

Student Affairs Administrators' University Relationships:

A Study of Language Usage in Departmental Meetings

by

Malcolm William Moss

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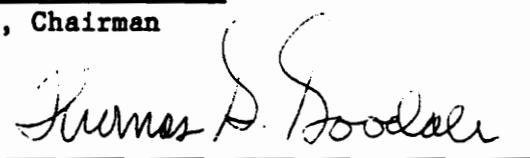
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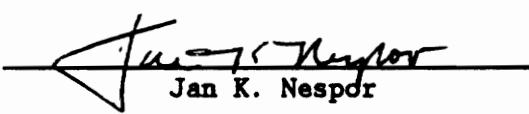
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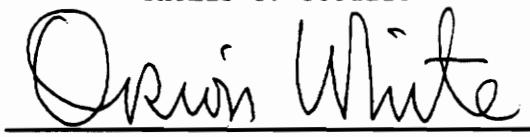
APPROVED:


Don G. Creamer
Don G. Creamer, Chairman


Darrel A. Clowes
Darrel A. Clowes


Thomas G. Goodale
Thomas G. Goodale


Jan K. Nespor
Jan K. Nespor


Orion F. White
Orion F. White

February, 1991

Blacksburg, Virginia

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(ABSTRACT)

Investigations into cultural aspects of organizations offers promising improvements to understanding those organizations, and to the field of organizational development. The study of figurative language usage provides revealing analogs to the culture, represented through attitudes, values, beliefs, and assumptions.

Organizational meetings of four units of a division of student affairs at a large state university were observed over a period of eight weeks using a naturalistic research design (Lincoln, 1985) to collect qualitative data about language usage. Data analysis was inductive and was reported as case studies of the unit meetings.

Findings of the study revealed several perceptions of dominant relationships viewed by student affairs professionals as crucial to their work. These relationships were described using the metaphors of "family" and "servant," which revealed important cultural themes of the student affairs division of the university.

This research provided insights into student affairs culture, valuable data for student affairs practitioners, and further evidence for the usefulness of emergent research methodologies.

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CHAPTER 1

Human beings are distinguished from all other living species by their ability to create and use symbols as a basis of discourse, and as a means of forging their lives. As such, it would seem that any social science concerned to do justice to the fact that it is dealing with the study of human beings, should accord the subject of symbolism a high place in their interests and concerns. So too in relation to the study of organization. (Morgan, Frost & Pandy, 1983, p.30)

INTRODUCTION

Figurative language is a primary means for understanding our world and ourselves (Lakoff, 1980, 1987; Lakoff & Turner, 1989), and may be considered a tool through which we build our realities, and through which we display those realities to others. We all use figurative language regularly, and this usage adds richness to our communication and to our understanding (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Langton & Langton, 1989).

Examples of figurative language are discernible in every field, including the study of organizations (Morgan, 1986). For instance, Kurt Lewin used the metaphor of an iceberg to describe an organization (Bennis, Benne, & Chin 1985; French & Bell, 1984; Hanson, 1985). He argued that for change to take place, organizations must be thawed, moved or changed, and refrozen. Changing an organization requires a thorough understanding of all environmental conditions (Morgan, 1982). Another aspect of the

iceberg as a symbol for an organization is that much of the organization is unseen and below the surface. Examples of subsurface aspects of organizations are beliefs, assumptions, attitudes, and values, all of which affect informal interactions and group norms (French & Bell, 1984). The iceberg metaphor provides us with a second value, or description, for understanding an organization and demonstrates the value of symbolic language as well.

Lewin used this metaphor to give students of organizational behavior insight into structure and function. Teachers throughout the ages have engaged in the use of figurative language as disclosure models in order to reveal conceptions of reality. Even Aristotle (Bucher, 1951; Ortony, 1979), father of rationality, believed that figurative language and myths were models for behavior.

Figurative language is used globally and reveals the perceived reality of the subject, often including the unseen, subsurface aspects of that which the speaker communicates. Therefore, observation and interpretation of figurative language and symbolic language used in organizations may be an effective method for research on very important, but invisible, organizational processes. For those purposes, it is preferable to the traditional, positivistic, quantitative approaches favored in presently dominant research paradigms (Pondy, Frost, Morgan & Dandridge, 1983).

To reach below the surface of organizations, to its culture, traditional methods of inquiry are inappropriate and new methodologies must be utilized. This research builds on the premise that organizations and organizational culture can be understood through the symbolic language used by organization members operating within the organizational context. This use of figurative language implies a way of seeing and a way of thinking which reflects how people perceive and understand the world in which they work. Those unseen and unconscious aspects of organizational culture are exposed in the figurative language used. The organizational culture is reflected in what kinds of figurative language are used by its members (Hirsch & Andrews, 1983).

There is a body of literature that provides guidance and encouragement for this type of research. Methodologically, naturalistic inquiry (Guba & Lincoln, 1983; Lincoln, 1985; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1988) is appropriate for an organizational study. It allows the researcher to explore the human dimension of organizations. Naturalistic inquiry assumes the human instrument is best in situations where motives, beliefs, attitudes, and values direct human activity. The careful observer can watch, see, listen, investigate, analyze, and organize observed direct experience. "The analysis of culture is not an experimental science in search of laws but an interpretive one in search of meaning" (Geertz, 1973, p.5). A paradigmatic shift from a logical positivistic paradigm to an "emergent" paradigm is preferred in much of social science research (Burrell & Morgan, 1979; Clark, 1985; Griffiths, 1983; Kuh, Whitt, &

Shedd, 1987; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Pondy & Mitroff, 1979; Schwartz & Ogilvy, 1979; Smircich, 1983). The conventional paradigm has restricted research from the higher levels of organizational activity such as communication, perception, shared systems of meaning (Boulding, 1968; Pondy & Mitroff, 1979). For example, Pondy (1983) states that "the rational bias of the formal organization paradigm has for the most part precluded the investigation of myths and metaphors in formal organizations" (p. 158).

The study of figurative language in organizations has been shown to be extremely useful in discerning cultural orientations. Lakoff and Johnson (1980), Lakoff (1987), and Lakoff and Turner (1989) have argued that symbolic language influences the way people define reality. Kuh and Whitt (1988) concur: "People define reality in metaphorical language and often draw inferences--consciously or unconsciously, set goals, make commitments, and execute plans based on the structure and experience provided by a metaphor" (p. 105). Additionally, Pondy (1983) refers to figurative language as a cohesive element in organizations especially in the "organizing" of participants:

The central hypothesis is that the use of metaphors in organizational dialog plays a necessary role in helping organizational participants to in-fuse [sic] their organizational experiences with meaning and to resolve apparent paradoxes and contradictions, and that this infusion of meaning or resolution of paradox is a form of organizing. In this sense, the use of metaphors helps to couple the organization . . . that is, metaphors help to organize the objective facts of the situation in the minds of the participants. (p. 157)

Geertz (1973) also adds that the creation of objective facts in an organization is guided by underlying root figurative language.

Therefore, figurative language serves both as models of the situation and as models for the situation (p. 93). Lakoff (1987) and Cassirer (1946) share this interpretation that information is aggregated around known entities or grouped along similar ideas. Eoyang (1983) calls this "cognitive economy."

Other studies have provided a sample of the possibilities for using figurative language in organizational research (Feldman & March, 1981; Huff, 1980; Moss, 1989). However, many studies have mistakenly used the word symbol when figurative was intended (Pondy, Frost, Morgan & Dandridge, 1983; Daft & Wiginton, 1979; Morgan, Frost & Pondy, 1983; Tierney, 1988, 1989). Although this confusion will probably continue in organizational literature, I will not follow that muddled path.

Symbols have a transcendent value which inspires awe, such as the cross does for devout Christians. Figurative language, behaviors, and items are not sacred and merely act as a means by which one is enabled to understand or categorize the unfamiliar through association and a value-added cognitive reaction (Eoyang, 1983; Huff, 1980). For instance, in corporate takeovers language such as "ambushes" and "shootouts" have been observed, relating a war-like quality to the operation (Hirsch & Andrews, 1983). Symbols emerge and stand on their own and cannot be created and used. The interpretation of everyday language and behavior

allows the student of organizations to better understand the complexity inherent in such a social system.

PROBLEM

The preponderance of current organizational research is couched in a paradigm inconsistent with the realities inherent within organizations. Logical positivism, the basis for the conventional paradigm, assumes lower levels of complexity (Boulding, 1968) than are realistically observed in organizational culture, especially in academic organizations. The conventional paradigm neglects those cultural elements or interpretative frameworks in favor of mechanistic, objective, and value-free phenomenon. To use the aforementioned iceberg metaphor, only the tip of the iceberg is observed in such a research agenda. Therefore, we know little about how organizational culture is maintained or how it changes. Qualitative methods such as naturalistic inquiry enable the researcher to identify cultural properties and to develop an appreciation of the holistic influence of the organization's culture. The specific implications for student affairs practice of this emerging paradigm, or world view, have yet to be fully realized. Kuh, Whitt, and Shedd (1987, pp. 14-15), building on the typologies of Schwartz and Ogilvy and the concepts of Clark (1985), provide a framework for a richer understanding of how the paradigmatic change may be applicable to student affairs (Table 1).

Table 1

Comparison of Conventional Facilities and Emergent Paradigm Qualities

Conventional Paradigm	Emergent Paradigm
Student affairs work is . . .	Student affairs work is . . .
<i>Objective</i> Events can be studied from the "outside" with value-neutral instruments and mental processes. <i>Examples:</i> objective, value-free data; single truth/reality produced by scientific methods.	<i>Perspectival</i> Events are necessarily viewed in light of the viewer's experience, values, and expectations; "believing in seeing." <i>Examples:</i> Multiple realities are continually being reconstructed; "multilectic," naturalistic inquiry; hermeneutics.
<i>Simple and reductionistic</i> Events can be explained, controlled, and predicted by reducing them to their simplest components; complexity requires simplification. <i>Examples:</i> MBO, PPBS approaches; attrition studies; behaviorism.	<i>Complex and diverse</i> Understanding events requires increasingly complex views of their processes and structures; the whole transcends the parts. <i>Examples:</i> humanistic psychology; humanistic developmental theory; open systems theory.
<i>Hierarchic</i> Systems are ordered vertically and control, authority, responsibility, and knowledge flow from the top downward. <i>Examples:</i> bureaucratic chains of command, formal communication channels; centralization of control over resources and decisions.	<i>Heterarchic</i> Order in a system is created by networks of mutual influence and constraints. <i>Examples:</i> enrollment management strategies; political model of policymaking in IHEs; clan-like work groups; informal organization.
<i>Mechanical</i> Events are calculable and sequential; actions result in quick and predictable reactions. <i>Examples:</i> PERT flow charts; admissions processes, registration, payroll.	<i>Holonomic</i> Events are dynamic processes of interaction and differentiation in which information about the whole is present in each of the parts. <i>Examples:</i> organizational culture, hermeneutic circles.
<i>Determinate</i> Future states follow from present in rational, predictable ways. <i>Examples:</i> human development-stage theories; needs assessments; goal-setting & goal-based planning; single-loop learning.	<i>Indeterminate</i> Future events are unknowable; ambiguity and disorder are to be expected, valued, and exploited. <i>Examples:</i> loose coupling; "double looping;" garbage can models of decision making & problem solving.
<i>Linearly Causal</i> Events have finite, identifiable causes. <i>Examples:</i> accountability systems; standards and "excellence" movements; problem solving; futurism.	<i>Mutually Shaping</i> Events are generated by complex reciprocal processes that blur distinctions between cause and effect. <i>Examples:</i> campus ecosystem models; positive and negative "amplification cycles."
<i>Assembled</i> Change is planned implementation of prescribed processes that create predictable results. <i>Examples:</i> long-range planning, planned interventions to purposefully influence student development.	<i>Morphogenetic</i> Change is evolutionary and spontaneous; diverse elements interact with each other and the environment to create new, unanticipated outcomes. <i>Examples:</i> self-organization dissipative structures theory; career planning functions evolved out of counseling and placement; nontransferability of programs.

Note. The authors are indebted to Clark (1985) and Schwartz and Ogilvy (1979) for the concept of presenting comparisons under separate headings for conventional and emergent paradigms. From *Student Affairs Work, 2001: A Paradigm Odyssey* by G. D. Kuh, E. J. Whitt, and J. D. Shedd, 1987, Alexandria, VA: ACPA. Copyright 1987 by ACPA. Reprinted by permission.

The Table provides examples of how the emergent paradigm captures organizational reality. This perspective, built from our experiences, is not compatible with control, objectivity, and an objective, single reality but with a dynamic world with conditions of uncertainty, mutual shaping, and multiple realities of relationships. In the case of this research, the "problem" is more than a need to demonstrate the promising utility of an emerging research paradigm. Certainly, it is integral to this research. Grounding this perspective in organizational life is of more importance.

Learning about organizational culture in student affairs at a large public research institution of higher education during a period of rapid change is the applied aspect of the problem. Utilization of qualities from the emergent paradigm to explore and to understand an organization, especially one in a period of change, promotes solutions to both problems. The more appropriate paradigm is utilized to provide greater insight into, and answers for, complex organizational phenomenon.

In 1990 the Division of Student Affairs at this large public research university, hereafter referred to as "University," provided an excellent setting for organizational study. The University had recently made major changes. A new president, provost, and vice president for student affairs had been hired. Major changes were occurring, almost daily. The administration was taking actions which were very different from their

predecessors, in each case. The changes were coming rapidly for this fairly conservative institution.

Complicating the scenery was an unexpected budget crisis. The state government requested budgeted funds be returned, and warned of future cutbacks. Changes requiring additional funding were cancelled, plans had to be tabled, hiring was frozen, and disappointment abounded.

These events, and the reactions to them, provided an opportunity to take a cultural perspective to understanding organizations in the midst of change and in the throes of economic depression. Attitudes, values, assumptions, and beliefs unfolded and were demonstrated more fully in such situations, making it a propitious occasion for observation (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). The language of value is the language of emotion. This setting provided ample opportunity to observe administrators struggling to maintain their units and to provide services. Emotions often ran high.

Certainly structural changes and funding formulas are part of the changes which may be quantitatively observed in this scenario, but what about the hidden part of the iceberg? What are the hidden, or cultural, aspects that make up the more comprehensive elements of an organization like student affairs, and how do we study them? This investigation offers insights into these questions using methodologies more compatible with the human elements of complex organizations.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this research was to identify internally-felt constructions about each member's, and unit's, relationships with others in and around the university using the analysis of figurative language as the key. This analysis of figurative language used by student affairs administrators aimed to reveal some larger meaning about the organizational culture in which the administrators work.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Research is important for extending the knowledge base in the field as well as for understanding and improving practice (Merriam, 1988). The significance of this research lies in demonstrating how figurative language serves to reveal aspects of organizational culture. Practically, the attitudes, values, assumptions, and beliefs of staff members may serve to help the organization better understand itself and its actions (for a discussion of the implications of the "cultural audit" for practice, see Wilkins, 1983; Kuh & Whitt, 1988, pp 95-110).

This specific research may assist the Division of Student Affairs in its self-understanding, especially in its change efforts. Division units may reflect on the implications of the study for internal significance or consciousness. It will permit interpretation of findings in a manner that

might lead to behavioral change in administrators, if warranted, and to better self-awareness.

Additionally, other student affairs divisions and units may gain from the observations of this research. Since many student affairs divisions are arranged similarly, this study may provide some guidance to other institutions.

LIMITATIONS

Limitations include the short term of the collection period and restricted number of observations in the study. The nine-week data collection period may be considered insufficient. This study also observed only one division, and only half its units, though the sample represented a selection of student affairs professionals.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study was guided by, and attempted to answer, the following questions:

How does the use of figurative language by student affairs administrators at Virginia Tech reveal their conceptions about their relationships with students and the university?

Do student affairs administrators' conceptions about their relationships with students, and their institution, communicate aspects of their organizational culture?

DEFINITIONS

Culture: "Culture is a holistic, context-bound, and subjective set of attitudes, values, assumptions and beliefs" (Kuh & Whitt, 1988, p.95).

Figurative language: Language in which one known entity is used to describe another, unknown entity, thus adding value by asserting a relationship between the two (Pondy, 1983).

ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

This study is composed of five sections. Chapter one develops the theoretical basis for this study, including limitations and assumptions. This chapter identifies the problem, states the purpose, supports the

significance, defines important terms, and poses the research questions. Chapter two reviews the literature relating research in organizations, culture, and metaphor. The third chapter describes the methods of research, and includes a rationale, the methodology, and the collection of the data. Chapter four is a narrative description of the study with interpretation of the data. Chapter five includes implications and conclusions.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is organized into three sections. The first section is used to address paradigms for research on organizations, the second to review literature pertaining to culture, and the third to show how analysis of figurative language has been useful for research on organizations.

Paradigms for Organizational Research

Man's efforts to be more efficient and effective are evidenced in the multitude of research projects of the twentieth century (Lewin & Minton, 1986). The industrial revolution, promoting technological growth and mass production, met head-on with traditional patterns of management which were designed for simpler societies (Hanson, 1985). Classical theorists such as Frederick Taylor (1911), Max Weber (1947), and Henry Fayol (1949) examined the problems of management and proposed that the application of rational, scientific management principles would resolve those problems. These principles were soon incorporated into all sectors of society.

Scientific management considered individual workers as cogs in the bureaucratic machine. Within this context, "maximizing labor efficiency was not unlike applying precepts from the physical sciences to the human domain of work" (Hanson, 1985, p.7). Elton Mayo (1933), in the famous Hawthorne studies, demonstrated that social systems influenced operations. Mary Follett (1918) had earlier recognized the importance of integrated social systems in organizations as opposed to strictly rational systems.

During the 1960s, a new logic developed regarding the influence of the environment on organizations. What had previously been considered intact organizations or "closed systems" were seen as dependent on, or at least interactive with, the environment (Burns & Stalker, 1961). The organization was viewed more as an organism than as a machine.

In "Beyond Open Systems," Pondy and Mitroff (1979) argue that organizations are actually more complex than simple organisms. They describe how open system theory has "directed our attention away from organizational dysfunction at the macro level, and from higher mental functions of human behavior that are relevant to understanding organizations" (p. 3). They go on to develop a cultural model of organization. In their attempt to invent a new future for organizational theory, Pondy and Mitroff use Boulding's (1966) hierarchy of complexity as an ordering mechanism (p. 6-10).

A brief review of Boulding's hierarchy will provide the reader with a basis on which to understand Pondy and Mitroff's claim that it is time to move beyond the open system paradigm and deal with a new set of assumptions. The hierarchy has nine levels of complexity. As the levels increase they contain the properties of earlier levels, yet they become more complex, not only in their diversity or variability, but in the appearance of totally new system properties. The levels are:

Level 1: Frameworks possess static and structural properties. They may be complicated but not complex in Boulding's sense. An example of this level is the Library of Congress cataloging system.

Level 2: Clockworks are similar to the level 1 model, yet the state of the system changes over time and, thus, a dynamic property is added. An example of this level is a processing gyroscope.

Level 3: Control systems are regulated by external criteria. Examples of this level are a thermostat or a heat-seeking missile. Though similar to level 2, the prime difference is in the functional differentiation between operation and regulation.

Level 4: Open systems reflects differentiation as generated by the environment. Variety within the system is governed by the variety that

the system is exposed to in its environment. Examples of this level are cells or flames.

Level 5: Blueprinted growth systems adds a deeper structure to levels 1-4. Pondy and Mitroff note that "at a given level there is a structural isomorphism between the level and the system. Level 5 systems do, however, have level 4, 3, 2, and 1 properties that can be described using those less complex models, so that a system and a model of that system need not be at the same level" (p. 8). The model for this level is the reproduction process of the acorn-oak system.

Level 6: Internal image systems incorporate the essential characteristic of detailed awareness of the environment, as well as the cumulative properties of the levels below it. However, level 6 systems do not exhibit self-consciousness properties. Examples are a pigeon in a skinner box or, even better, an organization that forgot why it instituted a certain rule.

Level 7: Symbol processing systems enable higher levels of communication. Whereas level 6 is able to process differentiation in the environment, it is not able to take that information and generalize to it, proposing ideas and symbols which can be done at level 7. Berger (1966; Berger & Luckman, 1969) offers examples of level 7, noting how human groups socially construct shared models of reality. Mitroff and Pondy note "level 7 systems are self conscious language users, like individual human

beings.... For a group to use language, not only must verbal interchange take place, but shared definitions of the group's situation must also be constructed" (p. 9). A shared reality is communicated at this level.

Level 8: Multi-cephalous systems are what Boulding calls social organization, or a group of individuals or things acting together in concert. "What distinguishes level 8 from level 7 is the elaborate shared systems of meaning (e.g., a system of law) that entire cultures, and some organizations, but no individual human being, seem to have" (p. 9).

Level 9: Allows for emergence of new levels not yet imagined. Boulding added level 9 or an open level to avoid premature closure.

In this brief review of Boulding's hierarchy we discover that the main problem with our present paradigm of human organization, the open system, is that it is at level 4, and our research only reveals even lower levels. Whereas, human organizations actually are at level 8. Boulding's hierarchy provides a conceptual model for understanding the problem with research in organizations. The simple, mechanistic paradigm characterized by control, objectivity, and causal relationships is presently dominant. Though comfortable and easily understood, research in this paradigm is unable to provide more than partial data regarding the complex and relational symbol processing and multi-cephalous systems which represent modern academic organizations. Mitroff and Pondy (1979) note: "All human organizations are level 8 phenomena, but our conceptual

models of them (with minor exceptions) are fixated at level 4, and our formal models and data collection efforts are rooted at levels 1 and 2" (p. 9).

Examples of this problem are easily found in academic organizations. Deal and Nutt (1983) note how rural school districts are unable to change internally, even with outside assistance and influence. Kirst (1983) reflects the weakness of research (focusing on lower levels) in academic policymaking. Regarding the PPBS plan in California, Kirst reports "much of the data will either obfuscate or avoid areas with significant value conflict" (p. 135). Clark (1985) and Morgan (1982) note that whereas traditional Weberian notions of rationality, efficiency, calculability may be preferred, our experiences, especially with higher education administration, have demonstrated an overextension of these ideals. The more realistic complexities of organizational life in academic institutions have been reported as organized anarchies (Cohen & March, 1974; Cohen, March & Olsen, 1972), loosely-coupled systems (Weick, 1976) and multiple realities (Morgan, 1986; Kuh & Whitt, 1988), though our research has traditionally been one-dimensional (Daft & Wiginton, 1979; Habermas, 1971; Kuh, Whitt, & Shedd, 1987).

Research on the higher-level aspects of organizations is becoming more available. Special issues of journals, such as the Journal of Management and ASQ (Frost, 1985; Jelinek, Smircick, & Hirsch, 1983), as well as a growing number of works on organizations from a cultural perspective,

attest to this fact (Kuh & Whitt, 1989; Tierney, 1988). Clark (1985) traces the history of organizational research from Weber, who described the way organizations ought to exist, to the emerging, more realistic organizational research. Clark reports the continuum of three types of researchers, and the paradigm reflected: orthodox (dominant paradigm), neo-orthodox (transitional paradigm) and nonorthodox (emergent paradigm). Researchers in the later category are exposing the hidden, cultural aspects of the iceberg metaphor used by Lewin (1951) and noted earlier in this work. Organizational research in student affairs is no less affected by this shift than are other disciplines. Kuh, Whitt, and Shedd (1987) concur:

The comfortable frame of reference characterized by a relatively simple mechanistic paradigm or world view in which objectivity, control, and causality were superordinate is being challenged by an emerging world view characterized by a much more subtle, complex relational paradigm in which behavior has multiple meanings. Student affairs work as an applied field of practice cannot escape the implications of this evolving world view. (p.12)

Within this emergent paradigm, organizational research in student affairs requires a cultural perspective. The next section will briefly review literature regarding culture--what it is, and how it may be interpreted.

Culture

Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) reported 164 different definitions of culture. Smircich (1983) noted that two decades later there was still no commonly accepted definition. Definitions usually include shared values, assumptions, and beliefs which make up the identity of a group (Becher, 1984; Deal & Kennedy, 1983; Jelinek, Smircich, & Hirsch, 1983; Kilmann, Saxton, Serpa, & Associates, 1985; Kuh & Whitt, 1989; Louis, 1983; Morgan, 1986; Schein, 1985). Becher (1984) laments the problematic, yet useful, term "culture":

If there were any word to serve the purpose as well, I would unhesitatingly use it in preference to one that seems at times downright slippery and at other times impossibly vague and all-embracing. But although "culture" has uncomfortably many denotations, it is the only term that seems satisfactory to combine the notions...of a shared way of thinking and a collective way of behaving (Becher 1984, p.166)

For this research, the definition offered earlier in Chapter 1 from Kuh and Whitt (1988, p. 95) is used. The reason for choosing this definition from the many available is to accentuate the idea that culture is interpretive and that it is at once process and product (Geertz, 1973). At the heart of any definition of culture are the assumptions and shared beliefs of members (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). The context is continually created and recreated by members' interactions (Gray, Bougon, & Donnellon, 1985; Jelinek, Smircich, & Hirsch, 1983; Kanter & Stein, 1979; Morgan, 1986; Smircich, 1983; Tierney, 1988). Smircich (1983) describes culture as a social or normative glue that, based on beliefs and shared

values, holds organizations together and serves four general purposes: (a) it communicates a sense of identity, (b) it fosters commitment to a group, (c) it stabilizes the social system of a group, and (d) it provides a sensemaking framework which guides and shapes behavior.

Interactions during stressful periods in an organization's history may be exceptionally revealing--symbolic representations of values, attitudes, and beliefs are invoked more often when those norms are threatened (Kuh & Whitt, 1989). Kuh and Whitt (1989) argue that in any cultural audits, six "life problems" may be considered. These are basically orientations to institution, causality, hierarchy, change, collaboration, and pluralism (p. 104-105). These assumptions help reveal underlying organizational culture. Yet how do we gain understanding of organization members' orientations?

Geertz (1983) reports the study of culture is the interpretation of diversity:

The interpretive study of culture represents an attempt to come to terms with the diversity of the ways human beings construct their lives in the act of leading them. In the more standard sorts of science the trick is to steer between what statisticians call type-one and type-two errors-accepting hypotheses one would be better advised to reject and rejecting ones one would be wiser to accept; here it is to steer between overinterpretation and underinterpretation, reading more into things than reason permits and less into them than it demands. (p. 16)

Generally, when studying culture, we separate the properties of that culture. We look at language, rituals, stories, and behaviors which

relate revealing aspects of culture. This complex set of context-bound properties, which continually evolve, potentially involve all events and actions which may define the culture of a university (Tierney, 1988). There may be a danger of distortion (Kuh & Whitt, 1988), as with any interpretation of research (Woolgar, 1988). Nevertheless, the discovery of culture amplifies understanding and is indispensable to the study of complex organizations (Wilkins, 1983).

Moreover, the analysis of interaction reveals the multifaceted construction of reality by a culture. Multiple elements of organizational reality may be interpreted through language (Chipman & Kuh, 1988; Deetz & Mumby, 1985; Silverman, 1981). Inquiry into language constructs is useful in ethnographic auditing, especially in the technique of observation of participants. Kuh and Whitt (1988) strongly advocate the analysis of metaphors and figurative language used in organizational settings:

People define reality in metaphorical language and often draw inferences--consciously or unconsciously, set goals, make commitments, and execute plans based on the structure and experience provided by a metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Incorporating metaphorical analysis as part of a cultural audit (Owens and Steinhoff, 1988) can be as simple as asking faculty and students to compare the operation and administration of the institution to some familiar object or activity ("to what would you compare the way decisions are made around here?"). What metaphors do faculty use to describe the institution (e.g., "family" or "factory")? (p.105-106)

Using language to audit culture is advocated by others (Hirsch & Andrews, 1983; Huff, 1980, 1983; Morgan, 1986; Pondy, 1983). What makes figurative

language such a powerful gauge and such a special form of language for the researcher concerned with organizational culture?

Figurative Language

Although we cannot directly observe the unconscious mind, Jung (1964, 1967) provided an elaborate concept of the unconscious. He pioneered word association tests. The unconscious mind consistently suggests, Jung proposed, an archetypal structure. Though the term archetype was used centuries before by St. Augustine to designate the principle ideas of human culture, for Jung they were primordial psychic processes which, through symbol and metaphor, were transformed into images which could be understood consciously. The Jungian perspective thus lends itself for the analysis of organizational symbols, including organizational communications which reveal, through analogue, unconscious and subsurface thinking.

Symbolic language is based in a structure through which members of a culture share reality. Cassirer (1946, 1953) attributed to symbolic language the power to subjectively establish perspectives from which we view the world.

Building on the pioneering work of Milton Erickson (Rossi, 1980), Langton and Langton (1989) discovered that figurative language provides a

powerful tool for psychotherapists in helping patients discover latent capabilities. By avoiding metaphorical modality, therapists who use the rational and direct approaches often find themselves frustrated with clients who seem to be stuck, or unable to respond to direct assignments or authoritarian challenges to irrational thoughts (Billow, 1977). The Langtons have discovered that figurative language and stories stimulate responses that were found unattainable through more direct, rational techniques. Figurations that relate to attitude, affect, behavior, identity reorganization, and other changes are used with clients , and information gained from these figurations can produce significant outcomes. The authors also note a quality of creative language which tends to induce a hypnotic effect. That is to say, the ambiguity inherent in the figurative language is often trance inducing. In any case, this symbolic language provides powerful analogues for learning and other psychological processes.

Events and phenomena in the political arena are often explained through figurative language. Processes are often managed through the right word or phrase which reflects the constituent's perspectives (Tichy, 1983; Ferris, Fedor, Chachere, & Pondy, 1989). Pondy, et.al. (1983) document that "language plays an important role in shaping the behavior, attitudes, images, and values of organizational life, and that to understand everyday organizational events, it is important, indeed essential, that we understand the use of language on which they are based" (p. 124). The authors report four studies that reflect the importance of language in

organizations. Pondy (1983) and Schon (1979) both argue that people use figurative language to make sense of their experiences in organizations. Tierney (1989) reports how leaders of institutions of higher education use symbolic language to manage and how those leaders view their role in terms of metaphor (e.g. coach, father). Deetz and Mumby (1985) argue that specific terms are a part of the "deep" political structure and produce particular forms of information. Carried further, this information favors certain individuals and interest groups, and therefore is power. Figurative statements can effectively distort information so as to empower certain groups and disfranchise others. Deetz and Mumby (1985) propose language analysis and criticism "as a means of examining the role of power in the construction of organizational information and of developing more representative and adaptive forms of information" (p. 369). Daft and Wiginton (1979) argue that "insight into organizational functioning is related to the fit between language of description and type of organizational phenomenon" (p.179). These authors maintain that natural language, including symbolic language, is more powerful than mathematical language for understanding and describing organizations.

Figurative language, especially described as metaphor, appears to be a topic for literary concern (Montjoy, 1985). Billow (1977) suggests that though literary behavior is also psychological behavior, and should be studied as such, "metaphor is firstly and centrally a psychological phenomena" (p. 81). He goes on to say that "metaphor supplies a language with flexibility, expressibility, and a method by which to expand. It

contributes to the functioning of cognition, language, memory, and creativity" (p.81). The author argues that not enough research has been done to make it clear whether this language is a special form of response or whether it can be categorized under a general psychological theory, such as learning, cognitive development, or psychoanalysis. Below reviews the psychological literature on metaphor and finds a real "unexplored field of scientific inquiry" (p.90).

Figurative language seems to have a property which allows us to gain understanding by analogy, yet also allows an internalization of meaning (Morgan, 1986). We know that figurations and metaphors have, throughout history, played an important part in education and in the development of wisdom (Montjoy, 1985). In addition, they also produce an effect that causes the receiver to reflect meaning from personal experience which is cognitive and affective (Lankton & Lankton, 1989; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Ortony, 1979). There is a value-added quality, from both sender and from receiver, based on experience and outside of mere definition (Lakoff, 1987). Figurative language is "more than cool reason":

It is commonly thought that poetic language is beyond ordinary language - that it is something essentially different, special, higher, with extraordinary tools and techniques like metaphor and metonymy, instruments beyond the reach of someone who just talks. But great poets, as master craftsmen, use basically the same tools we use; what makes them different is their talent for using these tools, and their skill in using them, which they acquire from sustained attention, study, and practice.

Metaphor is a tool so ordinary that we use it unconsciously and automatically, with so little effort that we hardly notice it. It is omnipresent: metaphor suffuses our thoughts, no matter what we are thinking about. It is accessible to everyone: as children, we automatically, as a matter of course, acquire a mastery of everyday metaphor. It is conventional: metaphor is an integral

part of our ordinary everyday thought and language. And it is irreplaceable: metaphor allows us to understand ourselves and our world in ways that no other modes of thought can.

Far from being merely a matter of words, metaphor is a matter of thought -- all kinds of thought: thought about emotion, about society, about human character, about language, and about the nature of life and death. It is indispensable not only to our imagination but also to our reason.

Great poets can speak to us because they use the modes of thought we all possess. Using the capacities we all share, poets can illuminate our experience, explore the consequences of our beliefs, challenge the ways we think, and criticize our ideologies. To understand the nature and value of poetic creativity requires us to understand the ordinary ways we think.

Because metaphor is a primary tool for understanding our world and ourselves, entering into an engagement with powerful poetic metaphors is grappling in an important way with what it means to have a human life. (Lakoff & Turner, 1989, p. xi)

Lakoff is arguably the best-known modern authority on the use of metaphor in the English language. His common sense treatment of the cultural aspects of metaphor reveals how world views shape understanding. He insists that metaphor is "anything but peripheral to the life of the mind. It is central to our understanding of ourselves, our culture and our world at large." (1989, p.214).

Figurative language perhaps requires a broader definition than does metaphor, if they are in fact different. They both provide keys for uncovering the hidden roots of culture. The basis of culture--assumptions, beliefs, and values--is conveyed or "envehicleed" (Geertz, 1980, p.135) through figurative language and may be understood through interpretation of the meaning of those assumptions, beliefs and values.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In this chapter, the rationale and methodological assumptions for this qualitative case study are presented. Secondly, the data collection is described. And lastly, the decision rules for data analysis are explained. Interpretations of the data were guided by naturalistic inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985: Lincoln, 1985).

Methodological Assumptions

Fieldwork, in the form of participant observation, is a major means of collecting data in case study research. It involves going to the field (i.e. the site, setting, place, or meeting) to observe the phenomenon under study. While in the field, the researcher gets a firsthand account of the situation under study which allows for a more holistic interpretation of the subject being researched. It is the technique of choice when behavior can be observed firsthand and when the research cannot be discussed through interviewing (Merriam, 1988). Such is the case when observing organizational culture through figurative

language. Lincoln and Guba (1985) note the here-and-now depth of experience:

The basic methodological arguments for observation, then, may be summarized as these: observation...maximizes the inquirer's ability to grasp motives, beliefs, concerns, interests, unconscious behaviors, customs, and the like; observation...allows the inquirer to see the world as his subjects see it, to live in their time frames, to capture the phenomenon in and on its own terms, and to grasp the culture in its own natural, ongoing environment; observation...provides the inquirer with access to the emotional reactions of the group introspectively-- that is, in a real sense it permits the observer to use himself as a data source; and observation...allows the observer to build on tacit knowledge, both his own and that of members of the group. (p.273)

Observation maximizes the advantages of the human being as an exceptional instrument. "The human instrument is capable of understanding the complexity of human interaction encountered even in the shortest of observations" (Merriam, 1988, p.103).

Critics of observation point to the highly subjective nature of human perception and interpretation. This argument may also be leveled against all forms of investigation, no matter how objective the method and researcher claims to be (Woolgar, 1988). Investigator bias may always be a problem. Several measures may be taken to minimize bias and distortion, including verification through "member checks," and triangulation of sources, methods, or theories. Additionally, trustworthiness is essential. Activities insuring trustworthiness, including note taking, audio recording, and others are required.

Nevertheless, direct observation is the preferred method for this project. The advantages of a cultural approach through observation by

far outweigh the disadvantages of other paradigmatic research techniques. In fact, observation is practically the only means for gathering the necessary data to investigate the phenomenon of language as an indication of organizational culture in a student affairs division.

Data Collection

To collect data, this researcher observed the Student Affairs Management Council meetings and three student affairs unit meetings, including those of the Dean of Students, the University Unions and Student Activities, and the Residential and Dining Services.

Decision to observe the Management Council arose from the fact that it was the chief governing body of student affairs, and consisted of the directors of all the several units, a fact which enhances the probability that the Council is representative of the whole culture of the Student Affairs Division. Additionally, Tierney (1989) noted how important language used by leadership in academic communities was in framing cultural reality (see also Silverman, 1981).

From the seven units making up the Division of Student Affairs, three units were chosen purposely. The three units chosen were groups which:

- (a) dealt most closely with the greatest number of students and student

affairs programs; (b) had recently experienced structural changes; and (c) had some prior familiarity with the researcher, and he with them, which provided some level of trust. In understanding the culture of student affairs units, these criteria are helpful, although other criteria may also be valid. Units which constantly deal with a large and diverse population seem to have more and different tasks to perform. Diversity of task fosters diversity in language. Additionally, changes foster situations which are doubly stressful and challenging. These situations encourage language which might be culturally revealing. Finally, this researcher felt that having some acquaintance with the groups might contribute to the trustworthiness of the study, as well as to personal understanding. This assumption was validated by the study. Exceptional cooperation was maintained throughout the data collection period. This researcher quickly came to be accepted, and offered additional help and support. Occasionally, members confided helpful information regarding interpretation of language and relationships. Reasons for this confidence seems likely to be the researcher's previous acquaintance with many of the membership, his background in the discipline, and his leadership of a local professional organization, of which many group members were also members.

Permission to observe the meetings was received from all the participants. Originally, the directors of the chosen units and the Vice President of Student Affairs were each approached about doing this research. In each case those persons agreed, though with the caveat that if the group

membership were opposed to the agreement it would be cancelled. Each of the unit membership went along with this type of research, and on several occasions indicated to this researcher an interest in it. This fact is mentioned to reinforce the cooperation and the openness of each of the units. At no time did this researcher feel group resentment either toward the research or to himself. On a few occasions the researcher was asked not to record certain segments of conversations containing confidential or sensitive information. The researcher agreed with these requests. In all cases, membership of the units gave assent to this research.

Each of the meetings lasted about two hours. The Management Council met once per week; others met biweekly. There were occasional meeting cancellations. The duration of data collection was nine weeks. Meetings were audio-recorded and field notes were taken. Final rewrites of field notes were done by listening to the audio tapes for additional perspectives or missed comments. Final field notes were transcribed into "askSam" computer files for text management, location of specific phrases, and printing. The author found this automation less helpful than expected, strengthening the argument that this type of investigation is overwhelmingly dependent upon human judgement, correlation, and interpretation. Hard copies of field notes were therefore used the majority of the time for analysis. Copies were printed and combined into separate files, one for each individual meeting.

The meetings were attended by a population of twelve for the Management Council meeting, nine for the Dean of Student's meeting, twenty-four (or sometimes more) in the meeting of University Unions and Student Activities, and thirteen members in Residence Life meetings. In order to be least obtrusive, this researcher used only one small recorder without individual external microphones. It was felt that, although all group members knew the session was being recorded, they would be less intimidated and more comfortable if they were not being individually taped. Additionally, the complication of a more comprehensive audio recording system was prohibited by the settings, especially the larger meetings. Some recording quality was therefore necessarily exchanged for practicality and less obtrusiveness.

Early on, and as a part of the emerging nature of the study, this observer recognized that language used by specific individuals was less important for this study than was the sum total of all the metaphors used in the unit meetings. That is, the metaphors of the individual units began to reveal a distinctive unit culture. Individuals, and their individual metaphoric language, emerged as being less important to this study. The groups were the basic cultural unit of interest to this study, and it was therefore efficacious to view the figurative language with less regard to individual authorship. This is not to detract from the professionals in each group, nor from their personalities. Certain individuals were clearly more dominant, as will be seen. Nevertheless, recurrent themes within the groups said more about the focus of this study, i.e.

organizations, and about the observation that interpretations of reality are created, transmitted and sustained through communication and social interaction (Grey, Bougan, & Donnellon, 1985). The manifestation of culture in an organization, or unit, is established through communication. The communicative structures of the units were observed to reflect certain common cultural patterns, which reveal more about the organizational values, assumptions, and meaning than do isolated individual responses. Individuals may choose their culture, while groups manifest culture.

This choice to not delineate individual responses was not done totally a priori. Rather, it was done in light of the aforementioned emergent nature of this study. Refinement is an integral part of observation in qualitative research (Merriam, 1988). Additionally, it was done as a part of what Lincoln and Guba (1985) call "doing what comes naturally" (187-220). Therefore, the methodology allowed for adaptability in focusing on the sample, and the development of a hypothesis that allows for an organic design to emerge. In the early stages of the data collections, several variables shaped the research. It was decided that transcriptions were not possible, nor were they desired. First, within-unit metaphors were found to reveal more about the unit cultures and environment. The idiosyncratic metaphors were then grouped by unit, rarely recognizing individual speakers. Secondly, the number of persons interacting, sometimes chaotically, made it virtually impossible to discern individuals without video recording. Video recording would have

been more intrusive and financially prohibitive. Also, several times the researcher was asked not to record sessions where sensitive information or topics were discussed. In those instances the investigator relied totally on field notes.

The researcher followed the methods of naturalistic inquiry, to be most consistent with the methodological assumptions undergirding the emergent paradigm (Lincoln, 1985). This research design was, as stated, emergent to a large degree and was guided by the works of Lincoln (1985), Lincoln and Guba (1985), and Skrtic (1985). Skrtic (1985, p. 187) provides an excellent clustering of implications of naturalistic inquiry which will serve as a guide to this research (Table 2). I followed the basic outline shown in Table 2, though treatment of each implication was beyond the scope of this research.

Table 2

Clustering of Naturalistic Inquiry Implications

<u>Aspect of Inquiry</u>	<u>Cluster</u>
Research design	Emergent design Problem-determined boundaries Purposive sampling
Data collection	Qualitative methods Human instrument Tacit knowledge
Data analysis	Grounded theory Inductive data analysis
Reporting	Case study reporting mode Idiographic interpretation Tentative application
Trustworthiness	Special criteria for trustworthiness Negotiated results

Note: Because the implications are interactive and synergistic, this particular arrangement is somewhat arbitrary. It is intended only as a framework for providing the reader with a feel for doing naturalistic research. Also, I have not included the "natural setting" implication here, as it is so central to the naturalistic paradigm that it can be assumed to be a given. From Organizational Theory and Inquiry: The Paradigm Revolution (p. 187) by Y. Lincoln, 1985, Beverly Hills, CA: Sage. Copyright 1985 by Sage Publishing. Reprinted by permission.

Decision Rules

The tapes and notes were scanned for symbolic language. Using the lens of discovered, figurative language, data were categorized by emergent themes, perspectives, norms, values, and assumptions which revealed underlying cultural aspects of the organization. Simply, the researcher listened for and clustered language reflecting organizational attitudes, values, assumptions, and beliefs in order to derive dominant themes which might be used to interpret organizational culture.

This approach is not totally untried. Tierney (1989) studied language used by college presidents in describing their administrations. Some presidents revealed "team" cultural orientations, derived from expressions such as "team players," "game plans," and such. Other subjects spoke in mechanistic metaphors or other symbolic language which provided insights into the leader's cultural orientation. Hirsch and Andrews (1983) studied language used in corporate takeovers, and found revealing clusters and genres. The majority of which were courtship relations ("marrying," "matchmakers," "rape," or "studs") or warfare metaphors ("wounded list," "siege," "flak," or "summer soldier") (p. 151).

This investigation proceeded in somewhat the same way. For instance, the belief that student affairs was somehow a separate entity within the university was interpreted from descriptions such as "other side of the

house," or the "academic side of the house." The metaphor "apples and oranges" was also used in reference to this separation. In another instance, an attitude of being overworked was interpreted from phrases such as "shorthanded," "stressed out," "overwhelmed," and "pull extra weight."

Symbolic statements representing relationships also were interpreted as important to the study. For example, the "parenting" value, or the personally felt responsibility for students which is found in student affairs, is evident through many of the verbal cues observed in the meetings. Statements such as calculus "breaking the backs of freshmen" were interpreted as a parenting response of the group. Others examples representing and further clarifying this value are described in Chapter 4.

Exact quotes were used whenever possible. They are denoted by quote marks or, when very lengthy, in block quote. On a few occasions I have edited quotes to insure meaning. These were instances where verbal speech, precisely transcribed, does not clearly represent the point. Rather than slavishly reporting the words, the meaning is related.

Key values, beliefs, attitudes, and assumptions derived from language were interpreted as indicators of culture. Efforts have been made to provide the reader with evidence for interpretations, and to "steer

between overinterpretation and underinterpretation" (Geertz, 1983, p. 16).

The first analysis and report led to an unsatisfactory conclusion of my efforts to link certain figurative language of student affairs administrators to culturally revealing metaphors. Subsequent discussions with committee members and a careful rethinking of the data led me to a different insight about my findings. My findings showed student affairs administrators revealing their relationships with students and with the institution through their language usage. This "negotiated results" is very much a part of my study, and in fact strengthens it. The emergent nature of this research methodology necessitates review and revision in order to build trustworthiness. Additionally, conclusions were tested with members of the stakeholding group to establish credibility, trustworthiness, and to insure that the reconstructions were adequate representations of the cultural realities of that group (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

In the first interpretations of these research findings, figurative language was found to cluster in an overall category of relationships. That is, most symbolic language expressed or reflected a relationship with others in and around the university. This was found to be consistent across the individual units. Additionally, themes for how the units perceived those relationships were established.

In the reexamination of the data, smaller categories further defining the relationships were derived. Relationships with (a) other members of the unit, (b) others within and outside the university, and (c) students were determined through figurative expressions to be qualitatively different.

These smaller categories were outlined for each unit. The data was completely rescanned for figurative language which had been used to describe or define relationships between the unit and that category of students, others, etc. Most of the figurative language, especially the descriptive metaphors, was used in reference to these relationships and expressed values, attitudes, beliefs, and assumptions about them.

Ideographic representations of the culture of Student Affairs were made based on the clear and consistent themes found in the figurative language which described the relationships of the units with other groups. The findings were used to answer the research questions. Final conclusions are discussed in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4

CONTEXT OF MANAGEMENT COUNCIL MEETINGS

Management Council is a name given to a group of administrators in student affairs at Virginia Tech, most of whom hold line responsibility for the management of functional units in the Division of Student Affairs. The group meets weekly with the Vice President for Student Affairs to plan and coordinate services and programs for students at the University. The line administrators include the Vice President for Student Affairs, the Dean of Students, the Director of University Unions, Student Activities and Recreational Sports, the Director of Residence and Dining Services, the Director of University Counseling Services, the Director of University Placement Services, the Director of University Health Services, and the Commandant of the Corps of Cadets. Four others attend the meeting regularly including the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, the Assistant to the Vice President for Student Affairs, the Director of Planning and Development for the Division of Student Affairs, and the Coordinator of Graduate Studies in College Student Affairs (a professor in the College of Education who serves as a special consultant to the Vice President). These twelve professionals in student affairs meet for two hours each week, normally on Mondays. They convene in the Vice President's conference room, which is located in a newly renovated

suite of offices in the building where all executive level administrators of the University have offices.

The conference room is formal. One long conference table occupies center stage with sufficient chairs for all to sit at the table. There is no required protocol for seating; however, the Vice President always sits at the head of the table and other participants tend to sit in approximately the same location for each meeting. Meetings generally are conducted promptly, normally beginning on time and rarely running overtime.

The Vice President chairs the meetings. He sometimes is "commanded" to be elsewhere (usually by the President) and often is interrupted in his duties during meetings. His demeanor in the meetings is mixed. He always publishes an agenda and usually completes it, but uses several tactics to finish the work. He exudes a "command presence" whenever he enters the room, but operates in a less formal manner. Frequent interruptions to the agenda are allowed and even encouraged by his sometimes relaxed and sometimes stern behavior. He enjoys the meetings and holds high expectations for them, but often appears tired and edgy and occasionally leaves them frustrated, though the reasons are not clear. One consistent condition is that the tone of the meetings is very much influenced by whether he is present. When he is not present, or when he merely leaves the meeting for a few moments, the psychological climate of the meetings changes immediately. The meetings become more relaxed and even lose their

focus. The binding trait in these meetings is the Vice President and his sense of purpose.

In a similar vein, each participant in the Management Council adds something to the overall tone of the meetings, but only one person dominates the general bearing of each meeting. For instance, one meeting was scheduled later than usual because of a meeting the Vice President had with the University President. When the meeting began, the Vice President had still not arrived. A "round table" was held, and members reported on matters of interest to the group; the atmosphere was relaxed and friendly. When the Vice President arrived he was openly irritated and the meeting immediately changed tenor and became more somber. His attitude was one of frustration, for which he apologized. He immediately called for "Executive Session," noting that no recording should be made. Remarks were made of how "we're getting screwed." Other comments such as "chewing our lunch" "mud on our faces" and "egg on our face" present some indication of the discussion. The problem was one of a domino effect which had reached the Division of Student Affairs, and the task at hand was "damage control." The message of "making some sense of where we want to go" and "where we're going" with "new marching orders, new directions" served as concluding remarks, though with the caveat that there were severe image problems. Much of the rest of the meeting reflected that feeling. The language used by the Vice President reflected frustration with the Division being caught up in the administrative budget cuts. The leader's posture prevailed throughout the meeting. The remaining agenda

was only partially completed, but the emotion and frustration dominated the meeting until the Vice President noted "the 3:30 hour" as the regular time to quit.

Minutes of the meetings were often though not always taken, and were usually the responsibility of the Assistant to the Vice President. Minutes reflected only the outcome, not the details, of discussions but still were collected by the researcher to ensure the accuracy of interpretations of discussions. The topics of most meetings were controlled by agenda items chosen by the Vice President. They often reflected topics in which he and other executive officers of the University were engaged throughout the previous week. Only rarely were items submitted by others on the council, and just as rarely reflected long-term concerns about student affairs operations. The Management Council ordinarily dealt with issues-of-the-moment and left perplexing, long-term issues to be dealt with in other settings.

The agenda always included two sections (though not always presented in the same order)--items pertaining to important events/decisions/actions by various persons within and outside of the University and round table time. This latter item permitted each person to report on important happenings in his or her operation and/or to put matters on the table for discussion. Sample agenda items from the meetings spanning the two-month period of this research included:

Budgetary Matters
Reclassification of Student Organizations

Academic Calendar
Campus climate
Recreational fees
Board of Visitors Meeting
Parents Weekend
"Hours" (a non-alcohol nightclub)
Commencement
Arrangements for Public Relations
Tutoring for Students
Freshmen Grades
Summer Orientation
Self-Assessment Activities

Agenda items are often revealing with regard to organizational concerns, and reflect priorities and interests. Taken a step further, the language originating from discussions of agenda items provides disclosure of the organization at more human levels and is thus more helpful to our understanding of them. In order to provide the reader with a clearer understanding of the process of the management council in meetings, several of the items listed above are reported in the following section.

The reader should note the transition from historical data to more observational and interpretive data. The former certainly provides important information, but the latter reveals rich insight deep into the organization. The figurative language allows us to see how participants organize objective facts of situations and make sense of them. In these examples the author has attempted to report some of the figurative language from the topical discussions which may provide the reader with meaningful patterns of internally-felt constructions. Attitudes, values, beliefs, and assumptions may be revealed through language, and thus reveal how members of the council perceive themselves and others.

Agenda items are reported along with the context, central ideas, or words or phrases which were most revealing as to the mindset of the speakers. Through several examples, a pattern may be established. I have taken most samples from speakers who spoke with authority on the topic. In almost every case this language not only reflected the speaker's perceptions, but also tended to influence other members.

There was an abundance of language that reflected how the membership felt unified as a distinct and unified entity within the university, but also that it was subservient to many of the other university subcultures. The following section demonstrates examples of figurative language which lead to these conclusions.

Figurative Language in Management Council Meetings

Budget Matters

Perhaps the main issue, and certainly the most recurring agenda item, was "budget planning," as it was often put. Generally it consisted of reporting what would be required of members and commiserating about the situation. In the first meeting observed, budgetary matters were discussed after the Vice President distributed a document outlining the university's reversion plan. After a lengthy explanation of cutbacks and

economic planning, the Vice President noted that "the key is this year you have cash reduction, and next year you will have budget reduction." The word "key" was used to signal that he was about to summarize and reveal the situation, and members seemed to sit up and take notice more than usual. Thereafter, several useful metaphors were used by the Vice President. "Hard cash" or present budgeted dollars which was counted on as "in hand" was not there. This was presented as more than a cash flow problem. Budgeted funds were to be returned to the state. The Vice President emphasized that it would not be a case of "haves and have nots." Rather, he affirmed that fairness among the units would be the rule. It was an associational statement that all the units were "in this together", and would be treated with fair consideration. Each unit would be treated equally, as members of a family might expect to be treated.

The Vice President left to answer a call from the University President. The Associate Vice President assumed the chair of the meeting and reaffirmed the crisis by saying that "next year you will be lucky to have the soles of your shoes." This comparison was threatening. The Vice President returned and clarified that the next two years would be times of "lean pickings."

As aforementioned, later meetings would all return to this topic. A few more examples of budgetary discussion provide useful insight into the council's models of and for the situation. The budget received much discussion in a later meeting, and related symbolic language revealed much

about the relationship of members with their job and employees. There was a tenuous sense of being, especially when speaking about the budget. Members reported "feel[ing] a lot of heat", being "powerless in the shadow of others" and "unappreciated." Other descriptive language included "burnout," "shorthanded," and "overwhelmed." Members reported these feelings among their staffs. Budget cuts were seen to leave them "without sufficient resources, but with increasing responsibilities." One member reported feeling like a "soldier doing battle but feeling powerless."

In one of the last meetings during my observations, a "Position Management Program" had been sent to university employees from the Provost and Chief Business Officer. It outlined how the budget cutting process would proceed. The Vice President followed by saying that the rule for Student Affairs would be "to keep this family together." He would later promise to treat everyone alike in the budgeting considerations. The "family" reference emphasized his fatherly orientation, and commitment to the group was reaffirmed.

"Budget Issues" would be on every agenda for all the other meetings, usually listed first and dominating the meeting. The Vice President explained his plans for reversion and for input from members, or that he would "lay it on the table and see what you think." First he "walked through" his plans. Basically each division director would meet privately with him with budget cut proposals for their unit. Plans for increasing student fees were mentioned, though much of this was confidential and I

was asked not to record or comment. Later he would walk through the budget plans again, explaining to the newer members "the way that the budget works," and maintaining that the Vice President's Office would "take the lead" in the cuts. He told the members that tough decisions had to be made and that this situation was "a challenge for all, especially me," saying that "I'm up against the wall." The required cuts were tentative during this collection, and often changed from week to week. "Where we are" or "where I think we are" would be repeated numerous times by the Vice President. Final reversion plans were kept from the membership until the mandate was finally set at 2%. Promises were made that the guiding rule would be to "keep the family together."

Additionally, since the cuts were statewide, there was much discussion from the membership about which colleges and universities were taking more of the burden and which would be hurt worse. This dialogue took an interesting turn toward students, and how their intentions for going to college affects the university. It was noted that as long as getting a job was important, Tech would be fine. Humor entered when an older member told about how friendly an Engineering dean was when, in the early seventies, enrollment was down and who, now, would not even speak to others with the present prosperity of that college. A "we/them" feeling seemed to be heightened as the management council struggled to define what was happening with a budget cut and where they would proceed.

The Vice President restated the President's dedication to the goal of quality of student life. This needed more clarification, but is generally taken to mean those programs and environments which contributed to a favorable student experience, for which student affairs was largely responsible. It seemed to offer support to the Division which was often seen as peripheral to higher education. Later discussions would support a perception that Student Affairs expected to be hardest "hit." This seemingly contradiction provides an insight into how the division considers itself as secondary in the university, even in light of top-level support.

The Vice President offered his impression that as the university made cuts "everyone (in the university) thinks they're the bastion, more important than everyone else." Shortly thereafter there was mention of "the other side of the house," or the academic departments. This assumption would recur in a later meeting, when student affairs and academic departments were symbolized as "apples and oranges," highlighting the differences.

Times of budgetary constraints perhaps provide the researcher with an opportunity to see how organizations operate under pressure. This research was done in such times. Communication and information becomes more important, and figurative language becomes more revealing. The above are such examples of attitudes, assumptions, values, and beliefs which are disclosed through figurative language. During this study, language

which reflected relationships was also recorded. The next section will report such language and the associations indicated.

Management Council Relationships

The next three items were taken from a meeting where the Vice President was absent. The meeting was tentative, without leadership. No clear decisions were made; many decided issues were redebated. The membership seemed to have an "us versus them" attitude.

1. The upcoming Board of Visitor's meeting, and the part the Division would play, was orchestrated through the Division Office. Times, visual needs, and readiness were confirmed in this meeting. On several occasions figurative language offered insights into members' feelings for their role with regard to this event. For instance, regarding student leaders' attendance at an early morning function, it was noted the students would need to be "rustled out" like children. The reference conjured pictures of nannies with sleepy adolescents. Later on, the same topic being the Board of Visitors meeting, the members spoke of the "powers that be," and the pressure to perform at higher levels each year. The head of the counseling unit, the longest-tenured of the membership, noted "we don't deal with straight-up reality." He insisted each year reports of what new

programs are going to be done this year are requested. When he reported "nothing," it "wouldn't fly" and would be "like discovering pellets in the punch bowl." The council membership complained with frustration about the demands for student programs and new initiatives in light of declining budgets.

It was noted that an agenda item for the Board of Visitors meeting on divisional organization would potentially affect the credibility of the Division of Student Affairs, as being in the same place as a year ago. It was suggested that item be taken off because it might be awkward or an embarrassment to the Vice President. This item revealed a relationship of the division to governance structures, to perceived reality, and to their leader. First, the council did not want to call the Board's attention to any problem, perceived or real. Secondly, it wanted to protect its leader from a perceived problematic situation. Impression management was important to the unit.

2. In announcing a new university refund policy, the Associate Vice President exhibited his student advocacy in the face of university tradition. He noted that past university policy had assumed "it was a sign of weakness to appear anything but hard-nosed." He would repeat this in other meetings, preferring student-oriented policies and denouncing what he felt were bureaucratic problems for students. The division felt it was the parenting faction on campus, and often saw

the university as a mechanistic bureaucracy which was unfeeling towards students.

3. The agenda item regarding Parents Weekend exemplifies how student affairs must be responsive to several forces in planning. In this case the "powers that be" had noted problems with scheduling parent's weekend on a football weekend. Coordination was critical. The answer was "up in the air" until the Vice President could respond. Since he was away, decisions were put on hold.

The Management Council often encountered relationships with other groups. These relationships would be discussed in meetings and the figurative language used often enlightened the relationship, if not defined it. The three short examples cited above from just one meeting represent relationships with the Board of Visitors, with students, and with parents. Conversation sometimes included relationships with the community. The "town and gown" relations were seen as becoming better, although the glut of rental complexes were going to impact dorm contracts, and the "cult of greed" (developers) was preying on the university. Often student affairs found itself at odds with community commerce.

The point is that the Management Council indicated through their language that they were a family which had relationships with others in and around the academic community. Those others included: (a) the "academic side of the house;" (b) the hierarchy (including the Board of Visitors, the

President, and Provost) and; (c) parents and students. Indications were evident that the Council felt somewhat dominated by all these groups. However, the Council's relationship with students was more of an advocate, or parental nature, than of servant. Further examples from the meetings may serve as indications the relationships mentioned.

Others within the university were likely to be considered outside the "family," even though often having common goals. For instance, commencement plans were reported by a council member who was also on the commencement committee. Plans were often described as what "they" decided, as if committee membership was not inclusive. Similarly, at another meeting, summer orientation plans were reviewed, though the plans were very tentative. The fees which were to be charged were described as being "batted back and forth between Student and Academic Affairs." This left plans very tentative for the Dean, whose office was responsible for the service of planning this event.

Even though there were often standing university committees, with members of the management council or student affairs on them, it was often incumbent upon divisional personnel to make the hard decisions regarding student policy. As example, the academic calendar committee was headed by a member of the Management Council, and the proposed changes were discussed by it. Regarding the proposed calendar, the Vice President referred to the favorable opinion of "the man upstairs" when first approached about the calendar/schedule change. It is assumed that

everyone knew it was the University President to whom the Vice President was referring. A few remarks were made about complications introduced by the new schedule. The draft schedule was traditional. It condensed the number of days while increasing class periods and time. One management council member noted that present programs would have to be "crammed in." Statements such as "this will create real problems for us...we'll have to squeeze ten weeks into six" and "the medicine is worse than the illness" reflected this membership resistance to this change. Nevertheless, "we'll have to live with it" was made as a summary statement, indicating a feeling of subservience to the will and decisions of others. The Vice President seemed antsy during this discussion, perhaps since he had a pressing meeting or needed to get along with other agenda items. His body language was very clear and may be interpreted as his impatience with challenges to what the man upstairs wanted. At a later meeting, when the proposed calendar was ready, there was much resistance to it from the membership. The committee chairman commented that he was put in a "hell of a position" by the council, in that earlier protests should have been more forcefully expressed to him and to the committee. There was generally a resistance to change within the Council. Nevertheless, the Management Council was seen as the information input source for its members with regard to relations with other university entities.

In another meeting, the Academic Dean's Spring Retreat was announced. The primary topic was to be a planning document which had been distributed

to the Management Council. The Vice President asked for comments. The comments were requested to be put in writing. Many interesting comments were made regarding the "reality" of the document. Basically, members felt that the document was idealistic and was not practical. Under present conditions the planning document was considered unrealistic.

The council dealt with each other straightforwardly and with great trust. I have mentioned their concern for their leader. Even when they disagreed with each other, they were helpful, less contentious, and generally more humorous than when passing judgement on outside policymakers. Although the Provost's expectations were seen as unrealistic in light of the budget crisis, the following is an example of how a similar problem was dealt with internally: The Dean of Students was unhappy with the amount of funding for the tutoring program for disabled students. She noted that "we're required by law" to provide that service. When she noted how fast the funds had been used, another member (who had formerly been associated with tutoring) humorously remarked "are drunken sailors running that program?" Nevertheless, that member and another suggested the use of alternatives, such as fraternity and sorority philanthropy programs, to help out. The Dean responded favorably to the suggestion to make the program work more efficiently.

Within the family, feedback was given and received with a great deal of trust. However, there was much resistance to the Vice President's suggestions for self-assessment. This was an anomaly worth mentioning.

The discussion on self-assessment was interesting. Questions as to what, why, and how assessment would be done were asked in a manner which challenged the Vice President. He replied that his concern was for data which might indicate that student affairs was doing the right things. Additionally, he indicated when he "sat next to an academic in a budgetary meeting...HE'S AN APPLE AND I'M AN ORANGE, and I have trouble getting him to understand my orange." He would later contend that assessment was where student affairs has "dropped the ball." The matter was not settled in this meeting and was not taken up in the later meetings I attended. Perceived differences in university personnel are highlighted here. The question of why there is such resistance to assessment remained unanswered. Ironically, the next meeting did have the Director of UUSA and Recreation report from a survey questionnaire done by the university. It basically asked students questions about their university experience and needs. It was labeled as only "gee whiz" information by the Vice President.

Relationships with students was the primary reason for the Division of Student Affairs, as is indicated by the name. Naturally, a large portion of the conversation in the Management Council Meetings revolved around students. Generally, topics were of a reporting nature. A report from the Provost's Office noted that at the end of the first semester 30% of Freshmen had less than a 2.0 QCA. A real concern was reflected in the discussion of how five-hour calculus was "breaking the back" or "killing" freshmen. The tenor of the discussion was a mixture of educational theory

and parental concerns. The culprit for the freshmen failure was seen as math. It was termed a "sacred cow" for Tech, which had a tradition of research and not teaching, in which "grade inflation was worse than ax murder" and the reward system was placed on failing students. This was related to the discussion of the proposed academic calendar. The Associate Vice President asked about the drop period for students, which had been constricted. He complained "God forbid we should give the student a break" and went on to say "We can depend that this university, when interpretation is called for, is (going to be) against the student and be as hard-lined as possible."

The Management Council, as did all of Student Affairs, related to students in a benevolent manner. Indications were abundant that they were to protect students, sometimes from themselves and were student advocates were abundant. A few examples, and the language noted, will substantiate these claims. A news article appeared in a local paper in which the writer had lived among the students in a residence hall for several days in order to write about dorm life. When the article appeared, the writer had deceptively written almost exclusively about alcohol use by undergraduates. The article, and the ensuing letters sent by parents, was reported to have "made the President not happy." A student resident assistant responded to the sensationalistic bias of the author in an editorial and the Management Council discussed what future policy or protocol would guide arrangements for reporters wishing to write about Tech students.

In another instance, a new non-alcohol night club named "Hours" was sponsored by University Unions and Student Activities. Although it operated with successful events, the preponderance of discussion reflected the problems: "Kids from Rtown," which were described as Black youths that came up and caused trouble, and on another occasion, a punk band played and "the plug had to be pulled" when kids slam danced.

The last meeting was short, and before the Vice President arrived, the round table included the Dean of Student being asked about students "running around" or misbehaving. One member remarked about how an administrator outside of the Student Affairs Division who often dealt with international student incidents had a tendency to "turn an ordinary police case into a psychiatric nightmare." This indicated the mistrust for others within the administration who dealt with student problems.

Follow-up on what was termed the "DKE incident" included a letter from the University President to the NAACP President outlining steps taken and proposed to facilitate a better climate for racial understanding and support. The incident involved a fraternity (DKE) acting inappropriately at another university, and causing racial misunderstanding. The fraternity was disciplined, and other measures were taken to promote racial understanding. Following was a discussion of an article which had been handed out dealing with freedom of speech in regards to racially

offensive language. The discussion was summed up by one of the older members who said "the water gets muddy."

These occasions reflected a pervasive parental attitude in the Council's discussion of students (i.e. student leaders being "rustled out," mentioned earlier). The Division of Student Affairs is responsible for students' welfare. On the other hand, members must make policy decisions which might infringe upon the rights of students. They are the servants to, as well as the disciplinarians of, the students.

Student Affairs deals with student activity fees, housing funds, and various other auxiliary functions. This responsibility resulted in the council hearing reports regarding changes in procedures. These reports were usually brief and were rarely discussed. For instance, reclassification of student organizations was announced by the Director of UUSA. It facilitated student groups' wishes to be recognized and to apply for funds, and clarified university liability for those groups. The relationship of the university, and especially student affairs, was guided by the classification. The closer the relationship and access to funds, the more the liability of the organization to the university--somewhat like an adopted family. The "liability" question was dependent upon the funding of a group.

On another occasion the Vice President asked the Director of Health Services what she thought about the requirement for international

students to have health insurance. She mentioned "the climate was really bad" since the students were against it. She suggested it could be put off for another year since one of the most vocal opponents would be graduating. He then suggested going ahead with it, saying "I can take the heat."

The multifaceted relationship and involvement with students poses Student Affairs as unique within the University. The Management Council revealed a complex association with regard to the relationships to other groups. It felt tentative regarding the other University divisions, it had a parenting association with students, and had a guarded relationship with the community. Additionally, the relationships within the Council were trustingly kindred, with the Vice President as the father and final word.

Management Council Membership Roles

In none of these sample agenda items was there any vote or consensus of decision. Either the decisions had been made prior to the meeting by the unit concerned, or they would later be made by the Vice President, making use of the input from council members. As previously mentioned, if an issue was discussed it was open to all members and each was encouraged to participate. There was opportunity to be open and direct for all members. However, the Vice President often moved along to another agenda

item without exhausting discussion. No decisions were actually made in the Management Council Meetings.

Most discussions during Management Council meetings began with a "report" by some member (often the Vice President) who clarified the nature of the item and its relevance for the Management Council. Discussions about the item then followed. Each member appeared free to join discussions, though it occurred commonly that some one or more members voluntarily excluded himself or herself from discussions. No "pecking order" was evident regarding presumed value of contributions. All persons seemed to enjoy approximately equal status in the group and all comments were fairly weighed. Even the Vice President frequently demurred to points made by others.

The language used by members of the Management Council contained a mixture of "authority" and "obedience." Clearly, each person in the group represented a position of authority within student affairs and was accustomed to exercising judgment about issues relevant to his or her responsibilities. Language use also reflected a recognition of boundaries of expertise and responsibility, especially when commenting about a colleague's direct area of responsibility. But evident also was an attitude of submission to higher authority. The following excerpts from discussions from the Management Council portray these twin assumptions about their roles:

1. Although the Dean of Students was to oversee "parents' weekend," there was criticism of the date on which it was planned and also was pressure from "the powers that be" (the Provost's office?) to have one each semester. This left things "up in the air" for the dean. She was advised to go to the Vice President (he was absent from this meeting). The level of authority necessitated her deference, though the Vice President might be able to communicate her concerns better to those powers that be.

2. A manual called "paRAde" was published to help Resident Advisors in their development and education. It was done at the beginning of second semester, and the cover had graphics of a champagne bottle, glasses, and bubbles with "Happy New Year" on it. The Director of Residence Life was responsible, and the Dean of Students cautioned that it was "inappropriate" since a large percentage of judicial cases which came before her office involved alcohol. The Director demurred and promised to promptly investigate whether the cover could be changed before distribution.

3. The Director of University Counseling Services, and the member of the committee who had been longest at the university, often used humor to comment on agenda items, current University events, or anything that came up. His perspectives added levity to the discussions, but also tended to make points about the University and Division. He had a candid, yet generally caustic and skeptical,

viewpoint on every aspect of the Division. His experience, often grounded in a counselor's approach, provided a powerful platform from which to speak. He, of all the group, most often made reference to a theoretical basis for planning; statements such as "if you believe in Maslow's theory of needs then we should be concerned about how students..." reflect this concern. On the other hand, he often ridiculed that which confronted the Council. In a discussion of a program in which an expert was invited to speak, this member's response was "an expert is someone who lives at least five miles away." The statement, although raising a point humorously, tended to detract from the speaker, as well as from the planners and the program.

His parochial humor often obscured the authority/obedience lines of the organization. When the Associate Vice President requested Management Council members to "prepare a clear statement of budget problems," the Director stated "sometimes ambiguity is better than clarification." In another meeting, with an extremely full agenda, a document from the Provost entitled "Assumptions About the Future" had been circulated. The Vice President asked members to review it and "mark it up," if in disagreement. The Director interrupted that "you can't disagree with it, it's more of an inventory, full of phrases and buzzwords from the economical literature." He continued, like King Nestor, to review the document until the Vice President finally interrupted and repeated "mark it up and give it back," at which time the Director stopped. It was interesting that no agenda items, nor

minutes, mentioned this member except as being present, though he was an integral part of the family and was most vocal of the group.

The Director was respected as the group's elder statesman. He commonly related tales from his many years with the institution. He was the grandfather of the group, in a Nestorian fashion. Although his suggestions were generally considered valid, they likely reflected his opinion from the position "If I were King, I'd do things this way." They often missed the problems, and the complexity, involved in making decisions in a large university, which had grown considerably during his tenure. He was generally the demurring member, and often offered sound though perhaps impractical advice. He affected the attitudes and assumptions of the members in subtle ways, especially regarding lines of authority.

4. Perhaps the most vulnerable of the Council members, in terms of authority/obedience, was the Vice President. He noted that his office would take most of the cuts in the budget reduction. The Council members were extremely loyal and supportive of him and his leadership. His credentials and experience were known. He had made changes which were welcomed to the division. However, there was a new President and Provost to whom he reported, not to mention the Board of Visitors. Even new and replacement personnel in his division went through the Provost. Another, perhaps trite, example is his telling the Management Council how the University President required his

Executive Council to read prescribed books and to discuss them in meetings. The "Book-of-the-Month Club" was humorous to the Management Council. The Vice President could laugh at himself, yet most often made "the buck stops here" decisions. In fact, almost all decisions were made by the Vice President. The manner in which meetings were managed provides a good example. It was not unlike a father hearing about the days his family had--listening, advising, commanding, and coordinating each member.

Nevertheless, he had experiences which made him feel unable to do his job. He told about how he felt like "an orange" when he met with the "apple" co-workers from the academic side of the house. He came in mad and frustrated when he learned a pet project would not be funded. When plans for commencement were being reviewed in the meeting, he was asked about one part. He responded "it hasn't come to my attention, which doesn't mean anything." This statement reflected how University planning, even about that for which he was responsible, might be done without his review. He was earnest with the Council about his feelings of frustration. It made it clear he liked to be in command, and being contravened seemed to anger him.

Pressures usually came from the top. However, there were expectations and demands from students, parents, faculty, and local power-brokers. The Vice President was greatly admired and respected by most students. He dealt with adults who sometimes acted like children, but treated

them like people for whom he cared. The Council was less like a democracy than like a benevolent dictatorship; it was like a family. He was a father who still had a boss, responsibilities to neighbors and community, but was required to maintain an orderly household.

Management Council meetings displayed civil behavior among the participants. Language reflecting an attitude of respect and admiration for one another was observed frequently; even language reflecting an attitude of

"let-us-support-one-another-because-we-are-in-this-dilemma-together" was seen occasionally. For instance, during a discussion about where the Planning/Coordinating Committee should be headed, there was an energetic discussion about goals. The Associate Vice President began the discussion by invoking the Vice President, who had to be away from the meeting. "I spoke to the Vice President last night" began the discussion of the Division's future planning. The Vice President had given instructions that the group should generate goals for the Division, and that these goals would be used for planning. Much of the discussion that followed was about how effects of decline in dollars would result in decline in services and "it can't be done." One was concerned for whether these goals would be derived "top down" or "bottom up" and he added that the University's Five Year Plan was a "free-for-all." One member remarked that planning within budget restraints was like listing the "top eight things we don't want to do." The group dynamics included philosophical statements about how "we don't deal with straight up reality" in planning,

and that "we've been doing this for 20 years," and "vision in leadership is missed by grass-roots goal setting." Divisional planning was confused by the different priorities of personalities, the philosophy of what "quality of student life" meant, and the budgetary crisis. Nevertheless, meetings generally were carried on in an orderly fashion. Members did not argue for their pet projects. Those projects would have been given approval or disapproval prior to the meeting and without group debate.

This same civility, however, sometimes left things unsaid. It was not uncommon for items on the agenda to be vacated even though no consensus had been reached on the item, and though strong feelings about the matter were still harbored but had not been voiced. Members seemed to be practicing some generally accepted, but not consciously acknowledged, rules of engagement on discussion of issues that dictated when enough had been said. Sometimes "enough said" was determined by the Vice President, who moved the meetings from one topic to another for either unexplained reasons or time constraints.

While all members of the Council were dutifully engaged in all topics of discussion, it was equally clear that one or more were often distant on a given issue, especially on a given day. Presumably, burdens of responsibility from elsewhere accounted for most of these episodes of distractedness. When these were observed, the member tended normally to be simply disengaged rather than hostile to others. Such occasions served as examples of genuineness. These administrators rarely, if ever,

appeared phony. They expressed themselves honestly with tempered openness. They often revealed their frailties juxtaposed with their strengths. Comments like, "I feel strongly about this, but I am not certain what to do about it" reflect these parallel human qualities.

Management Council meetings frequently ended on a ragged note. Time was pressing. Other matters suddenly intruded as the announced ending time for the meeting approached. On many occasions, one or more members of the Council stayed to deal with some matter of importance either with the Vice President or with some other member of the Council. Often, the Vice President asked some members to stay after the meeting to confer with him. These endings leave the impression that Management Council meetings serve as an interlude in regular duties of student affairs administrators more than an anchoring for common interests. Yet, as will be shown in other narratives, these meetings served to set the agenda, at least partially, for various administrative units of student affairs.

CONTEXT OF DEAN OF STUDENTS UNIT MEETINGS

The unit of the Division of Student Affairs known as the Dean of Students was actually composed of several staff people whose jobs vary, but who all report to the Dean of Students. The Associate Dean is responsible for judicial affairs, budget and planning, research, and personnel. Line personnel below him are the three Assistant Deans. The Assistant Dean

for Special Students is the campus representative for students with disabilities. There is an Assistant Dean who oversees three staff positions, including a Coordinator for Leadership Development, a Coordinator for Campus Environment, and a graduate intern for Substance Abuse Education. There is also an Assistant Dean for Multicultural Affairs who has one staff member, the Coordinator of Black Cultural Affairs. The office also has three secretaries, who do not usually attend the meetings. A Graduate Assistant was hired during these observations and began attending later meetings with the other eight members.

Meetings were held every two weeks. Agendas were published, but minutes were not kept. The Dean, who chaired the meetings, spent a good part of the meeting reporting what had been said in Management Council meetings; "management council" was an agenda item. Often the same kind of discussions followed, especially regarding the budgetary pressures. Budgetary concerns would also be reflected in the meeting's "round table," or that part of the meeting where the staff reported on programs, plans, or other activities within the member's specific area of responsibility. In this way the Dean of Students meetings were much like the Management Council meetings.

The conference room in which the meetings were held was rectangular and old. The Dean of Students office was newly organized and only a year old. Since the Student Center was under construction, the Dean's Office had been put in a part of a military dorm. Although the conference table and

chairs were formal, the room was usually very hot. When the windows were opened, those persons near them were cold while those away were hot. The Graduate Assistant once fell asleep in a meeting, attributing her response to the heat.

Additionally, all the offices were in a straight row down a hallway. First was the secretarial pool, then offices were arranged in descending order from the Dean of Students to the Coordinator for Black Cultural Affairs. I mention this because it was important in the way this office functioned, and dysfunctions on occasion. I will return to this later.

According to an outline provided by the Dean at a seminar, the purpose of the Dean's Office was to:

- Serve as the first line response for student issues of a non-academic nature.
- Heighten awareness of all constituencies regarding the needs of special groups.
- Identify ways to enhance the campus environment.
- Help to challenge and to support students.

To achieve its purpose, the Dean of Students Office had multiple functions. Several of these assignments were: Alcohol/substance abuse; black cultural awareness; campus environmental issues; judicial affairs; leadership training; multicultural affairs; orientation; special student, faculty, and staff services; student affairs research; student recognition and awards; and women's issues. The Dean, in a newspaper article by Harris (1989), noted the diversity of their tasks-- "we call ourselves one-stop shopping." The unit was specialized to perform several functions, most of which had been done previously by other units.

As stated earlier, the office was newly created. The Associate Dean of Students was the only person holding a doctoral degree in the office. He had come from Residential Programs where he had experience in judicial affairs. The Assistant Dean for Special Students had held basically the same position before being incorporated into the Dean's office and Student Affairs. The Dean was completing her doctorate in Educational Research at the time of the observations. This additional burden caused her to take days off on several occasions. She asked the group to forgive her being "short and ill-tempered" and asked them to "pull extra weight" in her absence. Meeting agendas sometimes included who would be "in charge" during these absences, or that the dean could be reached through PROFS (the computer communications system). The Assistant Dean was put in charge during part of the Dean's absence when the Associate Dean was suffering an extended illness. Both the Dean and the Assistant Dean had been on staff, in other positions, for the past Vice President for Student

Affairs and had been appointed to these important positions by the new Vice President.

Of the eight, only two members were trained in Student Affairs. They, nevertheless, had some experience in their specific job prior to the establishment of the Dean of Student's Office. This is mentioned because of the noticeable absence of language relating to programming theory in the meetings.

During this observation the budgetary crisis arose. This unit was totally dependent upon the very funds being cut. As the crisis grew, so did the stress level within the unit. Positions were later cut. The concern was reflected in the agendas of the meetings. Each had "budget outlook" or "budgetary concerns" as an item. Mandates from "the powers that be," stories of positions not being filled, and "the writing on the wall," or "trouble coming up the road" were central issues in meeting discussions. Perhaps the best example of the budget discussions, and the figurative language which prevailed in these discussions, came in the third meeting observed.

The Dean opened the meeting with a statement about the severe financial distress the University was under, more so than expected. She admitted it was not real clear, but went on to say they would certainly be required to "bite the bullet." Examples of figurative language followed in the conversation about the economic woes of the University, the Division, and

on down to the unit. Jobs were discussed as "frozen, or red-lined," saying that people would not be hired if needed, and others might be deleted. The level of service was also discussed as "trimming the edges on all programs." Though the Dean noted that no clerical staff would be cut and "they can sleep tonight," the level of work increase would "impact" all in terms of their work. She did state that all would be asked to "give and give and give."

Explanation was given in this meeting as to how Student Affairs received "E & G money" from the state, but also received "auxiliary funds" from student activity fees, room and board, and such. These latter funds would not be restricted, but the E & G money which funded the Dean's Office would be "hit." She reiterated the Vice President's promise of reallocation of money lost. The Dean described herself as the "bearer of bad news," and offered two perspectives from which to view the austere times. Either as "a real downer" or as "a challenge." She concluded the discussion with "we have mired around in this enough" and went to the round table item.

Though the message from the Vice President for Student Affairs which promised to "keep the family together" was delivered by the Dean to this unit verbatim, there was fear that they would be the first on the "hit list." One member requested the Vice President be asked to come in and "tell us what this (budget cutbacks) is all about," as if he might provide some extra reassurance in a fatherly manner.

Staff members also often referenced how hard they were working. Parlance such as "overworked," "overburdened," "stressed out," "having a fried brain," "shorthanded," and "we're all overcommitted" were common in the meetings. Private conversations with two staff members revealed that, in their opinion, this was not really the case. Members may have been reflecting assumptions that if they were not busy their position might be deleted in what they saw were certain layoffs.

These factors provided a setting which affected this unit internally and externally. The organization, admittedly, did not have a great foundation upon which to build. In the interview with Harris (1989), the Dean noted how their job was not easy "because at Virginia Tech, student affairs and the academic side of the house have not always worked congruently" (p.3). The unit was required to serve an unappreciative master when they worked with the academic "side of the house." On another occasion the Dean noted that "(the administration building) is only interested in the bottom line;" this reflected her belief that rationalizing student development in a cost/benefit analysis would present a handicap for the unit as they presented their budgets.

This year-old office reflected the pressures of having to confront "ambiguity," as it was termed by the Dean. Due to the specific new tasks of each member, organization goals were unclear. Goal submission from

each section were requested to be limited to five or six. This mandated each member to attempt to define his or her concerns.

As I mentioned earlier, office spatial arrangements were problematic. The offices, being in a long corridor with a set of steps as a natural division, caused the staff to "break up into coalitions." Secretaries were called into one staff meeting in order to "help correct information flow... and the we/they problem." The dean instructed which staff would "use" which secretary in order for the "office to work well" and all "be part of a team." Minor problems had to be addressed as this group developed. Temporary physical arrangements detracted from group interaction, and thereby diminished group integration.

Members of this office seemed to relate somewhat tentatively to one another, compared to the interaction and high trust level experienced in the Management Council. There was little input in the meetings from one staff member to another regarding programs. One member couldn't locate a student who had a common name (John Smith) and, asking for help, he received little response. Everyone seemed to be focused on the task at hand, as each had a separate program responsibility. The round table discussions rarely consisted of interaction. Rather, a member reported on what was "going on" in his/her own area.

The relationship of the Dean of Student's Office to students was unclear. Having their office space in the dorm also caused one journalist to

mistakenly report dorm rooms, paid for by student fees, were being used by the Dean's Office without compensatory payment back to student funds. This "creative financing" caused some student outcry which strained student relations with the Dean's office.

Such student action and reaction were often reviewed in meetings. These discussions were rarely agenda items, but were usually in the round table and focused on what was currently happening with student groups.

Statements such as "The SGA (Student Government Association) is angry," and "in an article in the (student newspaper)" reflected concern for student opinion and "goings-on" around the campus. Critical incidents were usually taken care of by the Dean or Vice President. Decisions were rarely debated and reached through group resolution. Each member had a group upon which he/she focused, and for which plans were made. These programs were often seen as an individual's personal possession, or "_____ 's (staff persons' name) program." However, enthusiasm for those programs was surprisingly low or repressed. For example, one member reported she was doing "the same old, same old programs" and another called her major program her "March headache." However the latter would later, upon termination of the program, rave about what a success the program had been.

Unit members reported on programs in vague terms, such as "we had a pretty good turnout," or "there were good responses." Seldom was there validation to this reporting. Students were usually grouped according

to the unit member's responsibility. For example, the Assistant Dean for Special Services reported he "picked up a new student, an amputee," or the other Assistant Dean for Multicultural Affairs would report on their "target group." The term "target" was often used, as if marketing to specific groups was a primary role for this office.

The Office of Dean of Students was created, given a purpose and function, and supported by the new Vice President for Student Affairs. The figurative language revealed, at the time of these observations, a unit marked by ambiguity about task, with a feeling or pretense of being overworked, and a genuine concern for budget cuts. This was reflected in the statement by one member that "we might end up getting the crumbs under the table." As the last to come into the family, the Office of Dean of Students seemed to feel that it would be the first to go. The unit was like the employee hired last, in times before the austerity of cutbacks, and thus having least seniority. If the Division was the "family," as indicated by the Vice President, then this unit might be an adopted step-child.

CONTEXT OF RESIDENTIAL AND DINING PROGRAMS MEETINGS

The largest unit in the Division of Student Affairs was Residential and Dining Programs. As the name suggests, this unit was responsible for housing and feeding students who elected to live and/or eat on campus.

Additionally, this unit assisted students in finding off-campus housing, provided educational programs for students, maintained physical resources such as dormitories and dining halls, and had many other related responsibilities. The Dining section, formerly not under Student Affairs, had been recently attached to the Director of Housing, adding a great deal of responsibility to him.

Unit meetings were held every other week in the small conference room located near the unit offices. The meetings were chaired by the Director and attended by the Associate Director, Assistant Directors, Coordinators, and a Graduate Assistant. Replacements were sometimes sent, and the Associate Director chaired the meetings in the absence of the Director, who was late or called away on occasion. The meeting usually had thirteen people in attendance.

The meetings did not take place around a table, as was usual with the other meetings. Instead, everyone sat against the wall in a circle. Members usually sat in the same place during each meeting, though seating was not assigned. Meetings were very casual.

Agendas were published, though the Director usually followed his notes. Very comprehensive minutes were kept, written up, and made available to members. These minutes followed an agenda-like outline, and were very faithful to the conversation in fact and in spirit. Even the figurative

language, which was important to this study, was occasionally reported in the minutes.

Meetings always began with "sharing" which was a time for members to tell about anything they wished to tell the group. Topics ranged from recent conferences, and highlights of the experience, to personal announcements (such as a good golf score). It was a time which was open and the members could laugh and "catch up" with each other. Sharing was done in a somewhat ordered fashion. It proceeded from the Director, going around the room, with each person having an opportunity to speak.

The director would follow with announcements, professional development opportunities, and/or other news which needed highlighting. An additional reminder would follow to look in the "read box," a place where current information which was to be read was placed.

The Director would usually follow with major concerns. The budget was a major topic in the first meeting observed. Ironically, this "sobering item" was not reviewed again except as a report from the Management Council which took place during the last observation. In discussing the budget situation, the Director did not soften what he considered would be "quite a blow." Although the unit was mostly secure being supported by auxiliary funds, the director indicated that the unit would be asked to participate in a program where the auxiliary funds would "pick up" costs and wages previously paid from the student affairs budget. He went

on to carefully explain that it would "boil down to" decisions made on the state level, but that the "word out there" was things were very tight. The Director provided, as he did on many occasions, statistics or hard data to reinforce his thinking. If he did not know something, he admitted it, and might add dependent facts. He often used the phrase "film at eleven" to express a "wait and see" attitude. His "up-front" warning of "hard times" and the necessity of sharing the burden as parity with other units was taken well by the staff. There was little "hand wringing" but rather a trust that they would prevail and that the tasks at hand were much more important than something over which they had little control.

The member's reports from each particular area followed in the meeting and these reports served several purposes. Primarily, they let their co-workers know "what was going on" in that area with regard to events, plans, or programs. Secondly, it was a time for coordination or "meshing", allowing for suggestions and information-gathering. Finally, it was a time when the director could provide guidance and top-level support. Various combinations of these purposes were served as members reported and developed programming plans.

Area reports usually came from Business Affairs, Programs, Special Purpose Housing, or from the others representative of the parts of Residential Life and Housing. This was usually done as a round table, mentioned in the other units (though without the table). Concerns for programs were voiced and coordination with others, inside and outside the

University, was discussed. These concerns and relationships provide insights into this unit, and their attitudes, assumptions, beliefs, and values. Relationships were especially clear regarding the University administration, the students served, and the community of realtors with whom they competed.

The University depended upon Residential Life and Dining Programs to provide room and board to students and to special groups in summer programs, to provide programs along with numerous other functions, as well as provide personnel to staff those functions. The unit was dependent upon the administration to set costs, and was required to wait upon the bureaucratic decision, even after contracts for housing were being negotiated. This required a "shot in the dark" as to what the rates would be. Additionally, schedules would be altered by the new administration at the last minute, causing rearrangements of personnel and materials. Ironically, many of the important scheduling problems were discovered by this unit. For instance, a home game against the in-state rival was discovered to have been planned for the weekend of Fall Thanksgiving vacation. In another instance, construction plans had been made for all dining halls during the same summer. Such scheduling blunders became "killers" for the unit. Nevertheless, this unit took it all in stride as "part of the program." Seldom was much said about these situations, except that it "put us behind the eight ball" or it would "tax our resources." Administrative changes were sometimes ordered and the administration would, for instance, "make a suggestion, or the message

was sent strongly, to open dorms early" which was a way to get results without taking "the heat" from the many student RAs who were required to return to school early. In response, the unit immediately went to work to "see if we can pull this off." These "management problems," as they were often referred, were just part of the job. The University administration was seen as the master to whom they reported and obeyed. Waiting for the needed information to be released was common. When it came, "everything was ready" to utilize it to provide services. Anticipation was said to be the key to the operation, and contingency planning to "stay fluid" was the norm.

Service to the University and to students was seen as primary, and plans for these constituents were always tentative. This unit was especially student-oriented, by its own admission. This unit provided Student Affairs' primary service to students, that of housing and meals. This entailed providing "guaranteed housing" for minorities, having a type of lottery for other students, and working to keep the dorms at efficient capacity. During the winter of these observations, several students had left on-campus housing. Since there had been a shortage of rooms the previous Fall quarter, many students had been lodged in dormitory study lounges. Instead of moving them as rooms opened, students were allowed to stay in the lounges, if they wished. The Director concluded that "they played ball with us, in a bad time, so we should do the same now." This language reflects the flexibility of the unit with students, the desire to accommodate their needs, and the mutually-supportive relationship of

this unit with students. It may be important to note that this unit was the largest employer of students in the university.

During a long discussion about a new logo for the unit, much was said about the need for a "homey-looking logo" which projected the "warmth of home" to students. When staff felt that the RAs were having a rough time they noted it in the meetings, and asked all to give words of encouragement to those students. The unit of Residence and Dining Programs was positively affected by those elements within their operation that increased student satisfaction. A new, interim manager of the dining program was said to be doing a wonderful job because the students liked him, and there were "smiles on the servers' faces." The membership professed, in the last meeting I observed, that student affairs should be "student oriented and student advocates."

"Town and gown" relations (or the relations of this unit with members of the community) were more closely guarded. This unit most often dealt with developers and housing interests from the community. The unit did have an Off-Campus Housing section through which alternatives to campus housing might be found. Nevertheless, the unit necessarily competed with these interests, and found itself in the business of "occupancy and marketing." During this research there was a "housing glut and a price war." After one meeting several of the unit members were going to the "housing fair" sponsored by the Off-Campus Housing at one of the campus sites. All the local rental and real estate firms had been invited.

These members said they were going to "watch the feathers fly," indicating the aggressiveness of the competition. Sometimes the students were involved in the less-than-honest dealings with local business, and housing became involved. "Remember clover hollow" was a warning of an instance where housing under construction was rented. When school opened, construction was not finished as promised, causing students to have no housing; the real estate firm involved was required to house them in hotels. The unit heeded this warning, as they had rooms under construction themselves, and as contracts for the next year were going out. The unit tried to stay fluid in making plans to fill but not overfill dorms, thereby assuring themselves they "did not stand hat-in-hand in August saying 'Come live with us'." The Director admitted "it is a difficult line to walk." The unit must be competitive, but not appear commercial.

There was generally a very business-like undertone to the unit meetings, though the membership were people who cared for students. They often offered suggestions for solutions to another member's problem. Often they discussed mutual support of programs, within and outside of the unit. Decisions were sometimes made with discussion. Generally, decisions were made on the lower, area levels. The Director would make suggestions and give support for those decisions. He was, moreover, clearly in charge but seemed to focus on the "big picture" and work to coordinate the areas in his charge.

Huge amounts of ground were covered in these short meetings. There was a great deal of interaction, though each area had a speaker who held the floor until finished. The meetings focused on providing a forum to "let the right hand know what the left hand is doing," as it was stated by one member.

The meetings always ended with "Other" as an agenda item. This was like a second "Sharing," where anything forgotten might be announced. This initiated a more informal part of the meeting. As this was completed, the meeting would usually become less ordered with several people talking among themselves. And, if nothing of import had been missed, the Director would let the meeting disintegrate with some friendly farewell.

This unit was the clearest example of the "servant" metaphor, ever-mindful of the task of housing students, working to meet those needs of a demanding master. They organized so as to "stay fluid" and be able to accommodate any emergency calmly. They were a group that shared with each other, and were able to work together. They had a strong and understanding leader who provided them information with which to make their decisions. They also laughed about the problems they were given, and adapted to the environment.

THE CONTEXT OF UNIVERSITY UNIONS AND STUDENT ACTIVITIES MEETINGS

The unit which is called University Unions and Student Activities (UUSA) is responsible for programming activities, directing student organizations, and generally performing a multitude of functions regarding student extracurricular activities. It was temporarily housed in a dormitory, while the Student Center was under renovation. Lack of proper facilities would hinder any organization, and it did hinder this unit to some extent. However, unit meetings were anything but fettered. The UUSA meetings were like a work party. The group had fun together working on a multitude of tasks. The fun did not, however, detract from the unit's business of serving students. On the contrary, the jolly nature of the unit seemed to provide multiple frames of reference for group identity and for creative expression.

Meetings were held in a large conference room on the same floor as the UUSA offices. The conference room contained three large tables, arranged in a "C" shape, which covered most of the room. There were chairs around the table, and around the wall of the room. Members usually sat in about the same place. The meeting chairwoman always sat in the outside middle of the "C."

Meetings were held every other week. Due to a cancellation, only three meetings were observed in the eight-week observation. Agendas were passed out at meetings, and comprehensive minutes were kept and published.

The unit meetings were large (usually 24-27 people in attendance). Meetings were attended by the whole unit, and included both line and staff members. The "events" were often noisy with several people laughing and talking at once. This made recording and observation difficult, though general interpretation of the unit culture seemed easiest of the units observed.

Group meetings always had refreshments (donuts or cookies) which were passed around communally, and the group was noisy and chaotic, complete with lots of talking and laughter. There existed a family-like cohesion which seemed to be bonded by humor. Several unit comedians were observed, who tended to make "jabs" at themselves, recent activities, or others; their interjections caused much of the commotion. Yet, this same group was extremely interested in a member who was recovering from an operation, and several reported staying with him until all hours of the night. Values were often expressed in the meetings through symbolic language, which will be reviewed in this section.

The Director of UUSA and Recreational Activities seldom attended these meetings. Although he did represent the UUSA unit in Management Council meetings. The administrator in the staff position below him was the Director of UUSA, and had no role in the Recreational Activities unit. However, both held the position of Director. It was somewhat confusing, organizationally, and was the outcome of recent reorganization endeavors

of the new administration. This organizational line difference is noted because it likely explains the fact that, unlike the other units, very little of the Management Council discussions were repeated in the UUSA unit meetings. This unit was most unlike the other units, including the Management Council, especially the meetings.

The Director of UUSA perceived herself as an organizational "cheerleader," encouraging individuals to be self-directed, using skills, talents and innovation, and she acknowledged their work. Recognition of staff activities were a major function of meetings. She stated that she worked very hard to prepare for the meeting. These preparations were likely to include a review of some extraordinary action by an ordinary member of the group (Kuh, 1986). The unit meetings were a forum for encouragement and to show support for projects.

Recognition of staff members and their efforts was a regular feature of any UUSA meeting. The most humorous example was in a part of a meeting recognizing three members of the Student Budget Board (the Associate Director and two staff members), all of whom had worked hard preparing the structure which would decide which student organizations would be funded the next year, a difficult and unenviable task. The meetings were to begin the next week. The Director began that "I decided to put the best minds together and provide (these members) some assistance (in Budget Board hearings)." She then apologized to the Associate Director that he and his staff had not been in on the plan. This, needless to say, was a

surprise to the Associate Director. This time-consuming and tough decision-making was a major part of his job, and the Director's sudden change of plan caught him off guard; he looked worried. The plan was unveiled. It was a dart board, or "Budget Decision Board," with each area redesignated as a student organization. Elaborate rules about how much would be awarded and to which organization were outlined. The Associate Director was to merely throw a dart to find out how much each organization would receive. It was a very funny, though haphazard, way of deciding. All had a good laugh. Additionally, his assistant was given a "Budget Board," a Greek paddle with Sigma Beta Beta (Student Budget Board) and the inscription "listen fairly, apply liberally." This was for showing student concerns and taking care of "testy" students. Finally, the secretary had obviously had her share of the job and who, the Director noted, had "become a master of finding hiding places." She was provided "with a token of appreciation" which "reflects the outlook and demeanor (she) has had." She was given a picture of a secretary, with a background of computer budget printout. The secretary is daydreaming of a tropical island vacation. The picture is entitled "Budget Bored." Such awards recognized tasks, and the actors who performed them, providing recognition and humor.

There was another, similar, situation with Union Office. One weekend a sandwich board had fallen, blocking the door into a top-floor office. Two staff members, using their full resources, rappelled into the window. They were awarded symbolic prizes for their resourcefulness. One award

was rappelling rope tied as a hangman's noose, called an "administrative decision-making accessory." The other was a (cardboard) chain saw, as a key to "open new possibilities" or, as one member put it, to "cut through the red tape."

UUSA meetings are in some respects "pep rallies." Much of what happens is attitude adjustment or spirit building. Situational symbols, such as the cardboard chain saw as a key, or the rope (noose) as "administrative decision-making accessory," and earlier the "boards," are creative ways of recognizing job-related situations and orient them in terms of humor and creativity.

Humor and creativity are valuable for any organization, but even more so for UUSA, with their hours and tasks; the Director noted that "a regular eight-to-five day seems like a vacation to us." Meetings were filled with "thank you," and recognition of whom is doing what. Recognition of what has been done is given equal time with planning. It seems the membership is given lots of autonomy to "do their job," with support and recognition. This lends to a "family" orientation recognized by most of the membership. The UUSA Director is a strong communicator and organizer. She works to build group cohesion and the family atmosphere.

UUSA meetings were events which allowed dissemination of information about the unit as well as unit members. However, the way this was done was enlivening. Instead of merely stating facts, the Director added a

value-added perspective. For example, one of the means used to enlighten and enliven a serious topic was "saving trees." This disclosure model was used to highlight the need to create better ways of providing information without giving every member a personal hard copy of any memo. Information would be placed in a central location, with a simple system for retrieving and initialing. This cut paper usage. The information needed to get to everyone, and all were ordered to "get in the Loop" so that the "nobody told me" excuse would not be valid. The value of conservation was implied, which gave extra emphasis to the message. Saving trees (conservation) was linked to information flow. Additionally, to accomplish this information system, the machine room was "given a face-lift." The new order allowed for a central place for information sharing. More humor was added when jokes were made as to the elevated height of the reorganized shelves in relation to some of the shorter staff members. The figurative language used offered a group value of conservation, and facilitated unit cohesiveness and centrality.

The group assumed itself to be a cohesive unit and, as well as gaining individual recognition, worked for recognition within the university. A "marketing" or "public relations" campaign had begun. Money and efforts were spent building the UUSA name through media and commercial attention. Due to the fact that Squires Student Center was closed, the staff seemed to feel they lacked identification, and that students would wonder about their student activity fees. Marketing through the disposal of a variety of artifacts (pens, pencils, buttons, etc.) was done during this data

collection. The group received attention from this activity. It made the students recognize the unit's new name and showed that the student's were "getting something for their student activity fees." The "product line," or certain logos, note pads, pens, pencils, lollipops, etc., had been purchased in order to market the new UUSA name.

Humor followed the line that these "products" might seem unnecessary, especially since the budget woes of the university had just been announced. Therefore, note pads were called "contract worksheets" and the other things were defined as "efficiency enhancers." Nevertheless, the reason for these products was to "get the message out" or getting UUSA publicity in the university. Group identity was reinforced, again, humor was an integral part.

One of this unit's primary tasks is to coordinate events and activities. In order to serve the students' activity needs, students must know about what activities are available. The agenda for the UUSA meetings indicated as Item #1 the multitude of events taking place, both day and night. "Upcoming Events" included the major, once-a-semester events, as well as reminders of upcoming staff members' birthdays. People were important in this unit.

Agendas usually had about six items, whereas the minutes usually had about twenty. Sample agenda items are: Upcoming events, the new "read book," a staff development video tape about student unions entitled "Where People

Care," campus TV news coverage of staff/student organization activities, naming the Student Services Building, or items raised by staff. The events, and "items raised by the staff," were usually where most of the important information and figurative language was noticed. Although the meeting moved "fast and furious," anyone who needed to talk had the chance. Associate and Assistant Directors, as well as members called upon to report, would speak. Often secretaries would have an announcement, and were recognized. The Director handled the meetings masterfully. At times when a member might interject something humorous and the laughter would grow, she would calmly state "When did I lose control of this meeting?" and the clamor would begin to subside. Often remarks such as "When did you have control?" might be thrown by one of her associates. Nevertheless, the meetings reviewed more problems than were proposed by the agenda, with an open floor and generally with much humor.

Perhaps this group was most insulated from the financial crisis, one of the dominant themes of the Management Council and the other units. There was never any agenda item regarding "budget." UUSA was a unit dependent upon student fees instead of state funds. Little time was spent reviewing the crisis. Nevertheless, time was spent reviewing cost-saving processes. This is evident in the "saving trees" example cited earlier. On another occasion, the Director advocated the price/time savings for processing PROFS & BITNET (computer network communications) messages; times with least costs were recommended to be used; how those mechanics could possibly save money over phone and mail costs were stated. Though

there was an effort to conserve funds, little trickle-down to staff of economic crisis-thinking was observed. Another time, the Associate Director noted that the unit had an excellent record of prompt payments to external purchasing, as reported by the university comptroller to him. This is also another case of the unit recognizing itself with pride, but also reflects its economic stability. Perhaps some of the confidence of the group came from its relative stability from external threats to its successful function.

The group was confident of its ability. In the situation with the barred door, the Director noted that "if the authorities had been called, there would have been (several) police cars and a cherry picker, no doubt." The situation was handled "in house" and with no help, promoting the "can do" value; it also, however, inferred a lack of trust for the campus police. This inference may be attributed more to humor than to real feelings for campus security. Few negative statements were recorded about University administration or others with whom the unit dealt. Conversation was almost always directed at in-house operations.

This situation also reflected a kind of separateness from the other parts of the University. The self-dependence of the group has grown from attitudes and assumptions that creative solutions to one's problems are more productive than depending on external sources for help, even from other University sources.

The UUSA unit seemed confident, though chaotic. It laughed at itself to counterbalance the difficulties of the tasks at hand, and to explore alternatives to tasks. Laughter used in this way was found by Boland and Hoffman (1983) to be extremely symbolic, conveying significant patterns of meaning to help frame and control difficult situations and reaffirm member identity. The social reality is accomplished and enacted through humor (Garfinkel, 1967; Weick, 1979). There was a process in which humor played a major role in allowing participants to be included and recognized within the group, the group was provided with stories of exceptional acts and normative values, and a group cohesiveness was built. There seemed to be a homogeneous culture here, sharing a social reality sustained through humor. The cultural norms were supported by the Director and the work parties she meticulously planned, the values and attitudes she encouraged, and the humor in it all.

UNIT RELATIONSHIPS WITH EACH OTHER

This study of figurative language provided little evidence of how units related to one another, outside of the units directors' relationships represented in the Management Council meetings. We may remember that in those meetings a high trust level existed and members spoke honestly with each other. Additionally, members were more often disengaged than

intrusive when matters about other members' units were discussed. In the unit meetings, little discussion about other units was recorded.

All the groups in this research used figurative language which reflected their relationships with others, within and outside the university, and with students. However, there was a paucity of any communication about relationships with other units.

The unit meetings all had formats very much like the Management Council meetings. For example, all had a round table period when each member had an opportunity to report on individual areas of responsibility.

Therefore, some structural similarities in meetings were noticeable. Each of the meetings had a somewhat different tenor, as discussed earlier in this chapter. Though similar in meeting form, these units demonstrated individuality in their purpose and job tasks.

One exception to unit individuality, which might be important to note, was in the meetings of the Dean of Student's Office. Often the language, especially the descriptive figurative language, used in the management council was reported by the Dean to her unit verbatim. For example, the Vice President's statement about "keeping the family together" was repeated, as was the fear of "getting the crumbs from under the table." However, because the Dean took much of the unit meeting to relate what was said in the Management Council, this may not be particularly noteworthy. It may be that this unit, in its first year, was looking to

the Management Council for some of its own identity. In any case, it is suggested that because specific figurative language communicated ideas well to one group, and then to the other, an indication of the groups' common understanding and orientation to their situation may be implied. Certainly the power of the language to impart important messages is affirmed. Further exploration may be necessary.

The Management Council and Dean's Office were the groups most concerned with, and most vulnerable to, budget reduction. Therefore, both would be more concerned with the current status of the economic crisis. The figurative language used reflected their concerns. The UUSA and Office of Residence Life and Dining Programs were both more financially secure with their auxiliary funding; they had little discussion about the budgetary situation in their meetings. When discussion did arise, both units were willing to help other members of the family. This was demonstrated when Residence Life picked up costs and wages previously paid for out of the Student Affairs budget. It was done in a spirit of giving, not forfeiture.

These four units had very demanding and much different areas of responsibility which led to minimal interaction and consequently little language and communication about each other. Economic dependence was a factor. Each group was concerned with their "marching orders," and for those with whom they interacted. These units' language reflected concern

with their responsibilities to students and others in and outside the university, and not with other units.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

The goal of this research was to identify figurative language which might reveal something of the relationships Student Affairs encounters with other groups within the University, and within its own Divisional boundaries. With this accomplished, it was hoped that insights about organizational culture in Student Affairs might be reached. This chapter will draw many of the examples of figurative language from the vignettes presented in Chapter Four into dominant themes which indicate elements of the organizational culture.

Themes of Relationships

Review of each of the four groups observed allows for a categorization of relationships of Student Affairs with others and with itself, as disclosed in "we/they" language. The category of "others" could be with the University, with students, or with local interests (businesses, local citizens, etc.).

The Management Council demonstrated a high trust level within the group. Members were genuine and direct, using open input. The term "family" was

used to describe their relationship. They felt themselves different from "the other side of the house," even as different as "apples and oranges." The University was perceived as more bureaucratic and less feeling for students. Nevertheless, the Council was subservient to "the man upstairs," as well as to the "powers that be." "Town and gown" relations were seen as improving. Finally, the Council's relationship with students was always in a "parenting" orientation, which included serving and protecting.

The Office of Dean of Students was more of an anomaly, perhaps due to its having been in existence less than a year. Internally, the diversity of tasks seemed to preclude a large amount of interaction. Nevertheless, the family metaphor was used, and there was much commiseration about the future and the budget. This unit saw itself as a different side of the house, which had not been appreciated by the academic side. Adding to the fact that this unit felt unappreciated and overworked, it was a group bonded by its situation. Very little was recorded regarding its relations with those outside the academic community. Additionally, its relationship with students was not well developed. There was little reflection on developmental theory, with the exception of discussions about "target" populations. The dominating relationship with all these constituencies and the Dean's Office was their tenuous sense of being, attributable to the newness of the unit and its dependence upon the funds being cut.

Relationships were the cornerstone of the Office of Residential Life and Dining Services. Members shared with each other their personal, as well as their job-related, business. The former was in the family tradition; the latter was necessary to provide the services they rendered. This group was a servant to the University, awaiting instructions, "staying fluid," and anticipating any changes in plans. They were student-oriented and student advocates whose concerns for students included providing "homey" touches with warmth. They were also mutually supportive of students, upon whom they depended. The units relationship with the community was "guarded" and competitive but not commercial.

The UUSA unit had, within its membership, a kind of sibling closeness, characterized by humor. Members seemed independent, egalitarian, and difficult to keep up with. Their "work party" meetings began with a communion-type sharing of donuts indicating a family orientation. Members were recognized for their small and large accomplishments. The unit sought recognition from students for services they provided. The data revealed an attitude of self-sufficiency in the unit. Outside concerns for tight budgets were mirrored only by internal money-saving announcements, and the unit was given praise for prompt payments. Meetings characterized by humor, internal recognition, and a hectic pace provided a forum where this family planned and coordinated its next activity.

This quick review of relationships in each of the units provides a means of aggregating the data presented in Chapter Four into a manageable form. Themes of "family," and of "servant" are abundant in the figurative language observed. Table 3 provides the reader with a simplified presentation of how the family and servant themes have been derived from the data. Figurative language derived from the observations is readily categorized into the themes. As previously argued, these themes arose consistently from each of the units observed.

Much of the language observed, and many of the behaviors, reflected a trust and kinship which can only be labeled as a family spirit. The Vice President's promise to "keep the family together" is an accurate portrayal of his own concept of the Division. Additionally, much of the language and activities witnessed in all the units provided examples of an underlying concept of their Division as a family. The strong bonding of Student Affairs may also be due to the second theme, that the group thought of themselves as servants in the academic household.

The servant theme is also clearly stated in word and action. The quest for equal recognition is hindered by the "other side of the house" that considers student affairs as secondary, as at variance as an "orange." Though the new "man upstairs" supported the "quality of student life," when the budget problems arose even the Management Council figured they would be hardest "hit."

Table 3

Figurative Language Themes in Student Affairs Culture

Student Affairs Units	Language Detecting Thematic Orientations	
	Family	Servant
Management Council	Family	Vulnerability
	Openness	We/they
	Trust	Parenting
UUSA	Work-party	Self-reliance
	Donuts as communion	Getting the job done
	Recognition awards	Activities
Residential and Dining Programs	Sharing time	Information
	Top-level support	Wait and stay fluid
		Coordination
Dean of Students	New member of family	Unequal status
	Commiseration	Stressed
	Pull extra weight for other members	Overworked

The units consistently reinforced the servant identification, especially as revealed in the overwhelmed attitude of the Dean's Office and the "you say 'jump,' and we say 'how far'" assumptions witnessed in Residential Life.

A Metaphorical Analogy

Figurative language provided us with descriptive examples which allow the reader to identify and better understand the subject being discussed. Even subtle aspects of a subject can be extrapolated if a person is provided an adequate metaphor. As Jung (1964) noted, symbolic language is "familiar in daily life, yet possesses specific connotations in addition to its conventional and obvious meaning" (p.103). Figurative language allows for a better understanding than pure, unanalogical description. Complex situations call for descriptions which capture the manifold aspects and the multi-dimensionality of those situations, and which provide means through which the many facets may be made familiar and be understood. We may recall how Boulding's (1966) complexity level seven provided for higher levels of communication. Symbolic language provides such communication. Figurative language provides a cognitive economy through which information is more easily processed and understood (Eoyang, 1983).

The cultural themes found in this study of student affairs require further articulation. This task was made easier when a colleague and I noticed a clear metaphorical analogy to the servant/family themes uncovered through this research. This analogy amounts to a metaphor of the metaphors (Smith & Simmons, 1983). The scenario is best described in terms of the popular PBS television series, Upstairs, Downstairs (Hawkesworth, 1971), which chronicles the Bellamy family and their servants, whose lives interweave and influence each other. For example, although Mr. Bellamy, the head of the household, is a rising figure in the British Parliament, and makes bold speeches in the privacy of his home, he finds himself compromised by politics and his inherited money. He also often finds himself governed by his servants' actions as well as those of his family. The "downstairs" version is quite the same, where the head butler is supposedly in command. However, other members of the serving staff also interact with the "upstairs," and with each other "downstairs." As Hawkesworth writes, "Storms in the upper regions invariably produced similar weather in the servants' hall (p.150). The servants are in fact not so much employees as part of Bellamy family, albeit "step-children." The children of the household are, additionally, "parented" by the servants. It may suffice to say that the family includes the servants, who have little voice in family matters and are dependent upon the family. Nevertheless, the head persons sometimes find themselves in reversed situations where they are dependent upon the servants.

The complex interplay of the family and servants, especially regarding priorities and concerns, provided the setting for what Boulding described as a level eight system. Servants and family share certain systems of meaning, as does the Management Council and the units. As the butler said, when asked who the "We" of whom he spoke were, "We, being but the reflections of our masters (Hawkesworth, p.133). The shared cultural values provided inclusion into a system which was more than the sum of individual members.

On the other hand, the individual groups hold unique perceptions all their own as a unit, and not shared by the whole. The son and daughter follow different lives and interests than do their parents. The servants act differently when the family is away than when they are at home. Similarities and differences are aptly captured by the metaphor.

Examples of similarities from Upstairs, Downstairs (Hawkesworth, 1971) with the Division of Student Affairs abound. Members of the servant staff, especially the new ones, complained about how overworked they were. An embarrassing article in the newspaper created a commotion in the household. Humor, in the Bellamy household, is one of the main balms for the pains of change. The servants' "tea time" was the highlight of the day, and was where much

of the coordination took place. Plans were often changed on short notice, sending the cook and parlor-maids running.

Additionally, there was a great difference in being a head butler or being a chamber maid in status and income. Therefore, family membership was affected by duties and funding. The head household servants exuded confidence in membership and were concerned about getting their jobs done. Relationships with others outside of the family provided examples where even the member lowest in rank would rally round the family's honor. These servants would brag about how their family knew how to get the right things done. However, most of the complaints came from those who felt most tenuous. In one part of the story, a financial crisis came upon the family. Instead of firing servants, a decision was made to decrease expenditures in other areas. A priority was placed on keeping the family together.

There are many episodes reported in the data of this study which are remarkably similar to those in the series. The power of the upstairs/downstairs metaphor is its power to communicate the many scenarios which may be encountered in the complex organization of the Division of Student Affairs. The value of this metaphor for understanding how relationships are affected by the culture is enormous.

This research provides ample data to make the statement that Student Affairs culture is analogous to the Upstairs/Downstairs relationship. To those familiar with the story, this analogy is helpful in understanding the actions and culture of members of the Division of Student Affairs and the complex social and organizational phenomena encountered in this research.

Research Questions Revisited

The first research question was:

How does the use of figurative language by student affairs administrators reveal their conceptions about their relationships with students and the university?

Figurative language usage by student affairs administrators highlighted their conceptions about their relationships with students and the university in several ways. For example, conceptions were revealed through formal and informal conversation. Most noticeably, characterizations of University structures, practices, and policies provided imagery colored by personal and organizational experience (Morgan, 1986; Weick, 1976). These characterizations were also found outside of conversation. Verbal solutions for institutional problems, whether under the control of the administrators or not, exhibited

significant values regarding how the administrators perceived institutional issues and governance. Members and leader's demeanor and interaction with one another also provided examples of internal and external relations.

Additionally, the economic situation provided a setting which not only added agenda items to the meetings of most units but also evoked additional discussions about what relationships existed, and the importance of those associations. This period of chaos was addressed by members attempting to construct a coherent picture of what was going on in the institution. These constructions, especially as revealed through figurative speech, offered insights into shared values, attitudes, beliefs, and assumptions of student affairs administrators (Pondy, 1983; Wilkins, 1983).

Internally-felt descriptions of relationships were observed and interpreted from figurative language. This language may not have reflected reality as much as translated it into a form which was easily shared and understood by others (Morgan, Frost, & Pondy, 1983). It provided a value-added quality which reflected aspects not exposed through other means (Cassirer, 1946; Lakoff & Turner, 1989).

Organizational life, especially regarding relationships, is primarily a symbolic activity (Morgan, 1986). Given this fact, inquiry based on the discovery of relations of objectively-defined variables is

problematic, if not impossible. Interpretation of symbolic language and behavior provided richer and potentially more rewarding avenues for understanding these most human aspects of organizations (Clark, 1985).

Information about what happens in organizational meetings, provided through agenda items and meeting minutes only, related a one-dimensional picture of organizational reality. By including genuine exchange, a fuller and more accurate picture was provided. Communicative exchange through figurative language revealed administrator's appurtenant perceptions of students and the University, and therefore provided the observer with a more holistic and context-bound portrayal.

Colorful descriptions revealed attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, and values of members, especially with regard to relationships. These figurative expressions conveyed significant patterns of meaning, often relating the deeper unconscious concerns of speaker, in the form of surface discourse. Patterns developed and emerged which represented the repeated themes of a distinctive cultural milieu, and were pervasive across the units. Insights heretofore unknown were revealed. These insights led to the highlighting of aspects of the organization which might be categorized as cultural (Becher, 1984).

The second research question was:

Do student affairs administrators' conceptions about their relationships with students, and with their institution, communicate aspects of their organizational culture?

A simple answer to this question is "yes." However, the answer requires some qualification. The key word here is "aspects." The figurative language observed revealed cultural aspects such as attitudes, assumptions, values, and beliefs. These were derived from figurative language which related administrator's conceptions. Whereas the first research question asks about the conscious language used by student affairs administrators, this second question dives into the cloudy regions of interpretation, where questions must always remain somewhat tentative(Geertz, 1983). Defining culture from aspects of that culture leaves one open to numerous epistemological challenges. Those commonly accepted elements of culture (viz., values, attitudes, beliefs, and assumptions) provide, however, a structure by which it may be defined. Observations of figurative language which indicated these elements may be used to interpret culture (Hirsch & Andrews, 1983; Huff, 1980,1983; Ponds, 1983).

Values are important to defining separate cultures within an institution (Kuh, & Whitt, 1988). Formal organizational properties create bureaucratic models which specify structural differences, and therefore contribute to the formation of subcultures (Follett, 1918,

Weber, 1947). Moreover, shared value systems function to further delineate differences and behavior patterns of a specific group; through these value systems experience is made meaningful (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). The equal status of members within the Management Council illustrates a value within this unit. The family model was preferred to the bureaucratic. The conservation/ecology value promoted in the UUSA unit is another. Values are instilled as a normative way of thinking, and define membership to a culture (Gray, Bougan, & Donnellon, 1985; Kanter & Stein, 1979; Smircich, 1983; Tierney, 1988).

Attitudes also provide insights into culture. Attitudes are emotional and temporary, yet yield more examples of figurative language. This language may be used to interpret and respond to external conditions (Burns & Stalker, 1961). It may often shape the reality of a member or unit (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Morgan, 1986). Attitudes are largely learned. For example, the Vice President's frustration with the budgetary crisis was an attitude that illustrated his servant role, and also affected the unit's perception of their own limited power within the University. Often "us versus them" attitudes were revealed through figurative language which related cultural perspectives. Other examples of attitudes revealed conceptions of relationships related cultural aspects. Parenting duties defined roles for administrators with regard to students. Group interaction, through symbolic language and behavior, affected perspectives (e.g.,

mutual trust, sharing, attitudes about work, and even donuts). Unit discussions projected attitudes, as the unit defined the issues and organizational realities. Attitudes of self-sufficiency, patient order-taking, humor, or being overworked all reveal culturally important components of the organization.

Culture and meaning are often intertwined, as are assumptions and beliefs. They are context-bound, and make up the core of culture. Tacit assumptions and beliefs are the most difficult, if not impossible, aspects of a culture to articulate (Wilkins, 1983). Examples, however, may be given. Perhaps the clearest examples were provided by the "apple/orange," or the "family" metaphor offered by the Vice President. Additional assumptions from the units are the belief that "staying fluid" is best, or that "the other side of the house" does not work congruently with the Division of Student Affairs, or have the students' best interests as a priority.

As previously stated, these units and administrators considered themselves a family within the division and a stabilized group which had learned its role and understood its environment (Schein, 1985, p.8). Additionally, a high trust level was exhibited for members within the groups but did not always extend beyond it. "We/they" references were abundant with regard to other university groups. Actions, real or imagined, by other groups were often seen as unfitting for the situation at hand (Weick, 1979). These groups were

different, and acted in ways different, from student affairs administrators. They were a cohesive group bound by tacit assumptions concerning priorities for educating students. Student Affairs felt a "parenting" and a "service" relationship with students; certainly these two have quite a lot in common (Appleton, Briggs, & Rhatigan, 1978; Strickland, 1965). Student Affairs administrators identified themselves as "student advocates" in juxtaposition to what was perceived as a bureaucratic and mechanistic University.

These Student Affairs administrators had a somewhat tenuous sense of being, which translated into a subservient feeling, due to a felt difference and inability to ascribe to other group's values and beliefs, or be included on equal terms in the university structure. Units felt they were second-class administrators within the institution. This manifested itself in the group's cohesiveness, but also in its "us-them" relationships with others within the University.

Organizational culture, it is argued, can best be understood from a qualitative study such as this one (Clark, 1985; Daft & Wiginton, 1979; Kuh, Whitt, & Shedd, 1987). The elements of culture are extrapolated from figurative language. The language provided descriptive data for how members viewed and understood their roles, their organization, and their relationships. This information was collected, was expressed in themes of "family" and "servant," and was described in the metaphor of "upstairs/downstairs." This metaphorical

analogy of "upstairs/downstairs" provided added explanation for actions and behaviors of student affairs administrators which stem from their organizational culture, guided by values, attitudes, beliefs and assumptions (Morgan, 1986).

Practical Applications

As with most research, questions of how the findings may be practically applied are important. The findings suggest several applications for organizational understanding.

First, this research implies there are powerful messages encoded in figurative language and metaphor. Language provides models of the situation and models for the situation (Geertz, 1973, p. 93). Therefore, communications are potentially strengthened through figurative language. Important messages stated in figurative expressions are more powerful (Morgan, 1986).

Consider the speeches of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He used figurative language to which his listeners could relate. In his speech to the "poor people's march" he compared the Constitution and Declaration of Independence to a promissory bank note:

In a sense we've come to our nation's capital to cash a check.
When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words

of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men--yes, black men as well as white men--would be guaranteed the inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check which has come back marked "insufficient funds." (Davis, 1969, p. 26)

King continued, in the speech, to draw other metaphors from the secular world to provide insights into the plight of the oppressed and the civil rights movement. This extended example further demonstrates how figurative language provides a powerful and creative means of insight (i.e. seeing into, discernment, penetration) and understanding of cultural dimensions (Tierney, 1989).

Second, self-knowledge is always important. Insights gained through others' observations provide useful information which may be applied for behavioral change, if warranted. Often internally-felt constructions are revealed through disclosure by others (Jung, 1967). Through this disclosure, a person becomes more self-aware (Lankton & Lankton, 1989). Clinical counseling always entails interventions which assists a client resolve concerns so as to live more effectively. This research provides data upon which student affairs administrators might reflect. Unconscious feelings which affect relationships and/or organizational goals were detected. These may need to be addressed. Through reflexive judgement, resolutions for change or affirmation of existing practices may be adopted (French & Bell, 1984).

Individuals who participated in this research may benefit from it. Understanding oneself, and others, through the elements of culture disclosed in this study may provide useful information to stakeholders. Individual differences and similarities were reflected. Self-worth and a sense of integration are but a couple of positive outcomes which may be derived from information contributing to self-knowledge. Specifically, through understanding the "upstairs/downstairs" roles, administrators might see how relationships with others within the university might be affected (Weick, 1976).

Moreover, relationships between individuals and groups were portrayed. The figurative language which was used provided individual perspectives regarding relationships. These perspectives may be strengthened or changed through a review of this interpretive work. Conclusions, affirmed or denied, may serve to foster members' understandings of self and others (Kuh & Whitt, 1988).

Seeing oneself as others do also provides an opportunity for improvement. Insights into one's effectiveness is another implication for self-knowledge. Members' constructions of reality revealed by this study may promote or hinder that individual's performance. Often, these constructions are unconscious and are revealed through symbolic

language. Observation and reporting of this language enables members to view themselves in a different light, through a different lens (Lankton & Lankton, 1989).

Likewise, organizational self-knowledge is important for many of the same reasons as individual self-awareness. Self-identity, relationships with other groups, and insights into organizational effectiveness are similarly important applications (Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Morgan, 1986).

Specifically, this study may provide information which will allow units to describe themselves more adequately, with vividness and accuracy. This may, in turn, inspire and elevate interest in unit operations. Consideration of cultural influences may be provided.

Additionally, this investigation may reveal unconscious barriers to organizational effectiveness, as well as identify cultural traits which seem to promote quality work and cooperation. Organizational understanding through cultural research also may provide further clarification, or reordering, of institutional goals (Morgan, 1986).

Relations within and outside the Division of Student Affairs were highlighted in this research. Information provided by it may be useful in future institutional and divisional planning. In a University undergoing rapid changes, both administratively and

economic, information of this nature is especially timely. Within these changes, communications may be crucial to goal setting and attainment.

Certainly there are other applications for this research. Other questions which might be useful have hopefully been raised. Additional research about institutional culture in other divisions, institutions, and regions would be useful in our continuing search for organizational understanding.

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APPENDIX

MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Management Council Meeting #1 1/8/90

After an introduction by the Vice President for Student Affairs and Coordinator of Graduate Studies, I mentioned that the duration of my data collection was about two months. The Director of Counseling Services noted the analogy with the gestation time of a groundhog. Comparing research and dissertation with a groundhog allowed icebreaking humor, and also made a statement about the Director's "downhome" orientation. The southern orientation and colloquialism will come up later. The Vice President followed with an article which cited the University as a leader in the distribution of free condoms. This again was humorous, but blended in the task and seriousness of student affairs work. After a lengthy explanation of cutbacks and economic planning, the Vice President noted that the "key" was "this year you have cash reduction, and next year you will have budget reduction." The metaphor "key" was used to signal that he was about to summarize and reveal the real situation. Thereafter, several useful metaphors were used by the Vice President: (a) "Hard cash" -- present budgeted dollars; (b) "Haves and have nots" -- noting that fairness among the units, whether negatively affected or unaffected by budget cuts, would be the rule. It was a symbolic statement that all the units were "in this together, and would be treat with fair consideration: (c) "Eating us alive" -- describing the terrible effect of the unexpected cost of removing asbestos from the Student Center which had depleted the Student Affairs discretionary fund and left little for emergencies. A promise to "keep this family together" was made by the Vice President. The "family" metaphor indicates the Division.

The Vice President leaves to answer a call from the University President. Cross reaffirms the crisis by saying that "next year you will be lucky to have the "soles of your shoes." This metaphor, or my interpretation of it, is more threatening. the Vice President returns and clarifies that the next two years will be times of "lean pickins'" (again we have the rustic expression). However, note that "lean pickins'" has connotations that it is a group hardship, whereas "lucky to have the souls of your shoes" is more personally threatening, individualistically oriented, and smacks of personal deprivation and hardship. The Vice President also promises the University President's dedication to the goal of "quality of student life." This metaphor needs more clarification, but is generally taken to mean those programs and environments which contribute to a favorable student experience, for which student affairs is largely responsible. Enrollment "targets" -- goals of admissions; noted to be down 2%.

During a discussion about an article on racial harassment vs. freedom of speech the Director noted that "the water gets muddy" on harassment and who to call. Again we get the Director's organic metaphor. It's very descriptive.

Meetings and a staff development program were announced. Reports come from around the table. Assistant to the Vice President: Basically there are few metaphors noted. Generally the reports were very short or handouts were provided. The Director took exception to the letter/proposal that "Appalachian" not be used in description of the University, because the University "suffers" from its connotation. Agenda of the student affairs committee of the Board of Visitors. This short list carried quite a bit of power in that it was also the agenda for student affairs in the coming year. The Commandant of the Corps of Cadets spoke about the Inaugural parade. The Director of Planning and Development gave the directors report. Neither had significant metaphors.

Management Council Meeting #2 1/22/90

The Associate Vice President presided over this meeting in the Vice President's absence. There was a clear absence of leadership; even when the Associate Vice President felt certain actions would be taken, it was second guessed by other members. Many decided issues were redebated. Additionally, the Associate V. P. clearly reasoned why certain paths were taken but the tentativeness of the meeting was frustrating. The members seemed unmotivated.

The Director of UUSA and Recreational Sports indicated he was for withdrawing the use of lawyers for handling student cases. "We should drop it." "Don't throw baby out with the bath water" was metaphor used to say legal advising should continue.

Several subjects were addressed, but I wish to concentrate only on how some metaphors reflected the prevailing attitude in this meeting: "Rustle the student leaders out" referring to the Board of Visitors meeting and the early hour and tight schedule of the breakfast with student leaders. The herding metaphor is revealing.

There was a real "us vs them" attitude in the group. "Them" being the "Powers that be" or the students. Much was said about an BOV agenda item and the credibility of the Office of Student Affairs. Suggestions that "it should be taken off," that it reflected a situation of "being in the same place as a year ago," and this showing "awkwardness," that it would reflect "sensitivity of the V.P. even raising it," or be "an embarrassment to him" were made.

Political images of the organization were apparent. The Associate Vice President noted "the problem with the university was not the structure. . . but needs to be a commitment." In speaking of structural change he added that hopefully this will "generate and create a renewal." The political side of the group came out in many metaphors: the Associate Vice President introduced one statement by beginning "I spoke to the V.P. last night," which gave the idea some added value. In the meeting, an obvious topic boiled down to politics. The Director noted "we don't deal with straight up reality." He insisted each year the requests for reports of "what new programs are you going to do this year" are requested. When he reported "nothing," that report "wouldn't fly." He sarcastically noted it was like "discovering the pellets in the punch bowl."

Consideration of whether planning should be "top down" or "bottom up" were discussed at length. The Director of University Placement Services noted it was like "a free-for-all." The Coordinator of Graduate Studies noted that "vision" of leadership is often missed by "grassroots" goal setting. the Associate Vice President noted "the Director of University Placement Services, from the corporate standpoint . . . that's the corporate model." The Director of University Placement Services stated "I would expect there to be some payoff" and "we don't get invested here." There was a "slice of the pie" metaphor referring to unit equals slice and division equals whole. The lengthy discussion was summed up with the statement "the bus is gone" saying, in effect, that it was the end of discussion (as it was except for the Director saying "I hate to be pedestrian." [There were many "disconnects"; information was not always accurate and it was not always relevant to all members.]

Several metaphors were evident regarding a tenuous sense of being. Regarding the budget they were most apparent: (a) Instead of referring to political scientists or economic forecasters, those speculating about budget cuts were referred to as "tea leaf readers"; and (b) budget implications or programs were referred to as "that shoe and another to fall," "Feel a lot of heat," "Burnout," "stress a system." Observations on this were: "overwhelmed," "shorthanded," "without sufficient resources, but with increasing responsibilities," "being powerless in shadow of others," "unappreciated," and "soldier doing my battle but feeling powerless." "Shorthanded" is a metaphor referring to hands or workers. This goes back to the mechanistic orientation when workers were hands and managers brain of an organization. [Issues: It seems as if the Associate Vice President's leadership is process oriented and the Vice President's leadership is product oriented.]

Management Council Meeting #3 1/29/90

This meeting was exceptionally laden with a full agenda and, along with the discussion, was filled with information. It was extremely hard to keep notes, due to the rapid pace of discussion and information flow. I do believe that there were more metaphors used than in any meeting yet. A review of the tape will reveal more than could be tracked through my notes, though many metaphors are written in them. We would expect there to be a quantitative correlation between amount of information and number of metaphors, by chance. Qualitatively, this meeting revealed that metaphors allow information to be revealed in such a way as to say less. For instance, the Vice President talked about the tentativeness of budgetary reversion, and waiting until "once it was put in stone." This metaphor ended the topic and informed the group that final decisions would be forthcoming, but neglected going into the process of who would do what and when. The meeting did not run exceptionally long, and members had their viewpoints heard. The Director of Counseling Services's metaphors often summed up entire arguments in one or two rather parochial metaphors. However the other side of the argument is that metaphor, by adding value to something, may fail to properly represent a situation. Lakoff (1980) notes this in terms of highlighting or "understanding a situation as being an instance of an experiential gestalt involves picking out elements of the situation as fitting the dimensions of the gestalt . . . This highlights those aspects of the situation and downplays or hides aspects of the situation that do not fit the gestalt." (p.177).

This requires a "leap of faith" which seems to hinge on organizational unity and leaderships within the divisions and the units. The trust level in the division is high, as indicated by the frankness as well as the kidding which is evident.

The mood was elevated before the meeting. For a cold, rainy day, everyone seemed in a jovial mood. The Vice President began by invoking "Executive Session," a ritualistic time "with no notes being kept." The subject was for recommendations of a project which the Vice President had in mind. He said he wanted to "lay it on the table, and see what you think." This metaphor asked for a response to some fairly well-laid plans. The group did make suggestions for changes, which were discussed. The request for confidentiality prohibits elaborating discussion of the context. Few metaphors were used. [This may be more due to the nature of discussion, which was oriented toward other ends than understanding.] Note the Director's "Expert is more than 5 miles from home" and a joke [garbled].

Budgetary matters were "walked through." This metaphor noted the slow pace of review. "Surcharge" was a word which we might explore for its meaning. It was a word used instead of fees. When other institutions fees were discussed, the Director of Planning and

Development interrupted that the large differences (\$1400 to \$3000) pointed out by the Vice President were a "misnomer," this one word tended to dismiss much of what had been said about the differences. It's what the fee is "couched" in: "Some people don't "couch in much, some couch a lot." He then said there was a disparity "across the board." This was confusing to some (the Dir. of Health Services tried to repeat what she'd heard). There was a bit of missed signal here. Then the Director of Planning and Development said "I hope the surcharge works"; "works" could be understood to be the plan or the money gained by it. Student leaders had been "asked" about the surcharge. It was noted they would not have to pay for it because "they'd be out driving BMW's" or "Momma and Daddy would have to pay for it." Though the students were being asked about the plan, and it was important they be included, there was some skepticism about their being involved. With regard to the budget it was noted the University President was "pushing real hard."

Conversation moved to the regular agenda:

In regard to Budget, the Director of Planning and Development the Director of Planning and Development noted that there was at \$5000 "windfall" which needed spending in the next 60 days, and would entertain budgetary revisions. This humorous approach allowed some of the stress of budgetary matters to be released. The Director noted "This is the Chinese year of the horse, not the horse's end."

Commencement - perhaps the chief symbolic ritual for the university calendar was discussed by the Commandant. He noted that the students had "peddled" speakers, but the Governor had been selected. Several times the ceremony was labelled as "thing." For example, he noted the "indoor thing" and the "Ph.D. thing." The Coordinator noted that CAGS Degree was missing and asked the Commandant to "raise that for us." These metaphors indicated the ceremony was still in planning stages. Questions were "raised" and not settled. Components were as yet unnamed and were "things." Furthermore, when activities such as the ice cream social and the beer party during commencement week were raised by The Director of UUSA and Recreational Sports, the Vice President said "it hasn't come to my attention, which doesn't mean anything." [Does this mean: (a) he's not part of the planning, (b) the other sides of the house do this ceremony, or (c) he feels like he's just a cog in machine?]

Two Town Trolley - The Vice President asked the Director of Planning and Development to "bring us up to speed" on the transit from Campus to the Mall to Localburg. The Vice President noted the cost \$ 52,000 and that "we picked up 42% of it."

The Director of UUSA and Recreational Sports discussed the Hours Club. The Dean interrupted what was basically a positive review, sharing information that "people from Rtown" might cause trouble; discussion

of security followed. This exchange may be an example of two units exchanging information [watch for follow-up in Student Activity unit; the Director of UUSA and Recreational Sports is not in attendance at these "full staff" meetings which are chaired by the Director of UUSA]. It was noted that the club was "pretty visible" and needed to be secure. The Director of UUSA recognized the staff as working hard, meeting challenges "pulling their hair out," but they were using this "creative window" to show their talents. [Staff recognition is very visible in both the division and the units; many times the individuals involved in job tasks are recognized for their hard work, challenge and novel ideas].

Multicultural Awareness programs were discussed as "trying to put into place several short-term, and also some long term programs to address racial and multicultural awareness, and make the majority students aware of the subtle ways prejudice comes out." It's a challenge." ["It's a challenge" is an appropriate statement to assess the problem.]

The Budget Board request was basically accounting for student organizations (I did not get a copy) and the schedule of review followed. Rational for changes in schedule changes were summarized with "late at night tempers began to flare."

A full discussion of the Provost's Planning Document was revealing. The document was not the problem. It was heralded as being correct. The Director took it to task: "You can't disagree, it's more of an inventory. It's full of buzzwords and phrases from economical literature." "If you think about it, what is coming down is to do more with less." The Vice President asked the group to "mark it up" or write criticisms in the margins or reactions to it. The Director diagnosed it as a social document; "What it's coming down to, the austerity is not temporary" [regarding the budget]. There were said to be "monumental problems, incomprehensible, unspeakable costs." The point being that one could not argue with it. The terms "coming down," "coming down to" were often used, representing the finality or settled state of the predicament. The Commandant noted doubts about the accuracy, as did another member, especially the reliance on the lottery for educational funds. The Vice President termed the provost's intent as "provocateur" in writing the document. "Statements are placed there (in the document) to draw conclusions, as a provocateur." The Director noted "there is a bit of reality." [He used "reality" in an earlier meeting, noting that administration has unreal expectations "to do more with less"]. He also made the oximoronic summation: "What I like about it (the document), I don't really like it, but it gives a quick review of processes, complexity of thing." The Vice President dismissed the discussion, again, with "mark it up, give it back."

The Vice President reviewed the minutes from the Town/University meeting. He noted both are on "fast track" to build, especially parking. The Director of UUSA and Recreational Sports noted the problem with beginning a parking complex, just as the Student Center is finished, is that it is right in front of the Student Center.

The Director of Planning and Development, introduced by the Vice President as "the transportation guru," gave plans for new roadways. Apparently, the town and gown relationship indicated some strain: "the word is out" to town council about the project (which will be done the University's way, the Director of Planning and Development assured not the town's "proposed" plan). the Director of Planning and Development later contended, and the Director agreed, that most University plans in "Central Office" should be made "in vacuo" due to the political debates processed in cocktail parties. "And, dammit, I believe those decisions should be this University's decisions and not the town of Blueburg." The Vice President noted the reason for the the University-Town committee was to "air" problems, to "kiss and make up with town," and take the "sweet with sour." It was noted that the university President was trying to "mend fences," and "he is a visionary." [This the University-Town conflict is very tangential to Student Affairs. Note past problems (i.e. Greek Housing).]

In the middle, and out of place (I reviewed tape and could not discern how it came in, other than the subject of the Student Center & building) the Dean raised the misunderstanding about the editorial in the University Journal by the Director of UUSA (two grad students)? regarding using buildings which were built by student funds for Administrative Offices. The Vice President asked the Director of UUSA and Recreational Sports to "straighten him out." The Director of Planning and Development and the Vice President both noted they had attempted to explain the situation and had problems. No real solution or plan was made.

The Director of Residence and Dining Services brought up the "conditions out there" (outside the university, but in the area) of "things going on" with the many housing units built and being built. This will result in an increased supply in housing and how the market will behave. The Director of Counseling noted the housing industry in the area a "greed cult." The Director of Residence and Dining Services summarized "we're going to feel it."

Several metaphors were used in Director of Health Service's idea for a Residential Treatment Center. She noted "we have hardly scratched the surface; its hard to if you don't know what to do with them." It would be targeted for people "down and out" and to be a "bridge." The Vice President noted "its going to get worse before it gets better." The Graduate Coordinator noted to "get your hands on some money ... team up with C & I."

This was a proper ending to the meeting (though a few more loose ends were covered). The meeting began with budgetary items, as had the first meeting with the Vice President. Although there are budgetary cutbacks, new programs were planned and underway, new building projects are too. There seems to be a progressive leadership, with vision. However, many older members are more "realistic" and perhaps see behind the scenes to the struggle to deliver the program.

Management Council Meeting #4 2/12/90

Today I saw evidence of "in loco parentis," as it is played out, and how it is held over, on campus at a public university. There were three situations covered during the meeting which demonstrated the cultural orientation of student affairs as "parents" of the student body. These situations were of such a tragic and serious nature they were described off tape and kept confidential. One was an accident, the second an attempted suicide, the other was a student who was attacked. The incidents were related in terms of specifics of "what happened." However, the silence and the concern for the students surpassed what might be decided best for the school's reputation, or that this was just shocking news. Reputation was discussed, especially since the local news arrived at the accident before the Public Relations or Office of Student Affairs had all the facts. Information control and speculation about how university accidents might best be handled was discussed. Nevertheless, the air or feeling was one of almost guilt, or how could this happen? The disbelief of the details raised the level of discomfort. These events were not taken as merely news about one's institution, but seemed to be internalized as having happened to one's own children or family. Later in the meeting a less serious incident was noted by Student Activities. At the new non-alcoholic Student Night Club club this past Saturday night the band had its "plug pulled" 40 minutes into a 50 minute set. The reason was that students were "slam dancing." Again, the parent-authority was evident in the intervention. Student Affairs culture still maintain "parental" feelings toward students, although "in loco parentis" is legally on shaky ground. The internal need of Student Affairs leadership to care for students is evident. External pressures (legal) suggest that education move away from the parent function, yet student affairs is usually called upon to perform such a function. [Perhaps a family metaphor is justified.]

Several metaphors were observed during the meeting which provided insights for "diagnostic reading" of student affairs organization. Morgan (1986) uses commonly accepted macro level metaphors to provide a framework for organizational analysis. Examples of these organizational metaphors are:

Mechanistic - machine-like organizations.
organism - "open systems" or organizations that are

dependent and shaped by their environment.

Brains - organizations that are information-processing systems.

Cultures - a milieu characterized by distinctive values, beliefs, and social practices.

Political systems - where people operate to further their own ends.

Psychic prisons - an arena where various ideological or subconscious struggles take place.

Flux and transformation - organizations as manifestations of deeper processes of social change.

Instruments of domination - organizations are used by one group of people to dominate another.

All, or combinations of, these metaphors may be observed in a single organization. Several of the metaphors I witnessed in this meeting demonstrate this on a microscale:

Mechanistic-In speaking of the budget, it was said that "lots of noise has been going around" about layoffs. The noise represents a problem in the machine. This is how we know there is a problem in a machine, it makes a noise. Discussion ensued about how to dispel these rumors. Mechanistic organizations are most effective when stability is ordered.

The university calendar is perhaps the most stable part of the university. Therefore, calendar planning led to several mechanistic metaphors. The draft schedule was traditional yet condensed the number of days while increasing class periods and time. Management Council members noted that present programs would have to be "crammed in." Dates were "coupled with" breaks. Phrases like "this will create real problems for us. . . we'll have to squeeze 10 weeks into six," "this will have an effect on our offices," "we'll live with it," and "the medicine is worse than the illness" were recorded.

This last example is also slightly organismic, where changes are made at one place, they will cause transitions in others. Student Affairs finds that its role in the university is affected by both internal and external forces which, in turn, cause changes. The organismic metaphor is reiterated several other times. For instance, the revised budgets had "cuts for us (Student Affairs)" which may go to 10% over the next two years. When an organism is "cut," it is hurt.

In another case, a news article in which the writer had lived for several days in a residence hall at the University, reported the alcohol use of undergraduates. The article "made the president not happy." A parent sent a letter to the president; another student rebutted the article in an editorial. The external (parents') pressure, as well as the internal (president's) pressure is responded

to in writing and in the way future arrangements will be made with reporters wishing to write about the University.

Perhaps the main metaphor for the Student Affairs organization, with regard to its meetings, is the brain. Information is disseminated up, down and across the organization through these meetings. Information about the student's death; details about "strategy" for information dissemination, even the suggestion that the "language you ought to quote" should be the same as in Board of Visitors meetings when discussing Board of Visitors minutes. The sheer volume of hard copy materials handed out and "in the read box" is symbolic of the information processing going on. Information has power. An analysis of the Freshman class revealed 30% of Freshmen had less than a 2.0. This information, after being processed from Student Affairs to the Board of Visitors, will probably have an effect. It was pointed out (more information) that 5 hour Calculus classes may be a determinant. [Watch for effects.]

Of course, much has been said about organizations as cultures, with distinctive values, beliefs and social practices. Much of the Student Affairs culture has been discussed earlier when I noted the "in loco parentis" orientation still evident. Subcultures are very evident. For instance, The Commandant discussed the military ball, and how "Silver Taps" is always inspiring.

The Management Council, while especially sober today, is amazingly honest and open. Humor is evident in many of their jabs: the Vice President tells the Director of Planning and Development "Shut up, ----- (the Director of Planning and Development)" after the Vice President has described, totally inaccurately, what a "smart highway" was. Another time, when the Dean explains she cannot run a tutoring program on \$3,000 (she requested \$ 9,000). The Counseling Director responds "Drunken sailors running that program?", insinuating poor management or adequate funding. My experience tells me, though there are differences and subcultures, there is a culture within this group. Its youth may contribute to its stage of development.

Each member of this organization, as in most, is interested in furthering their own ends. This results in some political orientation. Generally, this group is caught in a "we-they" negotiation. Most of the political battles are with other parts of the university, or are with state or local entities, not within the group. For instance, the Commandant, on the commencement sub-committee, speaks of "they" making decisions with which he did not concur.

The Vice President mentioned that the State Treasurer wanted to assess auxiliary functions a management fee. To counteract this political move, the Vice President noted "(the Vice President) and I are getting our heads together." This is a political move to protect the

Division. The Director of Planning and Development talked about how the university made a "good move" to promote the East-West Road planning they wanted and about which the "town was not happy." Town-Gown politics are presently heated. Regarding certain Student Affairs projects, the Vice President reported "where we are at this point." He noted that the "major stumbling block is -----," a legislator who opposed certain projects at the University. The Vice President also noted that certain officials at the University were cautioning that "the University not be offensive to the budgeting process in the capital." Moves are strategic in the political systems metaphor of this organization.

Sometimes organizations may be seen as psychic prisons, in which individuals struggle with ideology and with their subconscious feelings. Underneath the surface of organizations they are all as distinctly human, and we sometimes find humans trapped by their construction of reality in unsatisfactory modes of existence.

As I mentioned earlier, the Dean was unhappy about her funding for tutoring. She claimed it "only enough for some of our disabled." When the Vice President and the Director of University Placement Services began to make suggestions, the Dean responded "yea, but. . ." on several occasions or "we're required by law" when asked about other special funding for handicapped. Finally, the suggestions (ex. sorority philanthropy programs) were heard, she responded "I'll pursue that, good point." This is a simplistic example of a psychic prison, in which the reality is changed from can't to can. [It maybe analogous to Socrates' "Cave Parable" in Plato's Republic.]

Organizations act to make changes, and flux and transformation is a metaphor for this process. The Director of Residence and Dining Services education aims at transformation and so does Student Affairs. For instance, the Director of University Placement Services talked about "a pilot program, a test run" which may be successful in Placement Services. Student Affairs is also at work for Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity. The Vice President offered the Wellness Center as symbolic of changes in student habits from drinking to exercising. Flux and transformation in education is not only who we are, its what we do.

Finally, and most controversial, evidence that organizations are instruments of domination may be obtained from observing meetings, this one no exception.

One agenda item was "mandatory health insurance for foreign students." Alexander reported that "Dr. ----- and (lost on tape) are writing letters (to President) and say they've had enough . . .uh. .telling of their experience." This rephrasing changed the harshness somewhat, but the meaning was clear. Later, when discussing the relations of the International Center and Student Affairs, it was (politically)

discussed that if the Center went to the Dean of Students, Dr.----- would be left. Someone noted "International students don't like to go to Dr.-----" to which a reply came "he tells 'em like it is." [Is domination always bad? What about the the Provost's edict "Because it's right?"]

Another domination metaphor was humorously revealed when the Vice President revealed the "President's Book of the Month." The University President gives each of the Vice Presidents a book to read each month and to discuss in monthly meetings. Usually the President asks each a question about it. Retorts from the Council were: "Did you pass?," "Will you have to repeat the year?"; "You read it in your spare time, huh?" The Vice President replied exasperatingly: "I don't know," "I hope not," "yea" (respectively) The book was entitled HIGH VISIBILITY.

[All of the eight metaphors used by Morgan to describe or conceptualize organizations are apparent in my review of metaphors used in this organization. Organizations are onion-like, with various layers of reality. Morgan's conceptual frameworks are helpful in categorizing organizational orientations. They provide several lens through which to observe meeting discussions. They will likely be helpful in my study, as demonstrated by my data and these notes. However, they should not be exhaustive. If "believing is seeing," as I think it is, I would restrict my study somewhat by relying too heavily on the metaphorical typology. Other metaphorical models are probable.

[Janusian Thinking is evident in the metaphor "where we are."] It is increasingly evident that organizations are unsure as to WHAT they are, and even more so as to WHERE they are in the larger picture. The Vice President used "where we are" or "where we stand" three times within a short (5 minute) period. Later, he said "my understanding of where I think we are." These phrases were all used regarding funding, or support. This metaphor is representative of what Cameron (1984) calls "Janusian Thinking," named after the god of Portals (usually depicted as having two heads, each looking in opposite directions). Organizations look to their past and their future, and thus decide "where they are." This conceptual symbol is helpful in recognizing how, or rather where, organizations see themselves, and how they may adapt to their situation. However, as a caveat, this oversimplifies complex organizational subunits that may be ahead or behind where the organization is "defined" as being, thus adapting inappropriately.

Nevertheless, many, of the metaphors I have heard reflect a feeling of future/past planning and work. Pressures are seen as coming from one side or the other. The Janus god metaphor may be very appropriate for this organization.

Management Council Meeting #5 2/19/90

As the meeting started The Vice President asked the Dir. of Health Services about foreign student insurance. She noted that she and the Dir. of International Students had talked and "the climate was really bad." One of the student leaders was a particularly vocal and "is going to fight it badly" and that "it'll be bad news." When the Vice President asked "What do you want to do?" the Director said "I think we can put it off another year." The Vice President pushed, "I think we should go forward." He noted "I can take the heat." The "heat" metaphor give us an idea of the environment and that leadership is often called upon to withstand uncomfortable situations. The Vice President's "the buck stop here" attitude allowed the Director to carry out his orders and depend on his support.

Almost all of this meeting was held in "Executive Session" which I was not allowed to tape. This name connotes more seriousness, and reminds members who they are (e.g. executives in charge). The executive session was about the economic situation and the potential impact on the Division of Student Affairs. Almost all of this could be categorized as information flow [brain metaphor, organismic also]. The metaphor "frozen" was used for open positions. As in earlier meetings, The Vice President often repeated the phrase "where we are," "where we are at this point," "The world we live in," "Where I am." Additionally, other positional metaphors were used. "I'm up against the wall," "I will take the lead," were common. [These metaphors again reflect the thinking Cameron calls Janusian thinking. Especially insightful is the line, "where we are, especially in relation to last week." This reflects the movement on process of budgetary negotiations and the past/now relationship which might provide information for future events and decisions.] Numerous metaphors were used: "They didn't buy that" - a plan for a surcharge that failed; "Where the rubber hits the road" - the point most exposed to external force [organismic metaphor]; "Grapevine is too powerful"; "Rumor mill working overtime" - for informal communications.

To summarize the executive session, information was shared, a call for input and uni-level "tough decisions" and planning. The Vice President asked to have plans to be presented to him at week's end. When speaking about the whole institution as a "house" different parts were specified as "sides." Which "side of the house" would be "hit" the hardest in the financial "crunch" was discussed.

Management Council Meeting #6 2/26/90

The most significant metaphor from any of the meetings I have monitored came out in this one. The discussion was about self-assessment activities. The Vice President had charged the Coordinator with making recommendations for the development of self-assessment measures. There was great deal of resistance for doing this. Statements such as: "What is it we keep looking for?", "what is the criteria?" Other statements including problems with quantification or how the research would be done were manifold. The Vice President felt that the effects of Student Affairs should be validated, especially to the academic side of the house. Perhaps it is best to pick up the conversation with the Vice President's and the Directors' exchange:

The Dir. of Couns.: What is it we keep on looking for? We have so many other things to do, why do we keep on looking for something new?

The Director of UUSA: We do a detailed annual report.

The Vice President: That's task oriented, the Director of UUSA. You know, that's TASK. You got to get beyond what you're doing. Hell, anyone can write an annual report. You know I can sit at home and write one on my computer terminal, and a pretty good one, and list all the things we're doing. But do we really make a difference. You know the situation I'm in now on substantiating the budget. When I sit down with the Provost, I can take hours and hours and hours to talk to people, but how do you know that makes a difference with students to whom you're talking. That's the bottom line. I wouldn't take the self study. To me that's as 'bout as worthless as the paper its printed on. It's opinion. I want more than opinions. I want to know has Student Affairs operations in a university made a difference in the life of a student. How are you going to substantially change the life of a student once they're here?

The Dir. of Health Services: That sounds good except how in the world is my evaluating placement going to make a difference.

The Vice President: Well that's the Director of University Placement Services. He was suggesting you evaluate each other. I don't know . . . (interruption, garbled)

The Director of University Placement Services: I'm just concerned. I went through the SCHEV and we could participate in one of their hot dog, state-wide studies. The problem is still the criteria, which you must establish up front, by which you're going to compare, that's why I'm concerned. Where are these criteria to be derived?

The Coordinator: Obviously, it's you who should agree on the criteria you should properly be given. In addition to those that the profession views, uh . . . that's what the past procedures speak to with regard to the criteria. Here's some, what are the others which would be required in this area of examination.

The Vice President: For example, if you believe it is appropriate as an institutional goal, student development goal, to develop students who are more tolerant of color, of cultural difference, how are you going to reflect that?

Dean: How are you going to measure it?

The Vice President: How are you going to measure, that's right.

The Director of University Placement Services: We may be able to do a pre and post.

The Vice President: I think that's going to be the charge of the task force committee, to come up with those mechanisms by which you can judge. I can tell you that when I walk into a budget meeting and I sit down, and I've done this for years, this is nothing new to me at Virginia the University, and I sit next to an academic manager, I have a hard time, because I'm an orange and he's an apple, getting him to understand my orange.

Later in the conversation, the Vice President would say "sometimes we don't understand ourselves" and "we don't have a commonality, we don't have a common mission." [Organizations are much like humans, in that psychological theories hold on organizations as they do for individuals. Organization's parts which feel like second class citizens, have a harder time functioning in the larger organizations. In order to be better integrated, the Student Affairs division seeks to be legitimized. Berger, 1969 (p. 132) notes the process of rationalization as a means of legitimization in culture, leads to a structural, and almost a "spiritual" affinity in the economical and political and a process of secularization. Applied to Student Affairs, the spirit and consciousness of Student Affairs culture would be, through rational assessment, adversely affected in several ways, all of which are pointed out in Kuh, Whitt, and Shedd (1988). A more appropriate research paradigm would yield better understanding the forces impinging upon the Division. But would the academic side understand this. The Vice President says: "A measure academics understands is where Student Affairs has dropped the ball." The metaphor "apples and oranges" is clear. The curricular side of the University can apply tests of cognitive, affective or psychomotor skills to measure how much a student comprehends material covered. Student Affairs does not have this situation.] The "we/they" perception continues.

Other metaphors:

"Batting back and forth" - the Dean discussing the fee to be charged for orientation which had been changed several times due to external changes impinging.

"Fascinating dynamics" - Problems on campus among black groups (mainly black fraternity members, black athletes and non-student blacks).

"Where we are" - The Vice President's favorite saying. He also said "situation I'm in now."

"Give students a break," "be as hardlined as possible" - the Associate Vice President saying, tongue-in-cheek, that the University tends to side against students with its bureaucratic policy and processes.

"Ya'll put me into a hell of a position" - the Director of Residence and Dining Services's (Janusian) thinking about the calendar and the delayed input from council members.

Management Council Meeting #7 3/5/90

This was a very short meeting. The Vice President had been meeting with the other University Vice Presidents and did not arrive until 2:45. The meeting, which usually started at 1:30, was rescheduled for 2:30; it ended at 3:30 as usual. This meeting was filled with metaphors, more than normal [Perhaps when people are pressured, timewise, metaphors act to relate information, viewpoints, ideas more efficiently. The sender uses metaphors to save time in relaying the message in detail. Metaphors serve as a "cognitive economy" (Eoyang, 1983), more powerful than data or large amounts of information (Daft & Wiginton, 1979)].

Just before the Vice President arrived there was a "round table," where each unit head reports. Most "passed." The Dean and the Vice President tried to make contact about a Chinese female who had been threatened. It was unclear as to whether they were talking about the same case. However, the Director reported that Dr.-----, who reported it, generally handles these cases badly in that he "makes a common police case into a psychiatric nightmare." This metaphor related dearly the Director's opinion of poor response to illegal activity. The Dean also reported that it had been pretty quiet, when asked if the kids had been "running around," meaning student misconduct. The Vice President arrived, clearly upset. He prefaced his oral delivery with a call for Executive Session.

(tape recorder turned off).

He began saying "Higher education in Virginia is in a lot of trouble." The Vice President also reported that the Recreation Center, for which he had tirelessly worked as a building priority was "about to go down the tubes." He then apologized to the group for his frustration, summing up that "we're getting screwed." This powerful announcement was followed by a short summary of pay raise percentages, then announcement that the state may okay \$1 million in planning which "we would have to come up with." The Vice President asked for "any thoughts" from the members [an attempt to get them to respond]. Next, was even worse news that the Student Center and the Student Services building was over budget and would run \$--- million (originally about ---).

There was a mention of "lack of leadership" by the Vice President. [Who was he talking about?] Two metaphors followed: that we would be going back to students "with egg on our face" asking for money, and

"chewing our lunch." [These metaphors indicated the financial bind which would later be summarized in "we're out of money," but also indicated the position he personally felt with regard to credibility with students. He noted the "political costs to public, students and staff."] The Vice President's personal indignation was tempered by his recurrent reflexing as to "where we are," to "make some sense" and to decide "where we want to go," all of which were used in one separate monologue. He announced a press conference for the end of the week, with meetings with students beforehand, in which an attempt was being made "to get this thing resolved so we don't look like we have mud all over our face." The Vice President, shortly thereafter, again apologized for his irritation, but saying "that's where we are." The Vice President usually tries to be clearheaded, yet his frustration was overwhelming. Where was the root of the frustration? He likes to be in charge and run things. This situation found him impotent to do anything. The external and internal forces of: (a) State governance; (b) cost overruns, due to architectural failure; and (c) commitments made to students and staff had put him under frustratingly heavy pressure. Nevertheless, he reflexed in the situation, or gestalt, and concluded the executive session with "where we're going." He noted "new marching orders and new directions." This metaphor offered a statement of change, yet the particulars of such a new program [or whatever] were not related. The staff were left a little anxious, but less depressed.

The rest of the meeting followed what could be covered in the time and agenda. It took second place to the budgetary problems. The Director of UUSA and Recreational Sports reviewed an assessment questionnaire and reported it was "just gee whiz information." [What is that and why does it say to me that it is unimportant?] The Director of UUSA and Recreational Sports otherwise used straightforward information about his survey (i.e., number of surveys, how, when, where, response etc.). This agenda item took about a quarter of the meeting. The contingency plans for 3, 5, & 7% reductions were reported to be completed. The Vice President reported he would not review his plans until he knew the exact percentage required by state. These percentages were reported as "targets" and each of the plans would result in "impacts on you (units)." [These metaphors have been heard before several times]. His plans would be given to the Provost.

Other agenda items were about the University-Town parking lot. This project may symbolize the change in "priorities" at the University. Additionally it reflected needs that "should have been done years ago," but had come up now with the new administration audit of priorities. It also reflects a joint venture in town-gown relations.

Lastly, staff development seminar was announced. These seminars are a new initiative to understand "common goals" [reported in an earlier

meeting] among all of the Division of Student Affairs, and to build inter-unit understanding about those goals.

DEAN OF STUDENTS

Dean of Students Meeting #1 1/11/90

My first meeting with the Dean of students unit was interesting because it was the newest of the student affairs units. It consisted of persons formerly in the Vice President's office of other units. I expected to see a different kind of meeting, and time will tell how different it is. Primarily the metaphors reflected communication (Lakoff, 1980 p. 10-13) and the movement of that communication. Additionally, the space used for communication(the "read" box) was a topic. When the subject of evaluations came up, there was a certain uneasiness. The Assistant Dean mentioned some doubt for the instrument. [Is evaluation a metaphor for something else?] Most of the meeting dealt with information passed from management Council to unit head. Unit head talked most/controlled meeting. Announcement regarding the new food services manager. He is categorized as "a real find, a real steal."

Talking about enrollments, dean noted the University is "losing out" to another university. The Assistant Dean for Multicultural Affairs reaffirmed this in regard to Black and Northern Virginia students. The Associate Dean talked about budget, useing metaphors about two alternatives to budget creation:

- a) need with constraint and "on the other hand"
- b) 95% of present budget. Budget being "cut." She stated the need to "tighten our belt a little bit."

The Assistant Dean noted "trouble coming up the road" with regard to budget and added responsibilities on Dean's office. The Associate Dean noted that some money in discretionary fund could be "eaked out" (Is this a mouse symbol?). Earlier the Dean said "getting the crumbs from under the table" (could this reflect this units insecurity with being new? Its stepchild role?) The Associate Dean said "(the Administration Building) is interested in bottom line." He also mentioned next year they would all have separate accounts in the unit. Proposals are said to "come to the top." This refers to the process of movement from lower levels to upper levels of the organizations of budget proposals. A suggestion of "holding back" money to create a discretionary fund is made. Additionally, it is suggested that each "make the best case." What is finally said is "what we're trying to tell you is the truth." (Again, information is key.) The Associate Dean reported that students will be hearing judicial cases which will "take a load off my shoulders," and make "the system work more efficiently."

"Round Table" - in this process each member reports on what is being done in each office. Some of the metaphors recorded are reported. Assistant Dean on student elections said to be "heading in an academic direction." The graduate intern - reported on drug/alcohol education seminar, drug-free workplace measures. Assistant Dean for Multicultural Affairs on Black History Month Programs - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; a local political Project; TV-Students Video production; March "headache" - putting on good Black Cultural Program. Coordinator for Campus Climate on the Campus Climate Committee, Articles/information on crimes on campus - compared to pulling teeth, states "not up to us to pull teeth." The Coord. for Black Cultural Affairs - No comment. The Coord. for Leadership- Leadership conference "The powers that be" (unclear to whom he is referring) are making decisions. Assist. Dean for Special Students - "We" used as metaphor for university, in reporting on special student population. The Dean - Talks about helping the Vice President with Camelot Society, described as a group of "regular students." Where other groups may have "tunnel vision"; this group is an "alternative voices."

Dean of Students Meeting #2 1/25/90

The second Dean of Student Unit meeting offered few metaphors, as did the last. It seems, with regard to rising theoretical propositions, that this group uses the fewest metaphorical analogies. I wonder if it could be a) it is new unit, which is unsure of its goals and/or b) metaphors are more often used with regard to more complex situations (i.e. the management council). A sample of the metaphors which were used were:

"We/they" used to describe the staff's physical arrangement in which the staff is divided. This arrangement has contributed to a sectioning of staff into coalitions. This was said to be "natural." "Use" - it was decided that certain members of the group would "use" certain support staff, and "use" others as "backups" in order for the "office to operate well." [Mechanistic metaphors similar to earlier statements by the dean of students such as "manpower," "shorthanded"]. Later statements such as "part of the team" decreases mechanistic metaphor, indicating organization as a team.

A statement regarding evaluation and the "good reflections offered" to indicate how evaluation would be used as a "positive" and not "punitive" measure.

The Associate Dean was out sick. Since he was doing the budget his absence was "putting stresser on the system" [again mechanistic metaphor]. The dean apologized that she "may be a little difficult or short tempered" with "all that was going on," but also followed that "we'll get through it." Budget issues were discussed as "impacts" on the unit. It was noted "we're all over committed." I

assumed this meant the unit. [The Dean's anxiety over budget constraints and the overburdened staff is apparent, here and in the Management Council (#2) but moreso in unit]. All were implored "Don't anybody plan to leave." This referred to the plans not to fill vacancies.

The Management Council meeting report "not a great deal of information to give you." This referred to the last management council meeting (#2). Reported as "not much to report on." One part about a "significant" document changing the structure of the university which was recommended to be read, or "wade[ed] through." After a short (3 min) synopsis of the meeting, the Dean noted "that's it, though it was a long meeting."

Math placement exams were discussed. The group was given a background of how "placement," or "proficiency," exams came to exist. What was not said: The message was "many people in the university asked for math placement exams" but the Math Department "was reluctant" to give them. "We need some information." A person in the Navy ROTC was given as a contact. He "has some information." Volunteers were requested to contact this person. Assistant Dean volunteered, saying she would be the most appropriate person to deal with this problem, since she was in charge of orientation.

The "Round table" - the part where everyone reports. Most reports were short, though two (regarding Black programs and Women's programs) were really long, taking almost half of the meeting. It was evident that these two members were excited about their programs, and the contributions the programs made. The Assistant Dean for Special Students talked about the students he had "picked up" - This meant that another student entered the handicapped program. (These students were identified more by affliction than by name). In another case a handicapped employee of the University had been moved from one office to another. The situation "blew up" and the employee was "railroaded." Assistant Dean noted the UNIVERSITY JOURNAL was warning of University "creative financing," or using student funds inappropriately (e.g. using buildings built with student funds for offices: using dorm rooms for offices). Reports often termed programs successful according to turnout (e.g. Women's undergraduate network had "good turnout" - a baby, faculty, and 20 women). Interesting terms were noted "why call womens' program "MENtoring." Another metaphor which was often used was "target," this referred to special populations to which certain programs apply. The Assistant Dean for Multicultural Affairs was congratulated on Alvin Poussaint program. The number of people was defined as "good turnout" but also "don't know how many people were there." It was said that he would be a good one to get back, as he "really got the students going," and he "talked two hours." The Dean announced she would be out much of the next week working on her dissertation and that the Assistant Dean "was in

charge." All would have to "pull extra weight." [Mechanistic metaphor again]

Dean of students Meeting #3 2/22/90

This meeting, as has been in the past, was basically a time to relate information from the Management Council to the unit; it highlighted the budget situation that has been an important issue in the division. Perhaps this meeting could be summarized by the metaphor used twice in the meeting by the dean, "bit the bullet." The Dean's office, using mostly "E & G" or state money is especially vulnerable to budget cuts. Its duplication of other departmental functions (AA/EQ; Student Activities) make budget cuts "impact significantly." The Dean saw herself as "bearer of bad news." She did tell those clerical staff present (they usually did not attend) that no clerical staff would be layed off and that "you can sleep tonight." Many metaphors were used to describe the plans: "trimming the edges on all programs," "here comes a red flag," "no one unit will take the hit," "red lined," "frozen positions," "shifting sand." She noted that the situation could be viewed from "two perspectives." One perspective is "a real downer," the other is "a challenge." The dean noted she had already spoken with the Vice President, though she did not share details of specifics. She noted staff may be reassigned. All this was prefaced with "it's not real clear." The (3) classified staff members were dismissed and the other members had a (long) discussion of politics and economics, on the "writing on the wall" (why this had not been foreseen). The discussion was seen as "catharting" as well as "miring around in this." [The meeting was in some ways depressing. I'm not sure if it was because of the economic problems. The group did discuss that "morale was low" and the "impact on morale" of the budgetary crisis. It seemed that the discussion of how bad it was could have gone on all day. In fact, three quarters of the meeting was nonessential discussion of the "the situation"].

The "round table" was hardly more upbeat. For example, the assistant Dean started with her report on orientation and otherwise "the same old, same old projects." The Dean steered the meeting on a more positive course, commented on the lauditory remarks from people working with the Assistant Dean. Later, the positive feedback from Black History Month were cited. All together the reports from members were consistently uninspired. For instance, the Asst. Dean for Sp. Students noted "the AA/EQ meeting was only 37 minutes whereas they usually were two hours," and was "a sign of the times." The Coord. for Campus Environment reported leadership conference "swinging right along" (the tone was uninspired). Later a discussion of

requests from fraternities for educational programs was due to "time of the year for them to get their educational credit." Information about projects was exchanged yet the positive aspects were accompanied by cynical remarks like "its almost over" (as if termination of a project is of equal importance with its success or failure). Project difficulties are highlighted. Finally, the Dean had been called away from the meeting and it ended with her. There was discussion and frivolity about mid year reports which the majority of the group had not turned in, now about a month late. Members, as well as the Associate Dean who was to review the reports, was not sure which reports were received.

Dean of Students Meeting #4 3/8/90

Again, as in the meetings before, the Deans meeting was generally a review of what was said in the Management Council, and some comments about what was said. The perceived main parts of the Management Council Meeting were covered. In summary of the Management Council meeting, the Dean said "about all we did" was these (few) things. "The rest was in Executive Session."

The first item was each member's "break schedule" to insure "coverage" during Spring Break, and that the V.P.'s office wanted to know. Secondly, the assessment questionnaire was said to be used to "get a feel for what's happening." [Again, this questionnaire was viewed as an environmental gauge.]

The University-town parking garage development which "you've probably read in the newspaper" was reviewed. This statement seemed to modify the news somehow. Later the situation's "down side" and "the problem is" were both used to reflect on the plans. These types of negative orientations, [look at typology of organizational disconnects] seem abundant in these meetings. It is as if the energy level is low. The parking building was said to "have the advantage" that offices may be built on the top of it.

An announcement of "Art Saddlemire's (Sandeen's) [sic] visit followed. The message included "they'd like you to take it for credit, though you might sit in for certain sessions.

Dean explained the budget would be out Friday and "everyone in the Administration Building looked stressed and strained" The (Management Council) meeting was about "where legislature was." [We see environment as moving sidewalk?]. The Dean also made the announcement that Friday, students would be meeting with the administration. It was asked "what student leaders are included," to which she responded, "I don't know, I wasn't consulted." The Dean noted that the Director of YMCA was to be hired as adjunct staff member for more coordination

with that unit. The Dean reported that she was "the only representative on the Core Curriculum Committee from Student Affairs Division, a two year appointment.

The Asst. Dean for Sp. Students reported the Graduation Committee is 6 weeks behind and "we may be hearing something about that." Also that the GSA was "upset." The Coord. for Black Cultural Affairs reported working with the Assistant to the V.P. on a project talking to minority students about their positive and negative experiences in class with white faculty. The Coordinator reported "the EO/AA Oficer said students had good responses." The GA reported she was collecting articles on date rape and assault on campus. The Dean congratulated her on her work. The Dean finished the meeting saying she would be "at home . . . finishing her dissertation." She apologized for being "short and ill-tempered" and attributed it to the stress of the dissertation.

Announcements called "nitty gritty's" or in this case two conferences which students were being asked to attend, paid for by the Dean's office or other organizations (i.e., SCHEV), were announced. It seemed it was hard to get students to go to some. [I wonder why these are called "nitty grittys" - are they minor functions of the office and troublesome?] This led into some discussions of who would be going. There were a couple of times in which members were "praised." Assist. Dean for Special Students had delivered a Student Affairs personnel development program. He mentioned the negative parts (i.e., "couldn't see my slides," "called residence halls dorms"). Nevertheless, he was complimented on his presentation. During the "round table," everyone reported. The Coord. for Campus Environment said she had a "fried brain" because she had done a program the night before for 75 or 80 Greeks on SAVES. She expressed how "wonderful" and "marvelous" the students were. One Assistant Dean reported on some successful programs, money raised and she was complimented. The Leadership Coordinator reported he had "on going projects" and some spaces available in some. He was also attempting to find a student with a common name, of which there were several on campus. He asked for help from the members or if they knew of anyone "tell them to give me a call."

This unit was rich in its melancholy metaphors i.e., "fried brain," "tell them to give me a call" (Coord. for Leadership looking for a student with a common name, and uninspiringly asked staff for help), "same old, same old projects," "down side," "about all we did," "seems stressed." More importantly, the unit seemed uninspired for the work it has. Few members express metaphors reflecting an attitude of energy and enthusiasm. The Assistant Dean has given input into other member's programs, whereas I have seen little cross-program exchanges in these meetings. They seem isolated - as was mentioned in an earlier meeting regarding the office arrangement. I believe it. The Dean is very busy in her connecting role to the division and with her effort

to get a Ph.D. the Associate Dean seems open, yet hardly spoke today. Several problems may be evident:

1. Overworked - I'm not sure this is true for their group any more than Student Activities, Residence Life, etc.
2. Task Ambiguity - maybe so, as a new unit its niche is not clear.
3. Trust level - exchanges in the meetings seem, at best, surface. For instance, compliments are usually limited to "good job."
4. Environmental uncertainty - Yes. This group is the first to be called in emergency.
5. Isolated - Yes - from each other structurally and from the other units, except the Corp.
6. Other ??? - yes [especially motivators].

This research is not to assess but to understand. All these factors relate to understanding the group's attitudes, assumptions and beliefs.

UNIVERSITY UNIONS AND STUDENT ACTIVITIES

UUSA Meeting #1 1/15/90

The first meeting of the student activities (full staff) was held on January 15, 1990. There were about two dozen participants "a full room." The coordinators all sat at a "6" shaped table. People sat along the walls, but no one sat inside although there were chairs.

There were very few metaphors that I could discern in the meeting. [I thought about a theory that perhaps metaphors are used more on higher levels in the organizational structure than on the lower ones]. The Director of UUSA led the meeting, and began with introductions of new members and how they got "baptism by fire this time of year."

The "family" orientation was there as seen earlier in other meetings (see # 1 Management Council). Later in the meeting a brief period was spent discussing a member's recent operation and get well gift then to the "flower fund" which all should contribute 50 cents per month.

One clear metaphor was used by the Director of UUSA in talking about the large volume of information delivered to the "read box." She noted that things were left two weeks, without slips, and that people should read them, thereby saving the need to send each member an individual copy. The metaphor "how many trees do we need to kill" highlighted the efficiency of this procedure.

There were discussions of budget proposals from organizations and how the meetings would be from 4-8 p.m. for three weeks rather than the

marathon one week 6 'til, sessions practiced in the past. Cost effectiveness regarding computer costs of Profs and Bitnet were discussed. Student Activities were reviewed. An interesting array of activities were noted. One member spoke in one sentence of Martin Luther King Day and jumped to a bridal workshop in the next. (This reflected the wide variety of activities of this unit, and of this person.) Another metaphor used well was the problem when one activity had to be rescheduled and it caused a "ripple effect" on other activities.

Publicity for what this unit does was considered important (i.e., publicity for the non-alcoholic night club "Hours"; the marketing committee). The problem was with the accusation that since the Student Center was closed and student activity fees had gone up, there was the (perceived or actual) criticism that students were "not getting anything for their money." The marketing committee developed a logo to be used "on everything . . . in a concerted effort" to make the student activities unit visible in the things it was doing and the information it released. The unit is energetic, and seems to need the personal recognition which the group gave to them. Identity with the unit and its efforts provide a basis of cohesion within this group. It has a strong group identity. The marketing materials are valuable to them.

Another metaphor offered by the Director was the separating of the policy out of the STUDENT MAGAZINE, the student orientation magazine, and made a separate publication. There were still some questions and decisions to be made, which were being settled. She said we "still have to work the politics as well as the mechanics ." This was descriptive of the process of developing the magazine and what it entailed (I had worked with the Director on the magazine a couple of years ago, when I worked at the University). In sum, almost every (80%) metaphor used was used by the Director, though she had the floor only about 25% of the time. The metaphors used were descript and obviously were understood by the group.

UUSA Meeting #2 2/5/90

Perhaps the most pervasive part of the Student Affairs culture I have witnessed is its humor. In all the meetings, and even through the budget problems, humor was prevalent. Nowhere is humor more evident, heretofore, than in Student Activities. Even when serious problems are evident and personnel are stressed out, a humorous approach is taken. Though the meetings are sometimes unruly with several people talking at once and each of whom is making a joke, the agenda items are addressed. Adding to the more chaotic meeting is the fact that this unit's "All Staff" meeting usually has around 27 people in

attendance. Nevertheless, the meeting is contained within 1 hour and agenda plus "round table" is covered. Some of the humorous metaphors used to enlighten, and enliven, serious topics were:

"saving trees" - used to highlight the need to create better ways of providing information without giving every member a personal hard copy. This cut paper usage. Yet the information needed to get to everyone. "Get in the Loop" was an order given so that the "nobody told me" excuse would not be valid. Additionally, a value of conservation was implied which gave extra emphasis to the message. "Saving trees" (conservation) was thereby linked to information flow and economy.

To accomplish this information system, the machine room was "given a face-lift." The new order allowed for a central place for "information sharing." More humor was added, when jokes were made as to the height of the reorganized shelves and some of the shorter staff members. One focus of the meeting was the new "product line," or certain logos, note pads, pens, pencils, lollipops, etc., that had been purchased in order to "market" the new UUSA name (University Union and Student Activities). As noted in the previous meeting. Due to the fact that the Student Center was closed, the staff seems to feel they lack identification, and that students wonder about their student activity fees. The humor followed the line that these "products" might seem unnecessary so notepads were called "contract worksheets" and the other things were defined as "efficiency enhancers." Nevertheless, the reason for these "products" was to "get the message out" or getting UUSA publicity in the university. Group identity is again reinforced.

The most humorous and best joke was with the Associate Director, the Assistant to Associate Director, and the secretary, all of whom have worked hard to decide which student organizations are funded this next year. This is a hard and unenviable task. The Director began that "I decided to put the best minds together and provide (Associate Director) some assistance (in Budget Board hearing)." She then apologized to the Associate Director that he and his staff had "not been in on the plan." This, needless to say, was a surprise to Associate Director. The plan was unveiled. It was a "dart board," with each area redesignated to be a student organization. Elaborate rules about how much would be awarded and to which organization was outlined. It was a very funny, though haphazard, way of deciding. All, including Associate Director, had a good laugh. The Assistant to Associate Director was given a "Budget Board," a Greek paddle with Sigma Beta Beta (Student Budget Board) and the inscription "listen fairly, apply liberally." This was for "showing student concerns" and taking care of "testy students." The secretary had obviously had her share of the job and who "has become a master of finding hiding places." She was provided "with a token of appreciation" and "reflects the outlook and demeanor the secretary has had." She was given a picture of a secretary, with a background of computer budget

printout. The secretary is daydreaming of a vacation island. The picture is entitled "Budget Bored." Although the agenda was covered, this meeting was a study of organizational humor. The majority of metaphors used were for humor.

UUSA Meeting #3 2/19/90

Situation with Student Union Office. One weekend a sandwich board had fallen blocking entrance into a top floor office. Two staff members, using their full resources, repelled into the window. They were awarded symbolic prizes for their resourcefulness. One award was repelling rope tied as a hangman's noose, called an administrative decision-making accessory. The other was a (cardboard) chain saw. Student Activities meeting are in some respects "pep rally's." Much of what happens is attitude adjustment or spirit building. Situational metaphors such as the cardboard chain saw as a key or the rope (noose) as administrative decision-making accessory and earlier the "boards" are creative ways of recognizing job related situations and put them in terms of humor and creativity. Humor and creativity are valuable for any organization, but even more so for Student Activities. Meetings are filled with "thank you" and recognition of who is doing what. Recognition of what has been done is given equal time with planning. It seems the membership is given lots of autonomy to "do their job," with support but not intervention. [Why? Ask the Director what are most valuable, maybe out of a selection of attributes.] This Meeting even ended with "feel good statement of the day," referring to film. Even the regular supply of donuts gives "party" atmosphere. Another example, in light of the financial crisis in the university, all that was mentioned was Associate Director's report that the "prompt payment report" (a report citing departments not paying bills on time) had not listed any UUSA group. In effect, saying everyone was paying bills on time and all was well. In meeting #1 The Director had noted the price/time savings for processing PROFS & BITNET messages; times with least costs should be used and how these mechanics could possibly save money over phone/mail costs. Though there was an effort to conserve funds, little "trickle down" to staff of economic crisis was observed. This unit is more insulated from financial crisis, and from Management Council discussions about the severity of the situation.

In the situation with the barred door, the Director noted that "if the authorities had been called, there would have been (several) police cars and a cherry picker, no doubt." The situation was handled in house and with no help, promoting the "can do" value, yet also inferring some distrust for the campus police.

RESIDENTIAL AND DINING PROGRAMS

Residential and Dining Programs Meeting #1 1/16/90

I was welcomed to my first meeting in the Residential and Dining Programs(RDP) unit by the Director. He asked me to explain what I was doing and had each member introduce themselves and tell what they did (by title). This followed what they called "sharing," or the open floor for any news, personal or job related. [This reminded me of the Quaker "settling" act or what is called "Baggage Dump," so useful in clearing distractions in meetings.] All of the "sharings" at this meeting were job related, though they could say whatever they wanted.

The agenda began with what was defined as a more "sobering" item - the budget. This definition was validated in the following descriptions. All metaphors used indicated the huge concern the budget "cuts." [This unit has, by far, the largest budget and is under pressure to enlarge or expand to meet student needs. This fact made for nervous conversation about the immediate future]. It was felt that the "cuts" "all boils down to the General Assembly." This orientational metaphor reflects the "down" orientation explained by Lakoff as "less" or negative." The auxiliary funds, not affected by cuts and which this unit controls much of, is expected to be used to "pick up" other programs. This will cause "quite a blow" to the unit. The director summarized that he was trying to "lay it on the table," and scenarios which may be actuated were described. However, he noted all would have to wait for the "word out there" (a phrase which was used more than once.) Specific scenarios included many metaphors which described situations which I, being new to the group, did not understand. However, all seemed to understand when the director used personalized examples of alternative ways of dealing with the cuts "go to more head resident models and less to a (name) model." Later, it was explained that the former was using undergraduate RAs and the latter used Graduate Assistant Managers. Additionally, positions were described as "___'s position or ___'s position." These metaphors seemed to explain to the group the position or situation of budget cuts in terms of personal rather than organizational descriptions.

Agenda item # 3 involved announcements that the "Drive-in workshop" of VASPA. Agenda item # 4 was "where we are." The orientation was not which room, but the situation as it stood at that time regarding housing. The number of vacancies were cited. Brief discussion followed regarding the corps of cadets and changes. It was noted that, though changes were "up in the air," the Commandant was very cooperative and more plans had been concluded than would have been the case "with past personnel." It was asked whether those persons

in study lounges, where they had been housed when occupancy was high, could be moved now that occupancy was low. Response was that, if they wished, they could move. No pressure to make them move would be applied. Then metaphor used was "they played ball with us . . . kinda helped us out at a bad time" [Again the game metaphor]. Random selection of students was discussed. The Director of Residence and Dining Services explained to me the "exception" of minority students who the University President had ordered guaranteed housing.

"Division updates"--This is an agenda item when each individual reported on his/her division. (This is the subdivision of the unit, not the larger division). Information flow was mentioned as important and how information was "routed around." Especially interesting was the metaphor used to inform staff that applications for RA's, summer employment, etc. needed open communications so "the left hand knows what the right is doing," to prevent "double dipping" and a "boomerang effect." Other very descriptive metaphors were:

"Remember Clover Hollow" - in case of off-campus housing, Clover Hollow contracted to be open August 1st for occupancy, and could not make that deadline; this caused them to house students in hotels. With the many new buildings going up, this was a threat. The director also warned that this could happen to the University, with "250 new beds" being planned (and counted on).

"Meshing"- was descriptive of the concurrent running of summer orientation, special summer programs and summer school. This describes the unit's coordination of housing.

Metaphors were abundant concerning the new dining services head: "he's no-nonsense," but in a meeting he "cracked us up." "A student reported now there were smiles on the server's face." He gave "psychological support." This was his "feeling-out process" and he was "starting strong, because he could always back off." He has a "hands on, physical presence."

Lastly a warning came that Summer '91 , as planned, would be "a killer." Somehow plans had been made which would close all three major dining halls for renovations, etc..

Residential and Dining Programs Meeting #2 1/30/90

Perhaps the clearest example in my data so far of how metaphors reveal the organizational culture and member's feelings about their situation was the second meeting of the Staff of Residential Programs. I kept hearing many metaphors which revealed a frustration with environmental pressures. Being aware of the "open systems" metaphor for organizations, I was able to see what was happening to this group. Basically there was pressure to meet the needs of the university in keeping dormitories filled, not only with students but during the

summer with many groups, (examples of metaphors for groups were "chicken people," "bug people," "extension people," "cheerleaders," "SCHEV people," and others). Additionally, they were to organize to insure maximum utilization of the rooms during the year. However, this group did not yet have information regarding even how much the housing and dining costs were to be this summer, with groups already contracting with them, much less the amount to be charged next year.

A huge amount of coordination is necessary in this unit, as witnessed by the information flow, and the Director of Residence and Dining Services's long range planning (ex., He was the one to recognize the University's playing their rival school for Governor's Day on Thanksgiving weekend, when the university was closed). The unit is caught between external forces in the environment (i.e., people who wish to contract housing) and internal forces in the organization (i.e. setting of prices for rooms; construction schedules, etc.). Although this is an auxiliary function, they have no power to set their prices in a timely manner. Metaphors were clear and abundant on this point:

- a) feeling "some pressure" - to get out room assignments;
- b) "some way to explain our remuneration" - explaining why orientation "RA's" are paid much more than regular RA's;
- c) "what will be housed where" - referring to report on summer housing, (a fantastic job by Winfrey);
- d) "one shot deal" - the plan to allow a large but suspect group to have a conference on campus;
- e) "ugly situation" - when groups have interaction problems, especially when they think they have segregated housing, "convenient to everything;"
- f) "head that off" - prepare for intragroup conflict;
- g) "anticipated" - a key word, often used. It seems everything is tentative in planning. Several variables include contracts, construction, new programs (for instance, a retention program may take space). All in all, the environment for Residence Programs can be categorized as "uncertain;"
- h) "shot in the dark" - situational description of the balance of supply and demand in the planning process;
- i) "behind the eight ball" - where Winfrey feels put when the demand for costs from parents and groups come. Although, this has been "policy" in the past, external pressures and internal resistance produce a tenuous sense of being;
- j) "makes our situation pretty fluid" - reflects the contingency plans which are necessary in order to have "business as normal." The business orientation of this unit was pronounced, as the "business as normal" statement notes.

The Director voiced concerns over the need to "market" housing, in light of the fierce competition in the private sector (external forces). He noted a "price war" and "housing glut" will certainly interact. Perhaps the most unusual, yet effective marketing tool for

Residence was produced by two unit members. They produced "Major Apartment Communities and Rental Properties," which includes a worksheet which allows the person to include all costs, including startup costs. This highlights the "hidden costs." Therefore, marketing and contingency planning are a crucial part of this unit. However, the housing office still "does not have prices for summer conferences, intensive course housing or commencement lodging." Therefore, metaphors such as "situation pretty fluid," "gone as far as we can go," and the descriptive "don't want to stand in August, hat in hand, and say come live with us," are clear with regard to the unit's attitudes, beliefs, and assumptions.

Surprisingly, this unit is most jovial, congenial. Both opening and closing sessions on the agenda had items such as "sharing" and "other" times when topics from golf to community projects are shared. "Other" lasted 20 minutes with lots of humor. There is a family attitude and value here.

The other agenda items are covered equally effectively. Huge amounts of information are covered in this meeting of 14 people, everything from contracts to a "rumored" petition to partition shower stalls. The metaphors aforementioned may also be noted for their situational content. They perceive a situation and infer planning toward solution. It might be expected, given another culture and perhaps another leader, to find an organizational culture more uptight and unhappy, given the present climate. This group centers on information search and solutions to their omnipresent problems.

Residential and Dining Programs Meeting #3 2/13/90

Today I had the rare opportunity to see a group, a part of the Student Affairs Residential Programs Staff, see the proposed new logo for the first time, have it "pitched" to them, and then discuss whether it "represented" their function. A logo is a symbol for an organization. A logo attempts to identify an organization, to relate the way the organization is ("the way it plays" as the designer said), and to draw attention to the organization. The designer produced four different logos, which were not that much different. They were two variations of two themes. An extra copy of one in color, with raised letter parts, was produced also. This was designer's personal favorite. Later, the newly adopted division logo was revealed. The designer did a good job "selling" his logo. It was explained that input was needed, but that the Director of Residence and Dining Services would make final decision. One logo variation had a "flair" look, the other a more corporate look. The discussion took several turns.

The Vice President left. Members had some responses, which were mostly descriptive metaphors that one was liked more than the other, such as:

"Political side" - that one reflected the "organizational structure"; that it included distinctive dining services representations.

"Workable" - one, more complicated, would be hard to copy without professional help.

"One is softer" - the other looked like a "corporate" logo. This was later seen as almost like the Appalachian Power logo.

Other criticisms were "no warmth," "I hate those," and "who likes the old logo. . . I'm not trying to set anyone up." One member noted "I think we've already made the decision," meaning the one the Vice President liked. Another member broke in "Is there anything else to look at?" At this point the group seemed to agree that none was really acceptable. The either/or decision moved to other alternatives and possible restrictions. Another member noted a time pressure for fall mailings and how the university letterhead "went round the horn several times." Other noted "If this is all we have to work from, I don't care." Time and option pressures were noted.

Other alternatives were:

1)Have a logo contest.
2)Have an "outside" person do more (The designer had mentioned earlier his time limitations for more reactions on this logo). Pam felt this may cost \$1500, but input from the staff would "build an identity." Suggestions were to be forwarded to the Director of Residence and Dining Services, who was not at the meeting. Other remarks were: "What about the political issues. . . going inside or out"; "realize [where] we may end" "trap is not to accept a student logo because a student produces it." This discussion saw the majority of the group not questioning until two members began to criticize. One wonders about the politics involved; the Director of Residence and Dining Services will still make the decision. The group, if voted, would reject all the proposed logos. (Later the logo which was slightly favored was accepted by the Director of Residence and Dining Services).

The next agenda item was the 60 Class Day Calendar. Discussion generally followed what was proposed and the ramifications for housing. Several statements revealed the organizational thinking about change. Outside the few pertinent questions of "will we be open Thanksgiving?" and "the rumble of the RA Staff," questions centered on the "Who is making these changes?." One member noted "It's interesting to note we are now moving back to September. It all comes around again." Another member said, "So eventually it'll get set, and it'll be like that." The reply came, "Wouldn't that be nice. In three years we'll have a new president and..[int]..." The questioning member again said "So, it's just peoples choices?" "No it's inputs from faculty and what their needs are and how it balances with

buildings which are supposed to operate twenty-four hours a day." There was a long period of descriptive discussion of the schedule. Finally, summer sessions were discussed. The schedule, with a week break between sessions, were seen to "impact" the unit and would be a "management problem."

My basic interpretation of the unit values is that members generally see the meetings as information receiving time. I thought at one point the logo, which the group would have to "live with," would be accepted without criticism. I wonder why this is true of this group? Are they used to being "impacted on" more than "having impact," which conditions such response. I noted last week the sense of being "behind the eight ball." "Keep your head down" was heard in the meeting, when the designer told a member that he never really asked how the UUSA logo was received. Perhaps the rule is: Move with pressures.

Two examples of reactive approaches to outside pressure: "Survey in response to complaints from staff in one dormitory about the fire alarm system, and have determined modifications will be necessary." "the Commandant's office renovated . . . to promote his recruitment." Most of the functioning of this unit is reactive, due to the external pressure (outside this unit).

Residential and Dining Programs Meeting #4 2/27/90

The key word for Residential programs is information. In each meeting, information is exchanged and, often, incomplete information is given as tentative when further information may be received. For instance, in this meeting metaphors such as "window" was used to describe the time opening when residential programs could act. For instance, longer summer sessions would give a "larger window for repairs" which at present "tax our resources." Another instance, after the Director of Residence and Dining Services finished revealing several alternatives which were suggested to a university committee which would decide on the university committee he ended "film at eleven," meaning the unit would have to wait and see. A greater part of this meeting was the Director of Residence and Dining Services's report from the management council and what the council, university's and state's political scene. He appeared knowledgeable of certain facts, especially quantifiable or statistical data, which tended to give credence to his decisions. (Example, the group solidly backed the university calendar which the management council had severely criticized.) He often made "wait and see" comments after his discourse (i.e. "see how it all washes out"; "your guess is as good as mine," "wait and see," "film at eleven").

I see this leadership style as prudent yet tentative. He was aware, as were the staff, that RP is very dependent on their external

environment, over which they have little control, even in the Division. One minor incident was when a member asked if the Vice President was "open to lobbying" with regard to their opinion. This unit is most typified by the organicism metaphor of organization (Morgan, 1986). Although slightly mechanistic in some senses (i.e., one member noted that a different university calendar would allow them to "recharge their batteries"), the RP unit generally is looking to the environment. This may be due to the fact that it depended heavily on the environment for its income, as it is basically an auxiliary function. As an example, one member reported on student contracts for next year, saying the deadline had just passed. Though there was yet to be a clear count she said "we are anxious to get a clear count to know what (how many) we need to draw in." This is a clear example of the need for inputs into the system, and the dependency upon the environment for it (the "draw in" metaphor reflects Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) orientational metaphor.) A member also reported that if the requests were low there would be a need to "be creative" in getting people (again we see the marketing aspects of student affairs). She also warned that there should be "no discouraging anyone." The constant information flow and the concern with the environmental conditions leads me to summarize the culture here as organicism. It is more uncertain, therefore the thirst for information.

Times, such as those during the data collection, of changing economic conditions (competition in the housing market, institutional cutbacks, etc.) this unit became more stressed and more lean, but more creative in their searching for more information which is shared anxiously. Another example of information quests, is the numerous members who attend conferences. At this meeting five had just returned. There was lots of information seeking and adaptation to changing information.

VITA

Malcolm William Moss was born in Guntersville, Alabama, August 22, 1952. He received his Bachelor's degree in Religion from The University of the South in 1974. He received a Master's degree in World Religion from The Florida State University in 1979. In 1986 he received a Master's degree in Counseling and Student Personnel Services from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

His administrative experience includes admissions, community services, publications and Dean of students at Snead State Junior College in Boaz, Alabama. He was also Director of Admissions at The Patterson School, Lenoir, North Carolina and Assistant Registrar at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. In addition he has taught religion courses at Florida State, The Patterson School, and St. Graduate Intern's Academy.

His cognate is in management and administration, with an interest in organizational development. His training in religion lends to the study of symbolism in organizational settings.

He has published on a variety of subjects from "Metaphysics and Modern Existence: The Philosophy of Vine Deloria, Jr." in St. Luke's Journal of Theology to such articles on academic administration as "Community Services/Community Colleges -- Separate Definitions / Separate Goals?" in the Catalyst and Grading Scales of Virginia High Schools and Admissions Action at Virginia the University: A Research Analysis" in College and University.

He has been on the Marshall County Red the Associate Vice President Board of Directors, Chairman of the Marshall County Democratic Committee, a United Way Volunteer, a facilitator for Upward Bound/Talent Search, and advisor to the Episcopal Young Churchmen. He is a member of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, American College Personnel Association, as well as chairman of the Virginia the University Association for Student Development and an organizing member of the Alabama Community College Dean of Students Association.