

'Toward the residence university' the story of the Grove Project



Candlelight, wine and conversation highlight the evening meal at the Grove. Often as many as 25 visitors are present for dinner, and Grove residents take turns helping with hashing duties. After-dinner discussions may last for several hours in the dining room and lounges.

by gail anderson and marian johnston

What is the Grove House?

"The Grove House is an educational and coeducational residence."

"It's grovy!"

"The Grove House is an idea."

"It's people learning to live with other people."

"The Grove is 'Stanford-In-Stanford'."

"The Grove House is a hot-bed of activism."

"The Grove House is the only place where at the dinner table a person could discuss the etymology of the word 'tradition' tracing its Greek, Latin, Old French, and Anglo-Saxon roots and derivatives, and someone else could correct him."

"The Grove House is Bill Shurtleff's Nigerian shirts, candle-light and wine at dinner, Peter Lyman's campaign headquarters, and volleyball games on the lawn."

"The Grove House is above all a happy place."

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SET UP at the end of Autumn quarter as a coeducational, academic experiment in the Phi Delta Theta house, the Grove has since become an object of controversy, confusion, and admiration.

The controversy has stemmed largely from the method of selection of Grove participants. Some have charged that the members were hand-picked and thus that the success of the Grove has no applicability to other residence situations.

The confusion, many Grove members believe, results from a "sketchy and superficial understanding" of the nature of the house. "I was in a symposium group," one member explains, "where another student remarked that he wouldn't want to live at the Grove because he didn't want to be intellectual all the time!"

But most view the project in a somewhat more favorable light. Comments range from a visiting freshman's "I'll never eat at Roble again" to Dean of Students Joel Smith's "It seems to me that it is a triumph."

Thirty-one men and twelve women undergraduates and five graduate tutors live at the Grove, and seventeen additional undergraduates and one tutor are associate members who eat meals at the house. Both resident and associate members attend weekly lectures and participate in seminars under the Grove's theme of "Development."

Because the Grove seems to contain a disproportionate number of social science majors, student radicals, and Beta Chis, many observers have questioned the fairness of the selection system.

"It seems obvious to me," remarks one frequent Grove visitor, "that the selection was scarcely random. No one claims that it was totally random; the question is, what percentage was hand-picked? I would say, from the information that I have garnered, that between thirty and seventy percent were hand-picked." Even a Grove resident admitted, "It certainly was the most incredible random selection."

The danger of such accusations, according to member Henry Hooker, is that "some will maintain that this kind of residential education is possible, while other people will say that this is so only because the members of Grove were selected and that it can only work with these people in it—that they have to be social scientists or radicals."

The actual selection system, Mancall explains, was a stratified random method. A cross-section of the University community was needed, yet, because the project was constructed during dead week, information on it was largely limited to word-of-mouth among students acquainted with Mancall. As a result, the applicants were overwhelmingly juniors and seniors in history and political science and freshmen who heard of the Grove through their sponsors. A straight draw system would have perpetuated this imbalance, Mancall says.

"We had a problem," he observes. "No one was discriminated against except in our efforts to keep a balance. We separated applicants by classes, majors, and sex—three major classifications. We wanted as wide a variety of majors as possible, to be divided equally among the classes, and there was only room for twelve women. In categories with overwhelming applications, naturally there were fewer chances of getting in."

Resident Jon Reider comments on Mancall's method of selection, "He did not personally select anyone. Some groups were favored over other groups, but he was trying to plan for some diversity."

The method by which the students were selected for Grove House is not the basic issue,

Jorge Lozoya, a tutor from Mexico City, explains a point in his seminar on Anarchism and Fascism. Henry Hooker and Marianne Gabel jot down notes.



however. What matters is what they have done to develop the Grove.

"The people here are learning something about constructing a community," contends Reider. Another resident, Jim Briscoe, adds, "People are learning to live with other people." Grove members emphasize this development of group consciousness as one of the most valuable experiences of the Grove.

"In the beginning, almost everyone was deeply involved in activities outside the Grove House, with outside friends," member Bob Fishman maintains. People invited their old friends to the house for dinner, and as a result there was no feeling of unity even at meals.

"But somehow we all did manage to come together," he continues. "I think the group consciousness that arose was best expressed in one incident. Mancall went to Japan over spring vacation, and he came back the Sunday before Reg Week. Almost all the members of Grove spontaneously went to the airport to meet him, carrying signs like 'Ho Chi Mancall' and 'Welcome, CIA Mission to Hanoi', and waving bright red copies of Mao's *Quotations*. Incidents like this signaled a change in the group attitude."

The spirit of group discussion was illustrated the morning that the "We Accuse" posters appeared on campus. Someone posted copies of them in the front hall of the Grove, and by three in the afternoon nine statements from students, tutors, and Mancall were displayed around the posters, both attacking and defending the University's involvement in the Vietnam war and the suitability of this form of protest. The incident, known to Grove members as the "Great Poster War," served to capsuleize

their ability to disagree within the framework of group communication.

Like every residence, the Grove has gradually developed an identity of its own and a certain amount of solidarity. This is manifested even in the wearing of wildly-colored, Nigerian shirts brought back from Africa by former Peace Corps worker Bill Shurtleff, a tutor. All the money received from selling the shirts is used for scholarships for Nigerian students.

But if for some Grove members the project possesses a spirit of unity, for others it remains the same fragmented collection of individuals it was at its beginning. Unfortunately, since most of the Grove has such a strong group feeling, anyone not completely involved feels apart from the rest.

One resident, for example, complains that the Grove is not a group but a collection of several groups. "A lot of people in the house knew each other before. They invite their friends over and talk to them but don't introduce them to the rest of us."

He explains that this exclusiveness involves not only members and their outside friends but also cliques within the house. "The essential thing is to get a feeling of meaning you can identify with. You feel good because you're part of a family, but the Grove House isn't a family."

OTHER GROVE members agree that the popularity of the house as a student meeting place at times makes it seem more like Tresidder than like a residence. "There are so many guests that it is not 'your place' to live," Mel Ellis, member of Grove, observes.



An hour of sunlight after dinner provides the scene for enjoying an ephemeral moment of relaxation on the verdant rise behind the Grove House before dusk drives this group back indoors to other tasks.

photos by bill pracher and jim briscoe



Barbara Dudley assumes a pensive pose as she looks over a seminar paper. All Grove members are required to write original papers for the two-quarter "Development" seminar.

"We are continually looking for new ideas, new ways of communicating, new developments in the arts, a better social interaction."

Most Grove members, however, seem to feel that any harm done to the group's unity by having so many guests is outweighed by the opportunity to meet a variety of people. In addition to the many students who frequent the Grove, faculty and administrators are often guests.

Grove members have remarked on the ease with which faculty members fit into the atmosphere of the house. "It is most indicative of the Grove House," emphasizes associate Joel Kugelmass, "that when a faculty member comes to dinner he is treated with the dignity the faculty deserve but not set apart by virtue of that dignity."

Members generally agree that meals are the center of life at the Grove. Eighteen faculty members are faculty associates at the house and the original plan was for these professors to participate in seminars and eat dinners at the Grove. But Grove residents complain that, with the exception of four or five, the faculty associates seldom come. And some members feel that Mancall does not spend enough time there.

Criticism is also voiced concerning the dress regulations laid down by Mancall. Women must wear skirts to meals, and all are forbidden to go without socks. "It seems paradoxical to set up kindergarten-level *shalt's* and *shalt not's* in a project emphasizing maturity and personal responsibility," one resident commented.

To improve the meal-time atmosphere, dining arrangements were set up to contribute to discussion. Meals are served buffet style over a period of about an hour, and each student clears his own place when finished. As a result, the conversation that begins at six fifteen is not

interrupted by hashers hurrying to finish their work.

Every effort has been made to facilitate informal, spontaneous discussions. Students take advantage of the spring weather by moving outdoors to eat, and coffee is always available. Dinners are enhanced by candlelight and wine.

Some people, however, feel that the arrangements at the meals and the uniqueness of the house combine to set up a forced intellectual atmosphere. Bob Hamrdla, Assistant to the Director of Overseas Campuses and a frequent Grove visitor, remarks, "The first or second time I was there I felt what many residents felt—that at meals if you didn't talk about something metaphysical you were committing some sort of travesty on what the Grove House is supposed to be. Since that time the feeling has diminished and I feel much more comfortable there. In many residences there is a forced social level of conversation, but I think at the Grove there tends to be a forced intellectual level."

But Peter Lyman, Grove House tutor, observes, "It [residential education] doesn't mean a superintellectual atmosphere—it means you can have an intelligent conversation over dinner."

If the informal part of residence education is centered around meals, the formal part finds its basis in the seminars. The theme of the house is "Development," and in addition to the general weekly lectures on the subject, residents and associates participate in one of the six area seminars taught by the tutors.

Topics and tutors for the seminars are Education, led by Thereza Penna Firme; Time, by

John Bakkensen; Community Development in Rural Areas, by Saad Raheem; Anarchism and Fascism, by Jorge Lozola; Ideology and Utopia, by Peter Lyman; and Contemporary Problems of the New Left, by Bill Shurtleff.

"The seminars have contributed to building a community," says Mancall. Thereza Penna Firme elaborates: "The seminars have been held in the house so the students don't have to go out. This brings the house together, leads to the sharing of ideas, and is a comfortable arrangement."

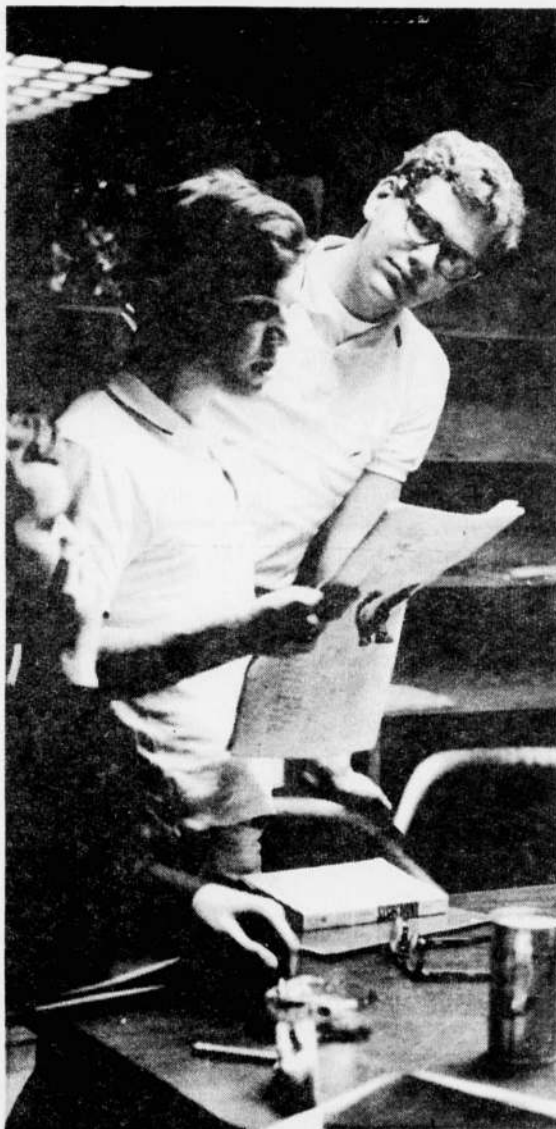
"It is very difficult to run a seminar with 60 people," Mancall explains, "even when they are divided into sections. I had conceived earlier of a seminar in which each section of about 10 or 12 people would duplicate the other sections, but it has turned out that each group has developed its own interests. This is perfectly valid, and I think very healthy. We are giving the students considerable responsibility for their own education."

Saad Raheem describes his seminar as dealing with such problems as population control, agricultural growth, and other areas of community development. The emphasis is interdisciplinary, drawing from such fields as anthropology, political science, engineering, economics, and medicine. Professors and graduate students in the different fields deliver lectures to the group and participate in discussions. Every two weeks each student hands in a nondirected paper which is not graded. Copies of the papers are placed in the Grove library for general reading.

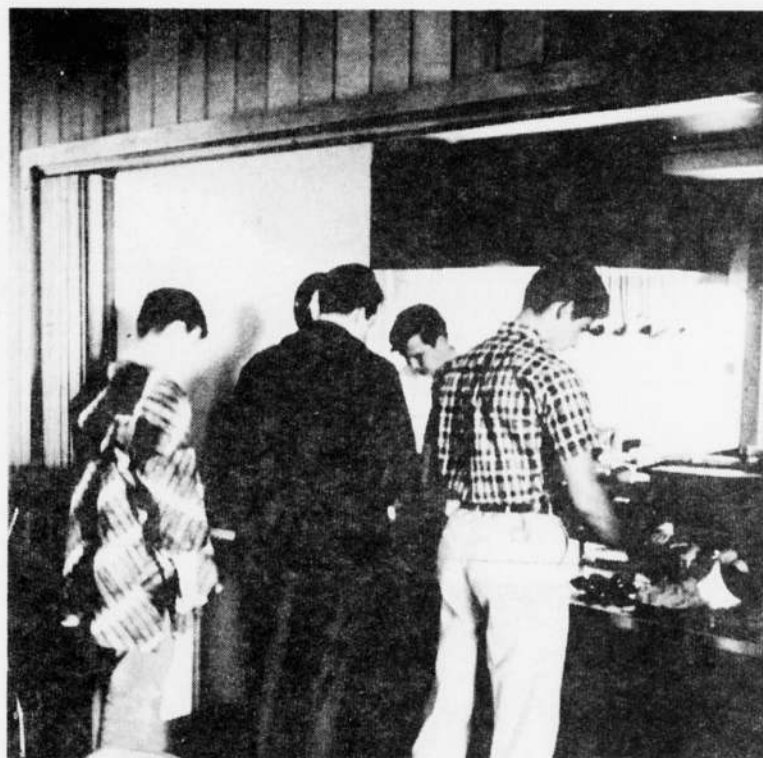
In quite another direction is the seminar on Time led by John Bakkensen. "We meet in

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Jon Reider and Chuck Karish glance over a periodical in the house library and seminar room. Kim Bell looks dispassionately on.



Grove-shirted Grovies line up for one of the house's buffet dinners. Grove members and friends have adopted the Nigerian shirts as semi-official costume.

some pleasant corner of the house, where we can relax," he comments. "Somebody will suggest what we should do for the next meeting, and we'll talk about that." One student interposed, "Once we sat around for the whole time and listened to records." The required reading for this seminar has included *Waiting For Godot*, *The Sound and The Fury*, *One-Dimensional Man*, and T. S. Eliot's "Four Quartets."

AT THE END of the two quarters, all Grove members are required to write a term paper in which the emphasis is on originality rather than research. Both Mancall and the individual tutors will grade these papers.

Students feel that one of the most valuable aspects of the seminars is the relationship between the graduate tutors and the undergraduates. "The seminar is the most successful I've ever been in in terms of the commitment of the students," says Peter Lyman. "There is no leader-student relationship. An indication of how successful the seminars are is that I feel no distinction between classes."

The close relationship between undergraduates and graduates extends to all areas of life at the Grove and is considered by the members to be one of the most important aspects of an integrated academic residence. Grove residents consider the barrier between graduate and undergraduate existing in the rest of the university to be artificial and unnecessary. Many say they initially felt this distinction but that the atmosphere of the Grove soon dispelled the feeling.

"It seemed strange at first," comments Bob Fishman, "to have a Ph.D. candidate come into

your room and sit down and talk to you, just as if he were an undergraduate." Now most of the undergraduates would agree with resident Margie Cohn that "there's no real difference between graduates and undergraduates here."

"We don't feel different from the undergraduates," says Saad Raheem. He proposes that graduates be included in the Grove or similar houses, not just as tutors, but as regular members of the house. Even though it could be argued that undergraduates benefit much more from such a setup than graduate students who might not be so attracted by the prospect, Raheem feels that "in a university in which half the student body consists of graduates, it doesn't seem unreasonable to have at least twenty percent of the residents in a house be graduates."

The interest in students living together as well as learning together reflects a concern among members of the Grove over whether the emphasis of the house should be on academic residence or integrated, coeducational, informal residence. Students and others debate the advisability of including academic requirements in the house. Bob Hamrdla says "I must personally question not whether education should be tied in with the residence program—I think that's obvious—but the extent to which this tie-in should be forced."

Most members do not wish to separate the two aspects of the house. To them, the Grove is both educational and coeducational, and each complements the other to produce what the residents call "a natural life."

Grove girls are especially aware of the differences between the nature of relationships at the Grove and at other university residences.

"It really is natural," exclaims Nan Goldie,

"You encounter boys on an informal basis. They're here and they're your friends." The girls contrast this to the structured dating level of most opportunities to meet people of the opposite sex. "You know boys as friends," agrees Margie Cohn.

On the other hand, some members criticize the Grove for placing too much emphasis on informal intellectual relationships and too little on normal social life.

Scott Davis, a Grove resident, complains, "We should have some social functions here. We never have any group functions. People are going to have social functions whether they're intellectuals or not, and if we can't have them here, we'll have them outside the Grove, with other groups." Another Grove resident adds, "There's no social life up here. You don't get that great big happy feeling, 'God, I'm glad to be here,' like you do at a drinking party."

Other residents point to social functions in the past as evidence of group cohesiveness. "The kind of social events here," says Joel Kugelmass, "are spontaneous, intense, and unstructured—and that's the best kind."

Mancall adds that since the students have no restrictions on their social activities, it is a "paradox of freedom" if they don't take the initiative to plan their activities. "Students should be mature enough to organize their own social life."

Grove members deplore the fact that a residence in which students are allowed to exercise both academic and social responsibility is considered unusual rather than standard at Stanford.

"The Grove House," says Joel Kugelmass, "has become a displacement of traditional Stanford activity instead of a replacement. It's like

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Mark Mancall

a pearl in an oyster—it happened because the Phi Deltas got suspended and because some faculty and administrators took the individual initiative to get it established. It should have come about through an institutional structure which made it inevitable. Instead of being the exception, it should be the norm."

"There are very few places at Stanford," adds Jim Briscoe, "where men and women can learn to see each other as people, not as social objects. When you've done this, you can turn around and treat others of your own sex as people too. It's the same kind of process that happens at an overseas campus."

The comparison between the Grove and overseas campuses is frequently drawn, and Peter Lyman calls the Grove "Stanford-In-Stanford." Many students feel the group experience in the Grove is even more valuable than the overseas experience because at a foreign campus the student is a part of his group all of the time, whereas at the Grove students may decide for themselves how much time they want to devote to the Grove and how much to outside activities.

"The Grove House is the residential university within Stanford University," asserts Joel Kugelmass. "Although it is a unique experience, it is the only natural living group, and it is a group which at once allows you to pursue your own interests and to find new interests in other people and groups."

The success of the Grove, says Saad Raheem, has come about because "people are simply responding to a situation that should have existed long ago. They're not *trying* to make it a success." But others fear that the physical circumstances of the Grove play a large part in its successes.

If only in these facilities, the Grove of the

future will be quite different from the present house. Next year, according to Joel Smith, the Grove will probably be located in Stern Hall. Mancall will remain its director, and seminars will still be required in the house, although they will be individually structured rather than grouped around a central theme.

THE CONTRAST between the physical facilities of the Grove and Stern has caused some apprehension among Grove observers. "It would be a big mistake," says member Chic Fitts, "to put the Grove in a Stern house." Kevin Burke, a graduate student in Communications who is making a movie about the Grove, adds "this place is going to lose a lot of its charm when they leave. It's ideal."

"The Grove can work in Stern," protests Kugelmass, "but it is important to remember that the physical facilities of the Grove have contributed both to the comfort and the ease in establishing it."

"Our biggest challenge," adds Bob Fishman, "will be to continue outside of our present location. Our situation is so perfect it was easy to succeed. The real test will come when everything is not going for us."

But all agree that despite these difficulties the Grove House should not only continue but be expanded.

A good deal of controversy centers around the impression that the Grove's uniqueness means that its successes are not applicable to future residences.

"One of the problems this year," says resident Mel Ellis, "is that everyone moved up here knowing it was only for six months. This gives it an aura of specialness."

A group of Grove members discussed the problem one night across the dinner table.

Henry Hooker asked about the criticism that the Grove can only succeed as it is now—"that you have to have a good house, University subsidies, a novel idea, and a group of people who came together for a specific purpose to make the Grove work."

Renton Rolph interjected, "I don't know if it can work for everyone," at which Jon Reider, Jim Briscoe and Hooker chorused, "yes, it can." Reider continued: "Expansion of Grove-type residences may create the problem of keeping different houses unique and distinct. One good thing about fraternities is their ability to retain uniqueness."

"Ideally, if everyone who wants to live in a certain type of residence is allowed to do so, the houses will have their own identities. The Grove isn't dependent on an elite, although it does depend on the people in it for a determination of its character. With the introduction of new people there will be a new atmosphere and new emphasis. The Grove next year will be very different, but it needs a sense of continuity, so that what has been learned won't be lost."

Briscoe added: "A lot of the Grove House is people learning to be people and learning to treat others as people. That can't be transmitted." "It has to be transmitted," insisted Reider. "That's not the kind of knowledge to be taught to somebody—it's something people must learn for themselves," clarified Briscoe.

A desire for continuity was among the factors which influenced Mancall to structure next year's Grove as a continuation of this year's. Members of the house, both resident and associate, have first option to move into the house next fall, and the remaining places vacated by seniors, students going overseas, and those choosing to leave the Grove will be filled by

selection from applications. In addition, if the house in which next year's Grove is situated is larger than the Phi Delt house, more places will be open. Applications will open later this quarter as soon as the final decision is made on the Grove's future location.

"The Grove should continue as a regular living group," says Mancall. "I didn't look on it as an 'experience' or as a training session, but as the establishment of a new option in housing at Stanford."

Looking to the future of the Grove, members express their faith in the house's ability to change with new situations and new people and yet to possess enough continuity to pass on what has been learned.

"We have not structured it enough to say we will keep the same ideas," says Thereza Penna Firme, "so we will be able to change. The idea of the house is to be able to change at any time."

"They should multiply this experiment and open similar groups like this. Although the Grove should continue, we also need other houses of students living and studying together, trying to find new ways of getting along."

Saad Raheem amplifies, "The Grove will change with the introduction of new people. We will be in a different situation. The seniors this year have been the natural leaders, and it's quite possible that next year's seniors may set the tone of the house in a different direction."

"Ideally," says Joel Smith, "we will reach the point where everyone will be able to live in the residence of his choice. Right now there may be resentment because the Grove is a limited opportunity. But we're trying to get a residential change, and you can't do it across the board. You have to start with small units. I hope that ultimately the opportunity will be available for all who want it."

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WHAT HAS the Grove House proved?

Saad Raheem says, "It has proved that if students are given responsibility—social or academic—they will exercise it. No one has imposed regulations on us or told us that we must set an example—yet the students have taken on the responsibility. I think this shows that many regulations are superfluous and should be changed accordingly."

Peter Lyman says, "I think it has proved that a community of scholars doesn't mean a super-intellectual atmosphere, but a group whose primary concern and purpose is for education."

Jon Reider says, "It has proved that although you may start out to live a life of ideas, you discover that that means to live as a person."

Thereza Penna Firme says, "It has proved that an unstructured and constantly changing situation can produce a successful living group. We are continually looking for new ideas, new ways of communicating, new developments in the arts, a better social interaction."

Joel Kugelmass says, "It has shown that a house can support political activity without becoming politicized; that it can be intellectual without becoming intellectualized; that people can act natural without becoming crude."

Mark Mancall says, "I think what we've proved is that the type of life led at the Grove is a natural life. The fact that the Grove is considered so unique says more about Stanford than it does about the Grove."

To its critics, the Grove House has proved only that an "elitist" group can survive. To its members and friends, it has proved that residential education can be more than a statement from a handbook, more than a political slogan—it can be a way of life.