STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF RESIDENCE HALL ENVIRONMENTS:

TOPICAL SUITE PAIRINGS VERSUS

STANDARD ROOM ASSIGNMENT PAIRINGS

A Thesis
Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree Master of Arts

by
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Chapter I

Introduction and Statement of Problem

The evolution and emergence of an applied social and behavioral science approach to student personnel work in higher education is a relatively recent and well-documented phenomenon (e.g., see Knefelkamp, Widick, and Parker, 1978; Parker, 1978). Theories of student development are being used as foundations and guidelines for providing student services to an increasing degree. The literature on student personnel work documents a growing awareness of the developmental role (including non-academic dimensions of human growth) which student services organizations have in the university setting (Chickering, 1974a). Residence halls in particular have been a fertile source for the emergence of concrete applications of developmental theory to student needs (Chickering, 1969, 1974a; DeCoste and Mable, 1974).

In spite of the evolution of a scientifically based developmental approach, residence halls continue to present challenges to the student personnel administrator committed to realizing
developmental theory in an applied setting. Though human development theories have many implications for practice, residence halls continue to pose very real problems in many respects. Problems such as student apathy, vandalism, and unresolved roommate conflicts are characteristic of many residence hall environments. Residence hall programming that has little educational potential, is uninteresting, or simply is nonexistent is all too frequently the norm. Opportunities for students to design and feel like they control their residence environment are frequently limited (Schroeder, 1976). Several authors have isolated those elements of a residence hall environment that would promote student satisfaction and development (Chickering, 1969; Schroeder, 1980). These theoretical and practical suggestions cannot serve as a blueprint for implementation in every currently existing environment, however. The varied physical structures, the limitations of available funds, and the unique 'personality' (Chickering, 1969) of the composite resident population of any institution or hall suggest that each residence hall must be assessed individually in order to design developmentally appropriate programs and interventions.

This study involved research on a deliberately designed intervention which attempted to solve some of the problems in a specific residence hall environment. The intervention was based upon
assessments of a specific hall context, and on theory and research on student development, building community and person-environment interaction. The relevant theories and research studies are reviewed in the following sections of this chapter.

**Student Development Theory and Research**

The development of the concept of human growth as one that can be productively studied and understood through the demarcation of qualitatively different stages or positions is attributed to Piaget (1952) with his work with the development of thought in children and to Erikson (1968) with his study of psychosocial development throughout the life-span. In the last decade and a half, many other scholars have offered models that they believe reflect the ways humans grow, develop, or mature. Several of these theorists have written about human development throughout the life-span, from the early adult years into late maturity (Gould, 1978; Levinson, 1978; Sheehy, 1974). Other researchers have focused more specifically on human development during the college years (Chickering, 1969; Coons, 1974; Heath, 1968; Perry, 1970). Of these, the works of Chickering (1969) and Perry (1970) are especially relevant to this study and merit review.

The work of Chickering (1969) is classified with the family of developmental models known as the psychosocial theories (Kniefelkamp, Mielick, and Parker, 1978). Chickering, like the
similar theorists, delineates the issues that are likely to be of particular importance to individuals who are in different stages of maturity. For Chickering, the college student must face and come to terms with issues related to the following vectors of development:

1. Achieving competence—A student develops a sense of competence of three types: intellectual, physical and manual, and social and interpersonal.

2. Managing emotions—

3. Becoming autonomous—

4. Establishing identity—

5. Freeing interpersonal relationships—

6. Clarifying purposes—

7. Developing integrity—

Chickering posits that many students deal with these issues or vectors in common patterns, focusing on the first three in the early college years and the final three as juniors and seniors. The vector of establishing identity is a pivotal one around which the others develop. Chickering believes that how a person deals with the later vectors is in part dependent on his/her success with resolving the issues raised earlier. Thus, it would seem that success with the vectors of achieving competence, managing emotions, developing autonomy, and establishing identity is crucial to later growth and development.

Like other psychosocial theorists, Chickering maintains that
growth occurs in phases of differentiation and integration (1969). Chickering postulates that several important variables including institutional flexibility, institutional size, effective communication, the personality of the individual, and the 'personality' of the environment all influence student growth. For the process of differentiation and integration to occur, the student must be confronted with challenge which upsets his/her emotional/rational equilibrium. S/he must also feel significant support from the environment so s/he might proceed to experiment with new behaviors or ways of thinking.

The relative degrees of challenge and support in the environment influence development in positive or negative ways (Rodgers, 1979). If an environment is unbalanced in favor of challenge or support, development is not facilitated. In one case, too much challenge tends to result in polarization or escape from the environment. In the other case, persons may be satisfied but not challenged to change and develop. A balance of challenge and support seems to facilitate growth.

Perry's work with college students at Harvard has resulted in his major work (1970) which offers a cognitive developmental model of different "positions" of intellectual and ethical ways of making meaning. This nine-position scheme traces the evolution of students' thinking about the nature of truth, knowledge, values, the meaning of life and responsibilities (King, 1978).
In this scheme, students are described as moving from systems of thought that are simple and dualistic in nature to more complex systems that recognize the relativistic nature of knowledge, truth, values, and the formation of personal commitments.

Based on Perry's work, implications have been drawn as to the variables which encourage and threaten growth (Knefelkamp, 1978; Knefelkamp and Corinfield, 1979; Knefelkamp and Sleptiza, 1976; Rodgers, 1979; Schroeder, 1980; Widick and Cowan, 1977, Widick, Knefelkamp, and Parker, 1975). This body of literature also suggests that development occurs in an environment that provides an appropriate balance of challenge and support: "...development is conceived to result from cognitive conflict or dissonance which forces the individual to alter the constructs that he has used to reason about certain situations. It is also recognized that there is a point where challenges become too extreme and the individual's recourse is to retreat or "fixate" at a particular stage." (Widick, Knefelkamp, and Parker, 1975).

Several of these scholars have identified specific environmental elements in the classroom which supply challenge and support in degrees appropriate for the development of students at different levels of growth. Essentially, the literature suggests that there are differences between the types and degrees of challenges and supports needed by students in positions of dualism and those who use relativistic thought. For example, it is suggested that stu-
dents, no matter what their level of intelligence or relative position of development, benefit from a personal class atmosphere but that dualistic students need to experience 1) moderate diversity with a focus on conflicting content and analytic skills, 2) direct experiential learning, and 3) limited degrees of freedom: high structure. Alternatively, relativistic students benefit most from 1) extensive diversity with a focus on intellectual and personal commit- ment, 2) an emphasis on indirect, vicarious learning, and 3) extensive degrees of freedom: low structure (Widick, Knefelkamp, and Parker, 1975). It is postulated that these variables constitute the necessary and sufficient balance of challenge and support to promote development. In each case challenge is the result of the degree of diversity encountered and the type of learning (experiential or vicarious) emphasized. Support results from the degree of structure provided and a personal community atmosphere. In this study, the concept of a balanced challenge/support environment is central.

Community Development

Community provides support and, for some students (e.g. students who reason in dualistic ways), a challenge. The first task of persons concerned with community development is to define their conception of what "community" really is. Definitions for the concept abound. Frequently there are overlans
In definitions even though complete agreement does not exist. Hillery (1950) compared 94 definitions of community and found that "when all of the definitions are viewed, beyond the concept that people are involved in community, there is no complete agreement as to the nature of community!" Even without complete agreement, however, several elements basic to most definitions of community do emerge. The definition of community that emerges from that composite of those elements is that a community is a group of persons engaged in social interaction (as described by Dewey, 1954; Mead, 1937; and Royce, 1913), possessing common interests and goals and using similar means to achieve them, showing concern for and sensitivity to the needs of other group members, and having an interest in the achievement of the goals of their group over all others (Freilien, 1967).

Parsons (1951) noted that for a community to develop, a group must "share a common territorial area for their basis of operations for daily activities." This observation supports the common notion that access to modern transportation has served to disintegrate communities in the United States. However, Kim (1970) argues that it is possible that modern transportation may have eliminated the geographical requirement for community development. Thus, Kim suggests, it is appropriate to refer to a scattered Jewish "community". Kim's point notwithstanding, general agreement seems to suggest the need (or at least the value) of having a defined area in which a community may develop (Audrey, 1966; MacIver and Page, 1947; Martin, 1968).
According to MacIver and Page (1947) another condition for the development of community is that there be a shared community sentiment. MacIver and Page posit three dimensions of this community sentiment, each of which is necessary. First, members of a community must have a feeling of identification (a "we feeling"). This is a sense of common destiny and is found whenever people share common interests. This very similar to Weber's (1947) emphasis on shared feelings between people in a social relationship. He writes, "A social relationship will be called 'communal' if ... the orientation of social action... is based on the subjective feelings of parties... that they belong together." Secondly, according to MacIver and Page, a community must provide members with a "role-feeling" or a sense of having a place or station in that group. Finally, community members must feel a sense of dependency on the group. That is, members must feel as though they can depend on the group for their physical and psychological well-being.

In addition to these requirements, MacIver and Page note that three types of problems or tasks must be mastered for community growth. First, individuals must be socialized. Each community must create and then transmit its unique culture. This includes the development of norms for behaviors and interaction, group values, expressiveness, appreciation of art forms, etc. Next, nature must be mastered. This not only includes the quest for food and shelter in more primitive environments but also speaks to the division of responsibility and wealth.
among group members and to the creating of an environment that is psychologically as well as physically safe. Lastly, MacIver and Page posit that a community must provide some form of social control over individuals who would deviate from group norms. This control can be either formal or informal or both. For all of these tasks demanding community attention the group must develop standard responses so a community member will know what to expect in the form of reward or sanction for behavior deemed appropriate or problematic.

In Brownell's (1950) study of agricultural settings, five features were determined to be essential for a sense of community to develop among members of a group: 1) members must know each other face-to-face, 2) the group must be diversified, 3) the members must act cooperatively among the group (similar to the "we-feeling" described by MacIver and Page, 1947), and 5) the group must be small enough for individuals to know the others in the group as whole-persons, not just as the roles they play. In many ways it seems that Brownell is describing the traditional community that is not surviving in the modern world of transportation and communication technology (Myers, 1974). However, Brownell's observation that, "... we have learned that people can withstand great hardships as long as their traditions are intact," certainly suggests that there is value in determining what is essential about a community "spirit".

The development of the sense of community has also been studied by Royce (1913). He believes that the development of
community depends on the member's "deeds of cooperation". These acts by the individual that further the groups' progress towards previously agreed upon goals. The individual must perform these deeds voluntarily and must be able to observe others performing their "deeds". This observation need not always be face-to-face as Royce believes humans have a great capacity for creating and understanding symbolic meaning and meaningful abstraction. In fact, the development of a sense of community is dependent on individual members realizing that any act would not have the same (or any) meaning if it were not for the interpretation or meaning given to it by the community consensus. Royce clearly believes that within a community there may be, and possibly must be, leading interpreters or makers of meaning. The community is dependent on these individuals to give some organization to experience so it will have a meaning to the group as a whole. Mial and Mial (1961) suggest that, "The struggle to find common meanings is itself an important phase of community development." Finally, Royce believes that the development of a community requires the passage of time. Time is required to give any group a history to which current members can relate and in doing so symbolically extend their life to include that history. This sense of community continuity also allows individuals to symbolically extend themselves into a future they might never experience.
Community in Higher Education

Most of the work done with the development of community has been concerned with actual communities or neighborhoods. However, beginning in the late 1960's scholars began applying the concepts of community development to institutions of higher education. In one study, Wilkes (1968) suggested that there are two types of community at work in colleges and universities. The first of these Wilkes writes is the primary or academic community. This seems akin to the notion of the "community of scholars". That is, the academic community would be composed of students and professors working as colleagues for the achievement of knowledge and truth. These communities are developed, according to Wilkes, in the lecture rooms, the libraries, and the laboratories. The secondary type of community in Wilkes' scheme are developed in the smaller groupings of residence halls, in neighborhoods if students live off-campus, in student unions, and other places where students meet to work and play. The importance of Wilkes' distinction between primary or academic communities and the smaller secondary communities is that the emphasis on smaller units within the institution as the target of community development efforts is legitimized.

In response to the student unrest of the late 1960's, Martin (1968) suggests that smaller units within an institution not only might develop a sense of community, but, in fact, that community must be intentionally developed there in order for modern institutions to remain relevant to students. Martin's plan
calls for the development of "cluster colleges" within the larger institution so that the student will have that smaller more cohesive unit with which he/she can be an important part. Martin points out that, "much of a students' learning takes place outside the classroom through various informal encounters" and notes that as the size of an institution increases so does the anonymity making significant informal encounters less likely. In considering the appropriate size of the unit to be the target of a community development intervention, Martin quotes Max Lerner: "... it is important for the individual to relate to a group small enough for it to be affected by his presence even as it affects him, and we ought therefore to provide the small organic group as the life-core even while we are a part of the big organization." (p. 121). The decision to be made then, Martin suggests, is by what criteria students should be grouped for the community development effort. Students are constantly confronted by the diversity and the enforced pluralism of the university environment so it is all too obvious how they differ from one another. The more pertinent and difficult question is then, "What do we hold in common?"

In his work on building community in an urban university, Shappell (1974) noted that there is a difference between truly "building a community" (in the neighborhood sense) and "building a sense of community." In the university setting there are severeral reasons why the building of a traditional community is not a viable option, not the least of which is the fact that
the student population is often a transitory one. The elements of community that Shappell found that apply to community building in modern universities are as follows:

1. A community must be composed of a group of people who support a common organizational structure and who share common interests.

2. Members of a community must share ownership of material goods (like a living space). This ownership can be psychological if not economical. For example, a group need not actually own a residence hall to feel like it belongs to them.

3. Members must participate in group activities and interact with others.

4. A community must have an identifiable area or space for members to call their own.

5. There must exist a sense of cohesion among the group (again MacIver and Pages's "we-feeling").

6. Small communities within the larger institutional setting must have goals compatible with that larger system.

Given these conditions, a sense of community may develop. That is, Shappell sees these conditions as necessary but not sufficient in and of themselves to promote community development. To further ensure that development Shappell suggests that it is important for each member to be able to have personal needs met while at the same time meeting the needs of the group. This linking of the welfare of the individuals and the group is
an important condition and requires a great deal of trust. Additionally, as others have suggested community development is enhanced when there is leadership that serves to cement together the aggregate parts.

In his seminal work, Chickering (1969) makes note of six conditions effecting development of community and the promotion of student development in higher education institutions.

1) Clarity of institutional objectives and internal institutional consistency -- institutional impact increases as objectives are clarified and as the various units of the institution remain true to those objectives.

2) Institutional size -- as size increases, the opportunity for individual students to actively participate in meaningful experiences decreases. With increased size, functions within institutional units become redundant decreasing student development of competence, identity, and integrity.

3) Curriculum, teaching, and evaluation -- the quality of each impacts student opportunity and growth.

4) Faculty and Staff -- again the quality of institutional personnel determine impact.

5) Student culture -- each institution has a unique student body with unique composit characteristics. This composit "personality" certainly affects such things as the impact of the curriculum, teachers, evaluations, and student-faculty relationships.
6) Residence hall arrangements -- just as institutions have unique student cultures so does each residence hall. Chickering concludes that residence halls impact student development through both the general attitudes and values of the hall and through the close friendships that can develop among residents. The degree to which that hall impacts a student depends on the degree to which it becomes an effective-and-effective community, and the degree to which hall residents become significant reference groups for each other.

Chickering's obvious predilection is that smaller schools more effectively address the developmental needs of students and that residence hall environments are highly influential ones (Chickering, 1969, 1974a, 1974b).

Development of Community in Residence Halls

Chickering's work effectively focuses on community development within an institution as a whole and within the more specific environment of residence halls (1969; 1974a; 1974b). Chickering and others (Brown, 1968; Centra, 1968; Pemberton, 1968) echo Martin's (1968) belief in the importance of the learning occurring through the informal encounters outside the classroom, especially in residence hall contacts. Furthermore, Chickering concludes that life in residence halls can effect the development of competence, integrity, and the freeing of interpersonal
relationships. The degree to which the residence hall group has a positive impact on student development is contingent on that group becoming an effective-and-effective community for the residents. According to Chickering, development occurs when a student meets challenges that require new responses at a time and place where the student is free to give up earlier response patterns and defenses. A residence hall therefore promotes student growth to the extent that the community atmosphere of the hall provides adequate emotional support for the individual to "try on" new responses to diverse stimuli. This, once again, is a reflection of the necessary balance of challenge and support discussed earlier.

Another writer who is convinced that the development of communities in residence halls is essential is Shaw (1974) who maintains that unless residence hall administrators focus on the development of effective groups they lapse into dealing with individuals who are exceptional cases — either exceptionally involved or exceptionally troublesome. Further, Shaw points out that as the size of a group increases, the opportunities for exceptional positive behavior decrease leaving individuals only the option to be exceptionally negative if they have a need for the attention that being exceptional brings. Using the community model, the individual is positively benefited from membership in a healthy group rather than a healthy group developing as a by-product of an aggregate of adjusted individuals. According to Shaw, this is an important difference because under
most circumstances a healthy community will contribute to the growth, development, and maturity of individuals but it does not follow that healthy individuals will always contribute to a well-developed community. In fact, sick groups might develop from an aggregate of healthy individuals (see, for example Golding’s Lord of the Flies).

Shaw’s recommendation then is not increase residence hall staff so they will be able to reach even the non-exceptional residents, but to focus on the development of small communities of manageable size. To facilitate community development Shaw relies on the concepts developed by Audrey (1966).

Essentially there are three dimensions that the environment must provide individuals to encourage community development.

1. Identity -- This is similar to Maclver’s concept of “role feeling”. That is, an individual must feel that he/she plays a significant role within the group. The opposite of identity would be anonymity.

2. Stimulation -- The group must provide an interesting environment that challenges the individual. The lack of stimulation would lead to boredom which is antithetical to community growth.

3. Security -- Individuals must feel safe both physically and psychologically. Audrey’s concept of territoriality is important here. That is, Audrey maintains that people, like other animals, do not feel secure unless they have dominion over their immediate environment. People need some space they can call their own and to which they may retreat when they want to be alone.

Unfortunately, although Shaw has attempted to apply these concepts in developing communities in residence halls at the University of Colorado, he has done little to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention. He has relied on resident
grades and subjective impression of community formation.

Mable, Terry, and Duvall (1977) have offered a residence hall community development model which proports to foster student development and responsibility. Central to their model is the sharing of goals, responsibilities and communication. This sharing creates a condition that stimulates interaction between the individual and the community bringing them closer together while both maintain unique characteristics. The steps that build toward community cohesiveness are identified as: 1) get to know, 2) assessment, 3) goal sharing, 4) skill and resource identification, 5) evaluation and goal setting, 6) responsibility identification, and finally, 7) common understanding.

In a study done at Ohio State University, Cross (1972) attempted to objectively measure the development of a community orientation in a residence hall. In his review of the literature, Cross referred to the parameters of community development delineated by Frieson (1967).

1. A sense of community requires that individuals share a common purpose.
2. The common purpose which provides the base for community must be an authentic purpose.
3. For community to form, an investment of commitment must be made by the individual members.
4. To say that community requires investment which is personal is to suggest that community calls for the risk of making oneself vulnerable.
5. In order to make risk and vulnerability possible, the community experiences safety.
6. For a group to develop and grow in its sense of community, it must have significant responsibility and the authority needed to execute its responsibility.

7. While it is not necessary for a group to be completely autonomous for it to experience community, the members must be able to clearly distinguish the boundaries of their group.

8. For a community to develop, the authority figures are commonly required to give up their assumed roles and their status symbols.

9. For a community to develop and prosper there must be the freest flow of communication among members of the group.

10. For a community to develop there needs to be a sense of election, a personal calling.

11. For a group to experience and practice community, the members also need solitude.

12. For a community to occur in its most profound, most humanizing level, it is required that individuals enter with faith and abandonment.

13. Community is dependent upon time enough for persons to meet and interact and upon physical proximity to heighten the likelihood of meeting in day-by-day affairs.

14. Community is supported when members are cooperatively creating their own rules and laws and when they make arrangements for human relations to be maintained in person rather than by law. (pp. 7-8)

Cross reported significant success in promoting a community orientation in a male residence hall by encouraging the hall residents to make decisions that affect their lives rather than giving that power to the building staff. This design included having the residents deal with interpersonal conflicts directly rather than having the building staff impose solutions. This freed the staff of the role of “chief disciplinarian” allowing
them to function more as facilitators and counselors. In doing so, many of Frierson's (1967) requirements for community development were met.

The work of a final writer, Crookston (1974), deserves review for his work in the conceptualization of community development in residence halls. Crookston focuses on what he calls "Intentional Democratic Communities" which can be content-centered (with the focus on a cognate skill), environment-centered (with the focus on creating or altering the group "atmosphere" in order to promote certain kinds of development or expression), person-centered (with the focus on the individual, building self-awareness, or interpersonal relations, and/or life-planning), or group-centered (with the focus on building a community out of the group).

Crookston has made a careful study of the minimal conditions required to create a sense of community. The elements he believes to be important are:

1. Social Contract--The individual gives up some personal power and in return the community protects individual rights, provides for personal security, and in general promotes the welfare of the individual. By giving up some personal power to the community in a sense the individual and the group become one and the same.

2. Primary Groups--These groups must satisfy the basic human needs of members (belonging, security, affection, acceptance, and adequacy) by creating an environment that allows for behavioral experimentation in a climate where risk-taking is permitted.

3. Shared Goals and Values--Goals are the ends toward which the group directs its energies. The goals need
not be identical for each group member as long as they are symbiotic. Values are the shared beliefs about the nature of things. Again, these may vary from individual to individual as long as the individual values don't conflict with the shared values of the community.

4. Boundaries--These would include identifiable physical, social, and political boundaries that are supportive of the group goals and values.

5. Power--This can come from sources both internal and external to the group. The internal power is inherent in that each member gives up a portion through the social contract.

6. Work--There is a direct relationship between energy output in service of the community and one's commitment to it.

7. Commitment--Commitment is derived from action, from such things as self-disclosure, sacrifice for the welfare of the group, energy output, and the rewards of acceptance and love from the group.

8. Transcendence--This is the realization that the group is more than the sum of the parts, that life in that time and place would be radically different if all of the elements present did not operate as they did.

9. Communion--This refers to a ritualized sharing and acting out of the oneness of the self with the community. This happens in regular community meetings that are for reasons other than business or decision-making. These sessions are both playful and quasi-religious and are very important in the early life of the community for building member identification with the group.

10. Process--The creation of a standard group response to recurrent issues such as member recruitment, socialization, establishment of primary groups, role delineation, data collection and evaluation, system linkage between subgroups and the larger system, and so on.

In addition to these necessary elements of community, Crockston describes stages of community development. These stages
are:

1. Nuclear--the formation of planning groups.

2. Charter--a social contract determining initial expectations, boundaries, controls, and functions.

3. Inclusion--in the two phases of inclusion members are first oriented and then primary groups are formed.

4. Integration--begin functioning as a group instead of just as individual parts.

5. Transference--this key phase ends the probationary period and is a time to take stock, to propose changes in group goals, methods, or leadership, to renegotiate the social contract. In the residence hall setting Crookston believes that this should be as early as November or December.

6. Resolution--getting on with the hard work of achieving community.

7. Renewal--members either agreeing to return or using the skills developed in the community setting with other groups.

In this study, there was an attempt to deliberately facilitate the development of community in university residence halls using selected characteristics from the literature on community. The characteristics used are described in Chapter II. They were drawn from the areas of agreement found among the different viewpoints on the nature of community in the works reviewed in this section of Chapter I.
Environmental Theory and Research

While an understanding of theories of student development and community development are necessary in designing developmental interventions in residence halls, they are not sufficient in many cases. These theories as heretofore reviewed, discuss at length the notion of environments, a concept as of yet not addressed in a specific, definitive manner. When developmental theory suggests that an environment with an appropriate balance of support and challenge is a goal of a developmental intervention, it then becomes imperative to establish a means of conceptualizing and operationally defining the "environment" in order to accurately and appropriately assess the impact of that intervention.

However, just as human development is conceptualized in distinctively different ways by different theorists, environments are subject to a variety of definitions and interpretations. While science is becoming continually more convinced of the crucial nature of the accumulated evidence regarding the role of environments in affecting behavior, it is clear that the creation of environmental measures is grossly retarded in comparison to the development of instruments to measure individual trait characteristics (Mischel, 1968; Wolf, 1965). Nevertheless, there are several distinct environmental assessment approaches in the literature and a brief overview of some of the theories of environment and environmental assessment, particularly in educational settings, will be helpful in investigating the possible parallels between
developmental and environmental theories regarding the definition and identification of environments conducive to human development.

Environments can be conceived in terms of physical and architectural design variables present in a specific setting. Industrial psychology is one field that is becoming increasingly aware of the impact of such variables as heat, light, color, density, noise and lay-out of the work setting on the behavioral outcomes in work efficiency and comfort (Moos and Insel, 1974).

Objective factors in organizational settings provide another avenue for systematic study of human environments. Variables of organizational structure (size, stability, centralization, extent of supervisory control) have direct impact on the behaviors and attitudes of the members of the organization (Porter and Lawler, 1968).

Barker (1968) offers a complex conceptual approach to understanding environments. This approach maintains that regardless of individual differences, people have a tendency to behave in similar ways in specific environmental setting (Walsh, 1973). Barker conceives of environment as behavior settings, which are defined in terms of the standing behavior patterns together with the part of the physical milieu to which the behaviors are attached or associated.

The 'student characteristics' approach to the assessment of academic environments is founded upon an interpersonal
theory of the impact of environments (Astin, 1970). This school asserts that by measuring the typical characteristics of the inhabitants of an environment it is possible to thereby differentiate and classify that environment. One such technique is the sub-cultural approach which attempts to describe the environment in terms of the attitudes, values, behaviors and roles of its inhabitants. Clark and Trow (1960, 1966) and Newcomb et al. (1967) present theoretical approaches that identify attitudinal or behavioral dimensions along which students tend to vary, and define college environments in terms of these inhabitant characteristics. The Environmental Assessment Technique (Astin and Holland, 1961) operationally defines educational environments in terms of the typical characteristics of students based on Holland's (1959, 1966) theory of personality type.

The concept of social learning theory provides a basis for a conceptualization of environments in terms of the exact stimuli present in a setting that produce and maintain particular behavior patterns (Kanfer and Saslow, 1965; Wolpe and Lazarus, 1966). The stimulus approach to the assessment of academic environments defines the environment in terms of the stimuli present which are capable of changing a student's sensory input (Astin, 1970). A stimulus is any behavior, event, or element of organizational structure which can be independently observed, thereby discounting personal characteristics or
the perceptions of inhabitants. The Inventory of College Activities (Astin, 1966) is one method which attempts to assess environments by measuring the presence of four broad categories of stimuli in academic institutions: the peer environment, the classroom environment, the administrative environment, and the physical environment.

In contrast to the approaches heretofore mentioned, there is a school of person-environment theorists that place major emphasis on the inhabitant's perceptions of the environment in attempting to define that environment. One theorist of this perceptual or 'image' approach is Stern (1970) who adopts Murray's (1938) need-press model of person-environment interaction and defines environments in terms of the consensual perception which persons in a given setting have of the activities and events in which they are involved. Pace (1963; Pace and Stern, 1958) has elaborated on this approach and created means of ascertaining these data in educational environments. Pervin (1967, 1968a, 1968b) conceptualized environments solely in terms of the self-reported perceptions of the inhabitants, and he focuses more specifically upon the discrepancies that exist between inhabitant expectations and actual perceptions of the environment. Rather than obtaining the consensual perceptions of all of the inhabitants of the environment, Pervin focuses on each specific individual's perceptions.

In pursuing the application of environmental assessment
techniques particularly to educational settings, the work of Rudolf Moos (1973a, 1973b, 1974, 1976; Gerst and Moos, 1972; Insel and Moos, 1974; Moos and Gerst, 1976; Moos and Insel, 1974; Moos, Van Dort, Smail, and DeYoung, 1975; Smail, DeYoung, and Moos, 1974) is of invaluable assistance. In his latest book, Moos (1979) offers an integrative conceptual framework for understanding the environmental variables in educational settings, and the framework incorporates many of the variables and phenomena heretofore discussed as addressed by other approaches. He discusses the environmental system as consisting of four major domains: the physical setting, organizational factors, the human aggregate, and the social climate. The physical setting includes such factors as the architectural and physical design. Organizational factors are assessed in terms of such dimensions as size, student-faculty ratio, and affluence. The human aggregate involves the characteristics of the students in a particular setting. Characteristics such as age, socio-economic background, ability levels and personality types are considered.

Moos argues that the impact of these three dimensions of the environment is mediated through the so-called social climate. Insofar as the other three variables affect the social climate, they will influence individual student behavior and attitudes. The social climate is a perceptual phenomenon based on descriptions of the environmental ‘press’ by the participants in that setting.
This rationale is similar to that of Pace and Stern (1958) founded upon Murray's (1938) concept of environmental press. This assumption is that the consensus of individuals characterizing their environment defines the social climate, which in turn influences student behavior (Moos, 1979; Small, DeYoung, and Moos, 1974). Moos delineated three major domains of the social climate dimensions which he has found to be common to all of the social settings he and his colleagues have studied (i.e., student living groups, families, work groups, psychiatric wards, prisons and military bases).

These three general categories of the social climate dimensions of a setting are the Relationship dimensions, the Personal Growth dimensions, and the System Maintenance and Change dimensions. Each of these categories has certain aspects or dimensions that fall under their general rubric which are peculiar to the type of setting or environment in consideration. The dimensions characteristic of student living groups will be identified and defined below as conceptualized by Moos (1974).

The Relationship dimensions involve the types and intensities of personal relationships among students and between students and staff within a student living group. The Involvement dimension identifies the extent to which inhabitants of an environment are involved in the group activities, the degree to which they are committed to the group and to each other, and the amount of inter-
action and feeling of friendship in the environment, all according to the perceptions of the residents. The Emotional Support dimension reflects the extent of the inhabitants' concern for each other and the degree to which they perceive that they support each other and sense a degree of support within the environment.

The Personal Growth or Development dimensions involve the opportunities afforded by the environment for self-enhancement. The exact nature of that enhancement is dependent upon the specific setting according to the underlying purpose, goal or 'raison d'être' of that setting. It involves the emphasis in that environment on the maturational, developmental process. For student groups, there are five dimensions within the Personal Growth classification. The Independence dimension identifies the diversity of behaviors allowed within an environment without social sanctions by the other inhabitants. The Traditional Social Orientation dimension reflects the degree to which the inhabitants of an environment perceive a stress on dating, parties, and other 'traditional' heterosexual interactions as opposed to less 'traditional' interactions or activities. Competition is one of the Personal Growth dimensions which addresses the degree to which activities such as dating and grades are seen in a competitive light in the living group.

In a university setting, it is obvious that Personal Growth dimensions must include academic growth or development. Academic
Achievement is a dimension that identifies the extent to which classroom and academic accomplishments and concerns are emphasized in the student living group. Intellectuality addresses the extent to which scholarly, cultural, or artistic activities are characteristic of a living group according to the perceptions of the residents.

The System Maintenance and Change dimensions include those aspects of an environment's social climate which tap information about the structure of the setting, the processes of its functioning, and the potential for change in those processes. The Order and Organization dimension deals with the amount of formal structure or organization characteristic of the student living group. The Student Influence dimension identifies the extent to which the inhabitants of an environment perceive that they control the operation of the environment, enforce the rules and make decisions regarding the structure of the living group. The Innovation dimension addresses the degree to which inhabitants see the environment as one which allows and promotes spontaneity in ideas and behavior.

The apparent parallels between this conceptualization of an environment with the concepts of student development theory are clear. The Relationship dimensions in Moos' scheme identify environmental factors that may provide the support needed for personal development. The System Maintenance and Change dimensions identify some factors that may serve as either supportive
or challenging environmental phenomena.

These social climate dimensions have been utilized by Moos (1974) to differentiate a wide variety of environments. Within academic settings, in addressing student living groups, Moos' social climate dimensions have been shown to differentiate between coed and single sex living units, residence halls and fraternities, environments at denominational and nondenominational colleges, and public and private institutions (Moos, 1979). Moos has also done corollary studies between perceived social climate dimensions and indicators of students satisfaction with the environment (Moos, 1979).

Given this brief overview of the specific dimensions which Moos utilizes in defining, assessing and differentiating environments, there are some concepts he advocates which further illustrate the parallels of this scheme with developmental theory. Moos (1976) discusses five basic assumptions or orientations of the social ecological approach of which his theory is representative. Primarily, this approach attempts to understand environmental impact from the individual's perspective. This is manifested in the methodology which Moos utilizes in assessing and classifying environments wherein he addresses the 'inhabitants' perceptions of that environment.

Secondly, the social ecological approach attempts to synthesize the study of the physical components of environments with that of the social components in order to deal with the essential
unity of the milieu. Thirdly, the social ecological approach emphasizes the adaptation and adjustment of the inhabitants which takes place within the environment. Moos (1976) discusses five conceptions of the mechanisms of environmental impact, a brief outline of which will be helpful in sensing the compatibility of Moos' approach with the developmental concepts heretofore delineated.

A 'stressful' conceptualization of environmental impact is one which sees the environment in an active role in producing stress for the inhabitants, thereby encouraging adjustment and adaptation. A 'limiting' environmental conceptualization portrays the environment as one which constrains or limits what the inhabitants can do or achieve. A 'selecting' concept of environmental impact is Darwinian in nature, asserting that an environment favors certain inhabitants because of some advantageous or desirable characteristics. A 'releasing' environment is one which is conceptualized as having impact insofar as it supports or allows behaviors, adjustments or adaptations to occur. Finally, a 'challenging' environment is one which offers opportunities to the inhabitants, facilitating and stimulating growth within the environment (Moos, 1976).

It is clear that there are definite parallels between this conceptual framework of how environments affect change and that offered by the developmental theorists. Moos posits the 'releasing' and the 'challenging' concepts of environmental impact as
the most positive or desirable of the five models and these seem to correspond to the support/challenge issues discussed previously.

The fourth basic tenet characteristic of the social ecological approach is that there is a practical, applied orientation involved in the approach. Social ecology as a school of environmental theory is one which is explicitly concerned with ascertaining data about environments in order to facilitate and empirically direct change or environmental intervention.

Lastly, social ecology as articulated by Moos has an inherent humanistic value orientation. The approach is explicitly designed to help humankind by seeking to understand the environment and its impact.

Moos' advocacy of the models of environmental impact which are supportive and challenging, his orientation toward using environmental data to develop interventions, and his interest in humanistic values are signs that there is some theoretical compatibility between the social ecological approach toward environments and the human development approach. Moos goes on to discuss some further issues that address the notion of developmental environments to a greater degree.

Moos (1976) discusses some tentative conclusions which he has drawn based upon his environmental research with the social climate scales. Primarily addressing academic settings, Moos concludes that environments which are perceived to be high in the relationship dimensions will have a positive impact on
students, allowing them to feel more secure and more satisfied with the environment. An environment which emphasizes cohesion and involvement and support will have a positive effect on the morale and the mood of the inhabitants. Support in particular is seen by Moos to be of importance in the psychosocial development of students. Lack of support is related to developmental retardation and a higher incidence of health-related problems. Again, these propositions seem to be consistent with the theoretical postulates on challenge/support and the other variables viewed as facilitative of development (see Blocher, 1978; Rodgers, 1979; Widick, Knefelkamp, and Parker, 1975).

Moos also concludes that more objective and/or performance effects may be dependent on a combination of several environmental dimensions, namely supportive relationships, emphasis on specific areas and directions of personal growth, and an orderly and structured setting. In particular, student achievement is apparently fostered by high emphasis on both Relationship and Personal Growth dimensions (Moos, 1976).

Environments in Residence Halls

It is clear that both the developmental literature and the environmental literature emphasize the importance of elements of support and challenge for personal growth to occur. There is an apparent reciprocity in the literature. Theories of student development assert the necessity of a balance of supportive and
challenging elements in an environment in order to facilitate development; theories of environmental assessment, particularly the social ecological school articulated by Rudolf Moos, discuss supportive and challenging environments and suggest their capacities for promoting growth.

In university residence halls, the living environment can by an immensely challenging setting, a mostly supportive setting, or any number of blends in between these two. The establishment of supportive environments within the residence halls is called for when the setting is overwhelmingly challenge oriented, and more challenging environments are needed when the setting is too supportive.

The literature suggests that the university living group is the locus of the most significant experiences in the college lives of students (Dressel and Lehman, 1965; Chickering, 1974b). Some research has attempted to link certain characteristics of student living groups to their differential impact on students (Brown, 1968; DeCoste. 1966; Lozoff, 1968; William and Reilly, 1974). Attempts at modifying residential environments to facilitate development, satisfaction and achievement of students are well documented (Boyer, 1965; Brown, 1968; Chesen, 1969; Davison, 1965; DeCoste, 1966; Elton and Bate, 1966; Kaplan et al., 1964; Madsen et al., 1976; Morishima, 1966; Nasitir, 1963; Schroeder,
1976; Schroeder and Freesh, 1977). The research done on roommate compatibility and relationships (Broxton, 1962; Carter, 1966; Cencra, 1968; Gehring, 1970; Hall and Willeman, 1963; Healey, 1956; Lozier, 1970; Newcome, 1956; Nudd, 1965; Pace, 1964, 1967, 1970; Pierce, 1968, 1970; Severinson, Viviano, and Hopkins, 1970; Volkwein, 1966; Zumwinkle, 1963) seems to provide some evidence tentatively supporting the success of intentionally assigning roommates according to some measure of compatibility or challenge as an intervention affecting student development and satisfaction. Though these outcomes and effects may be conceptualized differently in each study cited, and though each study does not report success, there is nevertheless a history of successful interventions in environmental management in university residence halls.

This growing history of successful milieu management strategies clearly illustrates the positive impact of deliberately designed grouping procedures, whereby residents are assigned to a certain living environment according to specific commonalities or differences thereby laying the groundwork for a more supportive or challenging environment, depending upon which is needed to promote development and community.

Assessment of a Specific Residence Hall Context and Statement of Problem

The Olentangy Area Residence Halls, namely Conaway, Ross.
and Lincoln Houses are located in Morrill and Lincoln Towers on The Ohio State University campus in Columbus, Ohio. Constructed in the late 1960's, the 24-story buildings are designed to house large numbers of students in a minimum amount of ground space. The basic design of the buildings is a suite arrangement with six suites on a floor. Five of these suites have four rooms with four residents in each room. One suite has only three rooms with four residents in each, the fourth room housing the staff person on the floor. Each suite has one common lounge and one bathroom for the 12-16 residents. Each room consists of a study room for the four residents and an adjoining bedroom with two double bunks.

Housing needs faced by the Office of Residence and Dining Halls at The Ohio State University for the 1979-80 year mandated the full occupancy of the Olentangy Towers. Therefore, there were 92 residents on each floor with one para-professional staff person residing on the floor. The nature of the buildings' physical lay-out, their location on campus, the density and heterogeneity of the population and the unfavorable history and reputation of the Area are some of the factors which have resulted in higher rates of damages, mental health referrals, requests to move to other halls on campus (Rodger, 1969). Students seldom choose to live in the Olentangy Towers or return there after their initial year of residency. As
a result, Conaway, Ross, and Lincoln Houses have the highest yearly turnover of all Ohio State halls and therefore house a predominantly freshmen population.

These assessment data on the Olentangy houses suggest that the extremely diverse, heterogeneous and densely populated residence halls are so challenging that they "overload" the challenge/support ratio in favor of too much challenge (Chickering, 1969; Rodgers, 1969, 1979; Widick, Knefelkamp, and Parker, 1975). Such an environment creates undue levels of stress which in addition to the existing pressures of academia and of leaving home perhaps for the first time, can become overwhelming. As previously discussed, the developmental literature suggests that a challenging environment must be counter-balanced by a sense of support in order to be developmental and satisfying. The literature also suggests several ways to establish supportive environments, primarily by community-building efforts and homogeneous grouping strategies.

The suite structure of the Olentangy Houses lends itself readily to the concept of support groups. To provide the residents with suitemates who have similar interests, life-styles, backgrounds or preferences on a variety of dimensions are possible foundations for creating support groups in the suites. According to the literature, if a suite is a supportive environment in the midst of an inherently over challenging one, residents would be more satisfied with the environment.
experience fewer interpersonal conflicts within the suite, and develop within that environment to a greater degree. Concrete behavioral outcomes would be fewer transfers, less damage, greater retention and a generally more positive attitude toward the environment.

The creative challenge facing student personnel administrators in the Olentangy Area Residence Halls thus became how to increase support in an overly challenging environment. The establishment of supportive environments and communities in the halls became a priority. The task at hand was to explore the practical implications of these theoretical suggestions, to investigate the possibilities of applying these theoretical conclusions to actual residence hall environments, to manipulate the environmental milieu of the residence halls in such a way as to have a positive impact on student development and satisfaction through increasing support through community building.

Beginning with the 1979-80 academic year, several milieu management strategies were implemented in three of the Olentangy Area residence halls. This study was an investigation of the impact of one of those strategies: the attempt to develop the sense of community in suites by assigning suitmates together on the basis of similar interests or concerns and then providing programming to match those concerns. These "special interest" units were referred to as "topical suites" and will
be so-called hereafter.
Chapter II

The Topical Suite Intervention

The topical suites were deliberate attempts to develop a sense of community and, therefore, support for residents of the Olentangy Area residence halls. Topical suites consisted of twelve or sixteen persons who voluntarily choose to live together in a suite and to participate in special programming centering on a special, common, topical interest. Initially, 21 such topical suites were advertised (see Appendix A). Ultimately there were sixteen topical suites formed, involving thirteen different topics. Soon after the beginning of fall quarter the Stereo topical suite was eliminated from inclusion in this study. For further discussion of this point see the Subjects section of Chapter V. The fifteen topical suites involved in this study are listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male Topical Suites</th>
<th>Suite Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Career Development</td>
<td>1700 Conaway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Guitar</td>
<td>640 Ross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Leadership Development</td>
<td>1630 Conaway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Outdoor Sports</td>
<td>1130 Ross</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

42
Each suite involved participated in special programming on their topic, and each shared in a common process community design. From the literature on community, the following characteristics were used to implement "community" in each topical suite:

1. voluntary association on the basis of an interest in a topic area,
2. the existence, therefore, of a common shared interest,
3. action, as a group, on the shared interest, by all who volunteer,
4. processing the meaning of the action to the participants as soon after an action as possible,
5. a negotiation of conditions for living together,
6. deviant persons are confronted by and before community members, and they are asked to participate with the group or to leave the community and move to another suite,
7. a special physical space where members live and meet,
8. a written and verbal contract for all the above is created by the members,
9. small size, and
10. a facilitator who helps participants do all of the above.

A case description of one suite's community life for a part of Autumn Quarter is presented below as an illustration of how the characteristics operated in the topical suite.

The Outdoor Sports Suite

The male outdoor sports suite is located on the eleventh floor of Ross House. During the first week of Autumn Quarter the Resident Advisor (RA) of the floor asked for the suite members to meet in their suite lounge as a group to discuss what the year ahead of them might be like. During this meeting the RA introduced herself and asked each of the men to introduce themselves both to the RA and to the suite members they did not already know. Following this two points of business were discussed. First, as in all of the suites in the Clantony Area, the suite as a group was led in the negotiation of their suite contracts (see Appendix E). Afterward, the RA led a discussion and brainstorming session about the kinds of outdoor activities in which the suite members would like to participate for that quarter. Many ideas were discussed and the group ultimately agreed to invite the female outdoor sports suite on a weekend camping trip to a nearby state park. From the group a committee including the RA was designated to approach the women's suite with the invitation and to begin making plans for the trip.
The invitation was delivered to and accepted by the women's suite. A planning committee from that group was also designated.

These planning committees met several times with both RA and senior staff advisors, reporting back to their suites whenever significant decisions were made. As arrangements became clearer specific responsibilities were delegated to individual suite members so as many people as possible had a role in planning and preparing for the trip. This activity was designed not as a strenuous outing demanding a lot of camping experience and skill, but as an opportunity for participants to get to know each other better. In addition, this trip was to serve as a chance for participants to assess everyone's interests and skill levels so that more strenuous trips could be planned for the future.

The camping trip itself served as an excellent community building activity. Almost everyone from both suites participated and the group was accompanied by two RAs and a senior staff member. Via delegation of responsibility for meal preparation, clean-up, making and breaking camp, and so on, group members learned to depend on others to get things done so that wilderness survival was a possibility. Each day a hiking trip was planned. The trips were to be planned as a group and everyone was expected to participate. Responsibility for carrying water and food for the mid-day meal was shared by all.

At one point as the group was preparing for a day's hike, it was noticed that one of the men had gone off hiking by himself with-
out having discussed his plans with anyone in the group. He did this in spite of the agreement that everyone had made to participate in daily activities as a group. When the group reconvened to prepare for the evening meal, the man who had gone off on his own returned and was confronted by the group. Once again it was made clear to both that man and the entire group that the firm expectation was for everyone to participate in activities as a group and that exceptions to this should be negotiated with the group ahead of time.

While out hiking one day one of the men in the group slipped, twisting his ankle so badly that he was unable to walk. The mishap occurred at a point when the group was in a valley about two miles from the nearest road or telephone. This unfortunate circumstance required the group to plan and work together closely in order to carry the injured man out of the valley. Several members of the group were sent ahead to get transportation ready while the rest of the group helped carry the injured man. Everyone left behind helped with the carrying and it became quite evident that the group was willing and able to perform a difficult task through cooperation. The accomplishment of that task proved to be central to conversation that evening as the group celebrated its success.

This camping trip ended on Sunday afternoon as the group broke camp and headed back to campus. Conversations on the trip back and at the evening meal in the Morrill Tower commons focussed on the events of the preceding days. These conversations provided for
some processing of the experiences and began the process of meaning making for the suite members.

It is postulated that several of the elements characteristic of community development are a part of the experience of the Outdoor Sports suite described above. The negotiation of a contract for living together, the planning, participation in and processing of significant group experiences, and the calling to judgment group members who did not meet group expectations are all elements the literature suggests help develop a sense of community.

This case description is to serve as an example of how characteristic elements of community development were operationalized in one topical suite. The common interest of each of the other topical suites was unique demanding a unique approach. The process of community development described here was shared with the other topical suites and as such may be appropriately generalized to the community development of the others.
Chapter III

Methodology

General Procedure

To assess the effect of the topical suite intervention on resident environment perceptions, six groups were compared. These groups are as follows:
1) Topical suites
2) Standard suites
3) Male topical suites
4) Female topical suites
5) Male standard suites
6) Female standard suites

Subscales of the University Residence Environment Scale (URES; Moos and Gerst, 1974) were used to define and measure different elements of resident perceptions of the environment.

Subjects

The subject sample for this study was drawn from all the new residents who were assigned to Lincoln House, Ross House, and Conaway House in the Olentangy Area Residence Halls at The Ohio State University beginning in the Autumn Quarter of 1979.
All the new residents were mailed a letter which described projected topical suites (see Appendix A). They were invited to live in such a suite with other students who shared a common interest in a given topic and who were willing to commit themselves to participate in activities and programs related to that topic. Initially, there were 460 students who asked to be assigned to a topical suite, including 247 males and 213 females. Ultimately, as many suites as possible (with a maximum of 16 persons of the same sex in a suite) were formed. Of the 238 persons who were assigned to topical suites, 141 were males and 97 were females. A summary of the topical suites and their location in the Olentangy Area can be found in Appendix B. The students who returned topical suite requests but who were not assigned to a topical suite (either because the suites of their choice were already filled by the time they returned their request or because not enough persons indicated an interest to create a suite on that topic) were assigned to suites by the standard process.

Two limitations should be noted here. First, although each of the topical suites were filled at the beginning of Autumn Quarter the membership changed slightly due to residents transferring to other halls or because some residents left school altogether. At the beginning of each subsequent quarter attempts were made to refill these suites by the same process used to fill the suites originally; that is, a letter
of introduction was sent to all incoming students assigned to
the Olentangy Area asking if they would be interested in
participating in a topical suite. Because of these changes
in group membership not all of the persons who were in the
suites at the time of the Winter Quarter instrumentation
sessions, the results of which this study is a report, were
the original residents.

Secondly, early in Autumn Quarter personality clashes
and behavioral problems were noted in the Stereo topical suite.
Additionally, the group expressed very little enthusiasm for
any programming suggestions relating to their supposed common
interest, i.e. stereo equipment. Given those problems the
Stereo suite was dissolved as such. The suite members were
moved to different suites in the halls of the Olentangy Area.
The suite was then filled with new residents who had not
expressed an interest in a topical suite. Thus the number of
topical suites was reduced to 15 and no data was obtained on
the Stereo topical suite. See the limitations section of
Chapter V for further discussion of these points.

At the outset of Autumn quarter, 1979, subjects in the
topical suites and in randomly selected standard suites were
asked to participate in a study of suite life in the Olentangy
Area Residence Halls. The standard suites were randomly selected
given the following controls: a) two male suites and two
female suites per house in the Olentangy Area and 2) no two
suites from the same floor. Each individual was given an Introductory Statement Form (see Appendix C) and had it read and explained to him/her by a staff member of the Olentangy Area at a scheduled meeting of the suite residents.

Each individual was given a Consent Form (see Appendix D) to sign if he or she chose to participate in the study. It was made clear that each individual was free to withdraw from the study at any time by notifying Dr. Robert F. Rodgers. It was explained that the results of all instruments and questionnaires were to be kept confidential; each completed instrument was to be kept in a locked file in the Olentangy Area Office to which only staff members coordinating the study had access.

In response to subjects' concerns and interests in being made aware of the results of the various elements of the study, information sessions were scheduled for the end of the academic year for all those interested. Such sessions explained in more detail the purpose of the study, the nature and purpose of the instruments, and the study outcomes.

Those individuals who chose to participate in the study were administered the URES instruments in suite meetings held in the Winter Quarter of 1980. The suite meetings were held in the suite lounges in the residence halls. A staff member met with the suites, reviewed the Introductory Statement form, discussed consent concerns, and then administered the instruments. A total of 177 residents agreed to participate. Of that number,
107 were from topical suites and 70 were from selected suites.

Research Design

The research design for this study was quasi-experimental (Campbell and Stanley, 1963) due to the inability to control some variables in the field setting of the Olentangy Residence Halls. The types of variable manipulations which are both feasible and congruent with these residence hall settings is limited. While attempts were made to randomize subject selection, there probably were differences in the floor staff persons who interacted with suites and in the programmatic efforts which took place within the suites. Accordingly, this study employed a design composed of several kinds of experimental groups (topical suites) and several comparison groups (the standard suites). The treatment variable was the attempt to create a sense of community within a suite environment composed of persons self-selecting to participate in activities related to a given topic throughout the academic year.

Independent Variables

Topical suites: Topical suites were defined as suites where everyone assigned to the suite self-selected to participate in activities related to a topic of interest and to live in a suite with others who made the same commitment. In this
study there were fifteen such topical suites. A complete list of the topics and locations of these suites can be found in Appendix B. Briefly the treatment process used in each topical suite includes:

a) Negotiation of activities to be accomplished mutually at the same time over the period of one quarter, and then renegotiated at the beginning of each succeeding quarter;

b) Negotiation of a contract for living together (see Appendix E);

c) Processing reactions to and learnings from each activity;

d) Involvement of faculty and/or staff on occasion in the activity and the processing;

e) Staff encouragement of and monetary support for topical programming and other programming which the residents desire for the suite.

Standard suites: Standard suites were defined as suites where everyone was assigned to the suite through the normal or standard process and no special programming was planned for the academic year. During 1979-1980, the standard process began with the assignment of students to a building and an environment (e.g. coed, non-coed, engineering, etc.) by the Contracts and Assignments Office of Residence and Dining Halls. This assignment was based on information submitted by
the students on an Assignment Preference Form used in the Ohio State residence hall system, and the availability of space in the requested environment. Then, students were assigned to suites based upon preferences for smoking, drinking, study habits or previous friendships, all such information being derived from the Assignment Preference Form. Briefly, the process to be used in a standard suite includes:

a) Negotiation of a contract for living together (see Appendix E),

b) Staff encouragement of and monetary support for suite level programs of the students' choice.

Dependent Variables

The dependent variable for this study were defined as the ten subscales of the University Residence Environment Scale (URES) developed by Moos and Gerst (1974). A description of the content of the subscales can be found below and in Appendix F.

The University Residence Environment Scale

In order to assess the social ecological climate of the Topical and Standard suites, the residents were asked to complete the URES. The conceptual basis for this instrument is grounded in Moos' theory of social ecology (see Chapter I). This instrument is a 100 item questionnairie in a true-false
format. Respondents indicate whether or not a statement is true or false of their living group. The results offer a consensual profile of the living group's perception of the social climate on each of the following salient dimensions: Involvement (Inv), Support (Sup), Independence (Ind), Traditional Social Orientation (TSO), Competition (Com), Academic Achievement (AA), Intellectuality (Int), Order and Organization (OO), Student Influence (SI), and Innovation (Inn). Appendix F is a list of the ten subscales with a brief description of the scale and a sample item from the instrument pertaining to that subscale.

Evidence indicates that the URES successfully discriminates among student living groups at different campuses as well as among living units at one campus. It also significantly discriminates among different living units in the same building or residence hall (Gerst and Moos, 1972; Small, DeYoung, and Moos, 1974). The URES also describes dimensions of the environment which have been shown to relate to differential impact on students (DeYoung, 1975; Gerst and Sweetwood, 1973; Moos, Van Dort, Small, and DeYoung, 1975). Moos and Gerst (1974) document the reliability and validity studies of the URES.

This study was part of a larger study of the topical suites. Other dependent variables were used in the larger study. These included a study of the developmental differences
between persons in Topical and Standard suites in terms of Chickering's (1969) developmental actors and either Perry's (1970) intellectual or Kohlberg's (1971) moral development. In addition, satisfaction comparisons were made using rates of damages, involvement in discipline cases, mental health referrals, and renewal of contracts.
Chapter IV

Results

Residents' perceptions of the social climate of their environments as assessed by the URES were compared in several ways. The groups being compared are as follows:

1) Topical suites as a whole and standard suites as a whole;
2) Male suites as a whole and female suites as a whole;
3) Male topical suites and male standard suites;
4) Female topical suites and female standard suites;
5) Male topical suites and female topical suites;
6) Male standard suites and female standard suites;
7) Male topical suites and female standard suites;
8) Female topical suites and male standard suites;

For the purpose of analysis, the hypotheses of this study are presented below in null form:

1) There are no significant differences on the ten subscales of the URES between the topical suites and the standard suites;
2) There are no significant differences on the ten subscales of the URES between male suites (as a whole) and female suites (as a whole);
3) There are no significant differences on the ten subscales for the URES between the male topical suites and the male standard suites;  
4) There are no significant differences on the ten subscales of the URES between the female topical suites and the female standard suites;  
5) There are no significant differences on the ten subscales of the URES between the male topical suites and the female topical suites;  
6) There are no significant differences on the ten subscales of the URES between the male standard suites and the female standard suites;  
7) There are no significant differences on the ten subscales of the URES between the male topical suites and the female standard suites;  
8) There are no significant differences on the ten subscales of the URES between the female topical suites and the male standard suites.  

The data obtained from the URES scores was tested to determine the existence of significant differences between the mean scores of the groups mentioned above. A series of analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests were performed as a test for significance (Kennedy, 1978). When appropriate, post hoc t-tests for single comparisons or Scheffe and modified Least Squared Differences procedures were used to determine the specific
group differences responsible for the initial indication of significance in the ANOVA. Whenever possible the more conservative Scheffe procedure was the one reported in this study.

Bartlett's test (Kennedy, 1978) for heterogeneity of variance is widely used and is applicable to research designs with unequal sample sizes. It has been shown that Bartlett's test is quite sensitive to non-normality (Kennedy, 1978).

It has also been shown, however, that departures from normality to which Bartlett's test is sensitive have little effect in altering the probability of committing Type I error in the analysis of variance. This is true even when sample sizes are not equal (Kennedy, 1978).

It seems that the robust ANOVA should be trustworthy with this data. Nevertheless, Bartlett's test was performed for each oneway comparison on each subscale of the URES. It should be noted that these tests indicate that according to Bartlett's test, the homogeneity of variance is violated only in one comparison on one subscale of the URES (the comparison of the male and female topical suite on the subscale of Competition). In all other comparisons the assumptions of homogeneity are beyond question according to Bartlett's test.

The report of the results of the statistical tests that follows is organized by the URES subscales. In each section reporting on a subscale, all of the intergroup comparisons
Involvement

On the social climate dimension of Involvement (Inv), the comparison of group means on the URES resulted in significant differences between topical suites and standard suites (p<.000; see Table 1). By consulting Table 2 it can be seen that the mean of the topical suites is higher. Significant differences were also found in the comparison of male and female suites (p<.01; see Table 1). Table 3 indicates that women reported feeling more involved than men. The test for interaction effects of these two variables (suite type by sex) did not yield significance (Table 1).

The oneway analysis of variance performed on the group means between male topical, female topical, male standard, and female standard suites resulted in significance at the p<.0003 level on the Involvement subscale (see Table 4). The post hoc Scheffe procedure indicated significant differences (p<.05; see Table 6) between the male topical and the male standard suites as well as between the female topical and the male standard suites. Reference to Table 5 shows that the male standard suites had the lowest reported group mean which indicates that the male and female topical suites reported significantly higher scores. The differences in group means between the other comparisons performed did not reach the .05 level of significance.
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Table 6

Scheffe post hoc Comparison Matrices
For URES Subscales

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| GROUP 2 | Female topical suites |
| GROUP 3 | Female standard suites |
| GROUP 4 | Male standard suites |

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<td>4 3 1 2</td>
<td>4 3 2 1</td>
<td>4 1 3 2</td>
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<td>3 2 1 4</td>
<td>4 3 1 2</td>
<td>1 4 3 2</td>
<td>4 3 2 1</td>
<td>2 3 1 4</td>
<td>(*) denotes pairs of groups significantly different at the p&lt;.05 level using the Scheffe post hoc procedure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Support

The analysis of variance performed on the group means by sex and by type of suite (topical and standard) resulted in a significant interaction effect ($p < .006$; see Table 1) on the URES subscale of Support (Sup). Strong significance was also found in the comparison of topical and standard suites ($p < .002$) and in the comparison of male and female suites ($p < .000$; see Table 1).

The one-way ANOVA performed on the four groups of male topical, female topical, male standard, and female standard suites resulted in significance ($p < .0000$; see Table 4). The post hoc Scheffe procedure indicated significant differences ($p < .05$; see Table 6) between female topical and male standard suites, female and male standard suites, and male topical and male standard suites. The strong increase in the male topical group means over the male standard suite means with no corresponding significant difference in the female topical suites would seem to account for the significant interaction effects (see Table 5).

Other comparisons resulted in statistical insignificance.

Independence

A significant interaction effect ($p < .002$) was found in the ANOVA comparing type of suite (topical and standard) by sex (see Table 1) on the Independence (Ind) subscale of
the URES. Strong significance was also discovered between male and female suites (p<.000; see Table 1). Reference to Table 3 shows that the male suite mean was the higher of the two.

The oneway ANOVA comparing male and female topical and male and female standard suites resulted in significance (p<.0000; see Table 4). The post hoc Scheffe procedure indicated significant differences (p<.05; see Table 6) in the following comparisons: female standard and male standard suites, female topical and male standard, and male topical and male standard. Of these groups the male standard suites reported the significantly higher means on the Independence subscale (see Table 5). As in the comparison on the Support subscale the significant movement seems to have occurred in the male topical suites which would explain the significant interaction effects reported above.

Other comparisons resulted in insignificance.

Traditional Social Orientation

Group means of topical and standard suites on the Traditional Social Orientation (TSO) as assessed by the URES were compared but were not found to differ significantly from each other (see Table 1). The comparison of the means of male and female suites also resulted in insignificance. No significant interaction
between the variables of suite and sex were found.

In the analysis comparing male topical, female topical, male standard, and female standard suites the differences between means was significant (p<.0055; see Table 4). The post hoc Scheffe procedure (p<.05; see Table 6) indicated significant differences between the male topical suite means and the female topical suite means. The less conservative modified Least Squared Difference (LSD) post hoc procedure (p<.05) indicated significance between the male and female topical suites and between the male topical and female standard suites as well. Table 5 indicates that the male topical suite mean is the lowest of the four being compared, suggesting that that group perceived less TSO in their environment. Other comparisons resulted in insignificance.

**Competition**

An analysis of variance of the group means of type of suite (topical and standard) by sex on the URES subscale of Competition (Com) resulted in significant difference only in the comparison by sex (p<.000; see Table 1). Male suites reported significantly higher amounts of perceived competition than did female suites (see Table 2). No significant interaction effects resulted.

The oneway ANOVA performed comparing male and female topical suites by male and female standard suites resulted
in significance (p<.0001; see Table 4). Both types of male
suites (topical and standard) reported significantly higher
group means on the subscale of Competition than both types
of female suites (topical and standard) according to the Scheffe
post hoc procedure (p<.05; see Table 6). Other comparisons
resulted in insignificance.

Academic Achievement

Table 1 shows that on the URES of Academic Achievement
(AA) an analysis of variance of type of suite (topical and
standard) by sex resulted in a statistically significant inter-
action effect (p<.06). There was additionally a significant
difference in the comparison of topical and standard suites
(p<.013) with the topical suite means the higher of the two.

The ANOVA performed comparing male topical suites by
female topical suites by male standard suites by female standard
suites resulted in significance (p<.0107; see Table 4).

The Scheffe post hoc procedure indicated that both male and
female topical suites reported significantly higher Academic
Achievement as a part of their social climate than the male
standard suites (p<.05; see Table 6). Reference to Table
5 would suggest that the significant interaction effect reported
above might be explained by the dramatically higher means
of the male topical suites compared to the male standard suites,
keeping in mind that the differences between the female topical and
standard suite means did not approach significance (see Table 5 for group means).

Other comparisons resulted in statistical insignificance.

**Intellectuality**

The comparison of group means of type of suite (topical and standard) by sex on the social climate dimension of Intellectuality (Int) resulted in a significant difference between types of suites (see Table 1). Table 2 indicates that the topical suites reported a higher perceived level of Intellectuality than did standard suites. No significant differences resulted in the comparison by sex or in the comparison for interaction effects.

The oneway ANOVA comparing male topical, female topical, male standard, and female standard suites resulted in strong significance ($p < .0000$; see Table 4). The *post hoc* Scheffe procedure indicated significant differences between male topical suites and two other groups: the male and female standard suites ($p < .05$; see Table 6). The less conservative modified Least Squared Difference (LSD) *post hoc* procedure indicated significant differences ($p < .05$) between the groups indicated by the Scheffe and between female topical and male standard suites as well. Table 5 indicates that topical suites (male and female) reported a much higher perceived social climate of Intellectuality than did the standard suites again supporting the results.
indicated in the preceding paragraph.

Other comparisons resulted in statistical insignificance.

Order and Organization

On the URES subscale of Order and Organization (OQ) an analysis comparing type of suite (topical and standard) by sex resulted in significance between suite types ($p < .000$) and between male and female suites ($p < .001$; see Table 1). The test for interaction effects did not result in statistical significance. Reference to Tables 2 and 3 show that the topical suites have a higher mean than the standard suites. The female suites report higher perceived levels of Order and Organization than do the male suites.

Statistical significance ($p < .0000$) in the oneway ANOVA performed on the male and female topical and male and female standard suites can be seen noted on Table 4. The post hoc Scheffe procedure indicated significant differences ($p < .05$; see Table 6) between male topical and male standard suites, between female topical and female standard suites, and finally between female standard and male standard suites. Table 5 shows that the female topical suites reported the highest perceived degree of Order and Organization with male topical suites reporting the second highest. Male standard suites had the lowest mean.

Other comparisons resulted in statistical insignificance.
Innovation

No comparisons of the data on the URES subscale of Innovation (Inn) yielded statistical significance at the $p < .05$ level.
Chapter V

Summary and Discussion

The statistical analysis reported in Chapter IV were performed in order to assess the value of the "topical suite" intervention as a means for increasing environmental support through community building in the Olentangy Area Residence Halls. Those results are discussed in this chapter in terms of the group comparisons performed (topical and standard suites, male and female suites, male topical and male standard suites, female topical and standard suites, male and female topical suites, male and female standard suites, male topical and female standard suites, and female topical and male standard suites). This discussion includes limitations of the study and implications for future research and practice.

Comparison of Topical and Standard Suites

The comparison of URES means from topical suites and standard suites resulted in statistical significance on six of the ten URES subscales (Involvement, Support, Academic Achievement, Intellectuality, Order and Organization, and
Student Influence). Moos and Gerst (1974) report that those living units with more emphasis on the Interpersonal Relationship dimensions of Involvement and Support, and to a lesser degree on Intellectuality, tend to feel less negative affect, report having more friends in their suite or hall, feel "more positively about the architectural characteristics" of the hall, and are more likely to want to return to the hall the following year than are units with lower scores on these scales. In each of these cases the topical suites had significantly higher group means than the standard suites. This would suggest then that the topical suite intervention did indeed serve to increase a sense of community and satisfaction as was hoped. Additionally, given the pre-intervention assessment of the Olentangy Towers as environments that are heavy on challenge and lacking in support, the significant differences on the Support subscale would suggest that the topical suite intervention makes a positive contribution toward correcting that imbalance. This suggests that the topical suite intervention not only increased resident satisfaction with their environment but also provided a social ecological climate in which a student might be expected to grow in the psycho-social or cognitive-developmental sense (Middick, Knefelkamp, and Parker, 1975). Studies examining these questions are in process.

Topical suites reported significantly higher scores on the Intellectual Growth dimensions of Academic Achievement.
and Intellectualy than did the standard suites. It would seem from this data that the topical suites support a social climate that promotes intellectual development. This might be explained by the fact that these residents, being placed together because they share a common interest, early in the school year establish the norm of serious discussion on the topics of interest. This norm of serious discussion may then carry over into other subjects of interest providing for a general climate of intellectuality. It could also be the case that the programming intentionally designed and implemented in attempts to involve the topical suite residents in processing their shared experiences, impacted this dimension. It might also be the case, however, that the type of person who requested to live in a topical suite is more intellectual or achieving in academics than those who did not request these suites and therefore got assigned to the standard suites. See the Limitations section of this chapter for a further discussion of this point.

The results reported in Chapter IV also indicate that residents of topical suites perceive significantly higher levels of Order and Organization and Student Influence in their social ecological environment than do their peers in standard suites. It could be that because building staff delivered special interest programming to these suites in an attempt to involve the suite members that the residents not only felt that their interest was worthwhile and that they were thought to be important, but that
they also felt like they could control and predict their environment more so than the standard suite residents.

In general it seems that the experience of residents of topical suites was a comparatively positive one. They not only felt more involved and supported than their standard suite peers, they also reported a stronger emphasis on academics and intellectual. They additionally felt that their environment was a more ordered one and one in which they exercised more influence than did standard suite residents. Although the mean differences between topical and standard suites neared the significance level on the Traditional Social Orientation subscale (p < .074) significance was not reached on that or the other three URES subscales (Independence, Competition, and Innovation).

Comparison of Male and Female Suites

Significant differences resulted from the comparison of male and female suites on five URES subscales (Involvement, Support, Independence, Competition, and Order and Organization). Additionally, significance was approached on the subscale dimensions of Traditional Social Orientation (p < .065) and Academic Achievement (p < .083). These results are for the most part consistent with the differences reported by Moos and Gerst (1974). In both this study and the work of Moos and Gerst, women reported higher levels of interpersonal support and involvement, lower independence, less competition, and a stronger emphasis on
culturally valued behaviors than their male counterparts. These results are also supportive of the "conventional wisdom" about the differences between male and female residents "...inasmuch as women's dorms are seen as having more interpersonal and socially traditional concerns while men's dorms deemphasize these qualities" (Moos and Gerst, 1974). The reported perceptions of the women's suites as being higher in Order and Organization might also have been expected based on the cultural stereotypes of women as being more likely to have had experience at "looking after" their home environment prior to arriving at college. However, that same "conventional wisdom" might have led us to expect male residents to place a higher emphasis on academics whereas we find that the difference in means is almost significant in the opposite direction.

Interaction Effects (Comparison of Type of Suite by Sex)

Significant interaction effects between the comparison of suite (topical and standard) and sex resulted on three URES subscales: Support, Independence, and Academic Achievement.

As was explained in Chapter IV, the significant interaction effect on the subscale of Support seems to have resulted from the extreme difference found between the mean of the male topical and male standard suites. This result suggests that for men the topical suite intervention did a great deal for raising their perception of environmental support. The significant interaction
of type of suite (topical) and sex (male) explains more of
the difference than do either of the two variables independently.
The standard male suites reported quite low levels of Support
in their environment so that even though the mean of the male
topical suites does not approach that of either the female
topical or standard suites, the difference is enough to result
in significance. The differences between the types of female
suites is minimal so the significant difference between the
male topical and standard suites stands out. It may be the
case that women came to the Olentangy Towers offering and
receiving more support and that this is not the case for men.
This could explain why the topical suite intervention seems
to have effected only male suites. On the other hand, it
could be the case that the men who requested the topical suite
living option were those who offer and receive more support.
See further discussion of this point in the limitations section
of this chapter.

The results of the comparisons of group responses on
the subscale of Independence resulted in significant differences
between the male standard suites and the three other types
of suites: male topical, female topical, and female standard.
As was the case on the Support subscale, the critical difference
seems to be found in the comparison of the male topical and
standard suites. There was no significant difference between
female topical and standard suites which makes the difference
between the male topical and standard suites seem more pronounced. According to Moos and Gerst (1974) male halls typically have higher scores on the Independence subscale. This would suggest that the topical suite intervention serves to modify the perception of independence in the environment for men but not for women. It could be that women come to the towers with more similar backgrounds, experiences, and expectations for peer behavior than do men, thus resulting in a lower Independence mean for women in general. With men, on the other hand, it would seem that the population in standard suites arrive and live expecting and allowing great diversity in the behavior of their suitemates. Men who choose to live in topical suites then either are different from the standard suite population prior to their arrival, or respond to the intentional community building efforts directed towards the topical suites. Of course a combination of both of these explanations could factor into the significant differences reported on the Independence subscale.

Finally, on the subscale of Academic Achievement it would appear that the significant interaction effect was the result of a dramatic difference in group means for the male suites (topical compared to standard) compared to the relatively constant female scores. Women in general reported a relatively strong emphasis on Academic Achievement whereas the men in the standard suites perceived suite emphasis on Academic Achievement.
to be quite low. The men in the topical suites however reported an even higher emphasis on this dimension than did the women. Again, the explanation for this finding might be that the men in topical suites differ from the norm on this dimension prior to their arrival, that they have been affected by the intervention itself, or that an interplay of these factors has occurred. (See limitations section of this chapter.)

Comparison of Male Topical, Female Topical, Male Standard, Female Standard Suites

As was reported in Chapter IV the four group comparison of means (male and female topical and male and female standard suites) resulted in significance ($p < .05$) on nine of the ten URES subscales (Involvement, Support, Independence, Traditional Social Orientation, Competition, Academic Achievement, Intellectuality, Order and Organization, and Student Influence). Three of these (Support, Independence, and Academic Achievement) were discussed in the preceding section. The others are discussed here.

On the URES subscale of Involvement significant differences were reported between the topical suites (both male and female) and the male standard suites. Although the group means were significantly higher for the topical suites (both male and female) the topical suite intervention seems to make a difference with the male group. It would seem that even without the
benefit of living in a topical suite, women in the Olentangy Area perceive more environmental involvement than their male peers. However, it is the topical suite environment that seems to make both male and female residents more involved to a significant degree. It seems that the staff efforts directed at getting topical suite residents involved in with each other using their topical interests as a vehicle was successful.

Using the modified Least Squared Differences post hoc procedure on the scores of the Traditional Social Orientation subscale, significant differences were found between the means of male topical suites and two other groups: female topical and female standard suites. Previous research (Moos and Gerst, 1974) indicates that women tend to report a higher TSO level than do men. The effect of the topical suite intervention seems to be in the direction of decreasing the emphasis on traditional heterosexual interactions for the men involved. The interventions seem to have little or no effect on the social climate perceptions of the women. Apparently women are much more firmly entrenched in the Traditional Social Orientation and less likely to move from that orientation than are men.

Comparisons of group means on the Competition subscale resulted in significance consistent with that of previous research (Moos and Gerst, 1974); male suites of both types perceive more environmental competition in their suite than do women. It does not appear to be the case that the topical suite inter-
vention had an effect on this social climate dimension.

On the URES subscale of Intellectuality the results strongly suggest that the topical suites place more emphasis on Intellectuality than their standard suite peers. Research (Moos and Gerst, 1974) has indicated a correlation between high scores on Intellectuality and smaller living units very much unlike the Olentangy Towers. This might suggest that the staff effort to promote a sense of community among the smaller suite units had some effect. It could also be the case that because topical suite members share a common interest at the time they arrive they set the norm for on-going serious discussion based on that common interest. This type of interaction should have been fostered by the staff members helping the topical suite members discuss and process their shared experiences.

The result of the analyses performed on the group means for the subscale Order and Organization in general indicate two significant trends. First, women in the Olentangy Area perceive a higher degree of Order and Organization in their suites than do men. Secondly, residents of topical suites perceive a higher degree of Order and Organization in their suites than do residents of the standard suites. The increase in the perception of Order and Organization seems to be parallel in the comparison across sexes (hence, no interaction effect was reported earlier). This suggests that women and topical
suite residents perceive a greater emphasis on the "... amount of formal structure or organization..." in their suites than do residents of the other groups. An explanation for this might be that in the heterogeneous population of the Olentangy Area, residents of standard suites have little in common with their suitemates, are very challenged by the extreme diversity, and do not know what to expect from those around them. Residents of topical suites however have at least something (their topical interest) in common as they begin their year as suitemates. In addition, the advisors to the topical suites not only had those suites do behavioral contracting as did all the suites in the area, but also did quarterly activity planning around the topical interest. In this way the topical suite members not only had a part in planning programming for themselves (adding to a sense of environmental control) but also knew what to expect adding to their perception of environmental orderliness.

In the group mean comparison on the Student Influence subscale a significant difference was found between the means of the male topical and the male standard suites. Although the mean of the female topical suites was higher than that of the standard suite counterparts, that difference did not approach significance. As was noted on several of the other subscales, the topical suite intervention seems to have impacted the male suites more so than the female. In this instance the men in
the topical environments perceive that they have more control over the running of their residence, control of policies, etc. This would seem to follow from their having been assigned to an environment based on their specific request rather than the more random assignment procedure used for the standard suites. This "voluntary" element meets one of the oft-repeated criteria for the establishment of a sense of community. The follow-up with topically appropriate programs should also have encouraged the topical suite resident to feel more "influential". That the female topical suite scores on this dimension did not reflect a score equivalent to their male counterparts is an interesting, unexplained phenomena. The fact remains that, once again, the topical suite intervention seems to have impacted the male suites more so than the female.

The analysis of the URES data for the innovation subscale did not yield significance. Apparently the topical suite intervention did not markedly affect resident perceptions of spontaneity in the environment.

General Conclusions

It seems that the topical suite intervention in the Ottertangy Area Residence Halls did effect a significant resident perceptual change. In addition it seems that the perceptual change was in a positive, or hoped-for direction. That is, there are indications of increases in resident perceptions of
support defined as increases in Involvement, Support, Order and Organization, and Student Influence and decreases in Independence and Traditional Social Orientation. It seems that the intervention had more of an effect on male suites than on female suites. In that same regard, however, it seems that the male suites were more in need of the perceptual differences that were reported than were their female peers.

If the research of Moos and Gerst (1974) can be relied upon, it would appear that the changes effected by the intervention were in the direction of increased sense of community and student satisfaction and toward an increased perception of environmental support. Based upon the assessment of the Glentangy Area Towers environments which are naturally heavy on challenge and light on support (see Chapter 1: Statement of Problem), it seems that the intentional development of a sense of community among suitemates via the vehicle of the topical suite intervention was successful.

Limitations

Several limitations of this study should be kept in mind. First, because of the "volunteer" nature of the assignment process that was an integral part of this study, it cannot be assured that the groups were equal prior to treatment. This is a problem inherent in the nature of quasi-experimental
designs. Given the possibility of pre-treatment inequality it is important to recognize that the resultant significant differences may or may not be casually related to experimental treatment.

It could be the case that the persons who requested to live in topical suites were different from their peers who did not make similar requests. The larger study of which this thesis is a part will give an indication of whether the groups were different developmentally.

This problem could have been better controlled for in two ways. First, all groups involved could have been administered a pre-test to assess pre-treatment equality. Secondly, more appropriate comparison groups could have been formed by assigning to a non-topical comparison suite individuals who requested topical environments. These groups should help control for the "volunteer" effect. Additionally, significant differences may have resulted from a Hawthorne effect. That is, because residents of the topical suites knew that they were a part of a special effort they may have responded to those experimenter expectations. Residents could have responded to the experimenter bias that was evidenced in the letter sent to all incoming students inviting them to live in these "enjoyable and stimulating" suites (see Appendix A). Unfortunately, in an applied setting such as this there is no way to avoid subject awareness of differences.
Another limitation of this study is that it was based on a non-objective pre-intervention assessment of the Olentangy Towers' environment. Although an assessment was made based or implications drawn from student development, community development, and environmental assessment literature, an objective measurement was not available.

An additional limitation is that because of the size and complexity of the undertaking many different staff members were charged with advising these suites and implementing the community development strategies. The individual approaches of these advisors varied considerably so it would be misleading to suggest that the treatment groups or the control groups were treated alike. Even so, whenever possible, the elements of treatment described in Chapter III were implemented.

It is also the case that not all students originally assigned to the topical suites remained there for the entire academic year. Some residents transferred to other halls on campus and others left school altogether for a variety of personal reasons. Because full occupancy of the residence halls was a mandate of the central housing office, every attempt was made to fill these topical suites with incoming students who shared the commitment to the interests of the other topical suite members. Thus the population of the topical suites changed slightly through the course of the year as it did in the standard suites. It is therefore the case that all residents
of topical suites did not receive exactly the same treatment. The larger study of which the present study is a part will include a comparison of the numbers of residents leaving and entering topical suites as compared to standard suites.

A further limitation of this study is that not all of the treatment groups, that is the topical suites, that were formed in Autumn Quarter remained as treatment groups throughout the entire academic year. As was discussed in Chapter III, the Stereo topical suite was eliminated as a group in this study early in Autumn Quarter due to serious behavior problems. Several of the original members of this suite were reassigned to suites elsewhere in the Olentangy Area and the vacancies were filled with incoming students who did not request to live in a topical suite. Because this suite was eliminated from the study prior to the administration of the URES there is no data from this suite included in this report. It is of course possible that had the data from this suite been included in the study the results may have been different.

Finally, it should be noted that this intervention was carried out in a unique environmental setting. The process of developing an appropriate intervention as reported here may be more generalizable to other settings than the specific intervention itself.
Implications for Future Research and Practice

Some of the limitations discussed in the preceding section lend themselves to suggestions or implications for the future. Although this intervention requires that residents volunteer to participate the effect of that "volunteerism" could be assessed prior to treatment. The URES Form E (Moos and Gerst, 1974) administered via mail would serve as an indication of group equality prior to their arrival at school. The inclusion of a comparison group composed of residents who requested topical environments but who were not so assigned would also be valuable.

Although this study resulted in reported differences between experimental and comparison groups, the exact variables that promoted those differences are not known. Future research should focus on more carefully defining the environmental elements that create the differences in perception of the social climate within a given residence hall.

The differential impact of this intervention on male and female suites is of interest and deserves further study. It may be the case that men and women respond to different elements in the environment and the delineation of those differences are important if we are to best serve the diverse student populations.

Finally, it has elsewhere (Cross, 1972; DeCoster and Mable, 1974; Mable, Terry, and Duval, 1977) been concluded that
student development is an acknowledged goal of residence life and that the intentional development of communities within residence halls is an appropriate developmental intervention. It seems important for staff who would attempt to impact student development to make an assessment of the student population and student social climate perceptions. Because, as is reported by Moos and Gerst (1974) "... a student's satisfaction with his (her) residential environment may influence his (her) perception of himself (herself) and his (her) overall college experience", an assessment of that satisfaction or lack thereof is crucial to any program evaluation.
Dear Clentagy Area Resident:

This year we are offering some exciting living options in Lincoln Ross and Conaway Houses. It is easy to get the impression that since the towers are big they must also be impersonal. However, this is not necessarily the case.

The towers are composed of scores of very personal living units — suites with sixteen or less residents. These suites have the possibility of being very enjoyable and stimulating places to live. In fact, the suites are the focus of our excitement.

Imagine having the freedom to choose to live in a suite with others who have all expressed similar interests and who plan to participate in a wide variety of activities together. This is precisely what will happen if you decide to live in a topical suite.

Enclosed is a list of topical suites we are planning to offer in the towers this year. Please read these descriptions carefully. If you would like to live in one of the suites simply complete and return the enclosed request form as quickly as possible.

A prompt reply is essential if you desire to participate. Space considerations will affect suite assignments and an early reply may enhance your opportunity to participate. If you have requested to live on an all male or all female floor and would like to make that consideration a priority please note that on the bottom of the request form.

Sincerely,

Donald E. Denney, Director
Clentagy Area Residence Halls
TOPICAL SUITES

BLACK CULTURE SUITE

Members of this suite will spend time learning and exploring recent and historical cultural trends. You will have the opportunity to visit and become acquainted with campus and city facilities related to this topic. The possibility also exists to coordinate the activities of this suite with the Black Studies Department, with non-credit CAP (Creative Arts Program) courses, and a variety of student organizations.

This suite presents an excellent vehicle for the design and implementation of workshops and informational presentations. Anyone with a genuine interest in black culture is encouraged to participate.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT SUITE

If you are unsure of what you would like to do with your life and would like some help exploring the options, then this could be the place for you. Even if you have picked a major but are not quite positive that it is for you the Career Development Suite might be able to help. In this suite you will be living with others who are also exploring career options; so you can all search together. In the suite we will have speakers come in from various academic areas and occupations, learn decision making skills, do some life-planning and goal-setting, all of which should help you in making career choices. Members of the suite will be expected to take Ed Sp Sv 270—a career planning course offered for credit here at OSU. Participating in this suite does not guarantee that you will make a major choice that will make you happy forever and ever but it should help you learn the tools to choose a career that fits you. Opportunities for volunteer experience in your interest areas are also available through the Student Volunteer Program.

DISCO

If the disco craze has swept you off your feet, it's possible to share that interest with other disco-maniacs in the Disco Suite. If you are an accomplished dancer and would like to live in a suite with others who love disco, or if you are a beginner who really wants to learn more, then this suite may interest you. This group will go together to the various discos both on and off campus. It could sponsor a disco dance contest in the dorm and give dance lessons to other residents. Enrollment in the disco CAP courses is encouraged, and a variety of programs and guest lectures on the history, the current status and trends, and the business of disco are all possibilities. If disco is a serious extra-curricular interest for you, this may be what you've been looking for.
DORM SERVICE SUITE
If you are interested in belonging to a group that has improving your living environment as its goal, then the Dorm Service Suite is for you. As a member of this suite you will work on service projects that will help make the dorms of this area more exciting and pleasant. This suite might work closely with Otengany Area student governments without the political hassles involved in actually being a part of that government.

EDUCATION SUITE
This suite is for persons who have entered UVC in the Education CAP area or who are interested in education as a career. Members will be expected to take one class, the Freshman Early Experiencing Program (FEED), together in the Winter Quarter. This class gives you an early experience in a school to help you determine if a career in education is right for you, and if so to better identify the grade and type of school in which you might best succeed.

In addition, members of this suite will have the opportunity to participate in special tours of the facilities of the College of Education, to meet and talk with the deans and faculty of the college. We can also have faculty members conduct skill building workshops for the suite each quarter. If living with other folks who share your interests sounds good to you give the Education Suite a try.

GUITAR SUITE
If you are a guitarist and are interested in living in a suite with other guitarists this might be your chance. Throughout the year the members of this suite will focus on the differences of guitar playing, the sharing of musical ideas, and the development of increased proficiency. In addition, the development of friendships with folks sharing common interests may be enhanced by your being a member of a group where learning and playing go together. You don’t need to be great-just interested. Due to noise considerations only acoustic guitars will be permitted.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT SUITE
Are you a leader or desire to be one? Members of this suite will have leadership as their common focus. Skills in team building, decision making, problem-solving, communications, planning and evaluating and other skills will be offered.

In addition, each member of this suite will be encouraged to get involved in some campus organization (there are over 500 of them) where leadership skills can be used.

This suite is for you if you’ve been a leader in high school and want to learn more about this area, it is for you if you want to learn leadership skills but haven’t yet held any leadership positions. Take advantage of this opportunity!
MUSIC CONSUMERS
Everyone likes to listen to some kind of music, but only dedicated musicologists are interested in really studying and understanding what they listen to. The Music Consumers Suite will enable you to live with others who take music seriously. Programs on forms of classical music from the bel canto to the fugue to the sonata will be presented. The history of jazz from the earliest Scott Joplin to the big band sound of Buddy Rich to the latest fusion jazz of Weather Report will be discussed, with the help of the staff of WBBY, a local jazz radio station. Bluegrass toe-tappers will also be topics of study, from early Earl Scruggs to Mcguffey Lane, a popular local bluegrass band.

The Music Consumers Suite will visit local jazz spots, attend symphony concerts and near-by bluegrass festivals, joining together in discussions of what is heard. If good music is serious business to you, this suite is for you.

NEWSPAPER SUITE
If you were active in the production of your high school newspaper, here is the possibility to continue that interest in the Glentangy Area Residence Halls. The Newspaper Suite will be responsible for all of the planning, writing, editing, lay-out, printing and distribution of a student newspaper for the Glentangy Area. If there are enough interested residents, it is even possible to have a paper for each residence hall. If journalism is a hobby or a career choice, the production of a paper can be a good learning experience as well as a lot of fun. Not only will the suite members work as the newspaper staff, but there will be a variety of programs and guest lectures on newspaper production, journalism as a career and other topics of interest. If you want to stay actively involved in a challenging extra-curricular project this year, the Newspaper Suite could be for you.

OUTDOOR SPORTS SUITE
Members of this suite will spend time learning about, planning, and participating in a wide variety of out-of-doors activities such as hiking, back-packing, climbing, biking, canoeing, spelunking, and cross-country skiing. You will have the opportunity to help lead the group on those activities with which you are familiar and you will be able to try out new activities as well. Coordination of the activities of the suite with one or more courses offered through the Physical Education Department's Popular Outdoor Pursuits (P.O.P.) program or with non-credit CAP (Creative Arts Programs) courses is a possibility. No experience in outdoor sports is necessary. Your willingness to learn about and experience them with sitemates is the only requirement.
PHOTOGRAPHY SUITE

Are you into photography? Many people are or would like to be. The members of this suite will be folks who are interested in developing new skills and learning new techniques as well as sharing knowledge and ideas about photography with suitmates. In addition to related programs designed especially for this suite, you will be encouraged to participate in one of the non-credit CAP (Creative Arts Programs) courses in which both photographic and dark room techniques are learned. Darkroom facilities will be available to suite members for practical application of these skills. You'll have the opportunity to enter your work in campus showings that will provide you and your suite with some exposure inside and outside the residence halls. So, if you are an experienced photographer or a beginner the suite will have something for you.

POLITICS SUITE

Residents choosing to live in this suite will focus on the political process at the national, state, local, and campus levels. Living in the state capital of Ohio will provide you with a variety of resources to utilize as you attempt to expand your awareness of the political system. You will have the opportunity to observe the Ohio General Assembly in session and gain insights into the nature of the legislative process. Opportunities to communicate and interact with state and local politicians are available: inviting politicians in to discuss issues that affect students and student's rights would be an interesting programming idea. Organizing debates about issues or between candidates for office would be a public service that would stimulate interest and involvement in the political process. You will be encouraged to get involved with the Undergraduate Student Government and your residence hall government. No previous experience is required; all that is needed is your interest and enthusiasm.

PRE HEALTH SCIENCE SUITE

This suite is for persons who intend to major in a Health Science and who have entered UVC in the Health Science Career area. Members will receive special assistance with the Career Information System in the Learning Resources Center. Experiences will be designed to give information about the study of the health sciences and career opportunities. Included will be visits to the suite by professionals in the various health sciences.

SCIENCE FICTION

For many folks sci fi is the center of the universe, figuratively speaking. That is to say that many of us take our science fiction seriously—and you might, too. If you are interested in science fiction, then this suite is for you. Throughout the year the Science Fiction Suite will concentrate on other
worlds by tuning in on the best sci fi around. Suite mates will be encouraged to share their resources, references, and collections. Each suite member will be expected to read at least one sci fi book agreed on by the suite each quarter. Other possibilities include having speakers and writers come in to talk about their ideas, coordinating the suite efforts with local science fiction groups, and taking science fiction courses for credit here at OSU. If the thought of exploring and sharing some of your favorite readings with other interested folks sounds good to you then you should give the Science Fiction Suite a try.

SEWING SUITE
Like to sew? Would you like to improve your skills? Need someone to help with fitting and hemming?—then the Sewing Suite is for you. We will be bringing in people to share skills and ideas and learning from other suitemates will be encouraged. By creating a library of patterns everyone in the suite will have access to more sewing options than you would if you had to collect them all on your own. As a suite you could participate in fund raising projects to purchase machines and materials for use by the suite. If you would like to keep in touch with your hobby, meet new creative challenges, or maybe discover a new career option, sign up to participate in the Sewing Suite.

SPORTS SUITE
Residents choosing to live in this suite will have the opportunity to coordinate and participate in a variety of programs related to intramural, intercollegiate, and professional sports. You could organize intramural teams and special projects (e.g. an Olentangy Area Olympics) and tournaments. Inviting coaches and players to discuss some of the current controversial issues in sports would provide you and others with insight about current trends in athletics. Debates and discussions of issues such as violence in sports, male/female equality in intercollegiate athletics as mandated by Title IX, and the overpaid athlete would generate a great deal of interest.

You could plan group trips to sporting events such as professional football, basketball, baseball, or soccer games. If you are a sports enthusiast and would like to live with others who share your enthusiasm, this may be the place for you to live. Discuss the latest trades and drafts; enjoy competing with and against others and learn about the world of sports.

STEREO SUITE
Students choosing to live in this suite will concentrate on a broad range of topics relating to stereo enjoyment. These could range from record reviews, equipment comparisons, equipment and record maintenance and care, recording techniques,
and so on. Through your efforts you should become better informed
and more critical consumers of stereo equipment and recordings.
Ultimately this should enhance your enjoyment of those products
and those persons who are also audiophiles. You certainly
do not have to own a stereo to join this suite. Your interest
is enough. Space and noise considerations will be negotiated
at the beginning of the year.

STUDY-SKILLS SUITE

For those of you who are interested in better preparing
yourself to meet the academic challenges here at Ohio State,
the Study-Skills Suite may be just what you are looking for.
Throughout the school year the members of this suite will
concentrate on how to make the best use of their intellectual
capacities by learning skills that help you learn. Participation
in Psych 120 (a study-skills course you can take for credit)
will be required of the members of this suite during the winter
quarter. In addition we have access to the Pressey Hall
Learning Resources Center which suitemembers will learn to use.
Everyone (even straight-A students) can benefit from some study-
skill development, so don't let grades (good or not-so-good)
keep you out. If developing skills to help you learn better
is an interest of yours then consider applying to live in the
Study-Skills Suite.

THEATER GOERS SUITE

Are you interested in attending theater productions at
OSU? If you are interested in being a part of a group with the
same interest, then this suite could be right for you. Members
of this suite will be expected to attend theater performances
together so you will share the same experiences. Gaining
insights into productions by inviting directors and actors
to speak to the suite about their work could further enhance
your experience. The members of the suite might also be inter-
ested in staging one or more dramatic productions providing you
with another way to involve yourself in the world of theater.

WOMEN'S ISSUES SUITE

Women currently face a wide variety of issues. Career
or marriage or both? What is the ERA all about? How does the
portrayal of women in media affect you? What special health
care concerns do you face? What does a woman face in a tradi-
tional or non-traditional career option? What about violence
towards women? Explore any or all of these with other concerned
women in your suite in conjunction with a credit-earning
class from the Department of Women's Studies and/or programs
provided by Women's Services or community groups.
YEARBOOK SUITE

If you were involved in the production of your high school yearbook and would like to continue that type of extra-curricular activity, the opportunity is available in the Oleniangy Area Residence Halls. Even if you don't have any past experience, creating a yearbook can be fun and rewarding. A variety of interests from layout to sales to business management to photography can all be pursued in producing the 1979-1980 yearbook.

Last year, one of the Oleniangy Area's houses designed and created a fine yearbook recording dorm activities and events, including individual suite pictures of all the residents. Depending upon interest, it is possible that all three houses could produce a hall annual this year.

Residents of the Yearbook Suite will have the primary responsibility for editing the yearbook, although other dorm residents may participate. Interest and willingness to work hard are necessary in order to make the yearbook a success and to have a rewarding experience as a member of the yearbook staff.
TOPICAL SUITE ASSIGNMENT REQUEST

I hereby request assignment to the following special suite(s) (Please rank in order of preference if more than one):

Black Culture Suite
Career Development Suite
Disco Suite
Dom Service Suite
Education Suite
Guitar Suite
Leadership Development Suite
Music Consumers Suite
Newspaper Suite
Outdoor Sports Suite
Photography Suite
Politics Suite
Pre Health Science Suite
Science Fiction Suite
Sewing Suite
Sports Suite
Stereo Suite
Study Skills Suite
Theater Goers Suite
Woman's Issues Suite
Yearbook Suite

I understand that if I am accepted into any of these suites I will participate fully in its programs. If I decide I do not wish to participate I understand that I will be move to a regular suite and cannot continue to live in the special suite or participate in its programs. Further, I understand limitations of space and rate of response will affect offerings, so that an indication of interest will not guarantee acceptance.

SIGNED_________________________________ DATE____________________

CURRENT ROOM ASSIGNMENT__________________________
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Career Development</td>
<td>1700 Conaway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Guitar</td>
<td>640 Ross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Leadership Development</td>
<td>1630 Conaway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Outdoor Sports</td>
<td>1130 Ross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Photography</td>
<td>1740 Lincoln</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Politics</td>
<td>800 Ross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Science Fiction</td>
<td>1210 Ross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Sports</td>
<td>1920 Lincoln</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Stereo</td>
<td>1940 Lincoln</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Study Skills</td>
<td>1030 Ross</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Female</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Disco</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Leadership Development</td>
<td>2010 Conaway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Outdoor Sports</td>
<td>2140 Conaway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Pre-Health Sciences</td>
<td>730 Ross</td>
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<td>5. Publications</td>
<td>1930 Conaway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Study Skills</td>
<td>1650 Lincoln</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

There are many new and hopefully exciting things going on in the Olentangy Area Residence Halls this year. It is the goal of the staff to make some positive changes so that residents in the Towers have good living and educational experiences. We are currently involved in studies regarding different ways of assigning roommates and how the resulting assignments affect you. We hope these studies will allow us to improve student life in the Olentangy Towers both this year and in years to come. We need your help. In fact, it will be difficult to evaluate our work without your help. Your assistance can be of great value to us and perhaps to future students living in these residence halls.

The study is under the direction of Dr. Robert F. Rodgers, a faculty member in the College of Education at The Ohio State University. Working under his supervision, the study is being coordinated by Senior Staff members of the Olentangy Area Residence Halls. The study is being conducted with permission of the Office of Residence and Dining Halls and the Vice-President of Student Services at The Ohio State University.

Many students like yourself are involved in this project in the Olentangy Area. Some have chosen to participate in a roommate matching process using the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. Some have requested to live in so-called Topical Suites geared
toward specific programming interests and activities. Others have been assigned to suites using our normal process and a group of these suites have been randomly selected to help with this study. We need the cooperation of everyone in these various kinds of suites in order to evaluate our efforts.

If you agree to help by participating in these studies, we will ask for a few hours of your time in order to fill out questionnaires. During Autumn Quarter, you will be asked to fill out two questionnaires during a suite meeting. In Winter Quarter, there will be another suite meeting where you will complete questionnaires and there will be a final session Spring Quarter when you will again complete two questionnaires. All in all, only about 4-5 hours will be required over the course of the year.

Confidentiality is a very important and vital concern. None of the questionnaires are threatening or stress producing. All results and collected data will remain confidential and be kept in a locked file drawer in the Area Director's Office. The information you give us will not be made available to any other organization and will not be on any college record. In the results, individuals will not be identified; only group data will be shared and your names will not be included in any way.

In exchange for your help and your time, we shall be willing to share the group results of the surveys and question-
naires with you if you so choose. We will offer workshops during Spring Quarter which you can attend to find out more about this study. We would like to think that by participating in this project, you will have the opportunity to:

a) learn more about yourself,
b) find out about the effects of roommates on students,
c) help us improve the residence hall experiences for yourself and future students.

It is important that you realize that you are free to participate or not to participate in this project. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any time by notifying Dr. Robert F. Rodgers at 146 Arps Hall.

If you choose to participate in this important study, please sign the accompanying Consent Form and return it to the staff member administering the questionnaires.

Thank you for your cooperation in this study. If you have any questions please contact David Kalsbeek or Donn Marshall or Becky Parker in the Olentangy Area Office in 357 Morrill Tower (422-0866).
--THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY--
CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN
SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH

I consent to participating in (or my child’s participa-
tion in) a study entitled “Do Roommates Make A Difference:
A Study of Topical Suite Roommate Assignments Compared to
Standard Procedure Roommate Assignments on Satisfaction and
Development.”

An Otentany Area Senior Staff member under supervision of Dr. Rodgers
(Investigator/Project Director or his/her authorized represen-
tative)
has explained the purpose of the study and procedures to be
followed. Possible benefits of the study have been described
as have alternative procedures, if such procedures are appli-
cable and available.

I acknowledge that I have had the opportunity to obtain
additional information regarding the study and that any questions
I have raised have been answered to my full satisfaction.
Further, I understand that I am (my child is) free to withdraw
consent at any time and to discontinue participation in the
study without prejudice to me (my child). The information
obtained from me (my child) will remain confidential and
anonymous unless I specifically agree otherwise.

Finally, I acknowledge that I have read and fully
understand the consent form. I have signed it freely and
voluntarily and understand a copy is available upon request.

Date: ____________________ Signed: ____________________

[Signature]
(Person Authorized to Consent
for Participant - if Required)

[Signature]
(Investigator/Project Director
or Authorized Representative)
Appendix E
ROOMMATE/SUITEMATE CONTRACT

We the roommates/suitemates of __________ agree to abide by the following considerations regarding:

Use of stereo

Use of TV

Food

Telephone

Borrowing

Use of space

Need for flexibility

How needs will be communicated

Smoking

Drinking

Temperature regulation

Decorating

Quiet hours

Conditions for sleep
Visitation and guests

Study

Personal hygiene

Cleaning

Special use of space

Other


In coming to this agreement we understand that if the above mentioned considerations become problems or if any additional concerns are recognized, the contract is to be renegotiated as it deals with those issues.

Signed, Date: _____________________
INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS: The emphasis on interpersonal relationships in the house.

1. Involvement- Degree of commitment to the house and residents; amount of social interaction and feeling of friendship. (In this house, there is a strong feeling of belongingness.)

2. Support- Extent of manifest concern for others in the house; efforts to aid one another with academic and personal problems; (People here are concerned with helping one another.)

PERSONAL GROWTH: Social pressure dimensions related to the psycho-social development of residents.

3. Independence- Diversity of residents' behaviors allowed without social sanctions, versus socially proper and conformist behavior. (Behavior properly in social situations is not important here.)

4. Traditional Social Orientation- Stress on dating, going to parties, and other "traditional" heterosexual interactions. (Dating is a recurring topic of conversation around here.)

5. Competition- (This subscale is a bridge between the Personal Growth and Intellectual Growth areas.) The degree to which a wide variety of activities such as dating, grades, etc. are cast into a competitive framework. (Around here discussions frequently turn into verbal duels.)

INTELLECTUAL GROWTH: The emphasis place on academic and intellectual activities related to cognitive development of residents.

6. Competition- As above.

7. Academic Achievement- Extent to which strictly classroom accomplishments and concerns are prominent in the house. (Most people here consider studies as very important in college.)

8. Intellectualism- Emphasis on cultural, artistic and other scholarly intellectual activities in the house, as distinguished from strictly classroom achievement. (People around here talk a lot about political and social issues.)
SYSTEM CHANGE AND MAINTENANCE- The degree of stability versus the possibility for change of the house environment from a system perspective.

9. **Order and Organization**- Amount of formal structure or organization (e.g. rules, schedules, following established procedures) in the house; neatness. (House procedures here are well established)

10. **Innovation**- Organizational and individual spontaneity of behaviors and ideas, number and variety of activities; new activities. (New Approaches to things are often tried here.)

11. **Student Influence**- Extent to which student residents (not staff or administration) perceive they control the running of the house; formulate and enforce the rules, control the use of the money, selection of staff, food, roommates, policies, etc. (Students enforce house rules here.)
References


Astin, A. W. & Halland, J. The environmental assessment technique: A way to measure college environments. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 1961, 52(6), 308-316.


Feldman, K. A. Some common and not so common approaches to the study of college environments and their effects. Stony Brook, New York: State University of New York at Stony Brook, 1972.


Lozier, G. Comparability of roommates assigned alphabetically versus those assigned according to educational goals or extra-curricular plans. Journal of College Student Personnel, 1970, 11, 256-260.


