

# International People: Profiles of Experience and Consciousness

(Research Design and Respondent Characteristics)

by *David B. Willis*

## ABSTRACT

What are the lasting effects of an intercultural education and experience? What might a profile of 'international people' show us? To answer such questions a longitudinal investigation of the alumni of an elite international school (1913-1983) was undertaken. These people share the common thread of an intercultural experience at a young age along with their education in this international school. The school, which we will call Columbia Academy (CA), has followed Canadian, then American, and most recently a mixture of American and International Baccalaureate curricula. Its student population has been from diverse cultural backgrounds.

In the present paper the theoretical background of the study will be examined, followed by a discussion of questions with which I started the research, and an explanation of the research design. Most of the paper will be a look at initial results: basic demographic characteristics which define this study population of interculturally-experienced people as significant cohorts.

An extensive literature review indicated that this may be the first longitudinal study of individuals raised in a transnational cultural environment.

Are transnationals or 'internationals' (internationally-experienced people) somehow different, somehow special? The evidence amassed clearly suggests that the answer is an emphatic 'Yes.' The data collected in this study from questionnaires and interviews indicates that these people are, on the whole, unique, highly-integrated individuals who display characteristics essentially consonant with Maslow's 'self-realized' individual or those positive aspects associated with Erikson's last two developmental stages (generativity and integrity). This paper is an introductory report on these transnational, transcultural people.

(As part of a larger project, this study was supported by the Toyota Foundation, Grant No. 86-III-004, Dr. Yasuko Minoura, Project Director).

What are the lasting effects of an intercultural education and experience? What might a profile of 'international people' show us? To answer such questions a longitudinal investigation of the alumni of an elite international school for the period 1913-1983 was undertaken supported by the Toyota Foundation (Grant No. 86-III-004). These people share the common thread of an intercultural experience at a young age and an education in an international school. The school, which I will call Columbia Academy (CA), has followed Canadian, then American, and most recently a mixture of American and International Baccalaureate curricula. Its student population has been from diverse cultural backgrounds.

In the present paper the theoretical background of the study will be examined, followed by a discussion of questions from the beginning of the research. Next will follow an explanation of research design and a look at some initial results: basic demographic characteristics which define this study population of interculturally-experienced people as significant cohorts.

An extensive literature review indicated this may be the first longitudinal study of individuals raised in a transnational cultural environment.

### **Theoretical Background**

The theoretical basis of the approach used follows the anthropologists Geertz, Rohlen and others. The primary theoretical framework . . .

- a) is hermeneutic or interpretive
- b) is based on the concept of experience
- c) utilizes the idea of a 'cultural critique'

My conception of social life here is organized in terms of symbols whose meanings must be grasped if culture and its principles are to be understood. It is a pluralistic approach, freely crossing the boundaries of anthropology, psychology, and education.

Experience is one of the key theoretical concepts in this analysis. As Turner and Bruner (1986) have noted, there are both private and common experience, but it is by definition the common experiences that identify us as members of a given culture. For those who once belonged to this particular international school in Japan, and who were/are members of its transnational culture, what is the substance and meaning of their common intercultural experience?

When we designate the experience of life in a multicultural community in Japan as typical, we notice that the activities of individual and community are shared, both in terms of what actually happens and in how participants feel about the happenings. Not only are experiences shared but so are the sentiments arising from them. Activities and feeling reinforce each other. We notice, too, the linkage between past and future when focusing on the typicality of event and sentiment. The recognition of what is typical is of course based on others who have gone through that experience (or something like it) before. As many of the subjects commented, the study brought to them the existence of

'the experience of (the CA or multicultural) experience'

The recognition that what is taking place in their lives is 'a replaying,' in some dimensions, of what has happened to others, was significant enough to compel many respondents to write detailed 'thank you notes'. The extended intercultural experience of these people is not only typical but has been intense, in places disruptive, making self-perception ever sharper. Their's is a more critical lens than those of us raised monoculturally. Recognizing their 'typicality', however unusual it has been, then becomes a means of recognizing how to feel and interpret what has happened to both individuals and to what is a special, transnational culture.

This project attempts to articulate the many possible answers (especially feelings and interpretations) which these interculturally experienced adults have related. The possibility of a novel insight or perspective is offered: how culture affects human development thereby extending our understanding of socialization and the formation of both personal and group identity.

## **Questions**

The original aim of the study was to capture empirically how these people developed in a multicultural setting, especially in terms of identity formation and the effect of culture on human development. The following sequence of human experience was seen as a model:

awareness-perspective-empathy-commitment-action

The practical result aimed for was a set of profiles of the various qualities of these people. Research questions included:

- 1) How do individuals raised in an international environment incorporate a sys-

- tem (or systems) of meaning specific to culture (or cultures)?
- 2) What is the intermediary role of an international school in inculcating cultural meaning?
  - 3) What are the differential effects of growing up in Japan?
  - 4) What is the relationship between biculturalism and bilingualism?
  - 5) What is the impact of an intercultural experience (upon life course, self-concept, and value orientations)?
  - 6) Does having an intercultural experience facilitate a sense of worldmindedness? What enables or hinders intercultural maturity?
  - 7) What are the possible implications for 'internationalization' for Japan and other countries? What facilitates/hinders 'intercultural maturity'?

The immediate goal was to develop a set of longitudinally-based profiles of internationally-experienced people (along with control groups in the US and Japan who have not had such experiences) in order to answer the above questions.

### **Research Design**

The research is ongoing and consists of multi-instrument data collection. The methodology is integrated: anthropology, psychology, education. Primary data-gathering is being undertaken through extended, structured interviews: field study in the international community of Kobe, Japan; and a six-page questionnaire sent to 1739 alumni (former students and teachers) world-wide. The questionnaire was constructed taking into consideration subjects' observations in the first stage of the project (Willis, 1986). Moreover, a large number of previously constructed surveys with intercultural themes were reviewed before generating the present study.

The 1739 alumni to whom the questionnaires were finally sent represented all known alumni addresses as of March 1988 for the period 1913-1983. The population surveyed is a purposive, not a representative, population. Since the school had not maintained a regular address list, an extensive address data base had to be constructed. As one might expect, there were many errors in reported addresses for the population. It seemed reasonable to assume that at least 5-10 per cent of the non-returns were also faulty addresses, deceased, misdelivered, etc.

In order to elicit respondent interest in completing the questionnaire, the cover

letter stressed the coincidence of the school's 75th Anniversary Celebration in 1988. Following the advice of one alumni, a token photograph of the school in its beautiful mountain setting was included along with the usual stamped, self-addressed envelope. In the case of those not in Japan or the US, international air reply coupons were supplied. It was also stated that the study had the support and encouragement of CA as well as the Toyota Foundation (Grant 86-III-004), would be confidential, and that the results would be discussed in a future article in CA's *Alumni Review*. The cover letter was signed by David Willis, who had been a teacher in the school for five years, and Walter Enloe, a co-researcher who had attended the school as a student in the 1960s.

An important issue was the possibility of results being biased significantly in ways related directly to the purposes of the research. People who were particularly interested in the research problem would be most likely to return questionnaires. To an extent, the response rates, which are reasonably high, obviate this problem. Having a highly literate (and rather opinionated) population also helped.

Still, the problem of missing a potential shadow population which may have significantly different interpretations of the international experience is a serious one. Members of this group may have purposely excluded themselves from the address list of the institution because, for them, the experience was damaging and something they would like to forget.

How can we find this group and the dimensions of their experience? One way of discovering them has already been broached by another methodology used in the study: interviews. During interviews with alumni the following leading question is asked: Do you know of anyone for whom the experience of an international upbringing was damaging? If the answer is yes, then other questions include: If so, how? In what ways? What happened to them as far as you know and, from your point of view, why?

Although this approach fails to obtain quantifiable data, the quality of the information is, at least affectively-speaking, quite high. It approximates, after many interviews have been conducted, what might have been obtained had the shadow sample actually been surveyed. Another method of searching for such data is to discuss former problem students with the guidance counselors and principals of this international school. These people are of course at least partly in the business of dealing with individuals who, for whatever, reason, are 'disturbed.' In the case of

the present study, guidance counselors (both Japanese and non-Japanese), as well as principals, were interviewed to try and further approximate the potential missing population. The extent to which those excluded are distinctive calls for a later, separate research report. It is my conclusion, though, that this 'damaged' group is very small, contrary to much previous research on interculturally-experienced people.

The final total return was 957 (782 non-return), or a return rate of 55.03%. Considering the nature of the population, the return rate is remarkable and can be attributed to persistence in the survey process: a second survey mailing, three follow-up post-cards, and one final, specially-targetted mailing of the questionnaire to cohorts inadequately represented. After accounting for returns that included bad addresses, deceased, etc., the data available totals 685 questionnaires, 573 student and 112 faculty questionnaires, covering the period 1913-1983. I will focus here only on preliminary analyses of those alumni who were former students, although findings from a control sample of American adults which was taken at the same time will also be mentioned.

### **Internationally-Experienced People: Characteristics of Respondents**

A key goal of this paper is to demonstrate the research base of internationally-experienced people available for more detailed analysis and to begin the articulation of the many voices and patterns we are encountering. A person's personality and culture are probably the most important parts of identity. Especially important are the acquisition and maintenance of this identity (including 'finding oneself'), love and marriage, and becoming involved in one's culture or in multiple cultures.

The population consists of 572 alumni of Columbia Academy who attended the school between 1913-1983. Basic information about respondents (N=572) is noted below:

Date of Birth: Range	1903-1969
Median year	1950 (Baby Boom)
Female/Male Ratio:	56.4% Females 43.6% Males
Marital Status:	Married 64.8% Single 24.7% Divorced 5.5%
	Median age at marriage 24.6 years

Two findings on marital status stand out:

- a) almost 10% more IS (international school) adults than US adults in the control sample remain single
- 2) IS adults have a median marriage age four years *older* than US adults (contrary to received wisdom about internationals marrying at a younger age)

Implications of these findings are hard to ascertain and could be interpreted in either a positive or a negative light. For example, later marriage age and a higher number of singles could be attributed to higher educational attainment, to a generalized social alienation, or simply being more 'choosy' after having known many different types of people. The relatively high number of single people at least partly reflects recent graduates in the sample. More research through interviews is needed here.

Of special interest are two questions connected with time: a) the length of stay in Japan and b) the total years spent outside one's country of citizenship. It would seem logical to assume that the amount of each of these would have a significant impact on an individual's world view. From interviews, previous research on groups such as Japanese returnees and international high school students, and discussions with people such as counselors who have the opportunity of the 'long view' of CA people, it was concluded that there are three distinctive categories of intercultural experience:

	Period of Stay in Japan	CA Alumni
Sojourners	1 – 5 years	18.6%
Long-termers	6 – 10 years	15.3%
Resident Expatriates/Residents	>10 years	66.1%

The median time spent in Japan for our study population was 14.8 years. Clearly, these are people committed to living in Japan at some point in their lives for an extended period. When I examined the time these people had spent outside the country of their citizenship a similar pattern obtained:

	Period of Stay Outside Country of Citizenship	CA Alumni
Sojourners	1 – 5 years	11.7%
Long-termers	6 – 10 years	18.9%
Resident Expatriates/Residents	>10 years	69.4%

The median time spent outside one's country of citizenship was 16.18 years. Most of these people have obviously been committed by circumstances to life in a transna-

International People: Profiles of Experience and Consciousness

tional or transcultural society. For most it is a joyful experience, easily seen as a great benefit, as will be discussed below. For others, being forced by circumstances beyond one's control has led to certain types of social dysfunction which can only be described as problematic. As analysis of the survey results continues the above categories will be examined by nationality, culture, age and other cohort groupings in order to try and discover unique patterns in international adjustment.

Present home for the members of the CA alumni is as follows: US 59.9%, Japan 19.0%, Canada 11.4%, Europe 5.4%, and other 4.4%. Further breakdown shows a clear preference for the U.S. West Coast (21.6%), followed by the US Midwest/South (21.1%), US East Coast (17.2%), Canada (11.4%), Japan-Kansai (11.1%), Japan-Kanto (5.6%), Other (4.4%), and Japan-Other (2.3%).

Citizenship was as follows:

United States	57.1%	Japanese	13.5%	Canadian	12.1%
European	9.5%	Other	6.6%	Binationals	1.4%

Compared to their parents, there is a generational/marital trend towards American and Canadian citizenship and away from Japanese, European and Other citizenships. I note, though, that this category has a different meaning to our respondents than does the category 'Culture.' The two are not always co-terminous, while citizenship is often a matter of convenience, culture is something special, a deeply-felt personal matter. The answers for our section on the respondent's 'culture' were supplied by them without the benefit of a list or other guide. Their answers are problematic as well as instructive-and they greatly aroused our curiosity:

Respondent's Culture(s)

Anglo-American	47.4%	Japanese	5.9%	European	4.1%
Asian (Other)	2.5%	Other	3.6%		
USA/Japan	11.1%	Japan/USA	7.4%	Total Mixed	36.5%
International	11.5%	Other/USA	6.5%		

Spouse's Culture

Anglo-American	67.2%	Japanese	8.9%	European	4.9%
Asian (Other)	3.0%	Other	3.2%		
USA/Japan	1.5%	Japan/USA	2.2%	Total Mixed	12.8%
International	3.7%	Other/USA	5.4%		

Father's Culture(s)

Anglo-American	50.2%	Japanese	8.9%	European	9.3%
----------------	-------	----------	------	----------	------



David B. Willis

Asian (Other)	6.1%	Other	2.7%		
USA/Japan	9.5%	Japan/USA	2.0%	Total Mixed	19.7%
International	5.5%	Other/USA	2.7%		
Mother's Culture					
Anglo-American	49.6%	Japanese	13.4%	European	10.0%
Asian (Other)	4.3%	Other	2.7%		
USA/Japan	7.2%	Japan/USA	2.2%	Total Mixed	19.9%
International	4.8%	Other/USA	5.7%		

There are obviously a significant number of people who, having had an intercultural experience at a young age, view themselves as belonging to not one but a melange of cultures. The most important finding here is the existence of . . .

### multiple cultural identities

Those of us from monolingual, monocultural backgrounds easily overlook the possibility of anything other than a 'monolithic identity, so absorbed are we in our own bias. Japanese, in particular, seem unable to conceive of (or accept) anyone who incorporates Japanese culture alongside another culture. Yet the evidence from the present research is strong on this point: over one-third of IS alumni view themselves as having a mixed culture.

Related to culture is the language or languages (dialect/dialects) used with family members or work-mates and while reading/writing. Over half the population are bilingual or multilingual (55.5%). Monolinguals accounted for 44.6% of the total. Language usage patterns tended to be mainly focused around English.

The religion of the subjects was fairly predictable, given the Protestant missionary background of the school. Main-stream Protestants totalled 45.2%, supplemented by Evangelical Christians (6.7%) and Catholics (4.4%), for a total of 56.3% Christians. Buddhist/Shinto followers were 4.2%, as were those whose answers tended to be 'ecumenically inclined' (4.2%). Other small numbers reported included Agnostics (2.3%), Hindus (0.9%), and Others (3.7%).

Subjects who either answered None or gave No Response totalled 28.5% (12.6% +15.9%). This seemed rather high, given the formerly solid Christian foundations of the school. Here, again, there is a need for further analysis.

The self-selected question on family income revealed a strong pattern of mate-

rial success:

Where I now live my family would be seen as . . .

8.2%	Low average in income
33.5%	Average
27.0%	High average
24.2%	Relatively well-off
2.1%	Other:

Any population where over half the respondents claim to be well-to-do can obviously be said to 'have made it.'

As for participation in voluntary associations or public service activities, 39.4% answered Yes, 30.5% No, and 30.1% Sometimes. There is a wide spectrum of political views:

23.6%	Conservative
18.4%	Independent
31.9%	Liberal
22.0%	Middle-of-the-road
4.1%	Other:

But political activity is very important for only a small number of the members of the population, though over a third are sometimes active (presumably at voting time):

7.0%	Active Politically
53.6%	Inactive Politically
36.5%	Sometimes Active Politically
2.9%	Other

On the other hand, many read the newspaper frequently, with 73.8% reading it either every day or 'often'. Only 9.1% read it once a week and 7.1% 'almost never.' The newspaper articles of most interest are: international news (88.1%), politics (48.1%), business (36.1%), home/family (34.7%), sports (21.4%), and 'other' (14.5%).

In another category of daily culture, foods often eaten (every week) included American (79.0%), Japanese (66.0%), Chinese (54.2%), European (34.9%), Indian (12.7%), Korean (5.5%), and Other (9.3%). Again, the international flavor is clear.

### **Education**

The grades which our population attended Columbia Academy varied considerably, but 64.3% entered the school between Grades 1-8 (elementary/middle school)

and 35.7% between Grades 9-12 (high school). Those in our population leaving by Grade 8 totalled 10%, while 64.7% graduated from the high school.

The pattern of elementary, middle, and secondary education by country and the type of school attended (e.g., CA, other international, military base school, public, private, home study, etc.) were also part of the survey.

Japan consistently ranked highest as the country lived in during schooling, with close to two-thirds of the students attending their primary, middle and high school in this country. The U.S. or Canada followed with about 15% for each of the three levels. Those who attended two or more schools during elementary, junior high or high school totalled 10.5%, 8.8% and 16.5%, respectively.

As for types of school attended, CA plus other international schools accounted for 33.4% at the elementary, 54.1% at the middle, and 62.4% at the high school level. Public schools (US, Japan, or other home country) were next with 24.9%, 20.8% and 11.1%. Two or more kinds of school at the elementary level claimed 21.1%, at the middle school level 12.5%, and at high school 21.0%.

An especially interesting group which will be examined in detail later are those who had 'home schooling' or correspondence work taught at home by their parents at the elementary level (9.1%). The most often-mentioned program was Calvert School from Baltimore, USA, which has been catering to missionaries in remote areas for many years.

Education after high school included the categories 'None' (only 24 or 4.2%), 'Vocational/tech/two-year college' (57 or 10%), 'Military service' (75 or 13.1%), and 'Other' (82 or 14.4%). What surprised us, however, were the large numbers who had taken college and advanced degrees. Even given the elite status of CA as a college preparatory school, an impressive finding was the number of people who had completed college (83.9%) or attended graduate school (39.6%).

<i>Advanced Degrees</i>		<i>Percent of Total</i>
M.A./M.Sc./M.Ed.	133	23.2%
M.B.A.	26	4.5%
J.D.	9	1.6%
M.D./D.D.S.	22	3.8%
Ph.D.	43	7.5%
Other (Social Work, Music, Divinity, Nursing, etc.)	81	14.1%

It is rather astonishing for 23.2% of the graduates of one high school to have re-

ceived Master's Degrees-and 7.5% doctorates. That nearly 40% had some kind of post-graduate education speaks highly for the graduates, schooling and/or ambition. Clearly, this group of interculturally-experienced people puts a *high* premium on education. This might be attributed to a combination of factors: parental background, CA's elite position as well as its fine education-*and* the constant 'hidden' pressures to learn from the 'educational environment' of the transnational culture.

**Educational Effects**

What educational effects were discovered? A significant percentage of CA alumni (92.2%) claimed that their high school experience had made them more sensitive to people of other cultures. This contrasts strongly with American adults in our control sample who agreed with this statement (only 35.7%). The difference is even more remarkable between those Americans who disagreed that their school experience made them more sensitive to people of other cultures (51.1%) when compared to those CA alumni who disagreed (3.9%). It would seem reasonable to assume that this sensitivity implicitly represents important contributions which international alumni have made to intercultural understanding.

An essential component of cross-cultural sensitivity is being able to 'put oneself in another's shoes,' to think beyond the boundaries of one's own culture. By contrast, 91.5% of CA alumni compared to less than half of the US adults (47%) felt that their high school influenced their ability to project themselves into another culture's mode of thought. What is the perception of America? CA alumni have less of a negative perception (17%) than the American alumni (28.9%).

CA alumni were much more influenced to become high achievers by their high school experience (80%) than US adults (51.5%), partly reflecting the college-prep track of CA alumni.

Personal networks these people have developed also show an international influence. For example, 60% state that they have close relatives in a different country. The location of these relatives is as follows:

United States/Canada	17.1%	Japan	28.1%	Europe	9.3%
Two or more countries	34.7%	Other	10.8%		

The category of close friends who live in a different country was even higher: 79.6%. These friends live in the following places:

United States/Canada	10.6%	Japan	19.4%	Europe	4.6%
Two or more countries	58.9%	Other			4.4%

Where transnational people have themselves lived is an interesting question. One would assume a high mobility. For this question respondents were asked to provide a list of the most important moves and places that have affected their lives. The median number of moves was 3.9 and the places people had moved were as follows:

US	7.0%	Japan	7.5%
US+Japan	38.3%	US+Other	2.6%
Japan+Other	5.6%	Europe (One country)	0.4%
Asian (One country)	0.2%	Japan+US+Other	16.2%
Four or More Different Places	22.2%		

The mobility of transnationals is indeed far-reaching. Not only do an overwhelming number feel they have a broad knowledge of the world, but they also feel they could be 'at home' anywhere they lived. But this mobility is not of the 'drifter-type,' as is sometimes represented in the literature on internationally-experienced people.

CA alumni have long experience overseas, nearly two-thirds having spent more than ten years abroad and another 29% more than five years overseas. Almost 84% of US alumni, on the other hand, have no international experience whatsoever.

Significantly **fewer** mature transnationals have anxiety about long-term commitments (e.g., making friends) than American adults or students (85% vs. 63% and 59%). But these commitments appear to be based on interpersonal ties and do not preclude shifts in roles or locations. The idea that transnationals do not like to be 'tied down' is common, but this can be interpreted in two ways, one negative, the other positive, depending on one's perspective. About the same number of transnationals disagreed with the following statement as American students and adults:

"I do not like to be tied down to a single role or location for any extended period of time."

A slightly higher percentage agreed with the statement (37.1% cf. 23.8% and 34.5%), but 'not being tied down' could also indicate an appreciation of the positive values of flexibility, innovation and creativity. The careers of transnationals suggest this latter interpretation to be more accurate.

#### **Composite Picture-CA (Intercultural) Experience**

The typical CA-ite who is not Japanese has mixed feelings about whether being at the school gave them much contact with Japan. There is both agreement (56.9%)

that they had much contact with Japan and disagreement (37.2%). Three of four believe being at CA influenced them to become a high achiever, and nine of ten felt the experience influenced them to think beyond the boundaries of their own culture. Nearly eight of ten felt it was not a culture shock, probably because the international culture is their culture, while only one of ten thought it had been 'a time of frustration and discomfort. From the reports of many of our respondents it was the 'return' to the culture/country of citizenship which was most commonly a time of 'culture shock,' not living in an exotic setting.

Did being at Columbia Academy help them have a more positive perception of their own and other cultures? The categories have been collapsed from four (agree strongly, agree, disagree, disagree strongly) to two for simplicity's sake.

Being at CA . . .	Agree	Disagree
. . .helpd me have a more positive perception of Japan. . .	61.6%	20.9%
. . .helpd me have a more positive perception of my own country or culture. . .	51.0%	29.6%
. . .gave me a more negative perception of America. . .	15.4%	76.7%

And an overwhelming 92.8% felt that the experience had made them more sensitive to people of other cultures. I will attempt to analyze some of the reasons for these answers in later papers.

**Composite Picture-Personality**

What kind of people are we looking at in this particular population? Eight of ten feel they are sociable and gregarious, while only 13.7% disagreed with this characterization. Most believe that it is more important to think of others (78.7%) than of oneself (14.9%) if one is to be successful in life. A large number (39.2%) believe that the only thing that can be the foundation of life is a religious or spiritual life, but an even larger number disagreed (54.8%).

As for feelings about the very personal emotion of love, there is an interesting division in answers :

Love is a family implanted, permanent commitment and the obligations that go with it are more important than individual feelings. (53.1%)

Love is an expression of spontaneous inner freedom, a deeply personal choice between two people. (46.7%)

I suspect these findings to be related to age, something which will be later investigated.

These are strongly inner-directed people, with 88.3% feeling that when they make plans, they are almost certain they can make them work (only 8% disagreed with this). An almost identical percentage (86.6%) disagreed with the idea that 'good luck is more important than hard work for success.' Many, but not all, consider themselves to be 'very competitive' (55.5% vs. 40.5%). Yet almost half feel '... it is better to be good at listening than to be good at expressing oneself' (37.1% disagreed and 13.1% had no opinion) and only 13.8% put their work ahead of their family.

Few see the fundamental measure of success as being in material wealth (only 8.4%), and a large number did not agree at all with this idea (88.5). Nearly all of the respondents (92.8%) feel they have something which they can be proud of, and for many this may be their family. Eight of ten said that their family life came before their work.

What problems might these people have? At times in their lives many say they have felt alienated or left out because of their upbringing (58.8%), but a significant number disagreed with this statement entirely (39.7%). Contrary to a popular impression, only 14.2% say they have anxiety about long-term commitments (e.g., making friends), while 82.1% disagree with this statement. These people are resilient and flexible: Most agreed with the statement that they could probably feel at home almost anywhere they lived (72.8% vs. 24.1%).

Are these people truly 'international' and, if so, on what basis can we justify our characterization of them as such? As for cross-cultural contact six of ten have had much contact with Japan, the Japanese language, and Japanese culture since leaving CA. There is a great tolerance for different life-styles, value systems and outlooks in this group of people (89.1% vs. 8.9%). Yet being brought up 'internationally', though it may dampen national feelings does not necessarily preclude them, as we notice in the following question:

	Agree	Disagree
I feel moved when my national flag is raised during a televised international sports event.	60.6%	28.6%

More significant, perhaps is a question with a direct behavioral connotation:

	Agree	Disagree
If my daughter wanted to marry a person of a different race, religion, or culture, I would approve.	77.1%	12.4%

The answer to this question and others above speak very strongly for a conception of the commonly-held values of a 'transnational culture.'

One section, titled 'Your opinions about the world', was constructed as a worldmindedness' scale. Questions included opinions about the U.N., war, immigration, international trade, world citizenship, discrimination, racial feeling, the standard of living of developed and developing countries, intelligence, cultural differences and environmental conservation. An illustration of the international consciousness of our study population is given in this section. One example:

- 92.7% a. In order to improve living standards of people in developing countries, I'd like to do something (e.g., give to a 'save the children' program, do volunteer work, etc.)
- 7.1% b. The lower standard of living of other countries is the responsibility of the government of the country, and therefore none of my business.

Further analysis of this section is forthcoming.

#### **Eras-Effects of Socio-Historical Periods**

In any longitudinal study the socio-historical transitions of populations are of special interest, reflecting both the private and public spheres of social structure. In our study these transitions are the various cohorts who attended Columbia Academy from 1913-1983.

As indicated by our informants and data set, there have been seven distinct cohorts. They fall within the following periods:

- 1913-1942 (pre-war, traditional school with a Canadian curriculum)
- 1953-1963 (re-establishment of the school, 'the family period' and appearance of American hegemony)
- 1964-1968 ('mature' American dominance in a Japan coming of age)
- 1969-1972 (social dislocation effects from America and elsewhere, loss of missionary population)
- 1973-1975 (full-fledged admission of 'pure' Japanese and their first graduation, transition towards a school doubled in size)
- 1976-1979 (consolidation to a larger school, increased student diversity, Japanese and Americans as dominant cultural forces)
- 1980-1983 (the International Baccalaureate and 'European interim' prior to a shift towards Japanese cultural hegemony)

These historical transitions are related to certain demographic characteristics. An important finding is the shift of population from a school of primarily North Amer-



icans of missionary background (and some from business/government) towards a school of diverse nationalities, mainly from business backgrounds. The first period is from 1913-1972, the second from 1977-1983. A significant transition occurs between 1973-1975 as the school faced the stark possibility of its disappearance with the decline of missionary families coming to Japan. A decision was made at that time to recruit more widely, including admissions of Japanese directly from graduation from Japanese junior high school.

The nationality of cohort members shifts from predominantly North American (93% in the pre-war period, then respectively from 71%-68% for the period 1953-1979) towards an eventual 30% in the most recent 1980-1983 period. This, however, reflects less a decline in absolute numbers than might be thought. Instead, the school's expansion after 1972 reflects a commitment to become both larger and more truly international. The entire alumni population falls into the following nationality groups:

United States	57.1%	Japanese	13.5%	Canadian	12.1%
European	9.5%	Other	6.6%	Binationals	1.4%

Perhaps more significant than nationality changes is the shift in father's occupation noted in the table. In the pre-war era 62.6% of students' fathers were missionaries, a figure that steadily drops to 26.6% in the 1980-1983 period. Fathers engaged in business or governmental occupations, however, rise from 22.4% in the 1913-1942 period to 58% recently.

Those fathers with professional/educational jobs account for the following shifts for the seven cohorts:

Students' Fathers with Professional/Educational Jobs (%)	
1913-1943	15%
1953-1963	26%
1964-1968	25%
1969-1972	19%
1973-1975	21%
1976-1979	35%
1980-1983	19%

The fathers of total alumni population break down according to the following occupations:

Missionary	43.8%	Business	31.6%	Education	11.3%
------------	-------	----------	-------	-----------	-------

International People: Profiles of Experience and Consciousness

Professional	7.8%	Government	3.2%	Other	2.4%
Mothers of alumni showed the following job categories:					
Missionary	36.1%	Business	3.9%	Education	14.9%
Professional	2.3%	Government	5.6%	Services	40.5%
Skilled Aesthetic	1.0%	Others	0.4%		

The alumni population, on the other hand, had a different set of occupations from their parents, with the large number of educators being especially surprising. The total alumni population by occupation breakdown is:

Missionary	4.3%	Business	31.0%	Education	25.9%
Professional	16.6%	Government	5.6%	Services	21.1%
Skilled Aesthetic	5.6%	Others	0.5%		

Half of IS alumni respondents followed their fathers into jobs with an international dimension. Other striking findings are the large number of 'professionals' (48.3%) among the CA alumni and the formerly high number of educators, though I stress the word formerly. Although 30.3% had been educators in a 'previous occupation', in the 'present occupation' there were *no* educators.

Those who had jobs with 'an international dimension' were greater (55.6%) than those whose jobs did not have such a dimension (44.4%), but these findings contrast with those of the subjects' fathers, 89.1% of whom had jobs with an international dimension.

This is partly explained by the break-down of subjects' occupations by cohorts. Here we see a pattern away from becoming missionaries, a job with 'an international dimension'. CA alumni chose occupations first in the professions or education, second in business or government, third in service or other areas, and last as missionaries. One possible reason for this is the clearly demonstrated driver for higher education, which was discussed above.

### A Profile of Class: The Emergence of a New Elite

The selected income profiles of our four populations are closely matched aside from one prominent difference. Over half of the current population of CA students (surveyed separately) considered their family income to be 'Relatively Well-Off.' Since this was the top rating on our scale it could just as well be read as 'Rich.' This particular international school has thus moved from being a 'special status'

school to one of truly 'elite status' in terms of its participants.

Formerly, many students came from missionary backgrounds, and their parents' missions paid for the children's tuition. Now there are few mission children. Instead, we see a new diversity, but mostly those from wealthy backgrounds. Tuition costs have soared, with total costs running well over ¥ 1.2 million per high school student for a nine month program.

Serious questions are raised here concerning equity, achievement, and the international school. Obviously, achievement is favored, a view supported by a high-powered academic orientation, the lack of an effort to create much of a scholarship program, and a board of trustees controlled not by middle-class missionaries but by wealthy businessmen.

As with many transnational experiences (Japanese returnees being another example that comes to mind), there is a move historically away from seeing the experience as individually-oriented and even 'classless,' towards seeing a 'new class,' a specialized elite in the mold of transnational managers. It is not surprising that there is little attention paid to concrete implementation of the oft-aided rhetoric of 'international understanding' when the real goal is high-powered achievement.

### **Family Orientation**

Transnationals are heavily family-oriented. Ties between parents/children and between sibling/sibling, having been forged in a difficult and trying cross-cultural crucible, are durable, easily outlasting separations of time and space/distance. Moreover, their concept of 'family' tends to extend in many respects to friends and others who have also had the transnational experience. Most transnationals (78-83%) have no problem accepting people of other races, religions or cultures, even in the intimate, emotionally-charged situation of a daughter's marriage. The US adult control sample, by contrast, had only 32% approval of marriage of one's daughter to someone who was of a different background.

### **Love and Interpersonal Maturity**

Love is one of the most complicated of human emotions and all manner of social manifestations can be traced to its effects. But what is love? This is not just a

rhetorical question, for its interpretation has important effects on human behavior. As the American anthropologist David Schneider has pointed out, for example, it is the substance or 'glue' which holds American culture together.

Is love 'an important, permanent commitment' of essential social obligations or is it an expression of 'spontaneous inner freedom, a deeply personal choice'? Generational choice of definitions is clearly divided on this point. Nearly twice as many adolescents as adults in our study populations view love as an individual choice.

This, of course, tells us much about the adolescent ego and adolescent preoccupations with self, but our IS students are also nearly 15 points beyond their US counterparts in endorsing the 'spontaneity' definition of love! What do we make of this? When this data is combined with earlier research (Willis, 1986) what emerges is the suggestion of an even higher ego awareness for young transnationals. Yet, paradoxically, this ego awareness is apparently not an ego preoccupation. IS students do not necessarily elevate the self above and beyond other people.

Nearly twice as many CA students as US students today think it is better to be good at listening than to be good at expressing oneself (28.7% vs. 15.0%). A maturational process is indicated here, with more than double the US adults thinking it is better to be a good listener than US students (35.4% vs. 15.0%). CA adults listen the most of all (45.0%), while both US and CA adults who believed more strongly in expression were about the same percentage (40.0%).

An even stronger measure of interpersonal maturity was obtained from the results of the following question:

"I believe it is more important to think of oneself than of others if one is to be successful in life."

One-third of the adolescents of both CA and US populations display a selfish orientation by answering yes to this question. This could suggest another effect of the ego preoccupation of youth and/or an affirmation of the mass media's much-touted 'me generation.'

Adults, on the other hand, were aware of the need to think of others. Again, CA alumni were highest in this 'other' orientation (78.3%), followed by US alumni (67.1%). Only 19.6% of US alumni and 12.9% of CA alumni felt you should 'watch out for Number 1 first.'

## **Anxiety/Psychological Problems**

A certain percentage of any population is likely to encounter psychological maladjustment of one type or another. Received wisdom on transnationals, however, as on the 'victims' of culture shock, suggests significantly *more risk* of debilitating experience. What does our research say about this?

First, a question on 'anxiety about long-term commitments (e.g., making friends)' showed that about 1/3 of both US and CA adolescents, as might be expected, do have such anxiety. But the difference between CA students and US students is less than five per cent.

Yet when CA and US alumni are compared a clear difference emerges:

*US alumni have more anxiety about long term commitments than CA alumni.*

Moreover, CA alumni are much more emphatic in their denial of anxiety than US alumni (85.4% vs. 62.9%). Adolescence may be a crucible for the development of personal identity and self-image, but the international crucible apparently forges a tougher product.

The other side of the coin of anxiety could be pride. Comparing our four populations, the mature transnationals (CA alumni) show by far the greatest pride (97.4%), followed by US students (86.5%), US adults (75.3%), and CA student (70.6%). Why the last figure? Interviews indicated that CA students are faced with sterner challenges than their US counterparts, challenges that when met yield higher results. Adolescence is a period of vulnerability for everyone, but even more so for the adolescent transnational.

Alienation is a topic of considerable interest and it is clear that internationally-experienced people have more than their share, particularly upon return/arrival in what is ostensibly their 'mother culture.' Nearly 69% of CA adults and 48% of CA students 'have felt alienated or left out' because of their upbringing, compared to 39% of US adults and almost 38% of US students. This margin points to what our informants refer to as a kind of 'tempering' process for transnationals. Not everyone meets the challenge and like all populations there are losers, drop-outs.

But these people should not be viewed as significantly more affected than misfits or drop-outs in any population. The differences in the origin of their problems has simply led to an exaggeration of the effects (and of the attention given to this

'exotic' experience). One thing is clear, though: it was not the experience in an international school that was a problem. Fewer CA alumni (13.8%) than any of the other populations felt the high school experience to be a time of 'frustration and discomfort.' US adults were somewhat more affected by such feelings (20.4%).

Almost the same percentage of current CA and US high school students felt 'frustration and discomfort,' but even this represents less than a third of their respective populations. 'Culture shock' is a widely-understood concept today, invariably associated with 'frustration and discomfort.' One would expect a report of considerable culture shock on the part of transnationals, yet the results are surprising.

Those with the *least* report of culture shock are CA alumni: 84.2% disagreed that the high school experience was a culture shock, while 11.8% agreed with it. Those with the *highest* report of culture shock were US alumni (17.7%).

#### **Intercultural Experience as Benefit or Handicap**

A page and a half of open-ended questions were provided in an attempt to elicit more detailed thoughts of our subjects' intercultural experience. The first short answer question was the most pertinent:

Overall, were your experiences at CA and in an international setting a benefit or a handicap to your later life? How did your international experience help? How did it hurt?

Three other short answer questions completed the questionnaire:

The best advice I could give a CA graduate today would be . . .

The most important thing CA should be doing for the future is . . .

Other comments on CA, this questionnaire, etc.:

These will be analyzed later, but some significant trends are suggested by the first of these important questions. As the answer to this question was supplied completely by the respondents a scheme for interpretation of answers had to be determined.

This was done by dividing answers into the following categories:

Definitely a benefit (No expression whatsoever of negative experience, strongly positive comments only)

Benefit (Including 'strong benefit' and 'eventual benefit,' if this far outweighed 'not a benefit' in the respondent's own words. Especially noticeable were those many respondents who saw it as an eventual great benefit in spite of difficult culture shock upon return to one's own country or to the USA)

Mixed response	(Most of these said 'overall a benefit,' but indicated problems in their remarks which led to my recording this response: a 'qualified benefit')
Not a benefit	(A clearly indicated answer)
Serious problem	(Definitely not a benefit)
Other	('Sorry , I could write a book': 'Can't comprehend anything but international': 'Not there long enough': etc.)

No comment

A balanced evaluation was sought in the responses. For example, some respondents may have said 'definitely a benefit,' but then elaborated on some way they had been hurt. This answer was then changed to 'benefit.'

Interestingly, one 'problem' spoken of was the respondent's 'prejudice against narrow-minded people.' Surprisingly few mentioned the standard explanations that appear in the literature as to the problems of expatriate children: lack of stability, rootedness, or focus or losing touch with friends.

The results of this question appear to be a resounding vote of confidence in the worth of an intercultural experience during one's formative years:

Definitely a benefit	33.6%
Benefit	41.2%
Mixed response	20.7%
Not benefit	1.5%
Serious problem	0.4%
Other	2.4%
No comment	0.2%

What of the pattern of positive responses above as related to era? Clearly, age effects (looking back wistfully on the past) account for at least part of the overwhelming response of the pre-war cohort (89.4% as 'Benefit'). The first three cohorts after the war (1953-1972) maintain a response of between 65.6-69.4% as 'Benefit'. The last three eras (1973-1983) are slightly higher in the 'Benefit' category at between 73.6-76.9%.

We note particularly the perceived intercultural difficulties of the 1953-1972 subjects as compared to those of other eras. More than 29% in each of the three eras represented (1953-1963, 1964-1968, 1969-1972) reported their intercultural experience as either "not a benefit" or "mixed response". The pre-war group reports less

than 10% with mixed/negative experiences, while the three post-1972 eras report 20-22.9%.

What accounts for these findings? Interviews of alumni from the 1953-1972 period strongly suggest the image of the school as a 'Dejima', an island separate from and very apart from Japan. Although this impression is given of the school in all eras, it appears in its fullest expression between 1953-1972. Respondents and interviewees, for example, noted the lack of even basic courses in the Japanese language or culture. Of course, this era is also one of world-wide American political hegemony, so the reactions we have received are somewhat understandable.

## Conclusion

Are 'internationals' (internationally-experienced people) or transnationals somehow different, somehow special? The evidence we have amassed clearly suggests that the answer is an emphatic 'Yes.' The data collected in this study from questionnaires and interviews indicates that these people are, on the whole, unique, highly-integrated individuals who display characteristics essentially consonant with Maslow's 'self-realized' individual and the positive aspects of Erikson's last two developmental stages (generativity and integrity). Indeed, they have an extremely positive self-image, with over 97% feeling they have something they can be proud of (vs. 75% for American adults).

These internationally-experienced people have a measured control over their lives, with 91.4% of the mature transnationals agreeing that 'when I make plans I am almost certain I can make them work.' This contrasts with US adults (78.4%) and US students (81.7%) Surprisingly, only 63.8% of CA students agree with this statement and 26.8% disagree with it. Why? Again, the 'crucible effect.'" CA students, usually through no choice of their own, have been thrown into a high temperature furnace of sorts. This furnace tests their will, their imagination, and other faculties. Later in life the tools and skills they have acquired from this experience will likely enable them to make enough significant choices that they will be lead to the same degree of confidence as CA alumni. There are a large number of 'achievers' among CA adults: 8 of 10 people (cf. US adults, 5 of 10).

'Culture shock' is a commonly-used expression which describes an important experience which could be both positive and negative. Other important 'shocks'



might be entering college, marriage, starting work, and so on. The conventional literature on our topic tends to focus on which, if any, 'shocks' have been most important in the life of these interculturally-experienced people.

I would posit that instead of being seen as running a gauntlet of 'shocks', they be seen as having a special insight into people and relationships that others who were not raised in a multicultural setting do not have. After living in an intercultural context their self-awareness increases and they have more insight into their own identity, value structure, and communication patterns.

How do these individuals 'experience' their culture-not only in terms of sense data and cognition but also through feelings and expectations? It is not merely 'experience' either, but 'an experience' which calls for a retelling on our part. These people show a broader perspective of the world and appreciation of interdependence—a global perspective (economically, politically, socially). They are more than simply *in the world*—they are *with the world*: for them national identity is less important than what might be called a transnational identity.

The author wishes to thank the Toyota Foundation (Grant 86-III-004) for their support of this project. I would also like to recognize Dr. Yasuko Minoura (Okayama University of Minnesota), Mrs. Pat Jarman (Canadian Academy), Dr. Walter Enloe (University of Minnesota), Mr. Tim Thornton (Canadian Academy) and Emi Millard (Friendswood High School, Houston, Texas) for their important contributions to the conceptualization and direction of the study.

## References

- Downie, Richard Dixon. (1976). *Re-entry experiences and identity formation of third culture experienced dependent American youth: an exploratory study*. Ph.D. dissertation, Michigan State University.
- Downs, Ray. (1974). A look at third culture children. *Japan Christian Quarterly*, Spring, 66-71.
- Enloe, Walter. (1985). From Hiroshima: the need for a global perspective in international education. *International Schools Journal*, 10, Autumn, 17-24.
- Falk, Richard. (1983). *The End of World Order*. (New York: Holmes & Meier).
- Farkas, Jennifer Burkard. (1983). *Japanese overseas children's American schooling experience:*

- a study of cross-cultural transition*. Ph.D dissertation, The Ohio State University.
- Geertz, Clifford. (1973). *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books.
- Gleason, T.P. (1973). The overseas-experienced American adolescent and patterns of worldmindedness. *Adolescence*, Winter, 8 (32), 481-490.
- Marcus, George E. and Fischer, Michael M.J. (1986). *Anthropology as Cultural Critique*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).
- Minoura, Yasuko. (1979). *Life in-between: the acquisition of cultural identity among Japanese children living in the United States*. Ph.D. dissertation, The University of California at Los Angeles.
- Murphy, William J. (1974). *Worldmindedness and overseas study*. Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University.
- Packard, V. (1973). Nobody knows my name, the effect of rootlessness on young people. *Today's Education*. September-October, 22-28.
- Park, Robert E. (1928). Human migration and the marginal man. *American Journal of Sociology*, 33, 881-893.
- Rohlen, Thomas P. (1983). *Japan's High Schools*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Siu, Paul C.P. (1952). The sojourner. *American Journal of Sociology*, 58 (1), 34-44.
- Stoddart, Susan C. (1980). *The search for an ideal multicultural environment: an ethnography of the American overseas school*. Ph.D. dissertation, Michigan State University.
- Torney-Purta, Judith (ed.) et al. (1987) *Evaluating Global Education: Sample Instruments for Assessing Programs, Materials and Learning*. (New York: Global Perspectives in Education).
- Turner, Victor W. and Bruner, Edward M., eds. (1986). *The Anthropology of Experience*. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press).
- Useem, Ruth, and Downie, Richard D. (1976). Third-culture kids. *Today's Education*, 65, September-October, 103-105.
- Useem, Ruth, Useem, John, and Donoghue, John. (1963). Men in the middle of the third culture. *Human Organization*, 22, Fall, 169-179.
- Werkman, S. (1954). *Bringing Up Children Overseas*. N.Y.: The John Day Co.
- Werkman, S. (1975). Over here and back there: American adolescents overseas. *Foreign Service Journal*, 52, 13-16.
- Werkman, S. (1983). Coming home: adjustment of Americans to the US after living abroad. *The International Schools Journal*, 5, Spring, 49-62.
- Werkman, Sidney, Farley, Gordon K., Butler, Craig and Quayhagen, Mary. (1982). The psychological effects of moving and living overseas. *The International Schools Journal*, 3, Spring, 55-64.
- Willis, David. (1986). *In search of a transnational culture: an ethnography of students in an international school in Japan*. Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Iowa.
- Wilson, Anne. (1987). *Mixed Race Children — A Study of Identity*. (London: Allen & Unwin).