PROXEMICS AS AN ASPECT OF COVERT CULTURE - An Exploratory Study of the Spatial Dimension of Social Interaction

by

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The analysis of man's use of space and its significance in social interaction has been largely neglected by anthropologists. The task for this study is to indicate that the management of space is far from accidental—in fact, it is a complex network of observable patterns. Despite the lack of studies (empirical or otherwise), it is argued that in face-to-face interaction, spatial patterns constitute a fundamental dimension. Moreover, such patterns are not explicit; rather they are in the realm of unconscious behaviour i.e. covert culture.

The thesis begins with a survey of the few studies reported in the literature which deal with spatial patterns. As well, consideration is given to a variety of material which provides secondary reference to this central interest.

The writer then reports methods attempted to gather information on codes of spatial behaviour. Several different perspectives for handling the resultant data are explored to illustrate the relevance of distance patterns. Following this discussion is a proposal for a possible field study which would allow a comprehensive analysis of human spatial arrangements.
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CHAPTER 1

AN INTRODUCTION TO PROXEMICS

Largely undefined and uncodified is a whole range of social 'habits' which anthropologists, and others, have only recently begun to describe systematically. So often, the common experiences which we take for granted are the most elusive of explanation and description (Cherry, 1957).

It is intended in this thesis to take a look at regularities in human spatial patterns as one kind of social behaviour. Basic to such an interest is the assumption that, as Sapir (1929) among others points out, we follow certain forms of behaviour in spite of the fact that we may not be able to describe them—a sub rosa social contract. The available literature, often an accumulation of generalizations and vague impressions of the parameters of social behaviour, far too frequently fails to analyse the components of everyday behaviour. Furthermore, in the case of spatial behaviour as an area of study in its own right, the literature is sparse.

Interest in the subject developed from reading the work of E.T. Hall on proxemics¹ and from personal observations and experiences. What would one find out about distance patterns, particularly between interacting persons? It has been documented and observed in animal studies, for instance in birds, that spatial patterns and distances between individuals are far from random; in fact there is often a functional explanation for such regularities. Human interaction and—specific to this thesis—the
spatial aspects of it, have not yet been well documented.

...distance elements of a culture should...be studied with the same seriousness as the overt symbolic behavior of gesture and verbal and written language (Broom and Selznick, 1955).
FOOTNOTES

1. "Observations and theories of man's use of space as a specialized elaboration of culture" (1966:1).
CHAPTER 2

PROXEMICS AND RELATED AREAS OF LITERATURE

Data on proxemics are scattered in many fields, and the writer intends in this chapter to indicate some of the varied literature (and lack of same) which led to the formulation and interpretation of an exploratory study of proxemics. This will take us into the following areas: Anthropology, Sociology, Psychology, Psychiatry, Zoology.

It is to be clearly understood that this leaves many areas of relevance untouched but it would be impossible to provide any degree of completeness within the confines of the thesis.

The chapter will close with the work of E.T. Hall who deals directly with proxemics. His major publications (1959, 1966) served as the impetus to the writer's interest in spatial patterns and as the basis for a project to investigate distance phenomena.

Generalizations

Many interesting but vague reports are given in such fields as anthropology, sociology, psychology, psychiatry and ethnoscience (to mention only a few relevant areas) about the structuring of human behaviour. Remarks range from Garfinkel's (1963) complaint that there is really little data about socially recognized familiar scenes, a point repeated by Goffman--"...The study of ordinary human traffic and patterning of ordinary social contacts has been little considered" (1963:2)--to sweeping explanatory generalizations about individuals acting and reacting to "prescribed patterns of conduct, practices and rituals which thereby guide and channel their activities and so give rise to the appearance of order, regularity, almost
uniformity" (Frank, 1951:122).

Sage warnings to get down to the business of observing and explaining what actually goes on are likewise given by Becker (1956), who says that there is too little work with 'uncaged' humans and that 'in the wild' (that is, non-lab.) studies or at least studies of natural social groups (Lewin, 1951) should be the major focus for sociologists. D'Andrade and Romney (1964) point out that in the case of ethnoscience (and the remark applies equally to our concern) the primary aim is not to test theory but to describe social (shared and learned) knowledge of peoples, a basic premise to this being that human behaviour is not random (Pittenger and Hockett, 1960).

Anthropologists must deal with standardized patterns of behaviour as the most basic isolates, according to Nadel (1951:75), fieldworkers in anthropology usually considering as a major part of any ethnographic work the rules of social behaviour of the people under study.

Norms, rules, conduct and regularities are terms which appear in discussions of the structuring of behaviour. Berne (1963, 1964) adds two more which go into everyday situations—social programming and semi-ritualistic interchanges (ritual being defined as "stereotyped series of simple complementary transactions programmed by external social forces"—1964:36).

Covert Culture

It is pointed out in the literature that people do not always act and react on the basis of explicit rules.

Members of any single human community share literally thousands of behaviour conventions which are as dominant as our rule of
keeping to the right, but which are much more subtle because they are learned, acted, responded to and taught almost entirely out of awareness (Pittenger & Hockett, 1960:212).

Ruesch and Kees (1961) likewise introduce their study with the point that people automatically apply rules of behaviour to social situations, non-logical or implicit social codes likely being as or more important than overt codes (such as etiquette and protocol) in the regulation of interaction between people.

Social rules operate whenever we are with others, all of us having a repertoire, so to speak,

an internal organization below the conscious level, as language has grammar (Pike, 1954:113).

Unknowingly we follow certain forms of behaviour, which we may not even be able to describe—"an elaborate code that is written nowhere, known by none, and understood by all" (Sapir, 1929:137). The network of patterns of which we are unaware or hardly aware is called covert culture by Kluckhohn (1943). This is what Hall is writing about when he says that culture controls behaviour in deep and persisting ways, many of which are outside of awareness and therefore beyond conscious control of the individual (1959:35).

and

most of culture lies hidden and outside voluntary control (1966:177).

The problem is to describe and analyse these informal rules and built-in patterns. As Hymes (1962) says of the ethnography of speaking,

the phenomena are there ready to be brought to order.

Social Interaction

What phenomena 'to be ordered' have been studied and what, more
specifically, give clues about spatial patterns?

Many studies in sociology point out that rules of behaviour, often not overt, are an important part of any situation where two or more people are in face-to-face contact. Goffman (1959) describes an encounter in terms of 'sanctioned orderliness', face-to-face interaction having its own regularities, processes and structure—a little social system (1956 - a).

Robert Bales (1949) typifies small face-to-face groups as microscopic social systems of human interaction. A.L. Strauss (1959) echoes Goffman's remark about the encounter—it is guided by rules, norms and mandates, although this does not necessarily mean we can predict its outcome.

A particular kind of interaction occurs in the psychiatric setting. What goes into a psychiatric interview is a multi-dimensional question for both therapists and social scientists. The interview is defined by Sullivan (1954) as not only a process of interaction but a miniature of all communicative processes and containing within it the essential qualities of all human relationships (1954:xvii).

Berne talks about games between therapist and patient while Pittenger, Hockett and Doneby (1960) give a 'microscopic analysis' of a few minutes of an interview between a psychiatrist and patient. In the psychiatric interview the therapist must be particularly skilled in communicative techniques. These techniques were what the above observers—linguists and anthropologists—were trying to isolate.

The significance of seating arrangements in group psychotherapy has come in for comment; Winnick and Holt (1961), for example, talk about the relationship of psychological and physical space. To study the effect of seating and spatial arrangement of chairs the authors observed sessions
where patients either set up their own chairs or were confronted with different kinds of seats, such as sofas, folding, upholstered, or hard chairs, or seats at a table. The authors' findings are too lengthy to present more than a brief example here. If both fixed and folding chairs are present, those who choose the portable seats are apparently more insecure. It is questionable what 'insecure' means here, for even in psychiatric jargon it does not seem to refer consistently to a discrete state or collection of symptoms, but regardless of the looseness of the term it seems quite clear in the authors' report that most patients disliked sitting on a sofa where there was the likelihood of being touched, single chairs being preferred as they provided a border for what Winnick and Holt call 'individual life space'.

Outside the psychiatric setting, seating patterns in groups have also been studied, by such people as Steinzor (1950), Bass and Klubeck (1952) and Sommer (1954, 1962, 1965, 1967) and by sociologists such as Hare and Bales (1963). Most of the material deals with seating arrangements as they affect group dynamics, the basic premise being that

...seating arrangements in a small face-to-face group help to determine the individuals with whom one is likely to interact (Steinzor, 1950:552).

One can add that the kind of interaction is also affected.

Theories and observations of Robert Sommer, psychologist, who among other things, studied interaction patterns in a geriatrics ward (1953), provide more direct information about the spatial dimension of social activity. From observations of the ward, Sommer decided that furniture arrangement was a large contributing factor to the minimal interaction and that by rearranging it, social contact among patients could be
increased. Sommer further explored seating positions in various groups (1959, 1961) labelling his investigations group geography or ecology. In 1965 he reported a study of small group ecology observations about student groups in a cafeteria and a library, this time his interest being in seating position around a table. Two recent studies of Sommer (1967a and b) continue his discussion but add little new information to his previous findings.

To return to the psychiatric setting, Reimer (1949) observed that in the case of a disturbed patient he may want to be several feet from anyone nearby, and that this physical separation and isolation is doubly sought by an 'averted gaze'. With this trait goes a low, subdued voice and detachment. Reimer reported on this behaviour in six patients which makes one skeptical about considering these particular observations anything more than interesting and supportative of other non-rigorous studies.

Dealing with eye behaviour as related to distance patterns are relevant comments by Goffman. For instance, the closer one is to someone whom one wishes to look at, the greater the compunction to avert one's gaze to decrease being exposed. The further away one is, the more licence there is to stare, although catching someone staring may cause embarrassment and shame as if one has been caught in an improper act (1959). Strangers passing on a street may perform an interpersonal ritual of directly eyeing each other until they are about eight feet (this distance being labelled by Hall as mandatory social recognition distance) then immediately lowering eyes like headlights being dimmed. Yet in other cases one is considered shifty unless there is direct eye contact, which rule can be skirted by such things as dark glasses or looking out of the corner of
one's eye. And, according to Hall (1966:67) who expresses a more general rule, "American conversation prohibits staring at others" (1966:67).

Birdwhistell, an anthropologist, has spent many years codifying various everyday aspects of behaviour ranging from "the language of body motion" (Trum, 1966) to the American family dinner table ritual (1965:10), courting behaviour, and posture differences between males and females (1964). He as well analyses the use of eye contact, head nod, and monosyllables such an 'nnn' (1962:10-13).

Something a little different is reported by Eric Berne (1949) who as a member of a psychiatric team having to judge the mental stability of 10,000 soldiers, only 30 - 90 seconds allotted to each man as he passed through an assembly line examination, tried to delineate what in a person's gaze gave one clues to that person's occupation in civilian life. Finding that a greater than chance number of his hunches were correct, Berne tried to isolate the cues which were being transmitted--one was the person's gaze.

To take an example, according to the report, a farmer's face froze after a few seconds, expressionless, with slow shifts of the eye, while a mechanic would look straight into the examiner's eye with curiosity but without challenge. (It is difficult to understand what the last feature means or indicates since Berne does not give discrete definitions.) How reliable is Berne's explanation of his intuitive process is a moot point but at least it is an attempt to explore how and what cues to behaviour are used in our assumptions and impressions of others.

A comprehensive study of eye behaviour has been made by Murphy (1964) of the Tuareg who have an extremely elaborate code of behaviour built around eye behaviour and the upper part of the face. Interaction is maintained through aloofness and reserve and controlled by various maneuvers.
with the veil worn by Tuareg men (the veil is a social distance device according to Murphy), there being highly formal and mandatory rules about the use of the veil with social contact demanding several subtle adjustments of it.

In our society, according to Goffman (1961:75) a system of etiquette and reserve that members of every group employ in social intercourse would seem to function...as a veil.

Having more direct implications for the study of spatial patterns are two other areas of human behaviour—crowding and physical contact, and housing arrangements, the anthropological literature providing many references. For example, to consider physical closeness between persons, Mead, writing about Samoa (1939:44), reports that relatives of opposite sex have a most rigid code of etiquette prescribed for all their contacts with each other.

After age ten or so opposite sexes cannot touch or sit close (one wishes that Mead had indicated how close this actually is), nor can they eat, work or dance together, nor use familiar address or be in the same house.

Quite the opposite occurs in Tikopia (Firth, 1936) where there is no avoidance between, in this, case, brother and sister; in fact they eat, sit and sleep together. For children, as in Samoa, body contact is quite acceptable and children seek it as an expression of the intimate and protective. Mead assumes that the reader knows what the terms intimate and protective mean, but, in fact, they are annoyingly vague and suggest unrefined blinds for lack of rigorous description.

Commenting on people other than Samoans, Mead (1939) mentions that for the Mundugumor of New Guinea, brothers must avoid each other and be formal when in each other's presence, the only close contact not frowned
upon being a public fight. In Tikopia, referring to Firth's study again, it is taboo for a child to touch his father's body or head.

Comparing and summarizing her field studies, Mead makes the point that

attitudes towards physical intimacy vary enormously among individuals and have been very differently standardized in different societies (1939:300).

In our society we can formulate rules about physical contact. For example, we are most suspicious and uneasy about any casual physical contact between males. Sleeping in the same bed, or sitting on a man's lap in a car is considered disgusting and repellant behaviour for a man.

Another aspect of physical contact is reported by Read (1965:48) in his field studies of New Guinea where he describes how the Gahuku gather in their street for social contact. Read found it, to his dislike, crowded like a beach. However, although he felt it was crowded, did the Gahuku? Or was it rather a case of a Westerner with his patterns of non-physical contact carrying his cultural conditioning to another area where it really did not mean the same thing or apply at all?

Of course not only the anthropologists make reference to physical contact. Even Lewis Carroll has something to say about it--

...And she (the Duchess) squeezed herself up closer to Alice's side as she spoke. Alice did not much like her keeping so close to her: first because the Duchess was very ugly; and secondly, because she was exactly the right height to rest her chin on Alice's shoulder, and it was an uncomfortably sharp chin. However, she did not like to be rude; so she bore it as well as she could. (writer's emphasis) (1939:88).

Weybrew (1963), studying human relations on a modern atomic submarine which would submerge for two or three months at a time, reported that physical contact may be a factor in mental disturbances of crew members;
for example, many men said they did not like 'hotbedding', climbing into a bunk someone had just left. This is not even direct contact but, nevertheless, the thermal presence of the man vacating the bed was disliked.

In the psychiatric situation physical proximity, or the opposite, may be used therapeutically, a psychiatrist soothing a withdrawn or frightened patient by sitting close to him or conversely, in a group session, deliberately increasing the distance between disruptive participants (Horowitz, 1965). Although space is used by psycho-therapists it is, according to the same author, largely done intuitively.

Two experiments in violating the norm of being too close to another person indicate the importance of distance between people. Garfinkel (1963) in an experiment had students begin a conversation and then bring their face very close to that of the other person. Such a close distance is not usual for casual friendly encounters in our society and Garfinkel reported that regardless of the sex, age or status of the individual, whether he was a friend or not, the students' aggressive proximity was interpreted as sexual in some way and subjects reacted by moving away, being confused or angry. The fact that discomfort was created indicates that spatial boundaries had been overstepped.

A similar experiment by Felipe and Sommer (1966), which they called 'invasions of personal space', involved participant observation and sitting uncomfortably close to another person. Any underlying assumption was that

under any set of conditions, a range of conversational distance... is considered normal for that situation (1966:207).

The results of the 'invasions' showed that getting too close can be disruptive, the individual reacting in various ways, from putting up actual
physical barriers to moving away or avoiding eye contact. Sommer does not report actual distances and, unfortunately, we do not even know how close 'close' is.

Anthropologists (not to mention architects and interior decorators who are ignored in the thesis not because they have nothing to say, but because space is not unlimited) often have considerable to note about housing arrangements. Firth, for one, as part of his ethnography of Tikopia, noted the relationship of spatial distribution of houses and villages to kinship patterns. (1936:119). Spatial distance may indicate social distance as in the case of a man who lived about fifty yards from an old chief but whose younger brothers and sisters, living even closer, reaped more benefits from the chief. "In Tikopia, micromovement may be enough to create social distance." (Firth, 1936:186). An illustration of this is banishment. Reporting on three particular cases of temporary banishment, Firth comments that half a mile seemed to be an acceptable 'away' distance.

The significance of distance patterns can be a trying question for Firth writes that

in any correlation between physical distance and social distance ...a society seems able to make its own rules. For Tikopia the observer needs a magnifying glass as an aid to interpretation (1959:187).

Household geography is another aspect of life reflecting the structuring of space. Looking again to Firth's study, we find him noting household arrangements and how they reflect social organization. For instance, there are three general sections to a Tikopian house: the central area is common ground for everyone; one side is sacred and for ceremonials, only men being allowed to sit on this side and people not turning their
backs to it or their feet when sleeping; women and children occupy the other side.

Further comments about the significance of house interiors are made by Piddington (1950) who points out the fact that within a Fiji house the upper end is for higher status persons while the lower end is for the more common variety of people.

Proxemics

Can we get closer to our central interest—specific and systematic study of physical distance patterns between people? Such studies are infrequent in the social sciences but turning to the biological sciences, we find many studies of spatial patterns (such as territoriality, flight and attack, and personal distance) among animals and birds. The literature here being vast, and in many cases beyond the technical competence of the writer, only a fragment of the material which articulates with human spatial behaviour will be indicated. A further reason for at least mentioning that there is a well-studied field, although it be of non-human animals, is because social scientists occasionally—and in the case of Hall in particular, frequently and profusely—make extensive and often over-generalized references to the findings of ethologists, zoologists and other biological scientists.

Studies of birds, such as that done by Crook (1961) on the elaborate movements of flocks, indicate that spacing patterns are quite precise and are maintained by what Crook calls social mechanisms. It is impossible at the present state of research to make any such statements for humans.
It has been observed and documented that different species of flock birds have different average distances separating members of the flock (a species-specific phenomena) and all have particular spatial zones for the individual, depending on the activity. Individual distance, that area around an individual within which the approach of a neighboring bird is reacted to either with avoidance or attack (1961:139) is quite exact. Apparently, with finches anyway, there are, as well, differences in zones between males and females.

Noted and classical work on relations to space of animals has been done by Hediger who explains in Studies of the Psychology and Behavior of Captive Animals in Zoos and Circuses two important distances for a wild animal: flight and attack. The flight distance, characteristic of the animal (and less for animals in captivity than in the wild), is for some animals, such as the big cats, apparently so exact that it can be measured in inches.

Hall, whose work on human spatial patterns served as a basis for the present study, several times uses Hediger's illustration of flight/attack pattern utilized by circus performers (1959, 1966, 1965) and although one can, without much straining of the imagination, find comparable human adjustments, the writer is suspicious that a one-to-one comparison between human and non-human animals is simplistic and may be less than valid, a compunction which Hall does not share.

To return to human spatial patterns, several allusions and oblique references to distance patterns, made by writers whose main interest is non-proxemic, suggest possibilities for empirical research. For example, the common sense remark of Ruesch and Kees (1961:32) that physical distance
is a clue to friendliness lends itself to concrete study. Or a reference
to distance between Frenchmen made by Lerner whose observation that
Frenchmen have "an elegant way of maintaining proper distance between
individuals" (1961:423), suggests research possibilities—what would we
find if we looked at actual distances rather than just the social aspect
of 'Il faut garder ses distances'? Garfinkel's experiment in violating
the norm of proximity with people (reported previously) gives one another
idea for quantifying distance and finding out what it means.

In psychiatry we find studies which deliberately have a spatial
focus, for instance, dealing with the question of whether schizophrenics
have different spatial patterns from mentally normal persons. Everyday
observations in the clinical setting indicate that schizophrenics require
more space around them than the average person. In face-to-face encounters
a schizophrenic cannot tolerate the distance a normal person can which,
Hall says, is because the schizophrenic flight distance is greater. In
a state of panic or stress, a schizophrenic may want a vast amount of space
and some psychotherapeutic situations are finally allowing him to have it
by, for instance, moving him into larger and larger rooms until he no
longer feels that the world is closing in on him.

Experiments were done by Horowitz, Duff and Stratton (1964) to
find out about personal space (defined simply by them as the area immediately
surrounding the individual) of normal persons and schizophrenics, two
hypotheses being tested and confirmed: 1. People use a certain predictable
and regular distance between themselves and other persons or objects.
2. Schizophrenics require greater distances.

The Horowitz experiments involved four settings. In the first
experiment, 19 schizophrenics and 19 enlisted men similar in rank, age and
cultural background were told they were part of a study on equilibrium.
Subjects were asked to approach a hat rack or another male and when the
individual stopped, the distance between his toes and the base of the rack
or the feet of the other person were measured by counting the nine-inch
square tiles on the floor separating them. Results showed that both
schizophrenics and non-schizophrenics stopped closer to the object than
the person.

The second experiment tested several different approach distances
to a hat rack, a man and a woman, by ten female schizophrenics and ten
normal female volunteers. Subjects this time walked frontwards, backwards,
side-ways and at an angle towards the object or person. Results again
indicated that both groups approached closest to the hat rack.

Taking the distances from different approaches, a spatial zone
was estimated for each individual and called the body-buffer zone. Study­
ing diagrams for approaches to the hat-rack, man or woman, it was found
that schizophrenics had the largest spatial zone when approaching persons
of either sex.

In the next experiment ten male subjects were told about the real
interest of the assignment (namely, responses to space) and asked to
approach, again in eight different ways, a man or woman to the point
where subjects began to feel uncomfortable. Graphs made of responses showed
greater distance between males than between a female and a male.

As a final variation, 25 schizophrenics and the same number of
normal persons were asked to draw lines around a silhouetted male figure
seen from above, frontally and in profile, mimeographed on separate sheets
of paper. Subjects were to zone the distance they liked to keep between themselves and others in ordinary conversation. It was found that schizophrenics drew larger zones around the figure.

Although the authors mention that the spatial zone depends on the situation and state of the individual, they did not seem to take this into consideration in their experiments. Further, perhaps quite different results would have been found if, for instance, subjects were told to approach a friend or stranger.

Argyle and Dean (1965), studying eye contact as an important part of communication, give another clue to the spatial dimension of behaviour. From the premise that eye contact and physical proximity must be in equilibrium for a comfortable social situation they tested and concluded that the closer two subjects are together the less the eye contact. The relationship between eye contact and distance was tested by placing seated subjects having a conversation two, six and ten feet apart, one participant in the conversation being a confederate of the experimenter and gazing continuously at the subject whose eye contact was measured for three minutes. The experiment confirmed the hypothesis that eye contact decreases with proximity and increases as distance increases. Moreover, there is less eye contact with mixed pairs than same sex ones and this is most marked at the close (two feet) distance where subjects often appeared anxious and made various nervous gestures. At ten feet the distance for conversation was too great as indicated by subjects leaning forward. The increased eye contact that occurs at this distance is needed to give signals that one is still 'with' the situation. As Hall says (1966:115)

...to fail to hold the other person's eye is to shut him out
and bring conversation to a halt, which is why people who are conversing at this distance can be observed craning their necks...

In a study of comfortable conversation, Sommer (1961) after several experiments with different people sitting on two couches opposite each other, concluded that people as a rule sit across from one another until the distance between them exceeds the limit of comfortable conversation and then they sit side by side. The crucial distance is five and a half feet for seated pairs—further than this conversation is a strain, and a move is made so that participants are side by side. This finding supports results from another experiment Sommer conducted where it was noted that around a table, chairs at sides and ends, if there was a leader present chairs seven feet away from him were rarely occupied. In a study which involved observation of students in a reference room at a University library, Sommer (1967) remarks that the distance of four feet across the tables discouraged conversation and, for support, refers to Hall's assertion that typical personal conversation in our society takes place at a closer distance. As a further study (1962) of typical distances for conversation Sommer adds to his data by conducting experiments with portable chairs instead of sofas so he can also consider side by side distance. What happens when this distance, as well as the face-to-face distance, is increased? Results are complicated, as Sommer has twenty-five different combinations of side and opposite distances. For example, when side distance is two feet, people do not sit side by side until the face-to-face distance is four or more feet. When the side distance is increased to three or four feet people do not utilize it until the distance across is five feet. Such a variety of results gives us a clue to the complexities of spatial patterns, such as the surroundings influencing seating distances. In a private home
it is not unusual to find furniture six, seven or more feet apart, yet conversation can still be carried on. Obviously, there are a tremendous number of variables to consider.

Dealing with human spatial patterns as a central focus, is the work of Hall whose studies of proxemics served as the impetus for the writer's investigations. Hall, concerned with the fact that we take our culture for granted (Hall, Whyte and Foote, 1966) accumulated an interesting and wide range of material on various aspects of what we have earlier called covert culture and, more specifically, regularities of human handling of space. From a single chapter in his first major publication, The Silent Language (1959) the topic of man's structuring of microspace expanded to a book and acquired the dramatic name of The Hidden Dimension.

A basic premise that underlies Hall's work is that culture is a mold in which we are all cast and it controls our daily life in many unsuspecting way (1959:38).

One of these ways concerns our experience with the organization of space.

Man carries around with him a series of spatial spheres, like bubbles, in which various categories of transactions are permitted to occur...these hidden zones eliciting different responses as boundaries are crossed (1961).

There are four zones, as formulated by Hall: Intimate, Personal, Social and Public, which can be arranged in the following scheme, Hall's cuts being made on the basis of thermal, olfactory, kinesthetic and visual factors.

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A good portion of Hall's material deals with cultural differences in behaviour; the Arabs, Latin and North Americans, Japanese (1959), Germans, English and French (1966) in particular being subject to comparison, but such material will be by-passed here not because it lacks interest but because it is extraneous to the focus of the present study. Likewise, a critique of some of Hall's statements is left for a later chapter (5) after a discussion of methodology and problems with his material, when it becomes apparent that his theories and vocabulary are often confusing.

Relying on Hall's material, Brown (1965) in a popular psychology text devotes a section to spatial relations of man, and suggests that psychologists could usefully consider 'Hallian' hypotheses in their studies. Brown points out, for instance, that a basic requisite for interaction is proximity, strangers who do not want to interact trying to maintain distance from each other, such as sitting several or at least alternate seats apart, or not choosing adjacent telephone booths if possible. For strangers, back-to-back or side-to-side closeness and contact is more bearable than face-to-face because in the former two, one can avoid visual contact. Once eye contact is made it is difficult not to either have some kind of interaction, or to feel guilty if one avoids it.

A test of one of Hall's hypotheses of how people related physically to others in interaction, specifically differences between Americans and Arabs and how they structure their microspace, was conducted by Watson and Graves (1966) whose aim was to test the validity of Hall's impressions on American-Arab differences and to record data empirically (which Hall did not do) using his system of notation. A simple hypothesis was to be tested--Americans have different proxemic behaviour to Arabs, the latter
being more close and direct to each other. From 32 students who were either Arabic or American, groups of two of the same nationality were placed in an observation room to have a conversation. Observation periods of five minutes by the authors (and a second observer as a check on reliability) involved notations of proxemic behaviour by the minute. After individual scores were recorded, a group mean was calculated, and statistical analysis applied, it was found that the hypothesis was valid. The Arabs were more direct in talking, sat closer to each other, were more likely to touch one another (Americans never had physical contact), looked at each other more directly and talked more loudly than their American counterparts. The Arabs began talking as soon as they entered the room and did not stop until the observer entered, while American pairs were more restrained, although not to the point of failing to carry on a conversation at all. From the experiment, the authors had several suggestions to make, the first being that improved methods of recording data and larger samples are needed. They expand this to suggest that preliterate cultures should be studied for proxemics and ask the question of whether there are changes in proxemic behaviour as people are exposed to different patterns and to acculturation. Is there a specific series of patterns for industrial society? No one has really analysed the dynamics of contact between two interactors who have different proxemic patterns. If we accept the fact of cultural differences in this aspect of behaviour, are differences within culture related to personality? All these questions lead the authors to conclude that hopefully we will soon have a field of psychoproxemics, which will encourage and tie together more research.
1. Such as military regulations about distance, sports, conversation, comparison of professional distance (how social distance is related to actual distance), games of physical contact, histrionics, art, etiquette books (covered elsewhere), fiction writing.

2. For the purposes of this paper the reader is referred to the following definition of culture:

"... as I see it, a society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members, and do so in any role they accept for any one of themselves....Culture is not a material phenomenon; it does not consist of things, people, behaviour or emotions. It is rather an organization of these things....The things people say and do, their social arrangements and events, are products or by-products of their culture ..." (Goodenough, 1964:36).

3. The distance of 5½-6 feet is what Hall suggests is typical for impersonal business conversation between people who do not know each other well. If this is so, it suggests that Sommer's subjects 'should' have been much closer for friendly conversation.

4. This suggestion will be taken up in the final chapter of the thesis as the writer tries to outline a hypothetical study of this nature.
CHAPTER 3

COLLECTION OF DATA

Having argued that spatial patterns do exist, and that they are an integral aspect of general social behaviour, this chapter will outline the approaches taken by the writer to explore proxemic questions. Following, chapter 4 will discuss the data.

As a brief note of explanation regarding methods, the writer's conception of the field of investigation narrowed considerably as early efforts proved to yield extremely nebulous and unwieldy data. As chapter 2 proceeded from general statements about informal/covert culture and behaviour to more direct and relevant material regarding proxemics, so did the writer's methods of data collection.

The first aim was to find a useful means of tapping less than conscious behaviour and finding out if, and if so how, people articulated informal rules of social behaviour, including those having to do with spatial arrangements.

An essay topic (Appendix A) was given to Grade 11 and 12 students of English at a Vancouver high school, the intention being to provide minimally defined social situations as cues to which students would write about behaviour rules. This was strictly an exploratory endeavour to ascertain what, if anything, would be articulated about less-than-formal rules.

On the basis of responses to the essay topics and in a further attempt to explore methods for tapping informants' awareness of proxemic patterns, four questions were included in a large scale questionnaire being
administered to the total population of the school, close to two thousand students. While the major portion of the questionnaire was collecting straight-forward information about students, adolescent sub-culture and occupational orientations, the writer's questions, listed below, included a concern with embarrassing situations and physical contact.

1. In which of the following situations would you be most embarrassed, assuming you would be embarrassed at all: (check only one)

   Alone with friend of same sex  
   Alone with friend of opposite sex  
   Casual situation  
   Social situation  
   Public situation  

2. To be at ease one must follow and believe in the rules of conduct

   Agree  
   Disagree  

3. Crowded buses bother me:

   A lot  
   Some  
   A little  
   Not at all  

4. How would you react to an embarrassing situation if you were with a group of people your own age? (Check only one)

   Joke or laugh it off  
   Leave  
   Blush, get flustered or blow up  
   Ignore it  
   Other (Specify)  

Questions 1 and 4 grew out of the essay topic, the categories used in following Hall's division of a spatial continuum for various situations. The items in question 4 included the most frequently mentioned reactions in the essay topic, patterned and grouped in Goffmanesque dialect; specifically, escape, flooding out and civil inattention. Question 2, a quote from Goffman (1961:31), was simply to find out the general reaction to such
a remark about behaviour being governed by rules.

It is no doubt apparent to the reader, and it was to the writer at the reported stage of exploration, that the two approaches, as they were carried out, were inadequate to collect the kind of material needed for a study of spatial patterns.

A brief acquaintance with psychological tests suggested to the writer that if a semi-projective instrument could be devised, responses to such may get at unconscious ordering of the spatial dimension of behaviour. Following Henry (1956), underlying phenomena such as learned patterns of social behaviour are tapped by instruments like TAT. For the writer's purposes, a series of pictures composed of units of varying distances in terms of dichotomies such as comfortable/uncomfortable, friendly/unfriendly, easy/uneasy were prepared, the intention being to correlate responses with a pre-arranged distance scale. However, the construction of a suitable instrument taking far too much time and psychological sophistication, it was decided that unless the invention of a test was to be the major purpose of the thesis, it was not economical to pursue the effort.

The fourth method of accumulating data involved information from popular etiquette manuals to find out if and how distance patterns were outlined for interacting persons, following an assertion by Hall that in any society the code of manners (and presumably etiquette manuals constitute an articulated code) sums up the culture. Appendix C includes a note indicating the kind of material one does find in etiquette primers but, as will be seen, the writer was no closer than earlier efforts to studying proxemics per se.

Consequently, the problem was still to find a means of collecting
the uncodified but common rules which contribute to the social machinery of interaction, particularly what occurs spatially and what this means.

To this end it was decided, after considerable preparation, to utilize drama classes at the same Vancouver high school which had been subjected to the questionnaire and other data collection devices at the hands of the writer and a team of researchers.

From December 1966 to April 1967 the writer attended senior drama classes and began planning a project in which these students, 12 boys and 25 girls, would act out impromptu social situations providing, even if only secondarily, information about the use of space. Every effort was made to fit the project into the framework of the drama instruction. Fortunately, the emphasis in the class instruction on improvisation had made students quite at home with spur-of-the-moment acting and the project was geared to this since it was to the investigator's advantage to have scenes as open and spontaneous as possible to minimize artificiality of behaviour.

The project was limited to a series of four general situations which students would act out on a grid marked on a stage. For details of the physical plan of the project the reader is referred to Appendix B.

Four situations to be acted out by students were selected to represent the four spatial areas of Hall's continuum. The Family Quarrel represents the Intimate category, Gossiping among friends the Personal, an interview Social-Consultive, and a lecture or address to be Public. It is certainly open to question whether these really do represent Hall's slots since his labels are hardly definitive, a criticism which will be elaborated in chapter 5. Under the circumstances, it was decided that, as a minimum
factor of agreement, both Hall and the investigator shared in North American culture and that if he assumed the reader would intuitively or otherwise know what he meant, perhaps the investigator could do no more than accept his faith in the intuitive process. At least, four different situations for stagings had been selected which should yield different kinds of information. Moreover, the situations seemed interesting, to both students and observer.

Students were told at the beginning of each class what the 'situation for the day' was and had a few minutes to get into groups of two or three (the number of actors per staging decided upon both arbitrarily and because of limitations of space and recording) to plan their scene.

It was decided to use the stage of the school auditorium for stagings since students were accustomed to working there. A grid was marked on the stage, the dimensions of which allowed room to cover Hall's distance continuum and yet not crowd the stage; as well the grid had to be of such a size as to covered by a camera. Recording sheets which duplicated the stage grid at scale $1'' = 2'$ were mimeographed, the intention being to mark every move made by an actor, and every spatial arrangement, on the grid on a corresponding sheet.

It was decided to have the dialogue of stagings taken on tape, both to assist the observer in reconstructing scenes and to provide a continuous record of staging activity. Camera and dialogue were coordinated by having pictures taken on signal of a bell which was picked up on the tape recorder. Largely arbitrarily, it was decided to have pictures taken of the first position of the actors and the following two moves made by any of the performers. The number was increased to five part way through the
project since it was found that this would cover the total number of
moves as a rule.

There was a question of time to be considered—since the number
of classes to be used for the writer's project was limited, stagings had
to be brief if a sufficient body of data was to be accumulated each day.
Exercises done previously by the class usually took no more than five min-
utes each, often only one or two minutes, so it was decided to instruct
them to keep their scene shorter than five minutes. Following such a sche-
dule it would be possible to go through at least eight stagings per sixty
minute period, leaving ample room for interruptions.

After the series of stagings had been completed, the writer spent
a class period discussing with students the stagings, and proxemics in a
general fashion, before describing to the class the dynamics of the project.
Comments from that meeting support the claim of the writer that students
were not aware of the distance aspect of the assignment, nor, more specifi-
cally, the reasons for the grid. The discussion with the drama students
focussed on verbalization about rules of behaviour that they had used in
the stagings. The framework for asking about codes of behaviour depends on
the basic theme of the thesis—not only were the drama students drawing on
certain cultural and social patterns but the observer, as part of the same
culture, was using the same framework to interpret the actions of the
students. Following Schutz' argument (1964:15), until it is proved other-
wise, one can assume that the meaning for the actors corresponds to the
meaning their activity has for, in this case, the investigator.
FOOTNOTES

1. "There is no other way for the individual to convey his feelings except in the ways in which he has been taught to communicate with others: in the public symbols whose core of meanings is generally understandable....He starts on the basis of the pattern of meaning and affect which his past cultural training has taught him should characterize (such) human situations (Henry, 1956:11).

TAT story is a "Crystallized symbolic projection of the individual's efforts to formulate major feelings...in the framework of the manner in which he has previously learned to present himself to the outer world" (Henry, 1956:40).

2. Please note that throughout the thesis 'staging' is to be taken to mean each social situation played out by students. In other words, an 'event' as defined by Chapple (1940)--"beginning to end of observed interaction".

To refer to all those stagings which make up one of the four particular assignments, 'grouping' will be used, or 'category', which refers to one of the four spatial divisions: Intimate, Personal, Social or Public.

3. They had accepted the initial explanation that it was for photographic purposes which would later be used in a class study of blocking.
Now knowing how proxemic material from stagings was collected and how non-spatial material was added to the body of data, it is intended to utilize several perspectives, separately, to get at the dynamics and process of stagings.

First, a brief section summarizing spatial data in terms of Hall's theoretical framework. One could easily present a thorough Hallian analysis, taking many pages, but it was the writer's opinion (after initial study of the data) that Hall's approach, and particularly his 'rigid' spatial continuum, was restrictive. Since it was not intended to turn the chapter into an illustration of pre-formulated generalizations, it seemed pedantic to match Hallian rules with examples from stagings.

Dispensing with the summary of spatial variations of the four groups of stagings, which represented (hypothetically, at least) Hall's distance continuum, a general section follows in an attempt to indicate some of the variables involved in the spatial arrangements of stagings. In addition, a comparison of the different groups of stagings is included to provide some continuity, in the form of shared features, of variables which affect or reflect distance patterns.

Section 3 takes quite a different approach to the data, from the perspective of pattern becoming obvious often only when it is disrupted. Both verbal and non-verbal behaviour are analysed for instances of breaks or lack of ease in communication. This direction, followed to get at
implicit rule behaviour, it must be admitted, diverted the writer from
a strict consideration of the proxemic dimension of stagings. However,
spatial patterns do not occur in isolation, which seems a legitimate reason
to turn to the major focus of stagings which was usually verbal.

The application of one kind of model dealing with the structuring
of social interaction closes the chapter. The section was included to,
briefly, provide an indication of (a) the importance of social boundaries
to any interaction, including stagings, (b) the flexibility of staging data
in 'responding' to various perspectives, (c) the framework for distance
patterns which are one fundamental element of the stagings.

Chapter 4 will be followed by a discussion of problems with the
staging project and the theoretical models of Hall, before leaving the
staging material to suggest a possible proxemic study of a community.

Proxemics According to Hall

Does the data from staging support Hall's distance continuum?
Compare the boundaries of Hall's categories to material from stagings of
situations which were selected to represent his four discrete slots (and
it is argued further that such slots are far from discrete). According to
Hall, to quickly review the outline of his work in chapter 2, North Americans
divide the space between themselves and another person, in face-to-face
contact, into four major zones.

Hall's minimal distance unit, labelled Intimate, is not represented
by stagings of a family quarrel. In fact, very little action occurred in
any staging at 1\(\frac{1}{2}\) feet or less. As a rule, three to four feet was the
usual distance during quarrel scenes, distance varying considerably from
six or seven feet, when one member of the group would wander, to body con-
tact when there would be a scuffle, a slap or awkward intimacy. A genera-
lization that most interaction in this particular set of stagings occurs
at distances of three to four feet says little alone and must be considered
within the context of the situation. Moreover, from comments by students
in discussion after the project, the family quarrel is not necessarily seen
as Intimate although to the investigator at least, and supported by obser-
vation such as Firth's, that "The household is a compact little group with
its own intimate life" (1936:87), a situation within the 'in' family group
would be classified as Intimate.

Hall states that people utilize a personal space (and personal
suggests at least the possibility of intimacy), meaning keeping one and a
half to four feet from the front of another person in casual situations.
Since we do not know what Hall does and does not consider personal except
from his copied definition from biology, it seems no less reliable to con-
sider the choice of gossiping between friends as personal. The stipulation
'friend' was included and specified in instructions to the students, as it
was felt that the stranger/friend continuum was important to the situation,
certainly not a new idea. For example, consider Free and Vanderbilt (1956)
as they specify different codes for strangers and friends according to
etiquette. As well as a stranger/friend dimension others can be applied;
for example private/public, and informal/formal.

As a rule, students gossiping used distances of two and a half
feet to four feet. For this category of stagings and for the family quarrel
there was far more movement than in the following two set of scenes, namely
Interview and Public situation. This suggests that as people move from the
the informal/private to formal/public they are more restrained in their movement. Perhaps the definition of the situation is more rigid as there are explicit rules about behaviour in such situations.

The Interview was selected to represent Hall's Social-consultive category, more specifically the Consultive end of the category. Two kinds of interviews were acted out by students--business and counselling. (A small group of four stagings of television interviews were not considered in this category.)

In the Interview, chairs were more frequently used than in the previous two sets of stagings (students having choice as to whether or not they wished to use furniture with the general request from the observer that if at all possible they would do without). Again there seems to be a shift from freedom in motion, as occurred in the family quarrel and gossiping to being 'held in place' by furniture.

Students acting out job interviews (as all but one of the business interviews were) did not sit seven, eight and nine feet apart, which, according to Hall, is the most distance (and usual) end for impersonal business between persons who do not know each other well, and the usual distance between chairs of a businessman and his visitor in the office. Rather, a closer distance was used by students, four to six feet, which falls within Hall's lower boundary of 5½ feet.

In the counselling session, distance rarely exceeded four feet, whether persons were standing or sitting.

In the Public group of stagings, with one exception, students used greater space between speaker and representative audience of two or three persons, seven to nine feet being the distance. It was as if even the term
Public indicated a need for greater space. It is worthwhile pausing to state the obvious implication that the students used these distances to convey the social focus. They could have used other means, such as furniture barricades, tone of voice, etc., but instead did, in fact, utilize distance as a characteristic cue of the situation.

General Features of Stagings

Hall devotes a considerable part of his writing to links between ethnicity and spatial patterns used in interaction (1955, 1959, 1962, 1966). It was originally planned in the thesis to consider the ethnicity of participants in the stagings, following Hall’s claim that certain patterns characteristic of particular ethnic groups persist even to the third and fourth generation. The number of students in the drama class taking part in the project who were of non-Canadian citizenship or birth proved to be few. However, just in case these individuals were using patterns that were noticeably different from their 'Anglo-Saxon' classmates, spatial profiles were compiled and checked. No particular similarities among students of the same ethnic background were apparent, and there were no discernable differences in distance patterns from students not born in Canada.

This was not the major reason for abandoning the consideration of ethnicity, however; rather, far more interesting, and what seemed to be more useful material, could be derived from the data if they did not have to be interpreted in such narrow terms.

There are differences in spatial patterns regarding sex, as suggested by Hall and others. Stagings where participants were all female
were associated with closer distances between persons than when the group was composed of both sexes. Such a generalization is supported by data from the first three staging assignments—Family quarrel, Gossiping, Interview—but not the last set of scenes, Public, where a common distance of nine feet was maintained between the speaker and audience whether participants were female and/or male.

In stagings of a family quarrel, the most frequent distance between female participants was two to three feet, this increasing to three to five feet when a male was part of the group.

The same pattern is suggested for the gossip session, although any generalization here is a bit tenuous—females tend to keep two feet apart while for males the distance is two and a half feet.

In the Interview, distances between applicant or employee and employer are greater when the group is composed of males and females rather than all female. (There is only one instance of an all-male interview, so nothing can be said about how it differs or is similar to a female one.) Difference in distance is between six to six and a half feet for mixed groups, five to five and a half feet for those composed of females only.

The amount of movement or adjustment of distances may be sex-linked, but the data yields only the hint that there is more frequent adjustment of distances in mixed groups than in all-female ones. If this is so, perhaps it would be possible with a more detailed analysis of this part of the data from stagings, and observations of group situations, to explain how all-female groups are more inhibited in moving than mixed groups.

Still considering 'mobility' there are considerable differences
in scenes, the most 'distance sets' (number of different distances between participants in any one staging) occurring in the Family Quarrel, then a considerable drop for stagings of a Gossip session, and decreases in movement again for both Interview and Public scenes--a progression from movement to 'rootedness' which supports the writer's suggestion that the four situations selected for the assignment can be put on a continuum. Thus, Family Quarrel ---→ Gossiping ---→ Interview ---→ Public can be paralleled by something called 'mobile/non-mobile'. How to typify the mobility continuum and to relate it to situations is a problem to be linked to other dimensions such as informal/formal, personal/impersonal, private/public, emotionality/neutrality.

Coupled with the above movement scale, furniture (in the case of stagings minimal—a chair or bench) is used more often in the Interview and Public scenes than in the Family Quarrel or Gossip session. And, as well, participants seem to become tied to chairs if they are used.

Even when actors left their chairs, they migrated back to them. For example, in one counselling session a boy seated in front of a Vice-principal's desk leaves his chair to pace back and forth, but he keeps returning to the chair. It is as if there is a distance threshold—one can move so far but no farther or the situation boundaries will weaken or collapse.

In two family quarrels, the same boy playing the role of Father opens the scene sitting on a chair pretending to read a newspaper and being interrupted by wife or daughter. During both these stagings he gets up from the chair but does not leave it, rather stands close to or walks around it. He certainly could have moved elsewhere on the stage, but he
did not.

Consider two examples from the Public group of stagings where the student playing the active role of speaker went for a podium, placed it on the grid (in both cases far upstage—eight or nine feet from where the audience was to sit) and confined himself to movement behind it. In the case of a boy playing the role of school principal addressing an assembly, the actor walked a few feet away from the podium as he talked but always returned to behind it. Part of our conception of public setting such as this is that if the V.I.P. is using a furniture prop, it will be placed between him and his listeners.

Are there particular differences in spatial patterns in groups of different numbers? Do groups of three or four use closer distances among members than for a dyad, or vice-versa? No consistent patterns were found when stagings were checked. Moreover, one cannot simply compare two and three person groups—sex of participants must be taken into account as we have seen previously that there tend to be slightly greater distances among participants in a mixed group than if the group is made up of females only. However, can one say something about the preference for a particular number of persons in the group for various situations? In both the Family Quarrel and Business Interview, there is no pattern of more frequent groupings into twos or threes. One would have thought that there would be more two-people groups, but this is not so in the stagings. In fact, 5/C stagings are three person. In the Gossip scenes there appear to be, at first glance, more groups of three than two, but several triads are formed by one participant entering late and really remaining an outsider, or displacing one member of the original pair.
In the Public situation there are more people in the stagings than in the other scenes, the minimal number being three, one staging having five participants. Does Public automatically imply more people? For the drama students, the number of persons was used as a signal of the setting, as was distance (remembering that a greater distance than in any of the previous scenes was used).

Uneasy Verbal and Spatial Communication

According to Hymes,

...instances of the breaking off of communication, or uneasiness in it, are good evidence of the presence of a rule or expectation about speaking (1962:30).

This is not limited to verbal behaviour. Hall adopts such a perspective when he points out that it is often only when rules are broken that we realize they exist, a similar point being made by Goffman (1953:36-36)--acts which cause embarrassment provide us with a chance to study the assumptions we make about interaction. These situational infractions direct us to elements of ordinary situations which would otherwise not likely be noticed.

Pike, dealing with the same point, notes that resistance to being interrupted indicates that some 'behavioral' pattern is occurring and that such a unit merits attention.

Finding that several stagings had been disrupted by actors falling out of role, having a moment of awkwardness or there being a noticeable and uneasy pause, it was decided to check the data for instances of these occurrences to see if they indicated what should happen, i.e., what
the 'standard' pattern is. Since people communicate by using space as well as words, it seemed quite likely that in the series of 44 stagings there would be instances of breaks which might tell us something about spatial rules of behaviour.

First, a fairly exhaustive list of dialogue passages which are considered uneasy are outlined to see if there is corresponding non-verbal uneasiness. Looking at these patches leads one to generalizations about the structure of social behaviour but this will be kept minimal since the central interest here is to find out about spatial patterns and adjustments.

To deal with the dialogue of stagings as data it is intended to consider instances of actors' uneasiness, the same for the audience, out-of-role behaviour, and difficulties in ending stagings.

Take for an illustration of actors' uneasiness an impromptu gossip session between two girls which begins with one girl asking the other "What are you doing?" and is punctuated throughout by

Vicky: Well, what's new?...
      Well, what all has happened?...
      Well, uh, what's new?...

the co-actress failing to carry the conversational ball. Vicky falls back on awkward opening formulae to hopefully elicit enough reply to continue the scene. Perhaps it is not insignificant to note that the scene continued at all—it would have been quite sensible for the girls to stop and say that they did not know what to say or "It's your turn to talk" but they did not and the staging carried on, precariously, for one and a half minutes.

What rules do we find here? Certainly one of reciprocity—doing one's share in a conversation. The 'speak when spoken to' rule is insufficient—in a situation defined as communicative and social there is an
expectation and implicit demand that participants will take turns carrying the conversation. Oral codes are public property (Joos, 1962), the assumption we make being that everyone is aware of them and can perform in a taken-for-granted fashion. If dialogue breaks down in a casual conversation it will usually lapse into silence while a consultative one will be broken off.

The leading participant in the staging not only had to resort to fishing techniques but she gave a considerable number of verbal 'awkward indicators' which included

You know...
Well...
Uh yeah...

Nor was her partner, who was less than reciprocal in the conversation, free of social noise either; for example--"Well, I mean, you know, I was just wondering how far you know...."

The same kind of thing occurred in other stagings. For example, a two minute conversation punctuated by eighteen expressions of 'I know' or 'You know'. A business interview with twenty-two 'uh's', fifteen 'oh's' and nine 'well's'. Or a staging of a school room, the girl playing the role of teacher having the following uncertainty spots:

Uh, well...
Well, uh... No, uh well. Uh well...
Well alright then...
Alright... So, well, alright...
Oh yeah...

These fillers are, according to Joos, code labels or formulae which identify the situation, in this case, as consultative. However, Joos' label 'consultative', which he says is "our norm for coming to terms with strangers" (1962:19) is far too wide in terms of data from the stagings, for the
'I know's' and 'well's' are not confined to stagings in the Social-Consultative group but occur, particularly, in Gossip stagings which represent Hall's personal/casual category.

Another case of Goffman's statement that even though we may perform badly and clumsily, we must perform, is illustrated by a staging from category 2 where two girls have the following uncertain lines:

Karen: Hi. Oh, I got something great to tell you.
Uh, I forgot what it was though.
Chris: Well think.
Karen: Great
Chris: Well

Their uneasiness is assuaged by the entry of a third actor and the relief is apparent as the girls say 'Hi Bob'.

In another staging where ad-libbing breaks down:

Linda: Really?
Diane: Yeah
Linda: Well um, where to?
Diane: To the party
Linda: Oh, the party, oh the party (pause)

the uneasiness is terminated by an abrupt switch in dialogue to

Diane: Lookit, we got to go now.

Linda, however, does not latch on to the reprieve immediately as she stumbles through

Linda: Oh well, can't you. What--
Oh hell you guys...

In the course of a staging of an Interview one actress playing the part of an employer is thrown off balance by her acting partner saying

Marilyn: Do I leave now?

Certainly a legitimate request for information, yet inappropriate to the business situation where one is supposed to 'know' the implicit cues and rules of leave-taking.
Another question in the same staging: "You don't want to talk to me?" is again an instance of inappropriate verbalizing of a reasonable sort of question. The reply suggests flustering:

Pat: No, I don't want to--well, I've already, um, there's more. No, I'll notify you if anything...

The third role player in the staging, who enters after the above dialogue, responds to a question of:

Pat: Well, Miss Jenkins, uh is there anything else you'd like to tell me that you feel uh is important and that could add to your...

with "Ask me more questions" which hardly decreases the discomfort of Pat, who was having difficulty with the ad-libbing and trying to set up a relief spot.

A case of audience reaction of uneasiness suggests that again something going on in a staging is amiss. There is, of course, a basic problem of ascertaining if and when the audience is uneasy before one can look for the possible reasons. The writer can only claim that because the uneasiness--an atmosphere of discomfort, a too quiet quiet, a change in the 'mood' of the audience--was communicated, it is legitimate to talk about it. Surely the investigator, as well as the actors, is qualified as a member of the same culture to make such interpretations since the assessment of social situations in everyday life alone requires many taken-for-granted rules, and the assumption that all concerned share the same basic codes.

An uneasy reaction occurred several times when actors came out with dirty words or references to sexual behaviour. For example, one boy at a point in a staging of a gossip session where he is presenting a monologue about Stephen Truscott case, crescendoes to a full volume line that:
...They believe that she, that he wanted to take her into the bush and that he was sexually hard up that night and he just took any broad he could see on the street and took Lynn Harper into the bush...

an immediate hush falling on the audience. Even the boy who delivered the lines seemed startled and his co-actor plainly was embarrassed and blushed. The same reaction followed a scene of a boy playing the role of a child arguing with his father about T.V. program selection. The actor's high pitched whiney voice and tearful:

Mommy said I could watch cartoons if I was a good boy. Popeye's on. I want to watch Popeye. Mommy said I could watch Popeye.

was followed by an uncomfortable quiet and 'oh' from the audience and another blushing co-actor.

An uncomfortable audience reaction also occurred in response to a final insult hurled by one girl to another, the girls playing parts of mother and daughter. In this case, the mother of the pair screams "You suckhole" which not only shocks the audience but the actresses as well, for the scene ends most abruptly and bluntly.

There are spots in the stagings where actors laugh out of role at their own or others' lines. In all cases where this occurs during a staging the conversation is simply picked up again after the awkward interval.

One staging ends before the end, so to speak, when the actor delivering a speech smiles and turns his head away from his stage audience to look at his classmates on the sidelines as he gives his concluding line. He quickly looks back to the two girls playing audience for him but they are already getting up from their chairs and leaving the grid. Phil shrugs and moves to sit down with his friends.
A different kind of break occurs in one staging where, the conversation on sisters dwindling, there is a sudden "Here comes the bus" which ends the scene.

In another case, two girls having an impromptu gossip session, and also running out of dialogue, there is a switch from

Vicky: Well uh (pause) Well what's new?
Brenda: Well nothing's you know. French class and French tests and uh

to

Vicky: Oh you know, I got a, I got a new bur-, bureau for my room. Do you want to see it?

The most obvious breaks in role playing are illustrated by the following cases.

In a Gossip situation which is ending with "Close the doors when you leave" Linda giggles and says "Oops, that's it" as the other two participants leave.

A similar situation occurs in an Interview where a guest on a T.V. program is explaining the flying saucer she has seen--she runs out of remarks and there is an awkward pause. The girl acting as Interviewer suddenly says, enthusiastically,

Oh I'm so sorry our time seems to be running out. Uh...

prompting an out of role 'That's good' from the other girl who smiles and turns her head slightly to quickly look at the audience.

"Join us again tomorrow evening", the next line, is punctuated with laughter and the scene breaks up.

Two incidents of falling out of role occur in another staging of an interview, this time of an Estonian immigrant on Station ICDP. It
should be noted that the two boys in the staging had spent about fifteen minutes previous to the scene planning dialogue.

The boy playing the part of interviewer asks half-way through the staging "...Uh do you know anything besides yes and farming steppes?" and there is a sudden pause. In a loud stage whisper he says to his fellow actor "You blew it" and they both laugh. The audience snickers. The Estonian player picks up a line "No" and the staging continues until, dialogue becoming rather mumbled, one boy suddenly turns from facing his co-actor to look at the audience and say "Hey Pete, can we quit now?" a remark addressed to the drama teacher. This is the only instance in all the stagings of actors dropping their roles to ask instructions or permission to terminate the staging. In all other cases the students struggled through to some 'end'.

In summary of the above cases, uneasiness or break in verbal communication does not cause spatial adjustments. The only suggestion of this is in the three cases where actors turn away from the other players which could be interpreted as an attempt to increase distance.

To turn to parts of stagings where there is spatial uneasiness or breaks, how is it expressed, does it affect verbal communication and is it reflected in disturbances in dialogue?

Cases of distortion in distances between interacting persons will be outlined according to three general areas: physical contact, the 'pursuing perplex' and decreasing distance.

To deal with the first area, the rule of noli me tangere is apparent in one particular staging where it is violated, although the rule-breaking is in keeping with the action in the scene. In this staging, a
family quarrel where a mother and son are arguing about a hair cut for the latter, the participants are four feet apart as the conversation progresses to:

So: Listen Mom. I'm not like all those kind of people.
Mo: Hell you look it.
So: Just because I grow my hair long doesn't mean that I'm a, I'm a, a grub or something.
Mo: Oh

where Mo quickly moves in on the son, to a distance of one foot, equally quickly pulling his hair. There is an immediate reaction for both of them--they practically spring apart to a distance of 3½ feet between them in what seems to be an attempt to neutralize the contact. There is no noticeable pause in the dialogue as it continues to a speedy end:

So: Now cut that out. Gee whiz Mom. Look--
Mo: (screaming) Get your hair cut.
So: (shouting) Go to hell.
Mo: Don't you (pause) -- Get out.

The only other case of physical contact in the Quarrel series does not cause spatial adjustment. Rather, uneasiness is expressed in most awkward posture, stiffness and leaning away from the other person. In the staging an ex-girlfriend meets the boyfriend and his new steady who are arm in arm. However, the attempt to express intimacy between the two is far from natural--although the girl's arms are around the boyfriend their bodies are held stiffly apart and the boy has an arm raised in front of him, a rather inappropriate signal of defense under the circumstances. Yet it is quite clear to the audience and the observer what the intent of physical contact was.

The case of the 'pursuing perplex' occurs in another quarrel situation, this time between sisters. Repeated subtle adjustments of
distance between the two girls gives the impression of a chase as one moves back and the other advances. The chase begins with a distance of 3\frac{1}{2} feet [which has a special quality, according to Hall, being within arm's reach--beyond this distance, about 3\frac{1}{2} feet, one is outside the limit of physical domination (1966:113)] between the girls being decreased by the 'Pursuer' leaning towards the other girl who moves back about half a foot, gaining no distance, however, because the pursuer moves forward until the distance is two feet. The distance is further cut as P (pursuer) leans forward, shouting, the sister pulling away her head and shoulders as her arm is grabbed. Although her reaction indicates that the distance is 'too close for comfort' she does not move away immediately. As the arguing continues and P again leans forward, the other girl begins to move back, upstage and to the side a few inches at a time until the distance is a little over four feet. P now has to turn slightly to face the sister and says "Look at me" as she closes the distance to 2\frac{1}{2} feet. P wins her argument and steps back from the sister 2 feet but, the distance adjusting reversed, the sister now moves forward so that the 'tentative' distance of 5 feet is only 4 feet. The staging ends with the girls moving downstage, distance increasing slightly.

Short spots in other stagings suggest this same adjustment process but not to the extent of meriting the title Pursuing.

There are several cases of distance between interacting persons being decreased by leaning.

In one particular Family Quarrel (a segment already outlined on page 48) a distance of four feet between participants is decreased by the male role player both moving closer and leaning forward so as he replies
So "Get your hair cut" with "No" he is 1 1/2 feet from his stage partner playing the role of mother. Although her comments are not inhibited by the move, a few lines further she moves back, re-establishing the distance at four feet.

There are two cases of this kind of adjustment in the Gossip group of stagings. In one, three seated girls lean far forward in their chairs, maintaining a strained position for the duration of the scene. The staging begins with two girls seated half-facing each other with a third chair empty. If sitting back in their chairs the girls would be about 4 1/2 feet apart but since both are leaning forward, the distance between their heads is only 2 1/2 feet.

When the third girl enters she moves the empty chair to about six inches from that of the next girl and on sitting down leans far forward towards the girl opposite her. If the chair had remained in its original position, and if the third girl had sat back in it, she would have been 5-5 1/2 feet away from the opposite girl. It seems quite clear by (a) moving the chair closer and (b) leaning forward, distance uneasiness is being expressed—a potential distance of more than five feet is too great for this staging and requires adjustment techniques.

The other case is of a conversation between two seated girls being interrupted by a boy who, coming on stage, stands back and between the girls who are four feet apart. One girl leaves and Phil sits down on the edge of the chair, pulling it a few inches forward, and leaning towards the girl opposite him so that the distance is decreased to roughly 2 3/4 feet. Is it simply idiosyncratic that for the occupants of that chair different distances were comfortable? Possibly, but more likely is a
change in the situation from casual conversation to 'conspiratual' probing, Phil wanting to find out what was being said about him.

The distance in two particular interviews seems distorted and strained for the duration of the stagings. In one case, a Business Interview with two female participants, the girls are seated eight feet apart. The girl assuming the role of interviewer leaned forward in her chair every time she asked a question of her partner who did likewise when answering in the role of job applicant. In comparison to other stagings in this series the distance was considerably greater than the usual 5-6 foot or less distance. Even according to "Hallian" rules the distance is too great, 5 1/2 - 8 feet being usual with anything approaching the upper limit, such as in this staging, indicating considerable formality and differential importance of one participant. The fact that compensation was made for the distance between participants suggests that a closer span, to the point where leaning would not be necessary for communication, would be the appropriate and comfortable distance for this particular situation.

There is some support for considering the likelihood that the girls in the above case were aware of the distance, for they set their chairs on the grid. Furthermore, one girl instructed the other to "Move it (the chair) back Susan" and Susan put the chair 1 1/2 feet back from where she had first placed it so that the distance between chairs would have been 9 - 9 1/2 feet instead of 8 feet. Susan then says "Move yours closer". The other girl does so and the chair is shifted, again about a foot and a half so that the adjustment really does not change the distance at all.

The other Interview staging, which indicates spatial uneasiness
via leaning, is a case of two girls seated facing each other, the distance between them being 6½ feet which, if we follow Hall, is perfectly 'normal' for the situation. But, throughout the staging, participants lean forward towards interviewer or interviewee as the case may be, every time a question is asked or answered the verbally active person decreasing the distance.

In neither of the above cases nor the Gossip or Quarrel stagings does the distance awkwardness interrupt or jeopardize the conversation which is being carried on. It would appear that both verbal and non-verbal discomfort occur without changed or corresponding adjustments in the complementary sphere.

Social Boundaries

The behaviour pattern runs its course in time: it consists of a sequence of part-actions which has a beginning and an end—the assumption of a particular task, its execution and completion (Nadel, 1951:75).

Although stagings were largely impromptu, most have a distinct and conventional beginning, and break off with a tidy end. The students in their productions had a distinguishable opening move and a conclusion. Social scientists may have trouble telling where a situation or unit of interaction begins or ends, but there is little difficulty doing so in the stagings.

In one staging of a Family Quarrel, after arguments about money, a father finally hands over two dollars with a "Get lost" line while another ends with "Oh shut up".

A high pitched quarrel going on between a mother and daughter ends with daughter walking out with the line "Okay, you stay here and do
the dishes and I'm going to the aftergrad".

A mother walks out on two daughters in another case telling the two of them to "Fight it out".

One staging ends with a mother telling her long-haired, barber-shy son to "Get out" after he has shouted "Go to hell".

In the second group of stagings, Gossiping, 'tidy' ends include: 'Bye Jack", "Well uh we got to go now Jack...", "Oh, here he comes".

Illustrative cases in the Interviews situation include "Oh, you like demonstration? Oh sure!", "Okay, thank you very much sir, Right". 'Very good, thank you very much. We'll call you if we need you".

Bob : Okay then, you can have the job.
Chris: Oh, oh!
Bob : Okay Joe. Lower the grapes.

Conclusions in the Public group include "Hallelujah" from a religious healer, 'Three cheers, hurray" from three girls making up the audience for a campaigner for mayor and

Mike : I close this meeting.
Rick : So do I.
John : ...Firecrackers, firecrackers, sis boom bah
Wart hogs, wart hogs, rah rah rah.

There are exceptions to the neat concluding pattern. For example, in one Interview, there is an awkward ending as the Interviewer says

Barb : Okay then. Alright Miss Ranchoux. We'll notify you in the mail and tell you if (pause) you're (pause) you can take it.

The line could be perfectly conclusive if not delivered in a faltering, hesitant voice as the staging fades away rather than terminates.

In a staging of a Family Quarrel where daughter is defending a boyfriend of the 'robes and beads' set and mother is shouting that no long-haired creature is going to enter the house, the scene breaks off
with both telling the other to "Shut up". Tension in the staging had reached a high level, such that some 'rebalancing' would seem needed but the girls broke up the scene simply by stopping at this point and looking at the audience who did not seem sure that the staging had ended for there was a considerable pause before the usual applause.

As for the beginning of scenes there is usually a greeting of some sort. Beginnings, according to Goffman (1963:22) occur when, after one person has made an opening sign, the other acknowledges and responds. Following such a definition, conventional openers include:

**Family Quarrel**

- Da: Mom, could I have the car?
- Ho: Well I don't see why not dear.
- So: Uh Dad.
- Fa: What d'you want?
- So: Mom?
- Ho: Yes?
- Judy: Barbara, look at this room...
- Barb: Well why don't you clean it up then?

**Gossip**

- A: Hi
- B: Hi (3/9 cases)
- Vicky: Hi Brenda, what you doing?
- Brenda: Oh, uh, just you know, the usual thing...
- Ray: Hey man, what do you think about...
- Terry: Oh, I think he...
- Alida: Hey have you guys, have you guys heard...
- Brian: Yeah, I'm going to that.

**Interview**

- Diane: Yes?
- Linda: My name is...
- Bob: Come in (5/8 cases). Good afternoon sir. Can I help you?
- Phil: My name is Mr. Brascia...
- Bob: Yes, what can I do for you?
- Marilyn: We're applying for the job.
In the Public group of stagings, openers are not in the form of greetings but rather acknowledgments of the audience. For instance:

Mike: Brothuhs and sistuhs, the Lawd is with us today.

John: Welcome brothers, welcome brothers. As you all know fellow vart hogs...

Linda: Good afternoon ladies. I'd like to welcome all you new members...

Phil: Students, of Grade 12 graduatin' class...

Some stagings began in more jarring fashion. For example:

Karen: Anna you little brat.
Rick: What a swine you got for a sister.
Pat: The mayorship of Smalltown has been run, over-run by men.
Barb: You feel you qualify for this job, right?
Darlene: What are you looking at?

The least that one can say about a beginning-ending pattern is that students asked to play out situations structured their scenes in similar ways and used a common repertoire of devices for starting and finishing, which is not a new statement by any means. Goffman, for instance, points out that there are rules for the initiation and termination of encounters (1961, 1964). Further, he says

...minor ceremonies are likely to be employed to mark the termination of the engagement and the entrance and departure of particular participants. These ceremonies along with the social participants in line, give a kind of ritual closer to the mutual activity sustained in the encounter (1959:98).

Once individuals enter a conversation they are obliged to continue it until they have the kind of basis for withdrawing that will neutralize the potentially offensive implications of taking leave of others (Goffman, 1957:5).

Conversation is one kind of social encounter.

Barker (1961) notes that each setting has a boundary which lets one know if he is inside or outside, Pittenger (1960) making the
same observation when he writes about boundary markers and signals which
tell us that something has begun or ended.

Miller (1961) follows suit with the generalization that a meeting
between two people is a meaningful sequence with a beginning, middle and
termination.

Is it not significant that students did perform at all? Would
persons other than this class of drama students--perhaps in another culture,
of different age, in a non-school setting, etc.--asked to do the same task
of presenting a facet of life in a few minutes even be able to produce
something? Lerner's ethnography of Turkish peasants (1958) indicates
that at least for these people one cannot assume the same kinds of things
one takes for granted in performance. To a question "What would you do if
you were president of Turkey?" peasants responded, often shocked, in the
vein of "What are you talking about? I couldn't even imagine such a thing."
Such people had no way of even handling the idea, no way of dealing with
"If you were...". The drama students did.

Goffman's point that, in fact, "We all act better than we know
how" (1959:74) is worthwhile keeping in mind as one realizes that it is
significant that the drama students responded to their assignment by per­
forming, largely with little difficulty. There is no reason they could
not have responded with "We can't" or "I don't know how" or even "No" but
they (a) did not question what they were asked to do and imagine and
(b) did in fact play out situations ranging from family fighting to public
lectures which included many roles some of them could not realistically
assume.
1. It should be noted that the frequent distance pattern of 4-6 feet in the Interview set of stagings occurred between participants who were friends and who had free choice in selection of co-actors. Perhaps it is not to be expected that, even though the 'event' was a Business-Interview, they would use distances such as 7 to 8 feet for, in spite of the definition and formal boundaries of the situation, familiar patterns of friendship (including spatial habits such as proximity) over-ruled any arbitrary impersonality.

2. Category Scenes chair used Total # scenes % Increment

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3. The student delivering the line was considered a 'fairy' by members of the class and there were references and jokes about his feminine behaviour both during stagings and out of class.
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF METHODOLOGY
AND THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

The concern of this chapter is with problems in the staging project and both Hall's theoretical approach and naturalistic observations about proxemic matters.

To deal with the first issue, difficulties encountered in stagings, as a method of collecting information on spatial patterns, will be discussed, followed by suggestions of how stagings could be improved.

Difficulties with the project arose from it being carried out within the boundaries of an institution, specifically a school. To comprehensively analyse the major problems with administration, staff and students would require a lengthy thesis in itself as there are direct implications for what may be called the covert sub-culture of the school. However, the following notes will perhaps give an introductory illustration of taken-for-granted behaviour. While such a diversion is somewhat aside from a discussion of the methodological semi-experiment, it is argued that it will point out that the staging project did not occur in isolation. 'Life went on as usual' at the school but not without some disturbances for both school and investigator, especially when the latter was taken for a student. For example, being stopped several times in the hall by a teacher and asked to present the required permission slip for being out of class.

Some staff automatically titled the investigator 'Student Teacher'. Being labelled 'Researcher' was, although more accurate (and dignified), no help as some teachers were suspicious of anything academic. The
researcher's explanation of being interested in experimental drama usually terminated probing.

Definition vis-a-vis students was a problem, particularly at initial encounters with the drama class, since my appearance suggested a school girl; yet I directed the class in several periods of 'experimental movement'. I wanted to be as taken-for-granted as possible by the class so that the project would not be contaminated by a stranger being present. Close to three months contact with the drama students (both in and out of class) seemed to eliminate any inhibitions, and I was loosely defined as an assistant drama teacher. When the students were given instructions to 'perform' in the project they viewed the assignment as somewhat of a favour to the assistant, and a different kind of drama exercise.

One could not plan a week's schedule of stagings without running into practical problems, such as the auditorium being booked for an assembly or half the drama class scheduled for innoculations. To adjust the schedule of the project was a minimal difficulty, but for one administrator the resulting confusion, usually at the last minute, suggested further reasons for doubting the usefulness of the investigator. The investigator had been in the school frequently for over a year prior to the drama project, as a public relations link between a team of university researchers and the school, and this administrator had a particularly difficult time classifying her.

Leaving aside the above illustration of difficulties to do with the project being conducted in a school, the following section will deal with questions about the project itself. Then come suggestions of how stagings could both be more controlled--as an experimental exercise--or
less structured, which could provide different kinds of information.

Several criticisms can be levelled at the organization of stagings. There is ambiguity and confusion regarding experimental control versus 'free action'. Limiting the number of persons per staging which, it was argued elsewhere, was necessary for practical reasons, nevertheless imposed what may be an 'unnatural' limit. This is suggested by the Public group of stagings where, although the minimal numbers rule was still in effect, more than two or three people took part. Yet, for the other three groups of stagings one could argue that a dyad, in particular, is not only normal but usual in everyday situations of this nature.

A similar limit was imposed, again for the sake of simplicity, by asking students to do without props unless absolutely necessary. It can easily be argued that having a family quarrel, for example, without 'home' props such as rooms and furniture makes questionable any conclusions about the spatial patterns involved. However, to repeat an argument that continues through the thesis, the students did act out various social situations which involved spatial arrangements of participants. And, even without a normal setting for the action, the students had to call on some past learning or less-than-conscious structuring of social situations to be able to act--their performance would, minimally, reflect this perceptual organization.

A debate on whether or not the stagings do replicate actual social situations is not the central concern here, for the writer does not claim to be proving such. Ideally, the staging project would have been paralleled by actual observation and participation in the various social episodes. A later chapter (6) suggests that a great deal of observation
of interaction in its "raw form" (Turner, 1966) would have to be done. Further, if portrayal of social roles can be cogently compared to 'the real thing' it is suggested that dramatizations provide a quick picture of a wide range of activities.

But this argument is a diversion from the point that students in the drama stagings did use spatial patterns, and had to, in spite of the fact that they were missing a conventional setting.

A somewhat different criticism concerns the spatial aspect in stagings--from what points are distances going to be measured between persons? After the first few stagings and a look at accompanying photographs it became apparent that distances would have to be measured in different ways. If students were side by side the important distance was shoulder-shoulder, and applied whether persons were standing or sitting.

If actors were sitting, facing each other, a foot-foot measurement is meaningless since faces and bodies, not feet, were 'communicating'. Face-to-face makes more sense. It was obviously the upper part of the body which was important in communication, for people would often lean forward, either standing or seated, decreasing distance.

There are references in the literature to this kind of measurement problem, often elaborate discussions being given to nose-to-nose versus any other part of the anatomy as the important distance in interaction. For present purposes, simply note that measurement of distance in stagings was adjusted relative to physical orientations of participants. Shoulder-shoulder or face-to-face distances were generally used but some personal judgment was exercised for other orientations.

It is obvious that with the amount of activity going on in
stagings it was impossible for the observer to make complete notes. Photographs and tapes helped considerably but nothing less than a continuous film with synchronized sound could accurately 'preserve' the stagings. This, of course, would lead one to new problems of data analysis, particularly the time to take account of every aspect of behaviour which would, with complete records, be available. A cinematic record was not even considered by the investigator precisely for this, and economic, reason(s).

Criticism of stagings could continue ad infinitum but would become tedious and tangent to the point of a monologue about methodology per se.

Improvements of the staging method could take one of two directions. The extreme in sophistication of a rigorous experimental study could chart movement by having scenes played out on an electrically sensitive grid. Or by using RDF equipment which would receive radio signals, from miniature transmitters unobtrusively worn by participants, which would precisely locate persons on the grid. The epitome of absurdity (perhaps) could be coded ink stamps on the feet of participants whose ink blots would be permanently recorded on grid size sheets of paper. Such precise information would lend itself to stringent statistical analysis. A less cumbersome study utilizing stagings could involve experimenting with distance patterns by instructing actors to adjust the space between them (similar to experiment of Horowitz, 1965). Would these spatial changes affect the major focus of interaction, verbal or non-verbal? If so, there is a likelihood that distance was an important aspect of the interaction; at least, part of the social pattern.

Statistical analysis is peripheral to the study of social
interaction if one is studying dynamics and process, rather than distribution, which interest can lead one far from refined (confined?) small group experiments. A record of the 'process' of social situations could best be obtained by a minimal amount of rigidity and a maximum of naturalistic observation. A skilled cameraman, for one, walking around the grid rather than being restricted to one vantage point, could catch pertinent and subtle detail that present photographs of stagings missed. Further, as mentioned earlier in the chapter, paralleling stagings with comparable observation of actual social situations would greatly expand one's focus of spatial patterns.

For example, if one were interested in spatial patterns in Hall's Consultive bracket, specifically the business interview, it is obviously sensible to observe such meetings and note (a) furniture arrangement and (b) if participants in the meeting change distance. An ideal area for such a study would be a National Employment Office where the large rooms holding 10-15 interviewers, each with his own desk, could be mapped and frequent and regular notes made on how close interviewees sat to the interviewer's desk. An advantage to this setting for observation is that the background of individual job seekers would be available.  

For two particular groups of stagings, Family Quarrel and Gossiping, naturalistic observation may be more difficult, or even impossible, which adds to the potentiality of stagings providing some information (the nature of this was argued elsewhere) on social behaviour or events which are not readily accessible to observation.

To turn from questions of methodology, did the theoretical orientations, based on Hall, apply to the data? In addition to difficulties
associated with methods to collect information on distance patterns in interaction, it was pointed out at the beginning of the chapter that Hall's theoretical formulation of the spatial dimension of social behaviour proved less than satisfactory to handle material from stagings.

A major quarrel with Hall is his deterministic 'tone', culture being depicted as a master programmer in the grip of which people are helpless to do anything but perform in prescheduled fashion. He talks about "man being programmed by culture in a massively redundant way" (1966:96), culture "delineating the amount and type of physical contact" (1964). It is easy, and tempting, to use 'cultural conditioning' as a rubric covering all social activity but it is doubtful if this puts us any further ahead in our understanding of either the dynamics or boundaries of proxemic phenomena.

Hall makes frequent reference to the biological sciences and inserts analogies between human and non-human animal behaviour at a regular rate. Not knowing sufficient biology to offer an erudite critique, one is, nevertheless, suspicious about some of his broad comparisons.

One of Hall's basic terms, 'personal space', is taken from biology--"the distance consistently separating members of non-contact species" (1966:112). But, for humans, who is to be classified as non-contact? According to Hall, Americans in contrast to Frenchmen or Arabs. Non-contact, he says, means that one avoids touching strangers. But the stranger/non-stranger continuum can be a highly complex matter for both social scientists and individuals as social actors. This writer would claim that studying distance patterns in connection with a social model could be more fruitful than an imposed scheme of boundaries determined on
the basis of kinesthetic, oral, thermal, olfactory and visual factors, as
Hall states his are. The writer is thinking here of an anonymity/intimacy
continuum (other social continua suggested on page 34) and whether one can
codify distance patterns in terms of these dichotomies. Regular kinds of
spatial patterns are carried into and through various situations which
may not, in spite of Hall's contention to the contrary, alter the more
basic spatial dimension--perhaps thought of more in terms of rhythm than
feet or inches.

Upon the basis of what seems to be an isolated experiment with
G. Trager, the two conversing at different distances (1966:138; 1959:163-4),
Hall formulated eight distances for North Americans--an experiment with
perhaps questionable validity yet he bases his scheme of classification
on it. Except for this admission about his experimental endeavours, Hall
mentions 'research' but one does not find specific reference to what and
who was studied. Following his remark regarding the division of space
into eight zones (later reducing this to four) Hall declares that "for
Americans the following shifts in voice are associated with specific ranges
of distances" (1959:164), and proceeds to outline these from 1. Very close
(3-6 inches) which is "top secret soft whisper" to 8. Across the room
(8-20 feet), a loud voice talking to a group. Hall's classification lacks
certain precision here. For example, he states that an audible whisper is
very confidential while a soft voice is only confidential. What do these
terms mean and what is the distinction between them? Hall (1966:110)
noted that distance may, of course, vary according to noise level or poor
lighting. People could, however, use other means than adjusting distance--
for example, increased eye contact (Argyle and Dean, 1965).
Talking about informal space, Hall again neglects to define it except to say that it includes encounters with others and that it is unstated (1959:105).

Hall claims that his selection of the terms Intimate, Personal, Social and Public to describe the distances people use was deliberate and that these labels give "a clue as to the types of activities and relationships associated with each distance, thereby linking them in people's minds with specific inventories of relationships and activities" (1966:108). This is an attractive way to justify nebulous (and possibly borrowed—see Joos, 1962) labels but indeed no basis for a framework of categories into which Hall fits human spatial patterns. His labels do not necessarily, and the investigator can attest to this, mean the same thing to himself and the reader. For example, a family quarrel was selected by the investigator as Intimate but the distances used by participants in stagings were not those which fit into Hall's Intimate slot. Implicit in Hall's spatial framework is the premise that Intimate = Close which is not necessarily valid. For example, husband and wife sitting in a living room, ten feet apart, may be 'close' and, conversely, as Hall himself points out, people packed into a bus are not necessarily Intimate. The problem which Hall glosses over is the definition of the situation by the participants. Hall does add a remark concerning his categorization of distances that "how people are feeling toward each other at the time is a decisive factor in the distance used" (1966:100), but this statement would appear to be in passing for he has to file gross kinds of behaviour into his categories.

The basis for Hall's spatial continuum (1966:118-119) is a 'study' of 'non-contact, middle class, healthy adults, mainly natives of the
northeastern seaboard of the United States" (1966:109). The details as to sampling and number of subjects, and research design are not clear. Hall tells us only that his generalizations were based on observations and 'neutral' interviews. Although he says that his generalizations do not represent all or even American behaviour--only the group in his sample--he appears to forget this in his discussions.

To consider a criticism of a more serious nature regarding Hall's spatial model, information from stagings suggests that a tri-partite conception is a more accurate model for proxemics than a four-part one. Such a tri-division is further supported by verbal expressions like 'the eternal triangle' and 'The Trinity'. If we assume that dialogue and speech are an articulation of our conceptual repertoire, it would appear more than accidental that there is an underlying tri-partite organization which may be reflected in non-verbal forms of human expression, including spatial patterns.

Many of Hall's generalizations about proxemics are seemingly based on personal anecdotal experiences, such as his statement that Arabs crowd in public places and do not recognize our private zone because to them "public is public" (1966:146). Hall's experiences are certainly fascinating and varied, but one is susceptible to doubts about his characterizations of spatial patterns knowing that some of his conclusions are possibly based on a single or limited personal encounter.

The four main labels for classifying variations in distance patterns decided, Hall writes that there are Intimate, Personal, Social and Public phases to personality, the zones around man being extensions of his personality, (1966:109; 121). These phases of personality Hall calls
'situational'. The jump from four kinds of spatial patterns to personality is a big one which leaves the reader somewhat apprehensive of Hall's psychological explication.

Hall expands proxemics to a point of being indicative of all that is cultural. He writes that the study of proxemics leads us to "hidden cultural frames that determine (writer's emphasis) the structure of a given people's perceptual world" (1966:153).

In the final chapter of Hidden Dimension, Hall emphasizes his position that all that man is and does is related to his experience of the phenomenon of space. Human beings are multidimensional, in the minds of most investigators of social behaviour, and it seems less than equitable to reduce the many (and it might be added—unstudied) facets to a single dimension. Proxemics, itself, is multidimensional, as Hall points out. Nonetheless, there is insufficient and imprecise evidence that proxemics, or any other body of theory, is the elucidation of social behaviour.

In spite of the fact that Hall outlines the purpose of his studies to be to "...show the reader that behind the apparent mystery, confusion and disorganization of life there is order" (1959:12), by providing the cultural analogue of a musical primer, he has not succeeded in adding to 'counterpoint' in the way of methodology.
FOOTNOTES

1. I am indebted to Mr. C.J. Grant for this idea.

2. Moreover, not all students taking part in the assignment considered a family quarrel as Intimate, a point which came out in informal discussion with the students after the staging project had been completed. As well, two girls stated that a gossip session to them was intimate.

3. Intimate is any face-to-face interaction occurring at less than a foot and a half.

4. "The specific distance chosen depends on the transaction; the relationship of the interacting individuals, how they feel, and what they are doing" (1960:120).
CHAPTER 6

POSSIBLE FIELD APPLICATION

Extending the major concern of the thesis, an exploration of the spatial dimension of social interaction, it is intended in this chapter to outline a framework for a field study of proxemic patterns—a spatial ethnography. It will be suggested in some detail that an ethnographic approach to the subject can be supplemented by semi-structured observation and the utilization of such records as photographs.

The problem of an ethnographer will be to study the spatial organization of a community, such as a village, particularly those features which Hall calls informal—largely unstated distances "maintained in encounters with others" (1966:105).

Such a study of spatial regularities in behaviour would take into account a considerable number of factors in social interaction. These would include sex, generation and age, status and situation. Partially covered by these would be considerations of such divisions as family/non-family, stranger/friend or work/non-work.

To illustrate the complexity of any one of these factors, an examination of the relationship between social and physical distance in terms of status (and the companion question—if equality is reflected by proximity) would lead to close analysis of interaction between persons of different status. Could a typical deference distance be established, such as a distinctive spatial zone around important persons like chiefs or leaders? Does this equal a leit-motiv? If one established the fact that, for example,
as relative status differential increased so did the actual distance used in interaction, changes in distance patterns may be a clue to less than obvious status levels.

It becomes apparent that isolating the salient fundamentals in any social situation, and particularly in spatial arrangements, is not a simple matter. However, once there is some understanding of the components of social situations which affect or modify spatial relationships (and vice versa), analysis of village proxemic patterns can be widened. Social control, marriage patterns, violation of norms, language, 'world view', the normative system, can serve as frameworks for queries of more general underlying proxemic principles.

Taking social control as an example, what spatial concerns are applicable? First, the common meanings of punishment, sanctions and rules which are read into the term social control may include a spatial reference.

Distance is deliberately used in banishment, whether someone is removed great distance from his village or put behind high walls within the community. If there are cases of banishment in the village we are hypothetically studying, is there, as well, some kind of distance scale being used; for example, serious offenders being sent furthest from the village. And are 'far' and 'furthest' codified in law in terms of actual distance? As noted in chapter 2, a report by Firth (1959) on three cases of banishment in Tikopia mentions that half a mile seemed to be adequate distance for punishment.

Less formal methods of using space as a sanction may operate, such as greater or lesser distance in face-to-face interaction with a social offender. One may signal disapproval by changing normal distance patterns.
By checking out social offenders one could ask if they have a wider or narrower space bubble around them, not necessarily by choice, but because others demand greater distance as an expression of disapproval—a scaled down ostracism. A related question would be if the offender recognizes that he is being 'kept at a distance' as a punishment or sign of disapproval.

To consider social discipline as the informal end of social control, one can talk about 'owing' proper involvement, deportment and distance to others in face-to-face situations—a kind of social multiprocity which may go on without participants having conscious awareness of it.

A thorough analysis of the complexities of the web of spatial patterns, some indicated above, could be expanded to a thesis in itself. However, the major concern of the writer is with possible methods of getting at proxemic material, in this case in a village situation. In addition to interviews and conversation, observations, a census and genealogies, it is suggested that semi-structured observations, maps, stagings and vocabulary analysis may provide data, either to check observation or to tap information about social situations which could not be directly recorded.

Following the writer's use of a grid to measure distances between interacting persons, one could adapt such a scheme for use in the village study. Rather than grids marked on floors one would prepare floor plans of house interiors, establishing actual distances between boundaries such as house posts, walls and furniture. This accurately noted, one could use such diagrams to note distances between persons as they conducted routine activities. In addition to simply noting static positions such as who sits where, or the nature and use of various areas of the house (as was
done by Mead, 1935; Firth, 1936; Piddington, 1957:498; Pierce, 1964; Chapin, 1967), one could record changes and adjustments in distances. By keeping regular and consistent spatial diaries of activities, one would have a large body of fairly precise information to draw upon, rather than relying on impressionistic observations.

Of course, there could be problems with such an approach. To people who would perhaps find note-taking an intrusion, a sheaf of recording sheets may be offensive. Assuming that villagers were tolerant of the ethnographer's peculiar habits, one could prepare recording sheets for any area of the village.

A further method of observation, this time somewhat unplanned, could result simply from the fact that the ethnographer is a stranger who will no doubt violate norms, including distance regularities. While it is not recommended that deliberate experiments in violation of spatial manners be overdone in any calculated fashion, cases of inadvertent trespassing which caused a reaction such as embarrassment, anger or silence, may point to an unnoticed pattern.

As the ethnographer's position in the community changes from stranger to non-stranger, are adjustments made in distance by villagers?³

In addition to adapting a grid system for measuring distances, the staging design of the writer's project could be extended to the village situation, although certainly on a more informal basis. If one could have villagers act out various everyday situations⁴, one could (a) establish if such distance patterns were the same as observed of actual social situations and (b) have people act out situations which perhaps one could not observe, such as family quarrels. In regards to (a), if one could legitimately argue
that distance patterns used in stagings accurately paralleled those in actual situations, one would have a useful and valid means of quickly getting at a wide range of behaviour. Stagings could thus be a quick way of collecting cross-cultural data on proxemics.

A simpler variation of stagings would be to ask villagers to place themselves in the position they would normally be for various activities, which could include situations or activities which the ethnographer was not allowed to witness. And, if villagers could not block out such positions, or refused to do so, this may be an indication of some perceptual pattern or rule of behaviour hitherto unnoticed by the ethnographer.

Children could, as well, be asked to act at various everyday activities which would be one way of finding out when children learn such implicit codes of behaviour as distance patterns. Do distances between children in stagings mimic those used by adults? Prior to such stagings, the ethnographer would have presumably made observations of children's games and play which he could compare with adult activities in terms of spatial arrangements.

In brief then, utilizing stagings would get at two spheres of inquiry:

1. Do portrayals of social situations parallel the actual, particularly in regard to distance patterns?
2. Do children use the same spacing patterns as adults and, if not, when do they learn such a 'code'?

Another suggestion easily follows from actual stagings—rather than people actually placing themselves in positions, ask them to draw settings of persons in various situations and to indicate who would be
where. This could be done on the ethnographer's recording sheets. And here, again, the ethnographer can try to get at any overt codification of distance rules by asking why arrangements would be drawn in a particular way. It must be noted here that there is no a priori assumption that drawings would accurately parallel the ethnographer's observations of actual situations, but if this did happen, drawings would be useful, at least when compared to other kinds of data. Indicating where people stand or sit on mimeographed sheets may be less than agreeable, or understandable, to villagers and could cause resentment. If villagers were not able or willing to draw settings, this fact is datum in itself and may give a clue to spatial perceptions (or lack of them) or some norm in village life.

Furthermore, there is a possibility of perceptual difficulty here—transposing a physical arrangement of persons in an actual social situation to paper may be confusing or impossible for the villagers under study. The mental dynamics of such a process are no doubt complicated.

Fairly late in the field study, asking villagers to plot situations of their own choice on paper and having the ethnographer try to label what was being represented, would be a check on his grasp of spatial codes.

Similar to both the staging approach and drawings, an adaptation of Horovitz' experiments with body-buffer zones (see chapter 2) is another means of collecting data. Remembering his design of having people approach either a person or object to the point where they no longer felt comfortable, one could have villagers do likewise. In spite of the fact that they may joke or laugh about such an 'assignment' they would still, as in normal everyday situations, have to draw on some conceptual 'pool', which,
it has been argued throughout the thesis, is bounded and can be uncovered. The semi-structured experiment could be done in much less formal fashion than Horovitz—for example, casually asking someone to indicate how far he would stand from a particular person in a conversation, then asking how close or far one would be before the distance felt uncomfortable. A basic problem, however, would be for the ethnographer and villager to be using the same definition of 'uncomfortable'. Assuming there were no problems in this regard, the ethnographer could collect information on a variety of patterns in terms of the participants' subjective evaluation of what constituted usual and comfortable spatial boundaries.

A different approach to the collection of proxemic material would be to check villager's vocabulary for terms referring to space or having a spatial connotation. This may give the ethnographer an indication of the depth of the spatial dimension involved in his study. Such a listing done by Hall (1966:87) for English, revealed 5000 terms of this nature which, he notes, is 20% of the words in the particular dictionary he surveyed.

As well as simply listing any distance or distance-related words, one may find a clue to spatial connotations of, for example, social relationships. Is there anything comparable to English reference to relatives in terms of 'distant' or 'close'?

As a final suggestion of methodological approaches to a proxemic study of a community, some consideration should be given to the use of photographic records as a source of raw data.

If one had a large and representative pictorial collection of various social situations, an analysis of distance patterns could be done
at leisure either by the ethnographer or by independent judges following a notation system. Such a system could be developed by the ethnographer for his particular study, or adapt an already existing scheme, such as that of Hall (1963) or Bales.

A pictorial analysis in anthropology is certainly not a new idea. Mead and Weyman (1965), for example, presented a cross-cultural study in the form of photographs. One advantage of such a record, is its permanent availability for study after a return from the field.

In summary, this chapter has tried to indicate the potentiality of systematic field work in proxemics by supplementing already established means of observation and interpretation of human behaviour with techniques developed in the thesis project. No claim is made to covering all conceivable methods of study; however, it should be clear from the suggestions which have been put forward that there are a variety of possibilities for research.

It has been argued in the thesis that since concepts about space and distances vary among people, and is reflected in language, why should these not be observable in actual ground patterns and social interaction? Boundaries of territory, property, social relationships and modesty are considered by ethnographers—why not the spatial boundaries to social interaction? Just because we cannot easily see such a perceptual repertoire for the ordering of space does not cause behaviour patterns, in this case spatial, to grind to a halt; nor should the efforts of social scientists to circumscribe and to make sense of regularities in space by obstructed by the paucity of the theoretical equipment. Stagings and observations done for the thesis, plus fleeting references in the literature, convince the
writer that regularities in spatial patterns do exist, and can be directly studied, so why ignore them? A systematic study of proxemics could become a legitimate area of research such as linguistic or kinship studies.
FOOTNOTES

1. Taking, for present purposes, the definition of Notes and Queries — "...a territorially separate collection of homesteads (a homestead being a single habitation the occupants of which form a household) which is regarded as a distinct unit, and of such a size that its inhabitants can all be personally acquainted" (1951:64).

2. Essential to such an argument is the assumption that since status may be signalled by deportment, terms of address, gestures, and rituals, it is likely not isolated from distance patterns which are no less cues to social relationships.

3. The writer is reminded of a conversation with an anthropologist doing field work in a Hindu community and her comments of how physical proximity increased to the point of considerable discomfort on her part as the women came to define her as sister—the only classification the could assign to a woman who was obviously interested in their way of life and problems. By the end of the anthropologist's field study, it was not uncommon for a Hindu woman to be sitting with her head on the anthropologist's shoulder.

4. And one cannot assume that this is a legitimate request, for even though the high school students in the writer's project had no difficulty 'performing', persons in another culture may not even be able to project behaviour from 'real' to 'let's pretend'.

5. And how do they learn? Are there deliberate instructions to children regarding space management? Or is instruction less explicit; such as pushing a child away every time he is closer than, say, three feet?

6. Such as how far or close would a villager stand before he felt uneasy in such situations as the following: a conversation with a male friend, a female friend, conversation about children, or taboo subjects (would persons be further apart than usual, reflecting perhaps a sacred dimension to the conversation, or closer together—a protective distance for dealing with a dangerous topic), appearing before a chief or other superior, giving orders. The variety of situations is endless.

7. For example, Andrews (1956), Levi-Strauss (1964).
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In conjunction with various studies being done at the school by a U.B.C. research team you are being asked to spend this class period writing down your ideas on the following topic.

This essay is not an exam or test, or something that is going to be graded. Write a paragraph (or more if you can) on each of the following points. Try to express your own views and not what you think you ought to say.

TOPIC

A. Describe how you behave in the following situations. (Behaviour in this case means what you do, not what you say). Give as detailed a description as possible so that a stranger of your age (say from another country) could learn how to fit in with the group.

1. Talking casually in the hall at school

2. An informal get-together or party.

B. Describe an occasion where you felt out of place with a group of friends your age. Were you embarrassed? What do you think were the causes? How did you handle the situation?
APPENDIX B

DIAGRAM OF STAGE PLAN

curtain

edge of stage

observer -- camera -- elev. 7'7" above stage level

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APPENDIX C

SUMMARY OF DATA

Data collected by the methods briefly outlined in chapter 3 included: (a) 354 essays (b) 2000 questionnaire schedules (c) 9 pages of quotes from etiquette books (d) 55 stagings of approximately two minutes each.

(a) Of the essays submitted, 249 were perused in a first attempt to cull information about implicit rules of behaviour. 105 were not used because of identification difficulties, the investigator using names of respondents to acquire information from School records about the students; specifically, sex, age and ethnic background. It was suspected when the essay topic was being formulated that there would be differences in responses according to cultural background and since the School concerned had a large population of students of non-Canadian origin this could be checked. However, this did not prove to be so after essays had been examined.

One major trend soon appeared as essays were read—students did not write about non-verbal behaviour (the major interest of the investigator) but rather about what people say to each other.

The most frequent comments in the essays were "Just act normally" or "Talk about..." which gives no indication of the implicit social rules, particularly those having to do with spatial arrangements, which the investigator was trying to tap.

(b) From the 2000 questionnaires collected, 293 (the number first coded by the research team) were run through the prepared MV Tab computer
program to get an indication of patterns of responses. It was quickly apparent that replies to the writers' questions, and the questions themselves (a realization which would have been obvious before the questionnaire was administered had the writer had less naivety about the meaning and utility of questions), would provide minimal useful data for how does one ascertain what it means, for example, when 203 students agree and 73 disagree that 'one must follow and believe in the rules of conduct'? Or that embarrassment occurs most frequently (1) in public places (2) being alone with a friend of the opposite sex? The blemishes of the approach need not waste our time--let it be sufficient to say that information from the questionnaire was not considered as data for the writer's explorations of spatial norms in interaction.

(c) The next tack was an analysis of popular etiquette manuals to give some indication of formalized rules of space management but this, again, was not fruitful. Although there is considerable information about rules of eye behaviour, (for example, Post, 1965:15; 1955:18. Pringle, 1949. Wilson, 1939. Vanderbilt, 1950. Ortega y Gasset, 1957:116) and physical contact, any such detailed commentary is lacking when one considers spatial norms which are, nonetheless, "certain mechanical conventions to be observed, essential to ease of living" (Post, 1955:2).

(d) We begin to get at such mechanical conventions concerning spatial patterns upon analysis of data from stagings which included 111 photographs, 74 minutes 11 seconds of tape, and 190 recording sheets. Description and discussion of what occurs spatially in the stagings will be found in chapter 4, the following chapter dealing with problems and arguments about the nature of the data and proxemic theory.
1. Established in an earlier study (1966) by the writer about the relationship of occupational goals and ethnic background.