

**ROCKY TOP, ROCKY ROAD, SOLID ROCK:
Thirty Years of Intellectual History at the Federal Executive Institute**

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(ABSTRACT)

The Federal Executive Institute (FEI) was created in 1968 by Executive Order from President Johnson, stating the need for establishing “a center for advanced study for executives in the upper echelons of the Civil Service.” It was common in the early years for FEI to provide life changing, “rocky top” experiences. Since that time, the FEI has traveled down a rocky road, through efforts to disband, attempts to privatize, and flurries of criticism. It has emerged with a “back to basics curriculum” and a mission founded on what is seen as a the solid rock of the Constitution and an emphasis of each executive’s role within that Constitutional system. The intellectual history of FEI, including its creation, curriculum, and leadership and how they have developed and changed over time, suggests this key question: how does FEI decide to teach what (and how) it teaches? This answer has varied; at times, the institution was shaped by strong directors; at other times, key political actors and faculty members. There were times of great environmental turbulence and threat, when the very existence of the FEI was in jeopardy. Although the intellectual streams may have diverged, the FEI community rallied to ensure survival. They have indeed survived, and while not the same institution founded in 1968, still maintain their niche for educating “the best of the best.”

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The year 1998 marks the 30th Anniversary of the Federal Executive Institute (FEI), an organization considered by many to be the premiere program for federal executive development. FEI has graduated more than 14,000 federal executives since its first class in 1968, and almost 2,000 now belong to the active FEI Alumni Association. Designed to be a training institute of executive development for high-level government managers, the FEI was established by President Johnson in 1968 after several years of study by the U.S. Civil Service Commission. Johnson's Executive Order called for establishing "a center for advanced study for executives in the upper echelons of the Civil Service." During the past thirty years¹, FEI has weathered storms yet emerged strong and vibrant.

This dissertation will take you on that journey. Imagine being on a path, a most glorious, beautiful path. As you reach the top, your mouth falls open at the sight of your new discovery. You never imagined such a place existed, much less that it would be accessible to you. While feeling a peace and serenity unlike anything you've ever experienced, you are thinking about all the possibilities that must exist from this experience. Suddenly you are discovered in that place, with people telling you that you don't belong there, that this is a place reserved for others. They tell you not to worry, however, that they will bring you to a new place, the right place, a place where you belong, where it will be safe for you. They take you to a place that *feels* the same, but deep in your heart you know it will never be the same. Paradise lost once again.

FEI was designed to be a benchmark organization, unique and cutting edge. It sought to provide life changing, "rocky top" experiences, to get the executives to expand beyond their comfort zones and learn about themselves, who and what they wanted to be, and how to make it happen. It was designed to challenge the executives, to push them to reach new heights, to go for the zenith, to have an epiphany experience. Its programs were cutting edge not only for the federal government, but for executive development generally.

By the end of the 1970s, however, FEI was traveling down a "rocky road." Although it was still establishing itself, it faced flurries of criticism, and efforts by others to disband or

privatize it. These jiggers and thorns, mostly the result of specific incursions into the affairs of the agency through the venue of politically appointed individuals, threatened its existence and caused it to make changes merely to ensure its survival. Some changes were programmatic, others were intellectual.

The path led them to the “solid rock.” They emerged committed to a “back to basics¹” curriculum, with a core foundation and firm structure. Although there were Constitutional elements in the program throughout, the program now focused on the executives and their role within a constitutional system. The program became structured and predictable.

The path was not always clear or self-directing. There were many individuals and organizations along the way who shaped FEI for the future; while this may seem like an obvious observation, it is critical for understanding a public institution like FEI, one that is involved in training “the best of the best” for government service. Executives do not operate as leaders within a vacuum; likewise, management and executive development training programs do not operate within a vacuum. Therefore, while the official policy set for educational programs may be one of neutrality, environmental influences inevitably play a role in establishing and directing the theories and philosophies utilized in developing programs for public administration executives at the Federal Executive Institute.

This dissertation will answer these questions about this role: What are those influences? Are they mainly social, political, or cultural? Are the influences external or internal to the organization? Are the programs political and biased? Do they shift priorities with changing administrations? When government establishes formal executive programs for developing managerial, administrative and executive skills, it is important to know whether the training philosophy chosen is appropriate to this end or has become implicated and muddled in the political process and/or other influences.

¹ The “back to basics curriculum” did not mean back to the original concepts of the FEI; rather, it meant the core truths found in the Constitution and what those meant to executives operating in a constitutional system. This was to be their grounding; everything else in the program would build on that foundation.

This project seeks to take the reader along the path of that process. It is a narrative history, viewed from both inside and outside the experience. This perspective best reveals the influences and their role (if any) in shaping FEI's executive training programs.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

It is important to establish at the beginning what this study is and is not designed to do. It is not a complete, historical account of the Federal Executive Institute. While drawing on history to set the context for the study, it does not provide a comprehensive institutional history. Instead, the focus is on the development specifically of the *intellectual* history of FEI. By utilizing a narrative description of the events, programs, and people involved in FEI's history, we are able to discern the forces directing the flow of the intellectual stream running through FEI.

This study also strictly focuses only on the core program at FEI, *Leadership for a Democratic Society*. While FEI holds workshops and other follow-up training programs (and these will be discussed later), the purpose of this project is to understand the formulation, development, and transformation of only its central theme program over its thirty-year history.

It is also helpful to develop a few definitions. There are basically two models of executive learning: training and education. *Training* is done to us or what we do to someone else, whereas *learning* is something we do for ourselves (Galbraith and McGrath, 1997). *Training* further infers that what is taught is tested in terms of how it "helps" or is relevant to the organization, as determined by those within the leadership of that organization. Standards, expectations and rewards are set and constant; payoff is in the present; and the bottom-line focus is on solving the immediate problems of the organization. *Education*, on the other hand, infers that what is taught is tested in terms of *the learner's* growth and development, with the objectives having been established largely by the learner. Motivation to and responsibilities for learning are thus on the learner, with a focus on preparing the individual to deal with a future that is ambiguous and ever-changing. The bottom line focus in education is on increasing the individual's "long-term capacity to cope." *Executive development*, therefore, is the development of the organization's leaders, so that the strategic development of the whole company follows

(Wertz, 1996).

As we study the role of education versus training in this research, we will find that both of these areas have been relevant within the historical context of the Federal Executive Institute. The emphasis on *learning* has caused tension between being learner-based versus prescriptive; an emphasis on *education* has caused tension between behavioralism and political science/constitutionalism within FEI's program.

For this reason, we will study FEI's history based on three threads: context, content, and process. *Context* provides the setting surrounding the development and/or dissemination of the information. *Content* focuses on the subject matter or body of knowledge present (or implied) in the program. *Process* indicates the methods used for transferring content. The intellectual catalysts will guide the analysis.

While these definitions have been provided, and though every effort has been made to maintain consistency, it is necessary to indicate that these terms may be used on occasion interchangeably, generally because they were utilized in that manner by the source. With this proviso in mind, I believe the reader will be able to discern the true meaning and spirit from the context.

METHODOLOGY

There are two lenses appropriate for studying the intellectual history of an organization. The first is *reflective*, a study of the institutional history held in its archives, and in the memories of its people. The second way is *participative*, to become involved with the institution, enroll in its programs, attend its meetings. In a case study, research focuses on a given question in considerable detail, typically using a number of data collection methods, such as document analysis, personal interviews, and observation (Johnson and Joslyn, 1995). Yin (1989) defines the case study as an empirical inquiry that (1) investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when (2) the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which (3) multiple sources of evidence are used. In order to understand FEI's history as a case study, I have utilized three methodologies. The first two,

document research and in-depth interviewing, utilizes the reflective lense. The third method, observation, utilizes the participative lense. These methods provided a means to discover the true intellectual history behind this institution.

Document Research

The sociology of knowledge framework is helpful for the process of document research. Unfortunately, FEI has never had a formal historian so, while most of the documents have been saved, they have not been saved in any organized fashion. Several key sets of documents were examined for this study:

1. *Founding materials.* There are many historical records documenting the founding of FEI. These communications outline the purpose and mission behind FEI, how the site was chosen, how the seminars were to be structured, etc.
2. *Bulletins.* Bulletins are produced annually outlining the program, courses, faculty, etc., similar to the bulletins produced at colleges and universities. With the exception of just a few years, the bulletins are available for each year since the inception of FEI. The Bulletins were useful in establishing the foci for each of the programs. Many also provided useful information on the background specialties of the FEI faculty.²
3. *Evaluations.* There have been several FEI audits performed by the U.S. Civil Service Commission. Copies are on file for audits in 1969 and 1971.
4. *Course listings.* Program notebooks are on microfiche from the first FEI program up to Program 143, with hard copies maintained from then up to the present.

These listings provide written documentation of the actual intellectual content of

² For example, in 1968-69 there were two faculty members with backgrounds in political science, two in public administration, one in international affairs, one in counseling psychology, one in organizational psychology, and one in education. In 1988, these numbers had changed to four in management sciences, two in political science, one in history/political science, one in administrative behavior, and one in economics. In 1998, there are only four regular faculty members; one has a degree in educational administration, one in adult and continuing education, one in political science, and one in organizational behavior.

the programs conducted at FEI and how they may have changed over time.

5. *Anniversary Symposium materials.* There have been several large symposiums organized around FEI anniversaries. The first symposium was FEI's Dedication in 1968. There was also a 10th Anniversary in 1978, a 20th Anniversary in 1988, and most recently the 25th Anniversary Symposium in 1993. These symposium materials contain articles written and presented by former faculty members, directors, alumni, etc.³
6. *Articles.* There has been a myriad of articles written about the FEI and published in journals such as Training and Development, Public Personnel Management, The Bureaucrat, and Government Executive.

All of these resources have been invaluable to the study at hand. FEI was quite generous in allowing me full access to these documents.

Personal Interviews

The document research was supplemented by utilizing in-depth interviewing to talk with many individuals who were instrumental in developing and shaping FEI. I accomplished my goal of meeting with all past (and current) directors in person, as well as many key initial, past, and present faculty members, and other individuals involved in FEI's history. Listed below are the individuals who spoke with me either in person or by phone:

Directors: Frank Sherwood, Chet Newland, Tom Murphy, Pat Conklin, Bob Matsen, Michael Hansen, Dee Henderson and Curt Smith.

Asst. Director: Pam Gwin

Faculty: Jim Colvard, Ed Jones, Allen Hard, Chong Pak, Larry Kirkhart, Michael Harmon, Rich Collins, Ralph Bledsoe, Bob Gest, Bob Maranto, Terry Newell, Jim Roberts and Linda Winner

³ Plans are currently being made for the celebration of FEI's 30th Anniversary in October 1998.

<i>FEI Alumni:</i>	Bruce Johnson, Jack Winder, Paul Lorentzen
<i>CSC/OPM:</i>	Scotty Campbell, Don Devine, Connie Horner
<i>Other:</i>	Laurin Henry (UVA liaison to FEI during founding)

My list of people to contact expanded exponentially throughout the research on this project. They provided invaluable information for this research. Their stories and insights brought meaning and understanding, humanizing FEI.

These interviews were critical to gaining a full understanding of FEI's intellectual history. To get the most out of the interviews, it was important to begin with a clear idea of what I was looking for. I utilized in-depth interviewing as a way of getting the interviewees to provide discovery and understanding on this issue. It was necessary to have a framework for looking at a standard picture across the years. While interviewing the current and previous directors, my introduction to them encompassed the following⁴:

As an intellectual history of FEI, my study is attempting to determine the sources of the theories and philosophies that FEI has utilized over the years in developing their training programs. I would maintain that FEI Directors may have brought some of this with them. I'm therefore interested in finding out several things. When you came to FEI, was one of your motives to institute a specific vision or model of executive development? Were there certain philosophies or theories from your previous education or training that you felt important to executive development? How are programs designed? How much leverage did faculty have in setting the learning philosophies for their courses? Did you ask participants, through methods such as focus groups or surveys, what they felt FEI should be teaching? Have other units of government expressed interest in having input in developing your programs? How is it determined which programs will be retained and offered again? Were there other environmental (social, political, or otherwise) influences on FEI's operation or training philosophy?

In addition to interviewing previous directors, I also interviewed several former and current faculty members for their input:

⁴ The actual guidelines utilized during the interviews can be found in Appendix B.

As an intellectual history of FEI, my study is attempting to determine the sources of the theories and philosophies that FEI has utilized over the years in developing their training programs. I am interested in understanding how much control you have over the content of your courses. It will be helpful to understand some about your training and background, and whether you were recruited for or applied to a particular position. In addition, how much “academic freedom” do you have in preparing the content for your course(s)?

The task at hand, then, was to document the nexus of these two relationships — the endogenous and exogenous, the internal and external. This was partially accomplished by asking, particularly the directors, how they see this mix, what their perspective is, and what exactly they perceive that mix to be. In studying the intellectual content of the curriculum at FEI, it was important to determine where those ideas came from — how much influence did the faculty members have on course development? How much did their background (political science, public administration, etc.) affect their planning and program design? How much control did the program coordinators have over the program content? How were programs developed and designed?

The in-depth interviewing methodology has been outlined in a recent book by John Chirban, Interviewing in Depth: The Interactive Relational Approach (Sage, 1996). This procedure transforms the *interview* into a procedure to discover the interviewee’s *inner* view — in so doing, the central task becomes one of comprehending the essence of an individual, his or her emotions, motivations and needs. Chirban asserts that the problem with most interviews is that they are reduced to a fact-finding venture, a scientific method which emphasizes the collection of empirical data but lacks vitality and fails to reveal insights by completely disregarding the inherent human dimension. Formally structured questionnaires are awkward and actually become obstacles — Chirban is not saying that we should not prepare questions in advance, but rather that those questions should be woven directly into the course of the relationship that is developed during the process of the interview. In so doing, he finds that the interviewees tend to speak more candidly by wondering, reflecting and actually making their own discoveries during the interview. Following along with our sociology of knowledge

understanding, Chirban reminds us that interviewers approach interviewing differently based on how they understand themselves or their roles, and that “in the final analysis, one’s person, more than one’s theory or technique, allows one to see another person” (Chirban, 1996). The interview goes beyond being a two-way interaction, to the creation of a new relationship where both participants have entered a new space “engaging collaboratively in a reciprocal manner” because this new relationship has provided a setting where true, authentic dialogue can occur (Chirban, 1996). Basically, Chirban’s approach can be outlined in the following table:

The Interactive-Relational Approach⁵

KEY FACTORS	ELEMENTS	RESULTS
<i>Self-awareness</i>	— access to interviewers’ feelings, disposition — self-knowledge — differentiating needs, motives, perspectives	Engenders self-confidence
<i>Authenticity</i>	— recognizing values, beliefs, convictions — openness — monitoring roles, professionalism, genuine communication	Promotes a genuine exchange of thoughts and feelings
<i>Attunement</i>	— attending — extending	Enables interviewer to enter the world of the interviewee
<i>Personal characteristics</i>	— individual characteristics shared — characteristics enhance, resonate interviewee	Understanding of how the interviewer’s characteristics, beliefs, and values have a significant and unique impact on the interviewee
<i>New relationship</i>	— new shared space — exploring one’s history — exploring one’s motives	Encourages an open and genuine discussion

As with a sociology of knowledge understanding, one’s personal attributes, values, and commitments have a significant effect on the interview. Furthermore, the interviewer must be aware of his/her own role in developing the relationship during the interview, watching for opportunities, or moments, presented during an interview that can lead to greater understanding

⁵ This table was prepared from comments and statements presented in Chirban’s book, pages xv and 3-7.

and connectedness and enhance communication.

For the interviewing to be successful, it was necessary to establish a free-flow process, where the relationship was built to allow the interviewee to feel at ease. As they relaxed and were drawn into the interview, I encouraged them to reflect at will about their experiences with FEI. This self-directed reflection often allowed them to remember things they hadn't remembered earlier; many times I heard the comment, "Oh, that makes me think of something else" The process worked extremely well with those individuals from FEI's past; it was a little more work with individuals currently attached to FEI, which is understandable because they have a greater stake in the impression that may be given about the contemporary FEI.

Observation

The third and final method I utilized for understanding the Federal Executive Institute was personal experience. I attended the majority of the sessions during Program 230 from April 6 through May 2, 1997. This experience supplemented the historical research and interviews by giving me a first-hand understanding of the FEI mission and how it is put into practice during their program.

Ron Stupak wrote in 1992 that he was writing his symposium discussion paper as a "participant-observer" — he had been a senior faculty member, had filled in as Associate Director for Programs, and was a student executive participant as a Ford Foundation Fellow in Session 15 at the Federal Executive Institute. He echoed Carl Jung's warning that "perception is probably 90% projection," yet he added, "I'm also aware that today in the 'halls of academe' we hear too much from the uninvolved researcher and 'objective' commentator points of view and not enough from the reflective practitioners themselves and/or the Mannheimian praxis perspective." This was my role during this final part.

Although I attended the majority of the sessions, I was not allowed to participate on an Executive Learning Team and so unfortunately felt left out of what many feel is the key to the FEI experience. In addition, there was at least one participant who took it upon herself to remind me on occasion of who I was and who I was not. I took notes during the courses and sessions I attended and tried to get feedback from participants in those which I did not attend. I

also kept a journal throughout the four weeks of my experiences, what they meant to me (both personally and professionally), and what my impressions were of the program and the specific courses I attended. So, since part of the FEI (as with any other) experience depends on where one sits, my experiences are somewhat different from the other participants. Yet, I still have an appreciation for how I felt going through the program, what the sessions meant to me, how they made me feel, and what changes I made after being part of that experience. These experiences will be shared in Chapter Six.

To understand FEI's intellectual history, it is important to first understand — and appreciate — the external and internal contexts within which it is operating at any given time. At any point in time, the external context — the socio-cultural-historical-political environment — both affects an institution and must be responded to by that institution. At the same time, the internal context — the curriculum, philosophy and training methods — are all created and driven from the minds of the people who compose it and are therefore shaped by their specific backgrounds, philosophy, and education.

The sociology of knowledge framework proves useful as a foundation for studying an organization's intellectual history. This framework has as its core hypothesis that even accepted truths are to be held socially accountable, and to be related to the historical social context in which they emerged (Merton, 1957). The term “sociology of knowledge” actually comes from the word *Wissenssoziologie*, which roughly translates as the “content of what is in fact known” in the intellectual tradition of social philosophy (Simonds, 1978). McCarthy (1997) relates this concept to American pragmatism (Mills, 1939 & 1940; Mead, 1910), because “sociology of knowledge offers pragmatism a social and historical field within which human experience and acts have their genesis; pragmatism offers sociology the precise terms and dynamics whereby social factors, in the form of ideas, beliefs, and knowledge, becomes intrinsic to mind.”

In any sociology of knowledge there are three crucial areas which are relatively separated: the social realm, the knowledge, and the relationship which are held to exist between these two. These three areas provided a reference point for the framework developed and

utilized for this research, in order to examine one particular organization on a more intimate level by examining its intellectual history. Each time period is analyzed based on context (“the social realm”), intellectual catalysts (“the knowledge”), and institutional effects (“the relationship”).

This framework was developed as a trilogy that would incorporate the main elements of the sociology of knowledge framework. The *context* explains the environmental circumstances that set the stage for the *intellectual catalysts*, who would be responsible for guiding the intellectual development of the FEI; *institutional effects* examines what those developments were and how they impacted the FEI. *Context* therefore includes an examination of areas such as program conditions, participants, program administration, faculty, program materials, objectives, agenda, and explicit or implicit leadership concepts of program context. *Intellectual Catalysts* determines who during that time period has had the most impact on FEI’s intellectual history. *Institutional Effects* builds on those first two areas, examining first, content and second, process. *Content* examines the content subject matter, relevance of program materials, use of diagnostic instruments, and the content’s consistency with program objectives — again with an understanding of the explicit or implicit leadership concept of the program content.⁶ *Process* includes the design of the program, faculty, methods, program structure, use of feedback, and the explicit or implicit leadership concept of the program process.⁷

In order for this study to be effective, it was critical to look beyond the mere facts of FEI’s history. While an important piece of the puzzle, it was not enough to study the impetus for its creation and its directors and changes over time. It became imperative to search also for the intellectual and social origins underlying its birth, growth and development. Societies, institutions and organizations are not merely collections of facts and dates, but rather the meanings and interpretations of context within and outside of those bodies. Everything we

⁶ As we will see in the research, FEI has struggled over the years between two polars of behavioralism and constitutionalism/political science.

⁷ Within the realm of process, one school says that people who are learners will be the best judge of what they need; the other school says that we know best what they need to know.

study, whether an analysis of belief, knowledge, discourse, culture, or texts, must be interpreted in a double sense — first, at face value, as the document itself; and second, below the surface, as an expression with inductive meaning. As compared to a book, what may be puzzling or obscure about a particular section or chapter within that book becomes clearer and better understood once the entire argument becomes known; at the same time, the entire argument is actually made familiar by the cumulative effect of those chapters and sections which together make up the book. Knowledge develops within its context — we cannot speak of the real except within its paradigmatic community.

Merton's (1957) framework for understanding through the sociology of knowledge takes on pertinence under a specific web of social and cultural conditions. The study must be *primarily concerned with the relations between knowledge and the other existential factors in the society and culture* (Merton, 1957). Through the sociology of knowledge, therefore, we are able to deconstruct events, comments, beliefs and ideas to re-examine them within their context so as to get a sense of their “real” meaning.

Merton (1957) establishes the following paradigm for the sociology of knowledge:

1. *Where is the existential basis of mental productions located?*
 - a. *Social bases:* social position, class, generation, occupational role, mode of production, group structures (university, bureaucracy, academies, sects, political parties), “historical situation,” interests, society, ethnic affiliation, social mobility, power structure, social processes (competition, conflict, etc.).
 - b. *Cultural bases:* values, ethos, climate of opinion, Volksgeist, Zeitgeist, type of culture, cultural mentality, Weltanschauungen, etc.
2. *What mental productions are being sociologically analyzed?*
 - a. *Spheres of:* moral beliefs, ideologies, ideas, the categories of thought, philosophy, religious beliefs, social norms, positive science, technology, etc.
 - b. *Which aspects are analyzed:* their selection (foci of attention), level of abstraction, presuppositions (what is taken as data and what as

problematical), conceptual content, models of verification, objectives of intellectual activity, etc.

Mannheim's and Merton's studies have been revitalized by Swidler and Ardit (1994) who have outlined the New Sociology of Knowledge. Whereas the older version asked how the social location of individuals and groups shapes their knowledge, Swidler and Ardit believe it "had lost a concern with the social sources of knowledge and political ideologies, as well as neglected the society of intellectuals." This new sociology of knowledge examines political and religious ideologies, and cultural and organizational discourses with the following structure:

1. Social authority shapes the authoritativeness of knowledge, affecting both the authority knowledge can effectively claim and the forms that knowledge claims can take.
2. Distinctions, social and intellectual, are made along lines of social differentiation, particularly hierarchical ones.
3. Shifts in the media through which knowledge is transmitted, especially the transition to print, have dramatic effects on the entire organization of knowledge systems.
4. To explain why new knowledge emerges and to account for the social effects of ideas, scholars need to pay careful attention to factors that directly affect the institutions and actors that produce and distribute knowledge.
5. Analysis of how the social location of actors affects their knowledge must account for the constitution of actors themselves.
6. Knowledge and power are intimately related because power allows people to enact realities that make their knowledge plausible.

McCarthy (1996) supports Berger and Luckmann's (1966) argument that "reality and knowledges are reciprocally related and socially generated." The sociology of knowledge serves "a vital need" by discovering the consequences that knowledges have in politics and in people's public and private lives. Sociology of knowledge as a method is used for examining the

changing and conflicting interpretations of contemporary events ... how objects of public attention arise ... how social problems come to be defined ... finally asking, whose knowledge should decide? McCarthy (1996) explains that this method allows us to comprehend the following: first, how individuals think within the particular social context in which they live; second, how thinking and consciousness are inherited from particular social and historical contexts; and third, how collective dispositions decisively provide the social objects accessible to human beings.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Federal Executive Institute was founded in 1968 as a training institute of executive development for high-level government managers. “Executive development” has been defined by Tipple (1992) as “those activities and experiences which are planned and executed in an effort to help top organizational members better lead their organizations.” He further delineates three common elements concerning what executive development programs do:

1. They service only those currently in, or soon to be in, top organizational positions.
2. They take place outside the routine of the normal “on the job” experiences, causing executives to take time away from their normal duties in order to participate.
3. They utilize a generalist perspective, which operates from the organizational level rather than the more limited, functional perspective operating at the technical level.

These three elements are all present in FEI’s design and structure. The program seeks upper-level civil servants (originally designed for SES only); takes place outside their routine and home location; and seeks to provide generalist leadership perspectives.

Tipple (1992) further delineates three streams in executive development. The first of these streams would be developing an understanding of *the primary players* in the literature, specifically the participants, the organizations, and the executive development program administrators. Studying organizations is necessary because it provides us with an understanding of the importance and role of executive development. Themes identified by Tipple include culture (Deal and Kennedy, 1982; Smirchich, 1983; Schein, 1985), power (Kanter, 1979), strategy (Porter, 1980; Hamel and Prahalad, 1989), environment (Thompson, 1967; Wamsley and Zald, 1973), decision making processes (Simon, 1957; Center for Creative

Leadership, 1988), organizational development (French et al., 1978; Huse, 1980), ethics (Gutmann and Thompson, 1984), and TQM (Deming, 1986; Crosby, 1979).

The second stream of literature focuses on *relevant learning processes and educational influences*. There is a large amount of diversity in both what, and how, participants learn. Before agreeing on learning methods, we must agree on learning objectives, which can be broad and simplistic. We have begun to accept that the traditional understanding of learning with the teacher as expert and the student as passive recipient, is no longer appropriate or useful. We also find studies in this area about types of learning methods — case studies, experience-based models, even the role and effect of the physical location and conditions for learning. Knowles (1980) explained that “the very purpose of education — in an era of knowledge explosion, technological revolution, and a social policy of equality of educational opportunity — in the world of the future we must define the mission of education as to produce *competent* people — people who are able to apply their knowledge under changing conditions; and we know that the foundational competence all people must have is the competence to engage in lifelong self-directed learning.”

The final stream of literature focuses on *leadership theory and its influence in executive development programs*. In many cases, leadership has become synonymous with the role of executive development. Many articles and books have been devoted to this area, and executive training programs have been attempting to train “the good *leader*,” as opposed to “the good *manager*.”

This project invariably touches on each of these areas in executive development, with particular attention to the relevant learning processes and educational influences on training programs at FEI. It becomes necessary to introduce a new concept to the literature, because this project does not focus merely on the historical facts and figures, but more specifically how the intellectual themes in its curriculum have been affected by the FEI’s environment, and particularly the leadership and faculty of the organization. This type of study therefore yields an intellectual history, which is a form of administrative history. Administrative histories can be divided into two basic fields — descriptive and analytical.

Descriptive Histories

Descriptive histories can be done from both internal and external source points. Internal histories take the form of annual reports and other historical records and documents compiled by an agency, usually an official historian in the agency's history office. An example of this type of administrative history is an historical account of NASA done by Robert Rosholt (1966), who in the first sentence of his preface states, "[T]his study focuses on NASA administrative matters, not on the specific content of NASA's programs and policies." His study focuses on five administrative themes:

1. *Organizational structure*, including intra-agency relationships;
2. *Administrative procedures*, with emphasis on intra-agency coordination;
3. *Personnel administration*;
4. *Finance administration*; and
5. *Procurement administration*, especially contracting.

Throughout these areas he has included historical program information to provide a contextual background for the analysis. A similar study was done by Arnold Levine in 1982 as part of the NASA History Series. His introduction states that the aim of the book is "to describe and analyze the organization of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration during the 1960s and, in so doing, to test certain assumptions about the nature of administrative history," which he defines as "the account of the interaction between an organization and its environment" (Levine, 1982). The book then begins with a chapter on key administrative decisions during NASA's first decade, proceeding with chapter analyses of specific administrative areas, such as policymaking, headquarters, acquisition process, manpower policy, program planning (including R&D), budgetary process, NASA/DOD relations, and long-range planning. The administrative historical study, therefore, is involved in studying the development, results, and causes of decisions, relating administration to the total agency mission, rather than studying the agency as a closed system.

Descriptive histories which are external are generally academic. The Leonard White series is an external study of the inner workings of political administrations and the context in

which they had to function. White examines the leadership styles and administrative philosophies of The Federalists, The Jeffersonians, The Jacksonians, and the Republic Era by analyzing public documents, collected letters, and manuscripts of the National Archives. As an example, in his study of the Republican Era, White reviews this period of time within three interrelated contextual frameworks:

1. *Cultural context* — deals with the prevailing social and philosophical norms existing at the beginning of this process.
2. *Administrative context* — deals with the inner workings of the federal government during this time period.
3. *Political context* — deals with the redefinition of the proper balance of the separation of powers within the U.S. Constitutional/federal structure.

Analytical Histories

The second major type of administrative history is **analytical**. Within this field there are two main categories: *political* and *sociological*.

The *political* type of analytical history seeks to examine the agency-environment relationship. TVA is an organization that has been examined by many researchers utilizing this method. Walter Creese's book, TVA's Public Planning: The Vision, The Reality looks at TVA by examining how it has developed from its economic, philosophical, and political roots. Hargrove and Conkin's book, TVA: Fifty Years of Grass Roots Bureaucracy examines TVA through four lenses: one, the origins of TVA; two, various leaders and their interaction with government; three, continued progress and problems; and four, assessment of the politics and government considered part of the TVA experience. Another organization which has been studied in this manner is the Bureau of Indian Affairs, with a study done by Paul Stuart in 1979, examining the evolution and institutionalization of the Indian Office. This institutionalization was based on three indicators: one, the strengthening of organizational integrity and boundedness (as measured by the organization's ability to control the entry of personnel); two, the development of internal procedures to achieve coordination; and three, the definition of an

organizational mission on which internal differentiation could be based (Stuart, 1979). This institutionalization came about as a result of the processes of centralization, formalization, and routinization.

The second type of analytical study, and the category into which this dissertation falls, is *sociological*. While this type of history contains many of the same elements as the political histories, it focuses more specifically on the utilization of a theoretical framework to provide an *interpretation* of historical patterns. Intellectual history studies differ from the other types of administrative histories by not focusing on the historical detail, but rather on connections and linkages — as in the case of the Federal Executive Institute: how the intellectual themes in its curriculum have been affected by its environment and its leaders and faculty. Intellectual history involves the juxtaposition of the history of public administration with intellectual trends — that is, how knowledge is perceived in public administration in action. The nexus of knowledge and training, and knowledge and institutions, provides us with an understanding of how these impact on the character and development of an institution. As we develop this understanding, organizational learning can occur. By mapping an organization's past behavior, we can gain insight into how that stream of experience becomes a basis for action in the present (Cohen and Sproull, 1996). Organizations are interactions within their environments, and an introspective look into their history can provide insight into the intricacies of those relationships. Organizations are not autonomous entities; instead, the best laid plans of managers have unintended consequences and are conditioned or upset by other social units — other complex organizations or public entities — on whom the organization is dependent (Thompson, 1967).

Marchand (1995) asserts that developing intellectual histories is difficult because there is an inherent call for complete disassociation of the writers' lives from their texts. She says we must move beyond that concern, accepting that it will indeed be a realistic and unavoidable challenge, because “we know from self-observation that the world, whether in ‘reality’ or in our representations of it, does impinge on us and we on it.” An intellectual history seeks “not only simply to contextualize works and lives, but in some way to normalize them,” without simultaneously removing their uniqueness or significance. To assist with these boundary concerns, Marchand suggests limiting our studies to single figures, a single school, or the history

of particular disciplines, which is precisely what this study seeks to do by developing an account of one particular organization, the Federal Executive Institute. This is made possible by the following process (Marchand, 1995):

Scholars here have found it possible to establish linkages between texts and the “real” world, the “internal” development of strains of thought and the “external” processes which surround it, not by looking for nebulous influences, but rather by establishing linkages at the micro-level (correspondence, grant proposals, lab notebooks, etc.) ...

This was my process of methodology as presented in Chapter One. Marchand issues a warning with her advice — the problem of delimiting the field of relevant source materials. This indeed becomes a critical juncture as the moment comes when one must determine that enough information has indeed been gathered.

The intellectual history of the Federal Executive Institute finds its home in FEI’s curriculum. Goodson and Dowbiggin (1994) contend that curriculum history has a significance in itself by enabling us to examine the role that professions play in the social construction of knowledge. The authors cite research on British secondary school subjects that has shown “how teachers have been encouraged to define their curricular knowledge in abstract, formal and scholarly terms in return for status, resources, territoriality and accreditation.” The concept of curriculum history has been further defined by Kilebard and Franklin (in Gest, 1990) as “the scholarly attempt to chronicle, interpret, and ultimately understand the processes whereby social groups over time select, organize, and distribute knowledge and belief through educational institutions.” Within the field of curriculum history are three strands. The first considers the curriculum as a hold, seeking to understand why certain curriculum ideas or ways of thinking about the curriculum arise and become part of it. The second focuses in on a particular area of the curriculum and how it came into being and became part of it. The third primarily examines the internal changes that may have occurred specifically within a particular subject. The predominance of studies, and the one appropriate to this research, have been those seeking to understand the curriculum as a whole.

Tanner and Tanner (1995) have developed a thorough text on curriculum development, examining the evolution and development of the field. They present the results of studies that were done beginning with Dewey to provide legitimacy to the field by developing a paradigm for the curriculum field. This paradigm is based on certain interrelationships of determinants (as expanded from Giles, McCutchen and Zechiel, 1942). Four areas have equal impact on curriculum development — objectives, methods and organization, subject matter, and evaluation. This relationship was further expanded by the introduction of philosophy into the process, as the core connector between those four areas. Once philosophy has been inserted into this realm of understanding, it becomes necessary to examine the actual sources and influences — society, social forces and social problems — having an effect on the curriculum, including structure or framework for the courses of study (i.e., discipline-centered or interdisciplinary studies), the methods of instruction, and the relationship of the courses of study to the life of the learner, the wider world of knowledge, and the larger society (Tanner and Tanner, 1995).

Curriculum history provides us with an understanding of how and why the process of curriculum development occurs. Short and Burke (1991) have written a book that while focused primarily on elementary and primary school education, also holds relevance for the development of curriculum designed to develop a learning community, an appropriate and relevant study for an organization such as FEI, that seeks to develop that same sort of community. They assert that the learning which occurs in the present can act to give new life and vitality to the past and to create new possibilities and plans for the future, and the organizational means for accomplishing this empowerment of the learner is the curriculum. This can be related to the differentiation made by Dewey (1938) between miseducation and education. While miseducation might lead to the learning of new knowledge, it restricts the potential of future experiences by having a knowledge that is isolated, or a negative learning experience for the learner because of a lack of connecting experiences. To be true education, a learning experience must not only generate fact, knowledge, or belief, but it must also increase the likelihood that the learner will actually seek similar but expanded experiences in the future. These productive educational experiences must take place within a learning community characterized by risktaking, reflection, and

collaboration. To develop this learning-centered curriculum, we must have a curriculum that is based on inquiry and the search for questions that matter to us, because without this inquiry, a sense of purpose and meaning in learning is lost and our natural inquisitiveness as learners is deadened (Short and Burke, 1991).

Epistemologically, different methods have been utilized at different points in history. As certain things lose importance, others take their place, and this exchange is critical to understanding both public administration and its institutions. Intellectual movements produce forms of knowledge that are embedded within a discipline's generational, organizational, written and referential knowledge practices (White and McSwain, Simon, et al). These can, and do, shift and change over time, reflecting the current philosophies in practice, or administration in action.

CONTRIBUTION TO LITERATURE

FEI itself has been the focus of, or at least a portion of, a couple of academic studies. Joseph Coffee, Jr. wrote his master's thesis on Market Behavior and FEI. Terry Tipple included the FEI as one of the organizations studied in his dissertation, Executive Development Programs: A Framework for Coherence. Frank Sherwood, FEI's founding director, has been working on several articles regarding the founding and early years of FEI.

While these various pieces, together with a myriad of articles and news reports, have been written about the Federal Executive Institute, no complete history has ever been written about this organization, and particularly no type of intellectual or curriculum history. There is no similarly designed study of the curriculum and program as it has evolved at the Federal Executive Institute. Various pieces of FEI have been studied in various ways, however, no comprehensive intellectual history of executive development at FEI has been compiled to date. This project seeks to provide that history.

This study therefore makes its contribution by providing an intellectual history of an organization critical to the public sector. As an organization, the Federal Executive Institute is involved in providing executive development programs for federal executives. While this

research could have been framed simply as a contribution to the administrative history literature, I believe it can also have a powerful impact as a contribution to our understanding of organization and executive development. This study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the intellectual history of the Federal Executive Institute and its place in public administration. This analysis includes:

- Identifying the major periods during the history of FEI;
- Placing these periods within a context of the concurrent social, political and cultural development;
- Understanding the leadership visions; and
- Determining the effect these have on the development of the content of executive development programs at FEI.

The intention of the study is to do a sociology of knowledge analysis of the Federal Executive Institute, as we seek to determine how FEI decides to teach what it teaches, and in so doing, whether the FEI has been a reactive institution, moving and changing in response to environmental changes; a proactive institution, leading the way and setting the stage for its environment; or a combination of both, seeking a relationship that is both dynamic and reciprocal.

CHAPTER THREE

PRELUDE TO ROCKY TOP: THE FOUNDING OF FEI

Frank Sherwood credits five men with the founding and early development of FEI (Sherwood, 1993). The first, and the one he considers to be FEI's true founder, is John Macy, Chairman of the Civil Service Commission during that period. Second is Roger Jones, once called "Mr. Bureaucrat" by Fortune magazine, who was Chairman of the Civil Service Commission when the Government Employees Training Act was passed in 1958, and later served as Chairman of the FEI Advisory Board from 1969 to 1973 (when the board was abolished). Third is Elmer Staats, who provided support to FEI as comptroller general, and also served on the FEI Advisory Board throughout its existence. Fourth is Robert Hampton, who succeeded Macy as Chairman of the Civil Service Commission in January 1969. Although the transition from Johnson to Nixon was a difficult one, Hampton remained a source of strength for FEI, still in its infancy. Finally, fifth is James Beck, who was active behind-the-scenes implementing Macy's plans, establishing both the first and second Executive Seminar Centers. Sherwood credits him for developing the plan for FEI, engineering its approval and doing much of the "spadework" in setting up FEI. Beck then served as Deputy Director at FEI for two years before being named Director of Training for the Civil Service Commission.

Early plans

Macy served as Chairman of the Civil Service Commission from 1961 to 1969. He had endeared himself to President Johnson and became one of his trusted advisors, serving also as head of the White House Personnel Office (Sherwood, 1993). Sherwood credits this relationship with providing "a new image, legitimacy, and significance for career executives in the federal government." On May 11, 1966, Macy arranged for President Johnson to deliver an address at Princeton University focusing specifically on training, giving employee development priority, or at least recognition, on the national policy agenda. At this time, Ken Mulligan was Director of the Office of Career Development, and William McDonald was Deputy Director. Original plans for FEI called for the development of a "Staff College." In a memorandum for Chairman

Macy, Mulligan outlined ten proposed features for the FEI:

1. Background and introduction.
2. Population.
3. Governance.
4. Curriculum.
5. Educational methodology.
6. Staffing.
7. Physical facility.
8. Funding.
9. Academic relationship.
10. Research activity.

With this report, he concluded, “It is my recommendation that you obtain approval of the President and the Director of the Bureau of the Budget on the general features of the plan and then authorize us to proceed with its implementation” (Mulligan, 1966). The section on Curriculum stated that the curriculum would consist of two parts:

Unit (a) which will be a generic unit suitable for a career executive regardless of what mission he is assigned to or what occupation he is engaged in; and Unit (b) which will be actually several three-week units, each of which will be directed toward a specific governmental function or collection of governmental functions ... In the intervening time he would be fed readings, he might meet with his group or parts of it for seminars, he might have cases to develop, he might have papers to write, etc ... Now as to the content of Unit (a) — this will deal with matters which are universal to the needs of the Federal executive. You might say that this is an upper-level Skills and Goals of Management but it will be more than that, including substance found in Administration of Public Policy and in the Environment of Federal Operations. Perhaps also, substance derived from our Seminar in Governmental Relations. What it will concert itself with will be the role of the Federal executive in his agency, in society, in his dealings with other agencies and with the Congress, the courts, the White House and the central agencies of government. It will also be about PPBS and other related management matters. It will be about group relations and their management. It will be about Presidential purposes as they are universal to the government. It will be about equal employment opportunity, personnel and budgeting and employment of women, and improved communications. It will be about relationships with the outside society. It will be about sources of authority and power as they have evolved in our society. It will be about civil rights. It will be a humdinger.

Unit (b) (actually B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, etc.) will be program-oriented. Among the

program areas for which there will be separate units could be the following:

1. Problems of the urban society.
2. Science policy and management.
3. Natural resources policies and management.
4. Human resources utilization and development.
5. Fiscal and economic policy.
6. National security policy and management — etc.

Mulligan also felt it important to outline the educational methodology for the FEI, stating that the following “notions and techniques” should be built into the methodology: 1.

Teaching cases.

2. Problem-solving syndicates or team activities.
3. Experience with the use of computers in problem-solving and decision-making.
4. Gaming and role-playing.
5. Follow-up and sequel training experiences to the period of residence.
6. Tapes, films and readings.

Several staff members set to work on developing this model. The Task Force on Career Advancement was appointed during the summer of 1966, finally endorsing the proposal and recommending action in a report issued January/February 1968. Johnson signed the new Executive Order on Training on April 20, 1967, issuing a statement directing the Chairman of the Civil Service Commission to “establish a center for advanced study for executives in the upper echelons of the civil service.” He stated three focus areas for that center:

1. The major problems facing American society and the nature of government’s response to them.
2. The adequacy of the existing structure of government in relation to today’s problems.
3. The ways in which administration of federal programs could be improved.

Macy had self-imposed a deadline of starting the FEI before Johnson’s current term of office ended in January 1969. The project was therefore impressed with an immediacy for action.

Site Selection

First and foremost was the issue of location. With time being of the essence, it would be difficult to find a turn-key location, ready for operation. The summer of 1967 involved intensive planning, particularly site reviews. There were many requirements to be considered for this location. First were geographical considerations; it should be within driving distance of Washington, but within close proximity to a major university. Size was another consideration; the site needed to contain not only classrooms, but also sleeping rooms, large meeting rooms, a dining area, and faculty offices. The location also needed to be high quality, while striking a happy medium between posh and poverty. A key problem was financial — the funds for operating FEI were to come solely from the fees to be paid by the executives in attendance; until the first session was held, no funds were available to finance the venture.

Several locations were discussed and visited before selecting the Thomas Jefferson Inn in Charlottesville, Virginia. Charlottesville was selected because of the promise of a relationship with the University of Virginia (as well as their willingness to build a permanent home for FEI); proximity to Washington, D.C.; a suitable temporary facility was available; and the area was receptive and cordial to the proposition. In January 1968 a decision was made to negotiate with the University of Virginia, using the Thomas Jefferson Inn. A five-year, million dollar lease was signed for the property.⁸

Selecting the first director

Chairman Macy selected Frank Sherwood to be FEI's first director, because (as related by CSC's Training Director Kenneth Mulligan) "[the idea was someone] with academic credentials who understands something about adult learning and adult education, who had a substance of understanding about problems of the Federal executive gained through academic research and study, someone with academic status and thus able to attract staff and deal with the University of Virginia" (Anderson, 1969). In a later memorandum, Mulligan (1969) recalled that while there were various statements made in public documents and otherwise about the

⁸ As noted above, funds were not allocated for this project; this lease was signed based on the expectation of future fees to be received from the executives attending the program.

curriculum and the educational goals of the center, there was a clear understanding reached between Macy and Sherwood that although the general educational purposes had been articulated, it would be up to the director and his staff, guided by the Advisory Board and directed by the Commission, to develop a curriculum and educational method suited to the general purposes. He adds, “No other understanding would have been either feasible or appropriate. It was on the basis of this understanding that Dr. Sherwood accepted the post.” In fact, Macy set up FEI so that Sherwood would report directly to him.

Selecting faculty

In an astonishingly short time frame, Sherwood pursued the staffing problem during the summer, appointed a faculty, developed an educational plan, and opened the Institute in October 1968 on schedule. Selecting faculty was difficult because of the broad spectrum to be covered as part of the FEI program — managerial with behavioral programs at one end and the traditional, rigorous, theory-oriented programs (like political science and economics) at the other end. Conklin (1997) recalls that recruiting faculty was a nightmare because many of the hard sciences faculty were not equipped, trained, or even interested in being able to lead small groups. Neuchterlein (1988) provides testimony that these two polar views provided tension over content versus process within the faculty, where “[those] centered primarily in behavioral science and education tended to view group process and interaction as the primary focus of FEI’s program, while those who were trained in political science, economics, and public policy believed that the intellectual side of learning should be emphasized.”

Another difficult issue in recruiting faculty was that this was an untested venture; it would be difficult to attract potential faculty members to Charlottesville on a program that had not yet been developed, may or may not be successful, and would require a relocation, possibly giving up tenure, for the unknown.⁹ These were precisely the type of faculty that Sherwood wanted, however, because the risktaker was the epitome of the person for whom he was trying to design the program.

⁹ It is interesting that even the founding director, Frank Sherwood, was at FEI on leave from his institution.

Tabula Rosa — Developing the FEI Model

Macy is responsible for establishing the basic philosophy that would guide the creation and development of the FEI model. It was his belief that the intellectual climate of FEI should parallel that of the university, seeking to create a marketplace of ideas. Building on Macy's past experience at Wesleyan University, he felt FEI held an even greater potential for developing this marketplace because the students there would be experienced executives who were on the front lines of dealing with modern social issues and problems and could provide opportunities for exciting interaction and dialogue with the other executives and the faculty. In order for this to happen, it would be important for FEI to be separated as much as possible from the formal federal bureaucracy to allow the university climate of freedom, openness, and trust to occur (Sherwood, 1993-2). One area that would be different from the university setting Macy had been accustomed to would be the need for unlearning on the part of some of the executives. As recalled by Sherwood:

One of the biggest problems adults face is jettisoning learning that may have once been useful but which no longer fits changing circumstances. The major task of the FEI was to help federal leaders deal with a changing world, not at the cognitive but at the behavioral level. We had to be accountable for helping people act differently. We had to contemplate our approach not so much in terms of good ideas as whether they were ones executives would put to work.

Furthermore, while the executives were well trained in their particular areas of expertise, few of them had education that prepared them to be leaders. They had been singularly focused in their specific arenas and would now need to broaden their horizons to include a larger environment. Macy later reflected on this during a Seventh Anniversary meeting in Tehran, Iran, commenting, "[T]here was a fundamental need in the federal government for high level personnel to remove themselves from the job, to re-examine themselves in relation to their responsibilities, and to rearticulate their roles as top managers and professionals in the system."

The FEI curriculum and program developed to meet this need. Sherwood states the goal of the Federal Executive Institute was “one, first, of creating an excitement and enthusiasm for learning and second, of developing personal learning skills” with a mission that “fundamentally [it] places the spotlight on the individual as a total person, not just an incumbent of an executive job. Learning cannot be turned on and off. It becomes a profound part of the personality and has its implications for self-confidence, trust in others, perceptions of the environment and its friendliness or hostility, and willingness to risk” (Sherwood, 1993-2). He understood that placing this emphasis on developing a learner was a radical departure from other educational programs where “knowledge [had] always been considered to be the main currency of the academic enterprise.” The theme for FEI’s program would be based on a concept in the title of John Gardner’s book, *Self Renewal*, (Neuchterlein, 1988) as Macy and Sherwood believed that senior executives needed to take time away from their offices to reflect on where they were, and where they wanted to be, and develop the bridge to connect the two. During the first few years, Gardner’s book was even mailed to participants in advance to help them understand this philosophy.

As the original faculty began planning for the first session during that summer of 1968, there was “a keen awareness that there was an institution to be developed, an organizational culture to be created, and an administrative structure to be built — and that a traditional organizational concept was not satisfactory or appropriate” (Saroff, date unknown). They needed to create an organization that valued, encouraged, and rewarded change, one that would be flexible and adaptive, and this should be accomplished with an institutional culture that valued temporariness and reinforced it by constant program change and rapid faculty turnover. The organization would be relatively flat (only a director and an executive director; all faculty on the same level). Would, or could, this temporariness be accomplished? How would it affect the program? What would be the reaction of the executives? Of the agencies? The major difficulty that emerged as these questions were considered was intellectual contentiousness between some of the original faculty members. R. T. Williams (1998) recalls sitting in on two weeks of planning sessions and then telling Frank Sherwood he was going home, because everyone was arguing over what specialty they wanted to teach, whereas the point was to prepare people for

public service, to shift them from specialist to generalist, from manager to leader, from content to process. He felt that it was not about getting work done through people, but about getting people done through work. The early planning meetings sought to respond to these concerns and find answers to their questions, while remaining open for development to occur as the programs were held. The next chapter examines that development.

CHAPTER FOUR
ROCKY TOP — EXECUTIVE, KNOW THYSELF
1968 to 1980

Innovative, creative, flexible, life-changing ... these are all words that have been used to describe The Federal Executive Institute during its founding and early years. This innovation and creativity were not limited to the curriculum, but encompassed the entire program, including practical concerns, such as selecting and recruiting participants, developing a budget, and meeting the day-to-day physical problems of running a residential training facility (Roberts, 1992).¹⁰ The original faculty members knew they were part of a great project, something beyond anything they could imagine.

The Federal Executive Institute was created and developed with a speed that could not happen in today's world. Once the idea was approved and given the "go-ahead," many things had to come together and be accomplished before the first session could be held — a site had to be selected; a director, deputy director, and faculty hired; participants recruited and selected; and a program of study developed. All of those things occurred in a few months back in 1968. In contemporary public administration, there would be committees developed for each of those areas, lengthy (and process-correct) faculty searches, and numerous site visits. The contracts for the faculty and the site lease would have to be carefully reviewed by the legal department. All of these steps can take weeks, months, even years.¹¹ As much as we would hope that the current reinvention movement would permit an organization such as FEI to be created, the reality is it could not be done with the autocracy, and thus speed, as it was in 1967. When Macy selected Frank Sherwood as FEI's first director, he gave him the assurance that he had the full freedom to develop the program in his own way.

¹⁰ Roberts adds that Jim Beck, then OPM Director, had sent around a memo outlining necessary items to allow the participants to "pioneer in comfort."

¹¹ As an example of the modern-day bureaucratic process, the current wing that is being finished at FEI was originally designed and money set aside almost ten years ago.

Another remarkable feat was that FEI's first faculty was hired in a matter of a few weeks during the early summer of 1968. There were only six weeks for planning from the time the faculty arrived at FEI until the first session was to be held. Much time was spent trying to develop the FEI model. What would they teach? Were they to *teach* at all? Were they to change behavior? What would the executives be expecting? It was challenging to try and encompass what the program would actually *be*, and how that would be accomplished. This would be an adventure — nay experiment? — for all involved. We should first set the stage for those infant years.

CONTEXT

Events in the lives of the executives and faculty, as well as in their communities, nation, and world, directly affected the early sessions. Ed Jones, FEI's first hired faculty member, stated, “[T]he upside of this was that there never seemed to be a shortage of things to talk about; the downside, that the outside world was often too much with us” (Jones, 1993). Jones adds that these issues caused a dilemma for FEI — trying to decide how much attention they should give to those events, and to what degree they should confront the executives with the uncertainties of the times and their roles and influence in them.

The 1960s found the national government confronting an ever-widening array of demands, and as a rapid expansion in social legislation was experienced in the later years, public sector executives were required to confront civil rights problems. These new issues would require government professionals who were strong, imaginative, and committed (Macy, 1975), commanding a rhetoric of social investment and high government purpose (King and Stivers, 1998). These issues created the impetus for developing a premiere training program to prepare and develop these professionals. The groundwork for FEI had been laid many years before, as plans were written for a staff college to provide advanced executive development.

The year FEI was founded, 1968, was an important year in the field of public administration. Beyond the crises facing the nation — riots, the dissension at the Democratic National Convention, and the assassinations of Kennedy and Martin Luther King — public administration as a field sought its own identity. Both the nation and the discipline had lost a

shared sense of life, purpose; there appeared to be no center, no nexus to society. In 1968, Waldo sponsored the Minnowbrook Conference to begin dialogue on a “new public administration” — one that stressed normative theory, philosophy and activism, with an overriding moral tone contemplating values, ethics, and the development of the individual within the organization. The Federal Executive Institute was founded during these times, impacting practitioners and providing innovative training experiences.

The 1970s were tough years financially, both for the nation and FEI. Sherwood considered going for federally appropriated funding but Hampton warned him that if he did, FEI would never be the same. He knew that funding would not come without guidelines (strings) attached. Sherwood decided against pursuing budget appropriations in an attempt to prevent external, political pressures from affecting the independence that FEI now enjoyed.

In addition to the financial crisis, we were going through significant changes as a nation, being challenged beyond anything we had experienced. A surge in government activism in the late 1960s and early 1970s brought on a new wave of negativity among American citizens (King and Stivers, 1998). As Nixon’s administration came in, Sherwood recalls there was a high sense of partisanship, with a new conviction emerging that the civil service had inhibited the responsiveness of the government, and more political appointees were needed (Sherwood, 1993). Rich Collins was on the faculty in the early 1970s and recalls being concerned that federal executives had become too self-absorbed, too caught up in the negative backlash toward public executives. He felt it was time for the executives to stick their head out with unqualified pride and say “we’re the best there is” and “we’re doing alright.”

The same concerns overshadowed the field of public administration. A reaction against the “new public administration” emerged as an anti-administration movement, serving as the inspiration for schools of policy analysis, such as Berkeley and Duke. The field continued to search for its true self. There were two basic competing paradigmatic schemes (Henry, 1995) — public administration as political science, and public administration as management. Waldo (1968) said that “[M]any political scientists not identified with public administration are indifferent or even hostile; they would sooner be free of it.” In response to this “second class citizenship,” public administrators sought an alternative, looking to business and management,

particularly the field of organizational development. Henry (1995) concludes that in both of these arenas, the “essential thrust was one of public administration losing its identity within the confines of some ‘larger’ concept” while simultaneously “sowing the seeds of its own renaissance.” These tensions were mirrored at the Federal Executive Institute, as we shall see later in this chapter.

Social (but practical) issues that affected the early FEI were lengths of hair, shoes versus sandals, “none of those damn hippies,” and the greater inclusion of women and minorities in public service. Early successes, such as Armstrong’s walk on the moon in 1969, were overshadowed as the Vietnam War dominated FEI’s first decade, affecting areas of public and social policy, budget allocations, politics, and general issues of distrust of “government.” With the majority of executives being veterans of WWII, there was an overwhelming disdain for draft dodgers. Like the Hippocratic oath of “do no harm,” FEI had to find ways for the public service to determine what to do that would make things better rather than worse. FEI was similarly affected by Watergate. The executives were able to talk very freely, but there was some tension because within one session there might be executives both from the executive branch and from the Internal Revenue Service, the two major organizations directly involved in Watergate. Several FEI alumni spoke to me about the “strangeness” of sitting in front of the television set at FEI, watching the Watergate events unfold, and knowing that beside you sat someone from the “other side.” For the first time for many, they were putting faces to positions — it was no longer possible to see the executive branch as “evil” or the IRS as “evil,” because “it” was now your friend and colleague. While this initially created an awkward and tense situation, the fears soon dissipated as open discussion and genuine dialogue began.

Politically, the 1970s were indeed tumultuous years, with Watergate, Nixon’s resignation, Ford becoming president and pardoning Nixon, and later returning to Democratic leadership under Carter. Many felt that Johnson’s War on Poverty delivered benefits to a select group of citizens, and a sense that government had become too powerful, too controlling, and too involved. This was compounded by the Vietnam War, which was not only a war many Americans did not support, but there was also a sense of division as the working class young men were drafted, while the “sons of the elite” managed to avoid service (King and Stivers,

1998). There was continuous concern over what program changes might be facing FEI as these political changes occurred. The Watergate and Nixon issues cast a shadow on government executives, as they struggled to maintain their own identity amidst the negative ones being created by the scandals.

Academically, the Federal Executive Institute found its grounding in several areas. Examining the field of executive development, I noticed that it transcends professional and academic boundaries — studies can be found in both public and business administration, psychology, sociology, human resources, organizational behavior and development, and political science, among many others. While public administration and political science were the two most obvious, there was also a large influence of adult education theory setting the stage for FEI's development. The 1960s involved shifting philosophies on adult education, from pedagogy-based programs to andragogy-based programs. Pedagogy, which literally means “the art and science of teaching children,” evolved in the monastic schools of Europe between the 7th and 12th centuries and dominated secular schools and universities as they developed. This model was the original conception of learning, a model that was based on a premise of the transmittal of knowledge and schools from the teacher to the student. Between 1929-1948, the *Journal of Adult Education* began carrying articles of methods that deviated from this model. These principles were analyzed in the 1950s and were the topic of scientific research in the 1960s. Other disciplines, such as clinical and developmental psychology, gerontology, sociology, and anthropology, were important in the development of this new model called andragogy.¹² It is helpful to utilize an understanding of the differentiation between pedagogy and andragogy, as differentiated in this table:

¹² Andragogy was originally defined as a counterpart to pedagogy, meaning “the art and science of helping adults learn.” It was soon discovered that these techniques were not only successful for adults, but for students in elementary and secondary schools as well. Knowles (1980) says that these two models were no longer seen as dichotomous, but rather as two ends of the learning spectrum.

COMPARISON OF PEDAGOGY AND ANDRAGOGY¹³

	PEDAGOGY	ANDRAGOGY
	ASSUMPTIONS	
<i>Self-Concept</i>	Dependency	Increasing Self-Directiveness
<i>Role of Learner's Experience</i>	Of little worth; more as foundation than resource	A rich resource for learning by self and others
<i>Readiness</i>	Biological development, social pressure	Develops from life tasks and problems
<i>Time Perspective</i>	Postponed application	Immediacy of application
<i>Orientation to Learning</i>	Subject centered	Problem centered
<i>Motivation</i>	By external rewards and punishment	By internal incentives, curiosity
	DESIGN ELEMENTS	
<i>Climate</i>	Authority oriented, formal, competitive	Mutuality, respectful, collaborative, informal
<i>Planning</i>	By Teacher	By learners and facilitators
<i>Diagnosis of Needs</i>	By Teacher	Mutual self-diagnosis
<i>Formulation of Objectives</i>	By Teacher	Mutual negotiation
<i>Design</i>	Logic of the subject matter: content units	Sequenced in terms of readiness: problem units
<i>Activities</i>	Transmittal techniques	Experiential techniques
<i>Evaluation</i>	By Teacher; norm-referenced; graded	Mutual rediagnosis of needs & measurement of program

¹³ Expanded from Knowles (1980), Appendix K-14.

In summary, Knowles (1980) concluded that the following corollaries were true for learning:

1. Physical environment conducive to learning is one in which adults feel at ease
2. Great emphasis placed on the involvement of adult learners in a process of self-diagnosis of needs for learning
3. Law of human nature — humans feel committed to a decision (or activity) to the extent that they have participated in making it (or planning it)
4. Learning-teaching transaction as the mutual responsibility of learners and teachers; andragogy assumes that a teacher cannot really “teach” in the sense of “make a person learn,” but that one person can only *help* another person learn
5. Self-evaluation — teacher must set example of being open to feedback regarding their performance; establishing a supportive climate in which hard-to-accept information about one’s performance can be looked at objectively; be creative about inventing ways in which students can get comprehensive data about their own performance
6. Emphasis on experiential techniques that tap their experience
7. Emphasis on practical application
8. Unfreezing and learning to learn from experience
9. Curriculum specific (not Composition I, but Writing Short Stories)
10. Learning is an internal process

These principles also flowed over to program logistics in order to set the appropriate climate for learning. The physical environment needed to be comfortable, aesthetically pleasing, facilitative of interaction, and not crowded. Simultaneously, the psychological environment must exude a spirit of mutual respect, and be supportive and caring, warm and friendly, collaborative rather than competitive, creating a climate of mutual trust and mutual responsibility, with the emphasis on learning, not on teaching. These principles, although far from mainstream in 1968¹⁴, were to

¹⁴ Cross (1982) claims that Knowles was quite optimistic; the more prevalent, albeit pessimistic, view was presented by Miller (1967), writing “it is presumptuous to talk ... about

become the foundation for the creation of The Federal Executive Institute.

INTELLECTUAL CATALYSTS

The early success of FEI is generally credited to two men: John Macy, Chair of the Civil Service Commission, and Frank Sherwood, who served as FEI's first director. The planning period and the early sessions are reflective of their vision for executive education. What they sought to create was an institution which, in its own operation and spirit, reflected the belief that federal executives should be innovative, flexible, willing to take risks and have a tolerance for ambiguity (Roberts, date unknown). Stupak (1997) adds that the FEI creation team was "focused, integrated, dedicated, engaged, motivated, determined, bounded, special, excited, innovative, sensitive, delighted, and energized. It prized the individual but, more fundamentally, it celebrated the team."

John Macy's devotion and dedication was clearly a catalyst for the creation of FEI. Sherwood (1987) writes that "what seemed to underpin Macy's approach to his personnel responsibilities was a philosophy that is a standard part of our rhetoric, namely that people do make a difference." Macy preferred people over techniques, calling for managers who would practice "people-concern" and "people-leadership." He was devoted to public service and to FEI's creation as a commitment to those in public service. His original vision for FEI was that its intellectual climate should closely parallel that of the university; he had once approached Princeton for collaboration but was told that there was no chance for a partnership because they felt it was "inconceivable" that the federal government could contribute anything but "conformity, rigidity, and sterility" (Sherwood, 1993). While this was probably a realist view, he was deeply offended and declared to Sherwood the need to prove them wrong.

Many decades before Gore's "reinventing government" calls for entrepreneurial government, Macy created an organization without legislative bases and market-driven without appropriations. He was willing to take risks, signing a five-year, million dollar contract for the FEI facilities, and giving Sherwood virtual "carte blanche" in developing the program. He

theory building; like most fields of educational research, we are very far from ready for that advanced activity."

encouraged Sherwood to also take risks, to develop a program that would be cutting edge not only for public administration, but for executive development as well. He developed a program that would be entrepreneurial, that would depend upon pleasing the customer, and therefore ensuring participation, to be fiscally successful.

Frank Sherwood says he never expected to leave Macy's office in Washington, D.C. with a new job. He recalls it felt like Macy had already decided he was the one for this new venture, and the "interview" was actually his attempt to convince Sherwood of the same. Sherwood says he was impressed with Macy's vision, and with his commitment to FEI's independence in structure and program. Macy's enthusiasm, coupled with the challenge and excitement of creating a premiere executive development program (with free rein to do so), made this an offer he could not refuse.

In developing the program, it is easy to see Sherwood's grounding in Knowles' theories of adult education, particularly a belief in andragogy over pedagogy. The curriculum was completely designed to be learner-focused, to allow for individuals to be not only involved in, but responsible for, their own education from planning through evaluation. The creation of a learning community would be paramount to FEI's success.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTS — CONTENT

Roberts (1992) says that planning the curriculum required a special kind of "creativity," in that most faculty members wanted to do things that did not easily fit into the announced White House goals. Whereas the White House wanted a content- oriented emphasis on "the major problems facing our society," most faculty members preferred to focus on the process of adult learning. While most of these concepts, such as transactional analysis and sensitivity training, were not new, they were new to public executive development. Laurin Henry was on the faculty at the University of Virginia and had served as UVA's liaison to FEI, both in promoting Charlottesville as the location for FEI, and, after opening, in providing liaison and resources. He recalls that they (he and UVA) were not really involved in the initial process of developing the early curriculum, although he was familiar with Mulligan's preliminary program sketch. Based on his understanding of that preliminary sketch, Henry recalls that when the FEI

opened, the curriculum in place was quite a shock to him and several others. He remembers attending a reception the night before FEI was to open and encountered R.T. Williams, asking him what he was there to teach, expecting a response of “budgeting” or “constitutional history,” but instead was told, “I’m here to help with team building.” He was surprised by this comment and did not quite understand how that could possibly be a course of study.

The original curriculum and approach were thus Sherwood’s creations, and had been influenced by the 1960s intellectual climate of suspicion of hierarchy and a concern for providing legitimacy to feelings.¹⁵ The USC teaching program, where Sherwood had previously been anchored, had absorbed many of these ideas, founded in the methods of Gardner and Knowles, and concepts of student-centered leadership. Concepts that were critical to this process were “learning to learn,” “the temporary society,” and the need for organizational flexibility.

It was necessary, however, to ground these philosophies within a framework appropriate for federal executives. Harmon (1998) recalls that to satisfy the U.S. Civil Service Commission, FEI would bring down important guest speakers for evening sessions; however, the “real work” would be done during the daytime, when the faculty used the close, interpersonal relationships they had developed through quality time spent with the executives. An article published in 1969 stated that the Institute’s purpose “[is] to broaden the horizons of the participating executives; to deepen their knowledge and perception of the national scene; to bring them up to date on the concerns and activities of Government agencies other than their own; to apprise them of the latest trends in management theory and techniques; and to afford them a place and a time apart from their routine to reflect with stimulation from each other and from the Institute staff upon their roles and their responsibilities as leaders” (Anderson, 1969). Sherwood was influenced by a book by Corson and Paul (1962), which states that all the competencies developed as an individual professional will be needed later at other levels of leadership responsibility, therefore there is not a “vital shift” from individual worker to management as had been present in many other writings. Sherwood (1993-2) summarizes:

¹⁵ Sherwood’s “Rationale for the Federal Executive Institute Approach to Education” and his letter to participants are in Appendices 3 and 4, respectively.

In effect, there was no “executive” learning. Rather, it was a matter of each executive engaging in sufficient introspection to decide where learning was needed.

He then outlines the five types of understanding needed by executives at the top (as developed in Corson and Paul):

1. The substantive field of activity.
2. Ways and means of directing the work of others.
3. Functions of other units within the organization and of related government entities.
4. The society, economy, and the citizens it serves.
5. The policies and programs throughout the enterprise and how they were to be carried out.

It was believed that developing these leadership competencies did not require striking out in radically new directions, but rather building on the solid experiences of the past (Sherwood, 1993-2).

While Sherwood asserts that constitutionalism has been part of the FEI program from the beginning, he adds that it was subordinate to the other programs because it was what turned Macy off. In fact, this is the reason he selected Sherwood to be Director and develop the FEI model, as someone who would be out of the system. Macy wanted someone who was not influenced by, or bound by, political and bureaucratic processes.

Role of the Dean

Each session was developed and coordinated by a “Dean.” Since this position was rotated among the faculty members, there was great incentive for faculty members to be cooperative and helpful, so as to assure similar support when it was their turn to be Dean. The Deans had a large amount of creative license in developing their session.

The Dean of each upcoming session was free of a heavy teaching load during the current session so as to have time to devote to planning. During this time the Dean was very active in meeting with people, talking with executives, and interviewing prospective program presenters. About three or four weeks before the session started, the Dean would begin a second level of meetings where the entire faculty would get together and participate in the planning process.

Even though each session was planned completely by different Deans, Kirkhart (1997) says that there was not a radical shift from session to session, but rather a clear continuity. While there was constant change, it was more of an evolution, and therefore not disjointed. He says this continuity was present because everyone had a very strong commitment to serving the executives. Although he feels this was a productive process, Jones (1997) compares the act of continual change to “repairing a 10-speed bicycle while flying downhill.” Some executives were a little disturbed by this lack of direction. Jones recalls an executive asking him to “just tell me what you want done and we’ll do it.”

The process of rotating deans lasted for about twenty sessions. It had become somewhat routinized by that time, as feedback from participants made it evident what direction should be taken. The philosophical foundation never changed, however, as each session opened with the call that “you’re not going to hold us responsible for your learning ... you can [only] hold us accountable for the learning environment.”

Small Groups — Executive Learning Teams (ELTs)

While the Deans could plan sessions that were very different from one another, several key concepts emerged as the backbone of the FEI program. One of these involved the small groups that the executives were assigned to on their first day at FEI. The groups were selected to provide a maximum mix in terms of agency, type of assignment and general background and experience. Each group was coordinated by a faculty member, called a Facilitator, who was responsible for setting the few simple ground rules and for modeling the behavior or actions expected of the executives. The first meeting involved having the executives tell their life story. While some executives were skeptical and less enthusiastic about this sharing process, generally the group members developed a strong attachment to one another during this time together.

The success of the ELTs was most evident in reaching the executives not at a professional but rather a personal level. The executives in these sessions were very high level people who had reached a point in their career where they felt alone, without anyone to whom they could talk in confidence. The ELTs provided this outlet, an opportunity for the executives to commiserate and share with others in similar situations. This had a great impact on the executive's development FEI.

From Specialist to Generalist

It was well known that the executives would bring various levels of education and experience with them to FEI. Chong Pak, an early faculty member, related a story wherein an executive came up to him on the first day of a session and said, "I am an SES executive, I have advanced degrees in my field, what do you think you could possibly teach me?" Much of this stems from the current reward structure, as our system rewards high individual performance. In addition, many of these executives had been educated in a technical curriculum, had been in the same agency for most of a twenty-plus year tenure, were white, male, Anglo-Saxon, and a conservative member of the middle class (Jones, 1993). They were therefore focused on status based on their background, and past experience and training.

There were several reasons for avoiding these content issues. One was simply that the executives, who had been operating in the field, would quickly say, "you have no clue about what really goes on out there." It was also not the issue at hand. These executives were now at a crossing point in their career, where their technical skills would no longer carry them. It was now necessary to learn a new set of skills, to develop leadership and directing abilities.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTS — PROCESS

The FEI experience in those years was intense for both faculty and executives (Jones, 1993). While Jones and Williams were steeped in the philosophies of Gardner and Knowles, Sherwood says he would not let them turn the program into a big encounter group. He was, however, clearly committed to a different approach to learning, with a strong emphasis on the individual, starting with self-assessment, and then attempting to have each executive think in

terms of a set of learning needs based on an understanding of their strengths, deficiencies, and their future in government. FEI alumnus Paul Lorentzen asserts that this intensity is what leads alums to be extremely loyal, both personally and professionally. There were various key components of the process that were largely responsible for that intensity.

The Advisory Board

Macy felt it was important to establish a formal mechanism to advise on the policy, direction, and management of the FEI (Sherwood, 1993). Sherwood agreed with this plan because with FEI financed on a market basis, it was especially critical that all relevant stakeholders have an opportunity to participate in the planning and administrative process. Nine key people from business, academia and the government were on the Advisory Board.¹⁶

When Hampton succeeded Macy, he was less than enthusiastic about having this Board. To appease him, they managed to get “the very best guy” to be Chairman, Roger Jones, who had been known as “Mr. Bureaucrat.” Chet Newland, who succeeded Sherwood as Director, did not like the Advisory Board, so he proposed to Hampton to get rid of it, something he was more than willing to do. Unfortunately, the FEI Advisory Board had been a very high powered board, and without it FEI lost its defense in the front line trenches.¹⁷

The Learning Community

The FEI was to be a “learning” rather than a “teaching” institution. (Newland recalls he angered the faculty at FEI because he always introduced himself as a school teacher.) Two kinds of learning were intended: the obvious kind in which one person learns by exchanging information and views with another; and a more subtle kind, in which the executives, perceiving that the faculty is willing and eager to learn what it can from people who would ordinarily be

¹⁶ The members of the original Advisory Board are listed in Appendix J.

¹⁷ Many organizations compete to get the “right” people to serve on their Advisory Boards. Having individuals with connections can help open doors for organizations that may have otherwise been closed. Advisory board members assist with planning, fundraising, and most importantly, public relations.

considered as its students, will see a lesson that directly applies to themselves as managers and leaders.

Developing this “openness to learning” would take time — “time for the executives to recognize, articulate and accept their individual learning needs, time to meet some of those needs, time to learn how other needs could be met, time to become sensitive to the needs of others, and time to gain a greater awareness of their potentials as executives and as human beings. To meet such needs, eight weeks seemed hardly enough time” (Roberts, date unknown).

The learning community also meant that students and faculty would learn from one another. This type of interactive relationship ensured that learning would be wonderful, exciting, intensive and worthwhile. Newland (1997) says there were times when he thought, “I should pay them tuition!” Chong Pak echoed this as he marveled that faculty were there for 7:30 a.m. breakfast and still there for the 9:00 p.m. final lecture, not because they *had* to, but because they *wanted* to.

This goal was extended not just to create a learning community for their particular session at FEI, but one that would continue long after the session had ended as executives sought to maintain continuous learning. It was hoped that this approach would increase the executives’ knowledge and openness to learning, forcing them to practice learning as a habit, called by FEI the “long term payoff” (Anderson, 1969).

Choices, choices, choices

During FEI’s early years, the organization was wholly built on the notion that those who are learners will be the best judges of what they needed, therefore much of the development of the learning community was made the responsibility of the executives themselves. It was believed that the executives should be encouraged to find their own learning needs, with FEI faculty there to facilitate that learning and provide guidance and direction. Every minute of the eight week program was discussed, debated and fought over with this key philosophy in mind (Conklin, 1997). A key difference in the FEI curriculum from other executive development programs was the offering of course choices to the executives. No course or activities were

required, which it was hoped would cause the executives to take responsibility for their own learning. Unfortunately, by allowing the executives to choose, often the more rigid executives would stick to the substantively-oriented courses, rather than selecting those that stressed self-awareness or personal development.

A Bent Toward Temporariness

In addition to developing the learning community, another goal for FEI was to remain innovative. This involved the curriculum as well as the faculty. Faculty were to be at FEI for two to four years, and the Director was to stay for five years. This design was developed to promote a constant flow of new ideas.

With the Dean changing for every session and having complete control over that particular session, while there may not have been a radical shift from session to session, it was constantly changing. Larry Kirkart, who came to FEI during its second year on an ASPA post-doctoral fellowship, observed that this evolution did not appear disjointed because there was a very strong commitment to trying to serve the executive. FEI placed no requirements on executives that they even show up for a session, because it was believed they were responsible adults, and if you could not trust these supergrades, whom could you trust?

Not being safe and predictable was difficult for some of those involved with FEI. Jim Beck, Sherwood's Deputy Director, felt that day-to-day insecurity was bad. Newland also wanted a program that would run smoothly and be safe and predictable. Many of the executives expressed the same desire for a structure that would allow them to stay within their comfort zone.

Safe Haven for Learning

FEI was to be a safe haven for learning. Jones (1993) recalls that the FEI environment was designed to be relaxed, informal and uncompetitive. There were to be no grades, no reports and no efforts to call for high performance. Nametags merely listed first name and agency; no titles or degree levels were to be used. A safe haven, however, did not equate to a comfort zone.

Sherwood's philosophy, and therefore the FEI model, was predicated upon a belief that learning occurs in some rough proportion to the tension you feel between where you are and where you want to be.

Time for Reflection

Another critical part of FEI's program was providing quiet time for the executives to use for reflection and leisure; some referred to the experience as a sabbatical. This caused some controversy because the agencies said they had sent their executives there to *work*, not to read or relax. Conklin (1997) recalls an executive coming back to see him years after having attended a program at FEI, and telling him that he wanted to explain about all the time he had spent lying by the pool while attending FEI. He said he was sure Conklin and the others felt he was not doing anything (although Conklin adds that would have been okay too, because sometimes the executives just needed relaxing time for rejuvenation), but that he had completely reorganized his agency after having that quiet time to really think and reflect on the issue. It is often during quiet times such as those that we can have the greatest epiphanies, but unfortunately, they are difficult to explain to the agency heads back in Washington. Unless you have had one of those experiences, you may not believe in their existence.

Facing Transition

Unfortunately, what John Macy, Frank Sherwood, and some of the original faculty members had was a dream — a dream that faded in the strong light of political reality, was crowded out by the competing dreams of others, and was modified in response to pressures from staff members, participating agencies and the executives themselves (Roberts, date unknown).

Competitive behavior came in regardless of attempts to keep it out. Jones (1993) recalls that even before each session was a week old, competition became clearly visible. Some of this related to faculty, some to the executives themselves. It became a straddle to take this individual-centered philosophy and carry it out in a program that had to have some structure,

with faculty able to teach certain things. Tension arose between faculty members as Jones and Williams were concerned that there was too much structure, and Neuchterlein and others wanted more structure. It was also difficult for the executives to completely forget the competitive nature of the world from which they came.

The relationship with the University of Virginia was never truly nurtured or encouraged, partly because an interest in conventional lectures, the style most prevalent at UVA, dwindled fast. Michael Harmon (1998), who was on the original faculty on a one-year contract, said the relationship between FEI and UVA was always strained, which was unfortunate since it was one of the reasons Charlottesville was selected as the site for FEI. He says that the reason for this was not so much because UVA felt FEI was doing weird executive development things, but rather because public administration as an intellectual field was “almost beneath contempt.” The programs at FEI therefore were composed almost entirely of FEI faculty, although UVA did provide some graduate assistantships, brought in other college and university students for summer stints, and brought in visiting faculty from UVA and other schools. Henry was also concerned that more intellectual interchange did not occur between the University and what FEI was doing. He did concede that in the first decades there was never enough money to both meet FEI expenses and commit to a UVA lease for building a new permanent location. Without this connection, there were no other incentives to link UVA either structurally or academically, and UVA was unwilling to make a further institutional commitment, partially because of an internal failure of its own School of Public Affairs.

There was one direct intervention from Washington as to what the faculty were doing in the program at FEI. About twelve to eighteen months after the program had started, news (much miscued) of the “sensitivity training” shocked some agencies who complained to top people in Washington; they called Sherwood and suggested that he reconsider some of that type of training, to which Sherwood agreed. This was further limited by Newland, who felt one facilitator had almost been doing group hypnosis, which defeated the viewpoint that the executive should be in control and under self control. It was also deemed unnecessary because he felt it was possible — and preferable — to have “plain ‘ole” interaction without resorting to games and tricks. Newland felt it was better to teach by example than by manipulation, because

“authenticity begets authenticity.”

The market structure that was unique to the FEI program was both a blessing and a curse. It was a blessing in that it kept FEI from becoming politicized as part of the general budget, but it was a curse as a tension arose in defining whether FEI’s customer was the executive attending the program or the agency that was sending the executive to FEI. While Sherwood was a great believer in this market orientation, it tended to undermine the ability to remain individual-centered.

Furthermore, the process of being individual-centered provided opportunities for abuses and irresponsibility. Collins (1997) recalls executives using this philosophy to their benefit by responding that “We’ll tell you what we need to know ... don’t tell us ... or challenge us ... or make us unhappy.” Collins felt the program *should* be challenging and vigorous, not a vacation, which some executives had reported the experience to be.

In addition, several contextual changes would cause change at FEI. The Civil Service Commission (CSC) was transformed into the Office of Personnel Management, with an inherent structural change from having three civil service commissioners (with one chair) to one head of OPM. The first shift from Macy to Hampton was the beginning. Sherwood (1998) comments that whereas Macy viewed executives as being slaves of the President, Hampton’s view was *don’t trust the President*. Whereas Macy was exuberant, extroverted, and always optimistic, a personality that predisposed him toward the university and its free, open exchange of ideas, Hampton was much more reserved, more concerned with the immediate and the practical, and more conservative in all areas (Sherwood, 1993). An immediate evidence of this shift was Hampton’s order that all brochures labeled, “President’s Program in Executive Education” be thrown away, to be renamed the “Residential Program in Executive Education.” Nonetheless Hampton still protected FEI. However, further changes would occur when Scotty Campbell became the first director of the new Office for Personnel Management (OPM) without a history with FEI, and he did not want FEI to be “out there doing its own thing.” He felt it important to develop a specific and articulated curriculum.

Tom Murphy succeeded Newland as FEI’s third director. He originally turned the job down because he had some things he thought should happen that Hampton did not support.

Primarily, he felt that FEI should involve political people. For many years, FEI had almost bent over backwards to keep out political issues, but Murphy felt it was critical to understand how to get along with these people who come through agencies every couple of years. After all, these were the people they had to deal with to get their programs to be successful. Hampton said that while it might be a nice idea, it would be impossible to do at the time, especially after a crisis like Watergate where many of the career public servants had lost their respect for political appointees.

A second program Murphy felt should be implemented was to get state and local executives involved, asking whether FEI was an institution just for federal executives, or for any executives who spend federal money. Hampton said that was off mission, but Murphy argued that since 10% of the seats go vacant, and they have already been paid for by departments, so FEI should develop a scholarship program. His argument was that It would also help to have people on stand-by to fill in whenever there is a no-show. Also, he felt it would be useful for the federal executives to interact with those executives who have to put their policies in action. Murphy was responsible for developing a conference for Assistant Secretaries, but the program was perceived as violating FEI culture by videotaping all plenaries and taping all the small groups (with their permission). The program was later developed into a book (*Inside the Bureaucracy: the View from the Assistant Secretary Desk*) co-authored by two FEI faculty members, Stupak and Neuchterlein.

Scotty Campbell also brought Murphy into Washington to work on the Civil Service Reform Act while serving as FEI Director. For one and one-half years, Murphy traveled back and forth between FEI and Washington. This was the first time that FEI had a director that was mostly removed from the community.

All of these issues and events configured an impetus for change at FEI. It was just beginning to hit the rapids for a ride that would put the survival of the organization in question.

CHAPTER FIVE
ROCKY ROAD — EXECUTIVE, KNOW THY WORTH
1980 to 1987

Or lack of it, should we say? While the economy was going through some problems at the end of the 1970s and we were faced with the Iran hostage crisis, for FEI, the “rocky road” would emerge from the election of 1980. For many this event marked the advent of the Reagan administration, but as far as FEI was concerned, it was important for marking the advent of the Devine administration. With Devine at OPM, FEI’s foundation was shaken. Instead of challenging executives, FEI itself would be challenged. Instead of taking executives to a “rocky top” experience, FEI would feel the rocks crumbling down around it.

It was also a time of growing public mistrust over, and disillusionment with, government. An article by Terry Culler (1986) appeared in the Wall Street Journal denouncing the need for having “the best of the best” in government. He felt it was a waste to have the top brainpower in government, because “a good case can be made that those individuals are needed in the private sector where wealth is produced rather than consumed.” He added these comments:

Spending more money to hire the top talent to run the government is a bad idea for five reasons: It would raise the cost of government when the burden of its support is now too great; there is relatively little turnover at higher levels of the bureaucracy (indicating general satisfaction with current salary levels); current salaries are more than sufficient to attract qualified applicants; higher salaries probably would not attract more highly qualified applicants to the government; and the brightest and most talented people should work in the private sector where they can contribute to the process of wealth creation necessary to maintain a healthy society ... The most important argument against seeking out the highest-quality employee for the federal government seems to me, however, to be an argument that recognizes the private sector as the true vehicle for prosperity, social cohesiveness and national welfare, and as the place where we ought to encourage our best and brightest minds to migrate. Encouraging the

most highly talented people to take up government as a career will only encourage more of the misguided entrepreneurial government that has saddled us with a massive debt and a huge bureaucracy while denying those skills to the private sector.”

Underlying his destructive words appears to be the assumption that if executives became developed, they would be harder to control. Interestingly, Culler was under Devine at OPM as the associate director for work-force effectiveness and development.¹⁸ His words imply little interest for executive development in government, and little belief in the values of government executives. Although he says he is calling not for government “mediocrity” but for government employee “sufficiency,” his message regarding the executives’ worth was clearly evident.

CONTEXT

In the 1970s, a “virtual grass-roots revolt” against government began to emerge spontaneously (King and Stivers, 1998). The public bureaucracy, as evidenced in the Culler article, had been under increasing attack since the Nixon administration. In 1980, Reagan was elected on a platform that was heavily anti-government and anti-bureaucracy. Great cutbacks in programs were initiated, and society became management-oriented, particularly in cutback management. The field of public administration grew even more fragmented, with factions rejecting administration and focusing on policy, while others formed a new PA Theory group.

The executives attending FEI felt angry at how government (and society) was treating them. They were being told (directly and indirectly) that if people in private sector were running government it would work better. Toward the end of this era at FEI, the nation was once again facing crises — in 1986, the space shuttle Challenger explodes (on national television, carrying the first civilian, a school teacher) and the Iran-Contra scandal begins to unfold. Hard recalls the executives felt they were in a “no-win” situation — the government was beating up on them;

¹⁸ At the time this article was written, Culler had moved from OPM to running his own private executive search firm.

the politicals were running on platforms against the “bureaucrat” and the system; and the public was (not surprisingly) disdainful and aloof. To counter these views, Goodsell (1994) publishes *The Case for Bureaucracy*, proposing that administration is actually a solution, that bureaucracy actually function, and about good people doing a good job. This was further the impetus for The Blacksburg Manifesto (1982), making the bold assertion that we actually have a positive role in government.

Under Tom Murphy’s directorship, FEI was now in a financially precarious situation. Murphy had never truly felt connected to FEI either professionally or physically. He never moved his family to Charlottesville and spent much of his time in DC. He never felt part of the collegial atmosphere in the learning community at FEI. His involvement with CSRA was seen as an excuse to be home and away from FEI. The faculty liked this somewhat because they were left alone, but even in his absence he was spending money. FEI operated on a revolving fund instead of appropriations, and while this kept the organization from becoming political, the surpluses were easily expendable.

An additional side of the problem was that until now, FEI had seen the participant as the client, and had failed to recognize that OPM was also a client. Under the Government Reform Act, OPM had become the political arm of the White House, a relationship that had not been duly recognized by executives (Hard, 1997). FEI had been looking at OPM as they did the CSC, and that was a mistaken perspective.

The FEI has Bob Matson and Ralph Bledsoe to thank for its survival during those tenuous years. Matson did a tremendous job of protecting FEI, and by dealing with the boundaries and protecting those within FEI from the problems. While Bledsoe had served on the faculty at FEI, he had his biggest influence on FEI after he left. Macy had recruited him to start the Emergency Management Institute, based on putting FEI principles into training civil defense for managing crises and emergencies. He was there for several months when Reagan was elected. Bledsoe feels that Devine was not nearly the threat that many felt him to be, because FEI had too many supporters in Washington, D.C. In fact, the plans for downsizing at that time were not nearly the scale of the ones faced in recent years. While he agrees that

Devine was indeed abrasive and appeared to be trying to destroy the civil service, Bledsoe worked closely with Ed Meese, whom he said was committed “to not let anything bad happen” to FEI. At one point FEI had actually been zeroed out, but this action was slowed down through the OMB process, giving Ed Meese time to buy in as a protector.

Part of the trouble began brewing not with FEI’s program, but with FEI’s physical property. FEI had been leasing the property and the owners had decided they wanted to sell it. General Electric had put in a competitive bid for the property, although GSA started an initiative to declare imminent domain for it. The judge ruled that there was a bona fide offer, so FEI had to decide whether they were going to buy the property or move. FEI alumni became involved in petitioning the administration to keep FEI. Funds had actually already been appropriated for both purchase and capital improvements, so Meese announced (to a receptive and enthusiastic FEI Alumni Association meeting) that they would indeed be buying the property so FEI would have a permanent home there.

Bob Matson became director after Murphy left and took quite a beating from Devine, particularly on management issues. Many of these problems occurred as a legacy to Carter’s reorganization, and to the change in leadership at OPM from having a Civil Service Commission with three commissioners, to one politically-motivated Director. Not only was there a change in the structure of OPM leadership, but with the change the FEI director no longer reported directly to the Chairman of the Civil Service Commission, but rather to an OPM associate director for executive training. Devine even refused to include careerists in decision meetings at the agency, fearing that they would attempt to usurp the power of the appointees (Colvard, 1996). The first OPM director, Scotty Campbell, was indeed lukewarm to FEI. Whereas Frank Sherwood had been the “west coast guru” at USC, Campbell was perceived as the “east coast guru” speaking for Syracuse methods. Following Campbell, Devine came in and continued the attitude.

By this point, FEI’s leased building needed major repairs. Devine, “concerned about ‘tremendous expenditures necessary to bring it up to a decent living standard’ and unhappy with the quality and content of the curriculum, considered moving it” something his critics thought was “a smoke screen for a homicide” (Havemann, 1987).

The next director at OPM, Constance Horner, with Jim Colvard as her Deputy, was more sympathetic and enthusiastic towards FEI. Colvard, having attended FEI and also serving as a lecturer, took the initiative to bring Horner and the associate directors to FEI. They agreed to redesign the OPM structure, so that FEI would once again report directly to the Director. At this point talks began about the constitutional base, the legitimacy of the executive, and what role they have in that system.

INTELLECTUAL CATALYSTS

While Matson was critical to FEI's survival, by his own (almost apologetic) admission his tenure as Director was devoted to that survival, not to creating or developing FEI's intellectual climate. He was successful in maintaining FEI's course, and ensuring that it continued to operate on the basis of "business as usual." This was not an easy task, as FEI – structure and content – was being analyzed and challenged by the political regime. There were rumblings about FEI's seemingly protected independence, and also the content of the programs in the residential program.

The climate was being shaken by Devine. As mentioned above, the field was responding to Reagan's cutback initiatives. Devine determined it was not appropriate for FEI to be "out there" operating on their own without control from Washington. His major concern was that FEI was trying to change personality, rather than deal with executive training. He felt FEI needed to have a more pedagogical approach, to have a structured, standard, applied curriculum that would be consistent across the sessions. Beyond this, he was also concerned with appearances; sensing that the public view of training in government was that it was some kind of vacation, and with trainings often taking place in very nice locations, he felt it was important for the training to *be* serious and to *appear* to be serious. He also felt it was politically difficult to justify on-the-edge training. The executives needed to receive training that would be immediately applicable upon their return to the agency. These beliefs would become materialized in FEI's curriculum and program, as Devine sought to make specific changes in those areas, affecting both content and process.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTS — CONTENT

During the 1970s, FEI had several directors and an almost continual turnover of faculty, leading many to sense that FEI's mission had become blurred and the curriculum had drifted, losing critical links between FEI and the University of Virginia, the academic community, and business executive training centers. Gradually, it began gaining a reputation as a place SES members were sent during slow times in their agencies, or because they were unproductive. There were complaints (some legitimate) that FEI's curriculum was a "hodgepodge of old ideas, new ideas, soft ideas and political ideas. It has no unifying theme or dominant scholarly thrust. One can't remember the last time a breakthrough in management thinking or training was hatched at FEI" (Levine, 1988).

There was not much opportunity during these years to focus on the intellectual content of FEI's program — the focus had to be on survival. At the same time, there were some tangible impacts from the Devine administration on the program. Devine first tried to close FEI; when that did not work, he tried to have it moved to Emmitsburg, MD; and when that too failed, he became content with resisting what FEI had been doing, and to change becoming more politically prescriptive. Devine tried to change the curriculum because it provided "too much soft management and not enough hard – too much psychology and not enough business administration." He wanted to get rid of "sensitivity training" (Havemann). Hard recalls there was some call for getting rid of choices — they asked "don't you know what they're supposed to do? Why give them choices?" Devine wanted FEI to be like the Brookings and Cato Institutes. He also felt the program should only be one or two weeks long; they compromised at the current 4 week program.

Devine's (1998) major concern was that FEI was trying to change personality rather than deal with executive training, therefore the focus had to move away from being a "feel good, touch good" institution to becoming a true training institution. He said that although it may be unfortunate that the public's view of training in government (remember the Wall Street Journal article) is that it is some kind of vacation, we have to fight that view by providing training that not only *appears* to be serious but *is* serious. Even if he personally had thought more of that

“on-the-edge” kind of training, politically it is very difficult to defend. His whole goal, therefore, became to take it out of sensitivity-type training and to make the training more job-relevant. Thus, he sent people in to move it in that direction.

For the first time in FEI’s history, it was now given specific directives for courses to teach and faculty to hire. Although there was a freeze on hiring, Devine specifically required FEI to offer teaching on supply side economics by hiring a supply side economist as well as a philosopher selected by him. Devine, however, was unpopular in the Reagan administration and knowing that he was not going to be appointed for a second term, chose to withdraw from consideration.

In so doing, substance did begin to shift somewhat. Instead of focusing on the Constitution as the first thing, or on the executives themselves, it became important to emphasize the phenomena of the day as having more direct day-to-day impact. Workshops covered specific laws applicable to the executives, and new budget concepts like ZBB. Bledsoe said that while the program was not the same, it was just as relevant, and right on target with what it should be. It was important to get executives to come to grips with where they fit in, and to get them involved in the process.

It was also important to try and keep up with the executives’ changing needs, the kind of pressure executives were feeling. As discussed earlier, they weren’t feeling very highly valued, and knowing that, the intellectual content needed to focus on what was basic about government, to see our role in that, and not to get sucked into the political rhetoric. It was necessary to review the basics of democracy; many had never even read the Constitution. It was important for the executives to understand that the tension was present because the founding fathers set it up that way, so there would not be blind trust.

Thus began the push for a “Back to Basics” curriculum — while not overwhelming, it was a response to the tension being felt. There had been criticism from early on that some of the things were not directly connected. Some of this had been fueled by the Devine criticism which, although it had the appearance of a personal vendetta, was actually grounded in sincere concern.

This push would be greatly expanded with the appointment of Mike Hansen as Director, moving the organization into its next era.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTS — PROCESS

Changes began to occur in the difference between being learner-driven versus leader-driven. Matson admits that it became necessary to compromise to save the institution. Devine decided that not only would OPM be prescriptive about the curriculum, but all faculty were to supply their notes for Devine's review to meet his standard. Fortunately, he was too busy to implement his critique.

In addition, the FEI program was restructured. The seven-week program was shortened to the current four-week program. This in itself was a compromise, as Matson says Devine really wanted it to be a two-week program. Devine felt that in reducing the program length and revising its curriculum, "FEI now would be the place where top careerists would be trained in how to work *for* the new influx of conservative appointees in the executive branch" (Levine, 1988). Notice he did not utilize the word "with" — Devine felt that careerists were "on tap, not part of the top" (Levine).

Change Needed

Understanding the current issues facing FEI were just the beginning; as with any problem, the solution cannot be found until there is admission of a problem. FEI now realized it needed to make some changes. It understood that the Institute could not return to the old FEI of 1968 or 1980 to find its mission. It needed instead to break new ground, accepting that government and its career executives had moved on to a new state of affairs never before contemplated.

Concerned about this lack of direction, OPM Director Connie Horner conducted an extensive search for the next executive director at FEI. She sensed that there was an even larger problem, that not only was FEI struggling, but the SES itself was floundering, with moderately low morale. This was not just a result of the top direction (or lack thereof), but it was also

structural. Horner (1998) says that when Americans are taught civics, they are taught about the important institutions of government, but bureaucracy and its leadership are not taught as one of those significant components. This leads to one cause for low morale from a lack of sense for where they fit within the constitutional system. Inspired by the Bicentennial celebration of the United States Constitution, she therefore had two goals with FEI:

1. Use the FEI as a vehicle for creating a sense of separateness.
2. Teach these executives what their role is in the constitutional scheme of things; elevate their sense of worth.

For these goals to be met, she needed to find a “cracker jack” director, one who would have the intelligence to understand FEI’s mission, while having the executive skill to construct a new facility both curricularly and physically.

Furthermore, Horner admits that if it had been politically prudent she would have removed all of the behavioral aspects at FEI, particularly things like the Myers Briggs test. (Unfortunately, she says, affection for Myers Briggs was extremely high with faculty so she left it alone.) She asserts that these “games” are simply symbols of the 1970s managerial ethos that relationships and feelings are everything and content was irrelevant; it became her goal to reverse that. She remains convinced that in the SES a focus on feelings is contrary to decisiveness, action orientation, and the substance requirements of self-confident leaders. It was now necessary to expand the introduction of the broad external environment into SES decisionmaking. Many executives did not see themselves as executives; they did not read broadly, choosing to remain focused in their primary area (reading purchasing journals, engineering journals, etc.) without having an understanding of being one part of a big group of players. Instead of executives hiding away from the other groups, Horner decided it would be useful to bring in the outside world, not just technique but politics. The executives should be identifying themselves with senior elected corporate officials, instead of identifying with the upper management.

Thus entered Mike Hansen as FEI’s next director. Headlines at that time read, “*Can Mike Hansen Rescue the Federal Executive Institute*” (with an answer implied in the subtitle,

“Mike Hansen’s Mission Impossible”), *“Executive Training Entering a New Era: Director Reviving Faded Institution,”* and *“Bringing Back FEI.”* He indeed had his challenges before him, challenges that would require action, commitment, direction, and authority to action. The steps taken would be responsible for determining FEI’s fate and mission for the future. Hansen would need to reassert FEI’s legitimacy and role, and reassert their leading role in executive education.

CHAPTER SIX

SOLID ROCK — EXECUTIVE, KNOW THY ROLE

1987 to 1998

As the old adage goes, you cannot go home again. Such would be the case with FEI. It would never be able to be the same, in some ways innocent, place that it once was. The problem, many said, was that FEI, both faculty and students, seemed to bend over backward to deal with present management as if it had nothing to do with politics.

With Mike Hansen's appointment as Director, FEI began its move onto a solid rock, recreating the niche it was designed to fill, being exhorted by then-OPM Director Constance Horner to make it "the flagship academy and the flagship experience for members of the SES [because it is] the sole institution available to give the SES a strong sense of itself and its place in the U.S. government" (Havemann, 1987). Horner gave Hansen the prestige and authority necessary to upgrade the Institute, inviting him to her weekly staff meetings — access unheard of in the past — and taking interest in his every action — out of sincere interest, rather than concern for control and oversight.¹⁹

CONTEXT

The late 1980s and early 1990s brought political challenges and victories. Communism collapses in Eastern Europe, and the Iraqis are defeated during the Gulf War. There is an attempt to restore faith, belief, and trust in government. In 1989, the Volcker Commission (the National Commission on the Public Service) calls for a revitalization of the public service. In 1993, Osborne and Gaebler published *Reinventing Government*, followed up by an announcement of the Clinton/Gore initiatives of the same name. Many people remain distrustful of the government's ability to accomplish anything, believing the reinventing government movement was being used as a cover-up for the dismantling of government

¹⁹ Whereas Devine had refused to include careerists in decision meetings, Horner would not conduct a policy meeting *without* careerists present. Although it was understood that she maintained policy authority and decisionmaking power, the careerists were appreciated and needed for their ability to provide advice on policy alternatives (Colvard, 1996).

agencies.

The 1980's produced a proliferation of "how-to" books on leadership, such as Bennis and Nanus, Leaders (1985), Kouzes and Posner, The Leadership Challenge (1987) and Peters and Waterman, In Search of Excellence (1982). These concepts would be important in defining and redefining FEI's mission and direction. Bennis provides the following differentiation:

Leading does NOT mean managing, and the difference between the two is crucial: i.e., the activities of vision and judgment versus the activities of efficiency. The Leader is a decision-maker dealing with four entities: one, the immediate management team; two, constituencies within the organization; three, forces outside of the organization; and four, the media. The Leader must then be able to:

1. *Develop the vision and the strength to call the shots;*
2. *Be a conceptualizer, not simply nuts and bolts tinkerer with the organization;*
3. *Have a sense of continuity and significance in order to see the present;*
4. *Take the risks of getting out front;*
5. *Get at the truth and know how to filter the mass flow of information into coherent patterns;*
6. *Be a "social architect" who studies and shapes the "culture of work," i.e., the intangibles hard to discern but so important to governing the way people act and the way norms and values are subtly transmitted to individuals and groups and which tend to create binding and bonding; and*
7. *To lead others, the leader must first know himself.*

The concept of the leader becomes critical to FEI, as its definition directly relates the the core program, Leadership for a Democratic Society. As FEI seeks to redefine itself, it faces a context where public administration is also seeking its own identity, its own sense of legitimacy.

As with the other eras, there have been crises to deal with; one of the most prevalent and painful was the Oklahoma City Bombing. This was a personal affront to many of the executives, who saw themselves in the faces of those traumatized or killed by the disaster. A deep sadness and sense of vulnerability affected them.

The contemporary programs also reflect the greater diversity in society. More women, more minorities, and more international participants give the programs greater potential for rich discussion and expanded understanding. The programs also reflect different social and family situations, as more executives are getting married later, having children later, and must also deal with balancing work and family as both parents work.

INTELLECTUAL CATALYSTS

Mike Hansen brought a uniquely-mixed background to FEI. He, like many of the others, was a graduate of the USC program, with former FEI Director Chet Newland having served as his dissertation chair. He was also, however, trained in political science. He had worked with government executives in California at all levels: federal, state and local. While he had always liked the FEI program, unlike others, he was not in awe of the Institute. He saw the curriculum as being woefully out of date; found that the facilities were falling down (participants often called it a “dump”); that there was no OPM visibility for the program (OPM had been pushing FEI further and further down in the organization); and that the customers were saying it was irrelevant. During his first week on the job, he got a call from one of FEI’s biggest customers, the Department of Defense, saying they were about to “pull the plug” and quit sending executives to FEI. The Department of Defense had been utilizing about 37% of the slots at FEI, and with the IRS having already pulled out their 10%, Hansen was facing a potential loss of almost half of FEI’s clients.

Hansen says he first had to convince himself that the organization was “saveable.” Once he did that, he set about convincing everyone else of this. Then it was time to make the FEI a “total quality experience,” both physically and intellectually.

First, he brought in a blue ribbon committee to determine “what is best practice.” The

committee was composed of individuals from corporate, political, and public fields.²⁰ Before they could even begin to evaluate the curriculum, it was determined that the structure was wrong, so they decided to front-load all the diagnostics. They also had to return to the attitude that FEI needs to constantly innovate. This is discussed further in this chapter under *Institutional Effects — Content*.

Beyond the FEI program itself, the FEI facility was falling apart. By linking the renovation of the building to the curriculum, Hansen says they were able to create a sense of action so that people would feel something exciting was happening. The curriculum changes were not directly visible, but the physical evidence of the construction demonstrated that things were happening. In fact, he said he told the construction crews to “make it messy as long as possible.” He wanted to make FEI not only a top-notch program, but a top-notch facility. He brought in a consultant of Mobil guides who rated hotels, and he recalls she rated the FEI facility as “one step above a truck stop.” She gave him a list of things to be done and he set about putting the plan into action.

With the curriculum and physical building repairs underway, Hansen turned to the political environment. Of primary concern was the fact that agencies were dropping out. Hansen decided to put himself in the position of being a colleague to the customers. He picked the top twenty-five agencies executives were coming from, and set out to visit each one personally. He told them of “the bottom line:” he was actively improving the facilities and curriculum, making FEI a place where people would want to be, a place that would be a factor in government. In return, they had to understand and accept that if he did this, he would have to raise prices by one-third. He challenged them to stick with him and to make a commitment to FEI for two years by continuing to send their executives. He warned them against sending the wrong people, because if they did, he would send them home. They all agreed to his stipulations and were enthusiastic about partnering with FEI.

He also got involved with the IPMA board, ASPA, and other professional organizations,

²⁰ The members of the curriculum committee are listed in Appendix E.

getting himself on panels and programs in all areas. He wanted to increase FEI's visibility and stature in the public realm. By telling the story, being present, and becoming involved, Hansen was able to make FEI a player again.

In addition to developing partner relationships with the agencies, Hansen also developed a partner relationship with OPM. Director Horner said that she would only be in office for another 18 months, so he should get everything done in that time frame because there was no way of knowing what would happen next. Hansen was therefore under a time constraint to implement his changes quickly.

Hansen came to FEI wearing and distributing buttons declaring "FEI IS BACK." He recalls that this offended the alumni, who did not want to accept that FEI had ever gone anywhere. While Hansen admits he may have been brash, he had to accomplish many goals in a short time. In retrospect, he says that if he had had the luxury of time, he could have worked more closely with the alumni through this process.

When Hansen left FEI, a national search was conducted for his replacement. Dee Henderson was selected for the position, and came in as changes were taking place with the new Clinton administration. Henderson felt the most important thing to consider was the executives and what kind of training they were receiving. He examined how much they were being influenced by politics, and whether that topic was or was not appropriate for inclusion in FEI's program. He felt the executives should be learning their capacities, their strengths and weaknesses, how to accomplish goals and to develop people to reach personal and professional goals and mission. It was important not to be prescriptive, because then contradictory ideas are not considered. We need to step back, and see where the administration is, and look for what else is out there. It was his belief that FEI had to allow for the consideration of different ideas, even those contrary to the current administration. Personally, he felt FEI should have been created as a foundation, to keep it further away from political influences. During his tenure, he pushed for using the 360° feedback tool²¹, and for bringing more international executives into

²¹ The 360° feedback tool requires the executives to distribute an evaluation tool to their superior(s), subordinate(s), and peer(s). FEI faculty member Bob Maranto says that typically the

FEI. Henderson felt FEI had to allow for more latitude in what was being taught, with a key of developing excellence in leadership. He said it was critical to allow for divergences and conceptual differences; FEI needed to expand the mind, not hammer it. The program should be much more rigorous, with executives expecting to go and work hard. At this highest level of learning, there was an inherent need for more open-mindedness, latitude of curriculum, and for a teaching of concepts. He felt it was possible to still cover OPM's competencies while integrating with FEI's hallmark behavioral programs.

The 1990s and the administration of Clinton and Gore brought managerial and leadership changes to the federal system. In 1993, President Bill Clinton announced a government-wide initiative to reinvent government called the National Performance Review. This same year he also signed into law the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, requiring federal agencies to develop strategic plans for how they will deliver high quality products and services to the American people. Further, he issued an Executive Order requiring federal agencies to determine from their customers the kind and quality of services they wanted. To reinvent government, they were asking federal workers to put customers first, cut red tape, empower employees to get results, and cut back to basics. The action plan was designed to:

- Create a clear sense of mission
- Steer more, row less
- Delegate authority and responsibility
- Help communities solve their own problems
- Replace regulations with incentives
- Develop budgets based on outcomes
- Inject competition into everything
- Search for market, not administrative solutions
- Measure successes by customer satisfaction

peer ratings are the lowest, particularly in highly competitive workplaces. While he says many executives resist handing them out, virtually all do so in the end. Maranto adds that this can be a stressful process for the executives, but that when there are negative indications on their forms, it generally means they are "good people in the wrong jobs."

In order to redesign a government that would work better and cost less, they recognized a need for:

- New ideas and creative thinking
- Leadership from agency officials
- Employee empowerment and teamwork
- Interagency cooperation
- partnerships with employee unions, state and local governments, and the business community
- Congressional action; and
- Support from the American people.

Since 1993, the National Performance Review has reported savings of \$137 billion and the development of over 4,000 customer service standards.²² To reflect further changes, the National Performance Review has been renamed, because the time for “review” is now over. The new name, “National Partnership for Reinventing Government,” builds on the past successes and emphasizes the mission behind the movement.

When Terry Newell joined the faculty at FEI, he came with certain perceptions of what FEI was about and what it should be doing. He had attended FEI in 1992 and, when Hansen became director, Newell sent him a letter outlining his thoughts and perceptions — basically, he felt that FEI needed to do more regarding organizational change. As a participant, he had felt that the general sense was that FEI was only a four week program and if we did our job well as individuals that was the best we could do — for Newell, that was not enough.

FEI was going through an almost complete internal faculty metamorphosis during this time. Long time faculty members Allen Hard and Pat Conklin were retiring; Linda Winner was leaving; and Bob Gest had just arrived. Newell went to Hard and said that it was necessary to pull everyone together to share FEI’s story with the new members, to provide an understanding

²² Statistics as reported under “Accomplishments” on the National Performance Review’s web site, <http://www.npr.gov/accompl/index.html>.

of where FEI was from, and where it was going. He was concerned that they would start making changes without knowing what was going on and why. It was important for them to understand the FEI culture and values.

Another issue that concerned Newell was that while one of FEI's values was that learning is a lifelong endeavor, they were bringing executives here for four weeks and then saying goodbye and sending them back to their agencies. From much of this discussion, the Center for Executive Leadership was born. (This will be discussed in the next chapter.)

During the midst of these changes, OPM Director Jim King called Henderson into his office and informed him that they had appointed Curt Smith to be FEI's director. Henderson recalls this was quite a shock to him, but it was apparent that they wanted their "own person" there at FEI, and he had been quite proactive about the political program.

Curt Smith was appointed to FEI from a position at OPM as Associate Director for Retirement and Insurance Services. He considers himself somewhat of an anomaly at FEI because his background is in English literature. He does have an earned PhD in Management, which he feels allows him to be representative of the executive establishment rather than the academic or political establishment. Smith had been at FEI as a student in 1987, while Matson was director. He recalls that as a participant, he could see potential, that more could be accomplished in four weeks — people weren't working hard enough, "they should go to bed feeling whipped!" He felt it was important to think through what was important for the clients, and to help people understand themselves, and subsequently the context within which they are working. He does feel that choices remain fundamental at FEI; if they were being prescriptive, the choices would be eliminated. He felt it was important to help the executives (he actually said managers) understand themselves, and then the context in which they were working. He felt the bad things happening to federal executives were happening because they had forgotten the environmental context. He did say, however, that if the executives needed to "find themselves," they should do it on their own time. The training at FEI should instead focus on relating everything to being an executive.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTS — CONTENT

The contemporary structure of FEI's program actually began with Matson. He says that he opened every session by telling the executives, "You're here, literally, to join a second profession. First was what got you into government — second is where you are now, making government work." The executives needed to get far away from being an engineer, a lawyer, or whatever profession first brought them into their career. Thus, a refocusing of their role became the intellectual challenge. He said the executives must now take on a sense of responsibility of how they fit into the government structure, not just worrying about their particular piece in it. This is the difference being system dependent versus being a system leader. This sentiment was echoed by FEI's Assistant Director Pam Gwin, who comments that "I see it as a broadening experience in the sense of making people aware of a broader environment, that their particular piece of their agency is no longer their whole world" (Washington Talk, 1989).

Matson was followed by Hansen. Hansen came in to clean house, with only one faculty member and the assistant director surviving. He also felt it was necessary to overhaul the curriculum, borrowing bits and pieces from the most current management techniques in the private sector, the university environment and other areas in the Government. "Though it opened in 1968 on the cutting edge of executive training programs, the institute, by the early 1980's, was mired in what many describe as an outdated, 'touchy-feely' approach to management" (Washington Talk, 1989).

Hansen felt that the curriculum needed to be grounded in values, and needed to be well-rounded. He therefore brought in the 360° feedback instrument and health programs. Hansen was largely influenced by the multi-frame approach developed by Bolman and Deal (1984). This approach was based on four frames: technical, behavioral, political, and symbolic. It was believed that FEI did not have an intellectual framework, and so the question became: "*what can we do for the executives that they're not now getting from their agency?*" The answer was this multi-frame approach:

BEHAVIORAL — What is in the way of the executives being effective?

POLITICAL — How can they build coalitions to be successful?

TECHNICAL — What technical skills and resources are needed?

SYMBOLIC — What is it all about?

To this end, the FEI mission is focused on those three areas delineated in the original presidential letter establishing the FEI:

1. The major problems facing our society and the nature of the Government's response to those problems;
2. The adequacy of the existing structure of Government in relation to today's problems; and
3. The ways in which administration of federal programs can be improved.

FY88 saw the first reprogramming of the FEI curriculum. Pat Conklin (1987) summarized the reorganization as follows:

THE EARLY YEARS

I. THE ENVIRONMENT (of executive performance)

- A. External Environment of Administration
 1. Social, political, and governmental forces
 2. Public policies and missions
- B. Internal Environment of Administration
 1. Administrative organization, processes, and behavior
 2. Alternative organization and management models and analysis

II. MANAGERIAL SYSTEMS & PROCESSES

- A. Administrative Management
 1. Financial management
 2. Manpower management
 3. Property management
 4. Information management
- B. Program and Project Management
 1. Planning & objective setting
 2. Resourcing and implementing
 3. Tracking and evaluation

III. PERSONAL MANAGERIAL SKILLS

- A. Self-assessment and Renewal
- B. Leadership Styles and Skills
- C. Communicating Skills
- D. Counseling & Coaching Skills
- E. Organization Development Skills

FY88 ANNOUNCEMENT

I. THEORETICAL AND POLICY

Courses:

- "Foundations of American Democracy"
- "Development of and Interactions Among American Governmental Institutions"
- "Foreign Policy and National Security"
- "Economic Theory and Market Processes"
- "Theory of Government Management and Public Administration"

II. MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS & PRACTICES

Courses:

- "Strategic Planning and Decision-making models"
- "Executive Management Styles"
- "Personnel Management and Performance Evaluation"
- "Micro-computer use for the Executive"
- "Resource Management"
- "Policy and Program Planning and Evaluation"

III. EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT

Courses:

- "Effective Communications"
- "Conflict Management"
- "Managing Organizational Change"
- "Applied Psychology"
- "Employee Motivation"

In all ways, FEI sees itself as being charged with the development of generalist career executives, rather than with specialized or technical training. In fact, the FEI program is designed to prepare federal executives for the transition from specialist to generalist to leader. This is also based on an assumption that senior level officials are already highly skilled in their technical specialties and the processes of their respective agencies. FEI therefore focuses on “broadening” executives for their “second profession,” one for which they have never received formal training — as leaders and federal career executives.

While Smith did not come on board to make radical changes, he did organize a curriculum review from which four key themes emerged, with a Constitutional framework as the overarching theme:

Constitutional Framework of Democratic Governance			
Personal Leadership in Government: Exercising the personal attributes and skills required to engage others to move toward a common purpose	Transforming Public Organizations: Envisioning, designing, and orchestrating continuous change in response to evolving mandates	Policy in a Constitutional System: Understanding how policy is developed by various stakeholders and translating it into program actions	Global Perspectives and Public Action: Being aware of international trends and future transformations to better meet modern challenges

He adds that OPM has given him an enormous amount of freedom; while the agency might suggest people as worthwhile speakers, it has never given program directives or dictates. When soliciting bids for courses, FEI utilizes these four core areas to develop a list of Priority Course Topics. Appendix F contains the FY 1998 list.

Slippery Slope or Full Circle?

Perhaps FEI’s pendulum is shifting back toward behavioralism somewhat with the introduction of a new component to their program — The Leadership Challenge. Program materials indicate three meanings for this new component:

1. As a senior executive, they should leave FEI with clear answers to three questions: (1) where do you want to lead your followers; (2) how will you get

- there, and (3) what does this require of you in terms of your leadership behavior?
2. For those who have already given considerable thought to these questions, this experience may be one of sharpening and refining, and for testing your assumptions and plans against the realities of what you will learn here and the views of your classmates.
 3. The executives will also have to challenge their organization, and everyone else who looks (or should look) to them for leadership to meet their vision; they need to develop a compelling story about the future.

The leadership challenge is based on several key assumptions:

1. Leadership proceeds from within.
2. Leadership is exercised in the outer environment.
3. Leadership requires a vision.
4. Leadership requires followers.
5. Leadership requires the ability to communicate the vision.
6. Every senior executive at FEI is a leader.

The interesting piece of this project is that the executives are to present their plans in story form — either orally, written, or as a discussion. FEI justifies this method by stating:

If this were just a management training program, we would ask you to prepare a written statement, in traditional bureaucratic language, of what you want to accomplish. But leadership requires that you communicate in a more powerful way.

FEI feels it needs to justify this method because: “the notion of ‘telling a story’ will strike some executives as either childish or ‘touchy-feely.’ It will seem too ‘soft’ to be a serious leadership skill. Others may have the opposite reaction — that telling a story is a great leadership skill, but one in the possession of only the rare, charismatic, national or world leader. Both of these concerns are legitimate and need a reasoned response.”

The materials go on to remind executives of how storytelling has been effective in public administration — such as Thomas Jefferson’s Declaration of Independence and Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” speech. In addition to these well-known, public stories, we use stories every day to describe events in our lives. FEI adds:

As humans, we cannot, try as we might, see the world only as discrete bits of data or information. We have to weave these together and make sense out of them. This is why we create and need stories. Stories transmit values, build cultures (including organizational cultures), and provide a common core of experience that gives meaning to our lives.

Newell felt committed to developing this new component because storytelling is an important process to understand since others will also be telling stories — sometimes counteracting ones — and it is necessary to be aware of them, and possibly respond. As a case-in-point, he recalls a series of television “Harry and Louise” ads aired during Clinton’s 1993 campaign for health care reform, showing a middle class couple expressing fear of the Administration plan. He adds that even within our own organizations, stories are being told. It is important that as leaders, executives must be prepared to craft the appropriate story for their organization and tell it until it becomes part of the organizational culture.

Program Development

The overall structure for the FEI program is set collaboratively by faculty. Gone are the days when there was a Dean for each program who exercised sole discretion over every minute of the seven or eight week programs. Now, the majority of the schedule is consistent from one session to the next and is set for the full fiscal year, with program coordinators used to make sure it all happens. The coordinators usually have a couple of plenaries they can plan, but 90% of the program is pre-established.

Very little of the program is prescriptive — agencies don’t generally talk a lot, nor does OPM. The content is developed internally through review of past history and dialogues with executives and faculty. Conversations with executives are helpful to hear their struggles and

plan for what might be useful to help with those struggles. A major effort is put forward to avoid being faddish, so you won't find specific courses on TQM or reengineering during the FEI program. This prevents giving the impression that FEI shifts with the winds, but rather that there are certain bedrocks to good management and leadership. Newell adds that it is important to ask what executives need, but it is also important to determine what they need. He asserts that even at the FEI founding they had to make certain decisions about what they were going to teach.

This is not to say that these topics are not consciously inserted into the curriculum. There have been some specific requests, such as a course being taught by current FEI faculty member Bob Gest on customer service. While he had both background and experience in this area, he was told that "with the new administration's emphasis on the National Performance Review and considering emphasis on customer service and putting the customer first, we would like for you to develop a course in this area." He developed the program and was told a year later that his overview would need to be rewritten to provide reference in his description and develop a relationship between the Customer Service Workshop and the NPR.

When it does become necessary to locate speakers or new courses, FEI solicits proposals that would fit within the FEI program guidelines. The guidelines have been developed to coordinate with OPM's redefined executive core qualifications (ECQs), which were issued in September 1997 for persons who are employed in the Senior Executive Service (SES). ECQs outline the leadership skills deemed necessary to succeed in the SES, as well as reinforcing the concept of an "SES corporate culture."

Craig Pettibone (1997) writes:

This concept, which should be familiar to graduates of the Federal Executive Institute, holds that the government needs executives who can provide strategic leadership and whose commitment to public policy and administration transcends their commitment to a specific agency mission or an individual profession. Executives with a "corporate" view of government share values that are grounded in the fundamental government ideals of the Constitution; and

they embrace the dynamics of American democracy, an approach to governance that provides a continuing vehicle for change within the federal government.

As meets the FEI structure, these ECQs were designed to assess executive experience and potential, not technical expertise. The five updated executive core qualifications are:

1. Leading Change
2. Leading People
3. Results Driven
4. Business Acumen
5. Building Coalitions/Communication

The FEI program book includes a section on “Senior Executive Service Executive Core Qualifications and Course Selection Information.” The section includes descriptions of the five ECQs (as listed above), including the related leadership competencies. In addition, descriptions for each course option are presented, including course overviews, course agendas, and a table indicating which competencies are addressed during that course. Participants can utilize this information to select courses that will augment their SES qualifications and strengthen their professional portfolio.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTS — PROCESS

Hansen came in with a different philosophy. Since he had taught part-time at executive seminar centers that utilized part-time faculty, he decided to move FEI toward that model. He felt it more beneficial to have a small core faculty, bringing in outside presenters to supplement. He also started the Executives-in-Residence program during this time.

FEI would retain its dedication to the development of the learning community, where students learn from one another and the faculty learn from the students. It was also important to continue to meet students where they are, to let them learn what they need and provide it.

When Hansen came to FEI, he established the Blue Ribbon Commission (as discussed earlier) to evaluate the FEI program and curriculum and determine what changes should be

made. Once this new program was established, it was returned to the faculty and administration to evaluate progress and determine which classes would be retained and which should be changed. A similar review occurred when Smith came to FEI, although certainly not at the same level as was done with Hansen. Smith's review was primarily internal, and was not designed to make any radical changes. Instead, the program was redesigned to reflect the four themes indicated earlier as a way to handle what FEI was all about, asserting the constitutional framework as the overarching theme. While still designed to begin with the individual, it was now believed that the program could not stop there. Newell says that the overall structure today is set collaboratively by faculty, not as it was done in the early years where the dean of each program planned it completely. Much of this was in response to criticism from agencies concerned that the executives they were sending were having totally different programs and experiences at FEI. Neither agencies nor OPM generally comment about program content, although faculty believe that the FEI administration is told either directly or indirectly that "it would be a good idea for FEI to consider offering something in this area." These directives may not be articulated because both Hansen and Smith have been closely in tune with OPM and therefore understand the direction they want FEI to pursue.

The majority of the program, however, is still generated internally. Conversations with executives reveal their struggles and concerns. Newell does maintain that while it is important to *ask* what they need, it is also important at some level to *determine* what they need, and provide it whether or not evaluations may be popular or positive. This is not to say that the customer does not also play a role; some changes have occurred because of comments by the customer. The new Applied Learning Program was developed in response to comments from executives, who said they would like to take one of FEI's programs but could not be away from their home and office for four weeks at a time. Part of the reason was personal, with more executives having young children. The other reason was professional, where the sentiment was "If I can be gone from my agency for four weeks, they may decide they don't need me after all." In response, FEI developed the Applied Learning Program, where executives come to FEI for two weeks, return to their agencies for a three-month "intersession" while working on an Executive Learning Project, and then return to FEI for two additional weeks. Gest says that in

this case, the institution thought it was wise to listen to what the customer was saying rather than what they might have intuitively thought was best. Part of this goes back to the fact that FEI is supported with a market process and is therefore subject to market standards in operations and process.

During my research, it became apparent that in order to truly *understand* FEI, it would be necessary to *experience* it. I discovered people had varying viewpoints on FEI and thus wanted to find out for myself what the program was about. I would like to share some of my selected experiences and thoughts from that four-week session.

Reflections from Program 230

I attended most of Program 230 but was excluded from participating in an Leadership Development Team (LDT) due to a concern for privacy. Unfortunately, I later found out that it was common practice for new interns to go through the complete experience as part of their cultural grounding. I therefore felt cheated out of the true experience, as if everyone else was part of something grand from which I was excluded. Since the program is based on a level playing field, the experience would have been greatly enhanced if I had participated as any other person there, not identified as an “observer-participant.”

Demographics for Program 230 were provided at the opening session. For this particular program, 90% were between the ages of 35-55 (with a median age of 50). Ten percent were minorities and 27% women. Twelve percent have law backgrounds, 33% science and engineering, 33% business, accounting and economics, and 21% other.

Even without participation in the LDTs there were still interesting experiences. At the beginning, the executives were still living in their professional roles — during the breakout session where we were in small groups discussing the Mapp v. Ohio case, there were eight people in the group and no FEI facilitator. This became frustrating because one person in our group was an attorney and everyone kept turning to him for answers. By the third week, it was

obvious they were more comfortable with one another, willing to make risky statements, to stand up for their thoughts and beliefs.

Plenary Sessions

The initial opening session on *Values and the Constitution* was misleading. It was delivered in lecture-style and I could tell most people were bored and not engaged in the topic. It should have more appropriately been titled, *Introduction to the Constitution*, because very little was actually said about the values. The plenary session on the *Contemporary Policy Environment* was useful for setting up the political environment within which the executives are operating. The speaker sets up the constants of American government against the contemporary environment/policymaking arena and how we have developed a new federal culture or the “new public administration.” He presents an interesting process by Gerzon regarding debate and dialogue based on the premise that we have too much debate and not enough dialogue — with conflicting expectations, sometimes we have to be assertive, not likeable, and go against the status quo to get things done. This was a more practical session; while it did not really involve stretching, it was very helpful for setting up the context.

Yet another constitutional session was held with A.E. “Dick” Howard during Week Three. While he is an extremely capable speaker, and the topic was somewhat different as it covered the Supreme Court, it might have been better to have one full afternoon on the Constitution.

Linda Bunker’s session on *Winning Strategies for the Executive Playing Field* was enthusiastically received, both for her persona and her message — attitude is a decision. As a living example of the message she delivers, her presentation was successful and popular.

Personal Development

The *Myers-Briggs* session was interesting. It was probably the first time I have been in a discussion with a group of people where I was the ONLY person with my type, ESFJ. The majority of people who attend FEI are IN(S)TJ’s (71%). This means they think the world *should* work according to rules and guidelines, agreed upon by organizations they work both for and

with. This can cause them considerable tension and frustration, as at their level, many people who succeed seem to do so by bending rules, sidestepping procedures, and asking for “forgiveness” instead of permission.

The *Benchmarks* session with Ken LaFleur and Bob Pate was an interesting process. There was a lot of nervous gibberish before the actual reports were handed back. They emphasized that participants should be asking three big questions: *What got me to where I am? What do I need to move ahead? Do I want to move ahead?* They emphasized that the important thing to remember is that one can have the experience and miss the meaning.

Courses Taken

Aspen Institute. The Aspen Institute prides themselves on being “a little different from the other sessions,” and it was an appropriate claim. The program is based on the four points of The Executive’s Compass, specifically liberty, efficiency, equality, and community. The course began with readings from Hobbes, Mill and Friedman. *Equality* included readings from Rousseau and deTocqueville; *efficiency* included Plato and Hamilton; and *community* included Aristotle and Doi Takeo. It was nice to hear several participants say, “[T]his was a great excuse to read some of this stuff.” Session leader David Newell said that people had initially told FEI that no one would want to come to this seminar because it was too academic and not practical enough, but the group noted that it does have practical applications, and it has obviously been one of the most popular and successful programs at FEI.

Surprisingly, I had my only “run-in” with a participant during the final class. The tables had been rearranged and space seemed tight, and when I went to sit in my normal space (where I’d been sitting for the four previous days), one female executive from NSF did not budge and simply said, “we’re pretty tight right here,” even rejecting others’ offers to move down. Thankfully, another participant insisted on moving down in a different direction and making space for me.

Justice and Individual Rights. Many sessions involved getting people to move outside their job. John Irving introduced his class by saying this would not be one of those classes where

evaluations ask you how well the seminar helped you with your job, but rather was designed to get you thinking, to get you out of your box. Values and rights can come in conflict, as some of our personal values will be in conflict with national values, some in conflict with ourselves — after all, where each of us stands depends on where we sit. We talked some about how much is judged by appearances — such as judging the adequacy of law schools based on the number of chairs in libraries, number of students per faculty, etc., instead of the quality of the classes and education. It occurred to me that this is my purpose for going through FEI — instead of examining it from papers, numbers, etc., it is helpful to see what the program means, how well it works, how I feel about it.

The class had interesting dialogues on various issues. The class on Efficiency had a particularly active discussion — perhaps because the topic had more specific job relevance.

Principles of Negotiation. I only attended one of his classes to get a feel for what the program was about. At the beginning of this class, the facilitator Tom Colosi allowed the class to “vent” about some focus groups that had been held the previous night. The overwhelming majority had been completely frustrated by the experience, and it doesn’t appear they really got what they were looking for. Everyone appeared tired and many were annoyed. We then moved on to the main activity, the Piranha River exercise. This proved particularly interesting as our two negotiators had to present and promote a position quite different from their own.

Leadership for the Information Age. This class was interesting because it was the first class I had sat in on that was overwhelmingly male — 17 to 2. This particular class was on virtual reality and was completely eye-opening for me, as it appeared to be for the majority of the class. This information holds future potential for distance education, and learning simulations.

Several themes seemed to definitely run through the program. *Leadership* was constantly emphasized, whether it be personal leadership, organizational leadership, leadership style, or the role of leadership. Along those lines, *development* was important to the program.

Development of the executives both as persons and as executives were stressed.

Constitutionalism was obviously the overarching theme, and was designed to tie the other two areas in together, as the executives were being developed to become leaders within our constitutional system. I thought this process was particularly represented in the progression of the Aspen Institute course, which began with liberty, progressed through equality, efficiency, and community, and ended with leadership. This, for me, was the epitome of the spirit of FEL.

CHAPTER SEVEN

FEI FOR THE 21ST CENTURY — AND BEYOND

Peter Senge (in Costa and Liebmann, vii) quotes Gordon Brown, former dean of the MIT School of Engineering, as saying, “To be a great teacher is to be a prophet — for you need to prepare young people not for today, but for 30 years into the future.” As we examine the current issues facing our generation, we are well aware of the challenges and trials that will be facing generations to come. In the past, it was accepted that universal knowledge doubled every so many years; with the advent of information technology and other advances, that has now been revised to an understanding that knowledge doubles every few months. Future issues will involve global warming, environmental protection, cloning, and threats of nuclear terrorism. On the homefront, we are faced with increasing government deficits and breakdown of the traditional family structure. Senge asserts that the common denominator of all these types of problems is that they are all systemic problems, arising from the interactions, often over long periods, of diverse forces of change worldwide. He reminds us of the cartoon character “Pogo,” considered the first systems thinker in popular U.S. culture, who said, “We have met the enemy and he is us.”

We must be ever prepared, particularly in the field of public management, to confront the enemy in ourselves and make the necessary changes. Rusaw (1998) says that we need to transform ourselves before we can transform others:

Can you really change government, with all its built-in truncations, cascades of clientele, and red tape? You might not using the traditional top-down way. You do it by transforming self, that inside part of you that creates your reality and influences that of others.

Wamsley (1996) says that our current major intellectual challenge is to find a more balanced public philosophy, because public administration is “equally or more concerned with governance as evocation than it is with management; greater concern for collaboration achieved through dialogue than decisionmaking/command/control; emphasis on values of the

Constitution as well as words or interpretation; concern for capacity to evoke democracy and community values in addition to serving customers well.” We must find the ability to bring all the issues together, to lead by example, to learn by understanding, to encourage by spirit, and to grow by adversity.

The field of public administration is facing these changes for the 21st century, as it moves into what some are calling a “post-modern” twenty-first century and the era of chaos theory and the “new science.” The Blacksburg Manifesto, and subsequent Refounding volumes, assert that to adapt to this post-modern/chaos era, public administration will have to accept limits and diversity, for a society where there is no stability, no control, and no “right” answer. Answers instead are composed of negotiated agreements or understandings that are valid at a certain time, at a certain place, by a certain community. We need to move beyond an attempt to control knowledge to a sharing of information. Opening up to diversity will benefit public administration, government and the public by leading to interactivity, dialogue, relationship, and synergy. Reflective practitioners can assist in this process by linking the worlds of theory and practice.

Our current educational system promotes specialized and often fragmented knowledge, emphasizing individual learning and competition instead of preparing students for participation in a world that is increasingly more interdependent and will require understanding how to have genuine dialogue while integrating diverse points of views. Adult education is inevitably affected by the uncertainty that characterises the contemporary situation, calling for changing conceptions of knowledge, and challenges to modernist forms of education. Usher, et al (1997) explain this shift, saying, “[M]odernity is characterised by a search for an underlying and unifying truth and certainty, a search for a definitive discourse that makes the world and self coherent, meaningful, and masterable; in the postmodern, one does not experience in order to enumerate the knowledge gained or to become a ‘better’ person or to better become oneself; experience is itself the end, leading to further experience.” Lyotard (1984) argues that the difference between modern and postmodern conditions lies in the purpose of knowledge — in the modern, knowledge is justified in relation to the grand narratives and in terms of its contribution to the pursuit of truth, liberty, and the betterment of humanity; in the postmodern,

the purpose of knowledge is the optimizing of efficient performance, with educational processes becoming individualized, reconstituted as a market relationship between producer and consumer.

This is the world that FEI has so strongly promoted in its programs and in its development of a learning community. FEI's current learning format has not been without criticism, and it is already positioning itself to meet many of the concerns about what some perceive as the impracticality of the Leadership for a Democratic Society program. In response, it has developed The Center for Executive Leadership (CEL), under the organization of Linda Winner. The Center offers "Skills for the New Century," supplemental open enrollment courses designed to "promote progression from theory through practice to mastery." These programs last from 3 days to 1 week, and with the exception of one, have all been held at FEI, continuing FEI's vision as an educational retreat. These programs try to reflect the FEI orientation, yet taking it a step further by emphasizing practical application. FEI also offers Custom Designed programs, International Programs, Agency partnerships, and other special events such as the SES Symposium.

FEI's Center for Executive Leadership has planned a multitude of programs for Summer and Fall 1998, as announced in the recent FEI Alumni Association Newsletter (March 1998). The following programs are being offered:

- Work Team Development
- Alumni Follow-on
- Executive Communication Skills: Leading the Process of Change (Department of Defense only)
- Process Innovation
- Coaching Skills for Executives
- Leadership Communication: The High Impact Speaker
- Communicating Your Agency's Message
- The Leadership Awakening Experience
- Systems Thinking for Learning Organizations
- 360 Degree Leadership

Interest in the Center has been strong. In its initial year, the program served nearly 900 executives, generating revenues of \$1,200,000. The overall satisfaction level of the CEL programs (5 point scale) ranged from 4.5 to 4.99, averaging 4.6.

In addition to meeting the specific practical needs of agencies, it also reasserts the FEI position that once you have been part of the FEI program, you are now in partnership with FEI. FEI will contract with agencies for specific courses (such as the one listed above for the Department of Defense), based on organizational needs.

In addition to the opportunities provided by the Center for Executive Leadership, the FEI Alumni Association (FEIAA) offers opportunities for networking and additional training. The goal of the FEIAA, as outlined in a promotional brochure given to all graduating participants, is to promote continuous learning and development for public managers and executives, while supporting and strengthening the FEI; promoting excellence in public service; and representing the views of their members. The FEIAA seeks to provide opportunities for continued networking among federal executives, to continue the sense of community that was developed by the executives during their respective programs at FEI.

One of their most prominent events is the FEIAA Annual Executive Forum. This Forum is designed to meet specific and current needs for federal executives. The 1998 program, "Challenges of Managing People and Technology in the Millennium," was promoted in this way:

Management techniques are evolving rapidly to address reinvention, downsizing, accountability, customer focus, and a myriad of other demands placed on the Federal Executive and Manager. At the same time, Federal Executive management is also changing rapidly in response to new technologies for communication, robotics, web sites, video conferencing, and chat groups. This forum will examine how these new ways of managing and technologies can be used by Federal Executives and Managers in the Federal workplace of the future ... As a key feature, the 1998 Forum will include special presentations on

the essential role of entrepreneurship and accountability in the millennium.

FEI itself has also begun the process of examining what the FEI of the future should look like. In a draft prepared in 1996, FEI developed a scenario for FEI in the year 2005. Many aspects remain unchanged. FEI will continue to be described as “an executive development enterprise which improves the quality of Government for the American people by providing an advanced study center.” This center would still have the basic program, Leadership for a Democratic Society, supplemented with single agency executive development and other special symposiums and programs. It recognizes the increased role that technology will play in this process, by utilizing video to bring great leaders, philosophers and historians into the classroom. It is believed that FEI will continue to expand internationally, bringing in additional international executives while providing access to international organizations such as the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organizations. It is hoped that agencies will become more involved, with routine dialogue between FEI and the heads of agencies and their Bureaus to see what’s new and how changing needs for executive development can be achieved. Furthermore, an integration strategy is proposed based on a need for developing much closer ties with other organizations, such as the University of Virginia.

To this end, FEI has analyzed the various personal, organizational and managerial values that are felt deeply in the institution, outlining four that are considered to “overarch all others and collectively explain the uniqueness that is FEI.” Here are those values:

FEI OVERARCHING VALUES

1. PARTICIPANT FOCUS

Our Participants, and the Agencies they represent, are our most valued customers. We place their education and training needs above all else because their success as leaders is crucial to our democracy. We want them to be comfortable, healthy and enjoy a sense of community-family while here; we want them to miss FEI when they leave. All FEI members — faculty, staff, management and contractors — hold this value and it guides our daily efforts no matter what the task.

2. CONSTITUTIONAL FOCUS

We respect and embrace the dynamics of American democracy, an institution anchored in the Constitution — the framework which establishes the basic principles of our unique form of governance. Recognition of the central role played by the Constitution and its predecessor documents, causes us — faculty, staff and management — to seek to broaden our knowledge and understanding of this foundational document and seek to have its principles permeate the core learning curriculum of FEI.

3. INNOVATION

We must do more than treat our Participants exceptionally well. We must ensure that we are making available to them the very best learning tools, technologies, courseware and professionals in each core area of our curriculum — our four learning pillars. This value mandates that we must be a learning faculty and administration, searching-out and trying-out new, creative and innovative knowledge-based methods and materials. We must not be afraid to try new things and challenge even proven methods if new approaches prove better in the interest of our Participants.

4. FAMILY/TEAM

From time of arrival to day of departure, and thereafter, each person working on “TEAM FEI” enjoys a sense of being a member of a unique work family. This feeling transcends role, rank or status. It causes any task to be seen as doable and drives the willingness of every member to eagerly step into any role when the situation warrants, while supporting and respecting the roles of each other under normal conditions. FEI people exert real effort to understand, appreciate and help one another to achieve our overriding purpose — the leadership development of our Participants.

These values are critical to the successful development of the leadership community at the Federal Executive Institute. During my various interviews throughout this research project, the sense of community was invariably mentioned as one of the key components to FEI’s history. To sum it up in one sentence, the core of FEI is the development of a learning community that utilizes cutting-edge learning tools to focus on the growth of the individual both personally and professionally as a constitutionally-grounded public servant.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CROSS-PROGRAM COMPARISON

The last five chapters have focused on FEI's history from its conception and birth through growing pains and maturity. The historical analysis has been, appropriately for the purpose, overarching and broad. I believe it is helpful now to take the analysis a step deeper, to examine and compare three specific program cycles over this structure, given at the beginning, middle, and present time of FEI's history. They are: FEI's inaugural Session I (October 14 - December 6, 1968); a program fifteen years later, Class 49 (October 3 - October 21, 1983); and a contemporary program now another fifteen years later, Session 243 (September 20 - October 16, 1998). I initially summarize each of the three programs, and then offer a comparison among them based on similarities and differences.

Session I: October 14 - December 6, 1968

This was FEI's inaugural program. The program was prefaced with the announcement that "it is not expected that all Executives will participate in each element of the program; part of the individual obligation will be to determine what aspects will be useful." The first half of the program had an expressed goal of "improving knowledge of managerial processes on the part of the executives," while the second four weeks would be concerned with "interrelationships of management-government systems and the environment." The objective was that "[T]he Federal Executive must build an adaptive, effective organization that does its part in enabling the total government system to respond to the needs of the society;" FEI would accomplish this with the following program elements — personal growth needs; understanding of processes of human systems; awareness of U.S. governmental institutions; and an alertness to rapidly changing environment and governmental obligations.

Regular weekly events included special lectures — Monday night White House lectures, Wednesday night Leadership Encounters, Challenge lectures, UVA lectures, and Faculty lectures. Two hours each morning were reserved for individual study and work. Community meetings were scheduled twice a week. Two hours per week were scheduled for evaluation of

individual progress and Institute effectiveness. The week included time for discussion of Presidential Campaign and Transition. Finally, a regular film program was in place.²³

In addition to these regular events, the program had scheduled many special features. Week One focused on resources and planning group meetings. Weeks Two and Three established task forces “to recommend to the new President the national and international problems to which he should give priority attention.” Weeks Four, Five and Six established policy management study groups to make in-depth analysis study of a selected problem, change effort, or managerial strategy. Week Seven provided opportunities for an optional experience in a T-Group or D-Group, “designed to heighten inter-personal competence. In addition, an optional experience was available in a literary group designed to examine governmental procedures through the eyes of the novelist and playwright.”²⁴ Finally, Week Eight was a synthesizing period in which “concepts of organizational development will be explained and particular attention given to ‘back-bone’ problems.”

Five themes were established as important to the success of the program. First was *time*, with two basic assumptions being made: first, that time is scarce and should be used carefully; and second, that time for thinking must be scheduled like any other activity.²⁵ The second theme was *choice*, with the executive determining which events meet his personal needs. Third was *feedback*, which would be accomplished primarily through the community meetings. Fourth was *evaluation*, that each executive will have developed his own development plan based on their personal long-term career goals. Finally, the fifth theme was *leadership*, because the executive was seen, above all, as a leader.²⁶

²³ Some of the films watched during this first session were “Storm Over the Supreme Court,” “Date with Liberty,” “Seven Days in May,” and “The Mouse That Roared.”

²⁴ Summaries of course descriptions are found in Appendix G.

²⁵ This thinking time could be used for by the executive in ways “most relevant to his definition of his needs” — this could be personal reading, reading for a seminar, policy/management research, or personal reflection.

²⁶ It was noted that “[T]he Presidency is seen as an embodiment of the full complex of leadership tasks,” with the White House lectures focused on various aspects of

On a practical note, the program was very basic. While the executives were at FEI, they were fairly sheltered from the outside world. They did not have phones or television sets in their private rooms. There was one main television in the lounge area that everyone could watch together, reinforcing the sense of community being developed.

Class 49: October 3 - 21, 1983

By Class 49, the FEI program has been cut from seven weeks to four. The initial week was spent largely in the Executive Learning Teams (ELTs). During the first three days, the ELTs met in the morning from 8:15 a.m. until noon; again after lunch from 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., and once more after dinner from 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The last two days of the week included the Myers-Briggs workshop, as well as plenaries on Leadership Excellence and Executive Roles. The program now included a block of time each afternoon from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. for “reading, research, and fitness.” Seminars and workshops began during the second week and continued through week four, allowing different courses each week selected from four to five choices. The program also now included a retaking of the Oath of Office during the graduation ceremony.

Program 242: July 12 - August 7, 1998

Another fifteen years later, the program remains a four-week program (this is actually an accomplishment; if you recall, Devine had tried in the early 1980s to reduce the FEI program to one or two weeks). There is now, however, an option. FEI now offers the split program, where participants are in residence at FEI for two weeks, return home to their agencies for a three-month intersession, and then return back to FEI for a closing two weeks.

The Executive Learning Teams (ELTs) are now known as LDTs, or Leadership Development Teams. While a subtle name change, the meaning change is inherent. As exemplified by the reorganization in 1988, the program now emphasizes the utilization of small groups for leadership development, as opposed to executive learning.

“institutionalizing leadership.”

The first week still focuses on the LDTs, Myers-Briggs and leadership, although the sequence has been reversed. The first part of the week focuses on Values and the Constitution, Ethics and Leadership, and Leadership and Values. The Myers-Briggs workshop is held on Wednesday, and much of the remainder of the week is spent with the LDTs. Seminars and workshops still begin in the second week and continue through the fourth week, offering choices among four to five different workshops. Time in the afternoon is now specifically divided with an hour for fitness and an hour and a half for study time. This particular program offers a choice among five site visits:

1. The Supreme Court
2. Social Security Administration
3. Marine Corps Officer Training
4. George Washington National Forest (land management)
5. A Day in the Life of Troubled Juveniles

The program also continues to offer plenary sessions on personal issues — FEI Wellness Program, Financial Planning for Executives, and finally Health Issues at Mid-Life and Taking Your Wellness Home.

The FEI program is now based on four program themes — Global Perspectives and Political Action, Policy in a Constitutional System, Transforming Public Organizations, and Personal Leadership in Government. As mentioned earlier, these are tied into OPM's ECQ's to allow the participants to take courses they feel they need for the SES. Reminiscent of FEI's origins, participants are told at the opening session that "the FEI experience" will only be successful if it is "question-raising, assumption-challenging, stretching, discomforting, and risky."

Obviously there have been changes over FEI's thirty year history. It is interesting to compare where things have changed and where they have stayed the same. As discussed throughout this essay, there have been two basic streams throughout FEI's history. One is between behavioralism and political science (content), the other is between being learner-based

versus prescriptive (process). At various points in time, FEI has shifted between these two polar views. These shifts have occurred within the socio-political-cultural context of the era.

CONTEXT

One obvious change between 1968 has been the addition of more women and minorities into FEI's programs. In the first FEI session, there were two women in the program; about the same number for minorities. By 1998, women made up 37% of the class, and 17% of the total class were minorities. In addition, there are usually two international participants per class. Age has remained fairly constant: In 1968, the average age of the participants was 47.3 (with 91% between the ages of 35-55); in 1998, the average age is 50 (with 90% between the ages of 35-55).

Faculty has changed also. In 1968, there were six members of the teaching faculty. In 1983, there were ten faculty members at FEI. By 1998, there are only four regular members of the teaching faculty. The areas of specialization break down as follows:

	1968	1983	1998
Public administration	1	1	
Political science	1	1	1
Intergovernmental relations		1	
Behavioral Science & Org. Dev.		1	1
Clinical Psychology		2	
Administration/Admin. Behavior	1	1	
International Affairs	1	1	
Management Sciences		1	
Educational Psychology		1	
Org. & Industrial Psychology		1	
Anthropology	1		
Adult Education			2
TOTAL TEACHING FACULTY	6	10	4

These members of the teaching faculty were augmented by part-time faculty members, adjunct faculty members, and executives-in-residence. In addition, FEI contracts out with

professionals to offer instructional services in both the Leadership for a Democratic Society program and the Center for Executive Leadership.

CONTENT

It has been said, “the more things change, the more they stay the same.” In some ways, this is true of the program at FEI. While it has indeed gone through a myriad of changes throughout the past thirty years, much of the original design remains part of the program. Sherwood’s 1968 Inaugural Address highlighting four key foci for the program sounded much like the ones today — 1968 “self” versus 1998 “personal leadership;” 1968 “management” versus 1998 “transforming public organizations;” 1968 “government system” versus 1998 “policy in a constitutional system;” and 1968 “society” versus 1998 “global perspectives and public action.”

While the actual titles of courses and seminars may have changed, in general the program of 1998 is very similar to the program of 1968, at least on paper.²⁷ While there have been occasions during FEI’s history when the pendulum shifted, it has now settled in a balanced position. This is, of course, displeasing to those who would prefer that it be one way or another, but in so doing it provides the best of both worlds. While the list of courses below does not accurately reflect the program content, due to the lack of actual titles being available for all sessions, it has been apparent to me through my discussions with individuals involved during those years that the early programs were very heavily behavioral-based. The pendulum shifted during the Devine years to limit the behavioral aspects while focusing on the political. Finally, the pendulum has reached level ground by including aspects of each area.²⁸

²⁷ As discussed earlier, many of the activities, particularly behavioral, occurred outside the structured program as presented on paper.

²⁸ It is interesting to compare, however, the books included on the Executive Bookshelf in each participant’s room. The lists from 1968 and 1998 are included in Appendices 8 and 9, respectively.

Courses/Workshops Offered at FEI		
1968²⁹	1983	1998
— Executive Styles Workshop — American Federal Executive Workshop — Organizational Development Workshop — Analytic Workshop — Generation Communication Workshop — Policy Development Workshop — Executive Skills Workshop — Workshop on Leadership with Plays as Cases	— American Political Philosophy: From Washington to Reagan — Managing U.S. National Security: The Need for Priorities — The Creative Manager: A Workshop in Innovative Problem-Solving — The Manager-s Responsibility for Performance Management — Appraisal of Individual Management Skills — Conflict: How to Negotiate and Manage It — Economics: Understanding Concepts, Ideas and Strategies — Issues in the Federal Budget Process — Balanced Budgets, Uncontrollable Expenditures, Cutback Management, and “Hogs in the Trough”	— Shaping the 21st Century Government — Russia: What’s Next? — The Science of Leadership and the Art of Gaining Followers — Building High Performance Organizations — Washington Politics and Political Appointees: Negotiating the Maze — The USA in the Global Economy — Professional Ethics for Senior Public Officials — Media: Managing Communications in the Public Sector — Creativity in Organizations — Resolving Disputes/ Negotiating Agreements: Dispute Resolution Techniques for Public Organizations

The same comparison of lecture titles is also helpful (as seen on the next page):

²⁹ These workshop titles were actually taken from Session VIII, the first session I could locate actual titles. Because of the length of the earlier programs, the participants not only selected from the workshops available (examples listed above), but they also selected from mini-seminars with choices in areas of Environment, Management, and Government Systems.

Plenaries/Forums at the FEI		
1968	1983	1998
— Domestic Collection of Intelligence Information — The Customs Story — Problems in Guaranteed Incomes — Man in Space: The Next Giant Step — ECAC: The DOD Electromagnetic Compatibility Analysis Center — Oceanography in National Policy — Learning to Live with Nose Pokers — The Origin of Man — The Role of Propaganda in U.S. Foreign Policy — Welfare Reform — Parent-Child Relationships — Race, Poverty, and Urban Crisis — Inflation, Unemployment, and Growth	— Interrelationships Between Government Executives and Reporters, Editors and Researchers — Naval Weapons Center Demonstration Project: An Experimental Civil Service Personnel System — Conflict of Interest — The Senior Executive Service: Success or Failure? — The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, & Firearms vs. The Hell's Angels — A Delicate Balance: Constitutional Rights vs. National Security — A Terrorist Threat to Worldwide U.S. Military Interests — A Forecast of Information Processing Technologies	— Values and the Constitution — Ethics and Leadership — Leadership and Values — Financial Planning for Executives — Global Perspectives — Political Context for Executive Action — The Abilene Paradox and the Anaclitic Blues — Political Management and the Federal Executive — William Pagonis, Sears & Roebuck — Health Issues at Mid-Life and Taking Your Wellness Home — The Supreme Court — Executives in the News Media — Ben Bissell

One issue that I found interesting is that for 1968 and 1983, the titles listed for the workshops is very different from the titles listed for the plenaries/forums. The workshops were very behavioral-based, while the plenaries/forums were very political. Since the workshops were

where the “real work” took place, it is obvious that the behavioral aspects were more prevalent in the earlier sessions, particularly in 1968. The 1998 listings show components of both areas.

PROCESS

I reviewed two key components for this part of the analysis. The first was the amount of time spent on certain types of activities.³⁰ Surprisingly, the amount of time spent on certain activities as a percentage of the total program time have remained relatively constant over the past thirty years. In 1968, 26% was spent in lecture/discussion; in 1983, it was 26%, and in 1998, it was 28%. For group study,³¹ in 1968, the amount of time was 18%, the same for 1983, and 15% in 1998. Workshops per se were not held in the first session, but the amount of time spent in workshops was 33% in 1983, and 25% in 1998. An additional 22-23% was spent in all years for individual study, and approximately 10% spent on health and fitness. The early sessions also scheduled 12% of their time for evaluations.

The basic learning philosophy at FEI remains that “executives learn from experience, but in different ways and with different degrees of comfort.” To that end, the program utilizes four core areas of learning — concrete experience (simulation, role play), reflective observation (lecture, demonstrations, tapes), abstract conceptualization (reading theory, study time), and active experimentation (skill practice/feedback, small group discussions, learning projects). This process is also grounded in the belief that a supportive environment is necessary for

³⁰ Due to the difference in the length of time of the various programs selected for comparison, percentages of total program time have been used.

³¹ This amount does not include time spent “off the schedule” meeting in groups as there is no official record of that time.

learning to occur, thus the importance of developing and nurturing the learning community.

The second theme was more difficult to measure, attempting to reflect the shifts that have occurred during FEI's history between the polars of being learner-focused versus being prescriptive. It is difficult to imagine a more learner-based program than that of FEI's inaugural session in 1968, as participants were told "you know what you need and we are here to make that happen," to the frustration of some executives who responded, "just tell us what you want us to do and we'll do it!" For many, though, it was indeed a time of self-learning. It was soon discovered that the executives preferred some type of structure within which they were able to make choices. This was also preferable to the agencies who wanted their executives to receive some level of continuity across the programs.

CHAPTER NINE

REACTION: BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

Most of what has shaped FEI has been general and environmental influences expressed through various people, people with personal agendas and goals guiding their passion and direction. The original design was clearly Sherwood's creation, founded on Knowles' andragogical model. The organization was a grand adventure, one designed to take the executives to the "rocky top," to expand their mind and help them find the mission within themselves. The 1970s brought political issues into the arena, and by the early 1980s, environmental forces required FEI's response to protect itself and ensure its survival. FEI's path down the "rocky road" reasserted the political nature of public administration. By the late 1980s and early 1990s, FEI was able to turn the corner and become proactive, setting a new course of action designed to restore its niche in the world of executive development, placing it on a "solid rock" foundation. This foundation is based on a mission designed for executives to find their role within the constitutional system, and to be empowered and revalidated as public servants. The future remains unknown; the Center for Executive Leadership provides education while FEI's core program, Leadership for a Democratic Society, seeks to provide learning opportunities and the creation of a learning community that will continue long after the executives have spent their time in residence.

Smith quotes Cokie Roberts of NPR during his welcome to each class of FEI executives:

We have an obligation to do a better job explaining the institutions of government ... because without them we have no defining principle as a nation. We have no common history, ethnicity, religion, or even language. All that we have is a shared commitment to the Constitution and the institutions it created.

The Federal Executive Institute seeks to provide that defining principle, for itself as an institution and for the executives as leaders within the public sector. This chapter provides a summarization of what has been uncovered and accomplished during the study.

CONTEXT

The public service of 1998 is vastly different from the public service of 1968. Minorities and women are now in higher positions in the civil service and thus part of every class at FEI. A different mentalism pervades the public service as well; whereas once upon a time it was honorable to work in the public service, today it is perceived as a joke (“good enough for government work”). Ed Preston, alumnus of FEI Session 1, died this summer (1998). In his memory, the FEI Alumni Association wrote about a man who “hadn’t ‘worked’ a day in his life but he ‘served’ the government for more than four decades.” In the 1997 survey of FEI alumni, only 61% said they would encourage young people to consider a career in federal government. Sixty-five percent said that “knowing what they know now” they would still choose to work for the federal government; 24% said “no” and 11% said they either did not know, or did not have an opinion. Additionally, 49% said they would take regular, voluntary retirement as soon as

they were eligible.

When FEI was founded in 1968, a level of professional elitism existed. It would soon become clearly evident that escape from politics in fundamentals of public administration is difficult if not impossible. Similar forces led to having political and career officials providing the leadership of the U.S. Civil Service Commission/Office of Personnel Management. Whereas political forces were just right for FEI's creation, they would never again be at that level.

In time, those political forces that were once ideal for FEI's creation would shift and be responsible for FEI's struggle to exist. As summarized by Stupak (1997), FEI was enmeshed in the political system as "OPM, under the leadership of Scotty Campbell and Don Devine, began to assault FEI's independence" and as FEI empowerment programs were overwhelmed by "growing administrative bureaucracies (The Nixon years), brutal external political and career interventions (The Carter years), congealing external jealousies (The Carter years), the placing of internal 'Trojan horses' within the FEI (the Reagan years)." When Devine discovered that he could not get rid of the FEI, he chose to implant faculty members who would promote his agenda.

INTELLECTUAL CATALYSTS

As we return to the original question that instigated this study — how does FEI decide to teach what it teaches? — I must first reword my question so as to omit the use of the word "teach." FEI is a *learning* institution. Where then, are the above items — content and process — developed? Most of what has shaped FEI has been general influences expressed through various people, with varying levels of critical importance over the years. Not all directors have

had the same influence; not all faculty members have had the same influence.

Directors. Without a doubt, founding director Frank Sherwood was directly responsible for the formation of the early FEI. His progressive understanding of adult education and the cutting edge practices of andragogy led FEI to develop programs that were far advanced for its time. He was largely impacted by the philosophies of Gardner and Knowles, whose vision can be seen interwoven through all the initial plans for FEI, both content and process.

Mike Hansen was responsible for redirecting FEI's program to meet the concerns articulated from Devine's administration and further addressed by Horner. As discussed earlier, Horner wanted a director who would use the FEI as a tool for creating a sense of separateness, teaching the executives their role within the constitutional structure and thus elevating their sense of self-worth. Public executives had taken quite a beating over the past decade and she wanted a period of renewal, and commitment to public service.

Hansen was a perfect candidate to begin the process of enmeshing the two streams at FEI — while he, like Sherwood, had his academic background with the USC program, he was also trained in political science. He returned to Sherwood's idea of an advisory committee, bringing in experts from corporate, political, and public fields. He developed partnerships with the agencies and with OPM. In redesigning the FEI program, Hansen was heavily influenced by Bolman and Deal (1984) and their multi-frame approach. Fiscal year 1988 saw the first reprogramming of the FEI curriculum (see Chapter 6 for actual changes). While the structure does not seem radically different, the subtle shifts are apparent — from “personal managerial skills” to “executive development,” from “processes” to “practices.” While maintaining some

aspects of the original personal self-development programs, such as the Myers-Briggs (although Horner would have liked to have removed these as well), there was indeed a shift to a more practical, applied program.

Faculty. Newland asserts that there have been changes over the years in faculty and their attitude. During the early years, faculty took ownership of the larger community. Unfortunately, it changed to being a job — a way to make a living. During the early years, FEI was composed mostly of full-time faculty, who had a large role in establishing FEI programs and courses; since that time, FEI has developed a small, core staff largely supplemented by outside contractors. This has been a critical difference in the FEI program, as original faculty members were part of the community, and there needed to be enough faculty for intensive day-to-day interaction with each of the executives. This was a criticism I heard during the session I attended that some executives felt “cheated” because their LDT leader was not a regular faculty member and only parachuted in and out for their group meetings. This failed to develop the community.

Several faculty members have had tremendous influence over the FEI program. Pat Conklin, who has been involved with FEI since its early years and has returned on occasion since his retirement in 1994, is FEI’s walking historian. He has been part of the myriad of reorganizations, and with ensuring that the spirit of FEI was not lost through the process. He also served as acting director at FEI from January 1979 to December 1979, and again from October 1992 to December 1992.

Terry Newell, currently the FEI Faculty Coordinator, has been responsible for developing

many new and creative programs and for also ensuring that new faculty members are indoctrinated into FEI's history and culture. Newell's eclectic background makes him a natural leader for a diverse group — his undergraduate degree is in the hard sciences; he is one year shy of a master's in Meteorology; and he has his actual masters and doctorate in Education Administration (EDD), where he began to develop an interest in organizational and management development. Newell also worked at the Department of Education, where he spent the last three years in executive development prior to coming to FEI. His programs have returned FEI to many of the original learning styles that made it both popular and successful. He believes all the executives are leaders, and his views on leadership have been guided by certain books: Howard Gardner, Leading Minds; Collins & Porras, Built to Last; and Heifetz, Leadership without Easy Answers. His new program, *The Leadership Challenge*, is based on many of those concepts.

Alumni. Alumni have played a critical role in FEI's development for some very specific occasions. Just two years after FEI's founding, the Brookings Institute (1970) appeared to be on a "witch hunt" during a meeting of FEI alumni. Their questions seemed to probe the appropriateness of FEI, particularly this sense that the executives were not able to *define* the program. Again and again the executives supported FEI, saying "the big thing was not so much the specific knowledge we took away but the attitude change" and "I'm a changed person." They felt the program was successful because it shifted them from being an employee of an agency to a person and a member of a community; it also did not "ladle" out the information to them, but required them to dig it out for themselves, saying, "we can read ... we need the experiential learning process." When asked whether there should be an FEI, one executive

stated, “Because you can’t get the FEI experience at a structured school. That’s an impossibility ... [T]his school can’t last long because government can’t stand it ... this kind of unstructured, flexible experience is not normal to a bureaucracy.” How true his words would be later. Even within the interview, Brookings asked the alumni what was the payoff for the agency; one alumnus responded “are they supposed to *see* something to demonstrate that this has been an investment?” They continue to say that the investment was not to the technical aspects of their job, but to a more sensitive, larger scene, where they are now more confident, less defensive, and rejuvenated. I find it extremely interesting that despite these comments from the alumni, as well as program evaluations, a 1971 National Academy of Public Administration report³² summary states, “The FEI has a major problem in convincing some that this direction of emphasis is the correct approach for executives at this level; these individuals claim the that the Institute’s program should concentrate upon more narrowly defined managerial and administrative problems (whereas the Institute’s administration says broad personal development is the key aspect).”

Alumni were more successful in helping to insure FEI’s survival during the early 1980s. It was also based on reactions from alumni that the split program was created. As participants, Roberts reflects that in the first session, the participants recognized the newness of the program and assumed a responsibility for developing it; this was largely lost in subsequent programs.

CSC/OPM. For most of FEI’s history, the CSC and later OPM has had a mostly figurehead relationship with FEI. The main exception was during the administration of Devine

³² The evaluation was requested by Hampton.

as OPM Director, during which time OPM took a more prescriptive approach to FEI's program. It later resumed its independent status as OPM conducted a national search for Hansen's replacement; a reaffirmation that this was a different position not for just any "ole" bureaucrat. This did not last long, unfortunately, as their choice was later dumped by the new OPM Director, Jim King, who replaced Henderson with an OPM person, current director Curt Smith. Now that Smith has also been placed over the management training centers, there is less independence. Smith maintains that King (and now LaChance) have given him an enormous amount of freedom, saying they might suggest people as good speakers but do not give directives or dictates.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTS — CONTENT

While a constitutional focus has always been part of FEI, over the years, FEI has shifted between a heavy emphasis on behavioralism to a heavy emphasis on constitutionalism, finally settling somewhere in the middle. During the early years of FEI (late 1960s, early 1970s), FEI emphasized the "life-changing" courses. Appendix G provides a description of some of those courses. Ed Jones taught most of these courses³³, although Roberts' course on plays was also very popular. I do not mean to indicate, however, that only these courses were held, and none that were from political science. This is indeed not the case. Neuchterlein often provided a counter-balance to the courses offered by Jones, often preparing and organizing sessions on

³³ The descriptions listed were written by Jones.

foreign policy.³⁴

Preparing for change has always been important to the FEI program, and in the midst of change, FEI has strived to maintain a commitment to heritage and history. Appendix J contains the list of the Original Advisory Board of the Federal Executive Institute; Appendix E contains the list of the Curriculum Committee Members for Hansen's 1988 reorganization. Both lists contain members from government, corporations, and academia.

In addition to being prepared internally for change, FEI includes this conception as a key component of the executive's program. It is especially important for the executives to understand the importance of being ready — even enthusiastic — for change.

FEI has also taken on the daunting task of determining what FEI participants *want*; even worse, determining what they *need*. This task was originally left to the executives, who were basically told, “you are the executive, you know what you need (or want) to know, we’re here to facilitate that for you.” That has shifted to a different thought, basically that “we are the faculty, you are the executive, we’re here to provide what you need to know.” This is an extreme difference. While the executives originally resisted the first concept in the early years, after they understood it's purpose and switched their usual way of thinking, they appreciated the opportunity to develop themselves. The latter viewpoint presumes that there are certain things

³⁴ Unfortunately, I do not have any direct information from Neuchterlein regarding his courses or thoughts about those early years at FEI. He was one of only two people who were not willing to meet with me regarding this project, stating he felt the focus was “inappropriate.” The other was Stupak (for personal reasons); I did, however, utilize writings from both Neuchterlein and Stupak in my research.

every executive needs to know regardless of their individual circumstances. In some cases, this is indeed true. All executives need an understanding of their role in the constitutional system. All executives need an understanding of the values that guide that system. In truth, perhaps all executives need an understanding of the latest budget tool. But FEI was designed for something grander, for something beyond the public administration tool kit. FEI was designed for the executive, and therein lies the tension that has existed from the beginning. Who, indeed, should FEI target as their “customer?” Is it the executive who attends the classes? Or the agency who pays for their attendance? Or is it the federal government as a whole, to whom their allegiance lies? This too has shifted over time. Sherwood saw the executive as the customer. Hansen saw the agency as the customer. Smith sees the federal government as the customer. While none of these three are mutually exclusive (and I do not want to imply that it was for any of those directors), they do represent a shift in program focus.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTS — PROCESS

Throughout FEI’s history and the myriad of changes in directors, there have not only been changes to the program content, but to the structure and process as well. The faculty at FEI have gone from being a predominantly full-time elite group of six to ten members, to relying on a core faculty of two supported by Executives-in-Residence and supplemented heavily by contract presenters. This causes some tension during the programs because most executives do not have access to their ELT leader throughout their four-week session, because the leaders are only required to be on site during the first and last weeks of each session. This is a major shift from the early program, where the executives and faculty leaders were in constant contact with

one another from breakfast until the last evening speaker.

FEI's structure within the federal system has also been shifted at various points in history. The organizational change from the Civil Service Commission (CSC) to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the related shift in the reporting structure was indicative of the Institute's worth. Subsequently, its recent structural change placing current FEI Director Curt Smith over all the management training centers has further entangled FEI with the political system. It is also likely that the management training centers will be seen as feeders to FEI, reducing FEI's independence from the system.

While these organizational processes have changed, many stayed the same. The development of the learning community has been critical to FEI's success. Students learn from faculty and from one another; faculty in turn learn from the students. With the exception of a few years during Devine's administration, FEI has been more concerned with what people are LEARNING, rather than with TEACHING. Part of this success has depended on the student's ability to select; having choices has been critical to FEI's success and unique to its program.

FEI is still obviously doing something right. Here are some recent comments submitted with evaluations at the conclusion of an FEI four-week program:

The FEI experience is not about training. The FEI experience is about growing as an individual, a member of society and a teacher of yourself and those you lead. FEI has afforded me the gift of validating my life decisions to be a civil servant, a father and a husband.

This was a tremendous opportunity for me to step out from my current job responsibilities to have an "out of body" look at myself from many points of view.

*Thanks for reinforcing my faith in the values that made this country great.
Thanks for reinforcing my personal values and my contribution to my colleagues
and customers. Thanks for letting me be a kid again.*

*The FEI experience — It's about You. You hear the things you didn't want to
hear. You see the things you didn't want to see. So you can be the “transformed
leader” you didn't know you could be.*

These quotes indicate that the *experience* is what the executives come for, and those experiences can be gained through many venues, providing the package experience. The courses, the small groups, the colleagues ... all come together to create the learning community, and to provide the experience. As an observer in Program 230, I went to David Newell of The Aspen Institute and asked for permission to sit in on his class. He said I was more than welcome to *join* the class — in order to truly have the Aspen *experience*, you have to *participate* in it. I believe that statement is ever more true for the FEI experience. Those outside of the Institute, who have never participated in any of its programs, cannot begin to understand, nay appreciate, what the FEI experience is all about. And once you have been part of that experience — whether it be as a participant, lecturer, faculty member, executive-in-residence, or staff member — you are forever part of the FEI community.

In this sense, it may be true that “the more things change, the more they stay the same,” as FEI continues to provide a purposeful, meaningful, rewarding experience for the executives during each session. Although the process of executive development reflects past experiences and current prejudices from the political and socio-cultural contexts, Bruce Johnson, recent past president of the FEI Alumni Association, states that FEI has maintained a sense of constancy through change over the past thirty years. The FEI program remains a mixture of two polars —

on one side, providing a sense of history, American government, constitutional role (framework), and the “big picture” of government; the other side is intensely personal, with self assessments, knowing yourself, your strengths and weaknesses, and how others view you.

To be effective, an organization must have a clear vision or shared purpose, an understanding of the soul and meaning underlying that organization, clear insights into current reality, and a willingness to bring those areas together. If Newell keeps FEI focused both on the soul and meaning that have created FEI’s niche in the field of executive development, and build on that history in developing the future, the community of FEI will be in safe hands. This community responded during FEI’s time of need, ensuring its existence, and for encouraging others to participate. This community has been an invisible shield surrounding FEI, fending off adversaries and preaching its virtues. While there were times of great environmental turbulence and threats, generally through the venue of politically appointed directors, they have not been successful, *in the long run*, in determining FEI’s mission and program. The core pieces of the program are still intact; the names may be changed slightly (from “the environment” to “theoretical and policy” to “policy in a constitutional system”; and from “personal managerial skills” to “executive development” to “personal leadership in government”) but the main thrust, main purpose remains the same — the executives come to FEI for the *experience*, not so much for the *education*. They come to be empowered, to be encouraged, to be revalidated, and to make connections with other executives. The very culture and being of FEI, its sense of greater purpose and design, has allowed much of Sherwood’s original vision to permeate the contemporary program. Just as one has a sense of the presence of Mr. Jefferson as you sit on the

Lawn at the University of Virginia, so it is with being at FEI, and having a sense of those who have been there before, a sense of being a part of something larger than oneself.

This, in fact, leads to the one fear Johnson echoes from other FEI alumni — a fear of losing the heart and soul of FEI. The “old guard” of faculty has passed the torch on to a newer generation of faculty who are not imbued FEI’s spirit and history. This fear could be partly abated by having a more regular and systematic approach to program review. By taking time on a regular basis to understand where it has come from, where it is, and where it is going, FEI can maintain its ties to its history while continuing to grow.

CONCLUSION

Marchand (1995) asserts that “the work of intellectual history ... will be to assist us in giving ourselves an account of the manifold meanings of our conduct, a service the discipline cannot perform until we confront the historical changes in our self-understanding as real, historical changes, and until we confront the actual (material, cultural, and social) limitations on, as well as consequences of, our actions.” This study has examined those changes and what limitations and consequences they had on the creation, development, and growth of the Federal Executive Institute. As seen in the past chapters, FEI has been through various stages during its thirty year history. Many components have remained the same. Much of the process has remained the same. I must, however, dissent with current Director Curt Smith, who claims that FEI is now right where they were in the beginning. While it is still a good place, it is not the same place.

Many things have indeed remained the same. The heart of the program is still the learning community. The program still seeks to provide opportunities for leadership growth,

and to provide choices during the program. The program also buildings on personal development to provide executive development. The team process is still the core approach. The program seeks to relay the message that there is more to being effective than just being technical; more to being an executive than just a title and a position. The executives who attend FEI are now at a point in their career where they must make the shift from managing to leading, and from content to process.

Other items have changed. Obviously, an eight week program provides greater opportunities for growth and stretching than a four-week program. The program has indeed, by necessity, become more sophisticated, and now seeks to meet not only the needs of the executive, but the needs of the country (*“ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country ...”*). Executives must become multi-faceted, able to integrate the political and the symbolic. There are also opportunities for “practical” education through the Center for Executive Learning.

These changes seem harmless enough; however, FEI has changed in more subtle, yet dramatic, ways. Ron Stupak (1997)³⁵ has been especially critical of what he calls FEI’s “demise” from “a cutting-edge leadership experiment into a mundane, management institution based on participant observation, action-research, and the reflective-practitioner approach.” While I believe some of his arguments have grounding, I do not agree with several of his points because although this article was only recently published in 1997, the time frame he references is 1968 to 1984, when FEI was indeed going through a rocky period. I do believe it has since

³⁵ As stated earlier, Stupak was one of only two people who were not willing to meet with me regarding this research. He stated simply that everything he had to say about FEI he had already written.

emerged to return to many of the ideals that he felt made it strong in the beginning.

I tend to agree with Stupak's criticism regarding faculty issues. As noted earlier in this research, FEI was originally created with a large core, permanent contract faculty that was part of the learning community, who Stupak recalls as becoming "inextricably entwined with the Institute by linking personal commitment with 'institution-building.'" Over the years FEI shifted to less core faculty and more consultant faculty, who do not have the same strong ties to the FEI community. While FEI currently has four permanent faculty members listed, actually there are only two; one of the four is Terry Newell, the faculty coordinator, and the other is Linda Winner, director of the Center for Executive Leadership.

Contrary to Stupak's article, I believe FEI has since returned to many of the TQM principles he praised in the "creation years" such as empowerment and customer focus. Terry Newell has done a tremendous job of developing creative, energetic, thought-provoking and stretching activities, exercises, and workshops for the executives during the program. A key example of that is the new "Leadership Challenge" program discussed earlier. The words written by Mike Hansen back in 1988 still ring true for the Federal Executive Institute:

FEI remains a critical focal point for the consideration of issues crucial to its clientele: the relationship of politics to administration; the tensions between professionalism and democratic governance; the role of government in a democracy and the shifting degrees of state intervention in society; specialist versus generalist roles; the internal and external aspects of executive work; the relationship of public management to the private and voluntary sectors; and the search for efficient and effective governance.

In addition, FEI seeks to become more cutting-edge in the future. Many of their techniques and learning processes have been used in the field for some time — such as the Myers-Briggs, simulations and case-studies — and are no longer considered cutting-edge. FEI has future plans that it hopes will return it to a higher stature, instead of feeding on its past identities and successes. There are visions of creating an on-site think-tank, and developing new techniques to challenge and encourage the executives. These are the things that will be necessary to secure FEI's position in the future, to ensure its survival and to remove it from the government stereotype of being a step behind.

Throughout this study, it has been important to remember that “the times, they are a-changing.” The government of 1998 is vastly different from the government of 1998; the society of 1998 is vastly different from the society of 1968. Sherwood's critique that “FEI has lost energy” is actually a larger critique of the field of public administration. FEI's track from rocky top and rocky road to the solid rock has been a mirror of public administration – from individuals devoted to mind-changing and world-changing activities, to those simply performing a job. Hard supports this by recalling an early study that showed eight of ten government executives said they would stay in their career “until they carry me out;” today, people say they are “getting out” as soon as they reach retirement age. In some areas, however, the same language that permeated the FEI in 1968 is reappearing in 1998, such as “risk-taking.” Sherwood has criticized the current FEI for wrapping itself in the safety of the Constitution, to keep away from risk taking. Contemporary public administration, however, like Osborne and

Gaebler's *Reinventing Government* and Al Gore's *National Performance Review*, are pushing public executives to once again become risktakers.

In addition, where we stand depends on where we sit. Executives who participated in the early programs cannot relate to a program that is now half as long as the one they attended. Despite the changes over the years, there have still been life-changing experiences along the way, which is a direct attribute to the FEI. Lorentzen (Program 31) says that FEI changed his life, by giving him time to think about “who I am and what do I want to do with the rest of his life.” What he decided was that he wanted to get back to the books, and so he pursued his doctorate degree. He also realized that he had five years remaining until retirement, so he approached his office about having a one-year contract at five different locations, something very odd for an extreme INTJ, something he directly attributes to the period of retrospection and thinking he had at FEI.

While alumni have fond memories of the way the program was, they also accept and believe that FEI is doing what it needs to do. While the programs may not be the same today, they are just as relevant, and on target with where they should be. It is important to get the executives to come to grips with where they fit in, and to get them involved in the process.

I was impressed to read about a ceremony held at FEI on April 19, 1996 in commemoration of the Oklahoma City Bombing Victims. President Clinton had declared this day, the one-year anniversary of the bombing, to be a National Day of Remembrance. Even prior to that announcement, FEI alumni who had been in a program at the time of the bombing had already indicated their desire to donate a commemorative tree, an 18-foot pin oak tree, to be placed in FEI's front lawn as a living memorial to the 168 people who were killed in the blast.

A plaque placed with the tree reads:

In Memory of our colleagues who perished
in the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Building
in Oklahoma City on April 19, 1995
Class 212

OPM Director Jim King issued this statement, *“While it is said that ‘time heals all wounds,’ some wounds cut so deeply that the regeneration of life, mind and spirit requires more than the mere passage of time. Remarkably, it has begun. And in memory of the victims who perished and in support of the men, women and children still carrying physical and emotional scars, let us reflect and further the healing by re-committing ourselves to serving the people of this nation.”*

This action of the FEI alumni was simply one example of the depth of the feeling of community and relationship developed between executives attending programs at the Federal Executive Institute. FEI truly brought about life changing experiences not only in the lives of the executives but also in the faculty and staff. Chong Pak says that his nine-year relationship with FEI changed his life completely; when he went on to Virginia Commonwealth University, he never went back to his old teaching style, but involved his students much more, and while they weren’t used to it, they liked it. He says that he gained confidence at FEI; that FEI was the

best teacher he ever had in his life.

Frank Sherwood states that his written memoirs on The Origins of the Federal Executive Institute were prompted by this question: *“If the Federal Executive Institute did not exist, what are the chances it would be created today?”* His response is that it is his guess that it would not, because of differences that exist between the federal world in 1968 and 1993 (the time of writing). With that as a foundation, I would have to agree with him. The very speed with which FEI was founded could never occur today. Signing a five-year, million dollar lease in a matter of weeks without involving the General Services Administration, without legal review, without a bid process, would never occur today. Signing that lease, hiring a director, hiring faculty and staff, and recruiting executives to attend a program without any financial reservoir or backing would never occur today. Developing a program with such a behavioral, personal aspect would never occur today. With those things said, however, there still certainly remains a place for an organization like The Federal Executive Institute. Whether it would have been created today is a moot issue, because it has survived, and continues to provide meaningful experiences for federal executives.

FUTURE STUDY

One issue that continues to haunt me — why not the “best of the best?” Why do the executives attending FEI (and all government employees for that matter), need to feel that they are second-class citizens? Why not develop a senior corps of executives that would be worthy of the ideal? Why not develop a belief structure and system similar to the French *esprit de corps*, where government service is a worthy — and chosen — profession?

One plan that I had contemplated as a topic for the dissertation was to analyze the Federal Executive Institute as the flagship residential executive development program for federal executives, and compare it with an analysis of a flagship residential executive development program for business executives, such as The Executive Program (TEP) at The Darden School of the University of Virginia. Similar to FEI, this is a residential program (for six weeks) based on an interactive educational approach built on these three fundamental elements: team-oriented learning, total faculty commitment, and highly integrated curriculum (focusing on areas such as Managing the Total Enterprise; Managing for Collaborative Relationships; Managing a Sustainable System; Managing in a Global Context; Managing in the Twenty-First Century; and Creating Value in a Global Economy.) I would like to pursue this in future research, to determine what similarities exist, what differences exist, and why. The current emphasis of NPR on running government “like a business” leads me to want to emphasize the reasons why government should NOT run like a business, and why there needs to be significant differences between public and private sector management and executive education.

This study also holds significance for other research projects, by demonstrating how an organization must learn in order to survive, adapting their learning systems to fit the varying uncertainties and complexities in their environments. This is critical — particularly for government organizations. Kettl (1996, in Ingraham) asserts that public agencies at all levels of government are finding that any attack on critical problems will require an integrated assault that involves multiple agencies, federal-state-local partnerships, and public-private alliances. For government to surmount these challenges, it must discover how to learn effectively, and to understand that both individuals and organizations learn. Bureaucratic learning must be seen as

a broader and more important task than just making governments work (Kettl, 1996). It must be seen as the job of constructing active networks closely attuned to three things: one, the complexity of society's problems; two, the information available for solving them; and three, the public-private networks through which they will be solved. An important feature of many decision situations is that the decision process is often more important than the outcome – decision situations are often full of ambiguity and vague actions. Cyert and March (1963) set aside the assumption of a single or unified decision maker, developing instead the concept of a loose and shifting “coalition” that selects organizational goals. This is not all a bed of roses – these networks are far more complex, more unstable, and less predictable than orderly bureaucracies, therefore greater risks to government workers. They are told to be more innovative and entrepreneurial, yet penalties for mistakes have increased. These issues are critical to the success of current government initiatives such as the National Performance Review and the Government Performance Review Act. These programs hold great promise for government executives and their organizations to become skilled at adaptive learning, the process of customizing innovations from outside the organization to fit the local context (best practices). We need to develop a model that stresses continuous learning, experimentation, and a commitment to improvement, while retaining a constancy in certain core elements, as developed and promoted in the learning community at FEI.

PROJECT FAREWELL

I feel it appropriate to end by sharing this appropriate little story (as told in Tabor, 1997):

The Lesson of the Stone: A Metaphor

The stone lay on the shore, comfortably nestled among its fellow rocks, warmed by the sun, brushed clean by the wind, fulfilling its role. Aware of the water nearby, the stone wondered about it but found no simple means to learn more about it. One crisp fall day, the hand of fate lifted the stone, holding it aloft where it glimpsed the world beyond and the vast, seemingly endless sea.

Curious, the stone pondered the sea. Hesitant, it wished momentarily to be back in the place that felt more familiar. Suddenly, the stone was flung toward the water, exhilaration and fear surging through it in the same moment. As it touched the top of the water again, again, again, and yet again before finally coming to rest beneath the sea, the stone learned a great truth: Skipping across the surface leaves the sea undiscovered. The water is not known by lying on the shore, nor can the sea be truly understood until it is experienced deeply and profoundly.

The author contends that this story is a metaphor for professional development, where we do not truly learn unless we deeply explore that which we encounter. Simply touching the surface lightly and briefly prevents us from understanding, internalizing, or implementing new learning. This is appropriate both for the Federal Executive Institute as an organization and as the focus of this study. Programs at FEI push executives to come out of their comfort zone, to learn new things and new ways of doing things, and to develop that yearning to make the process of learning one that is lifelong. In the same way, this process of writing about FEI has

taken me deeper, to levels below the surface, to areas that are personal, to develop a true understanding and appreciation of this unique organization. Thus in true FEI fashion, I have been part of that learning community and my future endeavors as an educator and scholar will carry the indelible mark of this experience.

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Henry, Loren. Personal interview, 3 December 1997.

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Winner, Linda. Personal interview, 5 December 1997.

FEI DIRECTORS

Frank Sherwood	10/68 — 8/73
Chester Newland	9/73 — 6/76
Thomas Murphy	7/76 — 12/78
Patrick Conklin	1/79 — 12/79 (<i>Acting</i>)
Robert Matson	1/80 — 7/80 (<i>Acting</i>)
Chester Newland	8/80 — 8/81
Robert Matson	8/81 — 7/82 (<i>Acting</i>)
Robert Matson	8/82 — 8/87
Michael Hansen	9/87 — 9/92
Patrick Conklin	10/92 — 12/92 (<i>Acting</i>)
Dee Henderson	1/93 — 7/94
Curtis Smith	8/94 — present (Although he has announced his resignation effective 1998.)

INTRODUCTION to past directors:

As an intellectual history of FEI, my study is attempting to determine the sources of the theories and philosophies that FEI has utilized over the years in developing their training programs. I would maintain that FEI Directors may have brought some of this with them. I'm therefore interested in finding out several things.

- ◆ When you came to FEI, was one of your motives to institute a specific vision or model of executive development?
- ◆ **Were there certain philosophies or theories from your previous education or training that you felt important to executive development?**
- ◆ How much leverage did faculty have in setting the learning philosophies for their courses?
- ◆ **Did you ask participants, through methods such as focus groups or surveys, what they felt FEI should be teaching?**
- ◆ Have other units of government expressed interest in having input in developing FEI programs?
- ◆ **Were there other environmental (social, political or otherwise) influences on FEI's training philosophy?**

The task at hand, then, is to document the nexus of these two relationships — the endogenous and exogenous, the internal and external.

- ◆ What is the mix?
- ◆ **What is your perspective?**
- ◆ What do you perceive that mix to be?

In studying the intellectual content of the curriculum at FEI, it is important to determine where those ideas came from ...

- ◆ How much influence do the faculty members have on course development?
- ◆ **How does their background (poli sci, puad, etc) affect their planning?**
- ◆ How much control do the program coordinators have over the program content?

Introduction to faculty members

As an intellectual history of FEI, my study is attempting to determine the sources of the theories and philosophies that FEI has utilized over the years in developing their training programs. I am interested in understanding how much control you have over the content of your courses.

- ◆ It would be helpful to understand some about your training and background.
- ◆ **Were you recruited for, or applied to, a particular position?**
- ◆ In addition, how much “academic freedom” do you have in preparing the content for your course(s)?

**RATIONALE FOR THE FEDERAL EXECUTIVE INSTITUTE
APPROACH TO EDUCATION**

Executives who come to FEI for the eight-week residential program often find that this organization is “different” — from traditional training or education settings and different from their home agencies. FEI strives to be different. Not just for the sake of being different, or to mystify participants, but to fit a carefully developed and tested educational model. Some of the premises on which FEI is built are as follows:

1. A system that has as its mission continuing adult education may need to organize and operate differently than an organization that is set up to regulate, carry out R&D, or manufacture a product. Advanced educational processes must be highly individualized to allow students to meet their own learning needs according to their own criteria. Thus, a system must be created which stresses maximum flexibility to adapt the structure to fit the needs, freest possible flow of information, and maximum individual choice. FEI is a “temporary system” which stresses constant infusion of new faculty personnel and new ideas.
2. Effective adult education differs in philosophy and practice from public school education for young people and from routine skill training programs. Specifically:
 - a. Adults can and should take major responsibility for their own learning. What, how and how much adults learn is a matter for their decisions — not the teacher.
 - b. An adult brings to the educational setting a wide background of experience, knowledge and skills which can be a valuable resource for his and others’ learning. Thus, a collection of competent adults is a “learning community” in which everyone takes both teacher and learner roles and shares in the management of the educational process.

- c. Learning takes place best when the individual finds it relevant to his role and situation — i.e., when the skills and knowledge gained have utility in understanding important situations, solving immediate problems, or developing him as a person.
 - d. A complete learning experience deals with both facts and feelings. In order to utilize his learning most effectively, the executive should not only increase his storehouse of knowledge, but should also gain greater awareness of the part played by his values, beliefs and reactions — and those of his colleagues.
- 3. Faculty members at FEI do not view themselves solely as “expert-teachers” in the traditional sense, i.e., they do not purport always to know what executives ought to know, and they do not view their role as only passing information. Rather, they try to help facilitate the learning process in a variety of ways — as group discussion leaders, planners, lecturers, and participants in learning activities.
- 4. Specific measures are taken to build a “learning community.” These include asking executives to take the teaching role in a variety of learning activities, establishing a governance system in which executives have a part in planning and running the Institute’s activities, and establishing evaluation and feedback mechanisms to monitor regularly the on-going programs.
- 5. Faculty members believe it is important to develop open communication with participating executives. For this reason, they attempt to be explicit about what they are doing, their own value systems, program rationale, etc. Also, they want to receive open communication from executives — views, feelings, questions, complaints, etc.
- 6. Viable adult education should not exclude the learner himself from the process of inquiry. Through a variety of approaches the Institute strives to create a learning climate in which the executive can learn about himself as a person and a manager — as well as

about the external environment in which he operates. Thus, the FEI experience is more personalized than the traditional training setting.

7. Any educational endeavor ought to be able to specify its goals. This has been a difficult issue for FEI because each executive comes from a different setting, brings a different set of background experiences and skills, views the world somewhat differently, and has different learning goals and needs. It would be inappropriate and self-defeating to attempt to force each participant into the same mold. It has seemed more valid to propose a set of general learning goals for the Institute and to provide a varying set of opportunities for each person to work toward the goals in his own way. FEI learning goals include helping the individual develop more awareness and understanding of: (a) the social, political and physical environments in which he operates; (b) the role and responsibilities of the American Federal executive; (c) current thinking and research about management and leadership processes; and (d) himself as a person and an executive. Each executive is encouraged to view himself as a “change agent” who will utilize his learnings to help institute constructive changes and improvements in his agency, his community and perhaps in his personal life.

BASIC COMPONENTS FOR PROGRAM DESIGN:

WEEK ONE: The Individual: Self-assessment

WEEK TWO: The Individual: Leadership and Executive Roles

WEEKS THREE THROUGH SEVEN: The Individual Executive in Relation to:

1. National Needs and Goals; Social and Environmental Issues
2. Government
3. People and Management

WEEK EIGHT: Putting It All Together

From Frank Sherwood's archives

Making the Most of the Investment

by Frank P. Sherwood

Director

For the next 1,344 hours you will perhaps be more conscious of the use of your time than has ever been true in the past. I don't mean to claim, of course, that the discharge of major responsibilities in your work has not in the past also given high value to your time. What is different is that the hours at the Institute represent a far more personal kind of experience; the test of achievement is solely in terms of the degree to which individual goals have been satisfied. Some how, psychologically, that seems to put a greater premium on the relatively limited time you will be at the Institute.

Not long ago, I was asked how we could justify the expenditure of about \$7,000, including salary, for each executive who attends the Institute. In all honesty I do not know of any objective way in which the investment can be defended in terms of dollar payoff. I am sure you will have your own questions about the value of the experience as you move through the program. But beware of making the price tag a major factor in judging the value of the program. It can be misleading because learning, by its very nature, is often an inefficient process. There is, for example, the "aha" syndrome, in which one labors mightily with no apparent results until suddenly the light dawns. No one can predict when that will occur or in what degree.

One of the most interesting perspectives I have heard on the program was expressed by one executive, who said, "For the first time in my government career, I am going to be really selfish. Always before, I have behaved in ways that I thought were best for the organization. Now I am going to think about myself." Actually, he seemed to feel rather guilty in making that

statement. He shouldn't have. Too frequently we separate organizational and personal interest. I would argue that the best way to pursue the government's interest at the FEI is to do the things that will lead to one's greatest personal development. Being selfish at the FEI is the best way to be a good organization man.

In that last analysis your feeling of satisfaction about the experience will depend on you. I think there is enough freedom and flexibility in the program to permit you to pursue your development goals — providing you have them firmly in mind and are honest enough to evaluate your performance in moving toward them. In fact, I do not think the FEI could operate in any other way. This is an inter-agency program, enrolling executives with many different backgrounds, needs, and experiences. Each man must take responsibility for his own growth; and we must be very careful that the FEI facilitates that assumption of responsibility, rather than hinders it. The heterogeneity of our Institute society may at times bother you. You may long for more specific objectives that are set by someone else. However, I think you will look back on the experience as a rich one in at least one respect — the opportunity to get to know and experience some highly talented people from the many parts of the government. We work hard to help you do that, as we see it very much in keeping with the goals of the Institute.

Because development needs do vary so much, we have tried to design a program that provides as many opportunities as possible and as few requirements as feasible. Choice is an important word at the Institute. Unfortunately, we find that many executives feel very uncomfortable with the request that they decide what is best for them. Some believe that they must attend everything on the schedule. When I gave a special project on a fairly narrow subject I found more than half the community there. When I asked whether all the executives had an interest, one said, "Well, I figure I had better come to the Director's project." That kind of response discouraged me. On the other hand, I was elated when one executive reported that he did not register for our second group of micro-seminars because (a) he wanted to spend some extra time on his policy/management study and (b) there were five books on the Bookshelf he had promised himself to read. In my judgment, he behaved responsibly toward his needs.

I'd admit that we aren't so loose about the program that everything is equally optional. In fact, one of the faculty has characterized our position as one in which some things "are more optional than others." When we bring a speaker to Charlottesville, we do expect the community to be there. On the other hand, special projects, micro-seminars and many other features of the program are really and truly optional.

What can we say about the ways in which a self-responsible system can be made to operate? I think this gets us back to a fundamental proposition of administration. Anything worth doing deserves planning and evaluation. We therefore devote a good share of the first week to helping you plan your activities at the Institute; and throughout the experience we seek to promote your evaluation of your progress toward your goals. If you ask us what is least optional, it is evaluation sessions. I have to confess that we have real problems convincing executives that evaluation is important. One of the reasons may be that we have difficulty separating two aspects of evaluation: (a) our need to get feedback from you as to whether we are helping or hindering your individual progress; and (b) your need to use our help to evaluate your progress toward your personal goals. While we are very interested in our own performance, I think you should be most interested in appraising your own program, and you should insure that our needs do not dominate.

I personally have a special commitment to the Policy/Management studies because I believe they represent an element of particular flexibility in the program. They represent your opportunity to get below the surface in an area in which you think it is important to know more. Only you can tell what that area may be. Only you can set the terms of your inquiry. Only you can determine how a faculty member may be helpful. In fact, there is no area of the program in which the executive must assume personal responsibility as much as in the P/M studies. I hope you will be very tough-minded in considering your approach to such studies. Be careful in framing the problem in which you have an interest. Work hard to develop a framework which will allow you to complete the project within three weeks. In my judgment the P/M study can bring high satisfaction to you, but much will depend on your personal initiative and your own

industry in following through.

Though it is somewhat difficult to pin down, I do think the notion of the Institute as a place where you can be experimental about ideas and behavior is most important. It is hard enough to test new behavior in most established social situations. It is virtually impossible to try out a new idea. Here I am talking about one that is truly different and alien to expectations. I would like to believe that the Institute provides you a new arena in which experimentation is possible.

We have put about 25 books in your room that range broadly in their subject matter. The hope is that they will prompt you to generate new ideas and to test them with your colleagues. Similarly, we hope that the library will be used and thought of as a place in which there is a real repository of new ways of thinking and doing things. Scan the books in your Bookshelf. Visit the library. If I had a single hope for those of you who have not made books a real part of your life, it is that you find a new delight in reading and using newly-gained insights in your daily life.

In one of our orientation sessions, an executive exasperatedly said, “You faculty people act as if we never read a book in our lives.” Maybe that is the way I sound. That is not what I mean. In the term of one psychologist, I would like you to have a Being experience, which is to say that I hope the Institute will enable you to achieve the satisfaction of having used your full potential.

APPENDIX E

1988 — List of Curriculum Committee Members

Jack Bowsher	IBM Director of Education, External	IBM Corporation
Warner Burke	Professor	Columbia University
David O. Cooke	Director of Administration & Mgmt	Dept. of Defense
Robert Fagin	Acting Deputy Director	Bureau of Mines
John J. Franke	Asst. Secretary for Administration	Dept. of Agriculture
Brad Huther	Asst. Commissioner	Finance and Planning
Col. Powell Hutton	Director of Academic Affairs	Nat'l Defense Univ.
Patricia Ingraham	Assoc. Prof. & Dir. of MPA Program	SUNY Binghamton
Raymond Kline	President	National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA)
Philip Nowlen	Dean, Division of Continuing Education	University of Virginia
Sam Overman	Associate Professor	University of Colorado
Delores Parron	Assoc. Dir. for Special Populations	Nat'l Inst. of Mental Health
Roger Porter (non-participating)	Professor of Government and Business	Harvard University
Alfred Zuck	Executive Director	National Assn. of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA)

FY 1998 Priority Course Topics

THEME AREA: PERSONAL LEADERSHIP IN GOVERNMENT

- The Principles and Practice of Executive Leadership
- The Art of Delegating
- The Facilitative Leader
- Executive Decisionmaking
- Strategic Leadership and the Government Performance and Results Act
- Leadership and Influencing Others
- Managing Individual and Organizational Conflict in Public Organizations
- Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Government
- Contemporary Leaders as Coaches
- Strategic Career Development

THEME AREA: TRANSFORMING PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS

- Building the Learning Organization
- Managing Individual and Organizational Change
- Beyond Downsizing
- Developing and Managing a Team-Based Organization
- Leadership and Systems Thinking

THEME AREA: POLICY IN A CONSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM

- The Legislative Process and the Federal Executive
- Reinventing the Federal Bureaucracy
- Issues in Federal-State Relations
- Public Participation: Engaging Interest Groups, Individuals, and the Media in the Policy Process

THEME AREA: GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES AND PUBLIC ACTION

- The Rise of Asia and U.S. Policy
- Technological Change and the Global Society
- U.S. Foreign Policy in a Changing World

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS — “ROCKY TOP”

A Five-Minute Skit (Ed Jones)

The sessions were divided into groups of seven or eight, who were asked to go to group rooms and prepare a five-minute skit on a subject of their choosing. At times they were given a few simple guidelines (for example, all members of the group were to be involved in the process) but often they received no other explanation.

The skits were then presented to all participants, followed by a critique of what had happened in the planning, development and execution of the skit. Since everyone had observed the complete process, the exercise lent itself especially well to close examination of the behavior of the individuals concerned. For example, who talked first? Who talked most? How many ideas were allowed to surface? Who facilitated those ideas? Who blocked ideas? How were minorities dealt with? The execs proved to be not especially skilled at observing their own or others' behavior, and were reticent about surfacing what they did see.

A Life-Planning Exercise (Ed Jones)

I adapted a life-planning exercise that had originally been designed and used by Herb Sheperd at the Organizational Behavior Program at Case Western Reserve University. It was the early days of the behavioral science or human resource movement, and few exercises of that kind had been included in published material. The execs were asked to take stock of their lives, to look back to see where they had been, where they had arrived and now, in the second half of their lifetimes, where they would like to go. In those days this was a new idea and, though some had heard of it, others appeared to suspect that it had been generated on the beaches of Santa Monica.

Participants were asked to draw their life line and mark on it several high and low points. Next, to mark on it where they saw themselves along the line and what they hoped to see happen in the years ahead. Many of the execs had been so busy doing all of the things that had been expected of them by parents, school, family and bosses that they had never taken the time to create a vision of their own lives. The questionnaire was then used as a basis for a life-planning discussion in which each participant was given an hour or more to explore his or her life, hopes and fears. In the seventies many execs brought deep-seated concerns about their work, families and especially their teen-aged children to the groups. Afterward, some commented that they knew more about the people in this small group than they did about persons with whom they had worked for twenty years.

Team Development (Ed Jones)

Since the execs were in the program as individuals, there was no ready way to deal with the issues that inevitably arose concerning the work of the team back at the office. One theory we developed was that we would demonstrate the process by building a number of teams before their very eyes. To what degree this learning might be applied back home was problematic. In the longer run it did lead to the team-building workshops that were initiated in the mid-seventies and continue until today. It is noteworthy that the activities and exercises we used came from many different aspects of the social science field. As in engineering and in medicine, it is often difficult to trace the learning strands. It is also difficult to say why some learning activities persist even when there is resistance to them. It is probably safe to say that it is more difficult to apply new learning in governmental agencies than in the industrial culture, though industry too has been slow to pick up on practices that seem to have been initially generated in the United States and then transported to others in the industrialized world.

The Plays and Novels Workshop (Jim Roberts)

The idea of reading plays and novels as part of the FEI program was raised during the summer of 1968 both in Frank Sherwood's office at U.S.C. and at a meeting in Fullerton, California on July 25th. Since the interests of other staff members was concentrated elsewhere,

this possible area of activity became my bailiwick. It was an area wherein I felt I had some special competence and a high degree of interest. More importantly, the literary arts seemed to have some promise of fitting into the emerging intellectual *geist* of the institute.

[In the first session] a Novels-and-Plays Lab was included in the curriculum as an alternative small group activity. Ten executives signed up for the workshop — some because they wanted to avoid the intense personal interaction of the T-Group, others because they had already taken a Blake Grid course, and some because they just wanted to read plays and novels. By circumstance, by design, and by sheer luck, the workshop was a great success.

The initial idea was for the executives to read the novels and most of the plays privately and then come together to discuss them. Here luck played a part. As I wrote in a later letter to relatives in Los Angeles dated December 7, 1968:

The reading of Ibsen deserves a special paragraph. When the Ibsen books first arrived, the bookstore had mistakenly sent hardcover books; these we sent back since we had ordered the paperback version. These did not arrive until Monday morning, and the group decided to read it aloud without having even looked at the cover beforehand. The results were amazing, the casting was made by a somewhat mystical group process; there were not more than a half dozen fluffed lines in a play of nearly a hundred pages, and every single participant developed an important feel for the role he was reading ...

From this point on, all the plays were read aloud. In successive sessions, what was soon called the Literary Workshop grew in popularity and participation. In the second session the workshop was divided into two groups so that all could participate in the reading of the plays. Jim Beck took one group, I took the other; Beatrice Markey served as a process observer, and several faculty wives joined some of the play readings. The selections chosen were:

Jean Anouilh's Antigone

Robert Bolt's A Man for All Seasons

Henrik Ibsen's An Enemy of the People

Andre Gide's play version of Kafka's The Trial

One novel remained, Albert Camus's The Stranger.

The value of each selection was as diverse as the interests and needs of each group.

By the third session, there were three play-reading groups with Maurice Dawkins taking the third group. Subsequent sessions continued to use the Literary Workshop. Later, under the title Plays as Cases, play reading was a standard part of the curriculum for a number of years. Play reading was also used at several of the Federal Executive Training Centers.

Whatever the format and whatever plays were selected, the goals stayed fairly constant. They were to provide:

1. A high degree of personal interaction among the participants;
2. A means by which participants would examine some basic value questions involved in administrative decision making; and
3. A method by which the participants could identify with, and become involved in, a role or perspective different from their own.

The success of bringing plays and novels into the executive development process, gave me courage to try a number of other ideas that could be used as the basis for other seminars and workshops.

Executive Bookshelf, 1968

Cater, Douglass. Power in Washington.

Goodman, Paul. Growing Up Absurd.

Fulbright, J.W. The Arrogance of Power.

Hall, E.T. The Silent Language.

McLuhan, Marshall. The Medium is the Massage.

Matson, F.W. The Broken Image.

DeSole Price, Derek J. Science Since Babylon.

Bruner, Jerome S. The Process of Education.

Maslow, Abraham. Toward a Psychology of Being.

Wheelis, Alan. The Quest for Identity.

Simon, Herbert. The Shape of Automation.

Leavitt, Harold. Managerial Psychology.

Schein, Edgar. Organizational Psychology.

Seabury, Paul. Power, Freedom, and Diplomacy.

President's Commission on Civil Disorders. U.S. Riot Commission Report.

Griffith, E.C. Congress: It's Contemporary Role.

Roston, James. Artillery of the Press.

Wildavsky, Aaron. The Politics of the Budgetary Process.

Eckstein, Otto. Public Finance.

Alsop, Stewart. The Center.

The Planning-Programming-Budgeting System: Progress and Potentials.

Metropolitan America: Challenge to Federalism.

Clark, Kenneth D. Dark Ghetto — Dilemmas of Social Power.

Executive Bookshelf, 1998

Constitutional Framework

Bok, Sissela. Lying: Moral Choice in Public and Private Life.

Mitchell, Ralph. CQ's Guide to the U.S. Constitution.

Morris, Richard B. Witness at the Creation.

Rossiter, Clinton, ed. The Federalist Papers.

Ravitch, Diane and Abigail Thernstrom, ed. The Democracy Reader.

Personal Leadership

Blank, Warren. The 9 Natural Laws of Leadership.

Block, Peter. Stewardship.

Bridges, William. JobShift — How to Prosper in a Workplace Without Jobs.

Cleveland, Harlan. The Future Executive.

Drucker, Peter F. Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

Fisher, Roger and William Ury. Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreements without Giving In.

Transforming Organizations

Gardner, John W. Self Renewal: The Individual and the Innovative Society.

Vice President Al Gore. Common Sense Government: Works Better and Costs Less.

Vice President Al Gore. From Red Tape to Results, Report of the National Performance Review Overview.

Vice President Al Gore. From Red Tape to Results, Report of the National Performance Review Executive Summary.

Hammer, Michael. Reengineering the Corporation.

Kanter, Rosabeth Moss. The Change Masters.

Katzenbach, John R. and Douglas K. Smith. The Wisdom of Teams.

Osborne, David and Ted Gaebler. Reinventing Government.

Scholtes, Peter R. The Team Handbook.

Tapscott, Don. The Digital Economy.

Thompson, Charles “Chic.” What a Great Idea!

Policy Framework

Neustadt, Richard E. Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents.

Pfiffner, James P. The Strategic Presidency.

Global Perspective

Porter, Michael E. The Competitive Advantage of Nations.

Rhoads, Steven E. The Economist’s View of the World.

Organizational Leadership

Hamel, Gary and C.K. Prahalad. Competing for the Future.

Other

Guralnik, David B., ed. Webster’s New World Dictionary of the American Language.

APPENDIX J

Original Advisory Board of the Federal Executive Institute

Hon. John W. Macy, Jr.	Former Chairman, U.S. Civil Service Commission
Hon. Wilbur J. Cohen	Former Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare
Hon. Joseph M. Robertson	Asst. Secretary for Administration, Dept. Of Agriculture
Mr. Albert F. Siepert	Deputy Director for Center Management, NASA
Mr. Warren G. Bennis	Vice President for Academic Development, SUNY
Hon. Arthur S. Flemming	President, Macalester College
Dr. Henry Reining, Jr.	Dean, USC Center for International and Public Affairs
Dr. Marvin H. Berkeley	Corporate Personnel Director, Texas Instrument Company
Hon. Kermit Gordon	President, The Brookings Institution
Hon. Frank Keppel	Board Chairman and President, General Learning Corp.

Ex-Officio Members

Hon. Roger W. Jones	Former Chairman, U.S. Civil Service Commission
Mr. J. Kenneth Mulligan	Director, Bureau of Training, U.S. Civil Service Commission
Dr. Edgar F. Shannon	President, University of Virginia

TAMMY BARNETT HALL, PhD
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EDUCATION

VIRGINIA TECH, Falls Church/Blacksburg, VA. PhD in Public Administration and Policy, September 1998.

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY, Harrisonburg, VA. Master of Public Administration, December 1993.

UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA, Charlottesville, VA. Bachelor of Arts in American Government, May 1986.

PRIMARY AREAS OF INTEREST

- *Public Management — human resources, non-profits, leadership, organizational behavior & development*
- *Ethics — theoretical and practical; civic education*

SECONDARY AREAS OF INTEREST

- *State and Local Government; American Government; Community Development*
- *Public policy (particularly social welfare, education and criminal justice policy)*

WORKS IN PROGRESS

- *The Federal Executive Institute: Curriculum, Methods, and Lessons for Colleges and Universities.* Co-authored with Bob Maranto, PhD; currently under revise and resubmit.

PROFESSIONAL PAPERS AND MANUSCRIPTS

- *Cyberculture: The Blacksburg Electronic Village and the “New Community.”* Accepted for presentation at the APSA 1998 Annual Meeting (Boston, MA), September 1998.
- *Faith-based Institutions: An Alternative to the Welfare State.* Presented at the SECOPA Conference (Knoxville, TN), September 1997.
- *Students Expectations of Public Administration Education.* Panel convened and paper presented at the Teaching Public Administration Conference (Richmond, VA), March 1997.

SYMPOSIUM LECTURE TOPIC

America’s Quest for Balancing Rights and Responsibilities: The Role of Mediating Structures

DISSERTATION TOPIC

Rocky Top, Rocky Road, Solid Rock: Thirty Years of Intellectual History at the Federal Executive Institute

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Assistant Professor, Summer II 1998 to present **Indiana State University, Terre Haute, IN**
PA 642, Seminar in Employee Services Programs (graduate); Summer I 1999
PA 641, Seminar in Organizational Development (graduate); Summer II 1998; Summer I 1999
PA 609, Ethical Concerns in Current American Public Administration (graduate); Spring 1999
PA 690, Seminar in Nonprofit Management (graduate); Spring 1999
PSCI 305, State and Local Government (undergraduate); Spring 1999
PA 604, Research Methods (graduate); Summer II 1998, Fall 1998
PSCI 330, Introduction to Public Administration (undergraduate); Fall 1998
PA 611, Seminar in Local Administration and Policy (graduate); Fall 1998

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Part-Time Faculty, Fall 1996 to Spring 1998

James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA

PUAD 265, Public Administration (undergraduate); Spring 1998

POSC 295, Research Methods (undergraduate); Fall 1997

POSC 302, State and Local Government (undergraduate); Fall 1996, Spring 1997

PUAD 658, Public Policy (graduate); Fall 1996

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Graduate Assistant

Virginia Tech, Falls Church, VA

Responsible for assisting professors with class assignments. Served as class liaison between professor and students. Responsible for organizing annual roundtable speaker series. Performed administrative and academic research, prepared documents. Taught one session of PAPA 5014, Masters PA Theory class. Member, American Society for Public Administration. *1995-1996.*

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Development Coordinator

Virginia Discovery Museum, Charlottesville, VA

Responsible for coordination of the annual fund drive, wreath sale and special events; and soliciting foundation, corporate and individual gifts including preparation of supporting proposals and grant requests. Responsible for broadening the Museum's base of support with new individual and corporate donors. Accomplishments: Developed, coordinated and organized first annual KidsFest, attracting 930+ people for family fun and educational activities. Redesigned registration form for annual kids race, the Discovery Dash, to encourage kids to collect sponsor money; 11% more kids raised more than the minimum registration fee. Member of the American Society for Public Administration, and the local chapter of the National Society for Fund Raising Executives. Notary Public. *August 1994 to July 1995.*

Human Resources Administrator/Executive Assistant

International Auto, Charlottesville, VA

Researched and prepared Employee Handbook and Job Descriptions for all employees. Responsible for leave accounting and records management. Screened, tested and interviewed applicants. Hired and trained catalog phone staff. Reviewed and recommended policies and programs for team building, customer service, controlling absenteeism and improving retention. Assisted with merchandising, vendor research, database maintenance. Prepared monthly employee newsletter. Performed sales and marketing analyses. Organized special events. Member of the Society for Human Resource Management, Albemarle/Charlottesville Human Resources Association. *September 1992 to August 1994.*

Coordinator, Community Services

Jefferson Area Board for Aging

Co-Director, Retired Senior Volunteer Program

Charlottesville, VA

Recruited volunteers, coordinated volunteer assignments and in-service trainings, monitored volunteer sites, provided recognitions and maintained records mandated by funding sources. Supervised over 500 volunteers. Interviewed and determined eligibility for the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). Recruited older workers, screened, counseled and completed extensive paperwork. Arranged for and conducted testing and training as needed. Participated in Job and Volunteer Fairs. Supervised and maintained reports for seven nutrition sites. For all programs, prepared press releases and public service announcements. *July 1989 to July 1991.*

CURRENT MEMBERSHIPS

- *American Society for Public Administration*
- *American Political Science Association*

- *Southern Political Science Association*
- *Association for Practical and Professional Ethics*

MAJOR COURSES TAKEN IN DOCTORAL PROGRAM

- *Context of Public Administration*
- *Advanced Topics in Public Policy (The Executive-Legislative Interface)*
- *Complex Public Organizations*
- *Public Administration Theory*
- *Advanced Topics in Ethics (The Internal Morality of Institutions)*
- *Independent Study in Civic Rights/Responsibilities*
- *Civil Society Literature Review*
- *Normative Foundations*

GRADUATE RESEARCH PROJECTS

- *Higher Education Reform: A Case Study of Virginia Tech*
- *Parole Abolition in the State of Virginia: A Policy Study*
- *Alasdair MacIntyre and William Bennett: A Quest for Community, Practice and Tradition, and Education's Institutional Incapacity to Provide Moral Education*
- *The Turbulent Environment of the 90's and the Implications for the Human Resources Profession and Education*
- *Wide Awake or Rude Awakening? Implications and Missed Opportunities in the Rosenberger Decision*

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

- **Advisor**, Indiana State University MPA Association (1998-present)
- **Member**, Public Administration and American Government program committees (1998-present)

COMMUNITY SERVICE

- **Member**, Leadership Terre Haute Class XXI (1998-99)
- **Member**, Honey Creek Booster Club (1998-present); Dixie Bee PTO (1998-present)
- **Troop Leader**, Honey Creek Junior Girl Scouts (1998-99)
- **Troop Leader**, Agnor Hurt Daisy Girl Scouts (1992-93); Hollymead Brownie Girl Scouts (1996-1998)
- **Classroom Volunteer**, Hollymead Elementary (1995-96, 1996-97)
- **Camp Leader**, Sugar Hollow Day Camp (1996, 1997)
- **Fundraising Events**, Earlysville Volunteer Fire Company (1995-1998), Head Start (1989-91)
- **Grantwriting**, Charlottesville Pregnancy Center (1994-95)
- **Chairperson**, Head Start Policy Council (1989-91)
- **Individual Development VP, Communications Director**, Charlottesville-Albemarle Jaycees (1988-1992)

1. During its thirty year history FEI has had seven directors, one serving for two non-consecutive terms. See Appendix A.