

A FOOTNOTE as a Meta-evaluation Methods Statement, included in Stake, R.E. (1982). *Quieting Reform*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press

*This case study of the evaluation of Cities-in-Schools was designed and carried out as a responsive-naturalistic research study. It is "responsive" in that I concentrated largely on themes and issues found in actual work of the AIR evaluators. I tried to orient to the concerns and vulnerabilities of those who had a "stake" in that evaluation, hoping to add to their understandings of what happened. It is "naturalistic" in that ordinary events, witnessing, and documentation are featured. I have tried to tell the story in ordinary language, not so much to instruct readers but to enable them to add to their own experience.

In recent years the case study approach has become increasingly popular in educational research. But many researchers object to various aspects of the case study I present here. Briefly in this footnote I will try to identify and justify them. This approach to educational research has been described by Louis Smith (1978), Egon Guba (1978), and myself (1981a). I probably have been most influenced methodologically by the writings of Lee Cronbach (see 1982), though I have taken some ideas to extremes that he did not sanction.

I have tried to emphasize the uniqueness of this situation more than the general. I have paid less attention to what is common in this AIR work to other evaluation studies, more to its special context and meaning. Believing that each reader needs to and will generalize to sites and circumstances about which I know little, I have tried to provide particulars that facilitate those reader-made generalizations. I have sought what Mary Kennedy called "working knowledge" (1982).

I have tried to tell the story in "their own words," using AIR and CIS documents and quoting the people involved. The quotes and descriptions herein are too long and too uninterpreted, especially for readers who would like to be told just what it all means. Not all the narrative "leads somewhere," but hopefully it all helps portray the context. A special aspect of this particularization is my rather personalistic presentation. Most evaluation writers avoid emphasis on personalities. I examine them closely. Education and educational evaluation are greatly determined by spontaneity and intuition, and the particular cannot be well understood, I believe, without the personalistic dimension.

Most of my colleagues would anonymize as many people, programs and places as they could. Exposure regularly leads to undervaluing. To an important extent, personalistic detail such as I have provided is demeaning. I regret that. My model is not the journalistic expose. Nevertheless, I have rejected anonymization because it limits reader opportunity to combine new information with that already held. And here, where millions in public money were spent for a small program, and three quarters of a million more for the evaluation, arguments for privacy seem unpersuasive. Perhaps the most objectionable feature of this case study is a pervading presence of the biases expressed above. In examining Charles Murray's work I have not been a dispassionate reviewer. Even in describing it, and certainly in interpreting it, I have applied my standards. I have noted other standards. I have tried to be fair. But I have not tried to eliminate subjectivity (see more of this argument in Stake, 1981b). Rather I have tried to make subjectivity apparent. I have tried to remind the reader that this study too is personalistic. Who I am makes a difference that should not be masked. I have often been an advisor to NIE and would like to be in the future. I was an advisor to this AIR work. In the last year I have been an advisor to CIS. I argued for responsive naturalistic evaluation on those many occasions, and before and after, and am arguing for it again in this case study, both by example and indirectly in interpretation.

Ernest House (1980) has written about equivalences between evaluation research and argumentation. I do not hope my readers will be instructed as much as I hope they will be persuaded. I hope also they will be aware that a fallible, sometimes contentious researcher observed the AIR evaluation and created this case study.

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