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Reflecting on *Compagnonnage*: Or Real World vs. Schoolroom Learning

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Abstract

In this paper I hope to clarify and extend the analysis of French *compagnonnage* that I presented in the “Tracing School Effects” Symposium in the November 2011 American Anthropological Association (AAA) meetings in Montréal. First, I will try to explain more fully why some French youth are initially attracted to the program, but many others are not, and why some beginners drop out before completing apprenticeship. I will also examine, briefly, financial requirements for participants and how the program itself balances its annual budget.

Why should we be interested in *compagnonnage*? Developmental psychologists for some years have articulated a conception of environmental factors that can enhance the development of adolescents (ages 15-22), which include circumstances in which they can interact with a wide range of adults—authoritative caregivers and mentors, access to settings in which they can discover their own particular abilities, opportunities in which to make their own decisions and to experience moderate risk, etc. If you compare the learning environments provided in *compagnonnage* with those offered in schools that follow the dominant “school-and-classrooms” model (designated location, segregation from community, age-grading, group instruction, instruction by non-kin adults, formal curriculum, etc.) according to how well they correspond to the psychologists’ specifications, *compagnonnage* provides a more “complete,” developmentally suitable learning environment than school-and-classrooms. Most participants’ positive responses to the *compagnonnage* program are thus not surprising.

Yet most anthropologists (including those who specialize in education) are reluctant to critique the underlying structure, procedures, and norms of the school-and-classroom model, and the lack of correspondence of these with adolescents’ basic needs. Specifically, they show little sustained interest in alternative models, including but not restricted to *compagnonnage*, that seem to offer more appropriate environments for adolescent learning.

One reason for this stalemate is that most anthropologists, as academics and professionals, are firmly “culture-bound” when it comes to deep analysis of the school-and-classroom template, beyond sniping at its (many) rough edges. They are so invested in the dominant model that almost any other seems irrelevant. As students, most anthropologists prospered in it and are its products; they animate it, as best they can, when they teach; they deliver their children to it; they benefit personally from the model, which gives them time and energy for research and writing. In short, they take this part of their own culture almost completely for granted—as do most non-anthropologists with respect to most aspects of their culture. Anthropologists rarely ask: Why do we settle for this less than satisfactory model? Where did it come from? And are there more productive arrangements that we could move towards? How do we do so?

Introduction

I will highlight two subjects in this paper: first, the amazing array of attributes that the French program *compagnonnage* possesses as an environment for adolescent development; second, the strain of ethnocentrism that prevails, largely unacknowledged, in educational anthropology, which leads to unquestioning acceptance in our thinking and writing of what I call a “school-and-classrooms” model of education. Before ending, I will suggest a few steps we might take to broaden the perspective of our field.

The essence of anthropology is its holistic, cross-cultural, and cross-species stance. If we were true to this tradition, we would be as interested and active in documenting non-school-based educational procedures, if they are present in a society, as we were in understanding the formal and informal socialization that occurs in schools. If we, as anthropologists, do not orient ourselves in this manner, who else will do so? Yet from the record, most education-oriented anthropologists cling to Western ways of thinking about that socialization, i.e., they embrace the “school-and-classrooms model.” Despite its admitted flaws that we often document, most education anthropologists seem to assume that, in the last analysis, the predominant model is the only effective—certainly the most important—environment in which children and youths can be groomed for adulthood. In this respect, we are as culture-bound as the economists, psychologists, historians, etc., whose over-simplified notions of education, culture, and society we often deplore.

I base these “charges” on my involvement in the anthropology of education since it was thus christened as a subfield the fifties and sixties, and especially on more than fifteen years of fieldwork and reflection on French *compagnonnage*. *Compagnonnage* is a highly successful, educational and developmental “more-than-apprenticeship” program, not a school and not well-known outside of France, that I describe more fully below and in the papers in the bibliography of this article. The basic method that my wife, Dorothy, and I used to understand *compagnonnage* can be described as mostly classic “hanging around.” In our case, we applied it over many years—observing, chatting, participating, following the paper trail, etc., especially in one main site and less intensively in dozens of others all around France. To this participant observation we added several sets of formal, recorded interviews.

Our research goals at the beginning and throughout were 1) to identify and clarify the most important elements of the *compagnonnage* program, many of which are not immediately

evident to the short-term observer, some of which even French participants cannot specify; it is often classified by *compagnons* and other French people as *formation*, a broader concept than *éducation*; 2) explain how the parts interact with each other; and 3) estimate their impact (beyond conventional academic measures) on participants at all levels.

You will notice that I will frequently celebrate the “effectiveness” of *compagnonnage*, which claim I acknowledge that I cannot justify with objective, quantified data. But after our long and intense contact with the *compagnons*, I am confident of my conclusions, though ready to correct them should new data or re-analyses require that of me. How to employ “scientific” procedures in analyzing both the processes and the impact of complicated programs like *compagnonnage* is a topic that should be discussed and studied intensively in the future.

Compagnonnage leaders sometimes suspected that, as a typical American scholar, I intended to propose *compagnonnage* as a mainly remedial program for low-achieving, alienated youth. They rejected this idea because they believe the program is beneficial for all youths, up to and including university graduates. (I agree.) They also feared that I might suggest that it be reproduced, cookie-cutter style, in the United States and elsewhere. “It is too French,” they would say, and I also agree. My view is that the program should be viewed as a powerful example of what can be done outside of school-and-classrooms, for adolescents of all backgrounds and varied talents. That’s what we ought to be thinking about.

In brief, *compagnonnage* is an education and training (formation) program that evolved out of the medieval French guild system. In the Middle Ages, *compagnons* (qualified journeymen) occupied the stratum between masters and apprentices; most of them aspired to become a master in their trade. Masters were usually highly skilled craftsmen who owned the exclusive right to practice their trade in a specific town or region. In the old sense, masters do not exist today (Napoléon abolished their privileges), but *compagnons* still do. They concentrate on preparing youth, who begin as *apprentis* (apprentices), to become skilled artisans, their successors in *compagnonnage*, conscientious citizens, and solid family men. Forms of *compagnonnage* existed in most European countries hundreds of years ago, but today it is viable only in France. Even some French people believe that the system expired before 1900.

There are three *compagnonnage* organizations in France. We know best the largest, the AOCD (*l’Association ouvrière des Compagnons du Devoir du Tour de France*). AOCD’s and the other organizations’ primary source of income is the national *Taxe de l’Apprentissage*

(Apprentice Tax), which collects 1.5% of the total payroll of all businesses in France with more than 10 employees. The sum paid by a business may then be directed by the payee to the apprenticeship program or technical school of his/her choice. (This is an exciting idea for state and national governments in this country to consider, also.) *Compagnonnage* is a popular choice of many of such firms.

Apprentices earn only the minimum wage, out of which they are expected to pay their bills, but these days family contributions and summer job earnings are also required. Because *compagnons* are viewed as exceptionally skillful and reliable, private industry frequently contracts with AOCD, etc., for customized in-service training of their employees, from which the training organization profits. Also, municipal and regional governments are eager to have *compagnonnage* institutions in their midst, and so offer certain benefits to them, such as long-term, low-cost use of unneeded public buildings, which the *compagnons* often proceed to repair and modernize.

The program also relies heavily on time and services provided free or at steeply reduced rates by fully qualified young members who, out of a feeling of duty (*devoir*) to the organization, teach and advise trainees and help administer each *maison* (literally, “house,” but in this context, “small residential college”). The AOCD organization is financially and programmatically administered from a central office (*siège social*) in Paris, which establishes and reviews budgets, arranges for improvements in equipment and buildings, manages publicity and recruitment, provides training for staff, maintains advanced training and research facilities, etc.

A youth usually enters at 16 or 17 as an *apprenti*, one of about 4000 who do so each year, after finishing *collège* (middle school), where he/she probably placed in the middle or bottom third of the class and decided that *lycée* (high school) would not be an enjoyable experience. He/she becomes an associate of a *compagnonnage maison*, which is like a small college, housing 15 to 150 youths, with classrooms, workshops, dormitories, dining hall, exhibition hall, and other common areas. He/she immediately begins an entry-level job, arranged by local *compagnons*, in the trade he has chosen from the 25 or so available: cabinetmaking, carpentry, masonry, automotive bodybuilding, metalworking, upholstering, pastry-making, etc. Ideally, his *patron* (boss) is a *compagnon*, but often he is simply a well-regarded craftsman. He receives an entry-level, subsistence wage, as do all French apprentices, only about 5% of whom are in *compagnonnage*.

Only about half of all apprentices reside in a *maison*; due to space limitations, the others remain at home. However, for two weeks of every eight they all live in a *maison for stage* (intensive training), which includes vocational, academic, and moral components, and is led by young *compagnon* in the *métier* (*maître de stage*), who very recently concluded his own formation. After two years, completion of a small but challenging *travail* (project in his trade), passage of the basic government exams in his *métier*, and a simple formal initiation, a youth becomes (if he wishes and is invited to do so) an *aspirant*. Traditionally, *compagnonnage* was an all-male organization, but women are now accepted in all *métiers*. The first women became *aspirants* in 2004; the first were received as *compagnons* in 2010.

The young *aspirant* lives in a series of five to eight of the 150 or so *maisons* in France, and today in at least one other in another country, such as Switzerland, Germany, or Belgium. The typical *maison* projects a collegial, goal-directed ambiance, remarkable in that no one older than 25 or 27 lives there. The *aspirant* undertakes increasingly demanding jobs in his *métier* in the region of the *maison*, for which he now receives the pay of a skilled worker. His travels among *maisons* and jobs are his *Tour de France*. Life on the Tour is demanding (a combined total of 50 to 60 hours per week, on the job, in voluntary evening and Saturday practice in the workshop of his trade, in academic and professional classes, and in informal teaching and mentoring by and of fellow residents); sexually segregated (separate living quarters in the *maisons*, postponement of marriage, little partying); communal (shared chores, mutual support, no hazing); and replete with rituals (initiations, feasts on *métier* saints' days, traditional gestures and argot in everyday interactions).

The young *apprenti* or *aspirant* is immersed in a pervasive program of moral education that transmits and reinforces the values and beliefs of *compagnonnage*, such as work as the means to personal fulfillment, tradition and progress as co-essentials in the practice of the *métier*, pride in one's efforts and products, *compagnonnage* as fraternity, and the centrality of family in private life. Religious instruction and proselytization are explicitly banned.

After five or six years, the *aspirant* may request to become a *compagnon*. If his skills and character are acceptable to his seniors, he executes a challenging travel or *chef d'oeuvre* (masterwork) in his *métier*, and he undergoes a second initiation, during which he receives his symbolic regalia and his full *compagnonnage* nickname. He is now an *itinérant* (unsettled *compagnon*), who will probably remain in a *maison* for another year or more, teaching and

mentoring the younger boys (often as a *maître de stage* in his *métier*), while working days in a well-paid outside job. After this, he selects a city or region in which to establish himself in his *métier*, and becomes a *sédentaire* (settled *compagnon*),.

French employers regard *compagnons* as the aristocrats of their *métiers*. They are sought after, expected to set standards for other workers, and deferred to in problematic circumstances. They belong to networks of craftsmen who share common backgrounds, assist each other in obtaining jobs and clients, and participate in the affairs of their *métier* and the *maison* in their city. They may specialize in restoration (e.g., historic buildings, antique furniture, classic cars), but more often they do contemporary work in construction, factories, and workshops, often in the context of their own small businesses.

Each time I consider this overview, images that are maybe 25-years-old flash through my head, from my first visits to *maison* workshops. I remember the youngsters there, probably *apprentis*, as seemingly feverish to learn: engrossed in their work, watchful of their peers' progress, and eager for the (readily available) attention of their *maitre-de-stage*. It seemed to me then, as it does now, that a gentle maelstrom had co-opted their attention and energy. During subsequent years and decades, we encountered this same atmosphere in many (admittedly not all) *maison* workshops. "Intense engagement" is probably the correct descriptor for it. I have rarely experienced it in an American classroom, or in a French *lycée*, for that matter.

The gentle maelstrom occurs, I believe, because of the forceful, coordinated manner in which the numerous components of the program succeed and reinforce each other, entangling each participant more firmly in his/her future *métier* and with his/her comrades, and sweeping all of them into deeper engagement with learning and commitment to *compagnonnage* values.

Consider the sequence and pressure of events. The youth leaves home and parents and enters an unfamiliar building; he is uncertain, tense. With other newcomers, he stands before *La Règle* (the customary), a list of common sense rules for *maison* life, and swears to observe them. The very next day he travels to his first worksite, meets his new patron, and puts in a few hours. From entry, he eats, sleeps, works, practices skills, and socializes with a multi-age group of enthusiasts (including newcomers like himself), in their commitment to learning unlike other youths he has known back home.

At dinner or on weekends, older ones compare their challenges and achievements at work, and talk with respect and excitement about the *métier* and the *compagnons* who train them.

The new recruit learns to employ the daily rituals of greeting and special nicknames; he tip-toes around intense *aspirants* constructing *chefs-d'oeuvres*; he performs assigned household tasks, perhaps a new experience for him; also perhaps a first, he sees to his own laundry and tidies up around his sleeping area. He tries to make sure that he eats enough and (perhaps the hardest of all) that he gets enough sleep. During the first weeks, he is often bone-tired. On certain evenings, he must attend community meetings, solemnized by formal dress, *compagnonnage* regalia, and seriousness of purpose. The apprentice interacts frequently with older trainees (we have dubbed them “near-peers,” for our own purposes), as well as adult *compagnons*, who live in the house or visit it frequently, and who, he sees, possess advanced skills and knowledge, but also seem to take him seriously. After a few weeks, the first (small) paycheck arrives! Wow!

Let me emphasize that *compagnonnage* formation bears little resemblance to “free school,” “open education,” and other neo-progressive movements of the sixties and seventies, except that in *compagnonnage* classrooms are de-emphasized and the part-time academic teachers (government-certified, by the way) are expected to set up informal, conversational environments in the courses they offer. The academic program accords with French Government syllabi, and each *métier* has a written curriculum aimed at the government’s national exams as well as the requirements of the trade. *Apprentis*, *aspirants*, *maitres-de-stage*, subject matter instructors, etc., must and do follow the prescriptions therein. Trainees have times in which to goof off, but most of the day and evening belongs to work and learning. Everyone must conform to expectations during these times, or leave.

Except for a few recent details, no person or group planned or directed the construction of this scenario, although the whole of its many parts comes together almost perfectly. Rather, it evolved and grew over many centuries, despite the opposition, most of the time, of Government and Church. New practices that made sense were patched in (like common domiciles for *apprentis* during the era of cathedral-building, and formal academic instruction during the late 1980s); others were shucked off (e.g., physical brawling among the *métiers*, and anachronistic forms of dress, both abandoned early in the 20th century). Full participation of girls and women, which began during the first years of the twenty-first century, came about after decades of deliberation and trials to examine possible effects of the presence of women on the overall fabric of the program. (Note: the new policy seems to be working well, in almost everyone’s opinion.)

Dorothy and I asked many of the young people why they had joined *compagnonnage*. In

roughly descending order of frequency, they said they had done so because they believed they would be able to get a real job, with career possibilities, after several years; they would earn a small salary even during the first week; they were fed up with the boredom and physical restraints of both academic and vocational schooling; they believed “you don’t learn anything” in technical schools and other apprenticeship programs, and that these programs do not offer good job prospects; they sought adventure and opportunities to mature; they admired the lifestyle of a close relative or family friend who is a *compagnon*; they enjoy working with a particular material and are amazed at the skills of the companions who work with it; their parents share some of the preceding perspectives and support the choice of *compagnonnage*; they are trying to exit a dysfunctional family situation.

Many youths do *not* join, again in descending order, because of parental influence: they fear for the safety of their sixteen-year-old or just want to keep him/her home; they want their child to attend an academic high school and university and enter a prestigious occupation; they look down on the “manual” trades; they (increasingly rarely) are stuck on the nineteenth century belief that *compagnonnage* is anti-Catholic. Some youths, in turn, felt themselves unready to leave home (French adolescents traditionally remain in the nest well into their twenties); they were doing well enough or better in school and hope for a university degree and a white collar career; they did not wish to work as hard as they believed (correctly) that the *compagnons* require; they looked forward to hanging out with age-mates as relief from classroom pressures.

Most new *apprentis* finish their apprenticeship, but only about half ask to be adopted as *aspirants*. Youths leave early because they are homesick, especially during the first months; they are needed at home, because of someone’s unexpected illness; they and/or their parents can no longer afford to pay for room and board (a few scholarships are available, but sometimes they are not large enough); because of their excellent *compagnonnage* training, they are offered real jobs by employers; they feel that the program is too demanding or that they are ill-suited to the craft they have chosen; they miss girlfriends and/or hometown buddies; they are seriously sick or injured; they have been busted for smoking pot; they need more privacy or (conversely) want more partying.

Aspirants drop out for many of the same reasons as *apprentis*. In addition, some feel that more years of rigorous training and transiency in *compagnonnage* will not earn them commensurately improved wages or skills, or that they can set up their own small business

without further experience or credentials. Some want to get married and settled down. Sometimes, a young man or woman comes to doubt his/her own ability to complete the complex *chef d'oeuvre* required before reception as a *compagnon*. Sometimes a youth's closest tutors and sponsors belatedly decide that a candidate is not capable of producing a *chef d'oeuvre* of suitable quality, or that he/she otherwise lacks the personal characteristics expected of a *compagnon*, and he/she is gently removed from candidacy.

There is more behind the success of *compagnonnage* than brilliant *bricolage* or commonsensical accommodation. In recent years, adolescent developmental psychologists have come to consensus on a set of "needs" that all teenagers possess, and to which the educational environment in which they are placed ought, ideally, to respond. The list is almost identical from one textbook to the next. It includes opportunities for physical movement, circumstances in which the affective and cognitive parts of the brain concurrently engage, regular interaction with respected older persons, affiliation with age-mates, exposure to the adult world, authentic problem-solving, appropriate risk-taking, etc. The experiences and settings that the *compagnons* provide for their recruits reproduce or overlap that list almost perfectly. For example: apprentices and *aspirants* enjoy genuine involvement in the real world, mentoring by respected adults and near-peers, tests of personal competence, travel and adventure, changes of residence, daily immersion in community and awareness of the possibility for continuation in it throughout life, camaraderie, dramatic rituals, inspiring myths, responsibility for self-care, etc.

It was to us astonishing to observe how closely the components of *compagnonnage* correspond with those specified by the psychologists. It is more amazing to realize how poorly our schools and colleges make accessible these same components. Schools, by and large, almost invariably employ strict age-grading; group instruction by non-kin and distant professionals; fixed locations; segregation from community; partially alienated peers; externally prescribed and cognitively oriented curricula; little physical movement etc. Collectively, these do not a developmentally appropriate environment make. School-and-classrooms emerges in these comparisons as a highly mismatched institution.

It used to be, and still is in some places, that anthropologists had only scorn for psychology. But developmental psychology, in particular, has matured and now can conceive of cross- and within-cultural differences, and also incorporates perspectives from brain science, primate studies, etc. Developmentalists are much less likely to generalize findings from studies

of Western middle class youth to young people of different backgrounds, and they are much more willing to view adolescence as a partly biologically based stage of life. As we used to say, psychology, especially the developmental subfield, is much less “culture-bound” than it used to be. It proposes increasingly little that sounds ridiculous to us, while contributing intriguing perspectives, like the common needs of all human adolescents, that come from controlled experiments and well-organized observations.

Ironically, if you think about it, most of the basic practices and theories of modern education, i.e., those of school-and-classrooms, are backed by no such body of research and thinking; they are essentially customary, taken-for-granted phenomena. Thus, most educational research is what I call “tinkering.” Rarely does anyone ask, “Could this be done better in another setting?” Tinkering-type research can lead to improved math curricula, age-appropriate reading instruction, more effective teacher training, a case for beefed-up counseling services, etc. But it can never question the basic structure and functioning of schools.

There is another irony. Most of us (including educational anthropologists, sadly) feel, or act as though we feel, that school-and-classrooms, as a general model, is “about right.” It is, after all, the sort of place to which we send our own children (though we usually wish our children’s example of it were a little bit better). School-and-classrooms has merged into our unexamined cultural surround. When it comes to the basics of education, education anthropologists themselves are culture-bound. This leads to very few of us doing fieldwork in alternative “surrounds” for the general development of adolescents, and to a paucity of efforts to develop general descriptions of effective environments for adolescent development. Instead, we observe and analyze schools, or parts of them, and like other researchers, we propose partial, often unconnected criticisms and/or revisions of specific practices. That’s tinkering! That other sorts of institutions and processes might do the job better occurs most often only to home-schoolers and few mavericks.

Traditionally, anthropologists have specialized in research in “exotic” settings. Serious and effective educational enterprises not constructed on the school-and-classrooms model—like *compagnonnage*, of course—are exotic in the modern world. Again I ask: if not us, who will try to understand them? And why have most anthropologists, particularly anthropologists of education, ignored them? The reasons are numerous.

The origins and precedents of our subfield have had an important influence. Until the late

'50s and early '60s, when the subfield formally emerged, many leading anthropologists agreed that there was “nothing to study” in schools; despite what Jules Henry (1965), Mead (1950), and a few others had described, they asserted that schools everywhere were much the same, and boring, to boot. During the same period, a debate emerged about the reasons for differences in achievement among the children of ethnic, racial, and social class groups: genes or environment? “Environment” usually meant a few in-school factors, i.e., “good” teachers vs. “bad” teachers; at that time, school organization and climate and familial and cultural differences were seen as background noises.

But a group of young ethnographers, led by a few well-established scholars like Henry, George Spindler, Murray Wax, Fred Gearing, Stanley Diamond, Margaret Mead, etc., came forward, to insist, *inter alia*, that schools do vary importantly in many respects, many of which were then hardly appreciated; that they could be best understood via ethnography; and that they deserved as much attention as the isolated atolls or jungle villages that anthropologists conventionally studied. Thus the Council on Anthropology and Education CAE was born in 1968, as an organization of anthropologists interested primarily in schools. The CAE formally acknowledged the existence of non-school education, but the attention of most of the founders was on the formal institution. It has remained CAE's almost sole focus for more than four decades.

Second, most educational anthropologists grew up, and themselves learned and practiced their discipline, within the school-and-classrooms model. I have already mentioned how thoroughly in our personal lives we take it for granted. As children and teenagers, most of us flourished in that mode, and we thus pleased our parents. Maybe we went to summer camp, or played sports, or had roles in school plays, but these were seen as relief from formal instruction, i.e., truly “extra-curricular,” i.e., not “education.” Then we went to college and graduate school, and prospered in the intensified school-and-classrooms environments therein.

Later, as professors and researchers and administrators, we became the main animators of the model, which seemed to profit us, because it granted us time and settings for reading, research, and writing. Further, our salary, rank, and renown, and the security of our family, depended heavily on how well we used the resources thus provided. School-and-classrooms is virtually all we know; it is an apple-cart we are not eager to inspect too closely. So strongly does the model control our perceptions that often we do not recognize that the defining and most

powerful “educational” component of our discipline is non-school-based. I speak, of course, of fieldwork. Do we not learn enormously when we go “into the field” (and out of the classroom and office)? Are we not deeply engaged? Why don’t we extrapolate those realizations to other settings?

Third, it is very difficult, as the traditions of anthropology emphasize, to free oneself from the constrictions of one’s own culture. We grew up hearing that children and youth learn in school what they will need to become successful adults. That’s why schools have mandatory requirements, isn’t it? Where and how else could young people learn all the necessities? There’s no ready alternative, usually. Throughout the modern world, and especially in the United States, peoples and governments are deeply proud that they have established universal primary, and even secondary, schooling, while extirpating or marginalizing less effective forms of education (like apprenticeship? internship? intensive experience, as in initiations? changes of residence after childhood?). It is increasingly difficult even for educational anthropologists to consider that maybe the long crusade for universal schooling may have swept too much before it.

A fourth reason that non-school-and-classrooms programs are not seen as interesting for research is harder to articulate. These organized experiences do not constitute for anthropologists or anyone else a part of a class or category of culture. “School” is a term that includes recognizable sets of people, places, and activities, each organized according to familiar rules. But for non-school-and-classrooms, there is no common name, no inclusive label. (Maybe the French *formation*, mentioned previously, is partly that.) Anthropologists tend to see apprenticeship programs, early childhood centers, psychotherapy, internships, military service, etc., as *sui generis*, as examples—and certainly not as a demonstrations of how maybe to educate “better” than schools-and-classrooms. There is no point in studying them, unless perchance you are have a special interest, like job training or mental health or early childhood, etc., each of which is, of course, a perfectly respectable research focus.

Finally, there is only a very disorganized professional community of practitioners and theorists of non-school-based education with whom to share ideas and findings, and in which practitioners are trained. There are few graduate school degrees and undergraduate majors aimed at preparing students for jobs in the field. At a mainstream school of education, as well as in the anthropology department of an arts and sciences college, one must still implicitly (at least) apologize for doing research on non-school education. Associations and journals sympathetic to

such research exist, but they are of second rank and some of them seem ignorant of anthropology. There is little government or foundation money for research on non-schools.

We need to move beyond the present impasse. First, we must generate many more well-rounded ethnographic studies of such programs in our own country. They are numerous, if we start to think about them: for example, YouthBuild, Outward Bound, CityYear, Americorps, boot camp, summer camp, internships, mentoring programs, conventional apprenticeships, etc., to mention a few obvious examples in the United States. (I hypothesize that *compagnonnage* includes more operative components and has a greater impact on participants than the others, but I can't be sure without knowing more about them.)

We also need comparative studies, based on current and additional ethnographies, and a careful mining of relevant developmental psychology, to begin to understand which strategies work in which situations and with which individuals. Which programs are most comprehensive, and which are most effective? Funding agencies sometimes pay anthropologists to evaluate the outcomes of non-school education programs, but they rarely support holistic analysis of their functioning. Further: what sorts of comprehensive programs can we imagine, if we take the ethnographic results, and developmentalists' ideas, seriously? Which of the sky castles could we construct should we submit to trial in the real world?

Unfortunately, we are far from ready to undertake these tasks, because we have so little knowledge about non-school-and-classrooms education. We will not make progress until sufficient numbers of researchers, especially anthropologists, are involved in the necessary fieldwork. Here are a few ideas that might help us to develop our area of interest: forming a collaborative or coalition of non-school-and-classrooms anthropologists, to promote papers and sessions on the subject at professional meetings, etc.; encouraging students in our classes, at all levels, to do fieldwork on non-school agencies; sharing and combining bibliographic sources on non-school-and-classrooms; exploring the full range of research methods appropriate to the complex investigations we must undertake; after review of their proposals, providing letters and other forms of support for students' and colleagues' research; developing formal relationships with the several organizations of practitioners of non-school education, which might include attending their conferences and giving papers therein; approaching a range of possible funding sources to discover which of them might be interested in a long-term commitment to our area of

research; searching for colleagues and organizations in other countries with interests similar to ours; etc.

Finally, and essential: we must agree on a better name for what we are interested in: what a mouthful “non-school-and-classrooms” is, and what a nuisance to type! *Formation*, maybe?

Partial Bibliography

(Almost no writings about modern *compagnonnage* are available in English. I include below several recent introductions, in French, and some of my own papers.)

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The conference, organized by Kellogg Faculty Fellow and Professor of Anthropology Susan Blum, witnessed inspiring discussion and collaboration between leading scholars of education from several disciplines and nations.

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