace or community service."

This atmosphere of pluralism was evident in the First Methodist Church. There were many "one-career couples" (that is, couples where the husband is the sole provider and the wife has the primary responsibility for the house and the children) in the church, and most married women who worked held lower responsibility jobs,[12] but there were "two-career couples" (that is, couples where both spouses have demanding professional careers) even in my sunday school.[13] Different family arrangements were equally acceptable and feminist ideology had to a certain extent influenced the attitude of the church. There was - for example in the minister's sermons and general attitude - recognition of the strains that the traditional position of women in

the house imposed on them and a sense that, whatever the division of family responsibilities chosen by the spouses may be, husband and wife should have the same authority in all family matters.

I will begin presenting this variation with the traditional middle-class one-career model. In this model, husband and wife have different although interrelated tasks that are thought to be grounded in their different natural aptitudes and inclinations. The husband is the breadwinner and the wife stays at home and devotes herself to husband and children.

Many of the women who become housewives however express dissatisfaction, and in general view traditional conceptions of family roles with scepticism. I continue my presentation by examining some of those dissatisfactions and dilemmas.

Finally, I examine cases of a radical rejection of traditional conceptions of family roles. For many informants, both sexes are considered equally endowed to perform all domestic and professional responsibilities and women's engagement in professional careers is considered compatible with the creation of a family.

3.1 The Traditional Model

The primary role of the man in the traditional model is to provide for the family. The man is the "breadwinner", solely responsible for the economic well being of the whole family. The ability to provide is so essential, that for some traditional informants, the fact that a prospective husband is successful in his profession shows that he is a "man of character" that can make a "good husband". To achieve the relatively high economic standards of the middle-class family a man must be at least moderately successful in a career.[14]

But the father's responsibilities are not only economic. Business and community activities should not totally prevent him from participating in family life and interacting fully with other family members. The former activities have a distinct place in the life of a model citizen but the family should be given the highest priority. By making the right choices, a fine balance should be made between his various responsibilities. Although his professional responsibilities occupy most of his time, he is expected to be actively involved in the life of the family. He is required to participate in the

whole child-rearing process - although his role is thought to increase as the children grow - and, depending on the circumstances, to contribute to the actual household routine as well.

Male responsibility in business is regarded to stem from the man's natural aptitudes and inclinations. Men are seen as more logical, more practical and less sentimental than women. They are depicted as more competitive and more able in dealing with the harsh realities of the occupational world whereas women's more delicate and sentimental nature makes them more suitable for child-rearing and the home.

A man fully occupied in his career corresponds in the traditional model to a woman who is a "housewife" and a "homemaker."[15] The role of the wife is also often conceptualized as a "job" and it is equally demanding. The woman takes the husband's surname at marriage and is expected to stay in the home and devote herself to husband and children.

The home is her realm. She must create a domestic atmosphere of security and success that will appeal to her husband and secure the sound development of her children. She is responsible for the house's equipment and decoration and must be kept informed about current household fashion trends and show sensitivity, talent, and "womanly" care. It is her duty to cook the meals, to manage the everyday functioning of the household, and generally perform most domestic tasks.

The wife has the primary responsibility for the children's well-being and rearing. She is expected to provide an atmosphere of warmth, security, and unconditional love for her children, to be informed in matters of child-rearing, and generally organize and oversee the children's life and development. According to my traditional informants, a woman's true destiny is to become a mother; matherhood was regarded as the fulfillment of female nature and maternal love as an instinct with which women are naturally endowed.[16]

In addition to their roles as mothers and homemakers, women in traditional one-career families are expected to contribute to their husband's professional success. The wife is expected to move home without complaining according to the requirements of the husband's career, to acknowledge that he works hard, and be prepared to offer him emotional support and encouragement. Moreover she is expected to enhance his

professional image by participating in civic and business-related organizations and functions, and by generally providing the family and social life that are necessary for his success. Civic and more particularly charitable activity is an important duty of women through which they are considered to show responsibility in a way appropriate to their natural disposition.

There are many examples from my fieldwork indicating the continuing relevance of the traditional model. Jennie (the young Mormon student we met in the last chapter) thought that, as a woman, her primary role was to have children and stay in the home and raise them. She was willing to quit her studies and devote herself to husband and children as soon as that possibility presented itself. She said that, although she was interested in her studies, she could be equally satisfied as a housewife provided her husband had the same interests as herself.

The Bakers offer another example. They have folllowed during the whole of their married life the traditional family roles. Dr. Baker had a successful professional career and has always been an exemplary father. Louise devoted herself to her family and eagerly participated in civic organizations and projects.[17] Differentiation of roles continued after retirement although they did most things together and to a large extent shared authority. The kitchen was definitely Louise's realm; she didn't want other people "to mess with it" and she kept it, as well as the whole house, spotless and in perfect order.

In a conversation on the subject of family roles, Dr. Beach, who was in favor of women's economic equality, told me that women after having gained equality are now returning to their sphere "separate but equal."[18] Louise was of the same opinion and was proud that her daughter has also become a housewife. She had intellectual and artistic interests and always expressed her opinions in the Sunday School and in other occasions, although she also distinguished between the affairs and interests of men and women and kindly declined to be interviewed on the excuse that she was "just a girl." Dr. Baker, who on informal occasions called Louise "the boss", regarded some of her attitudes as characteristically feminine. In many conversations with them, it was Dr. Baker who talked about the "serious" matters and stood symbolically as the head of the family.

3.2 Dilemmas and Dissatisfactions

The traditional model, although adopted by many of my informants, has been subject to severe criticism. The "frustrated housewife", the woman who although she initially accepts her traditional role in the home expresses ambivalence and dissatisfaction toward it, started receiving attention from the media and the social sciences from the early 1960's.[19] The phenomenon appears to be even older as women's dissatisfaction with the domestic role has been recorded by many American historians of the nineteenth century family life.[20]

The example of the Ackermans shows clearly some of the most common uncertainties and dissatisfactions with the one-career model.[21] During almost all of their married life they followed the one-career model. Carl was the sole provider in a demanding career that occupied him most of the time. Linda on the other hand stayed at home and devoted herself to husband and children. They moved according to the requirements of Carl's career and Linda contributed in many ways to his success. She took care almost exclusively on her own of the home and children, worked as a volunteer in the community and the hospital-related charities and offered him emotional support. There were periods during which she identified almost completely with her role. She told me that during that time she would never go out if her appearance or that of her children was not absolutely perfect, and that she kept the house so clean and tidy to the point of even storing the towels in order of colour.

But at some point, partly because their relationship was so strained, she rejected the one-career model and started becoming more independent. Before moving to Lawrence, the family lived in Salina (a small town in central Kansas), where Carl worked in the local hospital and Linda was relatively happy and a well-integrated member of the community. When Carl got a better position as the executive vice-president of one of the largest hospitals of the state in Topeka, Linda refused to follow him. Carl rented an appartment in Topeka and commuted at the weekends. The compromise

they reached was to move to Lawrence from where Carl could easily commute to work, and where a couple of very good friends of Linda lived. When I met them, Linda was in the first year of Law School and they were practically living the life of a two-career couple although Carl was still the sole-provider.

Linda resented having lost many of her most productive years in housework and the care of children. Staying at home seemed limiting compared with the opportunities for growth in the outside world. She valued her involvement in the Law School very highly and she often said she hated housework, although she also felt guilty when her quest for personal fulfilment contradicted with her responsibilities as a mother.

Moreover, she resented feeling as an adjunct to Carl's career and said that he "didn't love her really", but that he married her because she "fitted in" with his life-plans and any other woman could easily take her place. Their difficulties to communicate with one another were sometimes presented by Linda in terms of the different values and general attitudes of men and women. Men - and especially men in executive positions like Carl - were presented as rationalistic and emotionally dry, whereas women were seen as more sentimental and less calculating. Both she and Carl often generalized about men and women in those terms, although they were unsure about the real nature and cause of those differences. Linda was not a feminist in any explicit or militant way. She liked *Self*, a middle-class magazine with moderately feminist views, but she also regularly got *Modern Housewife* - "just to get ideas". Carl on the other hand recognized Linda's frustration and was against discrimination towards women although he also seemed at times to believe that men and women were naturally different.

3.3 The Egalitarian Model

But many other informants rejected to a greater or lesser degree traditional conceptions of family roles and adopted more egalitarian views. This has been often identified as a historical trend in Western societies[22] and overall it was the dominant ideological trend in Lawrence. According to those informants, family roles are not naturally determined. All tasks can be equally performed by both genders and the division of responsibilities should

be a matter of ability and preference, not sex. Women's full employment in careers is considered compatible with the creation of a family and men are expected to share on an equal basis all domestic responsibilities. Granting women the right to full employment is considered by those informants to be ultimately beneficial for the family, since women's creative powers are no longer frustrated and motherhood is the result of a conscious choice.

I met couples who tried to eliminate all differentiation between gender roles. David and Paula are an extreme but very characteristic example of a couple believing that both sexes are made for the same work, perceive the same reality, and have essentially the same needs.[23] David was a realtor and Paula spent, during the period that I knew them, most of her time at home. They were both members of a Sufi sect in town and had two adopted children aged 5 and 9. Paula had a grand-daughter from a previous marriage, who lived nearby in Lawrence with her parents and was of about the same age as her adopted children. Paula's grand-daughter had short hair and was dressed like a small boy. The first time I met her I thought that she was a boy. To my addressing her as a boy she replied saying that she was not a boy or a girl but "a person"!

In this case, Paula had chosen to stay for some years at home. In most cases however, the rejection of the traditional understanding of family roles is associated with the positive notion of women holding jobs and careers in conjunction with their family responsibilities. The woman who is both a mother and a professional represents a positive ideal that may be regarded with reservation by some but is advocated and practiced by others. Work is a sign of women's emancipation, and much of the feminist critique concerns the right of women to participate in equal terms with men in the workplace. Employment is directly related to independence and growth. Women can only be free and have a full identity if they are economically independent. Only by being employed can they retain their independence within a marriage and acquire the skills necessary for full participation in society. I was told that women are the initiators of many prenuptial agreements. Pamela told me: "They made a great investment in their education and they are not ready to move at the drop of a hat." I knew a married couple who had made the agreement to decide their next moves alternately so that both careers can progress at an equal pace.

According to those informants, there is no natural basis in the traditional division of family responsibilities. All tasks, including infant care, can or should be equally shared. Pregnancy, which was experienced as an embarassing and frustrating period by many women, provides an interesting example. During their wife's pregnancy, men are encouraged to attend labour courses with their wives, feel as much as possible of the experience as their wives do, and participate in the birth in the delivery room. An informant even used the expression "expectant father" and I was told that some men experience "sympathetic pregnancy symptoms."

In general, the special identification of women with child-rearing is denied. The notion of maternal instinct is regarded by some feminists as a myth of patriarchal society. Carol, a young feminist mother from the group of radicals, told me: "Maternal instinct is a lot of bull. It's just another way to make women feel guilty. You'll notice nobody ever talks about paternal instinct." It is not so much a matter of "mothering" or "fathering" the child as of "parenting". Some informants viewed the traditional division of family responsibilities as stemming from the needs of the past. Diana - another feminist from the same group - thought that modern household technology has led to women's emancipation by freeing them from hard domestic labour and maternal instinct appeared in her eyes as the rationalization of past necessities rather than a naturally given condition of women's life.

The Cliffords offer another characteristic example. Both Henriette and her husband were successful full-time doctors who lived close to the Ackermans in Alvamar. When Henriette gave birth to their daughter she immediately returned to her studies for the next couple of years, and retained only a faint memory of her daughter during that time when the child was primarily cared for by her husband. He told me: "I don't think it's any less manly for me to change a diaper than it is to hammer nails. I just do what needs to be done."

4. FAMILY AND SOCIAL LIFE

We saw in the first section of this chapter that the family is regarded as a distinct sphere, an enclave set apart from the activities of "the world", devoted to the emotional support of the adults and the socialization of children. The family's special place can be seen also in ideas about childhood

and the exclusion of children from a large part of adult life.

Children are not considered ready for social life. Not only are they physically weak needing special care and protection for their survival, but they are also considered socially immature. Childhood is seen as a care-free period and was often idealized by informants.[24] Children are regarded as morally innocent and their physical, intellectual, and moral development is primarily thought to depend on the influences of their environment. Parents must protect and educate them before they are ready to participate fully and independently in social life. Much of adult life is considered inappropriate and of no interest to children and, given the generally recognized heterogeneity of society, potentially harmful and dangerous. Thus only with caution can they participate in the world of adults.

The home, the primary agent of child-rearing, is ideally spatially separated from the other activities of society. The suburb is a good place to raise kids because it is insulated from the outside world. The western Lawrence suburbs are almost exclusively residential areas that (given their relatively long distance from downtown and the Kansas University Campus) can be reached only by private automobiles. Even the kinds of stores that can be opened on the major thoroughfares of the western suburbs, where in addition to the churches some commercial activity is allowed, are restricted to what is considered "harmless" and "clean" fun. From the point of view of a suburbanite, Lawrence downtown is an area of commercial, economic, and recreational activity open to all, a world of strangers that children should be allowed to enter only under adult supervision. Moreover, the neighbourhoods surrounding downtown appear as a world of poverty and perhaps crime and they are considered unsuitable for proper family living.

Child-rearing is a task that the family shares with educational and other institutions rather than with relatives and neighbours. From birth until the age of 5 or 6 a child is reared almost entirely in the home by his parents. In one-career families this is the mother's full-time job. In most cases, even in traditional families, relatives are not part of the everyday life of the family and the larger kin-group meets mainly on ceremonial occasions (like Christmas, Thanksgiving, marriages, birthdays and so on). Close neighbours and friends sometimes replace relatives to a certain extent even though, in general, none of the available resources provides the woman with

continuous companionship in her tasks. From the age of 5 or 6 until the end of Junior High School (at about the age of 15), the home remains the primary agent of child-rearing although it is supplemented by compulsory schooling, optional religious and other activities, and the increasing influence of playmates. After the age of 15, although the parents retain the primary responsibility of child-rearing, the place of the home tends to recede in favour of a combination of other formative influences.

In families where both parents work, the role of specialized outside institutions and of payed help increases considerably. Children may go to nursing school from the age of 2 or 3 and spend from an early age a considerable part of each day in formal childcare settings.

Apart from family and specialized institutions, children can participate only in some parts of social life. Children can accompany adults in city festivities, basketball games or neighbourhood picnics where the environment is considered appropriate and provisions have been made for their accomodation. For example, a public debate took place sometime before the Lawrence city festival concerning the sale of beer in the event. The question was whether drinking adults should be allowed to intermix with families with children.

But children were generally excluded from most of social life. The family is not a productive unit and economic activity is in most cases separated from family life. The house is geographically separated from the workplace, and visits of the children to the place of parental employment remain sometimes notorious for the disruption and embarassment caused. Children do not accompany adults in many social activities and, with the exception of the occasions we mentioned, they are almost absent from public life. For example, children do not participate in political life, in most of the functions of the voluntary associations and in general in the adult business of society.

Even in events in which they can participate children's activities are to some extent separated from those of the adults. The church is an institution addressing the whole family. But even here the activities of children and adults are separate. The Sunday school meeting, for example, was attended only by adults. A nursery was provided by the church and there were youth groups for the older children. Children and adults joined again in the church service.

Adult and child entertainment are also generally distinct. There are special films for children, specially designed entertainment activities, and children are not generally considered to share the same abilities and interests as adults. Children can go along to coffee houses or fast food restaurants but they are legally prohibited from entering bars, and their presence in good restaurants is generally deterred. Some informants told me that to bring children to a good restaurant is a working-class characteristic. In one of Lawrence's downtown restaurants there is a notice above the counter saying: "Unattended children will be sold as slaves."

Children's presence in public is more generally problematic since children are considered to lack the reason to abide by the rules. Parents are expected to prepare themselves and find ways to keep the child occupied during any venture in the outside world. In a visit to an insurance office in Lawrence I noticed in a corner a small box with toys, that was there for the purpose of entertaining children accompanying adult customers.

Children's appearance and behaviour in public reflect upon the parents and sometimes to be in public with a child was perceived as problematic: "I would not leave the house with this child to go to the grocery store unless she was dressed to take a picture. I would not let anyone to take a picture of her in her natural state because she wouldn't be a perfect child. I would choose not to go shopping if I thought she would misbehave, I chose not to go out to eat with her. I bought books to read to make her right." To "be right" meant "to be able to sit in the church for an hour, to be able to go to the country club and eat for an hour and a half and be cute and charming and smile but not run around and not throw your food." (Linda)

Moreover, children are often excluded from the adult private life. Some parents may include their children in their social life as much as possible, whereas others kept the family separate to a greater extent from their other activities and regarded children as a disturbance. Family occasions (like birthdays, family reunions, great celebrations) include children as a rule. Informal socializing with friends may or may not include children. The fact that there was a tendency to socialize between couples who had children of similar age, is indicative of children's exclusion from social life. Children are very rarely seen in adult parties. In the party (with more than 60 people invited) that followed the marriage of Jim and Debby, there were no other

children present except Debby's son and his two cousins who lived in the same street, and the three children spent most of the time playing alone in Debby's sister's house. But it is also indicative of the separation that children did not participate in either one of the two Sunday school dinner parties I attended, although the hosts had children who were in the house during the event.

5. PARENTS AND CHILDREN

5.1 Traditional Views

We saw in the last section how the family environment, based on the home in the suburb, is separated from a large part of social life and child-rearing is an activity for which parents have the almost exclusive responsibility, which they share with institutions rather than relatives and neighbours. In this section we focus more closely on the relationships between parents and children and examine the ideology as well as the practical quality of those relationships.

The healthy growth of children that will enable them in due time to become independent is the family ideal. The family is oriented toward the future. Its task is to equip the child as effectively as possible with all available means for his later independent life in the adult world. The role of the family in the wholesome development of the child is considered paramount. The character and the development of the child are thought to depend primarily on the influence of the family environment and the opportunities for growth and development that will be offered to it by the parents.

We saw in earlier sections that in the traditional model, unconditional love should ideally characterize family relationships and that parental - and especially maternal - love is regarded as a natural outcome of the biological relationships between parents and children. Given the complete dependency children have on others for their development, the responsibility of parents to their children is especially stressed and parents who fail to fulfil this obligation in at least a tolerable degree are regarded as irresponsible and they are castigated.

The rearing of children may involve parental sacrifice but it is also regarded

as a fulfilling period, as important for adults as it is for children. Children are often regarded as a continuation of parents through life and a source of meaning and satisfaction. They were regarded as a source of joy and a positive challenge in the life of the parents. Linda told me: "It's a fulfilment. It's very fulfilling to carry life, to have someone need you to live. That means you give life." .

For traditional informants, seeing and helping a child to grow is one of the most rewarding and exciting things in life. Dr. Baker told me: "There is just a great deal of joy from children, from having a family; there is a lot of fun, a lot of interest, a lot of just life, of experience of life that comes from being a parent. When I see couples that don't have children I feel sorry for them. I think they are missing an important part of life."

The family should be a high priority in the life of the parents. Both husband and wife should combine their efforts for the creation of a healthy family environment. Family living is a way of life. It entails a certain set of priorities, certain values, certain practices. Professional advancement, personal development, or community activities should not absorb them at the expense of their family obligations. Good parents not only provide for their children materially but spend time with them and they are generally involved in their lives. They care about their physical, intellectual, and moral development, and they develop deep emotional relationships with them. Neither parents nor children should cling to those relationships and parents should prepare both themselves and their children for the latter's independence. But for as long as the family stays together parents should ideally remain the primary social and emotional point of reference for their children.

The "education" of children (the instruction of children in established educational institutions) is one of the most important preoccupations of the family. Education is highly valued among traditional informants and it is regarded as having spiritual as well as practical significance. Parents must take an active interest and get involved in the education of their children. All children are expected to complete higher education, and it is common for parents to open almost upon the birth of a child his or her "college account." Parents should carefully select the schools and insistently encourage and stimulate their children. "My parents started talking about college in Junior

High." (Linda) Supplementary religious and artistic instruction as well as participation in leisure, athletic and other activities are also thought necessary in most cases. Parents should be informed about courses, encourage their children's talents, provide transportation, and be actively interested in their children's activities. Moreover, they should participate in the organization of the educational life of the community and volunteer in the associations that are preoccupied with this end (such as the Parent-Teacher Association).

Yet, according to traditional informants, some of the most important things are learned in the home. Parents should be good role models for their children. Their own integrity as persons is considered to be of crucial importance for the child's development. Values, attitudes, and habits are primarily formed in the home. "Family builds character and gives a solid foundation in life" (Dr. Baker).

Parents should be able to develop sound and consistent relationships with their children, and avoid favouritism and "hyper-anxiety" about the child's future. Traditional informants, although often influenced by the more "democratic" prescriptions of modern psychology, were also explicit about the need to instruct and orient children.[25] While they emphasized respect of each member of the family as an individual, they also stressed the importance of transmitting to their children the "right" set of values. The approved disciplinary methods were in most cases democratic involving free discussion and persuasion rather than strict obedience to the parental "Do as I say because I say it" of an earlier period.

Dr. Baker told me: "Parents need to be definite about certain responsibilities that they expect their children to fulfil. I think they need to be as consistent as possible in regulations, rules or expectations. I think they need to be open however to changes and listen carefully to their children so that when something needs to be altered in the family structure it can be done. I think children constantly look toward their parents for guidance, and leadership and structure, and they lose some stability if they don't have that in their home. So how do they do it? I think trying to be aware of the importance of being good role models. Giving their children room and space to grow as individuals so that each one can feel unique".

The quality of the marital relationship is considered of primary importance for the good function of the family. Serious marital disagreement or conflict

which may lead to dissolution of the marriage is viewed as damaging to the whole familial constellation. The relations between brothers and sisters must also be harmonious; this amity is expected as a direct result of the soundness of the husband-wife relationship.

Families deviating from those patterns are thought as "dysfunctional". The term was very often used by different informants. Linda used to say, even publicly sometimes, that their family was dysfunctional, and Melanie said that she grew up in a dysfunctional family. Charles (the minister of the First Methodist Church) once told me that "there are many more dysfunctional families than we think" and Father Newman defined the term as following: "Elements in the family, either in the relationships and in the patterns of alcoholism, sexual abuse, those kinds of things are there that cause the next generation not to be able to function naturally, quote normally."

Following the imperatives of the traditional model is no easy task and entails important sacrifices from the parents. Even in one-career families, father and mother have demanding roles and children are from an early age engaged in a multitude of organized educational, religious, sport and entertainment activities. The members of the family have thus different schedules and a special effort needs to be made for all members of the family to meet together. Given the great demands of non familial social and economic life, it is not surprising that informants whose family life was consistent with the traditional ideal managed that only through conscious and deliberate effort. Paul attributed his strong family bonds to his parents' "almost obsessive need to have a strong family and to develop that. We did a lot of things together as a family and exclusive of other people. Our Christian environment really tended to further that too." As the care of children separates the parent from the mainstream of social and economic life a fine balance between various responsibilities has to be reached by the parents, and this is usually achieved by applying organization and coordination.

5.2 Alternative Views

Contrary to the traditional informants who had strongly articulated views about the importance of family life and the responsibility of family members, most people's views were not of such clear cut, systematic kind. Although

most people valued family life, many informants also viewed family obligation more ambivalently.

In the traditional model the family represents, for the mother at least, a vocation to which she has given herself and from which she mainly derives her sense of identity. Other informants however, regarded "parenting" as only a particular part of an adult life programme and one particular role among others. Given the general legitimacy of divorce, the roles of parent and spouse were, to a greater or lesser extent, regarded as distinct. Adult life consists of a multitude of different pursuits that are equally as important as the family for personal happiness and fulfilment. Linda who had a very full social life (she was a mother and a member of her natal family, she participated in various civic organizations as an individual and as the wife of Carl, she was a Law student, and she kept a wide range of personal friendships and acquaintances) used to say: "When the kids hit the door I become a mom." She also told me: "I do switch roles and I am conscious of it. A lot of people do it on the drive home." It is not perhaps accidental then that contemporary family advisers repeatedly stress that parenting is a "full time job".

Parenting involves duties and responsibilities that were often seen to contradict with the parent's individual freedom and growth. Parents have rights also and it is not enough to use up each adult life nurturing the lives that come after it. Professional and other achievements, personal development and happiness are independent adult pursuits and duties which can contradict with parental obligation. Serious dilemmas arise and informants often expressed feelings of "guilt" resulting from the inadequate fulfilment of parental obligation.

Contrary to the traditional ideology that idealizes childhood and regards interaction with children as a useful and valuable experience, children were very often seen more ambivalently. The care of children is often seen to restrain parents from full participation in the adult world and to compete with their other wishes and responsibilities. An informant succintly expressed these dilemmas: "Children are like a joyful-painful shadow that constantly covers whatever we do during those [child-rearing] years." Children are appreciated but they are also seen to restrain one. The contrast is clearly seen in the following incident. When I wished "good freedom" to a

young pregnant woman as we do in Greece, she opposed by saying that it is exactly with the birth of the child that she and her husband are going to lose their freedom.[26]

For an active, fully abled adult, the care and company of children often appears as a hectic and tiresome business that overworks and troubles the parents: "Insanity is hereditary. You get it from your children" (bumper sticker). Activities including children are often regarded as dull and normally not interesting for an adult. Parents often apologise to visitors for the nuisance the presence of their children represents and complain of children's continuous demands on their time.

In some cases the tendency to separate children from adults virtually becomes an anti-child ideology, and the question is not so much to protect children from adults but the opposite. In a television report that I saw in an informant's house, those interviewed stated they were very frustrated with small children on flights and were especially critical of the parents who did not bring anything to occupy their children. They asked for special flights for people accompanied by children, or for the designation of a special section in the aeroplane. Some of those present found the idea sensible.[27]

The separation of children and adults is in many cases extended within the family. The close proximity of parents and children in a smaller car was viewed as so troublesome that some informants considered a larger vehicle to be necessary for family travelling. A house should be ideally large enough to ensure privacy for each member of the family, and a motel must have a swimming pool so that children remain occupied. The summer camp does not only offer recreation and educational opportunity to the child but also temporarily relieves parents from child care.

5.3 The Absence of Parents

Many informants complained about the absence of their parents during their childhood even when they were physically present. It is not uncommon, even in one-career families, when the mother has undertaken important community or other outside responsibilities, for the members of the family to spend little time together and to spend most of that time in dealing with the day-to-day business of the family. Some parents tended to keep much of their

social life separated from the family and delegated a large part of childcare to external institutions and payed help in the home.

In some one-career families, fathers left almost all domestic and childcare responsibilities to the wife and generally distanced themselves from the family. This is particularly characteristic of the first critical years of an upwardly-mobile career. During that time career is for many men an almost entirely absorbing preoccupation. It demands long hours at the office, often exceeding the eight-hour working day, and it preoccupies them when they finally get back home. Many men, who experienced psychologically harassing situations in the office, primarily wanted home as an emotionally safe refuge and for this very reason tended to distance themselves from the everyday life of the family.[28]

But the same applies to many mothers as well. As we saw in the section on family roles, many women may find the demands made upon them as wives and mothers irksome in comparison with the communal, more lively world of university, profession or office and resent changing diapers when they could hold a professional position. It is not very uncommon, even when the mother stays at home, for child rearing responsibilities to be shared to a large extent with payed help. Some may even take the baby-sitter along on family vacations. There was a woman who used to come to the Alvamar swimming pool both with the baby and the baby-sitter.[29]

Melanie grew up in a family where she felt that she always was "in the way." "During most of my childhood my father worked in a different city about an hour and a half drive away. So he didn't live with us. He lived with his boss. I also hardly saw my mom. She was there but she was extremely busy taking care of everything: the whole household, the garden, the construction, whatever. I was very isolated because we lived in a very big house. We never had a neighbourhood. As a child I had my own world and I thought I could sense that my mother, I love my mother, but I sensed, from the words that she used, that the best thing for me to do for them was to be out of the way. I knew that, so, I was very good at it too. I could spend hours in my room, in my own little world, entertaining myself and that's how I always was a 'good kid'. My sister on the other hand was the 'bad kid', she was always rebelling, always making trouble, always being in the way."

For some women, the engagement in community activities represents a

way to "drop out" from their role.[30] Linda's mother, a very conservative woman who did not like children was described to me as a "full time volunteer." Linda described her experience as a child as following: "They were sort of non-existent as parents. They were always going out, always doing things outside the house. We were not allowed to talk at dinner at night, 'cause dad was tired and didn't like talking, so all we did was sit there and eat for twenty minutes. Neither one of them talked to us as human beings. They never asked me a question about my life. They were always gone, and even when we went on vacation the kids did their own thing and the adults did their own thing . . . But even when she [mother] was in the house she wasn't there. She never sat down and played a game with us."

5.4 The Two-Career Family

According to most informants the factor that had more than anything else affected middle-class family life during the last generation or two was the increase in the numbers of employed mothers. This is easy to understand if we consider the central importance women played in family functioning in the traditional model. Some saw it as a sign of family decline while others regarded it as a positive change. All agreed though that when both husband and wife hold careers or demanding jobs there is great difficulty in combining their various roles.

The central problem of the two-career couple and the salient feature of their family life was sheer overload. For all, time and energy were the scarcest resources, and efficient organization the prime imperative. Every minute of every day had to be scheduled to fit in all the requirements of career, child care, housework, and self care and development. Independently of their role as parents, both men and women should be ideally engaged in a career, entertain social relationships, volunteer for community activities, find time for education, sports, and othrer pursuits. In one of the regular therapeutic speeches that were given in the Altrusa meetings, the speaker urged her very busy audience to alocate time for themselves, and, as an organizing technique, advised them to make formal appointments with themselves.

The life of the family needs to be meticulously planned and flexible ways need to be found for the combined fulfillment of a plurality of domestic and

outside responsibilities. Children may start going to institutions earlier and payed help may be used on a regular basis. Parents and especially women, who in many families do perhaps more than their share of domestic tasks, often complain of overwork and exhaustion.

As all members of the family have their own schedule and coordination is difficult, it is not at all rare for members of the family to meet for only a few hours every week. Carl, who could quote statistics about everything, told me that the average two-career couple see each other alone for only 20 minutes every week. No matter how conscientious parents are, they experience great difficulty in combining their various roles. Linda told me: "We would need double and triple lives to fulfill the ideal". In some families parents seemed to manage more or less satisfactorily their various responsibilities whereas others obviously had difficulties. Another informant told me: "I think we cherish the idea of a family and we want our families to be quality families. We've become so busy, they aren't. The family has become a fast-food dispensing center and a place to get clean clothes."

In two-career families parents have generally little time for their children who must learn from early on to take care of themselves and be self-sufficient. The scene of children demanding their parent's attention is common in many families.[31] Parents are busy even at home and coexistence does not necessarily mean interaction. It is not accidental then that parents often spoke about the need to spend "quality time" with their children. This is a new concept reflecting the understanding of parenthood as one particular role among others. It also reflects the difficulty with which time together is found. Quality time is the time during which a parent can dedicate his/her whole attention to the child. "When I say that is that I'm gonna focus on my children as human beings instead of going through mechanically the day to day stuff. I am ready to be real with them" (Linda). Time with children had in many two-career families to be scheduled and sought intentionally. Linda would sometimes meet her children by appointment. In a very busy week she would meet the nine year old Greg at 6.30 in the morning for half an hour of time together.

5.5 Divorce and Remarriage

Another factor with a great impact on my informants' family life was divorce and remarriage. The parents of a large percentage of my informants were divorced and there was virtually no informant who did not know someone divorced in his or her immediate environment. Remarriage was also quite frequent and there was a significant number of step-families in my sample.

Personal circumstances varied enormously. In some cases spouses separate by common consent and they remain in friendly terms, whereas in other cases there is considerable hostility and conflict. Relationships between parents and children usually continue after the divorce although there are enormous differences in the quality of those relationships. In most cases children stay with their mother, but I also encountered cases where they stayed with their father or spent different portions of their time in the household of each one of their parents. Since many women rely on their husbands for economic support, divorce has a significant negative impact on their economic position, and some informants who were raised by their mothers recalled growing up in conditions of relative poverty.

Some informants recalled seeing both parents after the divorce whereas others grew up under the care of only one parent. Many informants - although by no means all - complained about their father's "indifference" and lack of support during their child-rearing years. Joan, a graduate student whose father remarried after divorcing with her mother, was critical of his absorbtion in his new family and his lack of commitment to his children from his first marriage. She complained that he did not assist any of his children financially and even refused to help her sister during a crisis situation.

Some of my informants whose parents had separated said that their parents' divorce was one of the most important events of their life with long lasting psychological effects. Joan attributed her close friendship with Katie (another graduate student) to the fact that they were both children of divorced parents facing similar problems and having similar reactions.

Parents who remarry while they still have custody of children from previous marriages set up complex households in which some children are

biological children of the wife, others are biological children of the husband, and there might be a third set of children born to the new union. There is no presice set of rules for social behaviour between step-relatives[32] and the decision to implement these relationships was in most cases a matter of mutual adjustment on the basis of personal selection.

The Wheelers household provides an example. Jim and Debby (who eventually married in September 1989) lived together without being married for about two years. Both had children from previous marriages but only James, Debby's 13 year-old son, lived permanently with them. Debby's first husband had disappeared after the divorce and had never seen his son since James was a baby, whereas Jim's first wife had died. The two biological families remained largely distinct but signs of merging were also evident. Debby had the primary responsibility for James' well-being and discipline and Jim was solely responsible for his own sons. Debby and James had eagerly adopted their new family. Debby wanted to marry Jim, and James was encouraged by his mother to use, and sometimes actually used, the kinship terms when addressing Jim and his sons. Jim was reluctant to assume parental responsibilities towards James although, in the everyday affairs of the household, he treated James like his own sons. Jim's sons on the other hand did not regard Debby as a step-mother and referred to her as their "father's girlfriend" in the beginning and their "father's wife" later, primarily because they had never lived in the same household with her.

The marriage of Jim and Debby had an important impact on their relationships with their children. It accelerated the process of independence of Jim's sons from their father and exposed James to a new environment. As Debby's loyalties were now divided between her husband and her son, and James could not participate in many of the couple's activities, he had to spend a lot of time alone in the home.

6. CONCLUSION

The family was highly valued by traditional informants and it was regarded as the only appropriate unit for the healthy development of both children and adults. The family is regarded as a "natural" unit (a unit that is formed according to the laws of nature), the two primary goals of which are the

socialization of children and the fulfilment of the sexual and emotional needs of the adults. Family bonds are seen to be rooted in fundamental facts of nature and should be ideally characterized by unconditional love, and family tasks are divided according to what are seen as natural differences between men and women.

The family, that is ideally based in a suburban home, is regarded as private and it is separated from a large part of social life. Children are seen as socially and intellectually immature and they are not considered ready to participate fully in social life. Children are indeed absent from most of social life and the family, assisted by the school rather than relatives and friends, has the primary responsibility for their socialization. The responsibility of parents to their children is stressed in the traditional model. The parents are expected to create in the home an environment of stability and support and to provide their children with all opportunities for growth and development.

The conception of family as a "natural" unit, although not completely absent from the discourse of non-traditional informants, has changed in important ways in favour of an understanding stressing individual choice and "social" rather than "natural" bonds. Many of my informants viewed the creation of a family not as a natural destiny but as an option open to individual choice. As many marriages dissolve and there is a high rate of remarriage, step-relationships are more frequent than in the past and they are in many cases regarded as "family" relationships despite the fact that the biological component is lacking. Adoption is also frequent and it was more generally considered an equally valid way to have children and create a family. Moreover, the natural basis of the traditional conception of family roles has been questioned. Many women expressed dissatisfaction with their traditional role in the home and the two genders were seen by the majority of my informants to be equally qualified to perform all domestic and social roles.

Contrary to the strong pro-family attitude of traditional informants the views of other people reveal considerable ambivalence. Children were often regarded as restraining parents from full participation in the adult world and their company and care were often considered to be a hectic and tiresome affair. "Parenting" was regarded as one particular role among others and parental obligation was often seen to contradict with individual self-fulfilment. Most parents assumed a plurality of social and domestic roles and

many experienced considerable conflict between their various responsibilities. In two-career families especially, family relations were strained by the lack of time and energy and many informants complained about the "absence" of their parents during their childhood.

NOTES

1. See the definition of the term in the introduction of part 1 of the thesis.
2. Margaret Mead has recorded this attitude (Mead 1949: 259).
3. According to the American historian K. Jeffrey, in mid-nineteenth century popular literature, the home is ideally located "in a usually sentimentalized rural setting" (1971: 23) and the family is regarded as "a utopian retreat from the city" (1971: 21).
4. See Schneider's famous description of cognatic love as "diffuse, enduring solidarity" (Schneider 1980: 44-54).
5. D. Schneider firstly observed this point (Schneider 1980: 24-25, 92, 106-117).
6. Schneider 1980: 25.
7. From the "Handbook of Information of the Rotary Club", published in 1985 and writen by a member of the Lawrence club.
8. The existence of a distinction between "social" and "biological" parenting in current "Euro-American kinship thinking" has been observed by M. Strathern in a series of recent articles and books. See especially, Strathern 1992: 14-30.
9. Lynds 1937: 176-182.
10. Seeley et al 1956: 176-183.
11. For a history of the American Feminist movement see Cott 1977: 196-206 and Gatlin 1987: 96-114, 138-153.
12. Although I will not present such cases in detail, in many instances women's employment does not represent a radical break from the traditional model : Women are entitled to work provided that this does not interfere with their role as mothers. This attitude was recorded by Mead (1968 : 304) and Gatlin (1987: 25). In many cases women work until they get married or until the first child is born, and return to work at about the time that the last child begins school. Because of the interruption in employment during the child-rearing years, women's professional prospects are seriously curtailed

and men remain the main breadwinners. In some affluent families especially, the work of women was perceived as a hobby equivalent to the community activity traditionally undertaken by women, although in other cases women's salary was an important component of the family income.

13. Around 70% of Lawrence's women aged 16 years and over were in the labour force, and the vast majority of them worked most of the year.

14. A professional career should be distinguished from a mere job or livelihood. According to Goldthorpe a career is an occupation affording the prospect but not the certainty of advancement, and commitment to a career is generally regarded as combining ambition, service to others, and self-fulfillment. Some careers are to be found in large organizations whereas others may be pursued independently or in business partnerships, as in medicine, law, or architecture. A career usually demands uninterrupted, full time dedication, and, especially in corporate organizations, the willingness to move in the place where a higher post might be available. See Goldthorpe 1987: 146. See also Hannerz 1980: 270-276.

15. For the history and the different connotations of those terms see Illich 1983: 47-48.

16. In a letter to Ann Landers (a famous national advice columnist) that appeared in the Lawrence daily newspaper in October 1989, a woman who felt miserable with the birth of her child wrote: "I feel like a monster because mothers are supposed to love their children and I am a total washout." Ann Landers titled the peice: "Unfeeling mother feels like freak" and advised her reader as follows: "When the Lord was passing out maternal instinct you must have been in the popcorn line. This doesn't mean that you are crazy or selfish or evil. Your own relationship with your mother may be a factor here, but nonetheless it's a deficiency in your basic make-up that needs exploration. I suggest that you get a competent therapist who specializes in nurturing and bonding."

17. A career in medicine was especially regarded by traditional informants as involving both spouses, and the role of the wife was clearly defined. On this point see also Goldthorpe 1989: 149.

18. According to Bellah et al women were by the early nineteenth century seen as "separate but equal" in their own "woman's sphere" (1985: 86).

19. Gatlin 1987: 49.

20. See for example, Cott 1977: 74-82 and Jeffrey 1972: 34.
21. Compare the Ackermans with the first of the examples provided by Bellah et al in the opening pages of the "Habits of the Heart" (1985: 3-8). See also Seeley et al 1956: 179-180.
22. Goldthorpe 1987: 147.
23. Illich 1983: 9.
24. Paul told me: "Childhood is wonderful here [in the United States] because we are a child-centered society. Anything that has to do with youth and being innocent and a child is exquisite. We know that as we develop and as we grow up we lose that. As we become older I think we worship it in some aspects, life is so easy for them, there is no worry and there is no struggle."
25. Democratic methods of child rearing, that became dominant in the United States after the Second World War (See Graebner 1987: 127, Friedan 1983: 403-404, and Seeley et al 1956: 167), did not intend to eliminate authority in the family but make it more efficient and rational. The American historian William Graebner writes about the most popular and influential proponent of a democratic model of child rearing: "Dr. Spock should be understood not as someone who stripped away or eliminated authority, but as an advocate of a new system of authority, as powerful and effective in its way as John B. Watson's behaviorism" (Graebner 1987: 128).
26. The entertainer Bill Cosby begins his best-selling book *Fatherhood* with the following paragraph: "So you've decided to have a child. You've decided to give up quiet evenings with good books and lazy weekends with good music, intimate meals during which you finish whole sentences, sweet private times when you've savored the thought that just the two of you and your love are all you will ever need" (Cosby 1986: 15).
27. Ann Landers published the following letter of one of her readers: "I loathe guests who complain about pets when they visit. My dogs live here. They are members of the family. I refuse to put them in another room when guests arrive. I wonder if the person who wrote this nasty letter has children. I've been in homes where the kids behave a hell of a lot worse than my dogs."
28. Seeley et al 1956: 177.
29. Although an extreme case it is not altogether uncommon for mothers not to feel maternal. Ann Landers who published a letter of such a mother commented in a later collumn: "You have plenty of company. I could not

believe the volume of mail on this subject".

30. According to the American historian K. Jeffrey some women in the 19th century found in community activity a socially acceptable way to "drop out" of the domestic role without explicitly rejecting it (Jeffrey 1971: 36).

31. Cosby describes eloquently such a scene: "Whether the father is trying to shave or nap or work, small children come to him like moths to a flame. 'Now look,' he says, 'I want you to *stop* that. I want you to go outside because Daddy is working. I've bought you three-and-a-half-million dollar's worth of toys and dolls. You even have a *beauty parlor* for the dolls, which you begged me to buy because it was the only thing you really wanted except, of course, the motorbike. It isn't that I don't love you. It's just that Daddy doesn't have time for you to rearrange his desk right now. I really do love you-you're better mentally and physically than anything I'd ever hoped for-but right now your hand is on the thing that's causing our problem. That thing is part of Daddy's job. *Your* job is to go upstairs and try to find something in that three-and-a-half-million-dollar room that can amuse you for five minutes. Why don't you take Barbie to the beauty parlor?" (Cosby 1986: 37-38).

32. It has been argued that there is a need for a new terminology as the "step" terms have survived in the English language from an earlier age when remarriage was usually preceded by death, not divorce. (See Goldthorpe 1987: 233-234.)

CHAPTER THREE
INDEPENDENCE AND RELATIVES

1. INTRODUCTION

We have until now examined marriage and the family during the child-rearing years. The nuclear family however, is located, as it were, at but a point in time. Parsons has called it a "self-liquidating" group.[1] It is a group of people, related to one another for a relatively short period by strong emotional bonds, which will dissolve after the task of child-rearing is completed. As soon as children reach adulthood they are expected to work or go to college, move to a place of their own, and become gradually independent of their family of orientation (the natal family).

Once the process of emancipation is completed, the relationships of the young adult with the members of his natal family undergo important changes. Most informants do not expect to live in the same city with their children after the latter's independence, and kin are scattered in large geographical areas. Marriage usually entails an important shift of loyalty from the family of orientation to the family of procreation and the individual establishes relationships with the family of the spouse (the affinal family). But even if a person remains single, he or she does not usually live in the parental home and the relationships with the members of his or her natal family are redefined in a more or less radical way.

This chapter is divided into three sections: section 2 focuses on the period of children's emancipation from their family of orientation; section 3 discusses the nature of kin relations; finally, section 4 examines views of moral obligation towards relatives.

2. INDEPENDENCE

2.1 Traditional Views

The family ideal is the development of children that will permit them in due time to become independent.[2] The family is oriented toward the future and its task is to equip the child as effectively as possible in the present with all available means for his or her later independent life in the adult world. There is such a stress in children's growth that childhood can be seen as a process of preparation for independence.[3]

Although parents should create an environment of unconditional support and acceptance, this dependency should be temporary rather than permanent. Family relationships must not become too binding, lest they shackle the child's progress towards autonomy. Linda remarked during an interview that "motherhood is a series of letting go", and the advice to "hold children close and then let them go" was commonly given among traditional as well as other informants.

The process of emancipation starts very early. Every new stage of independence is encouraged and celebrated. The major turning points correspond to the divisions of the educational system.

During infancy and early childhood parents should ideally be the hub of the child's world. Small children are considered completely dependent on parents who have the duty to fulfil all their needs.

As children grow up they go to school and parents share child-rearing responsibilities with educational and other institutions. This is a period where the family is still condsidered essential for the child although children's dependence is seen progressively to diminish. Children are expected to become during that period gradually more autonomous. They learn how to take care of themselves and they are entrusted with light chores in the home for which they are often paid a small amount. This is regarded as another preparation for the child's independence. Within different limits they are encouraged to develop individual traits and gradually establish themselves as distinct personalities. Their special traits and talents are stressed by the parents, and children start forming their first independent

relationships with their peers which remain under parental supervision.

Graduation from Junior High School, at about the age of 15, marks the beginning of adolescence. Parental authority should recede during that period and become more tenuous. Children become more autonomous socially, although they are still economically dependent on parents and they are still under the obligation to obey them. This is the period of the first dates, the first unsupervised parties and in general a greater autonomy from parental authority. Adolescents spend a large part of their time away from home and some acquire their own car. They are encouraged to take responsibilities and work during holidays regardless of the parent's economic standing.

Graduating from High School is a major turning point. The process of independence now reaches its culmination: "It's the line when you are supposed to be an adult, leave home and your parents get a brake. Public education stops. You are an adult. The parents telling you what to do are not there anymore, so you have to go out and figure it out yourself. You don't stay home to do that" (Linda).

From around that time children are looked upon as junior adults that should be allowed a large degree of freedom and start demonstrating their independence. For most middle-class individuals, the college years are a transition period leading towards complete independence. Young men and women usually move to a college town and return home during holidays or, if distance permits, during weekends and other occasions. Sometimes, even if they attend Kansas University in Lawrence, they move to a dormitory or a student apartment, although in other cases children stay in the parental house during college years. Parents usually finance their offspring's college education and remain an important influence in the child's life. "If you go to college then you have permission to come home as often as you want, and have your laundry done and slip right back into adolescence, but still you have to go off to college and *do* something. Once you graduate from college, then you *must do* something. And then you are not allowed to come back quite so much although kids are coming home in their late twenties" (Linda).

Children's independence is considered a necessary condition for their development. Only by becoming independent can they develop their own personalities and realize their full potential. "There is a certain independence

they attain and their parents want them to attain. They develop their own personalities otherwise they would be clowns of mom and dad. They reach adulthood in terms of age. They need to be taking a lot of responsibilities or exploring other opportunities, things to do with their life, just as their parents did" (Dr. Baker).

A "normal legitimate uniqueness", as Dr. Baker called it, is encouraged. All children need not develop at the same pace or toward the same goals and children need not be a duplicate of one another. "Parents should give children room and space to grow as individuals so that each one can feel unique, he doesn't have to be a cover and copy of the older brother or the younger sister" (Dr. Baker). Uniqueness is encouraged though only "up to a point" and must be consistent with traditional values and responsibilities. "They can develop their own characteristics, their own uniqueness perhaps can be expressed in their family; it means something can be different from what we have in our immediate family; my wife and I certainly do some things differently than our parents did. As parents we want our children to feel that freedom and courage to do so" (Dr. Baker).

However, the children's emancipation and their legitimate right to move to other places should not sever the bond with their parents. The children's independence is the result of a healthy change and relationships between parents and children enter in "a new exciting phase" (Dr. Baker).

Independence is often seen as a process dictated by nature itself. At about the age of 18-20 years, young individuals are considered as physically and psychologically mature, and therefore able to live independently. It is "natural" for the children to stay with their parents for as long as they need protection, guidance, and support, but it is "natural" for them to go their own way when they reach the age of physical and intellectual maturity. By now, socialization at home and education at school should have enabled children to develop their own personalities and support themselves.

Very often informants used analogies from the animal world to explain why children have to become independent. The "nest" is a frequently used metaphor for the family. Father Newman told me: "Part of it is just like the old mother cat we had at home who had these kittens, they were around her all the time until finally they got to the stage where she realized they were old enough and she turned them around a little bit : go out on your own and

leave me alone, I want sometime to myself now. She sort of cut the string between them, sent them off. Otherwise parents become possessive of their children, trying to tell them everything. You're not an adult if you can't make decisions by yourself. Parents have got to give them the freedom to make mistakes and to make their own decisions. You get to a certain point, you've trained them, they've got to apply for themselves, they need to be on their own, and make their own choices and failures."

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We saw that "independence" is rather a process than a particular point in time. This is a period where considerable adjustments need to be made by all parties. Parents should be prepared for their children's independence, and children should be able to meet successfully the challenges of independent life. The ideal is of a steady gradual break, but in many cases it is a crisis point.

In some cases it is the parents who experienced difficulties in adjusting to the new situation. Parents who are too attached to their children are known to suffer from "the empty-nest syndrom", that is, according to Dr. Baker, "the feelings of distress and emptiness that some parents feel when one by one the children have all departed".

But more often it is the children who continue to be attached to their natal family even after the formal time of independence has passed. The economic dependence of many children continued after their early twenties, and many children returned after college or after an unsuccessful marriage to live again with their parents. Some informants suggested - and national statistics support the point - that this is a recently intensified phenomenon related to economic changes that make it more difficult for young people to attain a middle-class standard of living independently.

The attitudes of parents differed to some extent even among traditional informants. Bob Baker was welcomed back home after he'd been to college and visited Germany as part of his studies. He stayed at home for about 8 months till he found a job in Kansas City. His mother gave him her old car which she let him pay for by instalments. Jennie stayed during the whole of her college years at home, and the directrice of the First Methodist Church choir returned to the parental home with her child after her divorce.

But returning home is not always acceptable. When Linda's brother came back home after a brief career in the army he was not allowed to stay in his

parent's home, but lived with his grandmother until he established himself in an occupation. Randy Frost, a wealthy farmer, told me that he makes sure his son, who declined a good career in the East and chose to return in Lawrence, has his essential needs met. He let him use one of his cars occasionally but he did not transfer ownership or buy him one. He told me: "With my son I am doing what the relationship would call for. Since he is not getting a regular income I make sure he's got food, shelter, and clothes. I let him use a car of mine but I don't give him a car. There are some restrictions."

In general, there are familial and social pressures on young people to be independent. Parents should support them without overindulging them. Father Newman told me: "We have the other problem in this country very much that the kids don't leave home economically. They say they don't have enough income to have a house and a car, so they live at home or they come back home. I think it's essentially selfish on the children's part. Sometimes, not always, some parents put up with an aweful lot and they give their kids too much. When you get to a certain point you have to be able to stand on your own two feet, because your parents will not always be there to pick up the pieces for you. You have to be able to back them without giving them too much."

In the home of a member of the Altrusa with grown up children, and in the office of the Episcopal Church, there was a notice saying: "CHILDREN: Tired of Being Harassed by Your Stupid Parents? ACT NOW. Move out, Get a job, Pay your own bills, While you still know EVERYTHING."

2.2 Alternative Views

Independence is an ideal in all families. Almost contrary to traditional informants though, who emphasized the continuity of relationships, other informants stressed more the right of every individual to independence and personal fulfilment unfettered from familial or other restrictions. Every person should be self-reliant and able to determine his or her own fate. John Morris (a 35 year old neighbourhood activist who had grown up in a Catholic family) told me: "There is an American ethic of independence, part of the immigrant ethic; coming to a new place with fewer restrictions of how you

conduct your life. The same applies to the family. The idea that each person should be free to determine his or her own destiny. Children can go their own way."

Parents are regarded as authority figures and independence is thought as a necessary step for the realization of individual uniqueness. The relationship between parent and child is seen as a relationship between unequals. Melanie told me: "When I think of mom I think of a parent figure, somebody saying 'do this; don't do that; you are supposed to be like this, not like that'. Between a child and a mom there is not much sharing because parents and children are unequal."[4]

In many cases parents experience their children's independence with relief. Brenda, another informant of mine, told me: "For me, as for others, now that that part [the child-rearing years] is nearly finished, there is relief, release, as I see them make their own way into life at last." Pamela also told me: "In my case it was much much harder for my mother to see me finally leave even though when I was at college I didn't live at home. I remember when I took my things from home, to mother that clearly signaled the end of my coming home between things - and I don't think I felt that nearly as keenly as she did. She was in tears when I left, and she has never done that before."

Many retired middle-class couples travel extensively or move to Florida or to Arizona in a house of their own or to a retirement community and generally take full advantage of the new social and economic freedom that their children's independence has given them. This is a right of parents that should not be encroached upon by their children. The eventual prolongment of obligation to their children is seen as an infringement upon their privacy and a burden. "Retired: Spending our children's inheritance" (Bumper Sticker).

Pamela, whose 19 and 20 year old sons lived independently in Lawrence, eloquently expresses this attitude: "Not everyone feels as I do, in fact, I talked to someone recently who was not pleased to have all of his kids out of the house. It was an interesting revelation. My own feeling is that because when the boys reached a certain age - 17, 18 - and we felt that they should have the opportunity to come and go pretty much as they pleased, because it seemed inappropriate to put limits on them, like 'you have to be in by midnight' and so on, if we couldn't reasonably impose those limits on them, and they

wouldn't observe the social amenities, which are that, when you live with people you sort of give them a clue about where you are going or when you might possibly be back, and if they want to have a meal with you, if they are not going to be part of the family that way, then it's much, much better for all of us, for our relationships, if they are not here to have to put up with my reaction, which is going to be, you know, that it is just driving me crazy. It's really inconsiderate of you not to let me know that you're not going to be home, because I get very worried, and you can go live in an apartment and stay out all night and that is fine and dandy. I can't help that, that's the way I am, I don't want to be on your back all the time, as I would be, so it would be much better for our continued loving relationship if you lived somewhere else.

"That is sort of a selfish viewpoint in some ways although it's not altogether selfish. A truly selfish viewpoint is that because Larry and I live together so peacefully it's very nice to just be able to do our own thing and not have to worry about planning for anyone else. We work all day and we come home and we are tired and it's very nice to not have to deal with someone else's problems, though as it is, if either one of the boys drops in to do the laundry, or to borrow our money, or because they have a problem that they want to talk about, then I am genuinely delighted to see them. I am quite certain that leaving the house has been good for both of them in terms of building their own independence and ability to handle their own affairs. The wonderful part of not being living with them is not having to feel a responsibility for overseeing their daily lives in anyway. I think we both still feel a strong sense of responsibility. If they got into deep trouble we would try to help them out, but unless they were the sort of kids who can put themselves into their parents' lifestyle as adults in such a way that there is a harmonious coexistence, then, there is just so much disharmony : 'why don't you ever pick up your clothes, why don't you ever tell us when you're gonna stay out all night, why don't you ever tell us when you are not coming home for dinner'. Some of those things can be worked out, but altogether they seem to comprise such a list of potential troubles that we are very happy to be without, and so are they. I suppose we surely must have taught them, though I don't remember that we ever said it in so many words, that at a certain point we would want them to be out on their own" (Pamela).

3. THE NATURE OF KIN RELATIONS

3.1 Traditional Views

There is a difference in the social world between people to whom one is "related" and those to whom one is not. The two terms most often used to designate the larger kin group were the terms "family" and "relatives". The term "family" was sometimes used to refer to all living kin, although in most cases it was a term of affective significance, connoting closeness and emotional warmth, and referring to some segment of the larger group of "relatives".[5]

The term "relative" on the other hand was more general; traditional informants almost invariably define relatives as all the people related by blood or by marriage.[6] They add that this is a broad definition and they usually distinguish between different categories of relatives. The range of people who are recognized as relatives is in most cases, even among traditional informants, relatively small. They usually counted as relatives all consanguines within close genealogical distance and direct affines. Most knew little if at all about their great-grandparents, had little effective contact with relatives beyond first cousins and could list few second cousins, and tended to be selective in the recognition of affinal ties.

Blood relatives, and especially close blood relatives, are differentiated from affines and they are the relatives "par excellence." They were the first to be stated in genealogies and their relations with the individual were invested with strong moral and emotional meaning. Traditional informants stress the moral obligation of blood relatives and the given and unalterable nature of their relationship. For some, relationships between blood relatives had an almost mystical quality and the fact of the genealogical connection seemed to dictate almost automatically the character of the relationship.

Traditional informants almost always included direct affines (like the members of the natal family of the spouse) in the category of relatives. The spouse in particular was in most cases considered to be a relative, and a close relative indeed. Ties with more distantly related affines though (such as those with the parents of the spouse of one's child) were less well defined and depended more on personal circumstances and compatibility.

Relatives do not constitute an undifferentiated category. When informants are asked about their relatives they usually begin with the members of their nuclear family of procreation. Husband, wife, son and daughter belong in this category. The nuclear family constitutes an independent economic and residential unit that is geographically separated by varying degrees of distance from other relatives. It is among the members of this unit that the closest bonds develop and the greatest sense of obligation is felt. Dr Baker told me: "I think in the broader sense we think that anyone who's related either by blood or by marriage is part of the family. I think the nuclear or immediate family is the one that's going to be closest in its experiences and the things that matter are going to be within the immediate family. The more you reach out to the other relatives the better because in our country people are so widely dispersed that we are rarely close to others cousins and so forth."

The next unit that informants distinguished (and to which they also referred as "family" or even in some cases as "immediate family") included blood and affinal relatives within close genealogical distance. This unit almost always included, apart from the members of the nuclear family of procreation, the members of the individual's natal family and of the natal family of the individual's spouse and their families, as well as more distantly related relatives like grandparents, aunts and uncles. Although this is not in most cases a residential or economic unit, members of this group tended to be informed of each other's lives, meet as often as circumstances permitted, and generally have close social and emotional relationships.

Traditional informants often knew, recognized, and kept some social contact with more distantly related relatives (like cousins, neices and nephews, or distant affines). Known relatives are usually recognized as such although the actual social contact and the degree of obligation between relatives of this category differ depending on many factors such as social and geographical proximity and personal compatibility.

3.2 Alternative Views

Opinions however, about who to consider a relative varied. Although most informants said that all the persons related to them by blood or by marriage are relatives, they also stressed the importance of personal factors in the

relationship with even close relatives. Biological relationships were not necessarily invested with emotional meaning and they were not seen as automatically conferring rights and obligations. People of the same genealogical distance may be preferentially recognized as relatives or not, and in some cases relationships with even close blood relatives can be barely existent or totally estranged.

Complete estrangement is not very common although it does occur. Prof. Taylor told me: "The sibling relationships are, I suppose, the first in our society to go or to be redefined in a more contractual way. If siblings do not behave the way they should to one another the bonds can break more easily than parent and child relations." Melanie told me: "I feel I have definitely broken the commitment with my sister for now. We are like siblings so there is no choice. Right now, honestly, I don't feel committed to her, maybe years from now, maybe when I'm thirty, I imagine we will be friends or something. I don't see any benefit for my well being to be around her, to talk to her."

In accordance with what we saw in chapter 2, many of my informants regarded kinship relationships to be a matter of social commitment rather than biological connection. Prof. Taylor told me: "As an anthropologist I point it out to my introductory students all the time : kinship is a social phenomenon not a biological phenomenon. And secondly, in my own personal case one of my children happens to be adopted, and so the biological connection of kinship is really something which professionally and personally is not a very significant thing to me. I say: 'blood is thicker than water' but I say that with reference to the obligation one has to relatives as opposed to non-relatives. But if those relatives happen to be non-biologically related - through adopted links or something like that - they're still relatives."

Prof. Taylor's views were very common among my informants. In Pamela's view, the rights and obligations that kinship relationships confer appear as social conventions and the sharing of blood is not invested with special meaning. She told me: "I don't know whether it's a physiological matter or a sociological matter or a combination of the two. I doubt if I would feel a bond to him [her brother] if we had never met, I don't think I would feel some strange pull in the direction of his house just because we had a blood relationship, but I suppose I must have learned some way that one has a certain kind of responsibility for and relationship to one's immediate family

members and he was my immediate family when I was growing up."

In Chris Wheeler's (the older son of Jim Wheeler) view, kinship relationships appear as purely conventional relationships with no intrinsic nature. The word "kinship" is not reserved for relatives and connotes a feeling of emotional closeness that one can have with relatives and non-relatives alike. He told me: "My experience with kinship is with people that I happen to feel close to that you might meet throughout your lifetime. I mean my brother and I have had no relationship as brothers for many years but that doesn't mean that in the end we're not extremely close, that we don't love each other profoundly. Usually it doesn't end up that way, not many people have a close relationship with their brother or their sister. It happened to us, but it's not because we are brothers, in other words I might have had another brother that I didn't have any feeling for; or certainly I don't have the same feelings for another relative as I do for my brother."

3.3 Relatives and Friends

The same contrast between traditional and alternative views can be seen if we consider the position of friends.

For traditional informants, relatives and friends represent clearly distinct categories of relationships. Whereas one is born with one's relatives and can count on them through good and bad times, friendships are voluntary and can be terminated if they fail to fulfil their purpose.[7] Many traditional informants had rich social lives and valued friendship, although family relationships usually took precedence over all other relationships. For Paul his family was clearly more important than his friends: "My family is probably the most important relationship I have with anyone. It's a number one priority."

The traditional distinction between relatives and friends is also found in the views of other informants. Prof. Taylor told me: "The whole thing about friendship is that it is contingent; everything can be changed and undone. Your brother, your sister, these are relatives for life. I would imagine that if we were to leave this town - my wife and I have been here for 22 years, our children have grown up in Lawrence and we have family friends that go back a very very long time - but I don't know that if we were to leave this town we

would retain ties with our friends in this town nearly to the extent that we retain ties with my brother, with her brother and sister, and so on."

In the discourse of other informants however, the distinction between relatives and friends was blurred. Many informants said that they felt closer to their friends than to their relatives and that they considered friends to be like relatives. This is not an insubstantial metaphor; many informants compared the obligation they felt towards their friends to that usually accorded only to relatives, and saw their friends much more often than their relatives.

Pamela defined loyalty as "the sort of support that one gives unquestionably to very few people, immediate family members and maybe a few very close friends" and considered a few of her friends as important for her as her closest relatives. Such close friends often become friends of the whole family and play the traditional role of relatives. She told me: "We have a few friends that we treat as family, for example, that we include in family gatherings. Anne is included in birthdays. When it's someone's birthday we automatically invite her. She's been a friend of the family for a long long time. She's watched the boys grow up. She flew them to Washington for a graduation present and showed them around for a couple of days."

The relationship of Jennifer with the Ackermans offers another example. Jennifer, who lived next door to them in Salina, was to a great extent rejected by her parents and had a special attachment to the Ackermans. For a child of her age (13) she used a surprisingly sophisticated therapeutic language to talk about her family, which had also moved and now lived in Topeka. She often spent time with the Ackermans, spoke regularly on the phone with them, was included in vacations and other family activities, and she was even called to babysit for the family. Both Carl and Linda - given the attitude of her parents - felt a strong sense of obligation, although they were also careful not to be antagonistic with her parents. Carl once said that they would pay for her college education if that were necessary.

Linda told me: "It seems that she was destined to be part of our family. The moving truck pulled in the day we hit Salina and Jennifer walked up the driveway behind it and she never really left. I think she found a feeling in our house of acceptance and love no matter who she was that day, that she

didn't find in her own house accross the street. It wasn't something she would reject her own family for but what it did was make up or add on. It was some kind of instant recognition, instant feeling for her that goes beyond any kind of rational description." When asked if she felt responsible for Jennifer, Linda said: "Absolutely. I feel responsible for doing what I can without going against her parents to make life better for her. I feel concern for her health, I feel concern for hobbies or schooling and I think I like the word concern better than responsibility, because not being her parent I am not allowed to be really responsible".

4. LOYALTY

4.1 Traditional Views

Kinship relationships in general, and especially relationships with close relatives, are highly valued by traditional informants and a strong sense of moral obligation or family "loyalty" is evident. Even when geographical distance separates them, parents continue to consider children as part of their immediate family, and children even when they have created their own family continue to feel members of their natal family.

Close relatives, particularly, are regarded as important sources of sociability and support although most traditional informants also recognized the impact of geographical mobility. Although a son or a daughter are not usually expected to live in the same city and have daily contact with their parents, they must be able to maintain close relationships with them and other close relatives (like siblings, grand-parents, aunts and uncles). The extent of such contact varies from periodical exchange of news by telephone and occasional "reunions" to regular outings together and the sharing of everyday experience. Close kin have the obligation to attend family gatherings, play specific roles in rituals like marriages and funerals, and support each other through life's difficulties. Occasions on which kin assemble include birthdays, weddings, achievements such as passing an examination or finding a better job, arrivals from or departures for foreign countries, summer vacations, and religious or national holidays like Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, and Independence Day. Depending on the stage in the family cycle, and the relative economic position of parents and children, parents may

help their children economically even after the latter's marriage or receive assistance especially when elderly and unable to live independently.

Dr. Baker told me: "We like to think that each child is going to start its own family unit and as they marry other children they will become a closely-knit family with which we are going to set up close relationships depending on distance and so forth. Even when the children leave home we want them to be considered part of the immediate family but if they live many miles away it's hard to have an influence at that point in their lives. We would like to think that distance really would not make any difference, but in reality we know that it does in terms of being able to do things and spend time together, although we would like to think we can be in close touch with our children wherever they were around the world and that the feelings would be the same."

But as the example of the Bakers' shows, there are many informants who are influenced in their choice of occupation and residence by familial considerations. Contrary to other informants who after their retirement may choose to move to some location in the "Sunbelt" or join a retirement community, the Bakers chose Lawrence for the cultural opportunities it offered and because they wanted to stay close to their children. Once they visited a retirement community and strongly disapproved of the individualistic attitude of some of its inhabitants.

Although none of their relatives lived in Lawrence, and most of the time relatives were not part of their everyday life, which was mainly dedicated to civic activities, the Bakers kept cordial and close relationships with all their children (who lived in Witchita and Kansas City) as well as with other more distant relatives. They were in regular contact with their children by telephone and used to see them frequently, mainly on occasions such as the ones enumerated above. Birthdays and other personal events, religious and national holidays, as well as other occasions like summer vacations, were usually spent with some or all of their children and their families. They knew their grandchildren well and kept track of all important events in the life of their children, although meetings always inolved travel and had to be planned and arranged in advance.

As Dr. Baker was an only child, their other closest relatives were Louise's two sisters who lived with their families in Texas and Ohio. Louise kept in

touch with them very regularly by telephone and the Bakers got together with them once or twice a year. Dr. Baker described those relationships as following: "It's a relationship of loyalty, of concern for each other, certainly of interest, what is going on in their lives, enjoyment in getting together. If either of them had some problem, that we could be of help with, there's been no question that we would step in and help out in whatever way we could. I think that's mutual; they would do the same for us." This support is mostly moral and emotional and is activated in crisis situations: "One of the brothers-in-law had a serious illness within the last year or two, so our calls were more frequent to them, and our concern was expressed in every way we could."

Moreover, the Bakers valued and kept contact with more distantly related relatives. Dr. Baker told me: "I have one cousin and his wife who still live in Kansas. They come and visit every Thanksgiving with us now. And this last year they not only came themselves but they brought their two grand-children who attend college in the Midwest [in Colorado and Oklahoma] and who, since their parents live back East near Boston, wanted at Thanksgiving time to be with relatives. So we had a family that included two grand-sons, a cousin of mine and his wife, plus our own children. And that same evening, the parents of our son's wife also came and spend the evening with us, and we consider them family."

Relationships with more distant relatives have a strong voluntary element. "We have two sets of in-laws [the parents of their married children's spouses]. Our daughter married a young man from Witchita, Kansas; his parents live in Witchita; we don't see them perhaps more than once every year or two depending on whether there are weddings in the family or something special on which we always participate and enjoy. We feel we have a good relationship with them although we don't know them in depth as we might other people we have been around more. Our daughter-in-law's parents live in the Kansas City area, closer to here, so we have been with them probably twice as many times in half of the time, and have a great deal more in common with them in terms of background than with the others."

Paul offers another example. Although he felt that his parents had in some cases interfered with his independence, he was very fond of them and had a very strong bond with them. Asked whether he considered himself

independent from his parents, Paul said: "But just how independent am I gonna become? I love these people and I care for these people very much. You know, I talk to them once a week and they're still very much a part of my life, and I don't think a day goes by that we don't think of each other, and there is always the care and support that I know of them and that I care for them too."

Paul chose to study in Lawrence because he wanted to remain geographically close to his family. He told me: "I could have gone to the East Coast or the West Coast to go to school but I chose to stay in Kansas because I wanted to stay close to my family." Although now almost independently living in Lawrence, Paul continued to feel a member of his natal family and thought that this wouldn't change even if he created his own family: "Whenever I create my own family I'm still gonna be a part of my parents family, I'm still gonna be their son. And I am always gonna be their son, and I am always gonna care for them, just the way they have always been children of their parents and they're still related to those people. I know my parents would love to have grandchildren." He felt that "the closer and the more often we see each other [his parents] the better" and thought that it was important "to be able to live in the same town, and to be around them once a week or daily or at least have that opportunity."

Marriage is seen as entailing a certain shift of loyalties from the natal family to the family of procreation but there is not a clear break and there is a clear sense of responsibility for elderly relatives. Paul told me: "When I fall in love with someone and make the decision to get married and to start a new family, I am taking a lot of responsibility. I am taking the responsibility to care for that other person and then if we have children, I carry a lot more weight, a lot more responsibility in that new family than I did in the old family. But the same time as I begin to support my own family in a very emotional and financial way, I am also happening to support my parents more, because as they grow older they are emotionally becoming more dependent on other people as well as financially."

Family loyalty was not restricted to the members of the natal family. Paul was very fond of his maternal grandparents and he considered his relationship with them as more intimate than most of his relationships. He told me: "I had a wonderful relationship with my grandparents when I was

young. I wrote letters to my grandparents all through college. I go and visit them twice a year, I see them four times a year, I call them".

4.2 Alternative Views

Views of moral obligation towards relatives varied widely among the rest of my informants. The significance of kinship ties was recognized by most informants although their influence was not considered to be always benign. A certain degree of obligation towards close kin was almost universally recognized, although there was a lack of clear-cut rules of behaviour towards kin and actual relationships varied widely depending on a lot of factors.

Although relatives are not regarded by Prof. Taylor as part of the individual's daily life, there is a decided sentiment of moral responsibility towards kin, and close consanguines especially are seen as important sources of emotional and even material support.

Prof. Taylor clearly distinguished the nuclear family from other relatives. Only his wife and children lived in Lawrence whereas the geographically nearest of his other relatives lived in Iowa. When asked about his relatives, he didn't even include his children at first in this category: "You see it's interesting, we are talking of kinship and I don't even think of my children in that category, so I am already distinguishing the nuclear family, which is something very, very separate from relatives."

Relatives may not be seen as sources of everyday interaction, but there is a strong interest in the maintenence of relationships with close relatives and a strong sense of obligation towards them. Prof. Taylor defined loyalty as following: "Loyalty is a relatively open-ended sense of obligation, not nearly as open-ended as to the wife, and not nearly as intense, but still if there is a need that the brother or sister has you try to respond to it. Once you get beyond that, cousins and stuff, no, not really, and of course those needs will almost never be expressed anyway." He also expressed his willingness to support his close relatives in case of need, although the social distance between the nuclear family and the rest of kin is also evident in his words: "The effort for your relatives is much stronger than you would do for other people, up to the point, horror of horrors, you ask your parent to come and live with you in old age."

According to Prof. Taylor, relationships between close relatives should be maintained irrespective of the quality of the personal relationship. He told me: "You don't have to like your relatives but you do have to deal with them anyway. I would distinguish, in my own life, between those people I am fondest of and those people to whom I feel the greatest loyalty and the greatest obligation. For example there are a lot of people out there that I like better than my brother, but there aren't very many people to whom I have a greater sense of loyalty than to my brother."

Relatives are expected to play specific roles in a number of situations,[8] and close relatives are regarded as important sources of support, particularly in crisis situations: "I will be more willing to present myself as vulnerable to my brother than to a good friend here especially if there was some need, for example if there is some problem with my wife: I can speak more about that to my brother than I could to just about any of my friends."

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Not everybody, however, recognized the importance of relatives to the same degree. The responsibility towards relatives was often regarded as a social convention and its fulfilment was felt as burdensome. Parents were often portrayed as making excessive demands on their children, and family reunions were described as boring or unpleasant and emotionally stressing occasions. There were many informants who clearly stated that their relationships with most of their relatives were distant and who, under normal circumstances, maintained only minimal contact with them.

Linda Ackerman provides an example. Linda was raised in a prominent traditional family and had many relatives most of whom lived in Hutchinson, Kansas. Her relationship with her parents was far from ideal. She criticized her mother as "a consumerist type" with old and rigid views and their relationship was emotionally distant. Her important ideological divergence with her parents, and their opposition to her divorce, made her visits to them a real hardship. She thought that she was "brought up in a critical way", and she held her parents responsible for her low self-esteem. She often complained about her parents attitude, and said she was unsure about whether they were going to help her in case she divorced, although they were wealthy and could easily afford to.

Despite the lack of warm personal relationships, however, Linda felt a

strong loyalty to her parents and other close relatives, and continued to participate in family reunions. She told me: "I've been committed to them, but I don't love them particularly. I have a human love for them but not a kinship love. I respect those people but I don't think I love them except in a very broad sense. I feel more family with my friends."

Linda, who insisted that the family move to Lawrence because two of her best friends lived in the city, used to say that her close friends were her real relatives, and in general attributed greater importance to relationships with friends than to those with relatives.

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Margaret Tolbert provides another example where even genealogically close relationships are highly selective, and friends are more highly valued than relatives. Margaret was raised in Lawrence and her mother and brother still lived in the city. She also had two sisters who lived in other states. Her relationship with her mother was very ambivalent. Margaret regarded her mother as a "middle-class type", exactly the type that she criticized politically and socially. They continually disagreed and their relationship was distant. Margaret spoke regularly with her on the telephone but they met mainly on ceremonial occasions. During the winter they went every Friday to the theatre together, because as Margaret used to say: "this is one of the very few things we can do together."

Margaret was in regular contact with her siblings, although they mostly met on ceremonial occasions, and their relationships were highly selective. Her relationships with her brother and her younger sister were distant, and Margaret emphasized their ideological and lifestyle differences. Of all her close relatives, Margaret felt closest to her older sister who lived in a commune in Oregon. Margaret described their relationship as very close and said that her older sister was her only relative from whom she sought advice.

Margaret had a full social life and many friendships going back many years. She used to say that her friends were her real relatives and she spent most of her time in the company of neighbours and friends. Of particular importance to her was her relationship with Laura, a retired waitress, 82 years of age, who lived nearby in East Lawrence. Laura's only other relative was a son who lived in Colorado and rarely visited her. She was a close friend of Margaret who played an important part in her life. Laura couldn't drive anymore and

depended on Margaret for her transportation and entertainment, as well as for her essential needs. Margaret felt an important sense of responsibility towards her and always made sure that Laura had all she needed. Laura was one of the people of whom Margaret often spoke and whose advice she always sought.

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Like Linda and Margaret, most of my non-traditional informants tended to be highly selective in their implementation of even close kin ties, according to compatibility of interest and temperament. Pamela told me: "A lot would depend on whether you really like your family. It just seems to me that to actively pursue a family relationship just because it's a family relationship, if the relationship is with someone you don't really like, then that doesn't make much sense to me."

Father Newman told me about his mother-in-law: "Karen's [his ex-wife] mother is a very possessive stereotypical southern woman who doesn't know how to love her daughter or her grandchildren. She does it solely in materialistic terms. I dislike her intensely; I don't have the children go there very much any more because she doesn't know how to express her love. She is a demanding, self-centered woman, and I don't like her." When I asked if relations need to be maintained since she is a close relative and the children's grandmother, he replied: "Yea but we don't have to go and live with her, we keep communication open to a point."

One time I was eating with Diana (a member of the group of the political radicals whom we also met in chapter 2) and her nine year-old neice. The little girl referred to the obnoxious character of her brother. When I remarked that he was her brother anyway, Diana intervened and said that I wouldn't say that if I knew the brother in question.

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Despite the relative infrequency of interaction between even close relatives and the importance of temperamental factors in the implementation of kin ties, most of my informants also expressed their willingness to maintain some contact with their close relatives and support them in crisis situations. Although their relationships with kin were emotionally complex, close relatives especially represented persons on whom they had a legitimate right to call in need, and with whom they felt the responsibility to remain on

sociable terms. The example of Steve Harris that follows illustrates this point and is particularly revealing for the character of kinship relationships.

Steve, a young lecturer from New Jersey, who had recently moved to Lawrence with his wife, stated clearly that his relationships with most members of his natal family were distant and that they were mainly activated in crisis situations. He told me: "I think that obligation [to relatives] comes up in my case primarily in crisis situations. The code is that you are available and that is a very strong feeling that if there is ever a problem, if there is ever an issue, all you have to do is call and we will be there, and we will take care of it. I would say that my relationship with my brother and my sister are very distant except in crisis situations. For example my sister has had a lot of problems, and the times we became closest and in fact have gone back to behaving with each other as we did when we were children, have been a result of the fact that she was in crisis. The family kind of came out and said well O.K., we are going to help her to get away from him. It was at that time that we were talking to each other on the phone, we were discussing issues, we were having more communication about how we are going to help my sister and also about how we felt about each other. [brother-father-mother] And we just found that this kind of crisis brought out feelings and ties for each other that had not been there, that we totally ignored. And what is interesting is that after that was resolved things drifted apart again. It wasn't as if the crisis had really changed the relationships at all. The relationships are still the same, which is distant, but I think the importance of a crisis situation is that within that situation you can see ties that were there, and still felt very strongly, emerge very quickly and the relationships do not have to be reformed or renegotiated, they almost kind of emerge out of the background."[9]

In similar manner to other informants, Steve, whose parents divorced when he was a child, used an almost clinically analytic language to describe his relationships with his parents; there is a cool rationalistic appreciation of the parent's virtues and faults and relationships are valued according to the degree of personal intimacy. He told me: "I talk to her [his mother] a couple of times a month, but when we talk, we talk about very intimate things. I can talk about how I'm feeling; I can talk about my feelings about my wife; I can talk about feelings about friends. She can also talk about very intimate

feelings that she has, and we feel very comfortable with each other; it's a much more intimate relationship that I share with almost anybody; there are kinds of things that I can talk to my mother about that I don't even talk to my wife about. Because the feeling is that my mother is always going to be my mother; my wife may not always be my wife and there are kinds of issues that need to be resolved outside of a vulnerable relationship. I feel that the relationship with my mother is one that is never going to change, so, in that sense, it doesn't take a crisis for our relationship to be more intimate; it's always intimate. The question is about the frequency of contact. There is never any question about the nature of the relationship; it's something that's always there.

"My relationship with my father is very different. It's not an estranged relationship, but it's one that I don't consider to be an intimate relationship. A lot of it has to do with the fact that my father is a kind of person who is very afraid of his emotions. He does not deal with emotions very well. I think he is also, deep down, a very insecure person and, so, for that reason he doesn't express himself in very candid terms. He doesn't talk about what he's feeling, because I don't think he acknowledges what his feelings are, and I think he's afraid of his feelings. So I have never been able to establish the level of intimacy with him that I have with my mother. Every conversation with my father ends with 'how can I help you?', meaning in a financial sense; there is never any acknowledgement that there is something missing in terms of an emotional relationship, but it's a very functional relationship and always has been."

Steve's relationship with his father was surprisingly without illusion. The relationship, as described by Steve, is characterized by its lack of spontaneity and it is based on negotiation between individuals acting in their own self-interest. He told me: "It's a relationship where I think we manipulate each other for strategic purposes. There have been various times in my life when I needed my father for financial reasons or simply when I needed his approval to feel good about what I was doing and other times when he also needed me for reassurance, in the face of a family crisis, or for just some feedback about the fact that he's doing O.K. as being a father and communicating with his children.

"It's a series of kind of negotiated positions which change all the time.

When we get together to have a conversation, we each spend a lot of time thinking about what we are going to say. There is relatively little spontaneity there. Everything is very calculated in terms of the kinds of discussions that are going to go on, each of us kind of pushing each other, like pushing little blocks around, to control the way that we are going to interact with each other. I remember when I was in college, I would not call him on the phone unless I had something good to say to him, unless I had some achievement to report that I felt would please him.

"The logic of the relationship was in terms of functioning in the social world, in that people ask you questions about your family all the time, and my father needed from me the kind of information that he could communicate to those people who ask him about his son, so that he could be able to use me in a socially strategic fashion in order to negotiate his relationship with other fathers and with other people who were interested in him. But I think I got a similar thing. I got enough support and enough information about my father that I could use him to structure my relationship with other people as well: to structure my relationship with my wife; to structure my relationship with my brother and sister; to say, well, dad said this, or he's doing this, or he wants to do that, and I would use this information in a highly structured fashion. So the logic was that each one of us contributed in our own way to the other's attainment of his individualistic American dream. And it comes across as very cold, very carefully structured, but my relationship with my mother is very different."

5. CONCLUSION

The successful accomplishment of the nuclear family's task entails its dissolution. Child-rearing is a process of gradual emancipation ideally leading to the children's independence. As soon as they reach adulthood young people of both sexes are expected to move from the parental household and become gradually independent from their family of orientation. Children's independence is considered a necessary condition for their development and it is seen as a process dictated by nature itself.

The ideal of independence was shared by all of my informants although there were again important differences in the views of traditional and other

informants, and there was considerable conflict between parents and children as the latter's economic dependence continued in many cases after their early twenties. Traditional informants underlined the need to combine the development of individuality with responsibility, whereas other informants stressed more the right of every individual to seek personal fulfilment unfettered from familial restrictions. Moreover, traditional informants emphasized the continuity of relationships between parents and children, whereas other informants regarded their children's independence as a relief from the burdens of child rearing and looked forward to their children's emancipation.

When children become independent, the nature of their relationship with the members of their family of orientation change in character. Most informants clearly distinguished between the nuclear family and other relatives, although the degree of the nuclear family's isolation differed depending on many factors. In most cases the nuclear family is an independent domestic and economic unit and, as it is usually geographically mobile, other relatives are not part of its everyday life. The importance of extra-familial kin ties, however, varied widely.

Traditional informants defined relatives in genealogical terms (as all the people related by blood or by marriage) and relationships with close blood relatives especially were invested with strong moral and emotional meaning. Relatives were clearly distinguished from friends, and they were regarded as important sources of sociability and support.

Other informants however regarded the rules of the kinship system as cultural conventions and emphasized the importance of personal factors in the relationship with even close relatives. Most of my non-traditional informants tended to be highly selective in the implementation of even close kin ties according to compatibility of interest and temperament, although a certain degree of obligation towards close kin was almost universally recognized, and most of my informants expressed their willingness to maintain some contact with their close relatives and support them in crisis situations.

NOTES

1. Quoted in Goldthorpe 1987: 58.

2. According to the American historian D. Calhoun, some time after the middle of the eighteenth century, child-rearing practices began to change from an emphasis on peace and order in the family to the development of independent self-sufficient individuals (1973: 143-147). See also Cott 1977: 91. W. Graebner also writes for the most influential family advisors of a latter period : "For Erikson and Spock, the central end was identity, requiring, as Spock would have it, that 'a youth must largely outgrow his dependence and emulation of his parents" (1987: 133).

3. Bellah et al 1985: 57.

4. Melanie's views are once more influenced by therapy. We can read in a bestselling therapeutic book that I bought in Lawrence : "The relationship of mother and child is a relationship in which, on the level of conscious intention, one party is almost entirely the giver, and the other party is almost entirely the receiver. Such a relationship, when existing between adults, is generally regarded as exploitative and parasitical-although it is not so regarded between infant and mother for obvious biological reasons" (Branden 1980: 13).

5. Schneider 1980: 30, Varenne 1977: 49.

6. In his influential "American Kinship" D. Schneider has argued that Americans define kinship relationships in two distinct ways: as relationships of biogenetic substance and as relationships governed by a code of conduct which demands enduring diffuse solidarity. Schneider reports that both elements weigh (although unequally) in the decision of his informants as to whether consider someone a relative or not.

He writes: "Since these two elements are quite distinct, each can occur alone or they can occur in combination. And since the two elements are quite distinct and each can occur alone as well as in combination, *a person can base his decision as to who to count and who not to count as a relative on either one or on the other of these elements, or on both if they are present.* In addition, the normative construct of a relative or of a particular kind or category of relative can also be 'compounded' of either one or the other

element, or of both.

These elements of substance and code for conduct, however, are not of equal value and their different values alone and in combination, along with "distance", account for much of the variance in the system at the level of the person, both as decisions about concrete individuals and as normative constructs." (Schneider 1980: 63, my emphasis.)

Scheffler refuted Schneider's assertion and argued that "It is premised on certain alleged matters of ethnographic fact about which there is room for disagreement, and it is incomplete and internally inconsistent in some important respects" (Scheffler 1976: 60). Scheffler has argued that kinship is genealogically defined in American culture and that Schneider has confused two levels that should remain distinct. He writes: "As Schneider has observed, if asked 'what is a relative?' American informants almost always reply, 'A relative is a person who is related by blood or by marriage.' This statement makes no mention of how those who are so related should conduct their social relationships with one another, nor does it provide for the fact that some individuals who are not related by blood or by marriage may be designated as relatives, for example the foster and adoptive relatives. If asked about the foster and adoptive relatives, 'Are they relatives, also?' the reply may be, 'Yes we call them relatives, too, but they are not really relatives.' And if asked why they are 'relatives,' though not related by blood or by marriage, the answer is likely to contain some reference to the fact that they take the social places of 'real relatives.' The implications of all this appear to be that standards of interpersonal conduct are not distinctive features of the category 'relatives'" (Scheffler 1976: 68).

There is evidence from my fieldwork to support both positions. There were indeed informants who, as Scheffler argues, defined relationships of kinship in genealogical terms and regarded step, foster, and adoptive relatives as exceptions to the norm that did not need to be included in the definition of relatives. The statements of other informants, however, vindicate Schneider's position. (See the alternative views in the last two sections of this chapter.) I think that the difficulties of Schneider's argument at this point are due to the fact that he believed in the existence of one sole American kinship system to which all data should comform. He thus seems to have integrated in one model observations coming from different informants that in my

view should be examined separately. Schneider's account of American kinship resembles for the most part the ideology of my traditional informants. This may be due to the greater prevalence of traditional ideas at the time of Schneider's research although at certain points of his book the statements analysed (and integrated by Schneider in one model) resemble what is here presented as "alternative views".

7. Schneider 1980: 53-54.

8. Relatives are for example invited and expected to attend weddings and other rituals. Prof. Taylor told me: "The relatives are invited to the wedding [of his daughter]. There are other people of whom we are very fond but they are not going to come in the wedding."

9. But to be in such need is humiliating because it means that someone has failed to be independent. Steve told me: "People are embarassed to activate it [the kin network]; when people realize they have activated it they feel very ashamed." This is what happened to the sister of my informant : "Her feelings for independence were so strong that she ended up rejecting most of the help that was being offered to her. She felt that her life was being impinged upon so much by these people who were coming in to help her that she basically rejected all of the assistance that she was getting" (Steve).

CONCLUSION OF PART ONE

The kinship relations of my white middle-class informants in Lawrence were characterized by great heterogeneity in both ideological opinion and the reality of kinship life. The existing differences cannot be accounted in the context of a single model of kinship relationships, and my observations were ordered under two main headings. No simple historical relation is suggested by this categorization, as the existence of social milieux where a conservative kinship ideology prevails has been also indicated in the past, although according to most of my older informants (and their view is vindicated by national data concerning the rates of divorce, the numbers of employed mothers as well as opinions about important kinship matters), alternative views and practices have become widely accepted in recent decades and have prevailed over conservative opinions and practices.

The informants that I call traditional were a minority in most Lawrence middle-class milieux although traditional views were more widely influential among my informants. The kinship relations of my traditional informants resemble to a certain extent the description of the American middle-class family life provided by Parsons. Among those informants, the nuclear family was the only independent domestic and economic unit, and kin groups outside it did not constitute firmly structured units of the social system. The tie between husband and wife was the central family relationship and divorce was regarded as an aberration. Relationships with relatives beyond the nuclear family however were highly valued by traditional informants, and they were perhaps of greater importance than Parsons' description suggests.

The kinship ideology of my traditional informants clearly evokes Schneider's analysis of American kinship ideology.[1] In a discourse relying partly on Christianity and partly on functionalist social science, traditional informants stressed the importance of kinship relationships for individuals and society. Kinship relationships are not only thought to be compelling by their very nature, but they are highly valued and confer definite rights and obligations.

Traditional informants regarded marriage as the destination of every individual and associated it with procreation. Marriage is ideally for life and it is founded on a strong sense of moral obligation. Spouses are expected to fulfill interconnected social roles and remain together independently of the ups and downs of their personal relationship.

The nuclear family is regarded by traditional informants as a "natural" unit with "natural" functions. The division of family roles is thought to be grounded in the different aptitudes and inclinations of men and women and the rules of the kinship system are seen as reflections of natural necessities. The nuclear family is separated from the mainstream of social and economic life and it is considered as the only unit in which adults can fulfill some of their most fundamental needs and where children can find the stability and support that is necessary for their development. Relationships between the members of the nuclear family in particular are highly valued and the home is cherished as a place of unconditional love and acceptance. Traditional informants stressed the obligation parents have towards their children and the responsibility of each member of the family to act in ways consistent with the good of the rest of the family and society in general. The relationships between the members of the family are thought to be rooted in biology, and the warm affective quality that characterizes them appears to be contained in the biological facts themselves.

Although it is expected that parental and sibling ties shall be subordinated to the marriage bond, traditional informants clearly distinguished between relatives and friends and kept in touch with a considerable number of extra-familial kin. Relationships with close blood relatives especially were invested with strong moral and emotional meaning and close relatives were seen as important sources of sociability and support.

The kinship relationships of most of my informants however diverged more or less from the imperatives of the traditional model, and their family life cannot be described by the Parsonian model. Domestic units do not in most cases include other relatives beyond the nuclear family, but only a minority of households corresponded to Parsons' "isolated nuclear family." Some people may choose to remain single, to live together without being married, or to marry without intending to have children. Among those who marry and have children, family roles vary widely and may change over

time. There are many one-career families, many families where women choose some combination of domestic and professional responsibilities, and a substantial minority of genuine two-career families. Finally, a large percentage of marriages dissolve, irrespectively of the existence of children or not, and there are many single-parent and step-families.

These structural changes were accompanied by an ideological shift towards a conception of kinship relationships stressing more their "social" rather than "natural" character, and their voluntary rather than compulsory nature. The rules of the kinship system were considered by traditional informants to be immutable like the biological facts that constitute their substratum. To use Schneider's expression, kinship "is one part of nature with which man has made his peace and in terms of which he is content to find his fate".[2] For other informants however, the relationship between the rules of the kinship system and the natural facts of human existence is not given once and for all. Women need not work all day in the home anymore and children are no longer needed to help on the farm and do not represent security for old age. New conditions impose new requirements, and scientific and technological advances open up new possibilities and lead to the discovery of better ways for the arrangement of kinship relations.

The importance of the biological component of kinship relationships was downplayed by most non-traditional informants. Instead of being seen as a "natural" unit, the family was regarded as "something that you create and that you choose"[3] through social commitment. Most of my informants did not regard the creation of a family as the natural destiny of every individual, but as just one valid option among others. Sexual relations between persons who are not married are widely accepted and, as there are effective contraceptive methods, sexual intercourse does not necessarily entail procreation. The natural basis of the traditional canception of family roles was generally questioned and many of my informants regarded both sexes as being equally qualified for the performance of all domestic and social roles. Step-families, families with adopted children, or even cohabitating couples were considered as families despite the fact that the biological component was lacking, and notions like the "maternal instinct" that founded kinship relationships on biological facts were questioned. The rules of the kinship system appeared in the eyes of most of my informants as cultural

conventions and biological relationships were not necessarily invested with social and moral meaning.

The stress of the social rather than the natural parameters of kinship relationships was accompanied by a greater emphasis on individual choice in their implementation. Contrary to traditional informants for whom marriage is founded on a sense of obligation that should ideally transcend immediate feelings, most other informants stressed the importance of personal relationships for the success and the continuation of a marriage. Some even completely rejected traditional notions of marital obligation and directly associated the duration of the marriage with the satisfactions provided by the personal relationship. But personal factors were also important in the relationships of parents and children. The obligation of parents to raise and educate their children was stressed by most informants, but parental responsibilities were often seen to contradict with individual self-fulfilment and children were regarded as restraining parents from full participation in the adult world. Finally, the importance of personal factors was also evident in the relationships between siblings and between parents and children after the latter's independence as well as in the relationships of more distant relatives. A certain degree of obligation towards close relatives was almost universally recognized, but most non-traditional informants emphasized the importance of friendship in their lives, and tended to be highly selective in the implementation of even close kin ties.

NOTES

1. See note 1 in chapter 1, notes 4, 5, and 6 in chapter 2, and notes 1, 5, 6, and 7 in chapter 3.
2. Schneider 1980: 107.
3. The expression belongs to one of my informants. See chapter 2, section 2.

PART TWO - POLITICAL LIFE

INTRODUCTION TO PART TWO

The second part of the thesis is concerned with social and political ideology and mainly focuses on city politics, although other more general aspects of social and political ideology and practice are also examined.

Due to the presence of the university and the city's continual expansion, Lawrence city politics attracts a fair deal of interest.[1] Many different groups are actively involved in city affairs and most issues become controversial.

Lawrence's political vitality contrasts with past accounts of local politics in small American communities and to the situation in other cities in the area, and it is more characteristic of university towns and larger cities.[2] In both Vidich and Bensman's Springdale and Varenne's Appleton, local government bodies operated under "the principle of public unanimity of decision"[3] and the political process was completely dominated by the local business establishment.[4] In the neighbouring city of Ottowa, Kansas, according to a professor in the small local university and long term observer of local politics, "it hasn't been uncommon to be hard pressed to have enough candidates to run for political office" and city politics were for the most part devoid of political controversy. The same informant told me : "You may have the againers [corruption of the againsters]; this group may be against something this time, then the next time it'd be another group. So the idea of two different groups opposed to each other with any seeming of organization is probably not valid."

The rate and quality of economic growth is the central subject of the political conflict in Lawrence. Whereas other cities in the area remained largely stagnant or were slowly declining, Lawrence has been experiencing the strains of high rates of growth for a long time. The city has been steadily growing during the last four decades and Douglas County was during the time my fieldwork the second fastest growing area in Kansas. Contrary to other cities who courted developers and were eager to attract outside growth, sections of the Lawrence population have resisted growth and have given the

city a reputation of being difficult for developers.

Political forces are divided depending on their attitude towards growth. No politician can afford to be against growth and the nature of the city is such that all political forces have, to some degree, to advocate balanced growth as their objective, but there clearly were different conceptions about what consists desirable growth.

The "pro-growthers", organized mainly around the Chamber of Commerce and the civic clubs represent the dominant view. They were firm supporters of Lawrence's further growth and development and they associated such development with progress. Their main adversaries were the supporters of "controlled growth" who were mainly organized in the Lawrence Association of Neighbourhoods. Finally, there was a number of groups and individuals who were against growth altogether. They participated in the L.A.N. and often cooperated with neighbourhood activists but they also followed their own independent political action.[5]

The first two chapters are dedicated to the milieu of the pro-growthers. Chapter 4 presents the most important pro-growth organizations and their rhetoric, whereas chapter 5 examines the ideology and practice of particular individuals from this milieu. The views and practices of their political opponents are examined in chapter 6.

NOTES

1. Yet, on the average, in the city's recent political history, only around thirty percent of registered electors voted in local elections.
2. Vidich and Bensman 1968: 335.
3. Vidich and Bensman 1968: 110.
4. Vidich and Bensman 1968: 110-121, particularly pages 110-112 and 138. Also Varenne 1977: 128-158, particularly p. 141.
5. The responses to a *Journal-World* poll, conducted in February 1990 among 300 Douglas County registered voters of all races and income levels, reflect the two conflicting positions as well as the dominance of the pro-growth views: 63% of the respondents to the poll said that Lawrence's population is "growing at about the right pace" whereas another 30% said that it was "growing too quickly". During the last decades, pro-growthers held in most

cases a majority on the City Commission. M. Carpenter, a long-standing activist and leading exponent of controlled growth, remarked: "We have had periods when core-neighbourhood groups had more power. Then they fell out. And then the Commission would get some more representation. But the majority always stays, out of the five there is nearly always three of those that you can count on to be pro-Chamber."

CHAPTER 4
THE IDEOLOGY OF GROWTH

1. INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 is mainly dedicated to the study of the pro-growth political ideology. I begin with an examination of the dominant civic ideology (the "civic ideal") as it is found in the rhetoric of the civic clubs and the editorials of the local paper. The civic ideal is presented as an ideal of citizenship and the public good transcending political division, and the organizations that advocate it are not directly political. However, economic growth is one of the central values of the civic ideal and most members of the civic clubs were firm supporters of the city's growth.

The two remaining parts of chapter 4 are more directly related to local politics. Section 2 is concerned with the political ideology of the pro-growthers at the most general level and examines their conception of city politics and the philosophy of the system of government in the city of Lawrence. Finally, section 3 focuses on the political rhetoric of the proponents of growth and examines their position in some of the most important local political issues.

2. THE CIVIC IDEAL

The civic ideal is the dominant public ideology in Lawrence and the one with the oldest and the most respected tradition. The civic ideal is advocated by many city organizations, it dominates the local press and media, and it is embraced by a large part of the middle class. Of course, not everyone holds this ideology to the same degree and versions differ depending on the organization and the informant. In this section we will examine the dominant public version as we find it in the rhetoric of the civic clubs and the editorials of the local newspaper.[1] I firstly present the civic clubs and then turn to their ideology.

2.1 The Civic Clubs

The civic clubs constitute one of the most important categories of community organizations. There are more than twenty civic clubs in Lawrence most of which are local chapters of national and international organizations. Most civic clubs were founded in the first decades of the twentieth century and have spread all over America and the world.

Contrary to the churches that, in theory at least, welcome everybody, civic clubs are more exclusive. Their meetings are only open to their members and their guests, and clubs become more generally known mainly through their donations and services to the community. The stated aim of the civic clubs is to foster a public ideal and provide "service" to the community by furthening its economic well-being and by supporting cultural, charitable and patriotic projects and organizations. Depending on the case, civic clubs have from 50 to 150 members. Membership is selective and a person becomes a member by invitation. Restrictions differ from one club to the other. In the Rotary a membership proposal must be approved by all members of two secret committees and ratified by the club's Board of Directors. Civic clubs draw their memberships mainly from the middle class, although the status of different clubs differs with Rotary being the most prestigious followed by the Kiwanis and the Lions. For example, when the assistant City manager became City manager he moved from the Kiwanis to the Rotary club.

The basis of membership is occupation. The civic clubs follow in the recruitment of their membership "the principle of classification", according to which no more than 10% of the club's members should come from the same occupational field. The different occupations represent the different parts of the community. A club by recruiting members from all different professions aims at providing a valuable arena of communication and becoming representative of the community as a whole.

Civic clubs were traditionally separated by gender, and their different activities reflected the traditional conception of gender characteristics. Men's clubs were primarily concerned with economic and political issues whereas women's associations were mostly oriented toward sociability and charity.[2] The distinction persists in Lawrence although most civic clubs today do accept

individuals of both sexes. The Rotary with a total membership of around 150 had only 8 women members and all Altrusa's members were women. The difference also persists in their activities.

Men's civic clubs like the Rotary and the Optimist meet once a week. Meetings take place during breakfast or lunch in one of the city's hotels and last for an hour. They are highly attended since one of the conditions of membership is 60% or more attendance at the meetings. All men's civic clubs' meetings have the same structure with minor differences, and I will here quickly describe a typical Rotary meeting.

Before entering the room members wear badges on which their name and classification is writen and they sit around tables of 10-15 people. After the meal, which lasts for about 15 minutes, and the Rotary hymn, sung by all those present, the programme begins. First, current events of Lawrence and the club are presented by one of the club's officials in the form of a news bulletin. Then visitors are presented, and another song from the Rotary hymnal is sung. Then an invited speaker talks and answers questions on a subject of general social, economic or political interest, and the meeting closes with the singing of another hymn.

Women's civic clubs like the Altrusa meet twice a month, usually in one of the two Lawrence country clubs. There were a few outdoor meetings usually combined with other events. One meeting had the form of a progressive dinner where members took different courses in different houses of host members.

Meetings took place in the evening, from 6 to 9 PM, and they were less formal than the meetings of men's clubs. The day of the meeting Altrusans started arriving after work around 6 at the country club and socialized until 6.30 when the meeting was called. Tables were already set for the dinner and attendants sat in tables of 5 to 8 people.

After a brief prayer, the "Altrusa blessing", the meal was served. The programme started with the Altrusa "accent" which is "a few minute news flash" presenting some action of the organization or advocating a practical or moral maxim. Guests were introduced afterwards, and announcements were made. Announcements concerned the activities of the club or had personal character updating the group on the personal circumstances of other members. The first part of the meeting concluded with an invited speaker on

subjects that were usually of a personal or generally social interest and only rarely economic or political. The programme of the second part of the meeting alternated from one Wednesday to the other. If it was a "business meeting" the business of the club was carried out. The president and the chairs of the various committees updated other members of the club on their activities, asked for their assistance, listened to their suggestions, and made various related announcements. Minutes were always unanimously approved. On a "programme Wednesday" on the other hand, the second half of the meeting was oriented towards sociability and entertainment, and included activities like fashion shows, art performances and indoor games. Meetings always closed with another prayer, the Altrusa "benediction".

The function of the civic clubs is partly revealed in their history. Most were founded at the beginning of the 20th century as part of the movement that the American historian W. Graebner calls "Democratic Social Engineering"[3]. At that time, according to Graebner, American social scientists, the clergy, educators and others in influential positions, reacting to a perceived crisis of authority, attempted to forge a new system of authority within the social structure. The authority of the church, the family and the community seemed to have dangerously diminished with increasing industrialization, urbanization and the wider dissemination of evolutionary-scientific ideas. The cohesive, unified society of the past seemed to have given way to a chaos of self-serving individuals.

The new system of authority was based on the small group. Small groups were regarded as the best vehicles for social control and cohesion in the new conditions. Formerly existing groups (such as church or boys' groups) became vehicles for democratic social engineering and many other groups were organized explicitly for that purpose (e.g., foremen's clubs, recreational groups for the elderly, or civic clubs). Although inspired in part by a collective recollection of small-town community life, the new system was secular in character and democratic in rhetoric. This was reflected in both the ideology advocated by those groups and the democratic and inquiry-oriented processes under which they were designed to operate. Truth was not *a priori* given but appeared as the outcome of a democratic process of inquiry led by the group leader.[4]

Apart from being agents of social cohesion and outlets of sociability, civic

clubs, and especially the most prestigious men's clubs provide important arenas of communication for influential community people[5] and help implement the policies formulated by the higher circles of power in the community.[6]

2.2 The Civic Ideal

The civic ideal is an ideal of citizenship and the public good that stresses the interdependence of public and private life and offers a consistent scheme of social order and progress. It celebrates the capitalist values of success, hard work and competition while also stressing the need for cooperation, democratic participation and service. The two complement one another and constitute the "American way". Democracy is equated with the free enterprise system and the two combined constitute the essence of "Americanism".

Success

The values of hard work, competition, and economic success are stressed in the rhetoric of the civic clubs and in the editorials of the local paper. According to the "Rotary Handbook of Information", a pamphlet writen by a member of the Lawrence club, one of the principal objects of Rotary "is to encourage and foster high ethical standards in business and professions, the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations, and the dignifying by each Rotarian of his occupation as an opportunity to serve society."[7]

"Efficiency", along with "Patriotism" and "Service", constitutes the motto of the Altrusa. We can read in the Altrusa Principals of Conduct: "My vocation merits my best services and offers me real opportunities for growth and efficiency in doing my share of the world's work. Therefore, I shall study its aims, its methods, and its product that I may intelligently promote its intersts and improve the quality of its service to others. I shall cooperate with my fellow workers in a spirit of cheerfulness, of readiness to share, and of appreciation of the efforts of others; I shall seek success by an ever-increasing sense of true values - a realization of the highest business ideals through honest effort, fair dealing and lofty ambition tempered by humility of spirit."[8]

Economic success acquires its meaning within an evolutionary perspective. Social progress is regarded as a natural process and it is primarily defined as economic growth (see below). The free enterprise system is seen as a fair and efficient system naturally leading to growth and progress.

Economic success therefore is not only personally desirable but the social virtue par excellence. The ideal citizen is the successful businessman or professional. Economic virtues become in the rhetoric of the civic clubs the essence of moral and civic virtue. Work is seen as a contribution to the public good and as a field for the development and encouragement of moral "character." It links a person to the larger community, a whole in which the "vocation" of each is a contribution to the good of all. The community is represented in the classification system as an aggregate of "economic men" who by pursuing their particular occupations contribute to the growth of the community and the common good.

At least moderate success is open to all who are willing to try. Character, honesty, and ability will tell and in the long run everyone gets what he deserves. One therefore should be hardworking and persevering, thrifty and enterprising.[9]

The following extract from an interview with the editor of the local newspaper stresses those values: "Granddad came to Lawrence in 1891 with two others, and they had 50 dollars between them, and he started the paper. There were 8 papers going, and he started the 9th, and he worked his fanny off, and he worked hard, and he just scraped by. And he didn't have the education; it's always been an example for our family that you never want to think you've got the world by the tail, or you've never got things made. Because there is always somebody that can come in and work harder, or try harder, or be more determined, so there is no room for complacency or cockiness or 'we've got it made' cause there always can be another J. C. Warren [the editor's grandfather] come to town and do something."

Successful businessmen, by creating employment and wealth, are regarded as social benefactors par excellence. The two following editorials are characteristic.

The first deplores the undeserved fame and success of "bums, frauds and outlaws" in modern American life and advocates the Horatio Alger model. "Things are getting tougher by the day for the Horatio Alger types. Not many

people seem interested in those kinds of stories. Are we so insecure and caught up in our personal flaws that we've lost sight of the positive aspects of life? We need to ask ourselves why we so consistently aid and abet bums, frauds and outlaws in profiting more handsomely than the genuine successes in our midst."[10]

The second celebrates the nomination of J. Durbin as the Kansan of the year. Durbin is the greatest real-estate developer in Lawrence. He has built a large part of the western suburbs and he has been very active in the social life of Lawrence. "There could not be a finer, more deserving recipient, and Lawrence residents have reason to be proud of their fellow citizen receiving this award. Durbin has been a leader in numerous fields, and he has distinguished himself since first coming to Lawrence from Russell as a highly sought-after scholar and basketball player. Since the years when he served as captain of the Kansas University basketball team, Durbin has committed himself to do what he can to improve Lawrence as a community in which to live, work and play and to help K.U. in every possible manner. Officers of the Kansas Native Sons and Daughters organization have shown excellent judgment by their selection of Durbin for this high award and recognition. Consider what kind of city Lawrence would be today without Durbin's dream of Alvamar [the most prestigious subusb of Lawrence], his determination, his commitment to quality and the many positive spinoffs generated by Alvamar. Durbin is a valuable asset for Lawrence and the entire state."

Service

In the above editorial, Durbin is not only praised because he is economically successful but also because he is community-minded. The individual should not be totally unrestrained and self-absorbed but have a concern for others and the community. Success entails the obligation to "give back" by supporting community projects and by volunteering in civic organizations.

Volunteer community service is a high ideal constantly advocated by the local press and the civic organizations. In an editorial, on the occasion of the National Volunteer Week, we read: "Some might take exception, but it could be that volunteerism is one of the distinguishing features or attributes peculiar to the United States that sets this country apart from so many other

nations. Here in Lawrence, the numbers of volunteers, people who receive little or no credit or recognition for their work, must number in the thousands, probably tens of thousands. They deliver meals to shut-ins; they work in behalf of United Way agencies; they help raise money for the United Way programme; they work for the Chamber of Commerce, the hospital, blood drives, the county fair, 4-H and FFA programs, the Salvation Army, Boy and Girl Scout activities, churches, the heart association and on and on and on."

The principal stated aim of most civic organizations is to provide "service" to the community by leading and supporting community projects and by providing valuable services to the members of the community. Civic clubs are alternately known as "service clubs" and stress service as their principal aim.[11] "Service is an all important Rotary principle. 'Service Above Self' and 'He Profits Most Who Serves Best' are Rotary slogans. A rotary club is a service club. It exists for the purpose of giving men incentive to do something for others and to do something for the community."[12] The purpose of Altrusa according to one of the leaflets of the local club is "to afford a channel through which executive and professional women representing a wide variety of occupational fields with similar civic and altruistic motivations can work together in common interests and effectively contribute their combined services to civic, national, and international understanding and betterment."

The provision of social services should be left as much as possible to the voluntary action of private citizens. Voluntary action is more democratic, more attuned to the needs of the individuals concerned and more efficient than government. Government intervention represents an unsuccessful way to "give charity with other people's money"[13] and, under normal circumstances, can do only harm.

Voluntary community service is the other side of individual competition and serves as the justification for it. The free market organization of the economy by freeing the creative powers of the individual leads to continuous growth and progress and generates increasing surplus that can be subsequently used for the realization of community projects that enhance the quality of life for all. Wealth entails the responsibility to give and the more successful one is the greater is the imperative to give.

Service has two principal meanings. On the one hand it is an expression of "enlightened self-interest".[14] Individual prosperity and well-being depend on community prosperity. Individuals and firms should therefore contribute to the community and thus pay their "civic rent".

The second meaning of service resonates the central Judeo-Christian value of charity. It represents a disinterested offering to the other members of the community and especially those who are in need. Charity is contrasted to state welfare programmes which are considered to encourage idleness and perpetuate poverty. Its aim should be to assure equality of opportunity and "help people to help themselves" by restoring them to self-reliance. Children in need are one of the principal targets of charity exactly because they are not themselves considered responsible for their situation.

Civic Pride and Patriotism

Every Lawrence citizen should have civic pride. A community is as good as its citizens make it and therefore one should be loyal and do all he can to promote and improve it. Like an individual a community should have competitive spirit, exhibit a winning attitude, and work hard for its success.[15] Lawrence has many reasons to be proud and editorials often stress that Lawrence can be or actually is "America's finest University city". The editor of the local newspaper told me: "One thing that bothers me in Lawrence is that, to me, there are too many people who want to settle for mediocrity. I think we have every opportunity to be truly an outstanding community for this size of community. We have everything going for us and maybe one of our problems is : it's come too easy. If we had had to fight harder for it, to work harder for these things maybe we'd appreciate them more and price them more and try to protect them."

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Practically every civic organization, from the scouts and the public schools to the churches and the civic clubs, fosters patriotism, and there are many patriotic rituals in public life. The national anthem is played before every K.U. basketball game and even the summer concerts in the park are occasions for saluting and cheering the American flag. Downtown Lawrence is decorated with dozens of American flags and a flag is mounted in front of

every business of some size in the city. Men's civic clubs pay tribute to the country and its ideals at every meeting, and patriotic topics are often included in their programmes.

To use the Lynds' expression, "patriotism is civic pride writ large".[16] We read in the Altrusa Principals of Conduct: "Our country is as great as we, its citizens, make it. Therefore, I pledge my loyalty to its ideals and to its endeavors for the welfare of mankind; I shall strive to practice true patriotism and to fulfill my civic obligations in my own community by interested participation in its activities."[17]

The values of the democratic system of government and of the economic system of free enterprise constitute the essence of the American ideals in the rhetoric of civic clubs. Typical of much public rhetoric is an editorial in which the United States is presented "as a nation that has long preached the value of the democratic and free enterprise systems."[18] American democracy is regarded as the political system which guarantees individual liberty to a greater degree than any other. By unleashing the energy and individual genius of man to a greater extent than has ever been done before America has prospered as no other people on earth. Because of its faithful allegiance to those ideals, the American nation is regarded as the most progressive and powerful nation on earth, an international leader for peace and the protection of human rights, and a model for much of the rest of the world.[19]

Community leaders often pay tribute to those ideals and especially in the context of public ritual, although large domestic problems and America's declining world position have made their tone somewhat less enthusiastic and categotrical.

The following editorial, titled "Maybe Pride Is in Order", is a good example: "Some people are wearing sack cloth and throwing ashes these days because America is drawing so much criticism from so many corners for not pushing a miracle button to solve all the world's problems. But is the Amercan actually that ugly?

"Actually, Uncle Sam and the residents of this dominion might feel downright proud that their stature remains great enough that people still look to them for answers and solutions, and think they're potent enough to supply them almost instantly.

"Something happens in some non-United States region and before the sun

has set, or risen, there are people, sometimes self-serving Americans, howling that our country ought to be controlling things. Then Uncle Sam takes an active role as he did in Panama, and the professional critics have a field day with that.

"It's frustrating, disconcerting and maddening, to be sure. But at the same time, maybe we ought to take some satisfaction from the fact that for all his enemies, detractors and critics, Uncle Sam is still considered potent enough to be expected to solve every riddle that occurs anywhere."

The Four Way Test

The dominant version of the civic ideal is secular in character. Although highly moralistic in its tone, the civic ideology does not rest on absolute *a priori* values for its legitimation. Its principles are regarded not only as consistent with the Judeo-Christian tradition but also as self evident truths vindicated by experience and practice.

"The Four Way Test" which I take from the same Rotary booklet is an example:

"Every Rotarian knows of the Four Way Test. How many can repeat it? But more importantly, how many can live the Four Way Test? Twenty-four words - that's all there is to it. The Four Way Test of the Things We Think, Say or Do.

IS IT THE TRUTH?
IS IT FAIR TO ALL CONCERNED?
WILL IT BUILD GOOD WILL AND BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
WILL IT BE BENEFICIAL TO ALL CONCERNED?

"It covers all Four Avenues of Service, but perhaps it fits into Vocational Service better than anywhere else. It can be applied profitably in relations with others in the home, community, business, national and international life; particularly to proposed legislation in government, to relations between teachers and students in school.

"The test was written in 1932 by Herberd J. Taylor, who had been assigned to represent the creditors of the Club Aluminum Company and whose task was saving a company from bankruptcy. He decided that this near defunct corporation needed something that his competitors did not have in equal

amounts - the character, dependability and service-mindedness of their employees.

"He discussed the four questions with four of his department heads - one a Roman Catholic, one a Christian Scientist, the third an Orthodox Jew and the fourth a Presbyterian. They all agreed that truth, justice, friendliness and hapiness coincided with their religious ideals and constantly applied in business would result in greater success and progress. Results were just tremendous and Herbert J. Taylor turned around this nearly bankrupt company to a leader in their industry. As a footnote, in 1954-55 this same Herbert J. Taylor became president of Rotary International."[20]

The ideal is not presented as a set of absolutes but takes the form of a method of inquiry and action and can be profitably applied to all areas of social life. It is consistent with the values of all branches of the Judeo-Christian tradition but its ultimate justification lies in the results it produces.

3. POLITICAL IDEOLOGY

In the dominant rhetoric, local political positions are regarded as administrative positions and political office demands above anything else managerial common sense and scientific competence. Ideas that regarded the application of expert technical knowledge as a solution to the problems of government first appeared during the "progressive era".[21] The progressive reformers sought to insulate the political process from the clash of interests and achieve better and more efficient government by passing many government functions into the hands of professional experts.[22] Progressive reform had an important impact and in conjuction with other developments has "made substantial portions of American government purely administrative in nature."[23]

These ideas were more eagerly adopted in the local level. One of the most successful institutional reforms of the progressive period was the establishment of the city manager form of government in many especially middle-sized American cities.[24] The field of application of the political ideology that I present here was usually considered to be the city government, although sometimes it was also articulated in reference to the state or the national level. This political ideology is echoed in the discourse of many

informants and it forms the basis of reform projects that keep appearing in the American national scene.[25]

3.1 Politics as Management

The basic ideas of the civic ideal also inform the dominant political ideology. The town is regarded as an aggregate of individuals who rule themselves through the periodic election of representatives. Political officials are elected by the people and should serve the people. All citizens should vote and thus contribute to the election of the best people to serve in political office.[26]

Economic growth is seen as benefiting all citizens alike[27] and as constituting the undisputable goal of the community. Growth is synonymous with progress and, like progress itself, is regarded as a natural process. Often in the editorials those who opposed economic growth in Lawrence were accused of being anti-progress and the two words were used indistinguishably. In an editorial called "Progress and Eagles" the editor was against an environmental group that opposed the building of a large riverfront commercial development on the grounds that it would disturb the eagles that used to rest there: "Let's hope progress on the Lawrence riverfront factory outlet project by the Chelsea group is not further impeded by officials fearful of some hinted legal action about the eagles in the area."

In another editorial titled "Progress Despite Critics" the editor castigated those who for historic, aesthetic and social reasons had opposed the demolition by a bank of 8 houses in a central neighbourhood. A new drive-in facility was built in the area and the editor compares the "old dilapidated houses" with the new construction. "Now the area is landscaped in a most attractive manner, the bank's drive-in facility is a handsome new structure, and the plantings are sure to grow in beauty, enhancing the appearance of the site." And he concludes: "It is sobering and disturbing to think what kind of community Lawrence would be today if those recent protesters who have been so opposed to growth and development, those who have almost made a personal crusade of opposition to development and progress, would have been successful in their shortsighted, often selfish, arguments over the past 50 years or so."

Economic growth is regarded as a natural evolutionary process. The

following editorial, commenting on the City Commission's denial to give permission for the construction of a shopping mall offers an example. "Some may question why developers such as Jacobs of Cleveland and Ed Warmack of Arkansas would continue to express interest in building a mall in a Lawrence location even after the court's recent decision. Apparently they think common sense someday will prevail here, and they know Lawrence could support a fine retail mall. And in so doing it would make Lawrence a more complete, up-to-date city."

Within this scheme, the city government is perceived as an administrative activity whose content is to manage the community resources efficiently and whose aim is to bring about maximum growth. City government is seen as a "pretty regular operation" involving the kinds of decisions and requiring the kinds of skills that are necessary for the management of large corporations.

In one of the most commonly used metaphors, the city is compared to a business and the City Commission to its board of directors. The following editorial, which is also concerned with the mall issue, is a clear example. Plan 95 is the long term, comprehensive plan for the city of Lawrence. It was adopted in the late 1970's and states that downtown should remain the commercial centre of the city. "Flexibility is unknown to city officials and city commisssioners and they will rely on plan '95 until the courts tell them it has been abused, or until the city has been so damaged that even narrow-minded city officials will admit they have been wrong and will agree to a major suburban commercial development. The only trouble is that by the time there is a wake-up call at city hall it may be too late to correct the years of damage and neglect. Most every successful business realizes the importance and need for flexibility in order to change and meet competitive conditions of the time. What business would make a plan in any given year and tell its stockholders and officers that no changes can be made in the plan for the next 10 or 15 years regardless of competition, government regulations, demographic changes and other potential harmful conditions?"[28]

Political involvement represents an important avenue of community service; it is another form of civic voluntarism in a strategic sector of the community.[29] Politicians are community leaders who should be distinguished for their moral and personal integrity and their ability to accomplish the task. Some of the most important qualities of a politician is

his professionalism, his expertise, and his competence for the job of managing the "public corporation" efficiently. Johnson, a Chamber of Commerce supported candidate for the Lawrence City Commission in the 1989 elections, said: "The voters need to look at candidates' leadership abilities to solve those issues. They're electing commissioners based on those abilities". D. Lipman, another pro-growth candidate, described himself as "A family man with many senior citizen relatives in Lawrence; a fifth generation Lawrencian for good jobs and affordable homes; an MIT graduate engineer with a depth of engineering experience; a successful business owner with a black belt in budget cutting." An editorial praised a county commissioner as following: "Sidney Mason's decision not to seek re-election as a Douglas County commissioner is a loss to the Commission, to Douglas County and to sound, progressive government. During her eight years as a commissioner, she and other commissioners have worked hard to bring more professionalism to this important body and to improve the relationship and respect between the County and City Commission. She has stressed the importance of looking at the long-range objectives of the Commission and the county, and she has been active in numerous other projects that have resulted in better, more efficient county government."

The kinds of problems a politician is called to solve are of a technical nature and more particularly they are managerial problems which should be solved by the application of business principles. To be a businessman was one of the best qualifications for a candidate and 4 out of 5 1989-1991 city commissioners were businessmen. W. Nieder, another candidate for the Lawrence City Commission, provides a clear example of this ideology. Nieder was a law student in Lawrence and had worked in the administration of another city. He told me that he had "a business philosophy" and that he wanted to get elected in order "to use his experience from the management side." He also said : "I feel the people of Lawrence are stock holders. The commissioners are the board of directors. A good political decision is a good business decision. The rules of efficiency should be the rules governing political decision. Before the money is spent one has to consider what he is going to get back. The success of a program is measured by the extent to which the goals are achieved."

Perry, another pro-growth candidate in the same elections said to the local

paper: "The running of Lawrence is big business and sound business decisions for planning and improving efficiency of operations should be employed. I believe my management experience would be an asset to the City Commission's decision making process."

The need for sound business-like government is also often stressed in relation to tax issues. An editorial titled "Government Business" is a clear example: "Lawrence taxpayers now should have a better idea why it is so important to have some sound, business-oriented people serving on the school board. School officials announced Wednesday that the proposed mill levy for the school district is estimated at 68.04 mills. . . Running the school district is big business, and it is essential to have individuals serving on this 'board of directors' who are tough, able, fair-minded, forward-looking business people, mindful of their responsibilities to the young shool-age children of the community as well as to the taxpayers. They need to be considerate but tough and business-like in dealing with school matters and not be pushovers for administrators or 'yes-men' for teachers."

Efficient, progressive government that serves the common good is often contrasted to government influenced by "special interests". Politicians, for reasons that have to do with their wish to be reelected, are perceived as vulnerable to the influence of "special interests" that deter them from being objective and business-like in their decisions. In the above editorial the common good, the good of young school-age children and the taxpayers is contrasted to the interests of the administrators and teachers. In another editorial we read: "If the city is to continue to move ahead in a sound, progressive and forward-looking manner, it is essential to have sound, progressive froward-looking - and honest - city commissioners interested in the welfare and betterment of the entire communtiy. Lawrence cannot afford to allow special interests to take over city hall to the detriment of the city and its future development."

This is the perhaps the most frequently stressed theme in the dominant political discourse. "Governing Lawrence requires making decisions for the entire community." (From Johnson's brochure of 1989 elections) In an article about Lawrence's mayor S. Owen, that was titled: "Owen Wants to Reflect Voters, not Interest Group", we read: "Owen relishes unity, dislikes strife. On those Tuesday nights when there are heated debates, when members of the

audience are frustrated and angry, Owen stiffens, almost flinches, in discomfort." E. Towner, another pro-growth candidate in the elections, wrote in one of his campaign leaflets: "Let's rely more on free enterprise and less on special interest groups' wants and desires for economic growth and development. Since all parts of the City pay taxes, let's treat all of the parts of the City - north, south, east, and west - in a fair and honorable way."

Neighbourhood groups, teachers, and administrators are often stated as examples of "special interests" in the dominant political discourse. Such groups are regarded as using their political power in order to extract decisions that are favourable to their interests but detrimental to the public good. Their claims should be given a fair treatment although they should be always weighed against the common good. As Towner's quote shows, however, business interests are usually exempted from this general rule. Business contribute automatically to the common good by providing jobs and services and they should be given every opportunity to flourish and expand.

3.2 The City Manager Form of Government

The city manager form of local government constitutes one of the most successful attempts to bring about institutional reform on the basis of these ideas. This form of local government had first been attempted in Staunton Virginia in 1908 and has been adopted subsequently by many, especially middle-sized, American cities primarily under the pressure of business interests.[30] The Lynds record such pressures in Middletown.[31]

The city manager form of government was adopted in Lawrence in 1950. At that time, as a result of the new opportunities generated by the second World War, Lawrence's "business leaders" decided to adopt a more expansionist attitude and actively seek the economic growth of the city. D. Darry describes the event in his history of Lawrence: "Something else occured in 1950 that had far-reaching effects on Lawrence. Business and community leaders moved to strengthen the city's government. They called for a change to the commission-manager form of government pointing out that under the mayor-council form committees ran the various city departments. The proponents of change claimed that the mayor-council form of government was too loose for effective city government in a growing community, and

they said the mayor-council system limited the city's progress."[32]

The city manager government is modelled after a corporate structure with a chief executive (the city manager) and a board of directors (the City Commission). It came to replace the mayor-council form of government which was considered prone to inefficiency and corruption. The new government form was regarded as establishing a separation of functions parallel to the separation between the ownership and the management of a corporation.

Its purpose is twofold: it aims on the one hand to increase efficiency by bringing more expertise and professionalism to city administration and on the other to depoliticize city government by putting a lot of decisions in the hands of administrators and a non-elected lay body. (The city committees whose members are appointed by the mayor and have more continuity than elected officials.)

City governments are large organizations that have to operate in a complex environment. Their administration cannot be left to amateurs like the local politicians who usually have little previous experience in government and cannot devote all their time to it, but requires the expertise of a professional. Toulmin, in a book propagating the new government form, describes the city manager as following: "The city manager is an appointive officer selected, by reason of his peculiar knowledge of municipal affairs and because of his administrative ability, to fill the position of chief executive of a vast public corporation, with little restriction upon his power and with only one command - produce results."[33]

The city manager form is regarded as superior for still another reason. While politicians are vulnerable to the claims of special interest groups and thus to inefficiency and corruption, the city manager is objective. Because he is supposedly above political division he can be impartial and efficient. Unrestrained from political obligations he can perform his task in a detached, scientific, and business-like manner.

In order to keep his objectivity and best perform his duties, the city manager is recruited ideally from outside the community and has to transfer every few years to another community. (The same rule applies to other community experts as well as to corporate executives.) Toulmin writes: "It is sometimes assumed that a resident of the neighborhood would know the

people better, and would then be able to serve them more acceptably; but the fact is that, as a rule, the less people a municipal officer knows, the better it is for the service. The great curse of municipal government arises from the fact that the officials know too many people, and are under too many obligations."[34]

The city manager form of government is regarded as no less democratic than the system it replaced. On the contrary it is seen as an innovation enhancing democratic participation by better adjusting municipal government to the new economic and social conditions. "The powers of this new commission are not diminished in importance as compared with what they were in other commission governments, but merely adjusted more nicely to the delicate requirements of municipal administration."[35]

Elections are not partisan under the new system. The involvement of political parties in "the business of the city" is considered detrimental and they are seen "to open the way to countless schemes of public plunder and civic corruption."[36] In the new system commissioners are not elected because a party has endorsed them but solely on the basis of their integrity and competence. The commissioners act as "the connecting links between the people and the manager"[37] and have a purely legislative and advisory role that fits their experience and competence.

Under the new system, in a further effort to depoliticize the governmental process, many of the government functions are transferred to the various city committees. Their members are appointed by the commission and they are supposed to act as non-political bodies.[38]

Most high-ranking city administrators subscribed to the dominant political ideology. According to M. Olson, the Director of the Planning Department, the Planning Committee is in fact superior and in matters of planning more powerful than the City Commission. He told me: "The state law intentionally tries to depoliticize the planning process by putting it in the hands of the lay body. They have greater tenure and better continuity, longer than the governing body. The governing bodies do not have the ability to destroy the continuity of the Planning Committee. It's never difficult to find people to serve on the Planning Committee. They have a lot of power and respect, although it requires the dedication of long hours without pay. They have the ultimate responsibility of adopting the plan for the community.

The intention is to create a separation of powers, to keep those issues out of the political arena. Because the political arena reacts too quickly to special interests and because the politicians' primary motives are getting elected, the politician is more likely to trade off the public welfare for self-interest. For example, neighbourhoods will be more effective with the city commission than with the planning commitee."

The planning process, according to Olson, consists in the scientific determination of the general good and as such it should remain as non-political as possible. "Politics" signify the clash of special interests and "playing politics" tends to deter city politicians from serving the common good. The job of the city's employees is to guide political representatives toward the correct scientifically justified decisions: "We try to present staff reports and try to extract scientific decisions out of them. "

4. THE PRO-GROWTHERS

We have until now examined civic and political rhetoric at a rather general level; in this section we turn to city politics and examine the political ideology of the advocates of growth.

Most candidates in the 1989 elections were unequivocal supporters of growth[39] and in recent years pro-growth politicians usually had the majority on the City Commission. The firmest advocate of growth is the local Chamber of Commerce, but supporters of growth were found in every part of the community. Growth is the guiding value of the civic ideal and was regarded positively by the majority of the middle class.[40] The local media, monopolized for the most part by one family, were ardent proponents of growth, and most high-ranking city bureaucrats as well as other officials were at least publicly in favour of it.

I first discuss the Chamber of Commerce and then examine the political arguments of the pro-growthers as well as their positions in some of the most important local political issues.

4.1 The Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber of Commerce is the single most powerful organization in Lawrence. Although a professional association, the Chamber is often included in the civic clubs as it is considered to benefit the whole of the community. It has a large membership and a large organization with many staff and volunteers.

The Chamber of Commerce is a professional association including in its membership almost all Lawrence businesses and a number of independent professionals. In April 1990 the Chamber had 1400 separate membership accounts. Some of the larger firms have many representatives so the total internal mailing list of the Chamber comprises 1750 people.

The Chamber's membership includes all types of business and government bodies. The majority of its members are entrepreneurs and business managers. But there are also an extra 200 individual members. More than 100 come from the university comprising faculty, administrators and university organizations, from fraternities and sororities to the coaches of the university's sports teams. Other members include the superintendent and principals of Lawrence schools and other high-ranking civil servants.

It is almost impossible to sustain a business without being a member of the Chamber and it is clear that active participation in it is indispensible for a successful career in business, in the professions, in certain corporations or even in the state administration.

The following anecdote is indicative. It concerns a computer firm owner, who initially didn't want to become a member of the Chamber, but was finally obliged to join after the pressure that was exerted on him by Chamber representatives, and it was recounted to me by one of his friends. "He got into the Chamber when he opened this business [a computer firm]. He told me that they essentially put the extortion on him if he didn't. 'You've got to join; you have no choice.' Since he opened the store, one of their people came in: 'We'd like to sign you up for the chamber', and he said: 'No thank you, I don't like what the Chamber is doing, I don't think I'll join'. And, he said, they just told him right on the spot: 'You must join, we have a directory of who is and who is not a member, and computers are obviously things you

are going to try to sell to businesses, and you are not going to sell any computers to businesses in Lawrence if you are not a member; we'll see that you don't'. And, he said, they were absolutely right, he did [join] and he ended selling to businesses, so he said he had no choice".

The primary aim of the Chamber of Commerce is to promote the economic development of the city. K. Robertson, the director of the Lawrence Chamber, told me: "The Chamber was established in 1878 and its goals then were very similar to its goals now and that was to strengthen the economy of the community by bringing in people and by bringing in businesses that create wealth in the community. And the Chamber's role primarily is economic and then, however, so many things become factors in whether a town is able to attract business and industry that we spin off into a lot of areas; we spin off into politics because if your government leaders are supportive of additional growth and development then in fact you can use that to attract firms. So we're involved in politics in the local, state, and federal level. We get involved in schools and bond issues on new governmental facilities. We get involved in pretty much anything that happens in the community that we think will have an impact on the quality of life of the town."

Indeed Chamber activities embrace the whole of social life. Apart from providing direct services to its members, (from advice and information to pension schemes for the small businessmen), the Chamber has organised committees that work on every aspect of the city's life and promote its views and objectives. The Chamber plays an active political role and it is the most powerful instigator of economic development in the city. It endorses and supports candidates in city elections, organizes a course for prospective business and community leaders and generally has a powerful impact on the city's political life. Moreover, it supports many projects and charities, organizes the city festival, and gives some of the most prestigious city awards. Its annual celebration is an important two day social event and the local paper devotes a special edition to it.[41]

4.2 The Pro-Growth Political Ideology

It is the prevailing ideology that growth represents the natural order of things and the undisputed goal of every community. It was so on the frontier and the relics of the ghost towns are there to remind everybody of what happens to the towns that do not manage to grow. In fact, growth is often presented as a requisite for survival; under conditions of acute competition, a city (or a company) which does not expand may start shrinking. Many cities, in central and western Kansas especially faced serious economic problems, and according to Robertson (the director of the Lawrence Chamber), "there is still a danger for a lot of communities in Kansas to become ghost towns." Johnson, one of the Chamber of Commerce supported candidates in the 1989 elections, said during the campaign: "I've had the opportunity to do different things with the state legislature and have seen the different situations communites across the state are in. The dire straits some communities are in is because of their local economy. Their quality of life suffers. Then they lose people, lose more money and find themselves in an even worse situation. Given the situation here, I'm glad I'm in Lawrence."

In the dominant political discourse, growth represents increasing levels of prosperity and well being for all the inhabitants of the community. As the local population increases and more businesses are established in the city, there are as a consequence more employment opportunities and a higher level of public and private services.

The principal political argument of Chamber of Commerce officials and pro-growth politicians was that growth creates jobs and broadens the tax base of the city; all pro-growth politicians stressed these points during the campaign. Lipman (an independent pro-growth politician who acquired considerable support from fundamentalist Christian groups and managed to get elected in 1989 for two years) said, when asked during the campaign about the most important issue facing Lawrence: "We need a fair, consistent city government which will serve Lawrence well into the 1990's. Our recent city commissioners, with notable exceptions, have dealt in negatives and introduced divisions in our community. The Commission needs to secure new jobs, and business expansion within existing businesses. Seeking new

businesses and industry is important for the future of our young people. Several major employers have dropped expansion plans, or are leaving entirely, because of a negative attitude in the city government. Those lost jobs hurt us all." Towner, another pro-growth candidate in the same elections, is presented in one of his campaign leaflets as being "for growth that creates new jobs and paychecks, which in turn help build a bigger tax base and help keep taxes down".

The close interrelationship between growth, jobs and taxes was stressed on many occasions. Bob Stover, a businessman and former president of the Chamber of Commerce, said to the local paper: "We need more good jobs. We're becoming too much of a bedroom community; we're not creating enough jobs for young people and our tax base is suffering. We've had nothing really major come in here since the Sallie Mae [student loan marketing operation], and we've got to see some development of projects such as the East Hills Business Park. That, of course, needs the southern trafficway, and we can't get that soon enough." (From Progress 1989 : the special annual edition of the *Journal-World* dedicated to the activities of the Chamber of Commerce.)

The 1989 president of the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce said in an interview in the local paper: "Like it or not, we're not a small town anymore. We can't turn back the clock. We need more good places to work and a broader tax base, and we need to get more people living here and working here. We have to be wary of the fact that Lawrence is fast becoming too much of a place where people sleep after working somewhere else, like Kansas City or Topeka. We want jobs we can offer young people who want to stay, so they don't have to leave because they can't find work, no matter how much they love the town."

In an editorial stressing the need for the city to compete with other cities for the attraction of new industry we read: "Some may say they do not want growth, but these individuals should be asked who is going to pay the taxes needed to support and provide the many new and more costly services that local residents seem to demand? And who is going to pay the ever-escalating tax bills generated by the school board? If new industry and business do not come to town, local tax-paying residents will have the responsibility of paying these higher bills. It would be interesting to know how many of those who

fight growth and expansion are property owners and pay local property taxes? It is fairly easy to be outspoken about local issues when there is no long-term commitment to the community, no property ownership and when policies called for by these individuals will be the responsibility and perhaps liability of those remaining in Lawrence as opposed to those who are here for a few years and then move away."

Economic development is considered a necessary condition for the general prosperity and welfare of the community, not only because it creates jobs and increases the tax revenue, but also because it generates a surplus, part of which gets donated to support community projects enhancing the quality of life for all.[42]

Denise Stockton, a member of the Peacemakers and one of the highest ranking judges in the country told the local paper: "I would encourage all of the changes that continue to stimulate economic growth for the purposes of supporting schools, roads and cultural development." (Progress 1990)

Robertson also told me: "In the long run what it [economic stagnation] means is that Lawrence doesn't have any money, that the tax base isn't growing and the pot holes in the streets don't get fixed, and when your children want a new recreational programme there isn't any money for it, and when you need something in the schools there isn't any money for it because the economy isn't growing. You never enhance the quality of life in a community that has a stagnant or declining economic base. Communities that have a growing economic base have the resources both from tax dollars and from profits in the community that get donated to causes to make the community even better. The reason that Lawrence is a nice community is because long term economy in Lawrence has always been pretty stable and has always been growing."

Pro-growthers complain about the resistance there is in the city to growth. They attribute such resistance to the fact that, because the university is the largest employer in town, a large number of the malcontents are state employees and thus they are not directly financially dependent on the local economy. Robertson told me: "Because people in the university community get their paycheque from Topeka [the state capital] they often don't see an interrelationship between their paycheque and the health of the Lawrence economy, or the health of the economy of the state of Kansas as a whole. So

there would be a tendency for that person to say: 'I really like Lawrence just the way it is. I don't want any more people; I don't want any more traffic; I don't want any more business; I just want it just the way it is, 'cause it's easier for me and as a result I may oppose things that create growth, population growth and economic growth in the community.'" Robertson denounced this attitude as negative and ultimately unrealistic, and pointed to the fact that, although with some lag, even state employees are affected by the state of the local economy and tend to respond politically by supporting pro-growth politicians.

The final part of this chapter is dedicated to the examination of the pro-growther's views on some of the most important local political issues.

4.3 The Issues

The Shopping Mall

The construction of a shopping mall in Lawrence was the most important issue in the city's recent political history, and continued to be a matter of concern and to appear in the political scene during my fieldwork.

The construction of shopping malls has been a national trend in large and small cities across the country. Shopping malls are usually located in the suburbs, they are easily accessible by car and have in many cities entirely replaced downtown areas as retail shopping centres. More than 50% of all retail shopping in the country takes place in shopping malls.[43]

Lawrence is perhaps the only city of its size in the country without a shopping mall. Developers have been seeking permission for the construction of a shopping mall since at least 1979. Almost no year has passed without a new proposal for the construction of a mall in the suburbs or downtown. But in every instance, the proposals failed to ensure political support and thus did not materialize.

The issue came to the political fore prior to the 1987 elections for the Lawrence City Commission. JVJ (an out-of-state company that had built 42 other malls throughout the country) in cooperation with local developers, had proposed to build a 360,000-square-foot shopping mall on a 13.5-acre plot at the north end of Lawrence downtown. The cost of the project was

estimated at about $55.7 million, more of a third of which was to be provided by public funds. The downtown mall became the central issue of the election. The proposal was supported by the Chamber of Commerce but encountered the firm opposition of downtown businesses and neighbourhood groups. The campaign was particularly heated and the subsequent electoral turnout set a new record for city's elections.[44] Despite a major advertising campaign by JVJ, Lawrence's citizens overwhelmingly voted against the project. All three incumbents who were in favour of the project failed to get reelected and were replaced by Owen, Carpenter and Burns who were outspoken opponents of the mall.

The outcome of the 1987 elections has shelved the proposed plan and has set aside, for sometime at least, the whole issue. Nevertheless, the construction of a shopping mall continued to preoccupy the local media and politicians and to be a matter of political controversy.

According to its proponents, a shopping mall is a badly needed development that will create jobs and benefit the local economy in many ways. By allowing the construction of a mall, the city is "taking full advantage of all of its assets" and will become a "more complete up-to-date city."[45] As the city's population grows, the retail facilities must grow to meet demand or the potential customers will spend their money elsewhere. They point to studies showing that "a lot of retail sales dollars leave Lawrence" as many residents shop in malls in Kansas City or Topeka.[46] They regard the abandoning of the downtown area as part of an evolutionary process that will in the long run inevitably lead to the construction of a mall in Lawrence. According to the executive director of the Chamber a mall will inevitably be built in Lawrence and "it's only a question of when there will be a mall" (Robertson). This view was shared by several pro-growth candidates of the 1989 election although, given the 1987 results, most pro-growth candidates avoided expressing support for the construction of a shopping mall. E. Towner remarked: "I see in Lawrence's future a mall being built. Where and when it will be built, I don't know. You can't stop growth and time forever. Plan '95 won't work anymore; it's outdated and should be placed in the Watkins Museum. Downtown Lawrence will survive by becoming competitive."

Proponents of the mall responded to fears that a mall would destroy the

downtown by pointing out that the downtown cannot be artificially maintained, and should survive only to the extent that it remains competitive. The defeat of the project appeared in their eyes as an obvious case in which special interests have managed to impose their views and inhibit development at the expense of Lawrence taxpayers.

Perry, another pro-growth candidate, said: "Lawrence could have had a shopping mall years ago if the special interests and the City Commission had not stopped it. 'Plan 95' should be called '95 ways to inhibit economic development in Lawrence, Kansas' Historically, it has been shown time and time again that the government cannot legislate economic prosperity. However, the government can inhibit economic development and, by lessening the tax base, impose a greater tax burden on the common citizen. Right now the city is involved in useless litigation to prevent a developer from putting in a mall that would not cost the taxpayers a dime if handled properly. I am in favour of competition and a free market to bring down prices for the consumer. This is the way to broaden the tax base and encourage economic prosperity so that the already overburdened taxpayers can obtain some tax relief. Economic development is encouraged by free competition and not by playing favourites at the taxpayers' expense."

According to Robertson, most consumers want a mall in Lawrence but tolerate the present situation because of the availability of shopping malls in nearby locations. He told me: "More and more people I think in Lawrence are kind of tired of reading about the issue, of talking about it, and some of those people just said: 'What the hell I think I'll just go shop in Topeka or shop in Kansas City and I don't think I'm gonna worry about it.' So they take their car and in 30 minutes they are in Westport to shop. The consumers in Lawrence want additional shopping but it is fairly accessible right now, so I think that's the reason they just haven't gotten up in arms about what's happening because they have other alternatives."

The South Trafficway

The construction of a $58.2 million highway bypass around southern and western Lawrence (known as the South Lawrence trafficway or bypass) was another of the most important political issues in Lawrence politics during my

fieldwork. The proposed highway was one of the largest development projects in Lawrence's history and its construction was expected, by both proponents and opponents, to have a major impact on the city.

Plans for a new South trafficway were first introduced by the Douglas County Commission in 1985. The County Commission adopted the highway scheme and set about its implementation. It ordered an engineering study, the study of the environmental impact and allocated 4 million dollars to the project by issuing bonds. The County Commission then secured state and federal funding for the project and, prior to the 1987 elections, persuaded the City Commission to allocate an extra 4 million dollars.

The project was ardently supported by the Chamber of Commerce but it also met with strong opposition. A long legal battle that had begun in 1985, and concerned the right of the County Commission to issue bonds without a referendum, was still pending during most of my fieldwork. Moreover, the study of the environmental impact hadn't been completed and the delay reinforced environmental concerns about the project[47]. In the 1986 elections for the County Commission in which S. Mason[48], initiator and ardent supporter of the trafficway, sought reelection, the Committee to Elect a True Amphibian[49] urged voters to support Agnes T. Frog (pseudonym of an endangered frog that lives in the wetlands through which the proposed trafficway passes) and got 27 percent of the votes.

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The construction of the new trafficway was the most important priority of the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce. A 1989 survey by the *Journal-World* of "business, industrial, financial, and educational leaders" about Lawrence's most important needs, found that "transportation, with special emphasis on the speediest possible completion of the South Lawrence trafficway, was far and away the No. 1 priority." Chamber of Commerce officials and pro-growth politicians stressed on many occasions the importance of building the highway for Lawrence's future, and denounced those who had caused delays to the realization of the project.

The answer of Robertson to the above mentioned survey is characteristic of the highway's supporters: "No agonizing choice for me; no need to ponder. The South Lawrence trafficway is the single most important project with the highest impact locally of anything since the opening of the Kansas Turnpike

in 1956. It would represent a major breakthrough, and if it could be in use tomorrow, we'd see all sorts of good, desirable things begin to happen at the East Hills Business Park, which needs the trafficway to provide ready access to the turnpike to offer greater ease in reaching the Kansas City airport."

L. McPherson, a top manager of a successful local firm and former Chamber president, said: "Hands-down, for the immediate community welfare it's the Southwest trafficway. That's highly critical to traffic flow, safety and improvement of the economic climate here, because of the close ties to the turnpike and the East Hills Business park. This is a physical project, but there's a mental aspect as well, because it would signal the community is off dead-center and moving after too many delays. To outsiders looking in, it's difficult to see why Lawrence has been so hindered in recent years in measuring up to its potential."

According to its proponents the South trafficway is an urgently needed highway that will solve the current and future traffic problems of Lawrence and help the industrial development of the city and the county. "The Southern trafficway is a very nessecary traffic link. Traffic studies indicate that the it will provide traffic congestion relief both for internal and external traffic upon completion" (Johnson).

According to its proponents, the trafficway will ease congestion by diverting through-traffic that under the present street system passes through some of the main city arteries and particularly through 23rd Street, one of the main commercial streets of Lawrence. Lipman said: "Most of the traffic is not going to 23rd Street or downtown to shop. Most of them are coming or going to their residences west of Massachusetts Street. The southern trafficway would be a fast route home for drivers living in the southern and western parts of Lawrence." A. Porter, the senior elected commissioner in the elections of 1989 and one of the most ardent supporters of the trafficway, said: "I have been talking during the campaign about how long it takes to get anywhere these days in our community. Maybe we are a little spoiled because we do have the luxury of living in a nice, small city. But nontheless, our streets are very crowded and we do experience five o'clock rush hour. Five o'clock rush hour, for instance on 23rd Street, probably starts at 4:30 and doesn't quit until 6:30; that's a long rush hour for a small city. I believe that we need to continue to persevere on getting the trafficway into place before we're forced

to put a road where we don't want it to go. It goes back to managing growth before it manages us."

The construction of the highway was presented by its supporters as an act of good planning and a ground-breaking project. Simpson (the other Chamber of Commerce endorsed politician who got elected in the 1989 elections) said: "Good roads are important to the future of our community. Planning of these roads in the early development stages is more cost-effective and shows good, organized planning." F. Limberg, the 1990 president of the Chamber of Commerce, said: "Lawrence would be less attractive if, in the past, city leaders had not widened major streets and paved Kasold Drive [a major traffic artery in the western suburbs of Lawrence] in preparation for a population growth to the west. Yet all those things, at the time that they were undertaken, were perceived to be threats to what the community was like at the time."

Tax Abatement

A 1986 state law aiming at the attraction of industry in Kansas gave city governments the right to grand tax abatements to industries moving or expanding within their borders. The granting of tax abatements was regularly asked by firms wanting to move to Lawrence or to expand their operations in the city, and frequently became a matter of political controversy.

The supporters of growth were almost always in favour of giving tax abatements and pointed to the necessity for the city to compete with other cities in the state and the region for the attraction of economic development. New industry is seen as enhancing the general welfare of the community by creating new jobs and enlarging the city's tax base. According to those supporting the granting of tax abatements, the new payroll circulates a number of times in the local economy, stimulating other businesses and producing enough property, sales, and income taxes to compensate for the tax abatement.

The following extract from a *Journal-World* editorial called "Competition for Industry" is characteristic of the pro-growthers' views: "Lawrence recently lost a local industry to Fort Collins, Colorado, and depending on whom one listens to, there were varying reasons the owners decided to move. Some suggested the owners were anxious to move to the mountain country, and

others claimed Fort Collins was able to offer a very attractive package of incentives to help lure the Lawrence operation.

"It probably was a combination of those factors, but there is no question that the challenge to hold onto existing industries and attract new business and industry is going to become more intense in the months and years to come. This is going to place great pressures on local government and business leaders if Lawrence is to keep pace and maintain a high standard of living, working and playing conditions.

"Fort Collins has a very aggressive, successful economic development programme. The names of nationally recognized businesses located in the university city, which once was much smaller than Lawrence, offers excellent evidence of the effectiveness of their programme. However, competition among cities along Colorado's front range is becoming even more intense, and this places Lawrence and other cities at an even added disadvantage in attracting new industry."

In the question "What does Lawrence need most that it doesn't have now?" asked by the *Journal-World* in the 1989 Progress edition, the President of the Chamber, all directors of the local banks as well as other business representatives stressed the need for a "change in attitude" and the importance of giving Lawrence more of a pro-business image. I quote the President of Douglas County Bank. "What bothers me most is that Lawrence does not have a firm, forceful and courageous spokesman, be it an individual or an organization, for the business community. We need that badly, and the sooner the better. We've got an obvious downtown split, we sometimes have a bit too much concentration on matters involving the area from Sixth to 11th Streets and several blocks east and west [the borders of Lawrence downtown], and nobody seems ready to stand up and fight for the general business community. Meanwhile the message seems to be going out - and I talk to a lot of people elsewhere - that Lawrence is hostile to business and that it's not a place that welcomes such activity. That's terribly sad, considering all the things we have in our favour. It's as if 'business' and 'progress' are dirty words and we're too eager to let people run them down while a lot of people who should be speaking out aren't doing so."

Although they were almost always in favour of giving tax abatements and usually disagreed with neighbourhood politicians on the specific cases, most

pro-growth politicians recognized that Lawrence should be selective in the recruiment of new industry and the granting of tax incentives. A. Porter said : "We need to not give the store away, but we need to have some negotiating tools to attract companies. We need to look at what we're spending and look at the return on that expense. That will give us the answer as to whether or not we want the company here and it's going to provide the kinds of jobs our city needs." Simpson also said: "A lot of communities, a lot of states will give very, very hefty incentives for those people to locate in their communities. Some of those cities are not as rich in heritage or quality of life as ours. I think we need to compete. But because of the richness of our heritage and our quality of life, we can offer something that's an intangible as well as a tangible. So, I don't think we need to give a 100 percent abatement."

Other pro-growth politicians however, like Lipman were more critical of those who resisted economic growth and asked for the adoption of a more effective development programme. Lipman said during the campaign: "I would say the system Lawrence has now is not as strong as it has been in the past. In the 1950's it was very strong, and in the 1960's they had a very strong economic development. They were very competitive; I know that from some other cities that competed against them. Today, I think that we're kinda stalled out on getting economic development. What we're accomplishing does not look like it's very productive, and I'm not sure why. Part of the attitude of the City Commission has been less than hospitable to keeping the industries we have here and in drawing in new ones. As far as the mechanisms (for industrial development), I think the two most effective are the IRBs and the tax abatement. Those are traditional, and you have to be at least competitive, you have to be able to offer the same things other cities are offering. But we're going to have to be better at it and maybe steamline some of the problems we have with planning and zoning, with human relations, with all of these things new companies have to go through. If we can't offer what the other cities are offering, there's just no way we're going to get these companies because it's an economic bottom line in a lot of cases. Plus, if we have a very positive attitude on the City Commission toward industry and toward recruiting these people, then I think we have a good shot at getting these."

5. CONCLUSION

In their study of Springdale, Vidich and Bensman found that "almost every period of American cultural history was actively represented by some segment of the community"[51] and that the dominant public rhetoric was "part of the late frontier ideals of Jacksonian democracy" and was characterized by "a belief in agrarian democracy and independence and the ideology of economic growth and expansiveness."[52]

The dominant civic ideal in Lawrence, although in many ways akin to the public ideology of Springdale, comes from a later period. The ideals of economic success, community service, and patriotism that inform the dominant civic ideology in Lawrence are familiar from the Lynds' study of Middletown[53] and their origins can be traced to the progressive period of American history. The tone may be less optimistic in Lawrence but still the main aspects of civic rhetoric remain unchanged.

The dominant political ideology originates also from the same period and it was powerfully advocated by the Chamber of Commerce, the local press, and the majority of Lawrence civic leaders and high-ranking public administrators. Economic growth is considered the undisputable goal of the community. Pro-growthers support new developments (such as the shopping mall or the South trafficway), are in most cases in favour of unrestricted property rights, and believe that market forces should be left to operate freely. Growth is identified with social progress and it is seen as a natural and thus inevitable process. Economic development, by creating jobs and expanding the city's tax base, is seen as contributing to both private and public prosperity and benefiting all citizens of Lawrence alike.

According to the dominant political ideology, the role of the city's political authorities is to create the best environment for the attraction and accomodation of economic development. The government of the city is seen as an administrative activity whose role is to manage the community resources efficiently and whose aim is to bring about maximum growth. Politicians should be elected on the basis of their competence and they should ideally remain above the clash of special interests. These ideas have been the basis of important institutional reforms in the American political system and

inform the city manager form of government which was adopted in Lawrence in 1950, and it is currently the system of more than 3000 cities across the country.[54]

NOTES

1. Those editorials were often written by the owner of the newspaper who was very active both in the Chamber of Commerce and the Rotary club.
2. Bellah et al 1985: 170.
3. Graebner 1987: 7-35.
4. The meetings of the Peacemakers were designed according to the imperatives of Democratic Social Engineering as analysed by Graebner. A leader prepared the topic of conversation and guided the discussions with the help of specially designed books, and conclusions were reached with the use of democratic methods of inquiry.
5. Harold Gleason (a Lawrence businessman and civic leader whose views are discussed in chapter 5) told me: "Probably in any given community there will be a club which has a higher percentage of the community's leaders and in our community, Rotary I think is clearly number one, and Kiwanis club would be number two, and it would go down from there. In our community I think Rotary acts as a place where influential people meet and see each other once a week and say hello, and the political process gets greased. You know, we have the superintendent of schools, and we've got the City manager, and we've got the Chancellor of the University, and we have a number of the Deans of the University and the heads of the large businesses in the community. One of the reasons to go to Rotary is to see all these people and to get to know them."
6. See Wright Mills 1956: 37.
7. Rotary Handbook of Information (published in Lawrence in 1985), p.1.
8. From the Altrusa Encyclopedia (published by the organization in 1990), p.1.
9. The importance of a positive attitude for professional and personal success is stressed in the following extract from the Altrusa's "President's message" of March 1989 :

"'Enthusiasm is one of the most powerful engines of success. When you do a thing, do it with all your might. Put your whole soul into it. Stamp it

with your personality. Be active, be energetic, be enthusiastic and faithful, and you will accomplish your objective. Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm.' (Ralph Waldo Emerson)

"The words of Ralph Waldo Emerson reflect a view of the power of attitude. Our attitude reflects our beliefs, our perception and our goals. Within each of our lifetimes, there are moments of happiness and of sadness, yet each of us encounters these moments differently. The way we experience life, whether we have enthusiasm toward our daily activities, is depended on whether we have optimism as our foundation. If we are optimistic about the possibility for change and for growth, then we see ourselves as having some control and power to affect the world about us. To be optimistic does not mean one must be naive, but it means one lives with hope. Hope is a motivator that allows us to create something new and different - allows us to be enthusiastic. What better gift could we share with each other than the world as we see it - 'stamped with our personality.' Our lives deserve enthusiasm. We have much to hope for and to share with each other."

10. Horatio Alger is a famous character in American history representing the American ideal of "rags to riches" - the belief that anyone born in conditions of poverty can raise himself to the highest levels of success.

11. Some examples of services provided by Rotary clubs are given in the booklet: "Some clubs have actively sponsored many civic and cultural projects over a period of years. Such as a Scout Troop with participation as Scout Committee members as well as monetary gifts for the purchase of equipment. Many times the annual Scout-O-Rama is also shared by members as adult participants.

"Blood Bank donations by members of a club have been carried on for years. They not only share this blood reserved for their family members but also share this reserve by making donations to very needy patients.

"I have known of a Hockey Club, organized and sponsored by a Rotary Club, which is made up during the summer months for several hundred needy boys each year.

"Several years ago I was member of a club that assisted the Pikes Peak Forest Service in a supervisory capacity in the Cutting of Christmas trees. This service is usually done on two week ends in December." (p.6)

12. Rotary Handbook of Information, p.6.

13. The expression belongs to an official of the Lawrence Kiwanis club. 14. Bellah et al 1985: 168-177.

15. See Lynds 1929: 484, and Lynds 1937: 407.

16. Lynds 1929: 488.

17. From the Altrusa Encyclopedia, p.1.

18. Democracy has been called a "civic religion" by many American historians. According to Graebner and other American historians the identification of democracy with the American nation began in the late 19th century and became particularly prominent after the First World War (Graebner 1987: 36-57).

19. Lynds 1937: 413-414.

20. Rotary Handbbook of Information, p.3.

21. For a general historic overview of the "progressive period" (1900-1940) see Handlin 1963: 375-390.

22. Bellah at al 1985: 209. See also Segal 1985: 98-128 and Hays 1964: 157-169.

23. Segal 1985: 114.

24. Segal 1985: 111.

25. Bellah et al 1985: 267-270.

26. Even the theory of a "rational informed citizenry" was echoed in the discourse of some officials. This theory was prevalent in Middletown: "The system of selection is based upon the theory that, if periodically given an opportunity to express itself, the choice of the majority of adult citizens, including today women as well as men voters, will fall upon the person best qualified to fill a particular post" (Lynds 1929: 413.) See also Graebner 1987: 43.

27. In the following editorial, the city is presented as an aggregate of individuals who have the same interests: "A sound, healthy, forward-looking industrial climate requires give and take by all parties. It is a two-way street with the city, its citizens, the employees of a company and the company itself all benefiting from a cooperative, helpful relationship."

28. Another editorial draws the same parallel at the national level. "How long would it take Congress to get something important done about the federal budget deficit, the national debt and America's financial stability if the salaries of the members of the U.S. House and Senate were directly related to the economic climate? . . . What would be wrong in tying salary and benefit boosts to how well the business of government is doing? The incomes of

people all over the nation hinge on how their companies are faring, which is the way it has to be in the long run. When businesses are doing poorly, raises are lessened or even negated; there even are pay cuts and personnel layoffs in drastic situations."

29. A downtown businessman told me: "You have a lot of people who run for office thinking it's their civic duty, I've succeeded with my business, maybe I can be in the City Commission because I can bring some expertise to government problems and serve my fellow citizens." Johnson, one of Chamber of Commerce supported candidates of the 1989 city elections said, when announcing his candidancy: "People talk about a civic duty and the need to give back to their community. It may sound trite and overused, but I really believe that, and I believe I have something to offer."

30. Segal 1985: 227.

31. Lynds 1929: 427.

32. Darry 1982: 350.

33. Toulmin 1915: 76.

34. Toulmin 1915: 77-78.

35. Toulmin 1915: 72.

36. Toulmin 1915: 36.

37. Toulmin 1915: 71.

38. Many actions of the Planning Committee, for example, are considered "quasi-judicial" and therefore the committee adopts judicial procedures during its hearings, and witnesses give evidence under oath.

39. Economic and population growth are closely related and the role of population in economic growth is regarded as strategic. According to Robertson: "Only those areas that are close to major population centres have great opportunities for growth and development in the future. A market-based economy will naturally tend to provide goods and services to a large population area where a lot of people have buying power. Population is very important in the market place. It's important in retail, it's important in every business. The more population there is the more needs are to be served, the more businesses will be attracted to that area. The less population to be served the less money there is to be made." On the other hand economic growth contributes to the increase of the population by making more jobs available that are eventually filled by people from outside of the community.

40. As the break-down of electoral results and the existence of a number of successful lower-class politicians show, growth was also supported by a significant part of the lower class.
41. The leading social and political role of businessmen in frontier towns and cities was stressed by the prominent American historian D. Boorstin: "Even a casual look at this early American businessman, who he was, what he was doing, and how he thought of his work, will show how inaccurate it would be to describe him as simply a man engaged in mercantile transactions. We might better characterize him as a peculiarly American type of community maker and community leader. His starting belief was in the interfusing of public and private prosperity" (1965: 116).
42. See also "Service" in the first section of this chapter.
43. According to the National Council of Shopping Centers, malls today gross upwards of 52 percent of the nation's retail sales excluding automobile products, which are rarely sold in malls.
44. 55.53 percent of the city's registered electors voted. The usual turnout in city elections is around 30 percent and the previous record was 36 percent from 1981.
45. See "Politics as Management" in section 2 of this chapter.
46. A market study ordered by JVJ found that about 35 percent of the "total spending potential" in Douglas County, amounting to $26.5 million worth of business, was "leaked" to other areas and concluded that Lawrence could easily support a shopping mall. Another study by a Kansas University economist came to similar conclusions. The study found that Lawrence residents spend an average of $868 a year locally on retail goods, a figure which is significantly lower than the average of $1,628 for nine Midwestern college towns. The study also showed that similar-sized cities that develop malls experience an increase in retail employment over a number of years.
47. For some of the causes of this delay see the section on the "The Radical Activists" in chapter 6.
48. For Mason see also "Politics as Management" in section 2 of this chapter.
49. This committee was organized by the group of the radicals presented in chapter 6 and other environmental groups of the city.
50. Vidich and Bensman 1968: 319.
51. Vidich and Bensman 1968: 322.

52. See especially Lynds 1937: 402-486.

53. Savitch and Thomas 1991: 9.

CHAPTER 5

PATTERNS OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

1. INTRODUCTION

In the last chapter we were mainly concerned with social and political rhetoric. In this chapter the perspective changes, and we turn to the examination of the action and ideology of particular individuals. Although not all informants presented in this chapter were active in local politics, most were members of other organizations like the Chamber of Commerce, the civic clubs, or the leading churches[1], that up to a certain point at least, can be considered as a social milieu[2] in which a pro-growth political ideology prevails.

Civic organizations have large, mainly middle-class memberships and facilities in central locations, and many employ numerous staff. They, and the great number of organizations and committees that are related to them, have a wide range of activities, appeal to a variety of interests and embrace the whole of the city's life.

The Chamber of Commerce, the civic clubs and the leading churches advocate similar ideologies[3], cooperate in action, and a considerable degree of interaction takes place between their members. The membership of the Chamber of Commerce includes almost all of Lawrence's businessmen and many corporate executives and independent professionals. Civic clubs draw their membership from the same circles and usually agree and cooperate with the Chamber in most matters. Probably the majority of civic club and Chamber of Commerce members are churchgoers in one of the leading churches, although churches appeal to a considerably larger spectrum of the middle class from both an ideological and a socioeconomic point of view.[4] Many - although by no means all - informants regarded those organizations as "working towards the same goals" and identified community involvement with their participation in one or several of those groups.

Of course the degree of ideological affinity should not be exaggerated. Although the rituals of the civic organizations stress unity and one-mindedness[5] and decisions are often taken unanimously, there can be significant ideological differences among their members. Each particular organization, and even more the various subgroups that develop within each organization, are social fields where people communicate over more restricted experiences and a more intensive generation of shared meanings occurs.

Moreover, patterns of participation differ depending on many factors. Some individuals are very active and may participate in several different civic groups whereas others are more absorbed in private life and may participate to a much lesser degree. Civic organizations appeal to a variety of interests and address the whole of life. Some people may work, worship, play, act politically, care for their children and even meet their relatives within groups belonging to the civic milieu and have only little contact with people from other milieux, whereas others may combine civic involvement with participation in other kinds of organizations. Political involvement also varies widely. There are people who only get involved in non-political groups and are scarcely informed about the local or even the national political scene, whereas others have a keen interest in politics and are actively involved in various political organizations.

The most active members of civic organizations and pro-growth political groups in Lawrence came from the local businessmen and professionals, the ranking public officials, the managers and executives of local banks, industries and other enterprises, the leading ministers, teachers, etc. Such people are usually active in more than one group, are likely to know and to have cooperated with each other in the context of various groups and projects, and alternate in positions of leadership. In many cases couples functioned as one unit and together husband and wife covered a large spectrum of the city's organizations.

For some, such intense involvement is directly related to their occupation, whereas for others it is a reflection of ideological commitments and/or personal ambition. "To get involved" was a high ideal for many of my informants and it was constantly advocated by local organizations and the media. It is also an obvious way to make contacts and friendships in a highly

mobile society. But civic involvement is also a social requirement for certain occupations. The livelihood of local businessmen is closely linked with the development of the city, and participation in civic organizations represents, for local professionals, the best way to make connections in the city. Moreover, civic participation is a tacit, and often explicit requirement for corporate executives and many categories of administrators. An informant told me: "The higher up you get in the corporate hierarchy the more rules there are and one of those rules is : the higher up you get, the more you give to your community, both financially and in a real sense."[6]

* * *

Although most of the informants that I present in this chapter belong to the active members of civic organizations, they nevertheless differ in many other respects. The examples intend to show some characteristic patterns, and do not exhaust the existing variation. Dr Baker, a successful professional and an exemplary member of the Methodist Church and other civic groups provides the first example. His views are characteristic for their idealism and their religious orientation, and are representative of a considerable number of other informants that I met in the Methodist and other churches. I continue with Carl and Linda Ackerman, whom I met in the same Sunday School as Dr Baker, and who provide an example of a "corporate couple". Although they also have been always active in civic organizations, their views - that were more widely shared among people of their generation - are revealing of a different, more secular and individualistic ethos.

Unlike Dr Baker, Carl, and Linda who had only marginal interest in local or national politics, the next two informants, who were local businessmen, were active in Lawrence politics and their views are revealing of some more shades of the existing ideological variation in the milieu of civic organizations. Harold Gleason's views are in many ways interesting and his "libertarian" ideology directly contrasts in some respects with Dr Baker's biblical version of the civic ideal, whereas Bill Rissman's ideas are characteristic for their optimism and their direct association between economic growth and human progress.

Pamela Sullivan finally provides an example of a non-religious person whose occupation does not relate in any direct way with the affairs of the city, and who has only limited participation in civic organizations. Pamela's

scepticism for the political system, her lack of idealism and her difficulties in making sense of what appeared an extremely complex situation are also evident in the discourse of Linda or H. Gleason and reflect the difficulties and dilemmas of many other informants in the milieu of the civic organizations as well as in other milieux.

2. THE BAKERS

Dr. and Mrs Baker are a characteristically civic minded couple. The Bakers were very sociable and energetic and, considering that they had only recently moved to Lawrence, it was surprising to see how well integrated they were into the social life of the city. In contrast with other middle class couples for whom retirement is a period for turning to the private realm[7], the Bakers saw the new freedom they acquired with retirement as an opportunity to engage more actively in community activities.

The Bakers were exemplary in every aspect of their life. Never did I hear them say anything that was not consistent with their overall ideological position, and they conducted all their affairs with astonishing perfection. They were active members of the First Methodist Church and other civic groups and spent a large part of their time volunteering in civic and religious projects. The list of civic and religious projects in which they have participated must be very long. The numerous plates hanging in their basement, that were given to honour Dr. Baker for his devoted community service, are indicative of this.

The Bakers have always been church members and a large part of their social life has always revolved around the Methodist Church. They were such devoted and active members that in 1989 they were nominated the exemplary retired couple of the congregation. They regularly attended the service and the Sunday school and hardly any Sunday passed without their participation. They were among the very few people who attended the services during the whole of the Easter week. Apart from participating in the service and Sunday School, Dr. Baker was also one of the "Methodist men", a church group mainly concerned with the recruitment of new members, and his wife Louise was a member of the church choir. They had a many-sided presence in the church and they often volunteerd for church projects. When during the middle of my fieldwork, John Kiefer, a retired minister and

member of the Lawrence First Methodist Church, initiated "Habitat for Humanity", a new charitable organization, Dr. Baker got very involved in the project, became vice-president of the organization, and developed several activities in the city for the Habitat. Over the years the Bakers have also supported another religiously-affiliated asssociation based in a small Mississipi town aiding black youths from destitute families.

In addition to these church-related activities, Dr. Baker was involved with several other civic organizations. He transferred his Rotary membership from Topeka and became a "Senior Active" member of the Rotary club of Lawrence. In 1990 he delivered a speech to the club about medical insurance. He testified to the State legislature in support of lowering the legal alcohol limit for drivers. He served as a scout committee member in the state Scout-O-Rama. He also became a member of a delegation of American doctors who visited China and had official meetings with Chinese Doctors. Their visit in the summer of 1989 coincided with the student demonstrations. Dr. Baker was very moved by the events and, on his return, became very involved in various activities related to China and its democratic movement. He spoke to the local media and recounted his Chinese experiences to many meetings in the city.

* * *

Dr Baker's involvement in the community is predominantly church-oriented. His version of the civic ideal is deeply influenced by his Christian beliefs and is an example of the views of the segment of the population that American political analysts and commentators call the "religious right". In the context of the Methodist Church Dr. Baker's ideas are conservative although they are relatively moderate when compared with the extreme views of some evangelicals.[8]

When asked about the "American Dream", Dr. Baker defined it in both political and religious terms. His discourse resonates the common idea, among religious conservatives, that the American government was founded on Biblical principles and that the ills American society is facing are a result of the nation's abandonment of the Judeo-Christian values in favour of a materialist-humanist worldview.[9]

When I asked him about the meaning of the American Dream, Dr. Baker told me: "I think part of the American Dream is that the pursuit of happiness

should be an inalienable right of every individual, to be able to pursue happiness in the way it seems right to them within the context of the general welfare. The freedoms to speak and to live according to their own beliefs should be part of that dream, the opportunity to become whatever they want to become, they should have the opportunity educationally, the opportunity economically to improve themselves, their style of life, that's part of the American Dream. I think a part that has been diminished a great deal in recent years is the dependence on God that I think our forefathers stated very well. And yet in current history or current thinking I don't hear that mentioned very often, and many of us feel that has been forgotten and there has been more emphasis on 'we can figure out a way to do things' and 'we can figure out the answers' and more of what some people call 'Secular Humanism'. If the term means that we have the capacity within ourselves to solve our problems then I would not agree with that and I don't think that is what the forefathers really had in mind because they set under God this nation, you know, and 'In God we trust' and so forth."

Dr. Baker subscribes to the basic tenets of the civic ideology: "Economic freedom" is conducive to progress and ensures political and religious freedom. In the various discussions that took place after the events in China, both Dr. Baker and other participants often stressed the close relationship between "economic freedom", democracy, and the Christian faith. The economic freedom allowed by the Chinese regime was regarded as one of the principal causes of the democratic revolution, and democracy was stressed as more consistent with Christianity. He told me: "I think free enterprise is part of the American dream. I think it's good for the individual to have the freedom, the knowledge that he or she can go beyond any man-made barriers in terms of developing an idea, developing a business, a little bit like the 'uniqueness' I was talking about the last time. I think every individual should have the feeling that there is no limit to what they can attempt; they do not have to say, 'I can only be a serf, I can only be a slave, I can only be an aristocrat.'"

But Dr. Baker is not a utilitarian. He was very proud of the dedication with which his son Bob was doing his job and of the praise he was receiving, although a high-school teacher is considered a lower middle-class position. Economic activity should serve the general welfare and the pursuit of

economic success should be balanced by collective concerns. "Certainly many people put an emphasis on making money; being successful in a financial sense seems to be the highest priority for them. Unless this is balanced with high priorirties for other things such as family life and community concerns and values I think that's a real danger for any country."

Being a particularly civic-minded citizen, Dr. Baker had a deep sense of civic duty and great confidence in the American system. The city should ideally be "a community in the real sense", that is, "a cooperating whole for the mutual benefit of all". Community starts in the neighbourhood and ideally spreads to the whole of the city. Dr. Baker described their immediate neighbourhood in Topeka as a unit in which, despite some mobility, "the sense of community remained very well" and even thought of Topeka as a community. The Bakers were such good and loyal neighbours that, in order to honour their departure, their neighbours in Topeka organized the 1989 neighbourhood picnic in the Bakers' house in Lawrence.

Dr. Baker however, recognized the weakening of Christian and community values and sometimes doubted the true beliefs of even the members of the Sunday school. He was concerned with the drift from the "true American values" to an attitude that valued "instant gratification and the quick fix". "I think we've had evidence since the sixties on individual freedom or license to do whatever without the associated responsibility toward other people."

But, although he was aware of the existence of social problems of great magnitude and concerned about the increasing secularization and moral permissiveness of American society, Dr. Baker remained on the whole optimistic about the future. He believed that, despite occasional detours, the country has been progressing towards a more complete social realization of Christian ideals, and he regarded economic and technological developments as a positive contribution to this end.

* * *

Dr. Baker regards capitalism as a fair system and denies the existence of class barriers in American society. He attributes the existing economic inequalities to the lack of "sensitivity" on the part of individuals rather than on the economic system itself and he believes that poverty can be eliminated. He told me: "I think, unfortunately, there are classes in the sense of poverty, of people in poverty, the poor being a class due to economic situations. I don't

think of classes that are based on traditional status having to do with what kind of work someone does or what kind of job they hold. I think there is ability of one to move to any economic level if the right circumstances are there and that is perfectly O.K. No one is destined to be a worker, or to be a slave, or to be an outcast, or to be a ruler, or to be an aristocrat. I think that is one of the strengths of America, of American democracy. There are many many stories of people who started . . . Abraham Lincon was born in a log cabin, everybody can be a president, and I think in that sense we do not have classes."

Existing inequalities are attributed to non-structural factors: "The question 'why?' is the tough question. Is it something about the system itself or is it the way we human beings are working within the system? Is it the system or is it the way we as individuals? I think I would like to believe that the system is O.K. but that we as individuals are not sensitive enough, not being creative enough to figure out ways that within our system we still don't have to have poverty although we may have people who earn more than others. I would like to think that we can eliminate poverty."

According to Dr. Baker, the voluntary action of independent citizens is the best way to combat poverty as well as other social problems. He generally subscribed to the principle that "the best government is the least government" and considered government's intervention necessary only in exceptional circumstances. He told me: "Well our American system, our constitution, was basically spelled out that defence of the country falls to the responsibility of our federal government, the guarantee of certain basic rights and freedoms come within the responsibility of the federal government : the freedom of speech, the freedom of press, the freedom of religion and the freedom of assembly. There is often a wide difference of opinion about how much involvement the government should have. President Reagan's philosophy was certainly that the government should not be involved in most affairs of daily life - there should be as little government as possible at the federal level. Others in the past have gone much more toward government being involved in many things like back in the days of F.D. Roosevelt. At that time he felt it was very necessary for the government to step in and provide jobs, do many things to get us out of the Depression. As a result of that, a number of bureaus were established on a temporary basis that

are still in effect years and years later partly due to the fact that when a bureaucracy gets started it's sometimes very hard to dismantle it because it becomes entrenched and people begin to expect government to be doing certain things."

Local voluntary organizations "without any strings attached know what the needs are and know how to meet them" better than government. "A lot of things can be done outside of government to help relieve the poverty problem and the dependency problem, and in turn this helps the crime problem and the drug problem I think. The government has certainly got to say we need as Americans to solve this problem of poverty and drugs and crime. What is the best way then? Should the government vote millions of dollars to help solve the problem? Well yes if they go to the right kind of organizations without any strings attached. But so often our experience has been : millions of dollars have been funnelled into programmes, welfare programmes that did not help people help themselves out of the programme and out of the problem but simply into the problem by making them more dependent. For many of the people in poverty it was easier to accept a government cheque than it was to break out of the system and try to get a job, and get paid less than the government cheque. So rather than solving the problem often times welfare money is really only perpetuating it."

The Lawrence Habitat for Humanity is offered by Dr. Baker as an example of a charitable organization that best fights poverty by helping people help themselves. The purpose of the organization is to help lower-income people own their own home by providing houses lower than market price. Land is bought by the organization and houses are built with the help of the organization's volunteers. Recipients are selected by a committee and have to put a minimum of 300 hours of personal work in the building of the house. "That's just the opposite of the welfare system of giving money to them to buy food or to build a house, this requires their involvement and therefore they have much more pride, much more satisfaction, and that's why it's much more successful.

"I think those of us who have been involved with Habitat and feel good about Habitat like that concept. And I think it appeals to most Americans when they hear it, especially if they feel that the person who's receiving the benefit of the house is involved in the building of it; they seem to respond to

that; somehow it seems fair play. It's more equitable to think that people are helping themselves, if they worked at it then they become better citizens, better homeowners than if it's given to them."

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Dr. Baker has great respect for and faith in the political and legal institutions of American society. In striking contrast with some other informants who said they did not vote because, among other reasons, they didn't want to be called as jurors, Dr. Baker volunteered to serve as a juror and his experience has strengthened his faith in the legal system.His comments often showed his respect for the country's president and the political system in general.

Dr. Baker always votes and always tries to be a responsible and knowledgable voter. But he has only limited interest in partisan politics. The causes that usually interest him are generally patriotic, transcending narrow political divisions. The purpose of political parties is, acccording to Dr. Baker, to facilitate the process of the election of "the best person to be in political office" and partisan political divisions often seem abusive and unjustifiable. He told me: "There are times when it seems almost foolish the way some issues are raised and Democrats lean the one way and the Republicans the other, almost on party lines. I have a hard time believing that they are really separate so much in their philosophy." Politicians should transcend particular interests and express a sense of the national community by practicing impartial governance according to the law.[10]

3. THE ACKERMANS

The Ackermans are an upwardly mobile couple: Carl is a particularly successful hospital administrator and the couple have moved every few years following the successive positions Carl has held in different hospitals across the country.[11]

In each locality they have been active in various civic organizations. This was in part due to Carl's occupation. Hospitals are institutions of important community concern and were, in most cities of the region, built with donations and fund-raising from the local community. Hospital administrators - and their wives - are expected to participate in civic

organizations and be active in community projects.

But also, for mobile professionals like Carl and Linda, community organizations provide an important outlet for sociability and mutual support. Carl and Linda met most of their friends in the context of community organizations and they were in differing degrees integrated into the life of the communities they lived in.

In Salina, the city where they resided before moving to Lawrence, they were fully integrated into the life of the local community. They knew a great many people and they were involved in various organizations. Linda was such an important local figure that just before they moved she was about to be appointed to the presidency of the committee organizing the local festival. Even when they lived in Lawrence they retained ties with Salina.

When I met them in Lawrence they were relative newcomers and only partly integrated into the life of the city. They were to a certain extent active in the First Methodist Church. They regularly attended Sunday school and occasionally participated in various projects. Carl's main community involvement took place in Topeka and it was related to his position in the hospital. As the top administrater of the largest hospital in Topeka he was involved in various community activities and helped in the organization of charitable and other projects as part of his everyday work routine. He had only a moderate interest in other local community affairs and mainly fulfiled his civic duty by participating in the Topeka Red Cross. Linda tried to be as active as possible in the church and despite her busy schedule she often undertook voluntary work. Apart from the church, she participated in hospital-related functions and continued her earlier involvement with her college sorority.

Carl

Carl adheres to the basic tenets of the civic ideal. On one occasion in Salina, during the 4th of July celebrations, he had made a brief patriotic speech adressed to "lady liberty" where America was presented as a land of political freedom and progress, rescuing the "oppressed and downtrodden", like he and his family, who emmigrated to the United States from Germany after the Second World War. His thought however, was mostly characterized by its

practical and scientific orientation. Carl used to cite statistics to support his views and he often carried into family life the way of thinking he used in his profession.[12] He was a member of a club of people with high IQ scores and regarded IQ tests as objective measurements of people's intelligence. At the end of a conversation, he gave me a thick volume containing one of the versions of systems theory and said that it summarized his philosophical position.

Personal success constitutes Carl's primary motivation, and he regards the conscientious and diligent performance of his occupational role as his principal contribution to society. Carl liked to talk about his profession and most of his friends were related to it. He was not tied to any particular community and, in his discourse, community participation had both idealistic and utilitarian undertones.

Carl defines democracy as "the rule of the people" and regards the American political system as fairly representative of the people. He recognizes the existence of many dysfunctions in the system but believes that "in the long run and in some crude sense it really is [representative]; people do get voted out and get voted back in again."

He relates political freedom to "economic freedom" and observes that democracy seems to flourish in countries with free market economic systems. The free market system is not only regarded as more conducive to human freedom but also as "the more efficient and effective at dealing with real human needs".

Competition, by bringing out the best in people, keeps things "sharp and honest" and leads to development and progress. Having little help from home, Carl had managed to succeed professionally mainly through his sturdy determination and his competitive spirit. In college he was a swimming champion. In the end he had to stop training because he was damaging his body. "This is because I am extremely competitive, the body couldn't follow the competitiveness of my mind." He also said: "Competition is like the army phrase 'being all that you can be', you try to be better, and there is recognition for being better and the good side of it is that it brings out the best in people. And it's not just competition, it's the potential for competition which keeps things sharp and honest. There may be one roofing company in Lawrence, but they cannot charge more than 30 dollars a square foot to put up

a roof because, if they charge 40 dollars, someone from Kansas City and someone from Topeka is going to come in and compete with them. So sometimes it is the prospect of competition that keeps using technology and efficiency and all of that to stay as good and as inexpensive as you can."

The natural result of competition is growth. Although he condemned "pursuing short term growth for its own sake", Carl generally regarded growth positively and considered it "a byproduct of something good happening." A TV evangelist charged with fraud and a close-to-bankruptcy automobile company were used as examples of "bad growth". He said about the latter: "They just want to grow next year; they just want to have a profit next year. Who cares if I close the plant in Flint, Michigan, and have to open a plant someplace where the labour is cheap, and use lousy labour to build a lousy car, who cares if the car rusts as long as it is shiny and sells and looks good." Conversely the hospital he directed and the city of Lawrence were used as examples of "progressive growth". Growth in St Francis hospital is in human terms. Nurses and other employees like to work there and customers are satisfied with their services. Similarly, the growth of Lawrence "is a manifestation that people feel good about living and coming to Lawrence."

Growth was regarded by Carl as an inherent characteristic of human nature. He believed that men are essentially good and growth is a result of their natural desire to "make a difference" and have a positive effect on the world. Carl was generally in favour of new developments in every field and was particularly interested in new scientific and technological advances, which he regarded as obvious proofs of progress. Economic growth was seen as a natural evolutionary process leading to the improvement of human life: "Growth is to improve the human condition. We make people happier, healthier, smarter, more secure, more comfortable, we treat them with respect." When asked if he believed that the country was progressing, he said: "Definitely; absolutely; people live longer; they have more leisure time; the environment is better generally, it's not deteriorating like it was in the fifties; we got a handle in the environment." On the question of environmental degradation in particular, Carl believed that fears of a possible ecological disaster were exaggerated, and that, especially in the United States, important steps had already been taken towards a permanent solution to the problem: "The United States has been very responsible, I think, as a population and as a

regulatory system to do the best job they can to control the environment."

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For Carl, voluntary community action is the best way for the production of social services in a community. Voluntary action is more attuned to the real needs, and it is contrasted to government which is, by its very nature, ineffective and inefficient. Individuals and businesses have an obligation to "give back" to their community and "pay their civic rent".

He told me: "The phrase I would use is that we all need to pay our civic rent for human services - and the government plays a big role in that. They are the ones that are in power to do all that, but I guess I think that the more that can be done to just meet basic human needs outside of the government the better.

"For example in Topeka there are lots of old people. It's gotten very expensive to be in a nursing home so there is a trend for old people to move back into their big families, particularly as poverty has grown over the last ten years. We saw that there are a lot of care-givers at home that have to be there for 24 hours a day; nobody can replace them and it's sad. And then there are a lot of other people, volunteers, who really want to do something but they don't know what to do, so we organized it and now we have about 60 people who are professional care givers. So if you need someone to replace you for a while you call the Red Cross.

"The government could probably do that. So I guess my perception in a lot of ways is that when humans are, when a community is, either too stupid or too lazy or maybe it's too big a job to take care of something for themselves, then they leave it to the politicians and buy off on all the inherent inefficiencies and ineffectivenesses of government."

The voluntary contribution of every individual might be small, but as a whole the efforts of those individuals and groups "add up to a lot." Carl told me: "I am a rifle shot too. I see that there is a need for there to be - and it's partially professional O.K. - a collective blood supply. In most countries the government takes care of that; here it is done by the American Red Cross. It's not very well done in Topeka, there are some profit making suppliers, so I've got very active in that and within five years Topeka will have its own dependable blood supply, so that's something I am interested in, I know a lot about, and it's a little thing."

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Carl has a moderate interest in "politics". His livelihood is not in any important way related to the government and he is mostly concerned that politics do not become intrusive. He is mostly interested in international politics "'cause it's easier to see the little picture in the context of the big picture." National politics interest him less: "I am interested in how it affects my life, my job, the taxes I would pay, how it affects my security. I guess I am interested that politics does not become invasive."

State and local politics interest him the least. "I don't think anything will come out of local politics that would greatly affect my basic human rights positively or negatively; they are inconsequential to me." A certain interest is generated by his job. The hospital was active in the Topeka Chamber of Commerce and had on one occasion to appeal to the local political authorities. But Carl kept his involvement to a minimum. "I don't read the local stuff. A lot of the local news are who died, who got a ticket, who's suspected of burglary. I do read a little about Topeka's local issues, more so than the Lawrence, 'cause I work there and it will affect me more, and I want to know what people there are interested in talking about. It's almost so that I am current in conversing with them as much as anything. Seldom does it really affect me particularly."

Carl's political views reflect the dominant political ideology. He essentially regarded government as an administrative operation; but in his discourse "politics" and "politicians" have negative connotations as they are associated with inefficiency and the potentially corrupt influence of special interests.

The political process is essentially regarded as an automatic administrative operation. When asked if local politics affect him vis a vis the taxes he payed, he answered: "Yes, I suppose, but the people who scream about paying high taxes are going to scream long before I do. And so what, if there is another ten bucks a month on the price of the house, I don't care. The sense that I have is that there are enough people in Lawrence worried about that, I mean, if my taxes doubled that would hurt, but there are enough people in Lawrence far more worried about that than I, and I have so much faith in the system to take care of that, that I will not clutter my brain with it. Look what happened to property taxes; as soon as all that system got changed there is a thousand

people in the state capital pounding on the governor's desk and breaking in and raising hell, and now it's the most important issue in the legislation. The political system will be responsive; I mean it really will; the politicians are terribly sensitive to the electorate, very much so in the local level."

At the same time though, "government" and "politics" have negative connotations. Inefficiency and corruption are regarded as almost inherent in government and Carl used the following story to illustrate his views: "The city of Millard, Nebraska, was 10 miles outside Omaha and had a volunteer fire department and a volunteer rescue squad. When someone would call the fire department, the average response time was under 5 minutes; and these were people who were barbers, bankers, you know, everybody; and the same with the rescue squad, the response time was less than 5 minutes. Then the city of Omaha grew towards Millard, and Millard became part of it, and they had to have their own fire department and their own rescue squad. All of a sudden there were full time people, and they were tax-supported, and the response time to a fire went up to 12 minutes."

Politicians are negatively regarded both in the local and, to a lesser degree, the national level. They are regarded as people who have a strong ego and want to be in the headlines. Their primary concern is to get reelected and hence they are prone to the influence of special interests and tend to neglect their real duties: "The root cause is that people's ego and pride becomes more important than dealing with the issue. The manifestation I see of it is that the politicians are much more interested in satisfying their constituency, or who they believe is their constituency - it can be a bunch of lobbyists for that matter - rather than turning around and facing the issue that needs to be addressed. I mean, the mayor is constantly writing a proclamation for Ground Hog day and Kiwanis with blue eyes day and all that kind of crap. I suppose you've got to do some of that; you've got to kiss babies sometimes, but they are much more interested scheduling those things and dealing with this sort of things than dealing with the trafficway, and doing their job. I compare politicians with people in the corporate world. They don't work as hard; they are too busy kissing baby butts. They do that to get reelected, to feel self-important. When you go into politics you know that this is what you're gonna do, so the people that tend to go into it tend to be the kind of people that are fluffy."

Carl, as well as other informants (see Pamela below), used the word "politics" in the professional context. The term also has a negative connotation in the context of the hospital. An individual or a professional group are labelled "political" when they are considered to seek to accumulate, by political manoeuvring, undue influence and power at the expense of other workers and the institution. The hospital is conceptualized as a "commonwealth" the ultimate aim of which is to serve the patient. Employees should balance their self-interests against the interests of the corporation and the consumer.

Carl often referred to various groups or individuals in the hospital as "political". Asked what he meant by that term he said: "I mean that they have influence or seek to have influence over things over which they should not have influence by reason of their position, or the people they know, or the education they have. They have influence over things that is far greater than it should be for whatever reason."

Those who are "political", according to Carl, "want to accumulate power and influence for its own sake rather than applying that power to do something good that makes a difference. They want to be power brokers, they want to accumulate power as a banker accumulates borrowed money and then distribute it for whatever reasons, for very personal, egotistical kinds of reasons." Accordingly Carl regarded his role as being one of keeping the functioning of the hospital as free of "politics" as possible. His management policy aimed at establishing administrative procedures ensuring that the various individuals and groups involved had only the power and influence that was justified by their position.

Linda

Although she might at times express doubts and criticism, Linda's general views also echo the civic ideal. Linda regarded American democracy as the freest regime in the world permitting unparalleled political freedom and equality of opportunity: "I like to think that democracy is a system in which anyone can be anything; that everyone has, if not in reality an equal chance, at least an equal chance to change, an equal chance to try. I don't know that this is entirely true; that's real idealistic. It's a system in which you're not directly

told who you are and what you are and what you'll be able to attain, and there is no lid put on anyone. There is no stopping point in democracy; you can go up and out; in a sense there is always hope for that growth and change. It's very idealistic but in some ways it works; it really does work and probably works on a grander scale."

Linda acknowledges that reality and the ideal may diverge, but still views the American system as one of unparalleled equality of opportunity : "In America, you don't have defined constraints to growth and change. I do think there are some in place and they are insidious and it is that class thing that is one of them. But on the whole in the American system, I would just guess that there is probably a greater percentage of people that do have a chance to change."

She supports political measures enlarging equality of opportunity but regards community action as the main way to bridge the gap between reality and ideal: "Maybe what we are trying to do through our sense of community or community action is to reconcile those two things [ideal and reality] partially through charity. What we are trying to do is give more people more freedom of choice by easing some economic or emotional constraints and it's not so much to equalize on a class level but maybe to equalize on the choice level, which is very different."

Although somewhat hesitating, Linda is unwilling to attribute economic disparities to the political and economic system itself. Some people do not use the opportunities that are offered to them by the system, and it would be unfair if they got the same rewards as those "who are willing to do the necessary things to have a better job and have more money." She told me: "The older I get, I am not a whole lot more cynical, but I am a little more cynical in the sense that I see a lot of people that you could give them a full scolarship to college and they tell you where to put it; I mean, they may go for the party but would they go for the reason to better their class status? I had neices like this where I offered to help them go to school, and they intellectually know how much that would open their world and they had the freedom of choice and they chose not to take it."

Linda regarded growth as a positive and necessary development bringing stability to the community and expanding the individual's potential for a better and fuller life. She stressed the need to plan growth but was in general

in favour of it. She thought that growth led to both material and intellectual progress and considered it inevitable at least "until the population truly levels off." She told me: "For me growth is positive, I cannot think of growth without feeling positive, this doesn't mean that it's not painful, or hard, or problematic. Real growth takes lot of energy whether it be on an individual or a community basis; it takes work but it's positive. It opens you up to possibilities; it gives you more insight; it gives you more knowledge; it gives you more connections. Whether it be physical, intellectual, emotional, or social, all it does is expand the universe and I guess that's why I see it as positive whether or not it's painful. I can analogize to children growing : sometimes you know we hate to see them grow up because we love them at the stage they are, and in many ways it's so painful, but when they grow up, in the next stage they are perfect in a different way. A community, a person, an idea could be that way, could be perfect for a while, but after that you know, it can be perfect in another way; you can get complacent if you don't grow. I don't know that it's always boring not to grow but I think that I personally feel that it would be."

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Linda's views about the community reflect both the civic ideal and what Bellah et al call "the therapeutic quest for community"[13] Community involvement is as much an expression of civic duty as it is a quest for personal fulfilment through the establishment of intimate relationships with compatible others.

Linda comes from a prominent traditional family and has been active in community organizations most of her life. In Salina, she was one of the most active community members and occupied positions of leadership.

Linda viewed community participation in idealistic terms. Community participation is a civic duty and the expression of allegiance to a respected tradition as well as a means "to foresee the future" and "get more out of today". The community should ideally be a volunteer working body of individuals who cooperate for the betterment of the place where they live. Although Linda recognized that not everybody was equally committed to the community, she believed that small Kansas towns and cities were characterized by a strong community spirit.

"The members of the real community are the people that go beyond their

own household and their own individual needs and their own lifestyles perhaps. A group of people working together to better the place where they live, I think of it as a planning body of people, planning growth, in the sense of new, better, different things than already exist, or changing the existing things. It's a sense of continuity. It's allegiance, in the sense that you attend and you do things sometimes, even when it goes against what you want to do at that moment, it's looking toward the future. It's the ability to foresee the future and being able to live within the future. Get more out of today."

But Linda also pointed to the "semi-voluntary" character of community participation: "Those clubs are semi-voluntary. We tend to think of them as voluntary but there is a lot of external social pressure. When I lived in Omaha and Salina there was a point in both places, and it never totally dissipated, where I felt like I had to do certain things as Carl's wife and as my parents' daughter. As a hospital administrator's wife, you are expected to go to the internal social functions - the hospital parties and fund raisers - and this is true of any high corporate level. When you're married to a man who's in corporate power you are an extension of him and his job and you are expected - rarely does anybody lay it down to you: "you must do this"; it's more unspoken; it's inferred; if you don't go you really get a lot of . . . you get rumours; you get people talking behind your back; and plus if you don't go, it can affect your spouse's future, their promotion ability, their standing in the community. You're very much expected to be that extension rather than your own person. It doesn't mean your entire personality is subordinated, but it means that there are rules about behaviour, about dress, about how many appearances. There are rules - I think this is changing quite a bit - about whether or not you work outside the home. There almost seems to be an unspoken line where if your spouse earns so much money then why are you working, you don't need it; what you are supposed to be doing is volunteering; you are supposed to be doing church work, civic work, so you are expected to give of yourself to the community, and it is a 'have to' very much."

But for Linda, community participation is not only an expression of a sense of civic duty, but also equally, if not predominantly, a quest for personal fulfilment through the establishment of personal relationships. For a mobile urban population, community organizations provide one of the most

important outlets for sociability and the establishment of personal relationships. In every city where they have resided, community activities were a large part of Linda's social life and the primary avenue for the establishment of personal relationships. During the time of my fieldwork, she was an active member of the church and, despite her busy life, often participated in community projects in Lawrence, in Topeka and even in Salina. In the different groups in which she participated, she primarily valued authentic human contact and often found community relations too rigid and formal. In comparison with the past, she regarded her present community involvement as quite limited and attributed this to her present satisfaction with her personal relationships. She told me: "I became a very aggressive member of my prior community because of a real hole in some personal relationhips. Here and in Topeka I haven't become a part of the community because my personal relationships are so satisfactory on the whole that I don't have to fill in any holes. It depends on the personal relationships you make and how they plug into the community, because if you have your personal relationships on one level where you like those people and you have the same values and you're comfortable with them and they don't partake of the community, then you may not get involved. If however the personal relationships you develop as you step into the community are with those kind of people who are part of the community themselves, you're kind of drawn in with them, and here my primary relationships are with people who have chosen to be a little bit separate from the community, and live their lives kind of independent from the community, enjoy it but without being be a real integral part. If they were out there I would be going. The church is a need for me on a theological level, I always need some structure in that area."

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"Politics" have never been a big issue in Linda's life: "I used to just mark boxes when I was a young girl. If I didn't know someone I'd just pick a good name. And I believe people do that a lot. It's either the one on top or the one that has a neat sounding name. That's media . . . you look at the name, if you don't know them, you kind of check the name you like. I know other people do that. It kind of plugs in studies about kids with really acceptable names who are given higher grades even though it was exactly the same paper."

Linda regards the political process as a technical activity the principal aim of which is to "plan growth and have orderly change in society". Political issues are regarded as complex issues, the full understanding of which demands special activity and extensive study. She told me: "It's a thing I want to be more interested in, but I don't have time to study, and I have a real deep feeling that you shouldn't be too involved in politics unless you are willing to do that. I feel it takes a lot of work to be a responsible or knowledgeable voter."

When asked if she reads the paper she said: "I read it somewhat, but I read what catches my eye and I tend to read non-political things; I tend to read sociological articles, informational, interesting news; I am more likely to read world politics just to keep up in a general current of events; I don't have time right now."

Charity is perceived as a superior and more direct way of social intervention than the political process. "When I wanted to help someone homeless I gave a donation or I went out and volunteered time instead of being political. There are other alternatives, and what I found, the older I get, is that there are some things it's worth being political about, and there are some things it takes so much time and energy to do it in a political way that it's better to do it in a social way. It's better to go out there and help build Habitat for Humanity, or it's better to go volunteer at the Soup Kitchen. Your time is better spent because you see an immediate result and you touch the people that you're trying to help."

Finally, in Linda's discourse, the world of politics appears as an impersonal world of intrigue and calculation that is contrasted to the intimacy of personal relationships: "I basically don't care how the country is run, because I think I care more about my personal relationships within a geographical location instead of a place in Washington D.C. or Topeka Kansas."

4. HAROLD GLEASON

Harold Gleason is an example of what we may call a "city father".[14] Gleason is a descendant of a family of industrialists that dominated the city's economic life during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The family was not as important economically as it had been in the past, but it was

still involved in some industrial enterprises and owned a large estate as well as other property in Lawrence. Gleason who was in his early fifties, has lived most of his life in Lawrence and operated one of the remaining family companies. He always has been active in civic organizations and had a rich social life and many friends in the city. He felt "part of the Lawrence community" and he was very proud of the city and its achievements. Gleason had served as president of the Rotary club, the United Fund, as County chairman of the Republican party, trustee of the Congregational church, member of the board of the Chamber of Commerce, the Salvation Army, and many other civic organizations.

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His family has been socially active in Lawrence for many generations and Gleason was brought up in an environment where civic tradition was part of family tradition. "Our family has always been entrepreneurs and has been involved in commercial enterprises so that's sort of the heart and soul of your idea of what life is; you work hard to improve yourself, and work is salvation. We have been deeply imbued with the protestant work ethic and the idea that you build enterprise; that, in and of itself, is a goal, and it's good in itself".

Gleason accepted many aspects of the civic ideal although, being a thinking and broadly educated man, he distanced himself from what in the dominant discourse appeared to be rather crude and rhetorical simplifications. He always tried to be accurate and objective in his statements and he was leaning towards atheism. He was attracted by evolutionist theories although he thought that economic and technological growth has not been accompanied by social and spiritual progress.

Some of his views are characteristic of another important current of thought among the members of the civic organizations (that can be contrasted to the biblical version on a number of issues), which along with capitalism and democracy professes unfettered individualism and minimal state regulation. "I am a libertarian by philosophy; I would say Jefferson would have been a libertarian. Libertarian view is that the government should neither be involved in the economy in any way nor in legislating social matters or morals; a libertarian would believe in legalising drugs, would believe that abortion is up to the individual, and that the government should

not be involved in all those kinds of social issues. In fact the libertarian would be very close to the anarchist in terms of minimal state. They privatised the roads and they privatised the courts, I wouldn't go to that extreme, but a pure libertarian would take that position."

Gleason believed that the greater the power of the state the more important it is to have an influence on it and the greater the opportunity for corruption. He told me: "If we didn't have malt price supports it wouldn't be necessary for everybody in the dairy business to try to manipulate or otherwise influence the government, if we weren't subsidizing farm programmes it wouldn't be necessary for so much money to be spent to try to influence what Congress does. The less state the less reason there is to have to try to influence the government. In a place like the Soviet Union or a centralized command economy, it's vitally important for you, so I don't think that's very efficient, and I think that it's clearly less beneficial to society as a whole".

Gleason regarded Lawrence as "devoid of a rigid social structure" and thought that the city's "power structure is an open structure that can be entered by willingness to do community service." He also told me : "I don't think that a modern industrialized economy leads to the concentration of wealth. I wouldn't be fearful that unfettered capitalism in a technological society would lead to the impoverishment of the working class. If free market forces are left to themselves, with the level of technology we have in western democracies, I think that you would be confronted with a much more rapidly expanding pie where rich and poor alike would get richer.

"I think that poverty in this country has causes other than the exercise of free markets, I think it's a result of very sociological factors like broken families, chemical dependencies, there are things that can't be cured necessarily by giving people more money. We have an arbitrary income line below which people are defined as being below the poverty line, and that poverty line is a relative concept, and compared to the way people lived 50 years ago in this country, people below the poverty line will be well off relative to what they were and I really think that probably, no matter what our general standard of living, we will always have a segment of the population that will be described as being poor and bellow the poverty level."

Gleason regarded growth as an inevitable function of the economic system and has always been actively in favour of Lawrence's growth and

development : "If you are in a community or an area that is not growing economically you lose. You lose a lot of things. You lose a surplus of wealth that goes to art and other community endeavours that cannot be supported anyway other than by gifting. I've watched these small towns in Kansas, and there is no opportunity for young people; they have to move away."

The market economy by freeing the creative powers of the individual and stimulating technological development was seen as leading to the attainment of unprecedent levels of material prosperity: "I think technology permits us all to have discretionary income above and beyond what is necessary for our subsistence and it seems to me that we have achieved a high consumption society with a reasonably rapid growth rate that is fueled by technological change at an accelerating pace that permits us to have productivity increases that properly managed and properly handled will have very significant impact on the average standard of living."

However, growth is not regarded as having only benevolent effects. Gleason believed that material growth has been accompanied by social and spiritual impoverishment evident in the apparently insoluble problems of American society, and attributed this decline to the alienation of human beings from nature. He told me: "Not only have we lost sight of possible progress but we are regressing. As we have material progress and we become highly urbanized, people have been cut off from a sense and a feeling of nature. And we become cut off from our source of food; our food is a trip to the supermarket. And we are protected from storms, we live in an air-conditioned world; and we don't have to walk on the fields anymore, we get in an air-conditioned automobile. I think it's inevitable and unfortunate and has a deleterious effect on human spiritual satisfaction."

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Contrary to most other informants Gleason had an active interest in politics and strong partisan views. "I am not a fanatic and I spend less time now than I used to, but I would say on the whole that I am interested and that I have been active and would consider myself a card carrying Republican. I would probably vote a straight ticket; even if the Democratic candidate were more able I would vote for the Republican."[15]

His involvement in politics is justified primarily in terms of personal and economic interest, but also as a concern for the future of the region and the

country. "I think politics is an exciting game, the business of power and access to power and the use of power I think it's exciting and interesting and I have an economic stake in the world so I am interested in things that affect me economically and then I would say I have a broader interest in our state, and country and our future, and I feel I have a stake in it and I want the best to happen."

5. BILL RISSMAN

We saw that for Carl and Linda, economic growth is intrinsically related to scientific and technological advances, which were regarded as self evidently beneficial for humanity. In their discourse, as in the views of many other informants, the astonishing technological accomplishments of the last decades offered the most important justification for the economic system and the pursuit of further expansion and development. Rissman is a typical exponent of this argument and his views are presented in this section.

I met Rissman in the Sunday School that I attended in the First Methodist Church. Rissman was a retired businessman who came to Lawrence as a student in the early thirties. After the end of his studies he decided to stay in Lawrence and he became the co-owner of a successful advertising firm. Rissman has always been active in the milieu of the civic organizations and had, among many other positions, served as president of the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce. He subscribed to the civic ideal, and had diligently worked for the promotion and development of Lawrence and the surrounding region.

Rissman believed that most changes that have occured during his lifetime were due to technological change: "My grand kids asked what were things like when I was a kid in their age. I said, for example, 'no scotch tape.' 'What do you mean no scotch tape?' I said it hadn't been invented. And I said, long distance telephone, yes, we had it, but a long distance call usually meant some kind of crisis, a death in the family, a serious illness, or somebody was coming and you had to meet a train."

Rissman has always been in favour of Lawrence's growth and regarded most changes as "progressive kinds of changes.": "Progress is part of the challenge of being alive. Take my lifetime. The model T Ford was the mode

of transportation when I was born in 1917 and maybe a few other cars were there at that time, the airplane was pretty basically one engine, the woodwork and fabric cover with flamable material and in my lifetime . . . we've gone to the moon.

"I worked my way through college as a secretary on a straight manual kind of typewriter. I look at the sophisticated typewriters and word processors existing now and, my goodness, that could have saved a lot of work. With the computer we can make giant strides in certain kinds of research that pen and pencil cannot do. You know, a computer can do things in a few seconds, and I guess some things I've seen could take several hundred years.

"When I first worked on a farm, we pulled the equipment with horses and, of course, we had been doing - and maybe some areas of your country maybe yet are doing - hand labour to do things. But before I quit working on a farm we had fairly good tractors, and I worked for a man and his brother who had made the first tractor up in North East Kansas out of an old Buick car 'cause they could see the advantage of it."

Although the impact of growth and technological change is not only perceived as positive, growth is regarded as leading to a generally preferable situation mainly because of the material comfort it creates. Life might have been simpler back in the small town in the thirties; families were more closely linked, people were "on health food" anyway, and recreation, although less sophisticated, might have been more enjoyable. However, on the whole, people were less better off than they are today.

Rissman told me: "And people talk about 'the good old days'. Well, we didn't know any different. Air conditioning: that, to me, is one of the most significant things. This house is maintained around 72 degrees year round and the fan is going year round circulating the air so you are pretty much in a controlled environment. When we built this house in 1953, we didn't think we could afford air condition at the time and I can remember an electric fan that shoveled a little hot air around, and I can remember sleeping on the front porch a few nights 'cause it was too hot to sleep in the house. And I guess, I would say to you, I don't want to go back to the thirties and live in a non-airconditioned house in this climate. In 1950, my wife and I and our 3 and 5 year old daughters did a 75 mile trip in a non-airconditioned car. I don't want to do that again."

6. PAMELA SULLIVAN

Unlike other members of the Altrusa, who were also members of the Chamber of Commerce and in general more tightly integrated in the civic milieu, Pamela (who was a university administrator) had no professional reasons to participate in civic organizations and was involved in a lesser degree than many others. She was not religious and did not go to church and had no interest in politics on the local or the national level.

Pamela made most of her long-standing friends in Lawrence when, as a newcomer to the city, she joined a university-related organization that had as its aim to help wives of foreign students or academics in getting acclimatised to American life. When her children were younger, she participated in the P.T.A. and both boys joined the Scouts. She served for two years on a committee of the City of Lawrence helping people with disabilities, and she volunteered for a number of years in the "Headquarters" (an organization operating a telephone help-line). During my fieldwork she was a member of the Altrusa, the Civic Choir, and a hospital-related support group.

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Although at times her views echoed the civic rhetoric, she was independnent-minded and clearly perceived that there was a gap between the reality and the civic rhetoric. Pamela's views were not systematic, and many times she had real difficulty piecing together a picture of society and her relation to it. Questions appeared to be of such scale and complexity that they escaped her grasp and she was often uncertain and unwilling to make general pronouncements. She was more concerned with adapting to a situation that seemed inevitable and overpowering rather than with trying to make moral and intellectual sense of it.[16]

Pamela joined the Altrusa 12 years ago and was one of the more active members of the local club. She joined this particular club because she liked the mix of women of different ages that existed at that time, and her participation had social as well as civic motivation.

She described her community participation in the following terms: "There are 24 hours in a day and I spend anywhere from 8 to 11 of those working, I

spend anywhere from 7 to 9 of them sleeping, several of them eating or doing activities associated with eating, and a few of those hours exercizing, and a few of those hours in community activities such as Altrusa and Civic Choir, and a few of those hours in just playing: going to the movies, reading books - not nearly enough of those hours - and that doesn't leave very much time. So if community activity were a priority, then I would reduce my needs in those other areas and spend more time in things that I thought were going to help Lawrence."

Community participation forms part of a list of priorities and it is, in the case of Pamela, the expression of private interests as well as of community concerns. She said she participated in the Civic Choir because she liked to sing and Altrusa provided her above anything else with a much valued network of sociability and support. When asked about the aims of the local club she stated the Altrusa motto and added that one of the principal aims of the local club is "helping each other when we need help."[17]

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Pamela's view of "politics" is markedly negative. The term is applied to different situations, and it connotes the use of manipulative tactics for the achievement of personal gain. "I don't follow world or even national or local politics, if we are talking about that sort of politics. If we are talking about the politics that people play in their daily lives, and especially at work, then I'm sure that I am involved in politics though not by design because politics are very uncomfortable for me. I prefer straightforward transactions without a hidden agenda and so I don't purposely play politics. I don't like being manipulated or manipulative.

"There is no question that for many of us politics is not a very nice thing, it's somehow a pejorative term. When one plays politics, one somehow manipulates other people in order to achieve one's own goals."

Although she voted, Pamela had only limited interest in the local or the national political process. When asked if she read the local newspaper she said: "I read the front page rather sketchily just to see what the main events are, and then I glimpse through the paper just to see what catches my eye. The kinds of things that might catch my eye would be articles about, of course, people I know, and Lawrence is a small enough community for that to happen somewhat regularly, for social topics that are of interest to me,

medical developments, what's happening with various kinds of social programmes, and I find myself somewhat removed from all the political brou ha ha about the state's fiscal mess and so on."

Pamela had no allegiance to either political party and was in favour of a balance between "liberal" and "conservative" political opinions. "I have never been able to align myself with either party entirely. My background is Republican, my social inclinations are certainly Democratic, and sometimes I find myself squarely in the middle. But then, that's typical of my general approach to things, I do not see things black or white. There are way too many grey areas for me. Sometimes I have strong feelings about things one way or another, but very often I see so many sides of something that is very difficult for me to choose."

Although she was in favour of social programmes helping the disadvantaged members of society, she was sceptical about uncontrolled state intervention: "I know to some extent how much waste there is in state operations, because when I worked for the state of Kansas in Lawrence I could see the way things operated, and I could see the obstacles that stood between me and getting the services that my clients needed, and some of that was politics."

Pamela was sceptical about the political rhetoric, and believed that the political system was dominated by a political elite. "I suppose we have something more of democracy than most countries have. The picture that I get of the way that democracy operates in our country is that, unless they are able to get to the right centre of power, people don't have a heck of a lot to say about what happens in the government. The fact that it requires an extraordinarily large amount of money to get elected is so ironic and so disgreeable to me; it's just inconceivable that people spend the amount of money they spend to get elected when that money could so well be spent on feeding starving Africans for example."

Pamela mistrusted politicians and she was apprehensive of the political system's ability to overcome the existing problems: "How could anyone who reads the newspapers not mistrust a good many of our elected officials. I don't think that I can make the statement about our local situation but I really feel that at the national level things are a pretty hopeless mess. I think that we have become so entrapped and enmeshed in bad things. I think mostly of

a lot of corrupt practices at the federal level, like the amount of the federal deficit, or when something like the corruption in HUD comes to light and you think of the millions of dollars that were directed to other purposes, and think of the Iran-Contra scandal, and you hear of those large scale episodes. To me it just feels overwhelming and demoralising, this is hopeless, there isn't anything that I can do about it, even if I vote, and even if I vote for people who I think are honest and well qualified. I think we are too deeply enmeshed to get out of this aweful mess and I think we are probably just headed straight to the edge of the abyss."

However, Pamela was in favour of economic growth. She enjoyed the small-town charm of Lawrence and the ability "to go literally anywhere in 15 minutes maximum", but believed that growth was inevitable, and that those who mostly profited from it were "the people who are living on the fringe." She told me: "No growth equals no change. Some people say : 'I am for no growth; lets not have Lawrence any larger.' I guess I would have to know what that means; if we are not going to get any larger, then, are we going to improve what we have, and if so, how? I think no change is extremely unhealthy, communities that don't change, they do change despite themselves because they get smaller, because people move away and don't come back."

7. CONCLUSION

The basic tenets of the civic ideal were widely shared among the members of the civic organizations. As the individual cases presented in this chapter indicate, most informants who were active in this milieu identified the democratic system of government with the free-market economic system, denied the existence of social classes, and attributed the existing social and economic differences to non-structural factors. But the examples are also revealing of important ideological differences ranging from the religious conservative discourse of Dr. Baker to the libertarian views of H. Gleason. Dr. Baker has a religious vision of American Democracy and of America's mission in the world, stresses the importance of social responsibility, and is critical of what he perceives as moral decline and permissiveness. H. Gleason on the other hand, adopts a secular view of American society and professes

unfettered individual freedom and minimal state regulation.

The evidence presented also indicates that most individuals from the milieu of the civic organizations were mainly active in non-political organizations. Civic participation was often contrasted to political activity; charity was seen as a more direct and effective way to combat poverty than political activity, and community voluntarism was considered a more effective and democratic way for the provision of social services than state intervention. Civic participation is a social requirement for certain categories of occupations but it is also a deeply rooted ideal. "To get involved" was generally regarded as a civic responsibility, although in many cases another equally important dimension of it was the search of personal intimacy in an environment where compatible others are likely to be found.

Attitudes towards the political system also varied widely. Whereas some informants expressed a strong faith in the political system and had a great respect for the country's institutions, there was a widespread cynicism about "politics" and "politicians" that often coexisted with an understanding of government as a technical activity.

But despite this widespread mistrust towards the political system, and various other concerns (such as the degradation of the environment and the high rates of crime and chemical dependency) most informants from the milieu of the civic organizations (and indeed informants as different in other respects as Dr. Baker, Harold Gleason, and Pamela Sullivan) were in favour of economic growth and development. The high standard of living attained in the United States and the benefits derived from scientific and technological advances appeared as obvious justifications of growth and provided assurance for the overcoming of present and future problems.

NOTES

1. I will from now on refer to those organizations, and to the great number of other organizations and committees that are related to them, as the "civic organizations". For the leading churches in Lawrence see note 20 of the general introduction.
2. Following Hannerz, I understand an urban social milieu to be an environment in which "generation of shared meanings occurs" between

people who "have a bit of common life with a modicum of isolation from other people" (Hannerz 1980: 287).

The milieu of the civic organizations should be understood as a social field where people of roughly similar social and ideological orientations are likely to meet, communicate and act together. Of course it is neither completely homogeneous, nor completely isolated from other social milieux : although a member of a leading church is more likely to be a member of a civic club than of a neighbourhood association, there were neighbourhood activists who were members of leading churches.

3. The similarities between the rhetoric of the Chamber of Commerce and the civic clubs were shown in the last chapter. The relations between the religious rhetoric and the dominant civic and political ideology are complex and often ambivalent and will not be examined here in detail. The following extract from an interview with the minister of one of the leading Protestant churches is characteristic: "The whole philosophy of our culture is that growth is good and I think this is contrary to the Christian religion. Most people don't know that because Christianity is so closely tight in to our culture over here that it's hard to distinguish. My duty is to lift up the fact that what Jesus was about and taught is diametrically opposed to some of the basics that our culture and our society is founded on, but if I really said that as strongly as I believe it I would be accused of being a communist."

4. The Lynds observed this. They write: "Hence one tends to find certain groups of loyalties linked together. A successful lawyer is likely to belong to the Bar Association, Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, the Republican party, one of two or three leading churches, a high order in the Masons, the Country Club, and be a director of the Y.M.C.A., while his wife joins the more fashionable women's clubs, the group directing the local charities, and so on. A successful banker belongs to the same groups, save that the Banker's Association replaces the Bar Association" (Lynds 1929: 492-493). There are also many examples from my fieldwork indicating a significant degree of overlapping between the memberships of the most important civic organizations. The Sunday School that I attended in the First Methodist Church included 5 Rotarians, 2 members of the Kiwanis club including its president, an ex-president of the Chamber of Commerce, an elected member of the School Board, and the most powerful judge in the state. Some of the

members of the Altrusa were among the most active individuals of the milieu of the civic organizations. President Donna Killion's husband is the owner of one of the city's most successful new firms and an official of the Chamber of Commerce. Many Altrusans were members of the Chamber of Commerce, and two members of the Altrusa had also joined the Rotary club. I often sat next to Helen Nesmith, the wife of ex-mayor Frank Nesmith, who was during the time of my fieldwork the local representative of the firm constructing the Riverfront Plaza. Many Altrusans were members of mainline churches, and I met several of them in the Congregational, the First Methodist, and the Episcopal Churches.

5. See also Varenne 1977: 116-117.

6. See also Linda Ackerman in this chapter.

7. Bellah et al 1985: 71-72.

8. The views of the Lawrence politician D. Lipman, that we encountered in the last chapter, provide an example of an extremely right-wing Christian fundamentalist.

9. Wuthnow 1988: 245.

10. See Bellah et al 1985: 201-202.

11. Continuous geographic relocation is a requisite of professional ascension in many occupational fields. Carl told me: "The principle is : you cannot move more than one level within the same organization; if you want to move the next level you need to change organizations, which in most of them means you have to leave the community. There is a tremendous cultural pressure to do that. Because the people have seen you grow up and in the perception of the company, unless you have been to different places and seen a lot of different experiences, you don't add anything to the company, you've just seen that structure; it's like in a university: you don't want to hire too many professors who came from that University because they bring no diversity to it."

12. Seeley et al have observed this attitude among their professional informants (1956: 177).

13. Bellah et al 1985: 134-138. See also Sennett 1977: 3-5, and Gehlen 1980: 138.

14. The term was often used by my informants and it primarily referred to the "controlling members of the community", the group of entrepreneurs, businessmen and professionals who were active in the civic organizations

and were perceived to control the city's political process. See also Bellah et al 1985: 170.

15. C. Wright Mills had observed that in smaller American towns and cities "the local upper classes make up the social backbone of the Republican party" (1956: 35).

16. See Gehlen 1980: 47-48 and 115.

17. Moreover, the Altrusa as well as other community organizations, by uniting those with similar lifestyles can be thought as extensions of the private realm rather than its opposite. See Bellah et al 1985: 73-74.

CHAPTER 6
THE OPPONENTS OF GROWTH

1. INTRODUCTION

Due to a large extent to the presence of the university, the supporters of economic growth have encountered significant political opposition in Lawrence. In the city's recent political history, some mainly middle-class segments of the population have resisted what they see as "indiscriminate and uncontrolled growth", and have articulated an alternative political vision for the future of the city known as "controlled growth". The supporters of controlled growth, who mainly live in the older-city neighbourhoods, have managed to elect representatives in the City Commission[1], and challenge the dominance of the Chamber of Commerce in local politics.

The supporters of controlled growth were mainly organized around neighbourhood associations. The neighbourhood movement has been active in Lawrence all through the 1970's and 1980's and many, especially older-town neighbourhoods have had strong associations for many years. Since 1987, 12 neighbourhoods have formed the Lawrence Association of Neighbourhoods (L.A.N.), an umbrella organization that lobbies on neighbourhood issues, circulates a monthly leaflet and, in its political incarnation endorses candidates in local elections.

The formation of politically active neighbourhood groups is not unique to Lawrence. Particularly since the early seventies, neighbourhood groups have been formed in many cities across the country and, often in association with other groups (like minority groups and labour unions), they have played an important role in the municipal affairs of many American cities.[2]

The development of local neighbourhood movements is indeed one of the principal forms that the "movement of democratic reform" has taken in the United States since the early seventies.[3] As the ideological and political ferment of the 1960's faded, the 1970's saw the development of new kinds of political activity aiming at democratic reform at the local level, and initiated in many cases by activists formed by the experiences of the 1960's.

I first present the Lawrence Association of Neighbourhoods and then examine the political arguments of the proponents of controlled growth as well as their position in the most important local political issues. The chapter closes with the presentation of the most important radical political group of the city.

2. THE LAWRENCE ASSOCIATION OF NEIGHBOURHOODS

Most neighbourhood associations participating in L.A.N. were formed in the older parts of the city, although a few also developed in newer residential areas that had similar problems to those of the older neighbourhoods. According to the neighbourhood activists, the issues raised by the neighbourhood movement concerned every Lawrence resident, except perhaps the very rich: "Whether those neighbourhood issues have come to roost on your doorstep or not, they are everybody's issues, and sooner or later they get to everybody and everywhere."

The neighbourhood coalition was not based on ideological agreement but on the commonality of interests among the residents of different parts of the city. L.A.N.'s officials stressed the non-partisan character of the organization and avoided identifying L.A.N. with left-wing politics. They stressed the need for coalition-building on specific issues between different constituencies of the citizenry, and were only concerned with neighbourhood-related issues.[4] L.A.N.'s supporters come from a broad ideological spectrum and, as some of its leaders said, the neighbourhood movement represents an alliance of "liberals" and "conservatives" on specific neighbourhood issues.

According to one of L.A.N.'s documents, problems that are common to most older neighbourhoods include: "(1) Heavy traffic and speeding on residential streets; (2) Non-existent or inadequate sidewalks; (3) Deteriorating public utility systems; (4) Proliferation of rental properties; (5) Increasing crime; and (6) Lack of financial resources to provide services."[5]

As the city and the university grow, the older neighbourhoods, which are located around and between the downtown and the university campus, have to accomodate the largest proportion of the negative effects of growth. Many

of them have traffic problems. A lot of university and downtown traffic passes through the central neighbourhoods disrupting their peaceful residential character. Streets need to be widened and the quality of the neighbourhood is thus deteriorating. Moreover the newly-generated residential, commercial, recreational, and other needs must be accomodated. Downtown businesses serve a larger population and thus tend to expand into the surrounding neighbourhoods. The increase in the numbers of students and other newcomers has created a demand for rented property mainly in the older neighbourhoods that are closer to the university and the downtown.[6]

Apart from fighting the negative effects of growth, neighbourhood associations have also demanded a fair share of the city's funds. According to neighbourhood representatives, the city devotes most of its resources to expanding, and thus the older parts of the city get neglected. A commonly used example is the water supply. An East Lawrence activist told me: "Instead of providing cheaper water, they build new lines to expand in the west. In the same time old water lines deteriorate but they are not taking care of them. Water in the older neighborhoods comes out bad sometimes."

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L.A.N. is a broad alliance of neighbourhood groups the different concerns of which reflect the different socio-economic and ideological characteristics of the different city neighbourhoods. The associations of Old West Lawrence and East Lawrence that I present in the following pages are characteristic examples of active neighbourhood groups, and their concerns typify the concerns of most other associations.

Some of the most active neighbourhood associations are formed in relatively affluent middle-class areas of the old city. Old West Lawrence is an example. The area, that used to be "the Alvamar of the past" as one informant said, is located in the North West of downtown and is distinct for its historic ambiance. Old West Lawrence is full of large, well preserved Italianate and Victorian homes built at the turn of the century. Although it is not the most affluent part of the city anymore, a large part of its residents are high income professionals and university employees, and the average income in the area is one of the highest in the city.

The Old West Lawrence neighbourhood association is one of the oldest and most active neighbourhood groups and has played an instrumental role in

the creation of L.A.N. When in 1987 a Lawrence bank demolished 8 historic houses located in Old West Lawrence in order to build a new drive-in facility, many Old West Lawrence residents were outraged by the event, and decided to get organized and react to what they perceived as a "terrible intrusion". They organized a political committee and soon became influential in city affairs. The success of Old West Lawrence association encouraged the organization or the reactivation of other neighbourhood groups and, under the leadership of Charles Howard (the ex-president of Old West Lawrence neighbourhood association), eventually led to the creation of L.A.N.

Many of the concerns, most commonly voiced by Old West Lawrence residents, relate to the historic character of the area. Most residents were sensitive to issues of historic preservation and were concerned with the ongoing restoration of the historic houses and other buildings located in the area. Despite the recognition that the area had relatively few rented units, residents feared the proliferation of such property (caused by investors who buy into the area and subdivide properties into rental units), and the development of other than residential functions in the neighbourhood, and were critical of "insensitive" developers and city politicians or administrators who either cause or permit such disruptions to occur. The choice to live in Old West Lawrence was considered a "cultural" choice since many of the residents could afford to live anywhere in the city. Old West Lawrence residents treasured the historic atmosphere and the warm social interaction that developed in the neighbourhood. The two were often seen as interrelated. Some of my informants pointed that, compared with the western suburbs, the opportunities of interaction are more numerous in Old West Lawrence where porches, sidewalks, detached garages (or the absence of a garage), and the proximity of houses encourge intermingling.

Although most active neighbourhood associations were distinctly middle-class, neighbourhood groups were also organized in some of the lower-class neighbourhoods of the city. East Lawrence is the most characteristic example. East Lawrence, which is located in the North East of downtown, is the poorest and the most racially diverse area of the city. Houses are relatively small and in worse condition than in the rest of the city, and the area contains or borders on a number of productive operations. Most inhabitants are low-income blue collar workers and there is a significant number of elderly

working-class residents. There is also a number of professionals and university employees living in the area as well as a younger group of people identified as "60's students", "new age people", "social and political activists", and "counter culture people".

East Lawrence Improvement Association is one of the most vocal and radical neighbourhood groups. Neighbourhood activity has been stimulated by a number of radical activists who chose to live in the area and became instrumental in organizing area residents to combat outside threats, prevent crime, and generally enhance the quality of life of the neighbourhood. Contrary to other informants who regarded East Lawrence as an unsafe and generally undesirable place to live, radical activists appreciated the lifestyle and sense of community that developed there, and were committed to preserving the character of their adoptive neighbourhood. Representatives of the association complained that, being poor, East Lawrence tended to be low on the city's list for various services and less well protected than other areas of the city.

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Although a permanent feature of the local political scene, neighbourhood associations are also transient. Some neighbourhood associations were active for many years and involved considerable numbers of people. In most cases however, associations were formed on a single-issue basis. According to Howard, associations become active "when there is a crisis point in the neighbourhood" and interest tends to subsequently fade away[7]: "The neighbourhoods form associations only where there is a problem. After the problem is gone, the association usually fades away."

The history of the "University Place" neighbourhood association provides an example of this transience. A neighbourhood association was for the first time organized in University Place in 1975 to deal with the traffic problems generated by the nearby construction of Lawrence High School. That association dissolved after its goals had been accomplished, and it was only regenerated in 1987 when the L.A.N. encouraged all neighbourhoods to organize, in the hope of forming a strong coalition which would address joint issues.

The history of "Western Hills" neighbourhood association provides another example. Western Hills is a suburban development, currently

comprising about 80 single-unit homes, that began in the sixties and was not incorporated into the city of Lawrence until 1985. The residents formed an association to fight against incorporation because they believed that it would increase their taxes and it would mean, as the president of the neighbourhood association said, that "we'd lose control of our destiny." Initially opposition to incorporation was unanimous, but eventually interest faded away. "We lost some people in the process. When you ask a person to do something, they can think of a dozen things to do instead. Fewer people attended each meeting." When at some point, because of a road-widening, the interests of the owners of 11 properties in the area changed from that of the majority, they stopped participating in the association. "After this happened [the road-widening] their interest was not like ours. All 11 households stopped participating on an effective basis. When you see why people fight, it gets down to money. We also lost one in the corner over there, because he finally figured out that he could tie to the sewer system without paying for it because of the topography. Because incorporation would not cost him a great deal, he therefore would approve."

The Lawrence Association of Neighbourhoods functions democratically at all levels, and one of its main aims is the greater involvement of ordinary citizens in the political process. For the most part however, the function of the neighbourhood associations depends on the determination of a few individuals. N. Bailey, the president of the University Place neighbourhood association told me: "I fear for the University Place. I do. I think quite frankly right now that I am the driving force behind it and I won't be president again next year. I'm not sure who wants to step in and do it. If we didn't have Stefanie [ex- president of the neighbourhood association and vice chairman of L.A.N.] in our neighbourhood we wouldn't be as effective. It's hard to get the general population to get aware of that." And Rick Emerson (one of the most prominent members of the radical political group) remarked about L.A.N.'s president C. Howard: "I cannot imagine L.A.N. functioning without Charles Howard. He chaired it for the first 2 or 3 years, called the meetings, made it go, he does the newsletter for it - which is probably the most influential single position - he's been L.A.N.; he made it go completely."

3. THE IDEOLOGY OF CONTROLLED GROWTH

Neighbourhood associations are not directly political organizations. In order to engage as many citizens as possible, L.A.N. has no direct political character, and functions as a "special interest group" the primary aim of which is to lobby on particular neighbourhood issues. As a result, some of the most important issues of local politics cannot be addressed, either because no agreement can be reached, or because they do not fall under the definition of "neighbourhood problems". The "Board of Directors" of L.A.N. - on which sits a representative for each neighbourhood - meets every six weeks. A motion, often in the form of a proposed ordinance to the city commission, in order to become L.A.N.'s policy should be approved by 2/3 of the neighbourhoods. L.A.N.'s lobbying efforts thus concentrate on issues like the truck traffic in Lawrence's neighbourhoods, a noise ordinance or the size of the police task-force.

However, L.A.N. provides a public arena for activists from different neighbourhoods and helps the coordination of their efforts. Although there are L.A.N. members who "just want stop signs at the right corners of their neighbourhood" (Rick Emerson), and might otherwise support growth in the rest of the city,[8] most of L.A.N.'s active members are politically liberal[9] and support controlled growth at the local level. During the campaign of 1989, L.A.N.'s most active members formed another group, O.W.L. P.A.C. (which stands for Organization for Wise Leadership-Political Action Committee)[10], which organized a candidate forum, and endorsed and supported candidates in the local election.[11] The candidates they endorsed were known as "neighbourhood politicians" and supported controlled growth.

Proponents of controlled growth have a different view of the public good and the role of the local political authorities. What they celebrate in Lawrence is not only its economic success but its social and ideological diversity, its political vitality, and its respect for history and the environment. Although they do not reject growth - indeed they acknowledge that growth is necessary for the well-being of the city - they do not by definition identify it with progress and are concerned with issues of distribution of wealth and the

impact of new growth on the stability of Lawrence neighbourhoods and the environment.

Mark Carpenter[12] summarized their vision as following: "A community must grow to live, but headlong growth can be as deadly as no growth. This is an issue that rests on many factors: good planning, neighbourhood stability, economic health, social services, community tolerance of diversity, transportation and circulation, good public services, and quality of life. We must maintain a balance of those forces and remember that Lawrence is as attractive to people as it is, not only because it provides jobs, but because it provides a lot of opportunities for various people to live out their personal dreams of what a good life should be."

Whereas pro-growthers regard Lawrence as part of a "metroplex" extending from Kansas City to Topeka, and cherish the transformation of the "sleepy old town" to a modern "booming" city "in touch with the twentieth and the twenty first century"[13], proponents of controlled growth value the small-town charm of Lawrence and want the city to keep its separate identity. They reject the prospect of a Douglas County becoming like nearby Kansas City filled with freeways, shopping malls, office complexes and industrial parks, and regard many of the new developments as threats to the city's identity.

Judith Fiester, one of the candidates in the 1989 elections endorsed by O.W.L. P.A.C., said: "Lawrence has too much character to allow itself to become a satellite of Kansas City. I don't want Lawrence to become another nameless, faceless bedroom community for Kansas city. You drive through Lenexa and Overland Park [Kansas City suburbs] and there's no way to tell what city you're in. I think Lawrence will lose something if it ever gets too big."

Contrary to business representatives and pro-growth politicians for whom economic growth is almost by definition identified with progress, neighbourhood politicians stress the need for historic preservation and respect for human needs and the environment.

Mark Carpenter regarded growth as a process of "maturation": "It's a question of balancing your resources and making sure that growth is not always new expansion but maybe it's a refinement of what you already have. You know, constantly building the new and demolishing the old is wasteful. Growth has unfortunately sometimes caused destruction of the old and some

has done so somewhat insensitively. The house that I live in, there are physical resources in that house, there is someone's time and labour in that house. The value of that in dollars and cents is not the only thing; it's easy to say 'lets turn it into landfield'. Think about it: when the bank tore down those 8 houses across the street, most of those houses were hand-made, because they were built in an era when we didn't mass-produce homes. Master craftsmen went out, set up their equipment, sometimes they even milled the lumber on sight. It's a hand made, high quality product. Yet we treat it like garbage."

Although they regarded economic development as a natural and necessary function of every community, supporters of controlled growth stressed also the need to control and guide growth so that it would be beneficial not just for the buniness interests but for the community as a whole. Developers and investors are sometimes only interested in their own short-term profit and are indifferent to the needs of the community and the impact of their actions on the environment. In order to explain the meaning of controlled growth, Carpenter often used the analogy of a river: "It's like taking a river and channeling it where it will do you some good instead of letting it just wipe out your community." Burns[14] also said: "There are people who think growth is by definition good. If you give a child steroids it's gonna grow, you know; you end up with a monster if you don't allow growth to be natural."

Alan Finney, a corporate executive in the oil industry and president of the Old West Lawrence neighbourhood association, gave me the following example of harmful and inconsiderate growth. "A guy named Storment [a Lawrence developer who was also involved in the issue of the shopping mall in the early 1980s], a son of a bitch, he is a Nazi, he built barracks to put people in [apartment buildings for students], he is a bad bad guy because he builds barracks. He just wants to make money without any concern for the community or the environment."

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Supporters of controlled growth however, clearly distinguished themselves from those who were against growth altogether. Carpenter told me: "I had zero growth people that supported me just because I represented a more moderate attitude and I told them, when I was talking to them I said: 'If you're expecting me to say zero growth, cut it off where it is and never get any

bigger, don't you vote for me cause I won't do that."

Although concerned with its proper handling, Carpenter regarded growth as a natural and thus inevitable process and believed that it was an inherent characteristic of human nature. He said: "I see growth as a natural process; plants grow, people grow, everybody is born and grows up and matures into something else. Growth is part of us, inherent in our nature. Growth is part of not only our biological process, it's part of our mental process, our spiritual process, it's part of what we are. It's the desire to manipulate, to influence, to make a mark in the world."

Carpenter believed that the world was in a constant state of change and that there were important analogies between the social and the physical world: "You get what looks like a fixed state but there is always something going on. I really believe that there are parallels in human activity and the way the physical world functions and if you try and say I'm gonna freeze this here, some of the energy that is going on behind there is dried up."

Although critical of the distribution of the benefits of technology in Lawrence, the country, and worldwide, Carpenter regarded the development of technology as a positive factor contributing to the welfare of human societies: "I think technology is a great thing. Because I think it can be used to open up the good life for more people. The world is a rich place and everybody could live, and I am not talking about a subsistence level, I think everybody could live a decent comfortable lifestyle on the whole planet based on the resourses that we have if they were managed globally with that aim in mind."

Carpenter's views were shared by most other supporters of controlled growth. The views of N. Bailey, the president of the University Place neighbourhood Association, provide another example. Bailey stressed the need to control growth but ultimately regarded growth as inevitable. She told me: "I would love to see it stay the same, but I am just pragmatic; it's not going to stay the same and I think what we need to do is to control it as best we can. I wish growth wouldn't touch my world, but I have to acknowledge that it does and I think that it's just 'a head in the sand' attitude to say that our population isn't going to grow; it's growing all over the world. I think it's better to deal with it and plan for it - try to make it as comfortable as possible for your self. I think it ties indirectly to the world politics; the world

population is expanding; that's growth, and we can't tell people that we are going to have fewer people on this planet. You have more people; you need more space; you need more living space; you need to provide more services; you need to provide more food."

Bailey was optimistic about the overcoming of major present problems, and had a strong faith in modern science and technology. On the question of environmental degradation for example, she believed that fears of a future environmental disaster were exaggerated and that a permanent solution to the environmental problems would only come from the further development of science and technology.[15] She told me: "I think that the human race, mankind, has enough brainpower to deal with it [the problem of environmental degradation]. I think that we can solve it. There must be scientific, technological ways of dealing with that, and again it sounds simplistic but I love to tell this story. I took a class once on Backminster Fuller, and I remember sometime in the last century if we had computers and someone computed what would happen to all the droppings from horses (because we were all driving around on horses) and we plugged into the computer how much the population would grow, how many more horses we would need, the computer would have probably said that we'd have the whole earth covered with horse manure up to our knees by such and such a date. The computer did not know that the automobile was going to be invented and therefore we don't have horse manure up to our waist now, and I think that's the story I can use to illustrate that somewhere there's got to be technological advantages to deal with the transportation needs, the food needs."

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The supporters of controlled growth were not only sensitive to aesthetic and environmental issues, but they were also concerned with issues of economic fairness and justice. According to them, one of the main preoccupations of the city commission should be the protection of the city's most vulnerable neighbourhoods. They pointed to the fact that, particularly in the older neighbourhoods, development has caused many disruptions to the city's life, and they stressed the need to combine economic growth with the protection of the environment and the quality of life in general. Carpenter told me: "There is an effort to encompass more values in our decision process than

'does it make money or not?' or 'does it mean new jobs as opposed to better jobs?'" And Burns said: "As the city grows, we should look at the problems and needs of all parts of the city. There is not simply growth, it's also caring about how the city's health is doing."

The political involvement of most controlled growth politicians I knew had an ethical motivation and a reformist intention. In the manner of previous reformist discourse, their views echoed Biblical and Republican themes. Burns told me: "I got into politics because I thought things didn't happen properly. My motivation is to see justice, equity, fairness." All three of those terms are key terms of the liberal/reformist tradition advocating the need for political intervention to channel economic activity, protect minorities and ease extreme economic differences.[16]

Carpenter also told me: "You have to look at all human beings as having some worth because they are human beings, and it's not necessarily a sign of what kind of a house they have or what they do for a living or any of those kinds of things. It's ridiculous; it's an American shame; it's a shame for any society to write people off and say we can't do anything for those folks and just let them rot. I think you have some sense of obligation for your fellow men just because they are your fellow men and there are people who say O.K., 'the street folks, they chose that lifestyle'; yea, some of them did, that doesn't mean that it's O.K. for us to say 'you go up there and freeze to death', because it's not O.K. for me, I am not as good a human being as I should be if I say to some guy out there, 'I don't give a damn about you.'"

Although sensitive to the needs of the lower class, neighbourhood politicians like Carpenter and Burns do not aim to represent the interests of a particular segment of the voters. Both believe that differing special interests can be reconciled and that the common good can be reached by open, informed dialogue. Burns told me: "You have to try to bring all the affected parties together, and discuss whatever the issue is in terms of how it affects them and come up with a solution that is mutually beneficial. All these interests are not incompatible with each other; there doesn't have to be a loser all the time. I get excited when I go to places like Charleston, South Carolina, or Galveston, Texas, that have a lot of historic buildings, and they have preserved and promoted them, and also brought visitors and development; and all the community celebrates together."

Carpenter also said: "I perceived the dichotomy of Chamber and neighbourhoods and I was trying to make people aware that this does not necessarily have to be a mutually exclusive thing; and one of my points that I tried to make in my campaign was that there are not good and bad guys, we're all the same here, and as a result of that you try when you are on the Commission to make sure that you are not leaning too heavily toward one side or the other, that you try and make a point of stressing unity. One of the things that has always bothered me about local politics here is that people get coalesced into a position and it's like they can't change; they can't be persuaded by new evidence. I hate that format because it's not conducive to dialogue, and dialogue is what we need when we make a decision."

A mutually beneficial reconciliation of interests presupposes a willingness to make concessions and rise above one's narrowly defined private interest. When asked if interests can be actually reconciled Carpenter told me: "Yea I think you can have that as long as people realize that nobody should win or lose all the time - not the neighbourhoods, not the business interests, not whatever. And if you look at any group, if you lose some and win some, unless you are just totally selfish, you can feel 'well O.K., I didn't get this but I got that', you know, and that makes a compromise worth it. If somebody is not willing to give at all, then you have a problem, and one of the things that concerns me is that many Americans get an attitude of either a) I don't care, or b) I care only about No. 1: me, me, me, and there is no room for compromise of that. And that's a very destructive dynamic, I think, in terms of a society because an individual is concerned only about himself and takes whatever measures he needs to secure himself and maybe his immediate family, and if you take it to its logical extreme, that means rule of might by might, whoever is big enough, wealthy enough, whatever."

4. A CRITIQUE OF THE CITY MANAGER

As we saw, according to the dominant political ideology, the city manager is an impartial expert whose role is purely managerial. However, the actions of the Lawrence city manager were constantly at the centre of political controversy in Lawrence between Chamber of Commerce and the neighbourhood politicians.[17]

Nathan Andersen, the Lawrence city manager, had been in his post for 19 years, and he was highly regarded in civic circles as a particularly competent and dedicated city administrator and an asset to the city of Lawrence. After his unexpected death toward the end of my fieldwork, one of Lawrence's parks was named after him and the Chamber of Commerce established a special annual award in his memory.

The city manager - and other high-ranking administrators like the school principal or the executive director of the Chamber of Commerce -must coordinate his actions with the dominant interests of the city. In dealing with the various segments of the community, he must recognize differences of power. He is able to remain in his position only to the extent that he makes an accurate assessment of local power relations and acts on this assessment. Of course, while giving due weight to these various interests he must at the same time try not to alienate any of them. As a result, the city manager publicly appeared to be neutral although he tended in practice to serve the dominant interests of the city.[18]

It is no wonder then that the city manager was one of the more visible targets of the local opposition. The unsuccessful attempt to fire him, at a time when neighbourhood politicians held the majority on the City Commission, was one of the most avidly remembered political events of the 1970's. The city manager was generally seen by neighbourhood activists as a "good old boy" (another expression designating the members of the local power establishment), and a faithful servant of the local establishment who instead of simply implementing the policy set by the Commission actually promoted the agenda of the dominant local interests.

Burns, who comes from a poor farming family and never finished college, had to face during the campaign, and later, accusations of incompetence because he held an "unfit occupation". He told me: "I don't have the credibility of an expert; I am not a developer, an economist, a planner." And he had to face the same difficulties in his dealings with the city manager. "There is a certain part of the community always complementing the city manager. I go away, to Boston and other places, and there are people saying you've got a great city manager. It makes it very hard for me to be at odds with the city staff because people would tell me that he is a good city manager running the city well, and I am not a professional, and demand a very

detailed explanation of what I am talking about or dismiss what I say. My opinion doesn't carry the same weight as the city manager's opinion."

Burns stressed the tactical advantage the city manager enjoys over the Commission members through his expertise and day-to-day familiarity with city affairs. He regarded the city manager as one of the "good old boys", and saw his own role as one of controlling and restraining him. He said that the city manager didn't function under the principle of "neutral competence" and that he "tries to help the good old boys". According to Burns, the city manager was able to influence the political process mainly through: a) his day to day administrative decisions and b) his ability to manipulate the City Commission.[19]

Burns accused the city manager of manipulating the City Commission and presenting evidence that usually favoured "only one position". He told me: "For instance we are going to have this discussion on tax abatement coming up. In our discussions in the Commission I suggested that an economist was invited from Kansas University and the mayor said it would be great. The manager however, said after that that this economist usually argues against tax abatement and did not contact him. It was obvious that the staff didn't intend to call anybody that would have any expertise. So the staff invited K. Robertson and B. Murphy [Chamber of Commerce officials]. That's where I feel staff exerts a lot of influence in the direction of the discussions. If we only hear their presentation, then I think the outcome is fairly predictable. To manipulate information that way is a misuse of power by the city staff"

Burns also accused the city manager of withdholding important information: "It was only through the public that we could get a full discussion and information about the issue because the staff will take only one position. I feel that the staff should bring us every information, all the different things that bear on an issue, and we have to deliberate, to weigh the decision."

Instead the city manager tried to evade Burns' demands and prohibited other members of staff from giving information. "City staff people are very cautious; they don't want to talk to me because they are afraid of their jobs. The manager tends to stir all the information that goes out or in so that it passes through him. If I go to ask information he can deflect it, trying to talk me out of it, or he will not answer in writing but answer verbally. In a

Commission meeting, I need to ask to get the action in writing, but what usually happens is that the manager will say 'I know what you want' and that leaves him a lot of leeway."

According to Burns, and other neighbourhood politicians, the city manager in many of his actions crosses the line and actually sets rather than implements policy. The gradual development of the local airport - despite the fact that Lawrence's citizens have rejected its development in two referenda - is often given as an example of the power of the city manager to implement his own policy. The recent loss of a position in the human relations department was given by Burns as another example. The city manager, in a decision related to the budget, cut the "fair-housing" position - an area in which Lawrence was considered a model city and a leader - without informing the Commission. Before the cut, according to Burns, the city manager had commissioned a study from a new member of staff, unfamiliar with the human relations department, which showed that the employee was "underemployed". "It was obvious, at least to me, that the city manager wanted to cut this position."

5. THE ISSUES

The neighbourhood movement had an important impact on the political life of Lawrence. In this section I will present the views of the supporters of controlled growth on some of the most important local political issues.

The Shopping Mall

The defeat of the mall proposal was the greatest victory of the neighbourhood movement in recent years. When the issue came to the political fore prior to the 1987 elections for the City Commission, a number of neighbourhood groups actively opposed the construction of the mall, and managed to win the elections and shelve the proposed plan.

Opponents regarded the construction of the shopping mall as largely unecessary and as a threat rather than a positive development in the community. They also pointed to evidence showing that Lawrence, because of the attractiveness of the downtown, has a net retail surplus and regarded

the proposed shopping mall as a project that would only benefit developers, and deprive Lawrence of one of its most cherished attractions. Lawrence downtown has a unique historic ambience and is the envy of many other communities. Most buildings have been refurbished, and they are occupied by successful businesses that offer a variety of shopping and entertainment rarely found in a conventional mall.

Opponents of the mall argued that Lawrence could not support both downtown and a shopping mall and predicted that a shopping mall would compete with existing downtown businesses and, as the example of innumerable other communities has shown, would ultimately result in the decay of the downtown. "Our downtown is the envy of many other communities. We have seen many examples of what suburban malls have done to downtowns in other cities. Suburban malls have devastated the character and core of those cities." (S. Almsberger, a candidate supported by downtown businessmen, who finished fifth in the 1989 elections.)

Moreover, the state of the historic neighbourhoods surrounding downtown is intimately linked to the success of the adjacent downtown. P. Mallin, a neighbourhood leader, told me: "Probably the single most important element in the future well-being of the neighbourhoods surrounding downtown is the health of that commercial district. In cities all across the country, dead and decaying downtowns are, almost without exception, surrounded by dead and decaying neighbourhoods."

Many of the opponents of the mall recognized that there was demand in Lawrence for some additional retail shopping. They thought, however, that the building of a mall was not the right approach and looked for other solutions to the problem. Carpenter said: "I do not particularly favor a 'conventional' mall for Lawrence. For now, and for some time to come I believe, Lawrence is not big enough to support a second major retail center without serious harm to our first one, downtown. Additionally, I think Lawrence deserves more than the conventional approach to anything, when we can work it out, because Lawrence is not a conventional communtiy."

Downtown businessmen were among the staunchest opponents of the mall. Although they are members of the Chamber of Commerce and normally support development, in the case of the shopping mall they have allied themselves with neighbourhood groups and have contributed to defeat

the project. The political course of S. Owen is indicative. Owen is a downtown entrepreneur who has been elected many times in the City Commission and has served twice as mayor. He started his political career as a Chamber representative but subsequently became an independent politician. In the 1987 elections, he was endorsed both by the Chamber of Commerce and the O.W.L. P.A.C., and was the one who casted the critical vote that led to the defeat of the project.

The development of an "outlet mall", on the north side of downtown by the riverfront, was the compromise solution that was agreed. Outlet malls are smaller than conventional malls, and it was generally considered that the project would strengthen and improve the downtown area and the community as a whole. The project was unanimously approved in August 1988 and the Riverfront Plaza - as it became known - opened in April 1990.

The South Trafficway

The construction of the South trafficway was opposed by most supporters of controlled growth. The issue was not part of L.A.N.'s political agenda but most neighbourhood activists and politicians opposed the project and worked against it.

Opponents of the road believed that the proposed highway would not have a significant impact on traffic congestion and pointed to the existence of better alternatives for resolving traffic problems. Carpenter summarized their arguments : "I don't believe the trafficway serves as many community goals for the dollars spent as an eastern alternative, for example, would. The Kansas Department of Transportation origin-destination study indicates that bypass traffic is only about 10 percent of the load on our streets. That means 90 percent is either originating or ending in Lawrence, and this data does not include anything about purely internal traffic. This same study indicates that 23rd Street is one of the top three destinations in the community, so a bypass is no help to congestion there. I believe we should have a master transportation plan before we embark on a road project of this size. Finally, I believe that there are some internal improvements that may help us more, and probably at less cost."

Instead, they regarded the proposed trafficway as a growth stimulating

project that would encourage a lot of further development in Lawrence and expressed serious concerns about its impact on the environment. Fiester said: "I fear the South Lawrence trafficway paves the way for an urban mall and an eventual suburban sprawl. We need to place a premium on preserving our open spaces and environmentally sensitive areas. Places like the Elkins Prairie and the Baker Wetlands [parts of which are adjacent to the planned South Lawrence trafficway] would better serve as buffers to growth areas. I'm afraid that development interests will override concerns many have about our environment and natural resources."

Trafficway opponents also expressed serious concerns about the political process that has been followed in its design and financing. Fiester said: "I do not support the South Lawrence trafficway because I cannot support the arbitrary political process through which it has proceeded. Local government has committed millions in bond money to the project without public debate or public vote." Carpenter also said: "It is clear that the community would like to vote on the largest project in Lawrence history, and I think they should."[20] Opponents of the road did not think it would reduce traffic in Lawrence and believed that its real purpose was the facilitation and service of new development to the west and south of the city. They pointed to the fact that S. Mason, the County Commissioner who initiated the project, was a member of the Chamber of Commerce transportation committee, where the plans for the trafficway originated and that developers have already bought most of the land around the proposed trafficway.

Another critic, Rick Emerson, wrote in the *Observer* (a weekly newspaper that appeared for some time in Lawrence during my fieldwork): "We've always called the road the Durbin Bypass, because the main beneficiaries will be developers who own land on the west side. Now a new bit of news emerges : Because the price tag keeps going up, it may take a bit longer to soak the taxpayers for it, and we just may not build the whole 14 miles of the road at once. So where will we start? With the north-south portion out of the northwest end of the route, in other words, in Durbinville. We'll build the part that will benefit Lawrence's most prosperous developer first, and then see where we go from there.

"All of our public officials who have pushed the highway have argued vigorously that the biggest single reason for it is to reduce the traffic load on

23rd Street. We've always regarded that as an out-and-out lie, and we think we're vindicated at this point. No one who has taken a serious look at the project, other than those who have their hands in the pot, has foreseen any significant improvement for 23rd Street - just the opposite, in fact, since the road will be a development magnet which will actually throw more traffic onto local streets. If that were the primary purpose for the road, we would build the K-10-to-Clinton Lake."

Tax Abatement

The granting of tax abatement to companies investing in Lawrence was another point of friction between pro-growth and neighbourhood politicians.

In such a case the local newspaper reported: "The abatement didn't come before commissioners drew fire from a Lawrence resident who criticized the city for 'subsidizing' a private business and who accused the commission of letting the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce call the economic development shots for the city. 'As a taxpayer, I simply want to record an objection to having my money used to subsidize profit-oriented corporations and to having decisions about the distribution of that money made by a private pressure group whose meetings are closed to the public,' said Rick Emerson. The Commission also was questioned extensively on its abatement policies by Patrick Lynch, a Kansas University business professor. Lynch told commissioners he was not opposed to the GDG abatement, but said that the city should begin obtaining more detailed analyses of abatement requests. The comments from Lynch and Emerson drew the ire of commissioner Douglas Lipman He noted that both men are professors at Kansas University, which Lipman said has been 'abated for a hundred years . . . at 100 percent.' 'I don't think it's correct' Lipman said, 'for people who are working for employers who have 100 percent abatement in our community to come down and complain.' Lipman said he was opposed in theory to tax abatements but said that in practice Lawrence needed to offer the 50 percent abatements to qualified businesses or else risk losing them to other communities, some of which offer up to 100 percent tax abatements. Bob Murphy director of the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce's economic development marketing programme, also disputed Emerson's assertions. He said the Chamber leaves

decisions on abatements to the Commission. 'I never promise anybody anything when it comes to something the City Commission is going to have to take action on,' Murphy said. 'You have a policy and we review that with the clients. They understand that they are going to have to come before the city commission, and it's going to be discussed publicly'" *(Journal-World).*

When asked in the Chamber of Commerce candidate forum about his stand towards granting tax incentives to businesses considering locating or expanding in Lawrence, Carpenter said: "We want to be friendly and welcoming, but not at any price. If new businesses who might be considering Lawrence are offended merely because someone asks, 'What are you going to do for us?. . .' then I suggest that they are too easily offended."

In a conversation with me, Carpenter used an "environmentaly friendly", cooperative firm - whose motivation is not just profit but that has meaning in itself - of a Vermont city as an example of community beneficial business activity and contrasted it to greedy, insensitive business: "They are gourmet specialty ice-cream, they apparently are doing quite well. I've seen a program on the television where they say: 'I don't know what my competition is doing; I don't care what my competition is doing. I am doing something that I want to do; the community has supported me in this and I give back to my community as a result of it. What Baskin Robbins or Haggen Dazs and those folks are doing is not a concern of mine, I'm not out here to compete with them, I'm out here to accomplish a purpose, both for me and my friends and my community. That's the kind of businesses that Lawrence needs and they are out there and that's who we should be trying to get."

Against the argument of Chamber representatives that economic growth is necessary for the maintenance of a healthy tax-base in the city, neighbourhood politicians argued that new growth has major impacts on infrastructure costs and city service demands, and does not always "pay its own way". A neighbourhood activist told me: "The Chamber of Commerce brings industries that pay $5 an hour, that is, growth that does not pay for itself."

Supporters of controlled growth remarked that tax incentives were being used "in a bidding war between Kansas communities" and that they were not in most cases a deciding factor for the attraction of industry in an area: "Labour costs also figured in the decision of Garage Door Group Inc. to move

into the East Hills Business Park in Lawrence. The company has been paying its union employees an average of $10.11 an hour but will pay $5 to $8.74 an hour at the new operation. A dozen current employees will be retained and paid 10.66 an hour, while others are free to hire at the lower rate . . . We have stolen medium-paying jobs from Kansas City and turned them into low-paying ones here. The Lawrence economy gets a boost in gross dollars (although on a per-capita basis, which is what really matters, we would guess that Lawrence will be poorer after this deal is done than it was before), and Kansas city loses more than we gain.....Although it's never mentioned locally, low salaries are one of the key promotional tools of the local Chamber of Commerce" (Rick Emerson from the *Observer*).

Burns, who, after Carpenter's failure to get reelected, was the only commissioner opposing most applications for tax abatement, constantly required cost/benefit analyses that would reveal the long term economic effects of the location of specific industries in Lawrence, and asked for the adoption of a mechanism that would bind companies to meet job and payroll claims made in their abatement applications.

6. THE RADICAL ACTIVISTS

In addition to the pro-growthers and the supporters of controlled growth, there were also a number of individuals and groups who were against growth altogether. In the last section of this chapter I examine the most important of those groups.

Despite the lack of formal name and organization, the group of the political radicals that I briefly presented in the introduction has a distinct presence in the political life of Lawrence and even the state. Its core is formed by a group of intellectuals most of whom have been politically active in Lawrence since the 1960's. Some were native Lawrencians but most came to the city as students. The group draws most of its members and support from the university and the relatively large number of "underemployed" people (according to the expression by Chamber officials), who decide to reside permanently in Lawrence after completing their studies because they like the city and value its diversity, and despite the fact that their professional prospects would be better served elsewhere.

The prominent members of the group have been active in Lawrence for many years. Rick Emerson, the voice of the group, was widely known and very popular among radical and neighbourhood social and political circles in Lawrence. Even civic organizations such as the Rotary club, the Ecumenical Center or the Chamber of Commerce invited him to speak or attend their social functions. Emerson was the editor and principal writer of *The Plumber's Friend*, the most enduring and widely circulating alternative political newsletter in Lawrence every issue of which sold around 700 copies. Other members of the group were also widely known for their political action since their student years, and they were highly respected by other L.A.N. members.

The members of the group had little contact with the milieu of the civic organizations. They participated in neighbourhood associations and were active in L.A.N. and other alternative social and political organizations such as the Community Mercantile and the American Civic Liberties Union, and they tended to socialize with other group members and other individuals who shared their social and political orientations. None of the group's members participated in the activities of the leading churches, and those who were churchgoers preferred the Unitarian Church, which was distanced from the community's mainstream and whose members came mainly from the university and the neighbourhood groups.

Apart from participating in L.A.N. as individuals, the radicals had a distinct political presence. They, for example, were the only ones who opposed the construction of the Riverfront Plaza. A few days before construction started, they filed a suit against the cutting of some trees that served as a habitat for bald eagles, but their appeal was quickly rejected. When construction was due to start, company and city officials and workers found a number of activists on the trees in a last symbolic effort to stop the project.

The radicals followed closely the local political process, they were highly knowledgeable of the actors, the issues, and the legal and political procedures, and they developed many-sided political activities ranging from making representations to the City or County Commission to organizing public events and filing lawsuits against decisions made by the local government. "Lesser" political causes, such as the fight against the demolition of an historic house, were pursued by individuals on their own initiative. They

received help from fellow members but the case was largely their own responsibility. Action in "greater" issues, such as the Riverfront Plaza or especially the South trafficway, was preceded by extensive cooperation.

The most active members of the group were in frequent contact and participated regularly in the Friday meetings (see introduction). But the group's activities did not only depend on this small number of individuals (5-10). They were the centre of a wider network of political radicals including county farmers, university professors and administrators, blue-collar workers from Lawrence neighbourhoods, and high-ranking lobbyists in the state legislature. People in this wider circle were independent activists who generally supported the group and cooperated more closely on particular issues, becoming often instrumental in the group's political action.

The group had no formal structure and their ties were as much social and personal as they were political. There were no elected officials and the members of the group were free to choose the areas and the degree of their involvement. Most radicals were suspicious of mass political organizations and subscribed to the famous "green" exhortation to "Think Globally and Act Locally".[21] They believed that individuals and communities should be autonomous and self-governing entities and favoured decentralized political organization.

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The radicals often resorted to legal action and the group did not appear publicly at all. They believed that the local political process was controlled by the dominant economic interests and had more faith in the legal system. The environmental legislation of the seventies had given them the ability to dispute important development projects on legal grounds and retard or shelve their realization.

When a group called POETS that nobody had ever heard of before, filed a lawsuit against the cutting of the riverfront trees the only person that appeared in public was B. Evans, the lawyer of the group. In the case of the South trafficway as well, their main way for battling the project was legal. According to one of its leaders, the group had engaged a number of state and federal agencies related to the project in correspondance which had given them some very strong legal grounds to sue against the construction of the trafficway. The statement of its environmental impact was mysteriously

delayed for a number of years and according to the same informant this was due to their activity.

Again in this case, the group did not appear at all. The most prominent members of the group were known activists and they were not considered to be suitable to carry on this correspondance as they could be easily discredited because of their known political views. Thus, although a large number of individuals had cooperated in the operation, the only person that publicly appeared was D. Waid, an employee of a Kansas University museum who signed the correspondance, and the operation appeared to be the initiative of a concerned citizen.[22]

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The group is against additional economic growth in Lawrence almost as a matter of principle, and its members are the most radical critics of the local establishment and the civic ideology. They believe that the growth of Lawrence has a detrimental effect on the city's quality of life and they are particularly concerned with issues of environmental degradation. The radicals however, do not have a unified ideological platform. Their's is an agreement to cooperate in action, and they are more preoccupied with political tactics and strategy than with questions of ideology.

Most members of the group participated in the student movement of the 1960's and they were influenced by the ideas of the "new left" and the "counterculture" that were prominent in most American Universities at that time.[23] They remained faithful to their youthful commitments, although experience and time has made them question some of their initial ideas.

The radicals rejected the free-enterprise system which they regarded as unjust and destructive for both individuals and the planet, and they were highly critical of the United States' international role. They viewed the American political system as generally less democratic than Western European parliamentary systems, and believed that there was not a significant difference between the policies of the two major American political parties. Some members of the group were Marxists but most were sceptical about large ideological generalizations. Most were critical of East-European communist regimes, but there remained some sympathy for the once idealized Cuban model.

They denounced the exploitative character of the economic system and the

role of the political authorities in maintaining economic inequality, but they did not attribute a special role to the working class and most of them did not believe in the existence of any kind of historical determinism. Some of them have been instrumental in the political mobilization of a small segment of the Lawrence working class, but they recognized that their ideas had only a moderate appeal to the members of this class and that most of their fellow activists were middle-class dissenters and intellectuals.

The radicals were very sensitive to issues of individual freedom and they were overt defenders of civil rights. They had taken part in "free-speech" campaigns[24] during their student years and some of them still participated in organizations with similar causes. Most radicals were supporters of the women's movement, and some of the women were actively involved in feminist organizations. Their commitment to individual freedom was also reminiscent of the countercultural and New Left rhetoric and it was often expressed in the language of "liberation" from a repressive and alienating society.[25] They generally denounced every form of coercion and most of them were pacifists and believed in the use of nonviolent political tactics.

The protection of the natural environment was one of the group's principal concerns. Most radicals were sceptical about the effects of technological advance, and believed that the degradation of the earth's natural environment was the obvious result of an attitude which valued material prosperity above anything else and regarded nature as a domain of human enterprise. They were attracted by religious ideas stressing "the unity and diversity of life" and they supported health-food stores, organic farming, and holistic medicine. To live as consistently as possible with their ideas was of the greatest importance for them. Rick Emerson and his wife, for example, did not have a television and they used their car only when absolutely necessary. Other members of the group however, did not believe that there was a necessary link between environmental degradation and the nature of modern technology and they were against growth primarily for political reasons.

7. CONCLUSION

According to the dominant civic and political ideology, economic growth is a beyond-politics community goal and the role of the city's political authorities is to encourage and facilitate it. This ideology however, as well as the complete dominance of the Chamber of Commerce in city politics, have been challenged by the controlled growth movement which has been active in Lawrence since the early seventies. The controlled growth movement of Lawrence, consisting of a grassroots network of neighbourhood associations, environmentalist and other political groups, has politicized economic development and land-use issues, opposed important growth stimulating projects, and generally had an important impact on the life of the city.

The ideology of the controlled growth movement, as expressed by its most prominent politicians, is a combination of traditional ideas of the American movement of democratic reform with the new quality-of-life and environmental concerns of the last decades. Although they recognized the importance of economic growth for the city's welfare, supporters of controlled growth demanded that growth be "natural" and "in human terms", and were sensitive to environmental issues and issues of historic preservation and neighbourhood stability. Supporters of controlled growth questioned the equation of business and community interests, were concerned with issues of economic justice, and sought to put business power in its place to serve public goals.

Moreover, there was a significant number of Lawrence's residents who opposed growth almost as a matter of principle; they were organized in a number of groups and had a distinct presence in the political life of the city. Most of the no-growth activists participated in the student movement of the sixties and have since that period focused their attention on the local level. No-growthers believed that the city's expansion served only the interests of industrialists and developers; they denied the existence of a relation between growth and progress and considered development to be responsible for the degradation of the natural environment.

NOTES

1. On two occasions (in 1975-1977 and 1987-1989) they even had the majority on the City Commission.

2. See Boyte 1980: 3-4 and 45, and Savitch and Thomas 1991: 4.

3. Bellah et al observe that dissenting views have a long history in the United States and that they are mainly expressed in action in the form of the social movement (Bellah et al 1985: 212-213). They regard social movements as a "form of citizenship" and they contrast it to social and political action channelled through political parties as happens in many European societies.

Social movements for "democratic reform" range from the populist movement of the beginning of the century (The populist movement was mainly agrarian and strongest in the Midwest and the Southwest, and Kansas was one of its strongholds) to the civil rights movement of the 1950's and 1960's. According to Bellah and other American sociologists (Boyte 1980: 27), these movements emphasized the economic and social dimensions of full citizenship, found support in the churches and other established groups, and invoked biblical and republican notions to substantiate their claims. "Politically, of course, the movements failed to do more than place limits, often fragile, on the exercise of private power. But they left a considerable legacy of experience, symbols, and the exemplary type of the movement organizer" (Bellah et al 1985: 213).

Indeed Bellah's claim is supported by my evidence from Lawrence. Although some "liberals" are members of the Democratic Party, political parties have scarcely any activity at the local level and dissenting views are mostly expressed through a multitude of organizations following their particular causes and focusing on the local level. The L.A.N. is the most important such organization but there are also various political, anti-racist, environmental, and other groups.

4. The political and organizational strategy of L.A.N. reflects the general orientations of the movement of democratic reform during the 1970's and the 1980's (Boyte 1980: 44-71).

5. Although those are problems largely of the older neighbourhoods of the city, some of the older suburbs (built in the fifties and sixties) face similar

problems and some have formed active neighbourhood associations and participated in L.A.N.

6. It is the unfolding - in the Lawrencian context - of the process that in most large U. S. cities led to the abandoning of the city centre by the middle class. (See Sennett 1974: 25-44 and Jacobs 1961: 241-317.)

7. Bellah et al distinguish this form of political involvement (1985: 181-185). See also Lynds 1929: 422, and Sennett 1977: 294-312.

8. Glen Franklin, the president of Barker Neighbourhood Association and a former city commissioner, provides an example. According to him the neighbourhood associations were not the result of a crisis caused by rapid and inconsiderate growth, but they were only created in order to absorb the federal funds allocated for the rehabilitation of target neighbourhoods in metropolitan areas across the country. Franklin was generally in favour of growth, and, according to other neighbourhood activists, he was very "anti-neighbourhood" during his 8 year term in the City Commission.

9. This is a native political term usually designating those who "seek to advance such ideeas as equality, aid to the disadvantaged, tolerance of dissenters, and social reform" (McClosky and Zaller 1984: 189).

10. O.W.L. P.A.C. initially stood for Old West Lawrence Political Action Committee and it was created by Old West Lawrence residents for the election of 1987.

11. We can read in L.A.N.'s newsletter: "In the coming months, we will elect three city commissioners from a primary field of fifteen. I am sure each of them has the best intentions for our city and the winners will do their best. L.A.N. will continue to be objective and will not endorse any candidates . . . It will be hard to convince the press and community that L.A.N. will not endorse candidates in this election. There will be the inevitable confusion with O.W.L. P.A.C., since they also deal with neighbourhood issues. Also, many L.A.N. leaders will act as individuals in support of O.W.L. P.A.C. You all have that right and we encourage your support for that great cause. But let us each continue to advocate the independence of L.A.N. in politics" (C. Howard).

12. Mark Carpenter was the most charismatic and articulate neighbourhood politician. Carpenter, who worked as a supervisor for the university, was elected to the City Commission in 1987 for two years. He was widely

supported by L.A.N. members, and because of his firm stand he had gained the approval and support of even the most radical activists and the almost total enmity of the local establishment. Carpenter, who was married and had two children, was a long-term neighbourhood activist in Lawrence but also a regular member of the First Methodist Church.

13. The quotes are from an interview with John Durbin in a Kansas City newspaper, in June 1990. Durbin is the most important Lawrence developer. See also "Success" in chapter 4.

14. Jay Burns is another prominent neighbourhood politician who was elected to the City Commission in 1987 for 4 years. Burns held a middle-managerial position in the university and had come to Lawrence from a smaller Kansas town. He shared most of Carpenters's views, and became more outspoken after 1989 when he remained the only pro-neighbourhood politician on the Commission. Burns, like most neighbourhood politicians, had few and mostly formal relations with the civic clubs/Chamber of Commerce circles, although, apart from his political commitments, he was also active in civic organizations such as the Habitat for Humanity and the Folk Dance Society.

15. This was often part of the dominant public rhetoric. See also Wuthnow 1988: 291, Mascotte 1982: 220, and Illich 1973: 22.

16. See note 3.

17. The control of bureaucratic power is a common objective of neighbourhood movements across the country (Boyte 1980: 26).

18. For a brilliant analysis of the relations between "alien experts" and elected community boards see Vidich and Bensman 1968: 186-197. My evidence confirms their analysis. Harold Gleason, whom I presented in chapter 5, was a close friend of the Lawrence city manager. He told me: "I think he was a political genius, and I had a long association with him and found him to be very effective. He had an ability to be very tough and occasionally would have his own personal axe to grind on matters that he thought were important and he could be a very formidable opponent. But on the other hand, he had the ability to get things done and he knew where all the levers were and he knew how to do it in such a way that he wouldn't create too many enemies along the way. He was very skillful in keeping his fences mended. He had the ability to say no to people without having them decide

to try to get him out of office. He was a good listener, he kept his fingers on the pulse of the community. He was very able at working with the city council and in persuading them of what they ought to do."

19. Gleason also told me: "If you take a layman off the streets that gets elected to the City Commission, it probably would take him several years before he is knowledgable enough about the operations of the city to be able to make decisions, so he really in a way is at the mercy of a good city manager. I think it's very difficult for laymen to be elected to public office and to effectively be able to make any changes when they are confronted with a professional bureaucracy that's highly trained not only in the subject matter but in dealing with and manipulating boards."

20. In December 1989, the Kansas Supreme Court ruled that the Douglas County Commission exceeded its authority in issuing $4 million in general obligation bonds for the South Lawrence trafficway without first holding a public vote. This decision made a referendum on the issue inevitable but a date had not been set by the end of my fieldwork in June 1990.

21. See Goodin 1992: 156-168.

22. Waid does not socialize with the group and I've seen him only once very briefly. To undertake this responsibility one has to be very decided. A couple of Chamber of Commerce officials called the director of the museum where he works and asked him to arrange a meeting between the four of them because his employee "jeopardizes the future of Lawrence". The director refused but my informant said that the Chamber exerted pressure on him by cutting the funds of the museum.

23. See Diggins 1992: 218-276.

24. Free-speech movements were organized in the sixties in many American universities to rally students to the cause of the First Amendment and the right to collect funds and engage in political advocacy on behalf of civil rights organizations (Diggins, 1992: 249).

25. See Goodin 1992: 74, and Diggins 1992: 235.

CONCLUSION OF PART TWO

The second part of the thesis has been concerned with issues of social and political ideology and has focused mainly on Lawrence city politics. As we have seen, the political life of Lawrence is characterized by considerable conflict, which is primarily related to the rate and the quality of the city's economic growth. We also saw that despite the existence of significant opposition, the supporters of growth have dominated the Lawrence City Commission during the last decades, and have led the city to continuous economic and population expansion. In the conclusion I will summarize my informants' views on economic growth and focus more particularly on the question of growth's nature and legitimacy.

With few exceptions, mainly among the intellectuals and the members of radical political and religious groups, most of my informants were in favour of economic growth. Whatever their other differences might have been, whether they were religious or atheists, civic-minded or more absorbed in the private realm, politically active or not interested in politics, most informants regarded economic development as self-evidently positive. The local political conflict over Lawrence's expansion was to some extent reflected in my informants' opinions, although the majority of middle-class Lawrencians had only limited interest in local politics and regarded growth as a more or less autonomous process beyond the control of any one individual or group.

Most of the informants that I met in the milieu of the civic organizations and presented in chapter 5 identified economic growth with social progress. Growth was seen as an inherent characteristic of human nature and an inevitable outcome of social evolution. Society was thought by those informants to be in a constant state of flux and evolutionary change from lower to superior forms of social existence. Economic growth signified continuous advancement and improvement in all areas of human endeavour, and it was considered as ultimately leading to the improvement of human nature itself. Growth may be demanding, problematic or even painful but should not be feared. It should be rather regarded as a positive challenge containing the potential for progressive change.

The unprecedented material prosperity attained in the United States was seen by those informants as an almost self-evident justification for growth. Development, it was argued, has permitted increasing segments of the population to attain previously unthinkable levels of prosperity, has created new choices and new possibilities, and has improved and enriched human life in innumerable ways. There was little nostalgia for the past, and growth was considered necessary for the fulfilment of the needs of an increasing population.

In the discourse of those informants, growth is intrinsically related to scientific and technological advances.[1] Such advances were overwhelmingly regarded as beneficial in themselves and offered perhaps the most important justification for the economic system. Under the present system, it was argued, humankind has expanded the frontiers of thought and has developed technologies far beyond the point that anyone could have dared to predict, much less hope for. The astonishing scientific and technological accomplishments of the last decades especially provided informants with "an objective proof of the existence of progress,"[2] and were believed to have contributed more to the improvement of human life than centuries of earlier human history.

Moreover, most informants from the milieu of the civic organizations believed that the process of economic, scientific and technological development does not only lead to the consolidation of increasing levels of welfare, but also to the continuous discovery of solutions to the emerging problems. Although some informants expressed apprehension about what appeared as the negative consequences of growth, most were optimistic about the future. When confronted, for instance, with the problem of environmental degradation, most informants from the mileu of the civic organizations pointed to the inconclusiveness of scientific evidence and expressed their faith in the ability of modern science and technology to provide a permanent solution to the problem.

It is important to note that many informants did not have articulate positions on questions of growth and progress and were not particularly concerned with them. Problems appeared to be of such a scale and complexity that they escaped their grasp, and they were uncertain about their causes and effects and unwilling to make general statements about them. They were

more concerned with adapting to a situation that seemed inevitable and overwhelming rather than trying to make moral and intellectual sense of it.

But, as we saw, there was a considerable number of Lawrence's residents who opposed what they saw as "indiscriminate and uncontrolled growth" and were in favour of "controlled growth." The supporters of controlled growth did not by definition identify growth with progress, and they were concerned with the distribution of wealth, and the impact of new growth on the stability of Lawrence's neighbourhoods and the environment. They stressed the need for historic preservation and believed that new developments should not indiscriminately destroy the old, and be allowed to disrupt the social life of the community.

Supporters of controlled growth however, clearly distinguished themselves from those who were against growth altogether, and regarded economic growth as a natural and necessary function of every community. Although they stressed the need to control and guide development, they also believed that growth was an inherent characteristic of human nature and an inevitable result of social evolution. They generally considered economic development to be beneficial for society and had a strong faith in the ability of science and technology to improve human life and provide solutions to the existing problems.

Finally, there was a significant number of individuals and groups who were against growth altogether. Some of them opposed development for primarily political reasons and shared the faith of other informants in science and technology. Most informants from this milieu however, questioned the necessity of further growth, and were sceptical about the effects of technological advance on social relations and the natural environment. The degradation of the earth's environment in particular was considered to be a problem of great urgency and magnitude, and they believed that a permanent solution to this problem required a radical change of the political and economic system and of the ideas and expectations of individuals.

NOTES

1. For data showing the firm faith of the majority of Americans in science and technology see Wuthnow 1988: 280-296.

2. Wolin 1983: 6.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study has mainly concentrated on the examination of the kinship and political ideology of a predominantly middle-class sample of informants from Lawrence, Kansas. The views of my informants on both topics of my study were very diverse. In kinship, opinions were divided between traditional and alternative models, whereas the political conflict was related to the rate and quality of the city's economic growth. Most of my informants did not perceive a relation between kinship and political ideology, and attitudes towards the family were differently combined with political ideas. Those who supported economic growth took a plurality of positions on kinship matters and the same is largely true for their political opponents. In the concluding remarks I present the most important combinations.

A large percentage of the supporters of economic growth were influenced by alternative models of kinship relations. Indeed, there are important analogies between the two ideological domains. Those informants were usually optimistic about the future and identified economic development with social progress. They had a strong faith in the ability of science and technology to help people attain higher levels of prosperity, and to provide solutions to the existing problems. At the level of political discourse therefore, the relations between human beings and their natural environment are perceived to be dynamic and asymetrical. The place of human beings is not to accept their fate fatalistically but to conquer and control nature.

The same conception of the relation between human beings and nature is also evident in their kinship ideology. Informants who combined a pro-growth political ideology with alternative views on kinship relations usually regarded the kinship system to be in transition. The rules of the traditional kinship model appeared as social conventions destined to fulfil the needs of a bygone era, and they were not regarded as immutable. New social conditions impose new requirements, and scientific and technological advances open up new possibilities and lead to the discovery of better ways for the arrangement of kinship relations.

But there is also another similarity: the value of individual autonomy is central in both kinship and political ideology. These informants were firm advocates of the political and economic freedoms of American society and believed that the United States was the freest country in the world. Progress was regarded as a result of freedom, and economic growth was seen as a process enhancing individual choice. The value of individual autonomy is also central in alternative kinship models. Informants influenced by those ideologies regarded the rules of the traditional model as absurd and repressive and they were generally ambivalent about kinship obligation. Although they recognized some responsibility towards close kin, they also stressed the right of every individual to break important commitments (such as the marital one) and determine his or her relationships with even close kin on the basis of personal selection.

But a significant percentage of the supporters of growth had traditional views on kinship matters. Such informants were usually found in Christian milieux, and there are again important analogies between the two ideological domains. American democracy was seen as the regime that is most consistent with Christianity, and its political and economic institutions were believed to be founded on biblical principles. Although those informants were firm advocates of the political, economic, and religious freedoms guaranteed by the American Constitution, they also stressed the need to combine individual freedom with responsibility and concern for other members of society. Kinship relations were also seen as governed by immutable principles, and the fulfilment of familial obligation was related to the teachings of the Judeo-Christian tradition. The ideal was for each member of the family to be respected as a "unique individual", but individuality was only encouraged within certain limits, and the obligation towards relatives was firmly stressed. There was however an important "inconsistency" in their ideology. Although those informants were usually in favour of scientific and technological progress and conceived the relations between human beings and nature as dynamic, they exempted kinship relations from this general rule, and believed that they were governed by immutable laws founded on natural facts.

A plurality of combinations between kinship and political ideology is also evident among the opponents of growth. Although some supporters of

controlled growth had traditional views on kinship matters, most informants from this milieu were influenced by alternative kinship ideologies. Supporters of controlled growth were particularly responsive to alternative kinship ideologies for two reasons. Firstly, those informants were firm supporters of individual liberties and tended to appreciate the respect of individual autonomy shown by alternative kinship ideologies. They were usually in favour of women's rights and against discrimination on the basis of a person's sexual preference, and believed that kinship relations are private matters that should be determined by the individuals concerned themselves. Moreover, those informants did not usually believe in the existence of unalterable laws of kinship relations. Although they were more concerned about historic and environmental preservation than their political opponents, they also believed in scientific, technological and social progress, and regarded the rules of the kinship system as social constructions amenable to change.

Most of the supporters of no-growth, finally, were influenced by alternative kinship ideologies, despite their scepticism towards growth and progress, although there were also some political radicals who criticized what they perceived as the family mores of a consumerist society, and had rediscovered for themselves the traditional family values of their parents.

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