DEPRIVED CHILDREN: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF IDENTITY THROUGH THE SCHOOLING PROCESS

by

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M.A., University of Oregon, 1970

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in the Department of
Anthropology and Sociology
and the
Faculty of Education

We accept this thesis as conforming to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
March, 1973
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ABSTRACT

The problems faced by schools with respect to the education of low-income children have been with us for many years. Basic to the education of these children are the problems arising from the socio-economic environment in which they subsist. Despite widespread concern and proliferation of literature pertaining to low-income children in school their relative position among school children has not changed appreciably. Thus even though we have developed a sophisticated repertoire of characteristics concerning the qualities of low-income populations, and particularly the educational deprivation experienced by children from such homes, educators have exhibited inability to make up this social deficit through schooling. This even though "significant" changes have been effected in school policies from the testimonials of "experts". The initial perspective of this study was that it might be more useful to find out how the child in the context of the school perceived the educational process. Thus the purpose of the study became to
determine how deprived children interpret their school experiences.

An inner-city school was selected for the indepth study following the declaration by the school administration that a disproportionate number of its children were from low socio-economic origins. This is the group generally acknowledged as being deprived—a definition from the social class origin of the child which forms an important educational category in school. All the children in the school were classified by the teachers as to being: non-deprived; partially deprived; or severely deprived. This provided a delimitation of the larger school population as the researcher was not concerned with non-deprived children.

During the first three months of the inquiry the researcher sought to elicit the concerns of the children relating to their perceptions of schooling. The major domain isolated from the children was the pervasive feeling of "failure". Failure has deep-rooted consequences for identity and the sources of the generation of this feeling were sought. From further ethnographic investigation it was determined that the identification of students as failures was
from three major school policies. These categories were: "repeating a grade," "ability grouping," and "differential treatment".

The final three months of the study involved interviews with all grades 3, 5 and 7 children classified by the teachers as being deprived. The selection of these grade levels enabled a further delimitation of the population and involved some 79 children. The interview data relating to the intra-school policies isolated were analyzed by utilizing three analytical constructs: self concept; self and others' interaction; and self and school performance. The data are analyzed in terms of the child's perception of his self in the role of student. This is derived from the child's perception of other students in their roles and his position relative to others and how he is treated by them, and by teachers. Finally the material is analyzed according to the feelings the child has developed toward his ability in school work.

The three intra-school policies were found to be central determinants of student identity as perceived by the children. The policies served to separate and "label" children and acted as important evaluative criteria for the child and for others.
Thus the ascription as a "grade repeater", a "low ability group" member, or as one in need of "special" treatment served to reinforce feelings of being a failure. For low-income children entering the school system the social category, "deprived," becomes an ascription pertaining to the individual's educability; and frequently, by the segregative effect of the treatment the child receives, "deprived" becomes a sign and reinforcement of the individual's personal failure in school.
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PART 1

THEORIES AND RESEARCH
CHAPTER I

THE EDUCATIONALLY DEPRIVED:
PERSPECTIVE OF THE STUDY

Statement of the problem

There was a child went forth every day, and the first object he looked upon that object he became. And that object became part of him for the day or a certain part of the day, or for many years or stretching cycles of years . . .

—Walt Whitman.

The central purpose of this research is to explore how the school helps deprived children define their identities. Today, though deprived children have been extensively discussed in a great variety of studies and under a range of titles,* no systematic attempt has been made to determine how deprived children come to define their own identities as a result of their experiences in school. The influence of the school upon a child's self conception is great because it involves socialization to an obligatory and long-enduring role, namely that of student. A child could conceivably develop a poor opinion of

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*Referred to later in Chapter I.
himself in this particular setting, playing the role of student, when the factors which affect self-conception in playing that role are negative. When the treatment directed toward the child by the teacher is perceived by the child as being poor, particularly in relation to the treatment received by other children or groups of children, the child may feel inferior or inadequate and may develop a poor conception of himself in that environment. The effect of the school on self-concept is most encompassing and enduring when there are established norms of behaviour and achievement to which all are expected to conform.

Of central importance to the present study is the conviction that the way the child "sees" himself is crucial to his ability to learn, and therefore to take advantage of the school's opportunities. In the worst of such circumstances he may be suppressed or inhibited - by the school context, by his relations, or lack of them, with his school peers and with his teachers. As will be seen (Chapter II) the present writer has been actuated not only by this somewhat unorthodox hypothesis, but by the necessity of obtaining responses from the children themselves, without any of the special "conditioning" that ensues
if the questioning comes from teachers, or even from researchers if in the eyes of the children they represent "authority". This important issue is explored fully in the next chapter.

Background of the study

One of the most difficult tasks facing people who attempt to make meaningful statements regarding deprived children is to convey a clear and defensible idea of which children they are making reference to. This situation may not seem so surprising when understood in light of the idea that children are educationally handicapped by social class factors. This phenomenon has received extensive research only during the last decade or so. Identification of socio-economic influences upon cognitive growth has a longer history and controversy has continued since Davis (1948) developed a sociological view of cognitive growth. Davis analyzed the relationships between different socio-cultural experiences and differentiation of both cognitive growth and motivation. This important perspective was picked up and related specifically to deprived children in the 1960's particularly in the United States. However, the influence of class level and income upon educational
attainment has been presented by Furneaux (1961) in his pioneer study The Chosen Few 1948-58 in Great Britain, as well as notable studies written decades earlier, principally the "reservoir" studies by Hogben (1938) and the work of Lewis (1923) with one of the few examples of studies of direct and qualitative character in his book The Children of the Unskilled. Wilkerson (1967) suggests that prior to 1965 in the United States there were only four notable books directly related to this topic: Sexton (1961), Riessman (1962), Passow (1963) and Hunnicutt (1964). The amount of literature in North America since that time certainly mirrors the anxiety that was felt by professional educators, as well as sociologists, psychologists, anthropologists, not to mention medical personnel, politicians, journalists, and many others in a diversity of fields, including the concerned layman.

The extensive attention given to the subject has led to a great diversity of labels and characteristics. The usage of a variety of terms has arisen due to the involvement of the different disciplines. The label used is partly dependent upon the context in which it is used as well as upon the person using the term.
The same population may indeed be labelled differently; a psychologist, an anthropologist, a sociologist and an educator might each label the same group in a variety of ways. Tuckman and O'Brian (1969) elaborate on the usage of differing labels to describe "disadvantaged youth" by members of various disciplines. They state that different disciplines use different labels, "yet in each instance the term employed is quite specific and meaningful for the discipline represented".

Psychologically, this population is identified as the "culturally deprived" and is further specified in terms of specific early experiences and opportunities of which the members of this group have been deprived.

. . . To the anthropologist, this group is the "alien culture", alien because it is different.

. . . To the sociologist these are "stigmatized youth" labelled by their society as being different and inevitably wearing their label as a badge.

. . . To the special educator they are "exceptional children", their area of exceptionality being cognitive, perceptual and verbal deficits, which it is the role of the educator to overcome.

. . . To the educator these are "youth with special needs" (Tuckman and O'Brian, 1969:xx).

The approaches of varied disciplines to the subject has meant that no single approach has been established as each discipline often has a different reference point on viewing the phenomena. When researchers employ the traditional approaches of their respective
disciplines, this

... generally calls for a constriction of the initiates' ideas in order to conform to the well-defined and encapsulated set of expectations which provide each profession with its distinctive but narrow boundaries. This process invariably results in 'closure': ideas which do not fall within the limited range deemed as 'relevant' are automatically discarded or treated with less than passionate enthusiasm (Ossenberg, 1971:3).

Brazier (1967) suggests that present knowledge about a subject imposes on the person from that subject or discipline a bias by implying what should indeed be sought. As a consequence, the involvement of the many varied, but separate approaches, made to the subject of deprived children has, due to the fragmentation of research effort, produced an unintegrated inadequately defined set of terms. The different terminology employed also presents difficulty in analyzing research literature. The labels attached and classification of the deprived population have created much disagreement between those concerned and involved with the welfare of these groups and confusion has remained with others. Thus in spite of the proliferation of material relating to the subject the results have had a negligible effect on the position of the deprived children. MacDonald (1969) stated the situation in relation to the schools when she concluded that even though teachers were indeed
becoming more aware of the role of low social class in impeding learning in the school setting,

... for the most part they are not aware of the possibilities of overcoming class obstacles. Rather they use the disadvantage of low social class as a rationalization for the child's poor performance at school. Thus they can slough off any responsibility for that child's failure. It was not that the school failed to teach him, but that his social class background made it impossible for him to learn, and concomitantly for the school to teach him (MacDonald, 1969:174).

The view summed up by MacDonald is a commonplace one and illustrates the predominant starting premise of viewing deprived children as bringing with them to school an inadequate set of experiences and/or ability and therefore being a problem.

By the time a child enters school he has already developed an individual and cultural identity, for minority group and low income children, this identity has been viewed as a disadvantage (Lopate et al., 1970:147).

Research investigation of deprived children in school generally has this one unifying theme -- researchers employ the starting perspective that it is the children who are at fault. Then being governed by the bounds of their disciplines, researchers representing the different schools of thought differ dramatically in their assessment of the causal factors. The characteristics of the deprived then uncovered are commonly interpreted as evidence to validate the starting hypotheses. The lack of coordination of
research effort has produced a growing list of theories which have developed, but not in any systematic way.

Thus clarification of the terms and characteristics of the "deprived" requires critical examination. But delineating the subculture from which the population for this investigation has come is compounded by the great diversity of labels. Riessman (1962), for instance, maintains that the terms "culturally deprived," "educationally deprived," "deprived," "underprivileged," "disadvantaged," "lower class," and "lower socio-economic group," are interchangeable. However, the analogous treatment of these terms has been extensively discussed by several other authorities in the field; Fantini and Weinstein (1968) and Bereiter and Engelman (1966). Riessman's list has been extended by Fantini and Weinstein (1968) to include "culturally different," "working-class," "slum culture," "inner city dwellers," "culturally impoverished," "experientially deprived," "culturally handicapped," "children of the poor," "poverts," and "educationally disadvantaged".

The profusion of labels associated with the "deprived" or "disadvantaged" for example, does not provide clarification regarding the population to whom the labels are attributed. The lack of terminological
clarity regarding the deprived reflects a lack of conceptual clarity on the part of those studying the problem. This makes it increasingly difficult to ascertain the salient determining characteristics of those to whom the label "deprived" or some variant is attributed.

"Slow learners" and various related terms such as "underachievers" have long commanded the attention of the education profession in their consideration of the deprived; it is now fully recognized that a disproportionate number of children from low-income families make up these groups. In Laycock (1963) the term "slow learner" refers to pupils of IQ 50 to 75, which in British Columbia schools designates the group commonly classed as the educable mentally retarded (EMR) or in Britain the educationally subnormal (ESN), whereas educators in general use the term "slow learner" for the group of "dull normal" pupils whose IQ's are from 75 (or 80) to 90. These children would be those functioning at "normal" age (grade level) or "over-age" (1 or 2 years behind). Not included would be those pupils classified as EMR or ESN functioning 3 to 5 years below normal. Pursuit of this would take me too far afield from the present investigation.
Though such children may of course have ethnic or poverty backgrounds, EMR's may come from any social class, location or socio-economic background. They require special treatment but mentally sub-normal children should not be confused with the deprived nor should the deprived be incorrectly diagnosed as EMR's. According to Houghton (1970) the latter is common, that is, in every large industrial city one finds a disproportionate number of these children from the "slum culture" or lower socio-economic class, classified as educationally sub-normal (ESN). All too often in the literature the assumption is made that lower-class origins and poverty stricken environmental conditions result in a lower intelligence and poor scholastic performance. One popular notion is that the family is at fault. Thus one of the explanations offered to account for low scholastic performance among deprived children is that the home influences are so inadequate that the children enter the school with serious cultural deficiencies that are for the most part impossible to overcome.

Another thesis is presented by Lynn (1969) who suggests the possibility that there are social class differences in innate intelligence. "Slum dwellers are caused by low innate intelligence and poor family
upbringing, and that the real social challenge is posed by this" (Lynn, 1969:30). Lynn's solution to the "problem" created in the schools by deprived children is to persuade genetically inferior "slum dwellers" to limit their families. Conversely Clark (1965) expresses the opinion that: "Given no evidence to the contrary, the assumption can be made that the cultural and economic backgrounds of pupils do not constitute a barrier to the type of learning which can reasonably be expected of normal children in the elementary grades . . ."(Clark, 1965:139). Some educators would argue against Clark; Hickerson states:

The culture pattern to which most of our teachers are committed is diametrically opposed to the culture patterns of millions of economically deprived children. Teachers for most part come from established affluent homes or are committed to the values common to American dominant culture. . . . teachers see education as a means to future success and fulfillment. They stress the possibility of attaining prestige through academic accomplishment and book learning; they exhort children to forgo temporary pleasures for future rewards. Many economically deprived children find the greatest prestige comes from behavior thoroughly disapproved by the public school—sexual prowess, ability to fight, and development of cunning in circumnavigating established law. Many of these children believe only in today, because tomorrow is just another day of poverty, broken home, jail, or even worse. The teacher is given the task of convincing them that their values, commitments, indeed much of their entire lives, are wrong. A majority of these children, with remarkable strength, reject this assumption (Hickerson, 1966:44).
This statement is supported by Canadian writer Skene who says that:

If a child has been socialized in a family and peer group whose culture is different from that of the middle class culture, i.e. of a lower economic standard, such a child will be faced with a strange cultural pattern when he enters school, a new culture which conflicts with that which he had previously learned. If he wishes to cross the "cultural boundaries" he will need to move gradually into new peer groups which have absorbed this culture and reflect it (Skene, 1966:3,4).

It is views such as these that have given rise to the notion that children from low socio-economic groups are culturally deprived. Skene goes on to point out that

... the concept "culturally deprived" or "socially disadvantaged" or "multiproblem child" is not to be used as a stereotype for all children nurtured in the subcultures of poverty and discrimination. They are widely different in academic motivation, learning ability and in general pattern of behavior (Skene, 1966:23).

Fisher (1965) says that "cultural deprivation," because of its unfortunate coinage, has become simply what suits the situation or circumstances. Bereiter and Engelman defend the term "culturally deprived" and suggest a legitimate use of it.

In most dealings with people of different cultures, it is inappropriate to assume a fixed point of reference. To say that the Trobriand Islanders are culturally deprived by our standards is to misuse the term, for it makes no sense to apply our standards to a culture so remote from our own. In dealing with lower-class people in
ordinary American communities, however, the various sub-cultures share many common values and standards, and, with respect to those shared points of reference, it is both legitimate and useful to speak of cultural deprivation (Bereiter and Engelmann, 1966:24).

It should be remembered that the term "cultural deprivation" is not mere rhetoric but was adopted in an attempt to recognize that people in poverty were not just suffering from a physical deprivation, but in addition poverty had a social and emotional effect - an important implication for the schools. The use of "cultural deprivation" was deliberately stronger in meaning than "poverty background," or "low-income families". The struggle was for a term that summed up the realization that poverty was not only a material thing, poor housing, ill-nourishment, inadequate medical and dental care and so on, but also that poverty affected their socialization - having a mental, psychological, emotional and social effect. Recent condemnation of the label "culturally deprived" has resulted because the term was picked up and applied to the fact that poor people were only deprived of a certain culture - namely the norms and values of the "middle-class". The coinage of "the term 'disadvantaged,' like 'culturally deprived' and other variants, has now become a preferred euphemism
for young victims of poverty and racial discrimination" (Wilkerson, 1967:479).

Fantini and Weinstein extend the usage of the term "disadvantaged" to include not just the children of the poor, suggesting poverty is not the major element of homogeneity but that:

The only thing they have in common is that all are left out of a process which purports to carry all humankind, regardless of background, towards the same basic goals: physical comfort and survival, and feelings of potency, self-worth, connection with others, and concern of the common good. Anyone deprived of the means to reach any of these human goals is disadvantaged (Fantini and Weinstein, 1968:5).

The above use of the term "disadvantaged" by these authors not limiting it to those persons from the lower economic section of the population is supported by Holt (1964) who includes any youth who find the school experience meaningless and irrelevant, regardless of social class, economic status, or environmental background.

Cohen (1968) suggests that the term "disenfranchised" is a more apt and appropriate title than the present 'polite' term "disadvantaged".

It is not the poor, white or black who are culturally disadvantaged, but a much larger segment of our population. Cultural deprivation extends to almost all our youth: rich, middle-class and poor alike; White, Black, Yellow and Red; Protestant, Catholic, Jew, Moslem and all the other sects.
For it is not merely the children of America's minorities that are disadvantaged, but all of America's children are being disenfranchised (Cohen, 1968:78).

However "disadvantaged" usually means poverty and low social status even though now the meaning is broadened to include all those who are blocked in any way from fulfilling their human potential. A suburban community may also provide a restricted culture because:

This homogeneous and limited setting is far from representational of settings elsewhere in the world today, or for that matter, in this country. Indeed, the bland monotony of suburban living may limit the growing child's experiences, and lack of exposure to different cultures, values and attitudes may have serious consequences on his role as an adult in society (Fantini and Weinstein, 1968:69).

Nevertheless, the defective alignment of the needs of the student and the present school system is more profound for the children from the lower socio-economic class than for those from the middle or upper income groups. For the purposes of clarification, the terms utilized will be interchanged according to the ones employed by the specific contributors that are mentioned in the literature. However, in spite of the prospect of many different terms, their usage in succeeding references will be confined to a single definition, that is, referring to the population of children whose social and economic condition is characterized by low
income and poor neighbourhood. Utilizing this definition it has been estimated that socially disadvantaged groups make up about fifteen per cent of the population of the United States, with their children accounting for as much as 20 per cent of the child population (Havighurst, 1964).

While the actual numbers are smaller in Canada it is still of utmost importance. Canadian society suffers from urban, rural, regional and ethnic socio-economic deprivation. Many of the larger Canadian cities have slum areas, without the serious racial complications which exist in the United States. Regional poverty prevails for much of rural Quebec and most of the Maritimes. Most noticeably the Indian and Eskimo peoples of Canada have suffered severe socio-economic hardships. One survey of native Indians significantly relates the poverty and unemployment situation to education. Fifty per cent of those people who suffered poverty had not finished primary school and 90 per cent had not finished secondary school (Hawthorn et al, 1958).

A few studies have also been launched, notably through the Canadian Welfare Council; and one nationwide survey directly relates the school learning problem to social welfare in studying families on social
assistance where both poverty and the absence of one parent are considered as factors (Malik, 1966).

The children commonly called "disadvantaged" in Canada are the "one out of five" Canadians (Economic Council of Canada, 1968) who have too little of everything from economic resources, living conditions, personal attention, self-respect and self-confidence.

Quick, who edited the report by Canadian educators studying compensatory programmes for the culturally disadvantaged, summed up the nature of cultural disadvantage and related it to the question of educability when he said:

A child who is culturally disadvantaged is usually one who has grown up in a home where social and economic conditions are sub-marginal. His parents, for the most part, lack motivation for self-improvement and material achievement and participate very little in the community at large. The deprived child has not learned from his parents fundamental positive attitudes toward achievement and he has not developed significant aptitudes for improvement. The lack of parental aspiration and the early deficit sensory training and expression, produce in the child, deficient language and perceptual development and little ability to think abstractly about the world around him. These deficiencies although not synonymous with deficient intellectual ability are often interpreted as such (Quick, 1964:1).

The concluding sentence by Quick is a vital point, as such deficiencies in performance by disadvantaged children are often presented as evidence to support the notion
that lower-class children are inferior in intelligence to middle-class children. Poor performance is often interpreted as being due to multiple factors working against the children; low innate ability, linguistic deprivation, absence of father-figure, working mother, and so on, depending on the approach made to the subject, and the factors that have been isolated for focus.

The next step in trying to resolve the complexity of the issues involved in the literature is to examine what researchers have disclosed on the characteristics of the deprived. Again this is not a clearly defined area, as there is the added complication of important and conflicting "facts" mentioned in the literature. Sensitive analysis of the literature can lead to an awareness of the pitfalls in assuming causation from characteristics mentioned as being typical of deprived children. Generalizations from typical features of deprived children may be harmful as they can be misleading by erasing the unique qualities and ignoring the ranges of behaviour within the classified population.

There is evidence from even a brief perusal of the literature that there exists an excessive preoccupation with children's families. The predominant focus of many of the studies has been with the social class background,
the economic and occupational status of the parents, factors which are quite often deployed to the detriment of the children. Geographical and situational influences relating to the home background upon the developmental behaviour of children is not clear. It is true that there is often a dramatic difference between life in the inner-city deprived areas compared to the "middle-class" suburbs. The support for school learning the child receives at home in the deprived areas may also be different. The lack of educational tradition in the homes of deprived children is often considered as one of the detrimental factors in the lack of success in the school lives of these children.

As the result of his study, Riessman (1962) identified characteristics which he believed were fairly typical of deprived childrens' lives: physical and visual rather than aural, content-centered rather than form-centered, externally oriented rather than introspective, problem-centered rather than abstract-centered, inductive rather than deductive, spatial rather than temporal, and slow, careful, patient, persevering (in areas of importance), rather than quick, clever, facile or flexible.
In addition Riessman (1965) discussed what he believed were the specific strengths and weaknesses of these children. Among the strengths were: a cooperative-ness and mutual aid that mark the extended family; avoidance of the strain accompanying competitiveness and individualism; equalitarianism, informality and humour; freedom from self-blame and parental overprotection; children's enjoyment of each other and lessened sibling rivalry; the security found in the extended family and a traditional outlook; enjoyment of music, games, sports and cars; ability to express anger; freedom from being wordbound; and, the physical style involved in learning. Specific areas of weakness were identified as: poor auditory attention; poor time perspective; inefficient test-taking skills; and limited reading ability.

Brennan (1967) summarizes the most commonly recognized deficiencies which result in academic failure as: negative self-concept; low language level; poor utilization and interpretation of abstract symbols; difficulty in the transition from learnings of a concrete nature to modes of thought which are abstract; unique dialect of spoken language; low intelligence as measured by standardized instruments; insufficient motivation; little respect for public school authority; poor acceptance
of criticism; and inability to see the advantage of receiving an education. The most noticeable trait exhibited by deprived students than is that they form a disproportionate number of the school dropouts, and the characteristic most consistently associated with the school dropouts is poor school achievement. Several researchers have expressed concern over the seemingly progressive retardation which appears to characterize the educational performance of deprived children (Masland, Sarason and Gladwin, 1958; Gray, 1962; Deutsch, 1963; John, 1964; Jensen, 1969).

Explanations for this failure which have dominated recent literature vary in the identification of causation. Many that have attempted to account for this phenomenon have primarily centred and asserted causation on factors that lie with the children and/or their home environment. Such researchers see the adverse effects upon the education of deprived children as being due to the home environment, which is often considered to be non-supportive of the educational system, and the lower class style of life as preventing the children from utilizing those learning styles and/or skills required by the school. Prevalent in the literature is the dominant theme and insistence on analysing problems in light of the
individual's inadequacies; explaining that when deprived children do poorly in school it is because of: prior socialization in the home; being subjected to an environment which lacks stimuli; cumulative deficiencies in pre-school development; or else the reason is attributed to lack of innate ability based on the underlying premise of fixed ability. Each of the positions attempt to explain part of the variance and these theories are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Nevertheless, the proponents of the respective theories would feel that their explanation accounts for the major part of the variance. These and other theories are employed in an attempt to account for the phenomenon of deprived children and their lack of performance and increasing refractiveness toward school and school learning. Some researchers contend that deprived children have negative values and attitudes toward education. Although Deutsch and others have noted the enthusiasm that children have for school when they first enter, they have also observed a decline in enthusiasm and an increasing alienation from school as they progress.

Deutsch (1963) summarizes the position thus:

The lower class child probably enters school with a nebulous and essentially neutral attitude. His
home rarely, if ever, negatively predisposes him toward the school situation, though it might not offer positive motivation and correct interpretation of the school experience. It is in the school situation that the highly charged negative attitude toward learning evolves, and the responsibility for such large groups of children showing great scholastic retardation, the high dropout rate, and to some extent the delinquency problem, must rest with the failure of the schools to promote the proper acculturation of the children (Deutsch, 1963:178).

This not only indicates the role of the school in terms of remediation responsibilities, but also implicates the school as part of the causation of the problem. The enlightened perspective by Deutsch is in conflict with the preceding approaches which see the role of the schools only in terms of needed remediation programmes, but such approaches by their nature, exempt the school from explaining its part as a causative factor in the continuing retardation of the deprived.

Silberman (1970) states:

This literature has contributed a great deal to our understanding of why 'disadvantaged' children fail; with a few exceptions, it has contributed very little to our understanding of why schools fail, or of how they might be changed in order to make learning successful for children from these backgrounds*. Indeed the question hardly

*Silberman in a footnote at this point says that "The most notable exception is the work of Martin Deutsch, one of the first American Scholars to argue that lower-class children's failure in school was rooted in the
even comes up in most scholarly literature (Silberman, 1970:80).

Silberman goes on to say:

It is taken for granted that if children fail to learn, the fault must lie with them rather than the school (Silberman, 1970:80).

From the former approaches in the literature it would appear that "deprived" is something someone brings with them to school and that for the most part the school does nothing, or cannot do anything to affect this status one way or the other.

In the overview of the characteristics and findings mentioned we are unable to ascertain what is primarily cause and what can be attributed to effect.

Thus from the literature not only are we left without a clear definition of what constitutes "deprived," but without any indication of how schooling affects such children, in a qualitative sense. There is no indication of how deprived children perceive school and come to define their own identities as a result of their participation in school.

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This point was made on the preceding page of my study (page 22), using an excerpt from an earlier work by Deutsch (1963) in presenting a perspective that seemingly is for the most part still true almost a decade later.
Need for the study

Educational sociology is "... the science that describes and explains ... the social relationships in which or through which the individual gains and organizes his experience" (Payne, 1928:20).

The school is among those institutions which like "every institution captures something of the time and interest of its members and provides something of a world for them; in brief every institution has encompassing tendencies" (Goffman, 1961:4). Employing this perspective this study seeks to determine if and how the school functions to create and sustain the subculture of the "deprived" through its effect on the organization of their experience.

When looking at the schools however, it must be remembered that so much lies outside the school's purview. The vital educational functions of schools cannot be adequately accomplished without the full recognition of the fact that the educational system complements other socializing institutions, such as the family and the church. As Dreeben (1968) points out: "... although schooling takes place in a setting both geographically separate and socially distinct from his family of orientation, the child continues his membership in and close contact with
his family" (Dreeben, 1968:2). The importance of the total social experience in socializing the child is presented by Brown (1947) who writes that: "educational sociology is interested in the impact of the total cultural milieu in which and through which experience is acquired and organized. It is interested in the school, but recognizes it is a small part of the total" (Brown, 1947:35-36). The school certainly does not have a monopoly on education; the home, neighbourhood, peer groups, mass media - television, records and magazines, are also influential.

However Jackson suggests that school makes up too large a segment of a child's life to have its effects completely neutralized by what happens after the dismissal bell rings. Further he states:

Apart from the bedroom (where he has his eyes closed most of the time) there is no single enclosure in which he spends a longer time than he does in the classroom. From the age of six onwards he is a more familiar sight to his teacher than to his father, and possibly even his mother (Jackson, 1968:5).

Nevertheless, thus far much research in educational sociology has concentrated on social class and education, and has examined the influence of social background on educational aspiration, experience and achievement. Little attention has been given to the institutionalized
life of the children or, more specifically, the quality of the interaction between children, their teachers and other aspects of the school environment.

Much of the research in the schools has been studies which have usually provided too little information about too many children. However, from such research we know that the children considered deprived in general do poorly on IQ tests and in scholastic performance; that such children form a disproportionate number of the "problem" children, slow learners, truants, aggressors, the delinquents and the drop-outs (Williams, 1963; Nam and Powers, 1964).

The work of Coleman and his associates (1966) is illustrative of the scope of work in the field to date. He reported two factors which emerged as crucial for "success" in school: the family and social class background of the child, and secondly the school's social class composition - the "educational backgrounds and aspirations of the other students in the school."

The kind of "success" that Coleman referred to and measured is that as performed on standardized IQ tests. Such a measure whilst commensurate with such values as schooling and careers,

... ignores more subtle kinds of personal success - questions of identity, of a sense of
control over one's self and one's environment, of self-esteem - and these factors have in recent years been regarded as increasingly important (Kirp, 1970:10-11).

There appears to be wide differences in "educability" of children of similar IQ drawn from different social classes or subcultural groups (Jensen, 1968). Such studies tend to focus on the results of schooling for deprived children. They unfortunately fail to investigate "what goes on in schools" and so tell us nothing about the "child in context". It is postulated, quite deliberately that the socio-cultural dimension of the school is of priority significance in the emotional life of children. Conditions in the schools are all too often perceived as being favourable to the children. Yet are their values and attitudes toward themselves and toward schooling different from our institutionalized view of them? What is now needed is an internal analysis of schools as seen through the "eyes of the pupils".

The atmosphere and tone of the institution is set by the complex interactions of participants: teachers, administration and pupils. In the classroom interaction the teacher influences the children, not only by intentional behaviour and actions, but also without awareness of the behaviour and the effect of that
behaviour on the child. While it is clear that many things go on in classrooms other than the teaching of curriculum, there is little sociological discussion of such features.

The guiding assumption of this investigation is that learning takes place in interaction with other people, and how children learn is partly dependent upon how they are taught, and how the school environment, the institutionalized beliefs, images and expectations, is perceived by the learner.

We know that teaching methods differ in the effect they have, and Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) show that teacher expectations can significantly affect performance. The evidence put forward suggests that "disadvantaged" children tend to do poorly in school, not because of their different ethnic, cultural or economic backgrounds, nor any so-called inadequacies in their potential, but because - quite simply, they are expected not to do well. Their thesis indicates that it is the attitude of the teachers toward the children, the expectations for them, that is communicated to the children. If such attitudes are manifested in the classroom, children must accurately perceive them in order for the self-fulfilling prophecy to occur. Rosenthal's research
appears to show that children do perceive their teachers' expectations. Hence it would appear that the conventional schools not only fail to offset any handicaps that deprived children bring with them into school, but also contribute to the lowering of self-image and educational failure.

Teachers have often observed that when children enter school they are free from the hostility, aggression and other negative attitudes and behaviour patterns which are likely to characterize the group in the intermediate grade classrooms. Such behaviour comes either with age or experience in school (Clausen and Williams, 1963; Grossack, 1965). What happens within the school during the first 3 or 4 years that contributes to a decline in the estimates of a pupil's worth and ability?

While accepting external factors as being negative forces in the lives of deprived children; such as poor housing, defective family situations, lack of opportunities, and realizing that these forces should be eliminated, another area of concern that has an enormous influence on future aspirations, peer group interaction and the power to mould the potential of children is the internal organization of the school
itself. The position has been put forward by Roberts, who says:

Potential to learn is affected not only by the culture in which the child is raised, by the ethnic subculture to which he was born, by the socio-economic position of his family in the social structure, by his earlier experience in learning activities; but also by the school and teachers who may, through inhibiting procedures, decrease the child's capacity to use his learning potential (Roberts, 1967:31).

It must be said that many former statements concerning deprived children may be challenged because of the broad generalizations which are made in the light of limited data regarding inadequate home environments and the many factors purportedly reflecting a lack of interest by lower-class parents and the alleged adverse effects this has upon learning for their children. From the work of Douglas (1964) we know that even without parental interest children going to the best elementary schools can do as well as children who do have parents' support. However largely deprived children do poorly in schools in relation to the performance of the more advantaged or general population.

Bernstein states that:

... we have failed to think through systematically the relationship between the pupil's background
and the educational measures appropriate to successful learning (Bernstein, 1967:226).

We now have to critically examine many of the former premises regarding schooling and the learning process in the light of the considerable evidence of the non-performance of schools in serving certain segments of the population—notably deprived children.

Silberman adds:

... not that everything now being done is necessarily wrong; it was simply that everything now being done needs to be questioned (Silberman, 1970:4).

As the literature on the deprived continues to grow it is about time to hear from those deeply involved - the children themselves. They may be able to present answers, or more to the point, pertinent questions if "we" are to understand them. Most of the literature about such children is written by individuals who have devoted most of their energy toward helping children fit into the dominant pattern of education. Investigators rarely take the perspective of this study and question what it is they are asking these children to fit into (Weinstein, et al., 1971).

... educators and scholars, frequently with the best of intentions, have operated on the assumption that children should be cut or stretched or otherwise 'adjusted' to fit the
schools, rather than adjusting the schools to fit the children. And most of us have tended to accept this without question (Silberman, 1970:81).

Spradley (1970) suggests that the value put upon the self reliance ethic has led many of our institutions to give primacy to a point of view that states "It's up to the individual!"

Religion, education, psychotherapy, and other forms of rehabilitation seek to get the individual to change his behaviour, cope with his problems, and adapt to the dominant culture. The structures of our society, our institutions, are all too often seen as givens, to which one must adjust. Such a view often leads to the persistence of forces which create human problems but lie outside the individual (Spradley, 1970:5).

This study is an attempt to produce understanding of deprived children from their own point of view by providing a description of their way of life in school and its effect on how they perceive themselves. A major part of the study will contain a descriptive narrative of the institutionalized life of the children with anecdotal references. The description will stress the social and cultural determinants of behaviour. There are other ways to define and evaluate the experiences of these children, yet the ethnographic approach utilized in this study permitted gaining personal data which is important particularly "at those times when an area of study has grown stagnant, has
pursued the investigation of a few variables with ever-increasing precision but has received dwindling increments of knowledge from the pursuit" (Becker, 1970:424).

It is hoped that the theme of this study will permit some research explorations which will give new life to the field.
CHAPTER II

THE SOCIAL CONTEXT: DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The statistical evidence amassed in the 1960's in Canada, the United States and Great Britain showed that many children from homes with a background of poverty failed to find the school experience helpful or meaningful.* In Canada it has been estimated that one-fifth of all Canadians are now living on family incomes which are significantly below the national average. This not only makes for resentment and social unrest, it is significantly correlated with educational disadvantage. A high correlation between poverty and failure in school has been documented by studies, and it was therefore important that a setting be selected for this study where conditions of poverty were demonstrated.

Visits were made during 1969-70 to many schools and school districts around Vancouver, British Columbia.

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*In the later 1960's, Roper in The Myth of Equality (1970) pointed to the plight of deprived groups in Australia. This revealed the existence of inequalities for Aboriginals and other poor people; and the lack of opportunity through education was estimated to include half a million Australian children.
Several of the schools were those identified by the Vancouver School Board as "Inner-city". The term "Inner-city" is used to describe an area which has special educational needs.* Visits were also made to schools having special programmes; special classes, new Canadian and occupational classes, and schools having identified "deprived" children in their populations, several of which served native Indian communities. The unifying theme between "Inner-city" and Indian communities has been established; in both cases they are characterized by poverty. Additionally children form an important number of the respective populations. In British Columbia nearly one quarter of the native Indian population is of school age, between six and sixteen. Present statistics reveal that during 1951-1962, 94 per cent of a representative Indian school population did not complete grade 12. Nearly 50 per cent of the grade 1 enrollment did not progress to grade 2, and each year from one to eleven per cent did not advance to the next grade (Hawthorn

*The term used in England is Educational Priority Areas (EPA). In Toronto the name "community schools" is used when reference is made to all schools presently eligible for any form of compensatory education. These terms lack the stigma now inherent in the term "Inner-city", which has an undesirable connotation before it is even applied to the schools (Quality Teaching Study, Metropolitan Toronto Report, May 1969).
Several important fieldwork studies have been presented on Indian schools: Wolcott (1967) studied the life and school in a Kwakiutl Indian village on the north western coast of British Columbia, and King (1967) describes the educational process for Indian children in a residential school in the Yukon Territory. These ethnographic studies give a clear picture of the life and activities connected with the schools. Wolcott and King gathered this data whilst employed as teachers in the respective settings, and Rosenfeldt (1971) also gathered material using an ethnographic method while in the position of a teacher. The latter study describes the existence of slum school failure in an Inner-city area, New York's Harlem.

The idea of taking a teaching position was only given minor consideration because of the problems inherent in objectively observing a situation in which the researcher is involved in an additional role of formal participant (Wolcott, 1969). Secondly, the choice of a general setting for in-depth investigation could have been made from two alternatives: Inner-city or Indian schools.
The selection of the research topic was from interest that was first generated while the researcher was at college in England, following exposure to the work of Halsey, Floud and Anderson (1961) and from the motivation of personal experiences. The focus was specifically related to social class factors without the additional complexities of different ethnic backgrounds and different native languages; therefore the Inner-city schools resumed their primary importance. However, the Vancouver Inner-city schools situated in the East End, an area of low socio-economic ranking (Mayhew, 1967), had school populations which for the most part consisted of immigrant groups. One principal declared that the major problem encountered by his elementary school was the lack of facility with English of many of the children; at that time there were 28 different nationalities represented. Largely due to the primary interest in the particular topic, plus theoretical and ethnographic considerations, other research made to the subject, and importantly not to underestimate personal preference, the aforementioned areas had to be excluded. A different geographic area had to be chosen for its special relationship to the topic and additionally including factors of convenience.
The elementary school selected for use in this study was in a sub-centre of the Greater Metropolitan area of Vancouver, population approaching one million. The city in which this school is located is the second largest industrial community in the province, consisting of approximately seven square miles with a population of almost 44,000 in 1970. The economy is based largely on the port plus related industries, and the city serves as the distributing, transporting and business centre for a wide hinterland. The population is for the most part of a middle income group primarily occupied in production work. The city has a smaller percentage of low and high income families than does the metropolitan area as a whole. In the 1961 census, 75% of the city residents were Canadian-born. The three largest ethnic groups are British, Scandinavian and German. Thirty per cent of the occupied dwellings in the city are nearly 50 years old with 5 per cent in need of major repair. There are 13,500 families with some 6,000 pupils in nine schools; one high school and eight elementary schools.

The area served by the school in this study includes a district in which many houses are in a state of disrepair. The area also contains the largest
percentage of: families in the 20-44 age group; apartments and flats; lodging families; households occupied less than 3 years; and men earning less than $3,000 per year. In the metropolitan context this area ranks third in the percentage of households with less than 2 years of occupancy, thus the nature of transiency of the area is established. This transiency extends to the school. In June 1970 there were an estimated 434 pupils enrolled in the school. During the academic year 1970-71, 244 new children came into the school on the first day of school in September (not including children in Kindergarten or grade 1, all being new entrants). From September 10th, 1970 to June 24th, 1971 an additional 145 pupils entered the school. Between June 1970 and June 1971 some 227 children, grades two through six, left the school. This number is made up of 66 children grades 2-6 who left in June 1970 (thus the figures do not include grade 7 pupils who left for the high school) and 161 who left the school during the period September 10th, 1970 to the end of June, 1971.

Thus even though this research focuses on the one school for intensive study, the investigation is with children who for the most part have attended several different schools, and in many cases different
school districts. The study is therefore wider in perspective than it would at first sight appear to be. It is not so much an ethnography of one school but rather an analysis of a diverse group of pupils, with heterogeneity of prior school contact and experience, who have come together as "accidental neighbours" by their attendance at this school.

The second point of unity lies in the fact that many are singled out and characterized as being from low income family backgrounds, welfare families, or one-parent situations, and labelled "deprived" by the school administration.

The school is identified by the school board as having special educational needs and is designated an "Inner-city" school in order to appropriate additional finances and programmes at the school; hereafter called Inner-city School. A formal written statement by the Principal states that:

The social composition of the student population reveals a goodly proportion of culturally deprived pupils, a lesser group from sound middle-class homes and a sprinkling of pupils from upper-middle-class families (1969).

Inner-city School was selected because of the administration's declaration that many of the children present do not seem to benefit from schooling and
"what is needed is for someone to zero in on what creates a dislike of school and why they don't perform in class." This kind of situation is stated succinctly by Kendall:

Every classroom, every school and every school system has its failures. Usually we think of these failures as children: children who don't learn as quickly as others of their age, who fail to acquire specific skills, who are uninterested in school learning or who persistently transgress the rules or codes of the school or classroom (Kendall, 1969:12).

A disproportionate number of the children at Inner-city School would fit the description presented by Kendall.

In addition the choice of an elementary school was desired for reasons that are quite vital as:

... they are the crucial school years. During this period the child acquires the basic tool skills of reading, writing and arithmetic, as well as the fundamentals of science, language, and social studies. It is, consequently, the period during which basic attitudes towards academic endeavour are formed and the child's self concept of himself as a good or poor student emerges (Elkind, 1971:1).

The initial contact with Inner-city School was made in the Fall of 1970. Warm support by the Principal was vital in making this study possible.*

*Ease of access to the school was favoured by initial conversations between a member of the Faculty of Education at the University of British Columbia (Dr. Leonard Marsh) and the Principal of the school. The importance of University faculty members gaining and maintaining good relations with public schools was vividly illustrated in this context.
The Principal was concerned with those children who seemingly do not profit from the educative efforts and innovations of the school and moreover become increasingly refractive to the school and its programmes as they progress through the grades exhibiting severe discipline and learning problems. The question of formal clearance of the research project by the school board, often a prerequisite and frequently a major problem, before conducting a study in schools, was never broached by the Principal. He exercised great autonomy with regard to this issue. For the most part his support of the study was the main reason the teachers allowed the researcher the considerable freedom and frequent impositions on their time, through time spent with the pupils.

The researcher met with Inner-city School Principal (November 2nd, 1970) to discuss the research study being planned and the appropriateness and possibility of the school being used. The Principal described the school and the school population and expressed his willingness to cooperate in any way that was needed. The researcher, thus given the background of the school and guarantee of support was then able to clarify the study proposed and the methodology that was to be utilized. The planned fieldwork lasted six months
from January, 1971 to June, 1971 and as already indicated the ethnographic approach to investigating social phenomena was employed, directed to the way deprived children themselves perceive the schooling experience.

**Methodology**

While methodology is only secondary to the data, it is intimately tied up with the data and therefore should be made explicit at the outset. The major purposes are: (1) to give a brief description and justification of factors contributing to the research process employed in the study, and (2) to highlight the important details of the methodological procedures. For purposes of clarification it might be appropriate to state what the ensuing account does not purport to show. Hopefully this will allay fears that the researcher has either missed or ignored germane factors. The factors are primarily those of a practical nature faced by all field researchers; they have been concisely presented by Denzin (1971):

(1) getting into social situations; (2) learning a native's language; (3) standing around and listening; (4) making and writing field notes; (5) presenting self to diverse others; (6) securing permission to examine special files, or openly observe special classes of subjects; (7) becoming emotionally involved with the subject; (8) being
rebuffed or rebuked by persons in authority; (9) deciding what to tell a 'native' about one's study (Denzin, 1971:174).

The list of factors could be extended by the researcher in terms of personal adaptation to the research setting in this study. Suffice for it to be stated that the above factors and others are involved in many fieldwork studies and for the most part are successfully overcome by the researchers through individual and perhaps non-generalizable adaptations.*

The section does not attempt to provide a description of the research process per se, as might be found in an anthropological field diary (Barnett, 1970), neither is attention drawn unnecessarily to an account of "researcher effect," or reactivity, in the fieldwork situation. Becker (1970) puts forward the idea that people in "natural" situations are in fact less affected by the presence of an observer as there are more important constraints to be dealt with by the subject in the setting. The school in this study is taken as a natural setting, natural in the sense that it has formed part of the way of life for the children; it is certainly natural as opposed to an experimental laboratory situation.

Justifications

Even though qualitative research techniques are now gaining increasing acceptance as research methods in educational settings, only rare efforts have been made to apply them directly to understanding the learning situation and "problem" areas; and this even where traditional research methodology has been unsuccessful.*

The problems that educational policies have met, particularly in Inner-city schools, have been exceedingly complicated by our ignorance of the children we are serving; ignorance of their feelings and emotional well-being. One apparent area of sophistication has been in the quantifiable data that have been collected by innumerable studies. The starting premise of many of them has reflected the

* A cavalier approach was undertaken in England with the unusual perspective of actually asking the children what kind of schools they would like. See The School that I’d Like by Edward Blishen (Ed.), 1969. Perhaps even more dramatic and pertinent to this study is the book Letter to a Teacher by the School of Barbiana, 1970. This is written by eight young Italian boys who with statistical analysis of the Italian education system, set out to show the ways in which attitudes towards class, behaviour, language and subject-matter militate against the poor. They describe, too, the reforms they propose "... their anger is the anger of every worker and peasant who sees middle-class children absorbed effortlessly into the schools as teacher's favorites" (from the back cover).
attitudes of many educators who are concerned with the positive aspects of school policies being primarily interested in success in terms of academic achievement, and future educational orientation of the children. The analyses of low income children in schools has tended to view the academic performance and/or behaviour of such children in a vacuum. The perspective taken in this study is that a child's behaviour and performance in school is not only determined by his social class background and the socio-cultural environment in which he lives but is determined by the school as well. If this research were guided by previous research and theory concerning the deprived, it would likely impel us to define the behaviour of low-income children as a problem that must be eliminated.

Emphasis on this former approach blocks investigation of how children perceive "what goes on in schools," and how they feel it affects them. The change in perspective that this study advocates is to present knowledge and understanding not on the measured abilities of low-income children and evidence of the holding power of the school, but on the basic value orientation of how low-income children feel and perceive their school career and identity as presented to them by the school.
It is often difficult when looking back upon collected data to say precisely when insights into the research environment actually occurred. This is a consequence of the naturalistic inquiry in examining the empirical world. The initial step was to shift the focus away from a predefined conceptual framework or a series of hypotheses for testing drawn up prior to entry into the fieldwork situation. In fact on entering the research situation the researcher did not know what to look for in terms of specific concerns. Acknowledgement must be made in terms of the previous extensive background research investigation in the substantive and methodological literature coupled with observation in schools, including Inner-city schools or their equivalent variant, in Great Britain, the United States and Canada. This had affirmed to the researcher the need for study of what happens in schools that may be contributing to refractiveness and poor performance of deprived children. The core of this research work was the search for the concerns of the children as they saw them affecting their identity. This approach is therefore quite different from examining the "real world" (Hall, 1959) of the children with a preconceived set of hypotheses.
This research was initiated with observation in Inner-city School through which the researcher sought to determine how behaviour and interaction in this setting tends to be ordered. Though one holds to the view presented by Spindler (1963) that no bit of behaviour is too simple or too unimportant to escape observation, it is an ideal that one can seldom approximate. From the outset the study never purported to present either the total way of life of the children, nor a complete description of the school. The number of facets would be so great as to be unmanageable and important points might lose their significance by the sheer weight of so many other factors that would be observable. In the role of ethnographer the researcher was interested in identifying the values and attitudes held by deprived children toward themselves, their peers and the school. The researcher attempted to find out how "insiders" view their participation in the schooling process.

The central area of concerns given this focus was not however selected by the researcher, but gained from the children themselves. The extensive method of formulating the concerns in the field, rather than before entry into the fieldwork situation, avoided
the imposition of preformulated criteria which may not have been the concerns of the subjects under study. Instead from the points of concern gained from focussed observation, informal interviews, questioning and interacting with the subjects, there emerged the children's definition of the schooling process as it affected them. The original statement of the problem drawn up prior to fieldwork entry (December, 1970) was made more specific in light of data collection and from the careful and critical review of the data derived from the subjects. The apparent lack of definitive research goals or themes for investigation is essential for a study which aims at discovering the conceptual models employed by those we study. However, with sociological understanding and interpretation, insights into the field situation occurred. Some sociological concepts are obviously relevant and the discipline gave extensive guidance in role perception, self concept, group reinforcement and theories of socialization. However, the major point is that the themes were derived from the subjects in the study, and not imposed by the researcher, although they are interpreted sociologically. The study became concerned with examining how the processes
of labelling and grouping in school help children to define their identities as students.

The purpose of the study outlined in the original research proposal (December, 1970) was to describe "... one aspect of the cultural experience of deprived children: namely the encounter with their experience of schooling." It was put forward then that an individual may learn as much from his participation in school, a socio-cultural surround or system, as he does from what is actually taught.

It was this background orientation of the researcher that directed the research inquiry and it must be acknowledged that to some extent this position dictated the unfolding of the later research.

Denzin makes the point of naturalistic behaviourism* that it:

... places the sociological observer squarely in the center of the research act. It recognizes the observer for what he or she is and takes note of the fact that all sociological work somehow

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*The term naturalistic behaviourism is presented by Denzin as meaning the commitment to enter the worlds of the people under study and to attempt to explain those worlds and make them understandable from the point of view of theory that is "grounded in the behaviors, languages, definitions, attitudes, and feelings of those studied" (1971:166). Thus a naturalistic approach is commensurate with the ethnographic perspective and indeed shares similar fieldwork approaches, traditionally participant-observer (loosely defined) in an attempt to discover the subjects' perspective.
reflects the unique stance of the investigator. It assumes that all studies begin in some fashion from a problem, or set of problems, deeply troubling to the sociologist; whether this be the character of alienation, the socialization of one's own children or an attempt to understand how mental hospitals create mental illness. Sound, viable and exciting sociology begins with biographically troubling issues and culminates in an attempt to offer public answers to what was initially personal and private (see Mills, 1959) (Denzin, 1971:167).

The starting position of the research must be credited along with other factors to the focus of the study and the redefined statement of the problem. Other factors which served as instrumental in influencing the direction of the research included not only the starting orientation and the background and the training of the researcher, but importantly, the feedback influences acting upon the researcher in the process of the research. It should perhaps be evident, yet it is frequently ignored or given only passing attention, when the methodology employed rests largely upon the researcher as an instrument of that research, feedback in the field must to a considerable extent be responsible for the direction of the research and the data collected.

The statement by Kluckhohn (1940) is very applicable in this context.

The investigator forced to analyse his own roles is, on the one hand, less misled by the myth of
complete objectivity, in social research, and, on the other hand, more consciously aware of his own biases (Kluckhohn, 1940:343).

The data collected, questions asked, situations observed and subsequent analysis of the data for specific focus were to some extent determined by the starting justifications presented. Thus other researchers with different orientations may have focussed on different aspects of the school life and influence. selected different incidents, consequently asked different questions, collected different data and hence gained a different view of deprived children.* This does not detract from the contribution made in this study. If we are to give credence to Becker (1967) and the position he takes, that every action in the field is bound to produce biased results simply as it is not feasible nor possible to study all sides of an issue, the obvious limitations of a study of this nature become clear. With this in mind delimitations were made in this study, conscious of the value decisions involved. The researcher is first and foremost the major source and determiner of influences in the fieldwork situation. Recognition and acceptance

*See Keiser, R.L. "Fieldwork among the Vice Lords of Chicago," (1970) for his statements concerning his starting theoretical orientation as a social anthropologist and the predetermination effect this has upon the research.
of this occurrence can only lead to desirable results, rather than being misled or protesting a completely objective stance, and brushing away his own biases under the guise of "value-free".

All that can be hoped is that each researcher will publicly state his values so that future researchers may know them. In that ideal scheme of social research, cumulative studies will appear which buttress or counter previous biases. At some point then, all sides will be unveiled (Denzin, 1970:530).

This consequently draws attention to the issue of verification. However, as Hall suggests "verification for the sociologist involves indicating the typical situations but not repeating identical situations" (Hall, 1944:3-6).

The existence of the phenomenon uncovered cannot be refuted; the accumulated data and descriptive documentation in the write-up stands as testament. With awareness of subjective factors, certain methodological steps were taken in an attempt to minimize researcher imposition on the investigation.

Procedures

The choice of field methods is not an "either/or" proposition. An adequate field study is not conducted on the basis of a simple technique, gathering a single
kind of information. The ethnographic approach thus lends itself to a study of this nature, as the ethnography consists of a variety of different methods according to the different types of data required.

Of the ethnography Wolcott states "an 'ethnographic approach' implies commitment to a perspective in both the methods of field research and the handling of the data in subsequent writing but does not explicate the methods for doing either" (Wolcott, 1968:3).

The foundation of an ethnography lies in the complex relationship between the research and his subjects. The common term for establishing this relationship is "achieving rapport"* and carries with it the initial problems of entry in order to establish relationships through which the researcher can gain the "insider's perspective".

The study was to be conducted in Inner-city School, primarily though not exclusively during school hours. Polsky (1967) in the context of studying criminals puts forward the value of the study being in the natural setting for the deviants. No parallel is meant to be

drawn between the subjects in the respective studies but the case for the observational and naturalistic technique is convincing. Hyman and associates also suggest natural settings and an observational approach to investigation:

Inferences can be drawn about the inner world of the individual from one or another item of behaviour. For example, the individual's behaviour may be observed under relatively natural conditions, the observations being made covertly as in studies involving eavesdropping upon conversations, or merely in an informal and unobtrusive manner as in classic participant observation (Hyman et al, 1954:16).

Polsky (1967) in addition offers important advice on employing the participant-observer method. This title is frequently used as an all encompassing term to cover fieldwork methods which range from the role of the researcher as a complete participant in which, "the observer's activities as such are wholly concealed" (Junker, 1960:35) through to a complete observer, where "his activities are completely public" (Junker, 1960:37). Between the two positions of complete participant through to complete observer are the participant-as-observer, and the observer-as-participant.

It is difficult to classify the research role in this study into a single recognizable theoretical position. This is problematic for two reasons: the
research role did not by necessity remain constant throughout the study; instead, there was a degree of fluctuation in the role of the researcher at different stages in the fieldwork; and secondly, the position adopted at any one time encompassed facets usually accredited to specific positions ranging from the complete participant to the complete observer. Primarily, the research role leaned toward the observational side, yet also exhibited characteristics more generally classified in the role of a participant. Schools by their obvious structural features, especially age criteria for membership, while presenting unique opportunities for an observer, restrict occasions for participation. Nevertheless to some degree anyone who acts as an observer in a setting in which his identity is known, and his presence felt, is also a participant. This may be particularly so when the observer is set apart from his subjects by characteristics that distinguish him from those he is studying. In this research context noticeably, the observer is an adult male in a setting made up primarily of elementary school children. In addition there are of course adults represented in the total school population, and therefore an important
recommendation is for establishment of the researcher's identification. The presence of the observer was never concealed although the actual identity was disguised. The use of the title "writer", interested in learning about what children think about school, was adopted. It was felt justifiable to use this identity rather than the formal university researcher, as most children would have knowledge of what a writer is supposed to do: that is write books or stories. Secondly, it was felt that the use of the identity as a writer would not necessarily lead to an association with the administration of the school, as such an interpretation could have been rendered plausible with the more official title of researcher. The interest given by the children toward the idea of a story being written about them and the school, without the researcher ever having to explain any further details, would indicate the acceptance of this identity as non-threatening to them. Particular attention was also given to the anonymity of the story and use of false names.

After the first two weeks the researcher was never mistaken for a new teacher, a substitute teacher, nor a surrogate teacher; there were at the time five student teachers at the school from a nearby university
doing their teaching practice. In the role of observer, there was a deliberate attempt to interact with the children and become familiar with them in order to record their responses toward their experiences of school; in this sense the observer is also a participant.

In addition to the somewhat stereotyped role of the participant-observer, other methods were employed by the researcher. Indeed Zelditch (1962) presents three methods that the participant-observer employs: "(1) enumeration to document frequency data; (2) participant observation to describe incidents; (3) informant interviewing to learn institutionalized norms and statuses" (Zelditch, 1962:566).

The study carried out in Inner-city School was begun by means of participant-observation. The theoretical problem of definition of deprived children mentioned in Chapter I was also a practical problem in the field. The researcher was interested in focussing upon the children classified as deprived. This issue was overcome and in turn enabled a delimitation of the population by each classroom teacher identifying the children in their class according to who they thought were: non-deprived,
partially deprived and severely deprived. Each teacher acted according to his/her own definitions and these were later collected using informal interviews by the researcher. Thus given an identifiable population the researcher attempted to collect data regarding how these children perceived the schooling experience.
CHAPTER III

FORMULATION OF THE ETHNOGRAPHIC DATA

The core of this ethnographic method is the search for questions in the field situation. All too often preconceived questions or questionnaires drawn up outside the field get "expected" responses. Consequently, if the questions are seemingly unimportant by being imposed by the researcher, it follows that the differences in replies will be equally unimportant. Black and Metzger made this point:

It could be said of ethnography that until you know the question that someone in the culture is responding to you can't know many things about the responses. Yet the ethnographer is greeted in the field with an array of responses. He needs to know what questions people are answering in their every act. He needs to know what questions are being taken for granted because they are what 'everybody knows' without thinking (Black and Metzger, 1969:141).

To allow children from this subculture to define their way of life, to tell "us" how they perceive their experience, we have to listen to them, rather than merely observe and describe from a detached, objective position, which is always biased by the researcher's
cultural position. The detached non-participant-observer is also often unable to distinguish cause from effect.

The aim is to present an ethnographic description which approaches the way "insiders" of this subculture view and define their own identity, environment and life style. This approach is motivated by the fact that:

. . . there seems to be a bias toward studying reality only as adults see it. ' . . . schools are adult institutions in which children participate; they are also childhood institutions in which adults play all important roles' (Cohen, 1969). Most studies reflect the first perspective expressed in the quotation. Consequently when studying schools anthropologists rarely interview students in depth about their feelings, attitudes and values (Sindell, 1969:601).

In schools the administration and teaching staff often fail to recognize the subjective experience of the children involved. It is time to examine what events in the school life convey to the children about their personal worth, integrity and identity. If one believes that children's reactions are anchored largely upon what they perceive consciously or unconsciously in different situations, then the importance to educators of knowing what children think and feel about the role of the school in their lives becomes important.
What children do and say and believe is a consequence of the way they perceive their world and the events that make it live. This truth is one of the hardest for parents and teachers to comprehend and act upon. We are almost perverse in our insistence that boys and girls see as we see and believe as we do and act as we act (Corey, 1959:vii).

In this type of qualitative research, involving daily intimate contacts with respondents, the researcher attempts to collect everything that goes on. Then on transcribing daily, one selects particular concerns or constructs for examination, constructs that seem relevant, and

...that give the promise of yielding the greatest understanding of the organization he is studying, and for items which may serve as useful indications of facts which are harder to observe (Becker, 1958:653).

Isolated characteristics that had been collected, or any irregular patterns did not form the solid substance or hard core of the inquiry. Nevertheless, collection of data even when not forming the theme of inquiry, helped in the important step which was the careful examination of the verbal data collected to attempt to discover the terms and themes which children use to identify their experiences within the school(s).

Although the investigation concerns deprived children in one "Inner-city" school as previously outlined, a considerable number of the children had
been to many schools in several school districts. Therefore against this background it can be appreciated that the data gathered refers and draws upon the cumulative experiences of the children and does not necessarily indict Inner-city School. Indeed the researcher attempted to sort out material which related specifically to children's immediate experience with individual teachers; although not ignoring the importance of the "here and now" factors for the children, the emphasis was on identifying general categories from their total school experiences. These category systems are usually referred to in the literature as domains; once these are isolated, at least hypothetically, one is in a position to begin to ask questions to elicit or attempt to explore the categories of a particular domain. By following this procedure there began to emerge a crucial definition of the institution's effect upon the deprived children. This extensive formulation took place from January through March 1971, and a significant domain isolated, that became the major theme of investigation for the study, was that of "failure". From the collected data it was found that the domain of failure could be broken down into and analyzed in terms of two important areas of importance: labelling and grouping.
At this time given a critical substantive focus the researcher attempted to further delimit the population in order to obtain some knowledge about the frequency, intensity and distribution of the domain uncovered. Interviews were seen as a particularly appropriate research technique in this endeavour.

The interview, by definition, belongs to a class of methods which yield subjective data - that is - direct description of the world of experience (Hyman et al, 1954:15).

The interview method was well suited to this phase of the study and took place from April, 1971 to June, 1971. Interviews were not necessarily conducted every day, as the ongoing participant-observation was continually employed. This was important to maintain the contact with the wider total population of the school.

The group selected for interview were all children in grades 3, 5, 7 who had been classified by the teachers in the early part of the study, as being partially or severely deprived. The selection of these particular grade levels, indicating clearly-cut age differentiation was for several reasons. The success at making and maintaining rapport with children below grade 3 was extremely limited. As a
consequence it was decided to focus primarily on grades 3 through 7 earlier in the fieldwork. It was from these latter grades that most of the information was gained, not only by careful observation and questioning, but also importantly from volunteered information. A second factor instrumental in selection of grade levels 3, 5, 7* was that this delimitation yielded a population of 79 deprived children, a number that was felt to be manageable. In addition 21 non-deprived children were included in the interview schedule list, in order to anticipate any unnecessary Hawthorne effect that might have been working by isolation of only a deprived population. These non-deprived children were randomly selected in a ratio commensurate to numbers represented in the respective grades (see Table 1).

*A third reason for selecting grades 3, 5, and 7 was because at these grade levels group intelligence tests were administered. However, due to 2 factors - the transiency of the student population, and inconsistency of record-keeping on the Pupil Record Cards - the quantifiable scores of intelligence tests, in addition to the achievement tests, proved unamenable to consistent tabulation. Nevertheless from observational evidence by the psychometrician serving the school district, the IQ scores of the children at Inner-city School were estimated at being only 2 or 3 points below the mean for the school district. See Appendix D for the detailed interview with the psychometric specialist.
TABLE 1
NUMBERS AND GRADES OF CHILDREN SELECTED FOR INTERVIEWS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Deprived</th>
<th>Non-Deprived</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The material collected from the non-deprived group is not utilized in the analysis of data in way of comparison or contrast with the deprived groups, because of the small numbers, and the additional rationale that this study was not attempting to compare results of this deprived group with any other group, deprived or non-deprived.

As a consequence of the transiency of the school population, 94 children were interviewed. This was the result of children leaving the school before the researcher had the opportunity to interview them.

Any non-deprived children who left before the interviews took place were replaced by further random selections from the class lists. However, there was not the same opportunity available to substitute other deprived children as the total population of the
group in each of the three grades was being used. The actual number of deprived children interviewed was 73 (see Table 2) and additional numbers left the school before June 1971 although the interviews in these cases had taken place. This necessarily excluded any further contact and interaction with those children.

TABLE 2
ACTUAL NUMBERS OF CHILDREN INTERVIEWED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Deprived</th>
<th>Non-Deprived</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A further factor involved in delimiting the interview population in respect to three grade levels was that selection of children marked clearly by age and grade level differences would lend itself to analysis of the information obtained. Thus the moral career of deprived children might be observed via the progression through the grade levels in school and any significant attitudinal change might be reflected.
Finally the interviews were conducted at a time when the children had become accustomed and sensitized to the researcher's presence in a diverse number of situations and on various occasions. The same attention was given to the interview phase of the research as given to the observational procedures.*

The importance of the first three months of the study before the interview schedule is in keeping with those sociologists who emphasize the social aspect of the interview situation. Illustrative is Cicourel's concern with the establishment of "systems of shared meanings".

The well-conceived interview, complex as it may be, must have its roots in the categories of common-sense thinking, for without a knowledge of such roots the interviewer could not establish the necessary community for conducting his research. This means a recognition and understanding of how the respondent-interviewer

*A precedent had been set by the researcher always carrying a tape recorder and note book and deliberately making notations during a diversity of incidents. The selection of the interview setting is important for its effect upon the subjects. A strange environment or an uncomfortable one or various types of distractions, such as the presence of other people, may be magnified when interviewing young children. As a researcher in the school, I found certain limitations were present in selecting an appropriate interview setting. Ideal conditions did not always exist. A setting familiar to the children was used to minimize feelings of insecurity and reduce the association of the researcher with the administration. Such a setting was the librarian's office, which she kindly vacated. This was located inside the library, a formal but personal setting in the school.
interaction involves overlapping social worlds. According to Schutz, relevances necessary for the synchronization of meaning are pre-supposed. The respondent's and interviewer's stock of knowledge at hand and their definition of the situation will determine their mutual reaction to the questions posed (Cicourel, 1964:79).

Care was also taken with the interview procedures. The importance of the researcher in the interview was illustrated by Caplow:

The quality and quantity of the information secured probably depend more upon the competence of the interviewer than upon the respondent (Caplow, 1956:169).

With this in mind the interviews were designed.* The interviews were not standardized other than the initial profile questions. The standard profile questions were: name, age, number of brothers and sisters in and/or out of school, father's occupation, mother's occupation, number of schools attended, grade, reading group assigned to in class; followed by a series of alternative questions used to get the children to talk. Open-ended questions were employed for interviewing. It was felt that one set of formal questions given to a group of children, different not only in respect to age, grade level, and experiences, would be inappropriate and irrelevant. Benny and

*Children were interviewed singly, or in pairs, with the interview periods ranging from thirty minutes to one hour in length. All replies, as well as the questions asked, were tape recorded and so enabled ongoing evaluation of the interaction, by transcribing daily.
Hughes (1956) make the point that the structured interview which is so arranged to elicit common information from respondents is based on the starting assumption that the questions can be worded and then the crucial factor understood by all respondents. This assumption is often invalid, and particularly so in the context of this study which is concerned not so much with gaining common information, but the variety and diversity of the thinking and beliefs of the children. This study is attempting to gain the perspectives of the children and not to test prior hypotheses or gain standardized information. Atypical or non-representative responses were considered as important and useful as "common" data. As the research progressed, the conviction became clear that we know very little of how children feel about schooling.

The interviews commenced by asking the children if they knew what the researcher ("writer") was doing. With few exceptions all the children did know; nevertheless, a re-elaboration of the role as a writer interested in learning about how children feel about school was proferred with the opportunity again to stress the anonymity of the writing. In most cases this reassurance was enough, however, it was also
important to know how much explanation was needed before progressing.

The interview method used was a combination of two strategies: a variation of the non-schedule standardized interview, in which some questions are formulated but order determined by each specific interview case; and the approach which uses neither a fixed order nor fixed questions. Specific but unformulated questions were asked relating to major areas such as history of schooling, feelings and attitudes toward schools, school practices, parental interest, future hopes and plans. Each subject is used to elicit information required to throw light on how deprived children are processed in school, notably by the labelling and grouping procedures. The general question areas were organized around these two principal foci in an attempt to get the children to relate their feelings and attitudes toward themselves and their schooling experiences. When specific points of interest arose relating to the labelling and grouping process the researcher attempted to gain as much information as possible by keeping rapport with the respondent. Questions were used to get children to "back track" which was important
in terms of getting at the respondent's feelings.

The technique is expressed by Merton and Kendall:

By so rephrasing emotionalized attitudes, the interviewer implicitly invites progressive elaboration by the informant. And second, such reformulations enhance rapport, since the interviewer thus makes it clear that he fully "understands" and "follows" his informant . . . (Merton and Kendall, 1956:556).

This involvement of the researcher is well illustrated by Piaget with reference to the interviewing of children.

It is so hard not to talk too much when questioning a child . . . It is hard not to be suggestive! And above all, it is so hard to find the middle course between systemization due to preconceived ideas and incoherence due to the absence of any directing hypothesis! The good experimenter must, in fact, unite two often incompatible qualities; he must know how to observe, that is to say, to let the child talk freely, without ever checking or sidetracking his utterance, and at the same time he must constantly be on the alert for something definitive; at every moment he must have some working hypothesis, some theory, true or false, which he is seeking to check. When students begin, they either suggest to the child all they hope to find, or they suggest nothing at all, because they are not on the look-out for anything, in which case, to be sure, they will never find anything (Piaget, 1929:8).

The data collection methods utilized in this study have been presented, noting some of the questions of reliability -- the amenability of the data to replication. As Cicourel states: "each interview constitutes a unique event in the sense that identical
conditions will not exist again for eliciting the properties called data" (Cicourel, 1964:80-81). In this study attention is directed toward reliability and even greater emphasis placed on the issue of validity—the accuracy or truth value of the data.

Qualitative analyses of field data are not new in social science; indeed, many classics of social research have been based on such analyses. But the methods of arriving at conclusions have not been systematized and such research has often been charged with being based on insight and intuition and thus not communicable or capable of replication (Becker, Geer, Hughes, Strauss, 1961:30).

With this in mind the following method of analysis has been developed and the data carefully presented in some considerable detail in Chapters IV and V in order to illustrate such data can be communicated and also replicated whilst accepting limitations imposed by each new fieldwork situation.

Analysis of the data

Hall illustrates the situation with regard to data analysis:

It is abundantly clear that not only the gathering of relevant data, but also their analysis and presentation, pose difficulties. Although the function of sociology is not to expose, yet it proposes a kind of analysis which requires the use of facts often hidden from the public and sometimes even from the conscious thinking of the individual actor. Expose must be used insofar as it is necessary to analysis . . . (Hall, 1944:3-6).
With the isolation and interpretation of collected data from the early phase of the research investigation, the primary focus in later interview material was in respect to labelling and grouping as being significant. The following propositions concerning and influencing the formation and the structure of the self image of deprived children emerged from the data. Examination of the data in this area suggested that at least three categories must be analyzed: (1) repeating a grade, relating specifically to labelling; (2) ability grouping, relating to grouping procedures; and (3) differential treatment, a pot-pourri of responses containing elements of both labelling and grouping processes.

(1) The general feature in classrooms of homogeneity in respect to age. The particular concern here is with those children who find themselves in a class in which they are one or two years older than the average class composition thus exhibiting to peers, teachers, parents and the child in context, the situation of repeating a grade.

(2) Ability grouping according to homogeneity of measured cognitive competence. In the minds of children this is all too often translated as
"smart" kids and "dumb" kids; for the latter failure is an everyday experience in terms of comparison with the high or top ability group, creating stratification.

(3) Finally relating to differential treatment of groups and/or individual children. This is accomplished by altering pace of instruction or class material, or by remedial services. Special treatment has the effect of isolating children and by that token reinforcing that which the child is poor at, making failure visible, and increasing self doubt in relation to feelings of identity as a student. The grading and report card system are also formal examples of school processes in this category presenting to the child an evaluation of his self identity as a student in comparison with others in his class. In addition is the difference in treatment in terms of the tone of interaction between teachers and students as perceived by children.

Self identity is important in understanding behaviour; as such it has vital significance in learning. Through learning, positive and negative attitudes develop regarding "self". Thus, self is a major factor and concern in personality and children
show great interest in self by their many comments that they relate to the concept. Therefore each of the three categories in the domain of failure is further analyzed to show the impact on the children via their "perception of the situation" in terms of the following interpretive concepts: (1) self concept, (2) self and others' interaction, and (3) self and school performance.

(1) **Self concept**: This is a construct used to explain behaviour. Self concept is basically how the individual sees himself, or what he thinks about himself. As such self concept does not exist in reality itself, but has to be inferred from the behaviour of the individual. Self concept can therefore be understood as a construct which describes a mechanism which allows us to explain behaviour (LaBonne and Greene, 1969).

(2) **Self and others' interaction**: Self develops through interaction with others—what a person thinks about himself is his interpretation or perception of what he believes others think him to be. Self concept in a child is influenced by the interactions that he has with his parents, siblings and peers, and later in the more structured setting of the school, by teachers and peers.
These represent "significant others" and are particularly influential in the building of attitudes toward self for a child.

(3) **Self and school performance:** Self attitudes are significant outcomes of all learning, irrespective of overt or manifest aims of the learning exercise. The self concept a child develops influences his performance in later learning situations. Children respond to situations as whole people, not as segments, and when they are doing activities in school which are concerned with factual information-getting, the self is present in relation to assessment of ability, feelings related to capabilities and comparison with others (Staines, 1963). The self concept an individual develops, positive or negative, has an effect upon aspirations and expectations. The attitudes one holds toward self are projected in thoughts of expected future activities in school. There is some discrepancy between aspirational thoughts and expectations. Aspirations may continue to be high and "unrealistic", whereas expectations are frequently levelled to the realm of practical possibility according to an individual's perception of his
self and self worth. Thus, knowing an individual's expectations in comparison to his aspirations may lead us to appreciate his current standing in terms of his attitude or feelings which he had gathered toward self.

The three interpretive concepts enabled the researcher to compare various kinds of responses more precisely in an attempt to isolate and explain causal influences on behaviour. Self concept is determined inferentially from behaviour which must be observed over time in order to determine whether it is consistent and symptomatic of the problem. This study does not purport to be one of measurement of self concept; rather, it utilizes self report, that is, what the individual is willing to say about himself. This is consistent with the view expressed by Rogers who says: "the best vantage point for understanding behaviour is from the internal frame of reference of the individual himself" (Rogers, 1951:494). With the use of the three concepts the categories of the domain of failure are presented and then elaborated in conjunction with the self reports of the children in terms of their perceptions of the school processes isolated. All three of the school processes identified
in the domain of failure have manifest functions; they are educational practices set up for specific reasons. The practices are identified by the children in different manner and tone, perceiving different consequential effects--consequences which may be analyzed in terms of latent functions.

Swift adds a salient note: "the manifest-latent distinction is mainly a device for reminding ourselves of the dangers in assuming that intended consequences include all consequences" (Swift, 1969:90).

Because several points of view on the two major categories (repeating a grade and grouping) are observable, it was felt that the construction of an ideal type for these categories would be useful in the analysis of data.

The ideal or pure type is a mental construct, and presents hypothetical illustrations which are exaggerations of points of view that exist in reality. As hypothetical examples the ideal types must be framed by the researcher, and must contain elements that are "objectively possible" (Martindale, 1960:381). In other words, it is acceptable as an ideal type only if it is in accordance with the knowledge available to the researcher. An ideal type is a limiting concept
with which concrete situations can be compared in the process of investigation. The projection of responses drawn up by the researcher in the ideal types includes positive and negative ones.

Additionally in these two categories in the "domain of failure" (repeating a grade and grouping) are included schedules of responses which present material from the self reports of the children. The schedules include brief statements and short passages which typify the larger number of respondents. Further, in all three categories, more detailed extracts are selected which reveal the nub of the problem and illustrate the relationship between the school processes, analyzed in terms of their effect on labelling and grouping, and self identity as student. Self is present in transactions and is a component in, and an outcome of, all learning situations. Because self is a result of learning it forms part of future learning. Accordingly, self influences future transactions for all persons involved.

A transactional model implies that the behaviour of persons in contact cannot be understood as separate independent entities, but exists only in relation to
the other parties present in context. In this study the transactional approach means that the behaviour of both children and teachers can only be understood in terms of each other. That is, the children's behaviour is influenced and modified by the teacher, just as the teacher's behaviour is likewise influenced by the children. Thus prevailing beliefs, images and "perceptions of the situation" may affect the transactions between children and teachers.

Material collected from the teachers, although not the main investigation, rather in the nature of an additional aside, is deliberately reserved and treated apart in a separate chapter. This was collected by questionnaire and informal comments.

The small number of teachers involved and the limited data collected is nevertheless interesting, although there is not and cannot be any claim that the generalizations would hold for any teacher in other schools, now or in past or future. The material is related in an attempt to further explain the stages involved in the research process with the problem of delimitation and definition of deprived; also to try to throw light on the behaviour and perceptions of the children who are reserved as the primary focus of
inquiry. Consequently, the material from the teachers is presented exclusively in Chapter V so as not to distract at this time from the vital descriptive data from the children.

Detailed interviews were also conducted with keynote figures in the school: the Principal, remedial reading teacher and special counsellor, and the district psychometric specialist.

In retrospect the part played by teachers is hypothesized to be a major determinant of students' perceptions of their school social experience. Both sides of the transaction are covered and related in an attempt to examine those processes identified as sources of identity formation from analysis of the material from the children, and seen as inhibitory in nature and hypothesized here as precluding successful learning and instead reinforcing a negative self identity—thus the "hypothesis of failure" is advanced.
PART 2

THE HYPOTHESIS OF FAILURE
They drew into themselves and no one could foresee how they would come out of the cloud. For there are two possible reactions to social ostracism—either a man emerges determined to be better, purer, and kindlier or he goes bad, challenges the world and does even worse things. This last is by far the commonest reaction to stigma. 
—John Steinbeck (1945)

To understand how the elementary school helps deprived children define their identities within that setting it was necessary to investigate their perceptions of the school events to which they were exposed, and the relationship of these perceptions to their self perceptions. In this chapter material will be presented following careful and critical analysis of the self report data gained from the children in order to determine the insiders' perspective, and to advance the argument that the deprived child's perception of the schooling processes—repeating a grade level, grouping, and differential treatment—contribute to the development and reinforcement of a negative self image.
Stigma* attached to such children by others may affect behaviour and lessen their school performance by depressing self concept. This interpretation is rendered plausible by existing theory and the research material gathered in this study supports such a contention that public recognition of inadequacy in deprived children reinforces stigma.

A stigmatized person is one who is

. . . reduced in our minds from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one
. . . sometimes it is also called a failing, a shortcoming, a handicap (Goffman, 1963:3).

The situation faced by children whose ability is thought to constitute a 'special' identity, an identity of failure, is reinforced by their total social context.

As Holbrook (1964) suggests,

. . . half the trouble with 'backward' children is that they feel rejected and despised by the teachers, the school and society--and that the fact is, unhappily, that they are so despised (Holbrook, 1964:44).

Further, Clark (1951) speculates that

. . . it is probably true that unhappiness, anxiety or boredom and frustration are more frequent causes of apparent dullness or

backwardness at school than is sheer lack of intelligence (Clark, 1951:61).

Sociological theory indicates that a learner generally learns in a social situation (Mead, 1934) and the importance of the influence of others on self (Cooley, 1956) is crucial in what can be broadly defined as educability.

This study makes the assumption that the child has learned certain attitudes toward self and also concerning school from his family and the social group to which he belongs. These attitudes presumably have guided his perceptions of school. However, teachers have observed that children, including deprived children, that is children from low socio-economic origins, rarely enter kindergarten or first grade negatively predisposed to school, a characteristic that is often evident in the middle school years.

Attendance at school at age 5 or 6 years introduces to the child a new part of his cultural milieu in which he will spend considerable time at learning 'knowledge' in terms of school subjects. Importantly the school also provides an environment for social experience. The school thus provides
not only "education" in the technical sense of the word; reading, writing, arithmetic and other skills, but recognition has come about that the school acts in society as an agency of socialization.

The social role is learned in the course of socialization. The individual internalizes the basic values that go with the role and give it meaning (Parsons, 1951:209).

The elementary school is an important social context for learning and incorporating the standards and beliefs concerning what constitutes a normal identity, learning the particular identity one has, and the consequences of any discrepancy that may be present between the two (Goffman, 1963).

Entering the system of formal education is the child's first major step out of primary involvement in his family of orientation. Within the family certain foundations of his motivational system have been laid down. But the only characteristic fundamental to later roles which has clearly been 'determined' and psychologically stamped in by that time is sex role (Parsons, 1959:300).

When they enter school children rarely realize that they will expend enormous amounts of energy in impression management (Goffman, 1959) and internalizing roles, in addition to that which they will expend learning the skills and concepts schooling typically demands.
In school no child is free to learn through trial and error, the rules are established and the punishments for infractions are defined (Hawthorn, 1967:128).

One of the rules established for schools is that children are bound legally to attend until the age of 15 has been attained. While in attendance at school children are expected not only to behave in certain socially desired ways but importantly to perform academically at the highest level of their capability. This means that children are expected to internalize the goal of academic performance and success and work toward attainment of that end. Though frequently rationalized in terms of innate capacity, the influence of the family background, or lack of social or cultural experience, teachers often perceive a lower ceiling of ability for children of low socio-economic origins than they do for other children. From the point of view of many elementary schools and their staff, individuals from a low social class status are frequently seen as social failures and treated as such.

The schooling system ordinarily tries to compel everyone to manifest 'normal' intellectual achievement in reading, writing
and the like; if it is decided or suspected that someone is unable to develop normal skills, he is taught for all practical purposes (although ordinarily unintentionally), that he is a reject, an outsider, a dunce (Dexter, 1964:2).

However, as Goffman points out:

The stigmatized individual tends to hold the same beliefs about identity that we do; this is a pivotal fact. His deepest feelings about what he is may be his sense of being a 'normal person,' a human being like anyone else, a person, therefore, who deserves a fair chance and a fair break (Goffman, 1963:7).

How is it then, that the school system is able to transform its image of social failure into an identity of school failure for the deprived child when the individual believes that he is a normal person?

Warner and associates in their conclusion of Who Shall Be Educated? state

The teacher, the school administrator, the school board, as well as the students themselves*, play their roles to hold people in their places in our structure (Warner, Havighurst and Loeb, 1944:xi).

As Berger (1963) says, we become that which we are addressed. Once lowered to an inferior status the chances of rising above the early stigma remain slight. The factors involved in this process identified through

*Emphasis mine.
the "unofficial" conception of the school by the children are presented by utilizing both what educational theory states and then by illustrating the responses from the children. This approach is used in an attempt . . . to penetrate the smoke screen of the official versions of reality (those of the foreman, the officer, the teacher) and try to grasp the signals that come from the 'underworld' (those of the worker, the enlisted man, the schoolboy) (Berger, 1963:35).

The social construction of school failure: an overview

A prominent feature of the elementary classroom is age-grading; that is, grouping children in grade levels by their chronological age. The homogeneous age composition of classrooms enables a teacher to compare children's abilities in classroom activities across a common standard for that age.

Age is crucial because it represents an index (even if inexact) of developmental maturity, and by implication of capacity (Dreeben, 1968:38).

Secondly, it means of course that each child is also able to compare himself collectively with the others in the classroom of which he is a member. In the elementary school, achievement is assessed in two areas: the "cognitive", or the learning of skills; and secondly what Parsons calls the "moral" or social, that is learning the behaviour appropriate to the classroom: responsibility, independence, good work
The school is the first socializing agency in the child's experience which institutionalizes a differentiation of status on nonbiological bases. Moreover, this is not an ascribed but an achieved status; it is the status "earned" by differential performance by the tasks set by the teacher, who is acting as an agent of the community's school system (Parsons, 1959:300-1).

Moreover Parsons goes on to say that the achievement criterion in the elementary school has the two components of cognitive and social performance.

... the pupil is evaluated in diffusely general terms; a good pupil is defined in terms of a fusion of the cognitive and the moral components, in which varying weight is given to one or the other. Broadly speaking, then, we may say that the "high achievers" of the elementary school are both the "bright" pupils, who catch on easily to their more strictly intellectual tasks, and the more "responsible" pupils, who "behave well" and on whom the teacher can "count" in her difficult problems of managing the class. In many such cases, it can be presumed that the primary challenge of the pupil is not to his intellectual, but to his "moral" capacities (Parsons, 1959:304).

With respect to the criterion laid down as important in the area of achievement, a common structural arrangement is some form of streaming based on differentiation of performance in both the cognitive and social domains. It is suggested by Bruner (1966) that mastery of certain social skills is a prerequisite to active 'engagement' in the formal instructional process and further that
this shapes the school's perception and treatment of children (Boocock, 1972).* The streaming policy is set up to serve the perceived needs and abilities of different pupil groups either in separate classes (tracking) or within classes (grouping) as a way of ordering children in terms of homogeneity of cognitive and social "ability" or prior performance. Such homogeneous grouping conceivably makes it easier for the classroom teacher to spend more and appropriate time with small numbers of children, instead of one large group. The breakdown of a class into small groups means that the teacher can fit the appropriate instructional treatment to the unique aptitudes manifested by the group. Some of the salient features of treatment to groups of children or in isolated cases, individual children, are to alter the pace and techniques of instruction and sometimes the content of the material; the manipulation of time spent on specific tasks can be altered with groups of children so as to give more personal attention on the basis of their unique needs; and the teacher can spend more time in clarification of instructions, and explanation of the problems.

*This important perspective is a major theme in the present research inquiry.
For children who have specific weaknesses the teacher can recommend and control times spent with other teachers, for example a remedial reading teacher. For a child who is of a poor reading ability, remedial reading is naturally seen as a functional prerequisite and also socially desirable, as so much of the work everyday in school involves the use of spoken and written language. Support in the area in which a child is weak, and a slower pace or special work may thus give the child success and therefore he receives reward from the academic skills. Teachers may also manipulate the contingencies for each group, so that children in each ability group may feel and be rewarded for certain accomplishments. In the regular class many children may never feel remunerated for their efforts and feel less than equal with their peers.

An important feature of separation of children in terms of reading ability is to avoid the embarrassment for those children in the class who cannot read, or who cannot read up to the level of the rest of the class. For a child who does not manifest normal functioning for the grade, the teacher can also control the amount of time spent in that grade, by recommending repeat of that year. Given a brief presentation of practical policies and programmes initiated in schools it is
pertinent to illustrate some social theories of self gained from some recent school-based studies.

Theories of self and interaction hold that an individual's self-evaluation, aspirations, and behaviour are partially determined by the evaluations and expectations of significant others (Brim, 1966). An even more specific thesis supported by research is that children's evaluations of their own ability are determined, at least in part by the evaluations and expectations of them by teachers (Brookover and Thomas, 1964). A further proposition presented is that academic performance is in part determined by self-evaluation of ability (Dyson, 1967). Studies have shown that erosion of self-esteem greatly increases the chances of academic failure, acting-up behaviour in school, and dropping-out prematurely from school. Such features are often quoted as being characteristic and descriptive of a disproportionate number of low-income children. It follows from this that "failure" has deep-rooted consequences for the child's self-esteem, and future investment of effort and energy in the school requirements and activities. Such children may not feel adequately remunerated for their efforts in class, particularly if persistence in schooling with resulting lower performance further depreciate the person.
Since many classroom activities are judged in public, the pupil is bombarded with messages telling him how well he has done and (with a short inferential leap) how good he is. If he doesn't take the teacher's word for it, he need only look at the performance of others of the same age and in the same circumstances. The school in effect plays on his self-respect (Dreeben, 1968:38).

Further, Dreeben goes on to state the importance of the "significant other" in the development of a child's self concept and personal worth:

Each pupil is exposed and vulnerable to the judgments of adults in authority and of his equals, those who resemble him in many respects. If the child at home wonders whether he is loved, the pupil wonders whether he is a worthwhile person. In both settings he can find some kind of answer by observing how others treat him (Dreeben, 1968:38).

This position can be related to the labelling and grouping in this study as the school policies isolated by the children: repeating a grade, grouping and differential treatment are presented as being significant factors in the formation of the children's identification of themselves. The processes perceived by some children as negative forces in their school lives create a caste system within the school and stigmatize the individuals as failing persons. Friedenberg (1970) suggests that schools do not equalize educational opportunity, instead they emphasize role playing and social class stratification. Further he
states that the victims of stratification are insulted and given "2nd class citizenship" within the structure. Such stratification occurs when the children feel they are separated by school processes which militate against them, and which stigmatize them as different.

Stigmatization will always follow classes used as a dumping ground for all ages. Stigmatization will always follow overage children kept in a school for which they ordinarily would have been promoted. Stigmatization will always follow pupils whose lot is to be in a school in which some or all of the faculty segregate them by manner and tone (Smith, Burks, 1954:169-170).

Friedenberg (1965) had strongly asserted that

... the school affects society in two complementary ways. It alters the individuals; their pattern of anxiety and sense of mastery and ease in the world on which so much of what we think of as our fate depends. But it also performs a Darwinian function. The school endorses and supports the values and patterns of behaviour of certain segments of the population, providing their members with the credentials and shibboleths needed for the next stages of their journey, while instilling in others a sense of inferiority and warning the rest of society against them as troublesome and untrustworthy. In this way, the school contributes simultaneously to social mobility and social stratification. It helps to see to it that the kinds of people who get ahead are those who will support the ... social system it represents; while those who might, through intent or merely by their being, subvert it are left behind as a salutary moral lesson (Friedenberg, 1955:49).

Breton further suggests with regard to the policy of functional stratification that "... an important dimension of the school as a formal organization is its
stratification system and a student's position in that system has implications for his life's chances" (Breton, 1970:18). His study of secondary school children is concerned with what the school contributes to the student's behaviour and career overtations, not with what he "brings with him from his community, social class, and family into the school situation" (Breton, 1970:19). Polk supports these contentions by presenting the view that:

"... the meaning of failure lies in a complex of organizational and interpersonal behaviours hinging on stigma, humiliation and defeat, generated within the here and now of the status system of the school (Polk, 1969:5)."  

Polk goes on to add that the school's "success stream" creates an identity that washes away the early effects of status origins given to the child from his home and neighbourhood and, "exclusion from the success stream may similarly establish an identity which, once created, override class distinctions" (Polk, 1969:5).

**Repeating a grade**

It is with the school's 'functional' policies isolated from the children's responses that directed the unfolding of the research, and it is these data that are assembled and illustrated in the hypothesis of failure. Repeating a grade was the first of the
categories of failure isolated in the research. However, it is treated here first, not so as to record a chronologically linear exposition of concerns of when they were elicited from the respondents, but rather because it stood out conclusively without any ambivalence of response from the children who had personally experienced it and who interpreted it in the social context of the school as denoting they were failures.

Of the 79 deprived children, 15 had repeated one grade level and 8 had repeated two levels, making a total of 23 children. This number may be a minority of those interviewed in the three grade levels, yet it is a highly significant minority representing almost one third of the children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present grade</th>
<th>Children who had repeated one grade</th>
<th>Children who had repeated two grades</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The educational practice of having children repeat a grade level is one that is designed to assist them. The policy, which is utilized by many schools and school districts, enables children to repeat a year's work because they had not succeeded in sufficiently mastering the required skills, cognitive and/or social in order to progress to the next grade level. The desired outcome is that the children, by repeating the grade level, will succeed in meeting the grade standard. Thus the repetition of that level would lead to the ability to complete the material.

Repeating a grade level is based on the assumptions that:

1. Age is only a crude indicator of ability and some
children are unable to manifest the school performance or achievement of their chronological peers.

2. Children performing below the average for their grade level may experience academic problems which for the most part may be overcome by allowing these children to repeat grade levels and gain success in scholastic endeavours.

3. Repeating of material may enable children to strengthen those areas in which they had previously exhibited weaknesses, and hence gain a sense of competence.

In order to present the responses toward repeating a grade from the children's viewpoint, the schedules have been developed. The construction of the schedules is in order to present as concisely as possible the responses from the children. In addition for purposes of illustration and clarification the responses have been sorted to show the differences analytically in schedules 1-3.

The schedules show the range of responses on repeating a grade from children who have repeated grade levels ("repeaters") and children who have not repeated grade levels ("non-repeaters"). The responses have been collated in terms of the perceptions toward
A Summary of the Relationship between Repeating a Grade and Self Concept as perceived by 'Repeaters' and 'Non-Repeaters'

Non-Repeaters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Perception of Relationship</th>
<th>Negative Perception of Relationship</th>
<th>Positive Perception of Relationship</th>
<th>Negative Perception of Relationship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jean (7-12)</td>
<td>Cathy (7-12)</td>
<td>Derek (5-11)</td>
<td>Lesley (7-13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They just forget it. They should be able to anyway, they should do more work if they are older like that in a class with younger kids.</td>
<td>A lot of them have failed grades and don't care anymore. They probably cared in the past but now they don't care. A lot of them have failed and so they just gang together.</td>
<td>I didn't like it when I failed.</td>
<td>I wasn't very happy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelly (5-11)</td>
<td>Derek (5-11)</td>
<td>Derek (5-11)</td>
<td>Lesley (7-13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would just keep going, it wouldn't stop me trying. But some people when they fail just don't work hard anymore.</td>
<td>They would find the work easier having done it before but they still don't do good. I guess it puts them down they sort of feel failures.</td>
<td>I didn't like it when I failed.</td>
<td>I wasn't very happy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pauline (7-13)</td>
<td>Cathy (7-12)</td>
<td>Derek (5-11)</td>
<td>Lesley (7-13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... if they can't do the work it's no use them being in the class. So it's better for them to repeat a grade or so.</td>
<td>If you were hopeless. And that makes a person dumb if they fail.</td>
<td>I didn't like it when I failed.</td>
<td>I wasn't very happy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura (3-0)</td>
<td>Laura (3-0)</td>
<td>Laura (3-0)</td>
<td>Laura (3-0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would still like school.</td>
<td>I wouldn't bother me I don't think. I would still be me and I like our class now.</td>
<td>I would still like school.</td>
<td>Laura (3-0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy (3-0)</td>
<td>Laura (3-0)</td>
<td>Nancy (3-0)</td>
<td>Laura (3-0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It really wouldn't bother me I don't think. I would still be me and I like our class now.</td>
<td>If you were hopeless. And that makes a person dumb if they fail.</td>
<td>Laura (3-0)</td>
<td>Laura (3-0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ken (5-10)</td>
<td>Laura (3-0)</td>
<td>Laura (3-0)</td>
<td>Laura (3-0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do pretty well and well, other kids don't do so well so they need to do it again so they know how to do it.</td>
<td>Laura (3-0)</td>
<td>Laura (3-0)</td>
<td>Laura (3-0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Repeater

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Perception of Relationship</th>
<th>Positive Perception of Relationship</th>
<th>Negative Perception of Relationship</th>
<th>Negative Perception of Relationship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tom (7-12)</td>
<td>Tom (7-12)</td>
<td>Derek (5-11)</td>
<td>Lesley (7-13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some of the kids here feel sort of bad.</td>
<td>Some of the kids here feel sort of bad.</td>
<td>I didn't like it when I failed.</td>
<td>I wasn't very happy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larry (3-0)</td>
<td>Larry (3-0)</td>
<td>Derek (5-11)</td>
<td>Lesley (7-13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will make me feel bad.</td>
<td>Will make me feel bad.</td>
<td>I didn't like it when I failed.</td>
<td>I wasn't very happy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graham (7-13)</td>
<td>Graham (7-13)</td>
<td>Derek (5-11)</td>
<td>Lesley (7-13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They would find the work easier having done it before but they still don't do good. I guess it puts them down they sort of feel failures.</td>
<td>They would find the work easier having done it before but they still don't do good. I guess it puts them down they sort of feel failures.</td>
<td>I didn't like it when I failed.</td>
<td>I wasn't very happy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The Schedules do not indicate a proportional distribution of responses in the category repeating a grade. Rather they illustrate themes, present in the responses, analyzed according to the three Interpretive concepts, and collated in terms of negative and positive comments from non-repeaters and repeaters. Some children's responses are utilized in all 3 schedules to illustrate progression of response and method of analysis, whilst in addition further children are presented in order to indicate that the themes represent the population under study. All names have been changed to avoid identification of the children. The figures in brackets indicate grade level and age, e.g., (3-0) refers to grade level 3, age 8.
## Schedule 2: A Summary of the Relationship between Repeating a Grade and Self and Others' Interaction as perceived by 'Repeaters' and 'Non-Repeaters'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-Repeaters</th>
<th>Repeaters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Positive Perception of Relationship</strong></td>
<td><strong>Positive Perception of Relationship</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative Perception of Relationship</strong></td>
<td><strong>Negative Perception of Relationship</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carol (3-8) You would feel as if you were hopeless than you would have no friends in class.</td>
<td>Jerry (7-13) When I flunked my Mum didn't get mad or anything 'cos my Mum thought I should stay down as the teacher thought it would do me some good, but I don't think it did.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lenny (3-9) Everybody would say 'Look at Lenny fail.' They will tease me.</td>
<td>Martin (3-9) The teachers make you feel kind of bad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracy (7-13) That makes a person dumb if they fail. Other kids put you down. That's real hard to take. If I fail this grade I will get in trouble with my Mum.</td>
<td>Russ (7-14) The teachers fail you 'cos they blame you for not doing the other work. They sort of didn't come out and say it but they sort of blamed you and so they put you down to do the grade again.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cindy (3-8) Then none of the kids would play with you.</td>
<td>Tom (5-11) Other kids at the school they sit there and scorn you out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenny (5-11) The teacher would think that you weren't so smart.</td>
<td>Kenny (5-12) Would feel bad if failed again. I'd miss my friends and then others in the class might call me names and that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dave (7-13) My Mum and Dad would get at me.</td>
<td>Rita (7-13) Everybody sort of treats you different, they don't want to know you. Kids used to tease me about failing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NO POSITIVE PERCEPTIONS FROM NON-REPEATERS IN THIS CATEGORY ANALYZED IN TERMS OF SELF AND OTHERS' INTERACTION</strong></td>
<td><strong>NO POSITIVE PERCEPTIONS FROM REPEATERS IN THIS CATEGORY ANALYZED IN TERMS OF SELF AND OTHERS' INTERACTION</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Schedule 3 A Summary of the Relationship between Repeating a Grade and Self and School Performance as perceived by 'Repeaters' and 'Non-Repeaters'

### Non-Repeaters

**Positive Perception of Relationship**

- **Graeme (7-12)** They would find the work easier having done it before but they still don't do good.

- **Sheila (5-11)** If I failed a grade I would just keep going. It wouldn't stop me trying.

- **John (7-12)** They should do more work if they are older like that in a class with younger kids. They don't learn or don't want to--I don't think they're trying.

- **Lisa (3-8)** I am doing good in class. I like school but some kids who got put down don't do nothing, but fool around. That's bad to skip work... I wouldn't fool around.

**Negative Perception of Relationship**

- **Lenny (3-8)** That will put me more off school.

- **Betty (5-10)** Guess failing a grade really put him off school.

- **Graeme (7-12)** It puts them down, they sort of feel failures.

- **Kevin (7-12)**... failed a couple of grades. He doesn't do nothing in school, he just sits there now.

- **Gillian (5-10)** I hope I don't fail my grades then I know I can't succeed.

- **Roy (7-12)** Some kids fall so much they are 15 and still in Grade 7 so they quit. They hate school 'cos they failed so much.

- **George (7-12)** As soon as I failed I would quit.

- **Barbara (5-10)** He is supposed to be in Grade 9. Now there is no chance he will finish school.

- **Eddie (7-12)** Some of the kids will be pushed into the Occupational Programme which is real bad. Being an Occ. really makes kids bad... I might go to Grade 12, depends if I like it and if I pass or not, so I might only to Grade 9 or 10.

### Repeaters

**Positive Perception of Relationship**

- **NO POSITIVE PERCEPTIONS FROM REPEATERS IN THIS CATEGORY ANALYZED IN TERMS OF SELF AND THE EFFECT ON SCHOOL PERFORMANCE**

**Negative Perception of Relationship**

- **Don (5-11)** Made me think I was going to fail every other grade, so I started trying less harder because I thought, well, what's the use?... I started hating school.

- **Dave (7-13)**... got put off school when I flunked... I have felt a failure all through school.

- **Barry (5-11)**... really affected my later work.

- **Tyler (3-9)** It sort of bothers you the next year. It sure doesn't make you work harder.

- **Ann (5-11)** I would have liked to be a teacher I think, but I will not pass through now so I won't be a teacher.

- **Jon (7-14)** I feel pretty stupid at times so now I don't bother.

- **Guss (7-14)** All I've been waiting for since I failed is to be 15... Guess failing 2 grades has sorta told everyone that I'm not gonna make it through.

- **David (5-10)**... will try to Grade 12 but don't think I will make it... I don't think that I'm that bright.

- **Bruno (5-12)** I will probably drop out of school at Grade 10. I don't think I could make Grade 12 without being failed again and I wouldn't want that.

- **Caroline (7-14)** I would kill them if I failed Grade 7 then I would have to go to Occ. I would refuse to go to Occ. and look a fool.
self (schedule 1) because repeating a grade is put forward here as being significant in influencing the child's self concept; self and others' interaction (schedule 2) in which the behaviour of an individual and the attitudes and feelings he holds about himself are influenced by his immediate social environment; and finally self and school performance (schedule 3) in which it is held that school performance is affected by the feelings a person has toward himself and his feeling of competence in school activities, which influences motivation. These perceptions are analyzed according to positive and negative values. The responses in the schedules are used for purposes of analysis to illustrate themes that were present in the children's data and do not in any case indicate a proportional distribution of responses.

The schedules include brief quotations extracted from the fuller responses of the children relating to repeating a grade, framed into the three analytical constructs: self concept, self and others' interaction and self and school performance. The examples presented in the schedules typify the consistent themes, although non-representative replies
may be utilized later in the text with appropriate notation of their atypicality when the more detailed sample extracts from the interview data are presented. Thus the responses used in the schedules illustrate the regular and recurrent themes, not the atypical incidents. The format of the schedules illustrates typicality of responses, with the number of examples being chosen so as to illustrate the range of responses available from the data.

Because several points of view on repeating a grade were observable, the ideal type was introduced for use in the analysis of data. Table 5 represents a brief projection of ideal responses in this category. The projection of responses drawn up by the researcher includes positive and negative ones and is framed in terms of possible perceptions by children on self concept; self and others' interaction; self and school performance. The ideal type represents responses that could be anticipated by the knowledge available to the researcher.

In addition fuller extracts from interviews are selected to enable the reader to assess the data analysis method. There may be other ways of analysis; this method focuses upon the analysis of the school system sociologically from the point of view of
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Repeating grade consequences perceived by pupil in terms of:</th>
<th>POSITIVE</th>
<th>NEGATIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Self concept</strong></td>
<td>Helps you know your capabilities—strengths and weaknesses. Repeating a grade is so you can strengthen weaknesses.</td>
<td>Can make a person feel a fool. Think you must be useless. Hate yourself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Self and other interaction</strong></td>
<td>You can work with younger children who may work slower.</td>
<td>Other children would laugh. And the teacher would look down on you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Self and school performance</strong></td>
<td>Work better because you would have done the work before. Then you can select goals that are suited to your ability.</td>
<td>Puts you off school work, then you wouldn't bother, because you'd think that you wouldn't do any good in school. Probably just want to drop out of school early.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
those who are participants in that system. Further the general sociological assessment is of apparent "by-products" perceived and presented by the children which are not necessarily congruent with the anticipated outcome of the system by educators.

Perusal of the responses presented in the schedules from the self report data reveals a weakness in the ideal type projections; as there is an obvious discrepancy between the responses from children who had repeated a grade and the positive projections designed in the ideal type. The ideal type positive projections are met on several of the criteria, but the responses are expressed only by informants, that is non-repeaters. This is consistent in schedules 1 and 3 relating to the positive perception of the relationship between repeating a grade and self concept (schedule 1) and self and school performance (schedule 3). There are no responses relating to self and others' interaction (schedule 2), at least in the positive column by non-repeaters. Moreover it should be fully noticed that under "repeaters" there are no positive perceptions whatsoever in any of the three schedules. Thus the outstanding feature in this
category is that all children who had repeated a grade level identified only with the projections formulated in the negative column of the ideal type. None of the repeaters expressed their having to repeat a grade as being beneficial to them, irrespective of their present age status or which grade they had repeated. There is clearly a certain amount of recurrence and repetition in the tone of the comments illustrating the consistency of the self report data and indicative of the attitudes and feelings expressed toward repeating a grade. Thus the negative perceptions formulated in the ideal type sum up the feelings of repeaters toward the process which they have experienced. The responses from repeaters toward self are negative and predictably this has resulted in a low image of themselves in their role as students. Negative expressions toward others, not only teachers but also some other children, are also present as well as responses indicating a general dislike or disdain of school and school-related activities in which they are unable to gain gratification or a feeling of competence. The point has been made that a child's self esteem is influenced in the school setting by his feeling toward himself
as a scholar:

Through meeting tasks that are challenging to them, children learn to cope with the real world. Self concepts of competence in work emerge gradually, enabling the children to meet subsequent challenges with a calm confidence. Children who do not acquire a sense of competence become dissatisfied with themselves, unfriendly to those around them, resistant to authority, and perhaps rebellious against society. Studies of delinquents have shown that in almost every case the school was unable to give the individual a sense of competence; he then tried to maintain a sort of self esteem by anti-social means (Sears and Sherman, 1964:3).

It should be borne clearly in mind that repeating a grade is not an isolated incident but rather is the result for many of what has been a set of cumulative experiences and performances perhaps throughout a number of school years. Such children have been unable, in the class with their age peers, to gain that sense of competence relating to school work activities.

From the responses listed under "repeaters" in the schedules we are now able to see the perceived effect of repeating a grade by these children. Repeating a grade is influential in developing a low self evaluation in repeaters (schedule 1); and by making reference to responses from both repeaters and non-repeaters (in schedule 2) we are able to see
the influence of others in the social environment of the school that is instrumental in repeaters arriving at negative attitudes and feelings toward themselves; and that in all cases the repeaters did not interpret repeating a grade as a process beneficial to them in their school performance (schedule 3) but rather a public proclamation of their inadequacy. In addition not only do we find that repeaters identify only negatively with repeating a grade, but further, many of the non-repeaters present responses that closely identify with or support the comments expressed by repeaters. The former having seen the inherent label of failure that repeating a grade carries with it can identify with repeaters, perhaps if they see themselves as possible candidates. They may feel they have a learning disability in comparison with others of their age which is intimated in this labelling process. Some ambivalence of response is also apparent in the responses listed under "non-repeaters", in that some children's comments would indicate that they are immune from the process themselves and their responses are akin to the outsider's perspective presented in educational theory. Thus we find in
"non-repeaters" that there are comments in both positive and negative columns. Some non-repeaters can look upon the process from a somewhat detached position having themselves not personally experienced the effects of repeating a grade and the consequent alteration of perception of one's identity shown by "repeaters".

The peer group environment is crucial in disseminating attitudes and expressing opinion, correctly or incorrectly, as to what repeating a grade really implies. Although in the first and last instance it is the individual himself who determines who he is and what he is, his perceptions are influenced by the social setting, hence the importance of "significant others". Thus a child's identity as a student is made up of not only what the individual does possess--his ability--but also the "ability" is influenced by his interpretation of the feedback he receives from others in the social environment. In the development of self esteem recent studies have indicated that it is not the broader social context that is important in influencing an individual's feeling of self worth and success, but rather the "effective interpersonal environment" (Rosenberg, 1965). Such an environment
in the development of self identity as a student is the school context, and the criteria of "success" is the performance (cognitive and social) expected from a student illustrating the child's ability or worth in that role. From the data we are able to propose that repeating a grade delivers a severe message to the individual by suggesting that he suffers from inability and/or he lacks worth. The interpersonal relationships which inform the child of his standing in school include teachers, parents, other children and the child's own evaluation or interpretation of self.

As defined earlier (Chapter III) the construct "self" is basically conceived as the individual's set of images about what he is or how he sees himself, and this development of self is a social process. James suggests that a social self is the recognition he gets from his peers (James, 1890) and Mead's ideas (1934) advance this further. Coopersmith concludes from Mead that

... in the course of this process the individual internalizes the ideas and attitudes expressed by the key figures in his life—observing their actions and attitudes, adopting them (often unknowingly), and expressing them as his own (Coopersmith, 1967:31).
Further he states,

To Mead, no man is an island in his self-appraisal. No matter how isolated and independent he may believe himself to be, he carries within himself the reflecting mirror of his social group. If he places high value on himself, there have been key persons in his life who have treated him with concern and respect; if he holds himself lowly, significant others have treated him as an inferior object (Coopersmith, 1967:31).

The self develops in social interaction with others out of the individual's perceptions of others' reactions to him or his interpretation of the social environment. Therefore the immediate social environment is influential in the formation of self concept, as "the social environment is a setting in which socialization and self development takes place" (Landis, 1971:11). It must be remembered that the "effect" of the social environment on the individual is a very subjective process. As a consequence many of the more detailed illustrations from the interviews, even though selected because of typicality of response, will nevertheless reflect the variations on how the individual children perceive, interpret, and of course react and respond to that social environment. The effects of the school processes identified are open to subjective interpretation by each individual which means that no two children may
react in identical fashion. The way the children perceive their experiences and interpret their present and anticipate their future status as students is the result of cumulative prior experiences in this role. As such the present is always pregnant with the past, and for many of the children collected together in this school their experiences relate to their membership in other schools. However, because of the knowledge of this, and the prospect of individual variation and interpretation of experiences, the detailed illustrations should be read with reference to and in conjunction with, the analytical scheme presented in the schedules. The schedules analytically show not only the differences between repeaters and non-repeaters but also demonstrate the consistencies or general themes by framing the responses according to the three concepts and by the utilization of the positive/negative arrangement. Therefore the more detailed extracts are presented only so as to further illustrate and clarify the method of analysis in the schedules, and necessarily exclude detailed explanation. The samples are selected for illustration and description and not to depict all the themes available from the data. Nor do they present the greater number of
individual facets in each extract which may be available to the reader.

The first example is an extract taken from the interview data of Joan, a non-repeater.

Joan (grade 7, age 12). From a one-parent family she lives with her mother who is separated. Mother works as a meat packer in a supermarket. Joan has one brother and one sister. She has attended three schools. Has not repeated any grades. Rated partially deprived by teacher.* (We had been talking about school performance and Joan had indicated that some children do well in school while others do not "succeed" in school.)

WHY DO YOU THINK SOME CHILDREN IN YOUR CLASS NOW FOR EXAMPLE, DON'T DO VERY WELL?
I think it's just through the years, you know, they get problems that come up so they don't learn, or don't want to and at the rate they're going they'll drop out of

*The biographical details are condensed from the profile questions asked by the researcher. The ranking of the child by the teacher is fully explained and elaborated on in Chapter V.

The interviews are not presented in full; rather only material relating to the particular category under investigation, i.e. in this example "repeating a grade level" is presented. In addition when responses used were separated in their original form by other material brief details of that conversation are presented in brackets. However, the responses are otherwise unedited. Unfortunately for the most part excluded are the personal gestures, facial expressions, shrugs, and other quite important personal displays of emotion.
school unless they smarten up. They don't do much work when the teacher gives it to them, and that seems like they don't do much of anything, don't put much effort into anything. I mean, I don't think they're really trying. 

WHY DON'T YOU THINK THEY TRY? 
I don't know. Not really. Well, when you get work to do at least they should try to do it, shouldn't they? But some of them just don't try. Then they have to do the work again, you know, they get kept down because they failed the work.

(Joan then went on to talk about how these children fool around in class making trouble and noise and "getting the teacher uptight". She said that at Inner-city School more children spoke back to the teacher and she also made comments about how some children gang together. She indicated some of these children were older than the rest of the class and should really have been in high school. With regard to the issue of repeaters the researcher raised the question to Joan of how she thought children felt if they had to repeat a year.)

I don't think those kids feel anything about it, they shouldn't anyway, they should just forget about it. Well they should be able to anyway. If I had to do this year over again, well I won't have to 'cos I'm passing, but if I did I would just keep trying as hard and would be able to pass all the work the next time. Well they are the same, they should be able to do more work if they're older like that in a class with younger kids shouldn't they?
The analysis of repeating a grade by children whose responses approximate Joan's indicate that repeating a grade should not affect the repeater adversely, moreover it should enable the individual to perform better the next year, and presumably in subsequent years. Such responses are consistent with educational theory and the anticipated responses drawn up in the ideal type. The policy of children repeating a grade is not one of retribution, but rather an educational policy designed to assist children who have not mastered certain fundamentals deemed necessary by the school before progressing on to the next grade level. By enabling children to repeat the year it is desired by the school that the children will benefit personally by being able to successfully acquire the skills which before they had been unable to attain. Additionally such children should then be able to gain the sense of competence from school activities and a feeling of personal success.

The consistent theme in the non-repeaters' responses identified in the positive columns in schedules 1 and 3 is that repeating a grade should help such children—that the policy is designed to
assist them. Ken (5-10) says that when children do not do well in class it is better for them to do the year again so that they will know how to do the work. Also Pauline (7-13) supports the idea that it is better for some children who cannot do their school work to repeat a grade level. Some antagonism in the responses is present toward repeaters. Sheila (5-11) says that repeaters don't work hard anymore and Nancy (3-8) states clearly that it would not affect her adversely. The recognition is clearly made that repeaters do not work successfully after repeating a grade. In schedule 3 Graeme (7-12) suggests that repeaters should find the work easier and yet as he puts it, "they still don't do good". But as Joan's responses indicate she (and others) believe it would not stop them trying if they had to repeat. They recognize that even if they do not agree or identify with repeaters, they do stop working and so do not benefit from the process.

Non-repeaters draw attention to the structural features of school. In a system which is designed to deal with uniformities, differences show up clearly. Such features are exemplified by age of the
children in each grade level, calling attention to
the age-created system which is turned into a
hierarchy of age. This recognition is illustrated
by non-repeaters (and repeaters) and may be seen
in responses listed under the negative columns.

Carol (grade 3, age 8). Father a butcher,
mother a housewife. She has one brother.
Carol has attended only Inner-city School.
Rated partially deprived by the teacher.
(We had been speaking of things that made
children feel good in school. Carol indicated
that getting all her classwork correct makes
her feel pleased with herself.)

DO YOU USUALLY GET YOUR WORK RIGHT?
Not always, sometimes I get some right
sometimes some wrong.
HOW DO YOU FEEL WHEN YOU GET YOUR WORK WRONG?
Feel kind of funny if you get work wrong
a lot of the time.
WHY?
Some kids make fun of you.
WHAT DO YOU FEEL LIKE THEN?
I feel sort of hopeless sometimes but not
all the time. Some kids feel hopeless all
the time.
WHICH KIDS?
There are a couple of kids in our class who
were in another class and then they had to
come in our class 'cos they hadn't passed.
THEY HAD TO DO THE WHOLE YEAR AGAIN, YOU
MEAN?
Yes.
HOW WOULD THAT MAKE YOU FEEL IF YOU HAD TO
DO THAT?
I would hate it.
WHY WOULD YOU HATE IT?
Kids would make fun of you and then I would have no friends in class. It makes other kids think they're dumb and that.

WHICH KIDS?
Your friends would think you weren't much good 'cos you were in a class with younger kids, and so you would feel you weren't much good as well. You'd be older and would feel as if you were hopeless.

Barry (grade 3, age 8). Lives with his mother, a housewife, and his step-father a door-to-door salesman. He has three brothers and four sisters. Barry has already attended three schools. Rated partially deprived by the teacher.

(Barry makes reference to the idea that he will probably drop out of school.)

WHY DON'T YOU THINK YOU WILL STAY IN SCHOOL?
Well, I would like to go to high school but I'm not sure if we have enough money to go all the way to grade 12. I just want to go as far as I can in school and be a useful person. I try pretty hard all the time and just do my best.

DO YOU DO BETTER AT THIS SCHOOL THAN THE OTHERS?
(Shrugs to indicate that he doesn't really know).
I just hope to keep passing.

DID YOU REPEAT ANY GRADES AT ANY OF THESE SCHOOLS?
No and I don't intend to! No one wants to do grades again. You have to stay in school longer and they'd make fun of you. Like you're real big and you'd feel a fool being too big for the other class. Wow! I sure would hate to stay down this year—it sure makes a kid feel dumb.
Both Carol and Barry are non-repeaters and the extracts illustrate their perceptions of the hierarchy of age in the school, a system perceived by pupils as one in which age and ability go together. Thus being in a class with younger children depreciates the individual's worth by others' recognition of him as being "dumb"—a viewpoint that is internalized by many repeaters who see themselves in the light of being "failing" students. The physical visibility of repeaters in terms of age (and perhaps but certainly not necessarily size) differences is turned into one implying intellectual inability. Many non-repeaters are able to recognize that repeating a grade has the effect of lowering the individual's self worth in the eyes of others. This recognition comes from the interpretation of the status and treatment accorded repeaters as being different from that given to other children. Additionally children see that repeating a grade lessens school performance—"they still don't do good," "it puts them down," "they feel failures." Under self and others' interaction other children, teachers and parents are mentioned as influential others and the
consequences of those are well illustrated. The apparent concern of grade 3 children is that they fear other children will not play with them, and the more far-reaching consequences of repeating are not realized. It is later on in the grades that children mention the impact of teachers and additionally the involvement of a third party, that of parents. As children grow older they spend more direct time in interaction with others at school than they do at home and it is highly conceivable that many parents take as a major source of evaluation of their children, the evaluation given by the school. The parents can add to their own subjective assessment of their child with the objective assessment by the school. Douglas (1964) has indicated that lower-class parents are more willing to accept a second-class label for their children, and teachers more likely to inflict such a status upon lower-class children by them having to "suffer" non-promotion (School of Barbiana, 1970). In a study of Japanese schools the issue of promotion of children and the involvement of parents is raised. Though the children undergo periodic tests, they almost invariably are promoted each year and so stay with the same group of schoolmates...
Teachers in lower (elementary) and middle school almost never inflict on a child the shame of failure, which would be reflected on the child's family. . . so the slow children pass through school at the same rate as the bright ones (Beardsley, Hall and Ward, 1959:302).

Whilst accepting that only minimal contact with Inner-city School parents was made by the researcher, nevertheless from informal discussion with six parents there was found to exist an air of resigned acceptance of the school's evaluation of their children. The six parents all had at least one child at Inner-city School, with several having two and three children in attendance, and these children were those who had been classified by the teachers as partially or severely deprived. Three of the parents had children who had repeated one or two grade levels. All the parents expressed concern over their children's careers in school and were somewhat dismayed by their lack of progress. For the most part no responsibility was placed upon the school(s), neither were individual children castigated. The parents seemed quite incapable of knowing what to do about helping their children, and indeed apparently accepted the label of failure given by the school. It is quite possible that these parents were similar rejects of the system that their
children seemed, in many cases, determined or destined to become. One parent who had two children currently in attendance at Inner-city School expressed her feelings:

What can they (the school) expect me to do if he doesn't want to do school work anymore? I have enough of my time cut out just getting him to go. I just don't know anymore. He used to really like school you know but now all he wants to do is leave. (his brother) left two years ago but now he's out of work. I would like Andy to go to grade 12 but what can I do? (He was in grade 7 and would turn 15 that month, April.) I don't know how much longer I can get him to stay there. Shirley (2 years younger than Andy, yet both in grade 7) was doing well, but now she's going the same way. This year she hasn't liked school at all. She says it's the teacher but I don't know.

A second study in Japan, this time a pre-war study illustrates their recognition of the possible effects upon the child and his family as a consequence of the child having to repeat a grade. Embree states, and this over thirty years ago, indicating their promotion policy is not a recent introduction, that:

Teachers feel that, if they left some child behind his class, he would feel very badly about it and that the resulting psychological effect and family chagrin would not be compensated for by any good the child might receive mentally by repeating a school grade (Embree, 1939:188).
It would seem from the two Japanese studies that educators in Japan have recognised that repeating a grade is tantamount to telling the child, his peers, and his parents (as well as other teachers he is likely to face) that he is a failure. Moreover a child is not made to repeat a grade because of possible negative social and psychological effects even if it might do the child good in terms of his academic progress. Recognition of the whole child concept and the importance of the social milieu of peers, family and others is considered over and above the narrower school setting requirements and needs. The responses under self and others' interaction and the importance and impact of peer relationships would indicate that the theory of the influence of others in the learning context influences the identity of the learner, which in turn affects his performance.

Thus from the material already presented by non-repeaters it would seem that repeaters do not benefit either academically or emotionally by the process of repeating. Therefore repeaters do not feel good about themselves, nor do they do well in school in subsequent years.
It should be stressed here that the majority of the children in this study who had repeated grade levels had done so at other schools either in or out of this school district. The Principal of Inner-city School did not condone the policy of children repeating grades and stated that: "...the socially mature child in a lower age grade creates problems when in with younger children, problems for the child himself. It doesn't help any boy or girl."

On a further occasion the Principal had a group of six grade 7 boys in his office (five of whom had repeated grade levels, three of these had repeated two grades) and he asked each if they had felt that their repeating a grade had done them any good whatsoever. All six of the boys replied that they did not feel it had helped them, and the Principal agreed with their sentiment. Later, he expressed that: "I do not believe in failing* kids, it does not do them any good at all."

He recognized that repeating a grade is seen as being synonymous with "failure" for the children. This is not a traditional perspective; many educators

*Emphasis mine.
see repeating a grade as good for the children, in context. They see its desired outcome as leading to the children's reappraisal of their ability and positive adjustment of their performance.

It would appear that this view held by these educators for the most part is an external perspective which is not supported by the people that the policy is set up for. The weakness of the external perspective is reinforced by the children in this study.

The children in this context, the repeaters, saw repeating a grade as a negative factor in their school career, interpreting it as a public pronouncement of their inadequacy. From the children's viewpoint they accurately or inaccurately perceive a social equation which defines "repeaters" as "failures", and this had its consequences upon identity. From the sociological perspective of this study repeating a grade level is seen as a significant example from which children may derive their self identity. For many an identity of failure--"I have felt a failure all through school," "I'm not too bright I guess. That's why I failed."

These statements reveal that children perceive "repeating a grade" as a status reserved for those
exhibiting scholastic inferiority. Thus there appears to be a conflict of interpretations between the children, who are repeaters, and the traditional educators' view, which comes from different 'definitions of the situation.'

Negative expressions were pervasive in the preliminary stage of investigation and many of the responses from the detailed interviews are of this nature. The schedules and the extracts from non-repeaters already presented have however indicated some ambivalence of response. When we turn to the responses collated under "repeaters" there is one consistent theme in all three schedules. Whereas under "non-repeaters" we find some children identifying with educational theory whilst others interpret repeating a grade level quite negatively, under "repeaters" we find responses consistent only with the latter expressions.

From the respondents, that is repeaters, the example of Rick is somewhat typical for a grade 7 child.

Rick (grade 7, age 14). Parents divorced. Lives with his mother who is on welfare. Has one sister and four brothers. He has attended
eight different schools. Rated severely deprived by grade 7 teacher.

(Rick related that he had no ambition and that he acts lazy in school and as he says, "deserve everything I get." He went on to express the idea that he felt he was not going to do any good in school and that he did not feel good about school. Rick had repeated two grades.) With regard to repeating grade one, he goes on to say:

I really didn't know what was happening; well I knew I had flunked grade one and I had to go back and do it again, but I really didn't care 'cos I liked school then. And when you're little you really don't know the consequences of that sort of thing. It's only later on that the idea that you flunked sort of catches up with you. I stayed at that school then for a whole year...I didn't do so well!

HOW DID YOU FEEL THE LAST TIME?
When I was just put back the kids sort of bug me about that, everybody bugs me. Doesn't make me feel too good. I just want to hide my face and run you know. But what can I do 'cos I can't skip school now or I'm back here for another year. I well, I would quit than do that so I've got to come. I used to play hookey to miss out on tests or just to get away from school for a few days. Sometimes you know I've felt so bad sort of that I didn't feel like coming to school but now I have to, like I can't miss any more days or they won't put me into grade 8.

DO YOU FIND YOU CAN DO THE WORK ITSELF SO YOU CAN PASS?
Sure. I think I could pass the grade, just if I play it cool. I can do the work, in fact it's simple. Like I said I just don't
like doing it no more. I got no ambition
in school and I don't like school much,
in fact I've never liked any of the schools,
you know they're all the same. I've moved
to quite a few schools, and they're just
the same. I think moving schools affected
me. I like staying in one school, that
way you get to know the teachers better
and they get to know you better and they
know your problems, and then you know they
can help you. But if you just go from one
school to another it gets ridiculous. Now
I might as well not be here 'cos nobody
cares about you, I mean not really they
don't. Like Andy quit school. I think he
quit 'cos he felt, well probably he felt
he was too old for the school, and he
just didn't like it anymore. He got fed
up with it. He could have stayed in if
he'd have wanted to but he couldn't take
being put down anymore he just was afraid
that he'd be nothing in the end, that he
wouldn't be worth anything, so I guess he
quit and that made him feel he was still
somebody. So it wasn't the school or the
teachers; it was himself, that's why he
quit, he had to feel he was worth something.
By the time I come to fifteen and I'm not
out of this school I'm quitting as well.
School sort of tells you whether you are
going to do anything or not.
AND YOU FEEL THAT SCHOOL MEANS NOTHING TO
YOU NOW?
(Rick shakes his head negatively.)
DO OTHER CHILDREN FEEL THIS WAY?
Those kids who do well in school like it.
Why shouldn't they? They don't suffer or
nothing like kids who aren't so smart. I
tell you, you really feel bad when you get
told everyday that you ain't any good. I
mean not that they tell you that exactly.
I mean not that they say that to you, it's
just the way they speak to you and when you
always get your work wrong or you can't do
it and that. Well, the teacher has a way
of telling you that you ain't so smart, and
everybody else knows it too, 'specially when
you're in a class with younger kids. So I
guess you could say I'm not that smart. I
think I'm smart, but the teacher sure doesn't think so. Well I'm not one of the brains but if I'd have stayed in one school and that, I think I could have done the work easy and gone to grade twelve with no problems.

DO YOU WANT TO GO TO GRADE TWELVE NOW?
Well my Mum doesn't like what I'm doing now, see, I'm not doing much good. She wants me to go to grade twelve, but then she has lots of problems. You see my Mum and Dad are divorced and my Mum is trying to get the house, so it would be better if I got a job you know. Anyway I ain't gonna do any good in school. I think I could have been a top student but I don't have any ambition now so I don't bother. I think moving all those schools and the teachers bugging me and then flunking grades, well, that was it for good. Sure doesn't make you feel too hot. This sort of affects your feelings about school. Look how you're doing in school you know how the teacher thinks you are, tells you if you're any good or not. And then you know if you're going to do anything or not. When you're put back, well, it means you're not.

IF OTHER KIDS FEEL THE SAME WAY, DO YOU THINK KIDS SHOULD BE KEPT BACK GRADES?
No. It makes you feel stupid. Sometimes I'd feel really dumb and if I had a bad day or there was a test the next day I'd skip out for a couple of days until it was over. That's the way I sort of did every grade. The teachers were okay but the tests and that I didn't like doing much.

DO YOU FEEL THE TEACHERS TREATED YOU DIFFERENT?
Some of them did. Some of them treated you better 'cos they spend time with you and don't put you down, but the kids put you down. Last time I was put back the kids sort of bug me about that. That's really bad.

SO YOU THINK YOU SHOULD STAY WITH THE SAME CLASS THEN?
I think they should always put guys up. Like, take this Mark—he reads encyclopedias. I
think his goal is to be somebody great. I think he should be put up, but I don't think they should put guys down. You feel pretty horrible when you're put down.

Rick reveals the importance of being older than the rest of the class in an age-ordered structure. Additionally he feels the pressure of the environment of the school upon him—"the teacher has a way of telling you that you ain't so smart." This is then reinforced through other children who internalize the school's evaluation of repeaters as being failures. Riesman has indicated that in our society success and failure are very important concepts and that attainment of success gives prestige and everything is done to avoid the "shame" that comes with the second concept "failure". Martin's responses also illustrate the perception that children have of the school atmosphere.

Martin (grade 3, age 10). Father a shoe-repairer, mother a housewife. Only child. Had attended one other school for three years. Had to repeat grade 3. Rated partially deprived by teacher.

DO YOU LIKE THIS SCHOOL BETTER? Yes. WHY? I didn't like the teachers at ______ school and when I failed grade 3 it made me feel
not too good. Felt defeated sort of. I found the work hard over there. I don't know why but I find it easier here. We have about the same amount of work but I find it easier.

(We talked about which subjects Martin liked and which he was good at and then in reference to his former school Martin says):

I didn't like the other school much but I like the teachers here. The teachers made you feel kind of bad at the other school. We didn't like the school much so we moved. My Mum said if I didn't like school we could move to (Inner-city) School. I sure didn't like ______ school before I failed.

WHY?
Well, I was trying hard last year, I didn't think I should have failed because I tried. If a kid likes school I think he can do better, if he likes the atmosphere around him. Last year I sort of felt, I don't know, sort of not too good. But now I'm still the same person but I feel better in this school but I guess you know I still failed so, well, I'm not too good.

Martin points to the marked differences between the social environment of his former school and Inner-city School and, "if a kid likes school I think he can do better, if he likes the atmosphere around him." The atmosphere of the institutional environment has been conceived by Stern (1958) as the environmental press. This concept refers to the social environment experienced by the individuals—the actions and values he is exposed to. Influential sources in the
environment include teachers who seek to influence a child's behaviour and importantly hold his time and can affect his relationships with others. Such sources of influence can also affect his prevailing attitudes toward himself, and others' attitudes toward him. One's self identity is not so much where or what a person is within any given order, but rather the way a person is treated by others and how in turn he treats them. Thus it is less the qualities that the individual may actually possess, but how he is treated that count. Martin was treated and in turn felt like a failure at his former school, and notwithstanding he says "but I'm still the same person".

Martin felt a failure in his former school because of his perception of the atmosphere around him which to him was negative. He has not completely divorced his past experiences, however it would seem that with parental support and an atmosphere at Inner-city School which he views as favourable, Martin has the opportunity in the future to perceive his qualities in a positive way. Martin's parents knew that at Inner-city School the Principal had established a policy which would mean that Martin
would not be made to repeat any more grade levels. This example would leave us positively predisposed to the future of Martin.

The extract from Tyler, also in grade 3, unfortunately is more typical of responses.

Tyler (grade 3, age 10). Father a painter, mother a housewife. Has one brother and one sister. Attended one other school. Rated partially deprived by teacher.

(Whilst asking the profile questions the researcher noted the age of Tyler as older than the norm for grade 3. Anticipating that he had repeated a grade level, the researcher broached that subject directly and Tyler said he had repeated grade two and then went on to say):

(It) made me feel pretty disappointed. They put me into Miss _____'s class and I thought I was in grade 3, then they put me back the next day to grade 2. I thought I deserved to go up. I was working my hardest. People sometimes work really hard you know, the people that fail, they work really hard, they try their best. I think it's the teacher's fault. The people, you know, the kids, try their best, try their hardest, you know, and they think they should get something out of it; not like failing because of the teachers.

(The issue of the "teacher's fault" was unfortunately not pursued by the researcher.)
Instead how "failing"* made Tyler feel was asked.
Well, failing school puts you off school. It sort of bothers you the next year. It sure doesn't make you work harder you know, it sort of makes you feel less than the others. I want to be a scientist when I leave school but I don't know whether I'll get to be one, 'cos everyone's always saying I'm stupid you know, and that gets me to believe that I am. Failing a grade sort of made me think I really was stupid, so I don't really think I'll get to be a scientist.

The extract from Tyler's interview is symptomatic of those children who felt as a result of the environmental press that they are somewhat lesser in prestige than others. The crucial aspect of the position by Tyler is his commitment to this lower status. Tyler feels the effect of peoples' opinion of him; "everyone's always saying I'm stupid," which raises doubts about his identity as a student. Such an evaluation is reinforced by his having to repeat a grade level which made him believe he really was

*The phrase "failing a grade" for "repeating a grade" was frequently used by the children (also "flunking a grade" was substituted). A note should be made here that the researcher also lapsed into this vocabulary on some occasions, thus perhaps by implication planting the seed of association between repeating a grade and failure. Such occasions were infrequent but nevertheless form an important research note for other interviewers. Daily transcribing of interviews and continual assessment of the researcher role enabled the researcher to pick up on such impositions upon the interviews.
stupid. The school environment is a constant reminder of his failure which makes Tyler feel less than the other children. Thus the verdict reinforces feelings of failure until Tyler declares himself guilty as charged.

Tyler at grade 3 is already committed to his role. His commitment to such a role by both the formal and informal labelling processes has reinforced a negative identity as a student. One of the best ways to create a stable pattern and identity of deviance is to be recognized and labelled a deviant. For Tyler, the school process of making him repeat a grade level has enabled him to internalize that he actually is a failure. Such an attribute is synonymous with being "stupid," "dumb," or other variants, all discrediting titles, and evidence of deviance from the school's institutional norms of intellectual normalcy.

Both Martin and Tyler mention teachers as do many other children, some directly, others by implication. Teachers ultimately are an important part of the environmental press particularly if they hold expectations of failure for children. However, Tyler although involving the teacher as instrumental
in his having to repeat a grade, clearly also sees himself as an important factor, in that it is because he is "stupid" that he "failed". Thus Tyler has developed an identity which from the responses of children in later grades would lead us to believe that Tyler has inculcated a negative self identity which is likely to adversely affect his future school career and school relationships. The major factor of repeating a grade is not so much being older in the class but the stigmatization which is apparently inherent in the process. Repeating a grade is seen as synonymous with being a failure. The process has invariably placed the responsibility upon the individual child, not upon the school process itself, and consequently many of the children have internalized that there must be something wrong with them.

Stigmatization shifts the focus of deviation from the act itself to the actor. . . .the process of stigmatization publicly defines the person as being unacceptable and reprehensible. This act of labelling is therefore critical. Once an individual has been officially stigmatized—as mentally ill, a sexual offender, a psychopath, a traitor, a mental retardate, a delinquent—the consequences are hard to undo. The "tainted" find it difficult, often impossible, to alter their conception of
themselves as being unacceptable. Others find it difficult to accept those once defined as deviant. . . (Dinitz, Dynes and Clarke, 1969:18-19).

However, it should be noted that repeating a grade is a process which is designed to assist children and not to punish them. Having children repeat a grade is an institutional way of protecting the children and is not, at least in its intent, a form of punishment or degradation.

Dinitz continues:

If it is felt that the person "can't help it," there is a tendency to take a protective attitude; but if it is felt that the individual could "avoid" being a deviant, punishment is likely to follow. As a result of these various reactions, both on the interpersonal and institutional level, there is a tendency for deviants to develop negative conceptions of themselves. In a few instances, the deviant may feel that he is right and the world is wrong. This is a possible outcome, but it is a difficult one to maintain in the face of greater contradictory evidence. The more usual results of the process are stigmatization and the acceptance of low self esteem—the feeling of being "different and bad" (Dinitz, Dynes and Clarke, 1969:19,21).

In most instances the children who are repeaters feel not only "bad" about themselves—"felt defeated," "felt pretty horrible," "failing makes you feel lousy,"—but also accept the responsibility for it themselves: "I don't think I'm that bright," "meant I wasn't as good as the others in my other class."
Beverley (grade 5, age 12). Lives with her mother who is on welfare. Has two brothers. She has attended six schools. Repeated grades one and three. Rated partially deprived by teacher.

**How did it affect you when you repeated first grade?**
It didn't really do anything to me. When you're little it sort of doesn't matter, you just accept what happens and you really don't know what it all means, you don't know what goes on. After grade three when I had to repeat it, I didn't feel too good, felt as if I wasn't very good. If I failed grade 5 that would really make me feel bad.

**How? In what way?**
I would be disappointed. I think anyway I will probably drop out of school at grade 10. I don't think I could make it to grade 12 without being failed again and I wouldn't want that. My Mum would like me to stay in school but I don't think I will be able to, not without being put down again and I couldn't take that.

**Why do you think you had to do those two grades again?**
I don't know why really. I was in another school. I suppose it was for some reason.

**Do you think it was for your own good?**
I suppose it had to be.

**Do you feel it was for your good?**
(Shrugs her shoulders and looks down into her lap and then says quietly): I'm not ____,* (I'm) dumb I suppose.

*Missed the word here, could have been "smart," "bright," "clever," or some antonym to her final phrase that she is dumb.

(Caroline had expressed a great concern over passing grade 7 because if she "failed" again she might have to go to occupational classes* in the high school. With reference to repeating grade two, Caroline says):

I cried when I failed a grade, but I'm not concerned anymore. It really doesn't matter that you have failed, as you meet other people and make new friends that have failed too. They are just as dumb as you. Kids used to tease me about failing--me and my girlfriend Dana were the only ones in the class who failed and we cried all the way home. My mother said it was okay "the teacher had to fail you" and all that junk, guess because I'm too dumb for words. And the dumb teacher asked my Mum should she pass me or fail me and my Mum said "fail her."

Caroline adopted the identity of an inferior person "I'm too dumb for words" remembering that she repeated grade two and is now in grade seven. She

*Recruitment into the occupational programme is contingent upon parental and child consent, recommendation by school and district psychometrician. Additionally repeating two grades "qualifies" the children for the programme. The Occupational Programme is taken up later under Differential Treatment with poignant examples of feelings toward the programme.
has developed an almost total negative appraisal of self, and is resigned to this role. Andy, also in grade 7, reacts strongly to his school experiences.

Andy (grade 7, age 14). Lives with his mother who works as a cook, although somewhat irregularly as she has been ill. He has one brother and one sister at home. Attended three different schools. Repeated grades 6 and 7. Rated severely deprived by teacher.

(Andy was on probation and considerable time was spent in relating his delinquent activities. In the second interview Andy spoke vehemently against school and that he was merely waiting until he was fifteen so he could legally leave.)

WHY DON'T YOU TRY IN SCHOOL AT ALL?
The one thing that makes you give up trying in school more than anything else is the teachers and the way they treat you.

HOW DO YOU MEAN?
Well, you know, just everyday, and then failing you. That was it when I had to do grade 6 again, and, shit, then grade 7.

HOW DID THAT MAKE YOU FEEL?
How do you think that makes me feel in front of all the other kids? I should be in high school now and here I am with little kids in elementary school. Shit, as soon as I'm fifteen I'm not taking all this no more. Why do they scorn you out in front of everybody? If you're not doing too good they should tell you when you're on your own, not make a fool of you. That makes me give up and goof off more than ever.
That way it shows you don't care even if you want to get better. You just forget it. I'll be fifty at this rate by the time I get to do grade 12 if they keep flunking me.

The reality of Andy's remarks become poignantly clear when on reaching fifteen he dropped out of school. However, psychologically he had already dropped out a couple of years before. Andy had given up even trying; he had withdrawn his participation from school work as a self defensive mechanism against continued humiliation and failure. As James (1890) states in simple terms, "...with no attempt there can be no failure; with no failure no humiliation." Andy expresses a sense of being secluded, denied the reality and gratification that others manage to attain in school. His experiences are different from what should or could have been and what he really wanted.

He asks the rhetorical question "Why do they scorn you out in front of everybody?" and his reply is remarkably similar to that expressed by the children from the School of Barbiana in reference to the legitimacy of repeating.

For Justice 'To pass a bad student is unfair to the good ones,' said a sweet little teaching soul.

Why not call Pierino aside to say to him, as our Lord said in the parable about the vine
trimmers: 'I am passing you, because you have learned. You are twice blessed: you pass, and you have also learned. I am going to pass Gianni to encourage him, but he has the misfortune not to have learned (School of Barbiana, 1970:68).

Such was the case of Andy and many of the other repeaters. They became discouraged, gave up trying, labelled as "trouble" for the teachers both academically and socially, and seemed determined to continue that way.

The following extract is from Betty; although a non-repeater her remarks about her brother add light to understanding how repeaters feel.


Alec (grade 7, age 14). Has attended 4 schools. Repeated grade 2. At Inner-city School since grade 3. Also rated partially deprived by teacher.

(In relation to her own schoolwork Betty used Alec as a comparison!)

HOW ARE YOU DOING IN SCHOOL?
My Mum said she thought my work was good.

*Emphasis mine.
Alec is 'below average' in class now. I guess that failing a grade really put him off. He is supposed to be in grade 9.

DID HE REPEAT TWO GRADES THEN?

No, he entered school late so now he's in grade 7. And now there's no chance he will finish school. So there's no chance he'll get much of a job.

YOU ARE ELEVEN SO YOU HAVEN'T REPEATED ANY GRADES THEN?

No, I haven't myself and I hope I don't. I'm trying hard. But Alec, he doesn't try anymore.

WHY DON'T YOU THINK HE TRIES?

He feels he's a failure in school so he says "what's the use?" and just shrugs when Mum says anything to him about trying more.

Betty gives insight into how repeaters feel and how the process affects their attitude toward school and their school performance. Even though Betty herself has not repeated a grade, through her intimate contact with Alec, she is able to present a concise picture that "he feels a failure in school" and he is now "below average," a formal category clearly indicating an inferior status.

However, a further picture was also present and is illustrated by Jerry whose responses, at least on the surface, are atypical of the other children.

*"Below average" is one of the designations on the pupil report cards, indicating the comparative standing of the child in relation to others in the class. Betty and others accept and use the language of the school.
Jerry (grade 7, age 13.) Father a car salesman, mother works part-time. Has two brothers and one sister. Attended 3 schools. Repeated grade 5. Rated partially deprived by teacher. (In relation to his progress in school Jerry mentioned he was average, he thought, although he could have been better if he applied himself to his school work. He said he had repeated a grade at another school.)

WHICH GRADE DID YOU DO AGAIN?
Grade 5. But I didn't flunk because of my dumbness or anything, just because I was fooling around. When I flunked my Mum didn't get mad or anything 'cos my Mum thought it would do me some good, but I don't think it did.

WHY DID YOU FLUNK?
I don't know really why. The teacher gave us a lot of work and if you didn't do it you had to stay after school and that, or else she gave you the yardstick. I think I flunked not 'cos I wasn't smart or anything, I could do the work, it was just 'cos I fooled around, I could have passed. There was this one boy whose name was Raymond and he didn't do any work and they just gave up on him. He was sixteen and in our class, still in grade 5 then, so they put him up to the high school, out of the way. Some kids just can't do it but I could; I wasn't like Raymond you know.

The implication of "flunking" or repeating a grade brought out by Jerry is that it is because individuals are not "smart" that they are required
to repeat the grade. Such an attribute is considered discrediting and humiliating to "repeaters".

Jerry finds it necessary to make it clear that the social equation though generally operative, does not apply to himself; "it was just 'cos I fooled around," "I wasn't like Raymond you know."

Jerry finds it necessary to explain the reason for his repeating a grade, and although he sees himself as instrumental in the cause of it, he identifies himself as one who is capable by declaring that he could have passed. Whether or not Jerry really believes in his own competence or that he presents to the researcher what is a confident facade is open to interpretation. Jerry does acknowledge that although both the teacher and his mother thought repeating a grade would be good for him, he did not think it was. Thus perhaps from such a declaration it could be speculated that Jerry's manner and expressions toward himself as a student are spurious. As Coopersmith (1967) states:

Spurious self-evaluations may express conscious or unconscious distortions from the 'true' evaluation. In the first case the individual is aware of the low regard he has for himself and tries to conceal it from others; in the second he is largely unaware of his poor evaluation of himself and attempts to conceal
his negative appraisal from himself and others. In either case there is likely to be some external evidence to suggest that the self-evaluation is suspect (Coopersmith, 1967:25).

Nevertheless Jerry does not seem to have internalized the inferiority of some repeaters nor the negativism of others toward the school, teachers or themselves. Those children who have experienced repeating a grade and perceived it as a negative encounter and pronouncement against themselves have learned a widely generalized and apparently long-lasting attitude toward self, and in addition a status loss in relation to self. The status loss is generated in the school by the evaluation of the children in their competence as students, a status highly valued by the school. The equating of repeating a grade as a sign of lack of ability is perceived from the attitudes and behaviour of others. The effect of repeating a grade and others' interpretation of this as indicative of inability and that repeaters are worthy only of ridicule is destructive to the latters' self-concepts. The destructive element is evidential when some children acknowledge they are "stupid" "must be dumb" "not too bright" and other self-deprecatory variants. Once introduced such beliefs affect not only present learning activities
but future situations. Repeating a grade does not make children "reassess their abilities" and allow them to work better; rather the assessment of their ability (inability) lowers self appraisal, raises doubts about self worth and does not inspire confidence in the children. Once the idea of inability has been inculcated by repeaters, which has lowered self esteem, it also affects future possibilities adversely. Thus the children are unable to make use of the opportunities presented by the schools. Such is the case of many of the children that transfer to Inner-city School and this poses the real challenge.
CHAPTER V

ABILITY GROUPING AND DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT

The incoming children to Inner-city School are more often the rejects from other schools. They make up not only the grade repeaters and the problems that this creates, but also many of these children represent the greater proportion of slow learners, remedial students, members of low ability groups in their respective classes, as well as the potential delinquents (and delinquents) and early "dropouts" from school. It is apparent from analysis of the literature that deprived children characteristically are defined as "problem" children academically and that programmes in schools are organized on this basis. Educational reasoning rests on the premise that intellectual variation is present in a given population: that there are aggregates of people who essentially share a common or like ability, and interconnected differences that distinguish each such group from others in the population. Ability
level is a way to describe and categorize students into distinct groupings based upon school performance as a measure, however crudely, of ability.

**Ability Grouping**

Educators have found it is advantageous to the learning process to make an experience more meaningful to the individual. To do this the individual's needs must be sought out. Some human needs are more constant than others. Amongst the more constant needs is social interaction. The application of sociological principles and theory of social interaction have been applied to the classroom situation through a variety of group practices. Throughout the years various grouping methods have been used in education with a great variation in results. One of the most popular methods of grouping used in schools has been that of the homogeneous ability level. Homogeneous grouping, using ability and/or performance as the criterion, means that all the children in the group are at the same level. This however is rarely achieved; individual differences prevent actual realization.
Ability grouping at Inner-city School was an administrative policy which was designed to order children within classes into smaller groups for instruction with respect to homogeneity of academic ability and social performance in school.

It has been argued that this method of grouping allows each student to progress at his own rate with a group of students of like ability. It is also suggested that by having students of similar abilities in distinct groupings, the difficulties of teaching are considerably reduced. The teacher's energies are thought to have greater force when he/she is able to concentrate on one ability level. A summary of some of the educational premises which grouping for instruction is based upon include:

1. Ability grouping helps "teachability," as different instruction can be given to groups of children according to their needs. Thus the teacher can serve the unique needs of the students in groups of "approximately equal" ability.

2. "Educability" is also helped by ability grouping. Separation of children into groups of "like" ability means that faster children will not be held
back by slower children and also grouping serves a protective function for those children who manifest slower and/or lower performance.

3. Each child can gain a sense of competence by meeting tasks and challenges appropriate to his ability and needs, and the teacher by treating groups of children, rather than the whole class, does not have to teach to the norm, but rather, releases more time for the special needs of both ends of the ability spectrum.

There have been some well substantiated attacks made recently on the school policies of tracking, streaming and homogeneous ability grouping in general. There is no paucity of literature relating to the purposes, and effects of, ability grouping. It has been stated that the low ability student further regresses and the better student is made still better off by this system (Schafer and Olexa, 1971). Coleman (1966) argues against ability grouping on the evidence that in mixed ability situations the less academically able do better, and their more academically able peers are not adversely affected by the mixed ability relationship. The research suggests that a self-fulfilling tendency
is operating as a latent consequence of the homogeneous grouping policy.

Worsley suggests:

Any educational organization that ranks and differentiates students is likely to produce the phenomenon of the 'self-fulfilling prophecy'. In a class for example, there will be a top, middle and bottom. Irrespective of their intelligence relative to children in other classes or other schools, children at the bottom are likely to be treated by other pupils and teachers as 'slow' or 'stupid' and over time these pupils come to believe this (Worsley, 1970:186).

There is no definitive explanation as to why these students who apparently "suffer" as a consequence of ability grouping are able to perform better in heterogeneous situations. Nor is there evidence that ability grouping actually increases or decreases "ability," although apparent "performance" is affected. Yet educational theory supports the idea that ability grouping assists the less able children by protecting them from failure, although there is no substantiation of this claim. Additionally high group placement for "brighter" children is apparently considered by many educators as a sound procedure as it enables these children to proceed at a faster pace and not be held back by slower students.
Teachers support the policy of grouping children by ability when they perceive instruction as an important part of the teacher role. This is perhaps the most consistent rationale for support of ability grouping, and is symptomatic of the position which sees teaching as being more important than learning. Although, today the educational emphasis is shifting from the teacher to the student who is the most important person in the learning process. When we are faced with the alternative of either facilitating the teaching process or the learning process, by manipulation of one variable, the choice is not too difficult.

Selection of children for grouping is generally based on ability judged either by the teacher's impressions or reading test results. At Inner-city School ability grouping is organized by the classroom teacher's recommendations and results from the intelligence and reading tests. Additionally for the many children transferring into Inner-city School previous standing in other schools is taken into account. The children were assigned to ability groups from grade 2 onwards. The groups were primarily set up for instruction in language arts and arithmetic.
The general pattern of ability groups within classes was of three groups*: high, medium and low. Table 7 represents the allocation of the 73 deprived children interviewed into the three groups.

### Table 6

**HIGH, MEDIUM AND LOW ABILITY GROUPINGS IN GRADES III, V, VII (1970-71)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>(22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>(21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>(30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>(73)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Absolute numbers in themselves do not illustrate the grouping assignment procedure. In general the low ability groups were smaller than either the high or the medium groups. This policy of keeping size down in the low ability groups was pedagogically sound in an attempt to maximize teacher direction with children who need more individualized attention. Disproportionately low ability groups contained children classified as deprived and the teachers

*An exception to this was present in one class which had four groups. This was in grade III and represented two medium ability groups.
considered keeping the size of the groups small to be educationally beneficial to deprived children who often appear, or are believed to be, verbally and socially retarded. In addition teachers frequently acknowledged lack of "readiness" as the most important factor relating to school performance and that deprived children disproportionately had not learned how to "go to school." Their classroom behaviour included: lack of attention span, inability to concentrate and not having learned how to listen; all cited as characteristic of many of the deprived children and thus constituted the lack of "readiness." Thus such children are considered to need the "protective" mechanism that low ability placement provides as they are somewhat incapable of functioning in the classroom setting, and that the children would be socially and academically more comfortable in the setting with others of a similar background of readiness. However, some children classified by the teachers as deprived are also present in the other ability groups, indicating the range of ability or performance, in the deprived population at Inner-city School.
The outstanding feature of this category was that all of the children interviewed knew which group they were assigned and the relative ranking of their group to the other groups in the class. This happens in spite of the fact that classes used different symbols to represent high, medium and low groups. Names, numbers or letters were assigned to the various groups within classes with no consistency between classes. Yet these symbols of group standings were easily decoded into the specific social standing of each group within the context of that specific classroom. Thus the children were able to recognize that not only was there a group called the "bluebirds" but that in the confines of that classroom "bluebirds" were more highly valued than the "grizzly bears." That is, the "bluebirds" were the high ability group whereas the "grizzly bears" were the low group.

In their study, Luchins and Luchins numbered groups in a class 1 (bright), 2 (dull), and 3 (average) according to their measured ability. An interesting aspect of this study was the desire on the part of the children to change groups. Those children in both groups 2 and 3 expressed a desire to go to
group 1, yet those children in group 1 wanted to stay there. This showed the children's awareness of their rank in the class with respect to the other pupils' prestige value associated with being in the top group. Luchins and Luchins concluded that the prestige value of number 1 class membership was its chief attraction, and that it caused the able members to become snobbish, that the grouping situation in the school caused stigma to be attached to the number 2 (dull) class membership and that homogeneous grouping created a caste system in the school (Borg, 1966).

Various studies reveal that children who are ability grouped definitely know their status; and classify themselves accordingly: smart, normal, average, dumb, stupid and other self-referential and other-directed terms.

Likewise the children at Inner-city School reveal that they recognize their social standing within their classrooms and the social standing of their peers in other ability groups in the class. Children gain an individual identity through group assignment: "I'm one of the brains," "We aren't so smart," and also make reference to other children
according to their ability group status: "The grizzly bears are dumb kids," "Kids in the other groups are 'retards' and 'subretards'," "(they) are the smart kids," "they're the smarter ones."

The recognition of a stratification system was not dependent upon children's ages. Children in grade level three were just as able to recognize the differentiation with respect to high, medium and low group status as were students in later grades. The ordering of children into distinct groupings was made doubly clear in some classrooms where the grouping by ability was translated into a physical arrangement of seating. The arrangement of rows, or groups, of desks into separate areas of the classroom frequently gave clues to the social structure operating. Such spatial segregation of children within classrooms on the criteria of ability group membership can conceivably reinforce social patterns and peer relationships. The researcher was unable to determine whether patterns of peer interaction was affected by the ability grouping policy in the primary grade levels. However, this was highly apparent at later grade levels and recognition of clique formation based within ability
groups was identified by teachers. In later grades behavioural and academic transgressions were disproportionately apparent in low groups. In earlier grades such transgressions were evident only as individual symptoms, not as group phenomena which seemingly developed with age and experience. The acting-up behaviour prevalent in the literature as characteristic of many deprived children was vividly illustrated in grade 7 children. We find that behavioural criteria rather than academic criteria plays an increasing part in allocation to ability groups as the children proceed up the school. Thus assignment to groupings within classes becomes more subjective on the part of the teacher, and less reliance is placed upon recent test results. The combination of former academic performance and "social reputation" in school become important factors in addition to measured academic ability. Douglas (1970) noticed that children who are badly cared for or appear dirty were more often assigned to low ability groups with the overriding criteria being the teacher's belief that the nurture provided in the homes necessarily meant lower ability in the children. Additionally Douglas found that once assigned to low ability groups for "remediation"
deprived children rarely moved to higher group status.

Although the groupings in Table 7 refer exclusively to one academic year, 1970-71, very little mobility occurs within any year once assigned to a group, and the children documented this lack of mobility: "nobody has gone up yet."

Thus even though the policy is designed for flexibility of transfer between groups, dependent upon performance, this clause is rarely effected. The recognition of lack of mobility in the grouping policy by the children has the consequence of making ability group placement more of a permanent evaluation and increases the potency of the policy forming an important feedback source for the children's identities as students. This is particularly so as there appears to be consistency of group assignment across grade levels and within many school careers; although some mobility was evident between grade level 2 placement and grade level 3 grouping and between grade level 3 and grade level 4. Mobility decreased with grade level and career lines became apparent. Teachers confirm that the gap between ability groups on school performance becomes wider in the higher grade levels thus not facilitating legitimate transfer of children between groups.
However, mobility is present when children transfer from other schools. We find that although some children were assigned to low groupings at other schools, several examples are present in the data of children who were placed in a higher group at Inner-city School. Several teachers advanced the idea that the general level of children’s performances was lower at Inner-city School than at most other schools in the district and therefore these children, although in low ability groups at former schools, were "more suited" for and performing at a level commensurate with medium or high ability group children at Inner-city School. A final notable exception of group mobility was not based on academic criteria but rather was of a disciplinary nature. Low group status was used in some classrooms as a disciplinary threat. Such a disciplinary demotion is not only an abuse of the educational practice of grouping by ability; but is hardly a supportive action toward the children who were placed in the low ability group on academic grounds.

The ability group a child is assigned to serves as a source of evaluation for him through the comparison of his group status with others in the context of that classroom. Since most interaction
occurs within classes rather than across classes we can suggest that the particular hierarchal arrangement of ability grouping, incorporating a ranking system perceived by the children, is important in developing identity as a student. However, as some mobility is built into the system this gives the group placement a redemptive quality. Thus ability grouping is theoretically more flexible than repeating a grade, and is a less potent designation. Repeating a grade, once effected, has an irreversible quality, whilst ability group placement is not necessarily a permanent student status. However, although separate from repeating a grade, ability grouping is another policy which segregates children and forms a major category in the hypothesis of failure.* Again the important aspect of this category is not the manifest functions of the policy in terms of its desired aims presented by educational theory, but rather how it affects the student's perception of himself through

*Interestingly we find that children who were "repeaters" are exclusively allocated to low ability groups at Inner-city School. Regardless of the school or grade repeated, the "repeaters" were placed in low ability groups. Thus it would appear that repeating a grade did not assist the "repeaters" academically as they ended up not only in a class with younger children, with the implications of this already documented, but also found themselves designated as being of low ability status in that grade level.
his interpretation of his status and the reinforce-
ment of this identity by "significant others".

Accepting that "ability" is a relative condition
rather than an absolute one, children allocated to
hierarchal ability groups are influenced by the
privileges and treatments given to the different
groups, within the confines of the social system
operating in the specific context.

As Swift suggests,

... a school which stratifies students
according to its definition of academic
ability will tend to have important consequences
for the self concepts and life-chance decisions
of some of its pupils (Swift, 1970:154).

It thus would appear that it is difficult for
students to overcome the classification they are
assigned through group placement and that their
ability is interpreted in the context of a prior
history, not only by teachers, and the consequences
teacher recognition and evaluation have for the peer
environment, but ultimately by the individuals
themselves.

It is now appropriate to turn directly to the
responses of the deprived children at Inner-city
School illustrating the range of responses by again
reconstructing the responses in three schedules. The
three analytical constructs: self-concept; self and
A Summary of the Relationship between Ability Grouping and Self Concept as perceived by High, Medium and Low Group Children

(1) High Group

Positive

Pauline (7-13) Makes me feel independent, makes me feel pretty smart. I'm one of the "brains" I guess, I'm pretty smart.

Beth (3-8) I'm in the top group so that makes me happy.

Bryan (5-11) I'm in Group 1 which is the high group in our class although in other schools was not always in the highest group. This makes me feel a lot better than if I was down in the lowest group. This feeling of going down instead of up - this is pretty important to how you feel.

Chris (5-11) Makes you feel sorta better, kind of proud if you're in a higher group.

Lenny (3-9) Being in a high group sure makes you feel good. I don't think kids in a low group feel very good. I know I was in a low group at one school and a high group at my last school.

Joan (7-12) I'd care if I was in Group 1, that's the dumb group.

Micha (3-8) I can do the work teacher gives us.

Negative

Paul (7-12) Group 3 kids are the enrichment group which means that they're the smarter ones . . . they're allowed to work on their own.

Nora (3-8) I'm in the Comets and Jets. That's the name of the group. We are the middle group, that's O.K.

William (7-12) We aren't so smart I guess.

Carole (3-9) I'm in the third group but there's 4 groups so I'm not in the lowest one.

NO RESPONSES ANALYZED IN TERMS OF NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS BY HIGH GROUP, CHILDREN.

(2) Medium Group

Positive

Paul (7-12) Group 3 kids are the enrichment group which means that they're the smarter ones . . . they're allowed to work on their own.

Nora (3-8) I'm in the Comets and Jets. That's the name of the group. We are the middle group, that's O.K.

Carole (3-9) I'm in the third group but there's 4 groups so I'm not in the lowest one.

Negative

Danielle (7-13) I don't think I'm very smart, if I was I'd probably be in the smart group. I guess kids in the low group don't feel smart either . . . I guess the school sort of tells them that they're not smart by putting them in a low group.

Schedule 4 continued overleaf
(3) Low Group

**Positive**

**Judith** (5-11) Does not bother me if I'm in a low group. Bothers some kids, makes them feel stupid. It puts them off school but doesn't me.

**Dave** (7-13) It's alright to have groups I think. If I was in the higher groups, I couldn't do the work it would be too hard.

**Brenda** (5-12) I'm in the low group in our class. Doesn't really make me feel bad because I'm in with other kids who are the same.

**Rosa** (7-14) Being in a low group doesn't bug me anymore, just come to accept it, why fight it? you can't do the work anyway, so how can you say it's unfair.

**Keith** (7-13) We have groups in our class. I'm in Group 1. That's okay by me. You're put in the group which fits your ability. Our group has kids slower than Group 2 or 3 has.

**Andy** (7-14) It doesn't bother me being in the dumb group, who cares?

**Negative**

**Chris** (5-11) If I could do the work I would be in Group 1, but, well, I can't so that's it, I'm not so smart.

**Don** (5-10) We are called the "dozies" but we are not really, it is just we cannot do some of the work that the "brainers" can do and we are in a lower group.

**Carole** (3-8) I'm in the Grizzly Bears which means we're slow workers. We can't do much of the arithmetic.

**Nora** (3-0) I don't read very well that's why, I'm just not a good reader and I can't spell either, not very good.

**Anna** (5-11) We are in groups you know and sometimes when you don't know the work that makes you feel pretty bad... sometimes makes other kids feel not so smart, for me it does anyway.

**Rosalyn** (7-13) I think different groups like we've got are bad. I do! They make you feel stupid when you're in a low group because you feel like you are dumb.

**Pete** (5-11) Makes me feel low.

**Gillian** (5-10) Would like to be in a medium group. Makes you feel smarter when you're in a higher group.

**Robbyn** (5-11) Makes you feel that you're not popular and left out... in those higher groups you feel proud of yourself and you can show that you're proud.
Schedule 5: A Summary of the Relationship between Ability Grouping and Self and Others' Interaction as perceived by High, Medium and Low Group Children

(1) High Group

Positive

Sheila (5-11) Better to be in the top group. Other kids try to work harder so they can catch up but teacher watches them but they're not getting any higher.

Paulina (7-13) I'm one of the "brains" I guess, I'm pretty smart. Kids in the other groups are "dumbos" and "subretards".

Johnny (5-11) Can do the work better than other kids, teacher gives us lots of time with her.

Bryan (5-11) Kids in the bottom group they need more time with the teacher to help them.

Down (5-10) Kids in a low group try to get up to a high group but the teacher won't let them, because they're just not good enough.

Benn (3-8) The Grizzly Bears are dumb kids, some of them can't even read.

Douglas (7-12) We need groups because some of us want to get on with the work and, well, those other kids just try to skip doing it.

Negative

NO RESPONSES IN THIS CATEGORY RELATING TO ABILITY GROUPING ANALYZED IN TERMS OF SELF AND OTHERS' INTERACTION.

(2) Medium Group

Positive

William (7-12) Kids in Group 3 are the smart kids, last year we didn't have groups. Maybe it's better to have groups 'cos the kids who need help get the help.

Carole (3-9) The teacher spends the same amount of time with any group. Well really most of the time with the highest group because they have the hardest work and we get easy work, so the highest group need more time with the teacher.

Bill (3-9) Doesn't matter that you're in a lower group. Nobody says to you "I'm in the highest group" or "you're in the lowest group".

Negative

Tony (7-13) I don't think we should have groups at all. All the kids in the high group think they're good.

Danielle (7-13) Next to other kids in the class you feel dumb just like the group is meant for. I'm glad I'm in the middle group, we get much easier work than the third group, but you feel better than being in the low group.

Cathy (7-13) We are not named in groups but we have them and we do different work in math and reading. Everyone knows if they're in the "smart" or the "dumb" group. The higher group can go ahead in class work and the low group, well, guess they're just low, real low.

Schedule 5 continued overleaf
Positive

Derek (5-11) I'm not really in a low group, just that we need more help. Teacher spends more time with us.

Graeme (7-12) All the groups are treated the same except for the work he gives us. He spends more time with us while they work on their own. We get put into groups on ability in work, on what you're capable of doing.

Anne (5-11) Some kids here, the teacher thinks are smarter.

Caroline (7-14) The teachers give more help to kids in low groups. This is supposed to be good but it isn't, it just makes you feel worse. If we could work on our own it would be a lot better. Would feel better. But some of us cannot work on our own as we work too slow.

Dan (5-11) The teacher treats us all the same, but well "retards" and "mentals" are names kids call us 'cos we can't do the work.

Kevin (7-12) The other kids really make you feel bad when you're in a low group, not so much the teacher.

Gillian (5-10) The teacher separates you on whether she thinks you're "dumb" or "smart". And, well, if she thinks you're dumb and puts you in a low group you feel that maybe you are.

Robbyn (5-11) Feel that in a low group that I'm not as good as the other kids... wish I was in a higher group.

Tom (5-10) Kids in the highest group think they're better. Other kids brag about it.

Negative

Robbyn (5-11) Feel that in a low group that I'm not as good as the other kids... wish I was in a higher group.

Tom (5-10) Kids in the highest group think they're better. Other kids brag about it.
Schedule 6 A Summary of the Relationship between Ability Grouping and Self and School Performance as perceived by High, Medium and Low Group Children

(1) High Group

**Positive**

Cynthia (5-10) Lucky I'm in a high group. We get different work from the kids in the lower groups. Our work is harder. Better to do harder work so you can learn.

Sheila (5-11) Nice to be in Group 1 because you get a week to do all the work sheets that the teacher gives you. So you can take it home at night with you and you can take your time with it. . . In the other groups the teacher marks it every certain day. . . .even in arithmetic our group just goes ahead.

**Negative**

Lenny (3-9) I was in a low group at the other school. It makes you feel bad, and you don't feel like doing things in school.

(2) Medium Group

**Positive**

Nancy (3-8) We have groups for reading. It doesn't really make much difference, we all do the same sort of work. And the teacher spends time with us all the same.

Christy (5-12) Groups 1 and 2 are both the same but Group 3 gets easier work, and so well they don't work so hard. Sort of better being average.

Dennis (5-11) . . . got more work done and then you got higher marks. In Group 1 lots of time to fool around, in higher groups don't have the time to which it is better.

**Negative**

Carol (3-10) Kids in the lowest group and sometimes our group, well we have to stay in more after school 'cos we don't finish, well that's not fair. The other kids don't.

Toni (7-13) I can do most of the work but am not in the high group 'cos some kids are smarter, they can do it better. Some kids are also dumber, they must be, they're in the bottom group.

Dennis (5-11) Kids in the low group in our class don't feel as important so they don't try. . . .probably don't try anymore.
(3) Low Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Dave (7-13)** Guess it means I'm not really smart 'cos I can't do a lot of what the other kids do, so it's better I'm in the slow group.

**Catherine (3-9)** Our work is easy. We get easier work than another group, that's okay so I can do the work pretty much anyway.

**Kenny (5-11)** I'm in a low group for reading but I'm doing good.

**Mike (5-9)** I didn't like the school because the work was too hard but now I'm in another group I can do the work now.

**Valerie (7-12)** I'm in Group 1 this year. Last year we didn't have groups. I don't mind being in Group 1 'cos we're just learning. Like Group 3 is the smart group and Group 2 is working just ahead of us. Like we're just learning some of the stuff Group 2 has already done and Group 3 has. So ours is the low group.

**Robyn (5-11)** I try hard but don't feel good. Don't feel confident, and when you're put in a low group well you just feel low and you start to work sort of low, like not so good anymore.

**Jill (3-8)** It makes you feel bad and you don't feel like doing things in school.

**Gillian (5-10)** I used to work harder when I was in a middle group before, and we got more work to do.

**Jim (7-13)** I thought I'd like to go to college, but now I don't like school anymore, 'cos I know I'm not going to do any good. Don't do so good when you're in the bottom group.

**Colin (5-11)** Makes you feel your work is not as good. In the low group you just stay there, you don't go up into a higher group even if you're working well so you don't do much work.

**Tom (5-11)** We just have a reader the other groups have novels. We are also low in arithmetic. I just try my best to get into the second group although nobody has gone up yet.

**Russ (7-14)** Those things you goof off at are usually those that you can't do, then you end up in a low group and it sort of just puts you off about everything in school.
others' interaction; and self and school performance, are used and responses are collated according to the interpretation by the researcher as to whether they are a positive or negative expression. The schedules are framed into three sections representing the children's placement in high, middle or low ability groups for the academic year 1970-71. Because of the range of responses present in the data and the inconsistency in the educational research relating to the effects of ability grouping an ideal type is presented (Table 7). The ideal type illustrates "possible" positive and negative responses by children, and does not include "actual" responses from the data itself. Positive and negative projections are illustrated relating to the three analytical constructs. When the ideal type is read in conjunction with the schedules we find consistency of responses, that is, positive and negative responses are present. However, interestingly it can be seen that whereas positive responses are present in all three ability groups, the negative projections in the ideal type are consistent only with responses from children who have experienced medium or low group status. Thus,
### TABLE 7

**IDEAL TYPE PROJECTION OF RESPONSES: "ABILITY GROUPING"**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ability grouping consequences perceived by pupil in terms of:</th>
<th>POSITIVE</th>
<th>NEGATIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Self concept</td>
<td>Can go at your own rate so you can master the work. Feel better when you get work appropriate to your ability.</td>
<td>You start to think there must be something wrong with you if you have to do different work from most of the others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Self and other interaction</td>
<td>Work with other children who may work at the same speed or may have similar ability as you.</td>
<td>Compares you with other kids, they make fun of lower kids and it can make you feel bad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Self and school performance</td>
<td>Enables you to work better and you feel like you are progressing.</td>
<td>Feel like not even bothering, puts you off learning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
even though Lenny (3-9) in schedule 6 (high group) makes a comment which is framed in the negative column, his response which relates to the effect of low group status and feelings toward self and school performance, refers to his experiences at a former school when he was assigned to a low ability group. The comment from Lenny in schedule 4, positive column, that "Being in a high group sure makes you feel good" illustrates that now he has developed a somewhat different feeling toward himself as a result of his new status in the classroom structure. This discernible hierarchy and the feelings that high group placement make these children feel "better" and "happy" is important in understanding development of self attitudes in all the children, not merely the high ability group. The high group children feel confident in themselves via the evaluation they constantly receive through the recognition of them as members of high ability groups. As already mentioned ability group placement is relative to the context in which it is operating and that ability itself is not sufficient in explaining the differences in performance and attitudes toward school work. Rather the
psychological and status meanings of ability group placement is necessary in order to understand the effect on self image and academic performance. School decisions in reference to classifying ability and arrangement of abilities in a hierarchal structure would appear to affect the kind of education the child receives by influencing the feelings he develops about himself and others.

The high ability group children feel positively predisposed to themselves as students and the extracts reflect their feelings of confidence and competence toward school work. Additionally the extracts denoting a feeling of their deserved status and "put downs" of other children are important features of the peer environment and are likely to influence interactions between different group statuses within the classrooms. Such responses toward lower group children, which can be seen to reflect derogatory opinions, contribute to reinforcing the feeling of failure evident in some of the responses in the lower group children. The lower group responses must be examined in the light of the responses from high group children and this gives us a picture of the socio-emotional context in which
feelings toward self as a student and toward school performance are developed.

In the extracts from low group children we have both positive and negative responses in all three schedules. Interestingly this does not necessarily illustrate clear ambivalence. For example, some of the responses listed under the positive column may be spurious expressions. In schedule 4 Andy (low group) suggests "It doesn't bother me being in the dumb group, who cares?" It is reasonable to question whether low group status does in fact affect Andy, such clues being his interpretation of low being synonymous with dumb, and reflecting instead a resigned acceptance of inferiority which could be interpreted as negative to his self. Responses that question the legitimacy of the low group designation are often difficult to ascertain whether they have had a significant effect upon the identity of the student. The framing of extracts under positive and negative columns is entirely from the analysis by the researcher which has taken into account the knowledge and insight gained about the children, and has attempted to put an interpretation on the data that is consistent with the meanings
given by the children themselves, and has leaned toward a conservative evaluation of responses. More detailed responses from the interview data are again presented with minimal explanation and should therefore be read in conjunction with the analytical framework represented in the schedules 4-6.

The first extract from the interview data is taken from Pauline who is in a high group. Pauline (grade 7, age 13.) Father ill unable to work. Mother works. Has 7 brothers and 2 sisters. Attended 2 other schools. Rated partially deprived by teacher. (Pauline had made reference to differentiation between children and that separate work was given to groups of children.)

**WHAT IS THE MAIN DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE GROUPS IN YOUR CLASS?**
Well, I'm in the highest group, get to do what we want to do. Ours is the enrichment group, the low groups are 1 and 2. I've always been in the high group. This makes me feel pretty smart and I always try hard to do all the work. Some of the kids in the bottom group don't care--just as long as they pass.

**DID THE OTHER SCHOOLS YOU ATTENDED HAVE THIS SORT OF GROUPING?**
Yes, sort of. But I was always in the enrichment group.

**HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT DIFFERENT WORK TO CHILDREN IN THE 3 GROUPS?**
I think that is a good idea. If you have different groups the teacher can give more attention to the others that need it.

I do pretty good in school, that's why I'm in the high group. Others don't do as well, maybe I try to learn, maybe I can grab it better. I'm one of the "brains" I guess I'm pretty smart. Kids in the other groups are "retards" and "subretards".

I find the work here easy 'cos I've done it before, before we moved here. So then I started falling back. When you don't have things to challenge you in your work you just goof off and that and then fall back. That's why it is good for me to be in the high group because it makes me work harder.

This extract points to the clear social distinction drawn between high group and low group children; "kids in the other groups are 'retards' and 'subretards'" whereas Pauline holds the belief from her group status that she is one of the "brains". Such expressions are insightful into understanding the peer influence in the social context in which the grouping is operating. High group status makes Chris (5-11) "feel sorta proud" and Cathy (3-8) says "it makes me happy"; this gives the children confidence in their ability to do the work they are given. The effect upon self concept by high group status is well illustrated by those children who had experienced group mobility.

Donald (grade 5, age 11). Father a logger. Has one brother and 2 sisters. Attended 2 other
schools. Rated partially deprived by teacher. 

(Donald had documented his experiences at one of his former schools. There he was in a medium ability group and was later promoted. At Inner-city School he had always been in the high group. With reference to group mobility he says):

I got moved from group 2 to group 1. Group 2 was a lot easier which wasn't really good because you weren't so busy, 'cos, well, in the high group you're busy all the time, but in group 2 you weren't. So had lots of time to goof off. We have lots of work to do so there's no time to fool around. That is better 'cos you get more work done and then you get higher marks. Getting high marks sure beats getting low marks, makes you feel better. If you don't get high marks you don't feel as important. Some kids in the low groups get low marks and guess they don't feel sort of rewarded; tells you if you are good at schoolwork or not. Some other kids in the low groups who get low marks don't really care. I care if I get low marks but they don't, they probably don't 'cos they don't even try.

There was no evidence to indicate whether a grade ceiling was operating within classrooms, with for example, low ability group children graded in relation to the rest of the class who despite individual effort would be unable to get higher than a 'B' or 'C' grade. Nevertheless many children did
document that low group placement and low grades subsequently went together.

The children frequently mentioned that group placement was based on ability and/or effort. Thus, the assertion was made that low group placement was reserved for "dumb kids" ("some of them can't even read"), the rationale behind grouping therefore serving a protective function. Such an explanation was proferred not only by high ability group children but others as well, including those in the low groups. The second explanation of group placement was that the discrimination between groups was based on effort of the children. Therefore groups were needed in order that children who were motivated to do school work would not be disturbed by "those other kids (who) just try to skip doing it". Both explanations, no matter whether they were legitimate, unfortunately also carried with them elements denoting some defect or inadequacy on the part of children unable to gain high group membership. The lack of mobility was also rationalized in the light of these two explanations of group placement. Medium or low group children either remained in the group they were assigned because they did not try hard enough or because "they're just not good enough".
It is interesting that there are no negative comments relating to grouping by children in the high ability groups (with the exception of those comments in the schedules which refer to feelings toward former lower group placements). Both the medium and low ability group children present feelings toward the grouping policy which are framed in terms of positive and negative perceptions.

The ability group to which a child is placed canalizes activity in schoolwork. This serves to identify other children as similar, sharing a common status. The identification of another child as a member of the same group implies a sharing of criteria for evaluation and for judging one's status as a student. In addition a dichotomization of others as different according to ranking of apparent competence or ability perceived from the different work given to the various groups, and interpreted as implying superiority or inferiority, has consequences for identity.

When we turn to the medium ability group we find both positive and negative responses. Some children feel somewhat secure in their position; they recognize that "some kids are smarter" and "some
kids are also dumber”. Thus medium group children are in a "grey" area which can provide them with protection. As Danielle (7-13) says: "I'm glad I'm in the middle group, we get much easier work than the third group, but you feel better than the low group." This makes reference to the emotional involvement in learning as being important in influencing "what" and "how" one is able to learn. Where student identities are organized and allocated according to "ability", there is the tendency for the generation of further diversity of performance between the groups. This spread on the ability spectrum between high and low groups was recognized by teachers. This is not surprising when interaction and treatment in the classroom is influenced by the status categories and ascriptive qualities given to the groups. Interaction in the classroom is with reference to student identity through group membership—designating ability level. The organizing and canalizing effects of ability distinctions generate a relationship of stratification reinforcing identity. For medium ability group children there are both positive and negative evaluations relating to their identity presented via their group placement. Additionally children in the medium group
clearly illustrate some of the premises which grouping by ability is based upon. The support of educational theory is recorded when William (7-12) says: "... It's better to have groups 'cos the kids who need the help get the help." There are also some children in all three of the ability group levels who support the idea that grouping by ability assists all levels of students. Unfortunately, many of the positive effects of ability grouping are in comparison with, and at the expense of, students occupying lower group status. The medium group children are able to determine an interpersonal hierarchy with clear discriminations made between high and low group status. The group status, high or low, defines individuals globally as "smart" or "dumb" whereas the medium group places children in the "safe" middle of this range of ability.

The ability groups, which are in effect "treatment" groups, to which a child is allocated, are a form of feedback to others, including teachers, and the child, regarding the kind of student he is. The comments reveal that children learn their student status by the group placement and the categorization is on a single factor--ability--interpreted as high group being equal to "smart" and low group as "dumb".
Husen (1967) states that ability grouping is based upon the premise that the selected groups are homogeneous in regard to scholastic ability which consequently makes it easier for the teacher to deal with the diversity of ability. Additionally as mentioned in educational theory, such grouping makes it possible for all children to attain a higher standard of achievement commensurate with their respective potential. The responses from high group students and their able performances documented by the classroom teachers would indicate that group placement has desirable academic and emotional effects. The high group children feel positively predisposed toward self and school performance. The high ability groups may be considered to be processed in terms of a model of academic competence. The medium groups in relation to the high ability groups are functioning at a level of lower performance which is recognized by the incumbents of both groups. The group allocation is interpreted as a sign of worth as a student, within a social system which places great value on high performance of mental ability measured on academic criteria. Even though such a measurement of ability emphasizes the intellectual and ignores other aspects of the individual's personal growth.
Group dynamics and human relationships must be considered in relation to learning because ability grouping takes place in a collective social environment and the learning of identity as a student is influenced by the status and treatment accorded to others.

When we turn to the low group responses collated in the schedules we find that these children have all learned a self-definition relevant to the social system described in the schedules by high and medium group children. An undesirable social effect is again present as with "repeaters" and "non-repeaters" in that whereas many high group children consider themselves gifted, or more highly motivated and try harder than others in the lower groups, perhaps a positive "Hawthorne effect," there is an adverse tendency present in the responses from those who are in low groups. Low group children see themselves in relation to higher grouped peers in the classroom, which places them in a lower status position, in terms of what is valued in school. Children are vulnerable to the labels which are built into the hierarchal arrangement on which ability group assignment is based. Thus allocation
to an ability group, a system of stratification, provides an evaluation of ability on the criterion which determines the hierarchy. Placement in ability groups rests on criteria of school performance with respect to cognitive and social traits. Due to the disproportionate number of deprived children in the lower ability groups, and the smaller number of these children in high groups, one might suggest that social class origins may be influential in selection. There is no evidence to suggest that the tendency for deprived children to be allocated low group status was based deliberately upon recognition by teachers of the children's social class origins. However, if many "deprived" children do come into school lacking in behavioural skills, it is not unusual therefore to find these children allocated to lower group placement after grade level one. Moreover such a policy would be considered to be based on sound educational principles, as grouping would serve the necessary protective function. Unfortunately, for these children, they see their identity constantly paraded before them in the regular routine of carrying out daily learning tasks in the classroom, an identity
of failure, seemingly inherent, in the grouping policy.

Ability groups establish, and by the apparent lack of mobility present in the system, reinforce a child's concept of his ability in the particular academic areas—principally reading, a skill which transcends much of his schoolwork. Low ability group children find it hard to maintain the prestige acquired by others. Thus the responses assembled in both the positive and negative columns under low group children illustrate their perceptions of the ability group policy and the effect upon their identity.

Even though recognition that low group membership is reserved for those who in relation to their peers exhibit inadequacy in specific classroom activities we find some children suggest this status does not affect them. Thus Brenda (5-12) suggests that it "doesn't really make me feel bad because I'm in with other kids who are the same." And Judith (5-11) says that it does not affect her adversely either, even though she recognizes that low group status "bothers some kids, makes them feel stupid. It puts them off school, but doesn't me." These children clearly illustrate they have observed some children
do feel bad about being placed in a low ability group. They also note that low group placement and feelings of inadequacy are apparent; "makes them feel stupid." The children whose responses are framed in the positive columns in the schedules accept the description of "ability" presented to them by their group status and rationalize that the designation may be legitimate.


(Had been speaking of classroom experiences and Russ said he had always been in a low ability group as far as he could remember. He then goes on to say):

Being in a low group doesn't bug me anymore, just come to accept it. Why fight it? You can't do the work anyway so how can you say it's unfair. He just says group 1 and 2 do this, this and this; group 3 do what you want--projects, novels, own work, things like that, because they are supposed to be able to get on with things themselves. That means he should have more time for us but he doesn't help us much. If you don't know how to do it, it's your fucking luck. He just tells us what to do you know. He tells me something and like I'm not really interested in it, then he goes away and I forget how to do it. Then when you ask him to explain again he just says 'too bad, you should have listened' or 'you're not smart enough to do it anyway!'
I think that everybody has got as much brains in their heads as everybody else, just that some people don't use them as much. But really you do those things you enjoy and those are the things you can do well and those things you goof off at are usually those that you can't do. Then you end up in a low group and it sort of just puts you off about everything in school. HOW DID YOU FEEL ABOUT REPEATING GRADES AND THEN BEING PUT IN LOW ABILITY GROUPS IN THOSE CLASSES? It's another way of telling you you ain't gonna make it. Makes me feel like I'm not much good. This puts you off school and pretty soon you spend most of your time goofing off, trying to avoid work, then you just get further behind and then you can't catch up. Then you can't do as well as the other kids can even if you try, you're trying for nothing, because you're still not doing as good as the other kids in the eyes of the teacher and that's what it's all about.

Russ suggests that even though he holds to the opinion that "everybody has got as much brains," actual performance in class varies and is reinforced directly by success or failure in schoolwork. The progressive retardation of low ability group children is documented by both teachers and other children, and in many cases these children themselves. Many of the children feel they are not as capable in schoolwork as their peers and the responses collated in both the positive and negative columns of schedule 4 illustrate the acceptance of their lower status. Keith (7-13) states that "You're put in the group which fits your ability" and further
acknowledges that he is in a group which "has kids slower than group 2 or 3 has." Chris (5-11) translates the lack of performance into the personal recognition "I'm not so smart," a negative evaluation of his self from his grouping experience. Rosalyn (7-13) supports this contention.


(Rosalyn had a career of low group status and when asked about the ability group arrangements she said):

I hate them. I think different groups like we've got are bad. I do! They make you feel stupid when you're in a low group because you feel like you are dumb. And I suppose you are because that's what the group's for, dumb kids. I have been dumb all through school I guess, that's what it means doesn't it?

ISN'T IT SO THE TEACHER CAN HELP YOU WITH THE WORK AT A SLOWER PACE SO YOU CAN UNDERSTAND IT ALL?

Well, it is good to get more help but he doesn't give us much help. Teachers just think if you're in the bottom group you can't do anything so they don't waste their time, that's what they say. They get us together in one group and teach you, but say you don't know as individuals. Some kids catch on faster than other kids and then the kids who don't catch on as well, he just says 'you should have listened the first time.' Being in a low group you
just feel like, well, you're being put there out of the way. It's sort of a punishment for being too dumb to do the work. You feel that if other kids can do it, why can't you—there has to be something wrong.

**HOW DOES IT MAKE YOU FEEL ABOUT GOING ON IN SCHOOL?**

I'm not going on anywhere except maybe to Occ. I want to go to grade 8, but now I'm not sure if I can. When you are in the low group you know that you can't be very smart when you can't do the work, especially when lots of the other kids do it alright. Being in groups just sort of puts you off and others think that you're just as dumb.

The low group status clearly indicates to Rosalyn that she is inadequate as a student compared to many other children in the class. This has raised severe questions in her mind about her ability and conceivably like Russ such self doubts could lower actual performance by reducing motivation toward schoolwork. White (1959) advances a simple thesis—that people persist in things they do well; equally they lose interest in things they do not do well. Group status identifies children in terms of academic competence with a noticeable stratification system generated. Thus whereas educational theory rests on the belief that grouping helps all levels of ability in respect to school performance, the responses from low group children relating to self and school performance, indicate that these children
do not feel it has helped them at all.

Gillian (grade 5, age 10). Parents divorced.
Mother works. Has 2 brothers and 2 sisters.
Attended 3 schools. Rated partially deprived by teacher.
(Gillian had experienced several grouping arrangements in her school experience. In relation to her present low group position she says):

I would like to be in a medium group instead of a low group because it makes you feel smarter when you're in a higher group in class.
WHY?
Other kids then won't play with you if you're in a dumb group.
WHY ARE YOU IN THE LOW GROUP?
I'm not so good as a reader, so that's why I'm in the group. I wasn't always though;
I was in group 2. I used to work harder when I was in a middle group before, and we got more work to do. Don't get as much to do now. I usually finish the work although it keeps me busy, but we get less than before. We have more time with the teacher which is good.
WHICH GROUP WERE YOU IN AT YOUR OTHER SCHOOLS?
In the last other school I was in we didn't have any groups. I liked that better. We didn't have high or low we just had all together, that's better. I liked it better 'cos you all felt that you were all the same and could get on with your work and not feel any different from anybody else in the class. And you could work alongside other people in the class so you could be with friends. Well, this way you can't and you
feel sorta, well, I don't know, I guess you know you feel that you're not as good and the teacher separates you on whether she thinks you're dumb or smart. And well, if she thinks you're dumb and puts you in a low group you feel that maybe you are. You know she is the teacher and I guess she sort of ought to know. Anyway it makes you feel that way. The other kids see that the teacher put you down and they start saying you're dumb and everything like that. That's what everyone in the lower group gets called, dumb and everything by the higher kids. They say you're in the low group because you're dumb. That's not good—I don't like it.

Anne (grade 5, age 11). Father an ironworker, mother a housewife. Has one brother and one sister. Attended 3 other schools. Rated severely deprived by teacher.

(Anne stated she did better at her former school which like Gillian's experience was not arranged into hierarchal groups.)

In my other schools I was doing good. We all did our work together there, so we felt pretty smart. We all helped one another with our schoolwork. Here in Canada, well in this school anyway, we are in groups you know and sometimes when you don't know the work that makes you feel pretty bad. Some kids here the teacher thinks are smarter than others, they are in a high group for reading and things. This sometimes makes other kids feel not so smart, for me it does anyway.

Grouping by ability has served to identify and name children as inadequate which reinforces the
impression of failure and lowers motivation. Thus Jill (3-3) says that being in a low group "makes you feel bad and you don't feel like doing things in school." The generation of negative attitudes toward schoolwork is representative of many responses. Robbyn (5-11) says "I try hard but don't feel good. Don't feel confident, and when you're put in a low group you just start to work sort of low." However in the positive column of schedule 6 we also find children in low ability groups who feel that this status has served the protective function. Dave (7-13) says "I can't do a lot of what the other kids do, so it's better I'm in the slow group." However this comment is prefaced by the acknowledgement that low group membership "means I'm not really smart." Dave has developed an evaluation of himself from his group status in the classroom, and an identity that would lead us to suggest the policy has not really been beneficial to him at all. Placement in a low ability group to enhance performance of a child at the appropriate slower pace, the desired outcome, appears instead to depress achievement or the motivation to achieve in schoolwork and serves to stigmatize the individual as a failing student.
The peer environment and the different treatment in terms of work, given to the hierarchically arranged groups by the teacher, serves to distinguish the ranking and the respect worthy of each group. The responses reveal that grouping by ability affects the social and emotional climate that prevails in the classroom. Membership in a low ability group for many children serves to generate a sense of frustration at their own inability and raises self doubt in others. The grouping policy commits many children to accept the label which informally the group assignment carries with it--for low group children acceptance of their inability is as common as the high group children's evaluation of their ability. Some low group children also acknowledge the school's efforts to help them because of their special needs. However, low group status does not shield them from feelings of failure. Thus any actual handicaps that the child experienced from home affecting his self esteem, motivation for learning, and commitment to school, are magnified by a system that shows up sources of intellectual inequality.
Differential Treatment

The final category contains a pot pourri of responses that were found through the analysis of the interview data not to be general concerns but rather represent responses unique only to particular children. The interview data in the former categories, "repeating a grade" and "ability grouping" is organized in a deliberate presentation that tests the validity of previously established concerns gained from the early stage of the research inquiry. The material gathered under the category "differential treatment" is presented without the use of an analytical framework such as was constructed in the form of the schedules utilized in the former two categories. The schedules served the primary purpose of organizing the qualitative data by introducing extracts framed under the analytical constructs used by the researcher to depict the themes of response. The material assembled in the schedules was not presented as evidence but served to illustrate responses revealing to the nub of the problem--the effect of the school processes on the development of student identity. The organization of the data was necessary for
explanation of the method of analysis of the subjective material.

Goldstein states:

Instead of dealing with documents and artifacts, the ethnographer is faced with the task of making intelligible his observations or his field notes (Goldstein, 1963:297).

However, as Goldstein continues,

We have tended to think of the ethnographer as reconstructing the subjective standpoint of the people whose actions he observes, but we can just as easily think of him as postulating that standpoint in order to explain what he observes (Goldstein, 1963:297).

The responses framed under the "catch-all" designation "differential treatment" are presented without the benefit of a schedule of analysis. The responses are presented in a less focussed manner as the extracts are in themselves non-representative, yet very revealing responses by particular children only. The concerns selected from the data again refer to school policies and treatments which by their segregative quality serve to reinforce doubts relating to identity for individual students. There is no claim for consistency or validity for students other than the student represented in the example. Nevertheless the material is interesting educationally as it exemplifies the emotional process involved in
schooling. Sociological examination of the internal processes of schools, as perceived by the students, can enable educators to test many former premises regarding structural policies aimed as assisting children's learning. It is with the rites of testing, grading and separation of children for special treatment, school influences upon individual identity that the following interview data are concerned. The school's verdict upon children coupled with the peer interpretation and reinforcement of that status, is an area from which children derive their feelings toward self as students.

The first example is with direct reference to the nature of the intelligence test situation. Extreme debate ensues regarding the properties that these tests actually measure with primary controversy concerning the various contributions from hereditary and environmental sources. The distinction between ability and achievement is also not clear; thus the scores from the IQ tests do not illustrate what it is that has been measured. However, an individual's scores do indicate his likelihood of success in school subjects. The use of IQ test results also presents an issue of further debate as schools use
the scores as a method of sorting and classifying children by identifying their "abilities". The National Advisory Committee on Mexican-American Education in the United States called for an end of all testing, charging that all tests currently in use discriminate against bilingual children. Further, the lower scores evidenced by the children determine their placement in school and subsequent treatment, and that this ultimately affects their career and socio-economic status. Testing content has been shown to reflect heavily the "middle-class" oriented school system. It has been suggested that children of a different socio-cultural background find enormous difficulty in coping with the type of intelligence required to handle a test of this type. Thus low-income or minority group children score disproportionately lower than "middle-class" children.

This has led to the development of "culture-fair" tests which are not constructed on the verbal and life experiences of middle-class children traditional of the standard IQ tests. However, the results of culture-fair tests appear to be weakly correlated with school performance and verbal ability (Miller, 1967); and Jensen (1969) states that performance on
culture-fair tests by minority group children is even lower than on conventional IQ tests.

A decade earlier Haggard (1952) reasoned that although deprived children had taken IQ tests before, they had not learned to take tests properly. Additionally the social situation in which the tests were given were thought to militate against these children. However, the significance of the testing situation has not been substantially examined, yet this may be an important variable. The extract from Jim vividly describes his feelings, and interpretation of testing.

Jim (grade 7, age 13). Parents divorced.
Father on welfare. Lives with his grandparents.
Has one brother and 5 sisters. Attended 4 schools. Rated severely deprived by teacher.

They never tell you the score of those tests they give you but one thing for sure they ain't giving them to you for your own good. I messed around, didn't even bother with them--just skipped questions. You ain't telling me that they take you out to give you them to help you--no way! They use them to put the screws on you. I think they're trying to prove you're dumb and that. Well, no way, not me. I'm not doing any more of them. If they want to know why I don't do much in school let them look at the school and the teachers, not me. They're not messing around with me, trying to say I'm stupid, I tell you.
This extract though possibly extreme nevertheless serves to account for the apparent decline in IQ measure with the increase in age of children, documented in many inner-city schools. Jim illustrates clearly the feeling that he does not see the IQ tests as something which will be of benefit to him. Rather he believes that they may be used as evidence against him by serving as a measure which will serve to label him as "stupid". Although Jim is not aware of his IQ ("they never tell you the score"), rightly or wrongly he has internalized the idea that his IQ is low. Presumably this idea has been gained from a history of poor performance in school and a series of IQ tests which he had taken and which had not noticeably served to help him.

Cross (1970) presents some of the ethical and personal issues raised by mental testing:

Possibly the most dangerous aspect of testing is that of sophistication and the effect knowledge of personal performance has on subsequent progress, motivation and level of aspiration. It would be tragic if each discovery of excellence in ability were to be counter-balanced by a failure resulting from the assumption of a role personally identified with a low test score. Testing for its own sake has no intrinsic merit; too much testing without a specific aim or purpose is positively harmful. Similarly, misuse of a test and incorrect reading of a battery or profile defeats the whole object of mental assessments and brings it into disrepute. . . (Cross, 1970:101).
There is clearly a danger present if the results of IQ tests are considered to be an accurate measure of "ability" when the IQ score may be so directly influenced by the feelings the student has toward himself and toward the testing situation itself. Jim additionally reveals his abuse of the test, ("I didn't even bother"), and that he skipped questions. His attitude is antagonistic toward testing, being suspicious of the reasons behind the tests—interpreting them as a way of gathering data about him which could do him harm.

Jim points out the feelings he has toward taking IQ tests; additionally from his response we may begin to raise ethical questions involved in the procedure. Although we could likely assume that the tests were given in order to arrive at an assessment so as to account for or explain Jim's school performance, he was not given any assurance that the exercise was to assist him. Negative connotations of test results, and the possible low score (even without his abuse of the test) were seen as having punitive consequences. A similar fear, with equal anger, was expressed by a parent whose child had been referred for further testing. The father said that he did not want his son to have any of "those tests that
they give to people at the monkey farms". Such a concern may be dismissed as ignorance or as being overly emotional. Nevertheless it raises even more controversy about the testing of children, and whether the measurement is really worthwhile and beneficial to the child or to the teacher. Many teachers dismissed the validity of IQ as an important measure for understanding and helping the children. The illustration of IQ testing, although isolated as an individual concern here in the case of Jim, is taken up again in the appendices containing the interviews with the educational specialists, along with the other concerns also gathered under differential treatment.

The second example relates to another area of educational controversy--the realm of reading. Reading facility is such an integral and vital aspect of school-based learning that for children who do not acquire adequate mastery of the skill their schoolwork is adversely affected. This is particularly so when a child does not learn to read at a speed commensurate with his peers in the classroom. Intelligence test scores and achievement tests are also significantly affected as these depend largely
upon the ability to read. Thus reading is not only a skill taught in school but is essential for participation and achievement, in short, for functioning in school. Additionally a child's reading ability may be considered as important "feedback" for the teacher. It is a child's performance as a reader that forms a basis for evaluation of the child's ability by the teacher, particularly when this is further supported by formal IQ and achievement tests.

Reading transcends much of school life and determines the treatment a child will receive. Educators have documented that deprived children often experience considerable difficulty in reading and hence create problems for teachers. Interestingly the research material related to reading appears to be concentrated more on the teaching of reading than on the issues and "problems" involved in learning to read. Many varied approaches have been introduced: Look and Say; phonics; different colours; and the introduction of a new teaching alphabet (ita). Controversy over the various methods and conflicting results of "success" have emerged to suggest that no
single method of teaching reading is better than any other. Changes have also been called for in the content of the reading material, particularly the early basal readers. Mayer says:

The books are stupid and dull; despite all the grandiloquent claims to the contrary, they are regarded everywhere simply as 'books for learning to read', not as books that anybody who already knows how to read might be interested in looking at. They are written in the flattest and deadest imaginable style, and the conversations in them are embarrassingly unlike the speech of children or adults (Mayer, 1961:212).

Further criticism of the basal readers is frequently on the grounds that the content reflects only the "middle-class" way of life and it is argued that deprived children are unable to identify with, or relate to the material. Many reading experts have suggested that the readers presenting an artificial world to the child from a deprived background work against encouraging the child to read, and a change in the content can positively affect attitudes toward, and performance in reading. Recent changes have seen the substitution in many schools of inner-city and multi-ethnic readers with some suggesting the only real effect has been the substitution of one socio-economic class or ethnic group for another.
A structural device utilized in classrooms at Inner-city School was to teach groups of children, based primarily upon reading ability, as was documented in the category "ability grouping". However, additionally for individual children who exhibit serious learning difficulties in reading, specialized attention is frequently considered to be requisite. Since reading ability is crucial for schoolwork, concentrated time with a specialist reading teacher and isolation and treatment for the cause of the learning difficulty is important.

So when teachers encounter children that they are unable to give sufficient individualized attention to, or find they do not have the expertise to assist particular children, remedial reading with a specialist teacher is used.

Several individual examples of children who went for remedial reading reveal the social-psychological consequences of the method of treatment.

Larry (grade 3, age 9). Father dead, mother a cleaner. Has 3 sisters and one brother (not living at home). Has attended only Inner-city School. Rated partially deprived by teacher.
(In relation to remedial reading Larry says):

I am really in two different classes. I am in grade 3 which is my class but I also go upstairs everyday to another class. I don't read too well, have some trouble being able to read and get most things wrong. So I go to Miss _____ and do games and reading and that so I'm in two classes. Only Alan and me go from our class. I feel a fool going for other work. I like the work she gives us that Alan and me have been picked for, but it makes you feel a fool to go everyday.

A further extract is taken from Russ.


Rated severely deprived by teacher.

Going to Miss _____, it's a bummer. You feel like a little kid doing all that reading stuff. A real bummer, I couldn't hack it. I'm not going to her; makes you feel a lousy reader, worse than before. I wouldn't even go now with a shotgun in my back. You just feel worse it doesn't help you read better, just feel worse.

It would appear that these children do not feel they are helped by special programmes of concentrated attention to their reading. Both Larry and Russ, although separated by age and experiences in school, feel that the involuntary isolation reinforces the weakness in reading that the remedial work is attempting to correct.
Even though poor readers receive considerable teacher attention and concern the effect of involuntary isolation for remedial reading serves to identify children as being "in need". This segregation of the children makes them "feel worse, it doesn't help," "you feel a fool". Russ declares that "I wouldn't even go now with a shotgun in my back," seeing remedial reading not as a source of help for him but as a punitive measure against him.

What should be a sound educational policy in assisting children who have difficulty in reading, may carry with it, and create the effect of a spoiled image for some children. Thus whatever positive reading gains the expert treatment provides are mitigated by the socio-emotional effect of the spoiled image.

The third concern under differential treatment was isolated only from grade seven children and refers to children's feelings and expectations of assignment to the occupational programme. The occupational programme is designed for those students who because of lack of ability would be ordinarily unsuccessful in completing the regular courses in high school. The generally accepted criterion that
determines entrance into the programme is a history of the pupil's academic failure in elementary school. Usually the children recommended for occupational classes are functioning two years below their age and grade level; they must be fifteen years of age in the year that they enter the programme. Thus the programme serves grade level "repeaters" and attempts to offer courses to suit their academic ability, and interests, in addition to providing the opportunity for them to continue in school for two or three more years.

The general aim of the occupational programme is to provide children with the practical skills and knowledge necessary for early entry into employment. The Report of the Royal Commission on Education 1960 (The Chant Report), recommending the establishment of the occupational programme where it was introduced as the Junior Vocational Course, states:

The establishment of Junior Vocational Courses would not only provide a useful education for these pupils, but it has also wide community importance. These pupils should be educated to the limit of their ability so that they will become good citizens usefully employed, instead of increasing the ranks of the delinquent as it is claimed some do.
The occupational classes have been considered to be a programme which salvages ability of children for whom the regular curriculum was inadequate or inappropriate. The occupational classes are constructed on a different curriculum with an important aspect of the programme being the concern with job training. In the second and third years of the normally three-year programme, the students work up to 80 hours at various jobs in the community. The programme is not designed to offer specific trade-training courses but to prepare boys and girls for entrance into a wide range of unskilled or semi-skilled occupations. The significant change in curriculum, de-emphasizing academic subjects, is deliberate as these students failed in traditional school skills.

Some students in grade seven at Inner-city School were considered to be candidates for the occupational programme. However, again although a policy set up to assist these children, the programme was held in low esteem by children. Rosalyn (7-13) as presented in the interview in the category "ability grouping" appears resigned to the fact that she will likely go to the occupational programme instead of
the regular grade 8, and interprets this in light of the belief that she "can't be very smart". Also Caroline (7-14) whose interview presented in "repeating a grade" expressed great concern over the possibility that if she repeated grade 7 she would be sent to the occupational programme. This was considered by some children as the ultimate stigma. In relation to the occupational programme Tom, although himself not a candidate, does present a picture of what it is likely to mean being an occupational student.


Many of the kids here will be pushed into the occupational programme which is real bad. Other kids at the school, they sit there and scorn the kids out. At the high school for the occupational kids they have got a certain hall for the occupational class lockers and other kids call it "occ-alley". Being an occ really makes kids feel bad. Kids call them "ox," "dumb ox," stuff like that. Some of the kids in this school will end up in "occ-alley" I guess unless they quit school first, that's all they can do.

Low status is accorded to the occupational programme with a clear stereotype given by the peer environment providing a derogatory classification of
the children. The low status presumably is felt by the occupational students themselves and is reflected in the programme on account of two possibilities: the students recruited are the "failures" of the school system; or because of the knowledge of the expectant low positions that occupational students will fill in society. While it must be admitted that the occupational programme has merit, the fact must be faced that it carries with it the connotation of inadequacy of the students. Academic segregation of occupational students from other students in the high schools, including often a physical segregation in a separate area of the school is contributed to by the nature of the funding, i.e. through federal aid. Additionally the selection of students includes not only those functioning two years below grade level but also has provided education for problem children; returnees from delinquent homes, and a sizeable number of special class students. Despite a heterogeneous group the image created has been one of occupational students as colloquially being considered "retarded". With respect to Larry (7-14) who was transferred from Inner-city School to the occupational class during the academic year 1970-71, another grade 7 student, also a possible occupational student comments.

Larry has gone up to the high school in the occupational programme. He will really be mixed up. He'll leave that as soon as he is 15. They put him up there treating him like he is retarded or something. He's not stupid; they shouldn't do that to him. Just because they couldn't control him. He's not hard to control, he just couldn't hack the way they treat him. He could do the work if he wanted to; he wasn't retarded but he could not take all the other crap. No need to call him stupid.

Now he had to get his hair cut short because of the machines up in occupational. He looks kind of funny.

Unfortunately the researcher was unable to maintain contact with Larry after April when he was transferred to the occupational class at the high school, so no responses were gained about his personal perception and feelings toward himself and the programme. Although only a few responses related to the occupational programme all of them were negative expressions and indicated that the consequences could likely be a continuation of feelings of failure as a student.

The final concern in this category relates to the formal evaluative source of report cards.
Report cards are one of the official routes for the school to tell the home the relative standing of the child by assessment on academic ability and/or performance and additionally encompassing social and behavioural maturity. The report cards serve to record and report to parents, the child, and the school itself, by keeping on file data about the progress of each child. The report cards given at Inner-city School indicate an "objective" assessment of each pupil's performance in terms of general development: ability to listen; follow directions; work habits; cooperation and social skills; in addition to achievement in curricular subjects: language arts; arithmetic; social studies; science; are; music and physical education. These are evaluated in terms of performance being "good," "satisfactory," and "needs improvement". The general scholastic achievement of each child is also given in relation to the class with "above average," "average," and "below average" forming the symbols. One significant incident occurred when the researcher asked Tony (5-10) who he was and he replied, "I'm a below average kid". When pursued on the topic he
declared that his parents had told him he was "below average"—a designation they had gained from the school report card and which served as a "total" assessment of Tony as a student. Thus it would appear that report cards are influential in assisting parents arrive at an evaluation of their own children as students.

The report card not only expresses the teacher's evaluation, but the very real possibility exists that this can represent or influence the evaluation of the parents.

Tony has gained a conception of himself as a "below average" student and when he then declared "I don't feel much good in my class," it appears that he has internalized the evaluation. The report card system is one of the ways that a child may further gain knowledge about his identity, that is, of the kind of student he is—thus it is pervasive and encompassing in terms of being a reflection of ability and identity.

* * *
The separation of children for different educational treatment by: repeating a grade; ability grouping; and sources of differential treatment has been shown to affect the self concepts of the recipients and the possibility that the lowering of the self concept of some children, thereby reinforcing inability to learn, is highly plausible. Children gain firm convictions about their identity concerning the type of student that they are, in addition to their knowledge of other children's identities, revealed by the school organization. The formation of student identity is a process which develops over time, producing and sustaining the patterns observable in the data.

Educational reasoning rests on the premise that intellectual variation is present in a given population: that there are aggregates of people who essentially share similar ability, and interconnected differences that distinguish each such group of individuals from others in the population. School performance (academic and social) as a measure of "educability" is a way of separating and categorizing children into discreet groupings requiring different educational provision and attention. However, the
policies isolated, by the very method of trying to assist children may affect some children's self concepts to such a degree that this prevents any positive outcomes from the educational opportunities presented. Consequently positive changes in performance may not increase commensurate with the extra time, attention and resources provided. The data suggests that the policies have the effect for some children of reinforcing non-performance and a steady and progressive decline takes place. Many children who receive little or no gratification because of their inability to achieve the "success" valued in school, appear to develop negative attitudes towards peers, teachers and themselves, and this affects their school career orientations and commitment to subsequent learning. Success as a student is an accomplishment admired by many children but apparently out of reach for some. Thus attempting to improve children's academic performance, although frequently the goal of educators, would seem less fruitful and less important than trying to reinforce positive attitudes and motivation to learning. The regular school has had little apparent success with the first approach especially with
deprived children and has not systematically incorporated the latter into the teaching-learning situation.
CHAPTER VI

SOCIOLoGY AND EDUCATION

The consistent public usage of labels and traits to distinguish deprived children in school indicates that the identity "deprived" is considered to be of importance in the educational process. To understand the social definition of deprived children in school we need a frame of reference in which we can single out those objective phenomena characteristic of such children. Deprived children are a social category with traits that form a basis for status ascription, and relationships and programmes in the school are organized with reference to such a status by the teachers. The symbols of deprived must be understood in this social context by taking into account the mode of evaluation and interpretation by the teachers of what traits constitute a deprived identity. The traits become translated into examples of apparent deficiencies related to school required skills subsuming a
direct relationship between children's social class status origins and projected ability in school. Teachers are able to identify deprived children by two major syndromes: appearance and behaviour; and these are converted into beliefs regarding ability.

Considerable discussion took place between the researcher and the teachers as a continuing part of the research process. Information and advice was initially enlisted from the teachers in order to get to know as much as possible about the population of deprived children at Inner-city School. Thus the maintaining of contact with and gathering of material from the teachers formed an integral part of the research investigation. In this concluding chapter material obtained from teachers is discussed although it was not the primary data of the study.

Teacher Remarks

As was illustrated in Chapter II, Inner-city School was selected because of the declaration that
a disproportionate number of the pupils are what is generally acknowledged as deprived children.

Nevertheless the theoretical problem found in the literature, of identifying which children are "deprived", also proved to be a practical problem in the field. The teachers served as the primary source of identification of deprived children. In order to isolate this population from the total school population each teacher was asked the following:

"Using your own criteria based on the knowledge and experience you have of these and other children, please mark your class list in the following manner to include all the pupils:

A: Pupils not considered deprived;
B: Pupils you would consider partially deprived;
C: Pupils you would consider severely deprived."

Thus the target population for indepth study was selected by the teachers using their own criteria. The category "deprived" children here therefore relates to those characteristics that refer to the public definition of deprivation in the school by some sixteen classroom teachers. The teachers' criteria of "deprived" relate to the conditions and behaviours of the children. Environmental factors predominated in the assessment of what constitutes a deprived child:
poor home life, legacy of poverty and welfare, unstable adult relationships; and these were added to by observations of behavioural traits relating largely to values: lack of morals, untidiness, disrespect of public property, disrespect toward people. The deficiencies of parents were assumed by teachers from the general appearance of the children and where they lived. These served to inform teachers that the parents lacked interest in their children and did not spend much time with them. The parents were considered to be inadequate models for the children and the criteria of inadequacy was the evident lack of educational tradition in the home, assumed by the parents' unemployment, or low skilled employment. Failure to achieve "reputable" occupational status requiring educational prerequisites was considered enough to document the "obvious" learning pathologies that they would have, and would pass on to their children.

The consistency of criteria enabled the researcher to draw up modal responses of the teachers' definitions of non-deprived, partially deprived and severely deprived.

A Non-deprived:
Children whose parents have spent time with them. They have had wide experiences and show a good vocabulary. They come from stable families,
usually two parents—good steady home life. Their parents may not be rich but they can handle their money.

In the classroom the children are easy to classify because they are the manageable ones and do not exhibit the problems of deprived children.

8 Partially deprived:
These are children who may have been taken care of, physical needs met, yet they have limited social experience. The parents have spent too little time with them. The family background is unstable through living in poverty conditions. A lot of these children come from broken homes, those children with only one parent, probably divorced.

Poor homes and limited experience go together so the children create learning problems in the school.

C Severely deprived:
These children are lacking in experiences. Many of the younger children had never been outside of their own home or neighbourhood before they came to school. They have never been taken to places, some have only been as far as the shops for example. These children have the kind of parents who offer no explanations or reasons to the children.

Their homes have the legacy of poverty, broken families and welfare mothers with too many children. The home life is unstable and often undesirable. The children are sent to school generally uncared for; they even look deprived. No attempt is made by the parents to offset the poor neighbourhood influences. They don't train the children so when the children come to school they don't know what is expected of them. In school a lot of them are emotionally immature and cause behaviour and academic problems.

The modal responses illustrate the concern with the social class background of the children's
families as an important determinant of classifying deprived children and the variable social class is important in characterizing and predicting how children will perform in school, academically and socially.

Relating to academic work, teacher No. 12* illustrates her finding of poor performance in school and poor home background:

A lot of the deprived kids do pretty poorly in school, even though some of them are bright. When I selected the B's (partially deprived) and C's (severely deprived) I didn't select them on academic grounds but their home background. But look, there seems to be a correlation between performance in schools, according to their grades anyway, and poor homes. I don't know why that is, I certainly don't grade according to whether they are poor or not.

A primary level teacher, No. 4, also lends explanation of her assessment criteria from the behaviour of the children.

*For the purpose of clearer identification, each teacher is represented by a number. The numbers allocated by the researcher to each teacher are in order to protect the personal identity of the individual teachers. Although the comments from the teachers are not confidential, anonymity is preserved. The concern is to conceal the identity of the teacher making the statement and not to protect the statement itself. The numbers 1-8 were randomly distributed amongst the primary level teachers, kindergarten to grade level 3, with numbers 9-16 designating teachers from grade 4 to grade 7. However, only a small number of teacher quotes are extracted and used directly in the text.
In the primary grades we are on a level system and the children have to complete ten levels. As a group all the primary teachers meet and we decide which grade to place a child depending on which level the child is at. It is pretty much I guess a subjective assessment based upon the evaluation by the teacher of the child's work. I don't take IQ into account for example, although others might. I look for emotional stability, how the child behaves in class—if he does what he is told, these sort of things, they tell you if a child is ready. If a child hasn't learned how to concentrate or to attend to what he's supposed to without being distracted no matter what else he isn't going to do the work you give him.

I find a lot of deprived children are not ready. In fact in separating out the deprived children I can do it on their behaviour toward work. You find that they really don't know what the school expects and there's a difference between these children and the ones from good homes, you can see it and the problems are there early in school.

The illustrative material from the teacher data further describes the learning environment in the school by revealing the teachers' concerns and feelings about the cause of school problems. The role of the teacher and the sociological climate of the school is postulated as being of priority significance in affecting the interactional component of the learning situation. The teachers' comments present their perceptions of the school context including their own role in addition to
revealing their prevailing beliefs with regard to deprived children and the institutional images and subsequent treatment deprived children receive.

The problem areas identified by the researcher from the teachers and administration focussed directly upon the learning situation. Many of the "undesirable" characteristics of inner-city schools documented in the literature were not present in this context. Many of these adverse conditions refer to the physical features of schools including: poor instructional equipment—lack of supplies, books and other teaching resources; old and inadequate physical plant. Additionally other features such as: high teacher turnover, lack of administrative leadership, untrained or "reject" teachers from other districts are also cited as problematic and militating against the quality of education received by deprived children. Inner-city School did not qualify as having these features nor to the global statements referencing teacher unconcern and desire to move to schools serving "better" districts. The majority of the teachers were placed at Inner-city School, the exceptions being 2 male classroom teachers, and the remedial reading teacher and the special counsellor who asked for their assignments.
Nevertheless only three of the teachers expressed that they may like to move schools. Teacher No. 15 documented the present situation, with teaching positions now being more difficult to acquire.

You used to be able to select a school to suit your values but it's not so easy now as the jobs are harder to find. Used to be able to select the school area, know about the Principal, what he was like and whether you agreed with how he ran things. You also knew pretty much what kind of kids you would teach but with jobs the way they are you have to take anything you can.

Of course personal non-school factors also enter the decisions of both those teachers who may want to leave the school and those intending to stay. However, the Principal documented that he felt that some of the teachers stayed at the school out of what he called "some tremendous sense of loyalty to me". This in spite of the fact that he considered many of the faculty were not "suitable" for teaching deprived children. The Principal stated:

There are some teachers who are good for this kind of school for this kind of child and there are other good teachers but not for this situation. One teacher in particular is a good teacher but not for these kids. I have even asked her to change schools but she has refused each time.

The Principal was able to recognize teachers whom he considered were unsuitable for inner-city
schools, but admitted that to develop teachers for these children was a more complex problem. Nevertheless he believed that schools can and must be responsible for effecting changes in deprived children, including the images they hold toward themselves and that teachability plays an integral part in eliminating "failure". The Principal further stated that he considered that there were only three teachers on the staff who were excellent for the type of school population at Inner-city School. Such declarations might inadvertently set off a self-fulfilling prophecy reinforcing teacher ineffectiveness by raising doubts relating to their competence in teaching deprived children.

However, although many teachers documented the problems they faced in teaching deprived children, such children did not represent the total population at Inner-city School and the teachers were able to successfully demonstrate their ability in teaching "normal" children. Thus the issue of competence was transferred from the teachers to the learners. It was not a question of the teachers not being able to teach but the learners unable to learn. The major theme present was the teachers' concern
that they were unable to help deprived children. The teachers' knowledge of the literature of schools' ineffectiveness in dealing with deprived children raised the problem of impotence by giving the teachers the impression that they cannot do anything about the learning situation. Particularly, when coupled with their own teaching experiences, their images are reinforced by rigid institutional policies. As a result the teachers, with few exceptions, felt that the problems they faced with deprived children had not only their origins but their solutions outside of the school and that the school was not able to effect significant changes in the learning patterns. The prevalent explanation for the belief in the inadequacy of deprived children in school held by the teachers related to home experiences. The general assumption was made that low-income background meant that the parents would not have given the children any interest in school achievement.

Teacher No. 7 sums up a prevalent view:

I cannot help but feel, more strongly with time, that motivation is not a property or
attitude which can be school induced. I feel it's one which can be school implemented only if it's already present in the child.

The causes of lack of motivation and disinterest in schoolwork were that the parents do not take an interest in their children's schoolwork; the home environment is not good, lacking in stimulation and necessary prerequisite experiences for orientation to school. These features culminated into consequences such as: too much student turnover; too many absences among students; and the consequence that too much time had to be spent on discipline as the children are not interested in learning. The one in-school problem identified was that classes were too large for effective handling of the difficulties that deprived children present for teachers. Size of classes was thought to militate against the teaching process and general management of the children. Many of the teachers considered that deprived children had "special" needs, involving serious learning and behavioural handicaps. Whether these handicaps did exist, or whether the teachers were inclined to consider differences in behaviour and background experiences
as pupil inadequacies which impinged on the learning process, such beliefs can affect teacher/pupil interaction and subsequent treatment given to the children. The institutional policies, including some of those documented by the children as creating feelings of inadequacy and failure, were accepted by the teachers as ways of coping with the children, particularly if they made the teaching process easier. It should be stressed at this point that the teachers at Inner-city School were very concerned about the problems presented by deprived children. However, the sense of frustration by being systematically unable to assist deprived children reinforced "protective" policies such as repeating a grade, and ability grouping as well as seeking advice from testing and remedial services.

Disproportionately deprived children were considered to lack ability in school, though infrequently related to innate factors or the traditional explanation of low IQ. Inner-city teachers did send many children for testing, however, and one teacher does express the belief in the validity of IQ and the correlation with school performance.
Teacher No. 9 says:

We give IQ tests to the children and before I saw the results I entered next to the name of each child the score I thought they would get. For all but one child in the class I was right within 2-3 IQ points. So that you can tell from their performance in classwork. And this with the IQ score pretty much tells you what they are capable of. These I think form pretty reliable results.

The school was not considered as possibly also responsible for failure to develop ability, positive attitudes and motivation toward schoolwork. Moreover, the belief was that the school could not supplement what the home had not provided. Such a sense of impotency serves further to negate the responsibility of teachers in the learning process and may therefore serve to accentuate any lack of experiences that the child may bring with him to school, particularly when reinforced by inappropriate instructional policies.

The general attitude existed amongst the faculty at Inner-city School that the reputation of the school was considered to be poor as rated by other teachers in the district. Additionally teachers at Inner-city School also held the belief that the academic ability of the students was lower than the
average student in the district, although the teachers considered that many of the children tried to the best of their ability. The self-fulfilling prophecy was illustrated by teacher No. 10 who in relation to the research study, said:

> It seems to me that what you may find is that a good number of these deprived kids, for want of a better name, don't do well in school because we don't expect them to. I don't care what anyone says and I know we all try not to be prejudicial and all that, but there is a difference in the way you feel towards kids. I don't think most of us really expect much out of these kids. I've taught in other schools and I would say that here we have many more deprived kids and we give them less work—maybe that's why a lot of them like it here better. But I think it's not because they can't do it but we don't think they can.

> You know these kids may not do much in school at all, but when you get a look at their IQ scores, you can get quite a shock in many cases. Yet they don't do well in class. It's not lack of ability I tell you it's something else and I think that neither us or their parents or anybody else, including the kids I guess, think that they can do anything. Once they are convinced they are not capable of anything themselves, that's it. That's the big problem!

The extensive appendices A, B, C, and D contain further material gained from Inner-city School personnel. This material is taken directly from interviews with the school Principal, remedial reading teacher, and the special counsellor in the school, and the district psychometric specialist.
Holt (1964) suggests that educational specialists are in unique positions to see why children succeed or fail. The material is intended to serve in furnishing the reader with further information regarding both the properties of the children and the school context.

Motivation Versus Labelling

The disciplines of the social sciences with their multifaceted approaches and contributions have revealed to us the important realization that behind social facts is a mass of interconnected and interrelated causes. The effectiveness/ineffectiveness of any organization is intimately bound up in a number of interconnected factors. In the analysis of an organization, external forces are often stated as being the major contributing factors in the success or failure of the organization to achieve its stated objectives. External forces often cited in the context of this inquiry were previously isolated as being predominantly of two types: the innate potential or capacity of the children being the significant variable of whether they "succeed" or "fail" in terms of school demands; and secondly, the home or neighbourhood environmental
stimulation creating either the avenue or barrier to achievement and performance. However, a third approach has now pointed out that many of the problems lie in the organization of the teaching-learning process itself. Evidence has presented us with the knowledge that internal processes in an organization do play a larger part in determining the effectiveness of an organization than was previously thought, particularly in relation to those organizations set up to socialize, rehabilitate, control or otherwise change behaviour. The policies instituted toward promoting the aims of the organization may not in fact be accomplishing only that which they were designed for, illustrating the possibility of a classic manifest-latent dichotomy. As well as the unintended consequences of policies implemented by the organization Merton (1957) additionally introduces the concept of dysfunction. Thus policies that may seem beneficial to one part of the organization may be detrimental to another.

This study has described the operation of school policies as perceived and experienced by the children, whose identities as students are significantly affected by them. From the "unofficial"
version we have seen a different "reality" than that which was intended and presented in educational theory. King (1970) illustrates a three-dimensional framework useful for analytical assessment of education in distinguishing between the "conceptual, institutional and operational aspects" of problems for study. The present research inquiry concerned itself with the operational analysis of the institution by illustrating what deprived children reported about schools' organizational schemes which affect them—repeating a grade, ability grouping and sources of differential treatment. This material was analyzed in terms of the effect these policies had upon the identities as students of deprived children.

There has been no attempt in this school-based study to deny the existence of external forces and influences from home or neighbourhood upon the lives of these children. Fraser (1959) has stated in the summary of her study of home environment and the school that:

... the child is part of an environment very much larger than that of the school and... his school progress is vitally affected by the whole of that environment, by the attitudes...
which it encourages, by the motivation which it provides, and by the stability and security which he can derive from it (Fraser, 1959:75).

The numerous statements from studies presented in Chapter I, concern social class factors and education, and, for deprived children, apparent inadequacies from their low income home experiences. Even if, on the average, these are accurate assessments, they help neither in planning educational programmes to assist deprived children nor in understanding the problems of individual children in school. Social class characteristics are generally given central attention and we find that the most general attribute and identity of deprived children is presumptively determined by the child's social class background. Some characteristics are used which differentiate deprived children from other children, other traits are considered unimportant, and some similarities with other children are ignored.

The present writer takes a view complementary to that expressed by Schafer and Polk:

It is well known... that many children enter school less prepared than others to fit into the existing framework of education and that such children are over-represented among
minority and low-income groups. Yet evidence is equally clear that most of these students have the innate potential to learn and to develop into capable, responsible, and productive adults (Schafer and Polk, 1967:225).

Though we have had more than a decade to investigate the deprived child's existence and developed compensatory programmes for his education, his relative position among school children has not changed appreciably. A disproportionate number of the deprived children in this study did not benefit psychologically nor academically from school. Thus it would appear that the schools do not make up for any social deficits that the children experience from home, but may additionally contribute to turning this deficit into socially conceived failure in school. This identity then affects how the children are able to take advantage of the opportunities for learning presented by the school.

Accumulated material gathered in this study suggests that sociological comprehension of the deprived child admits the development of a viable alternative to the theses of the lower ceiling or inferior innate capacity of such children and class-based theories of inadequate home socialization and deleterious neighbourhood influences. The biological
theories have been discredited by many although the debate continues with notable proponents of such positions. The estimations of genetic versus environmental influences on ability have been extensively covered and it would be distracting at this point to enter into speculations regarding these properties, rather excepting with Douglas that:

I do not intend to deny that the distribution of both intelligence and attainment in the population are influenced by genetic factors; there is no doubt that many are. But they are also influenced by the environments in which children are reared and taught (Douglas, 1970:61).

Further debate ensues concerning environmental influences on intelligence and academic performance particularly relating to the effect of social class factors. Although social class characteristics are given central attention in studies from such source material, there has not been enough certainty in isolating the important constituents social class factors have in determining educability. Socialization does vary according to social class, nevertheless social class influences need very careful consideration. The tenor of the thesis is that the wrong attributions are often globally made, e.g. the
assumption that lower-class children are poorer educational subjects. Educators can gain by regarding social class features as important but being aware of a more sophisticated interpretation of their educational components. To use social class as a self-defining label is disastrous for child and teacher alike.

The empirical approach in this study has been an investigation of the nature of schooling perceived by deprived children at Inner-city School. The investigation was initially on the level of description, and the approach was explorative in an attempt to arrive at and account for the phenomenon of deprived students through the analysis of the descriptive data using sociological concepts. It is the hope of every researcher to contribute to theory. Implications for both policy-making and further research are also contained in the present study. Theory building should not exclude these concerns: rather they are contained in the interrelated purposes of theory in sociology which Glaser and Strauss state are:

(a) to enable prediction and explanation of behaviour;
(b) to be useful in theoretical advance in sociology;
(c) to be usable in practical applications—predictions and explanations should be able to give the practitioner understanding and some control of situations; (d) to provide a perspective on behaviour—a stance to be taken toward data; and (e) to guide and provide a style for research on particular areas of behaviour (Glaser and Strauss, 1967:1).

The authors continue that the theory must not only be understandable to sociologists, but additionally to "significant laymen". In the context of this study such laymen would include school administrators and teachers.

The internal organization of the educational process illustrated in this investigation demonstrates that the internal organization itself is contributory in reinforcing problems which one assumes schools would hope to prevent or eliminate. If, in the future sociology and anthropology are to be useful for education, they must elucidate the full implications of different social and cultural backgrounds in the educability of children, thereby pointing the way to more enlightened remedial approaches and appropriate school organization.
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APPENDIX

This material contains recorded interviews. These were interviews with the school Principal (Appendix A), remedial reading teacher (Appendix B), special counsellor (Appendix C) and the district psychometric specialist (Appendix D). The names of school and personnel are removed to preserve anonymity. The interviews are presented verbatim and were conducted during the last week of the study to ascertain what confirmation might be obtainable. The data from the specialist personnel at Inner-city School illustrated in the following appendices contains material not used in the body of the thesis.
APPENDIX A

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

WHY IS THERE A NEED FOR AN INNER-CITY SCHOOL AND WHAT DOES INNER-CITY REALLY IMPLY?
The need for an inner-city school? Well, I came down to (Inner-city) about 4 years ago and actually the whole concept of this as thinking about it as an inner-city school came to light when I was analyzing the reading results. We give Gates Reading Tests. About 2 weeks after I came down here I was looking at the results and they were obviously lower than I had been accustomed to, lower than I had expected. Then I went into the files, we have a psychometrist, you see, and I found, in the files, studies on 36 kids. These are 36 youngsters who were seriously underachieving and saw if there was any relationship between the reading tests and psychometrist tests. Well, out of the 36 kids that I looked at who the psychometrist had measured because of serious underachieving I found that 34 of them were what is normally called deprived kids. Now that was an amazing thing. Thirty-four out of the 36 kids were deprived kids. Deprived. Well, low-income, broken families, a history of delinquency or potential delinquency within the parents, alcoholism, the bit you see. I'm not quite sure what a deprived kid is, but single parent families is a factor, low income is a factor, the indignity of welfare is a factor and so many of them are on welfare, so many of them are broken families and then of course there is the marginal family living on a low-income. These I guess are deprived kids. Well, that is what started it, you see.

Then I convinced the board that perhaps we should look at what's going on in North America and what's going on in Canada in this area. And I did a little homework and I looked into the American situation, the problems in the major cities, a little background reading. And then the Board of School Trustees sets aside $5,000 every year and this money may be used in research projects and the only criteria is that
in the opinion of the Superintendent and his committee who rules on these matters, that it should be of some benefit to the city. Anyway they gave me a grant, a very generous grant. So I went across Canada. I was in Montreal, and in Ottawa and in Toronto and Winnipeg; I spent about 2 weeks studying inner-city schools. Then I came back and I wrote a report, and the result of that report was that we introduced some innovations. Well, I don't know whether you'd call them innovations or not but we introduced some ideas in September 1970.

Perhaps we could stop at that point and maybe you would like to ask me another question from there. That's a big one.

SO YOU APPARENTLY SAW DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THESE CHILDREN IN THIS AND THE OTHER INNER-CITY SCHOOLS YOU VISITED, AND CHILDREN IN THE REGULAR SCHOOLS. WHAT WERE THE DIFFERENCES?

I think it should be clear that it's only a matter of incidence, degree. In any school that I have worked in you see children of this nature. You simply see more of them here, more of those types of children here in this school. For instance, I don't imagine there is a school in the city at the elementary level even in the more affluent areas that doesn't have its proportion of deprived children. But at (Inner-city) school I suppose we have a greater proportion of them and what are they, and who are they? They are children who are characterized by, and I think I've mentioned some of these things: problems such as broken families, economic deprivation, they are on welfare, or they are, the income in the family is just about at the deprivation level, just a marginal level. They are characterized by lack of success at school and they are characterized by antagonism towards authority, antagonism towards school. They are on the one hand desperately anxious to be respected, to be loved if you like, and yet resenting condescension. That is the last thing in the world, you can't be condescending with these kids, you really can't. You've got to be fair, you've got to be honest, you've got to set standards and they'll respect you for that. They might buck you but they'll respect you for it. I think that's about the size of it.

ARE THEY ANY DIFFERENT IN ABILITY IN RESPECT TO IQ MEASURES?

Interestingly enough we do at certain grade levels,
grade 3, grade 5, grade 7 administer group IQ tests. The average for the school typically is 2 or 3 points just 2 or 3 IQ points below the average for the city, whatever that means.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT GROUP TESTS?
They are dangerous, like everything else in the hands of those who do not appreciate their limitations. I'm familiar with the whole concept of the level of expectation. I think they should play a much more minor, if that's the way to put it, they must play a very minor part in an inner-city school. They're dangerous, if as a result of these tests you say, oh, well, he's only capable of thus and so that's the best we can expect of him that's certainly all you're going to expect of him and that's in keeping with the level of expectation concept.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT INDIVIDUAL IQ TESTS?
They too are, well, they are much more useful. We have a psychometrist at our services, and her reports have been very very enlightening, and very very useful. Yes, the individual type tests are much more useful. I shy away from the word valid I'm not quite sure, but I am sure that they are much more useful than the group tests.

THE ACHIEVEMENT TESTS, THAT IS THE READING TESTS, YOU MENTIONED IN YOUR OPENING REMARKS ABOUT THE RESULTS OF THEM. WAS THERE A DIFFERENCE HERE?
CITY-WIDE?
The achievement tests, the Gates Reading tests and I believe Gates are just as good as any group achievement test that I have been able to find. They illustrate the fact, they work against, they discriminate against our kids, they do, and the literature claims that and of course their results are lower. But again they are very very valuable for grouping for instruction. I think if you use the results of the Gates, I would hate to see them discontinued, if you use the results for grouping for instruction if again you are very very cautious, not to interpret them too much on an individual basis. And then of course as far as the Gates is concerned, you've got to remember that you have the group test and then you have sub-tests that you can follow after you've got a general picture of the child. Then these other tests can zero in on specifics.
HOW SHOULD WE GROUP CHILDREN?

You know, I think like in any situation, there are situations when instruction can be carried on with a group of 150 and I think that's as true in the elementary school as well as anywhere else. I think there are some limited areas where you can work with 50. But, here you see youngsters, and you've been around more than anyone, you've seen youngsters working on a one-to-one basis, you've seen groups of 5 and 6, you've seen groups of 10 or 12, you've seen all the way down the line. And I think in the final analysis that's what it's all about. You see kids sometimes in large groups, it works, but there is no question about it, that we have to zero in on the individual needs. You see so many of these kids, I had one youngster who had been in 19 different schools and his education is like Swiss cheese, little hunks out of it. And that is why it is so absolutely vital that we have a remedial reading teacher on the staff because she can take these youngsters when they come into the school. She takes them if they exhibit any serious problems and many of them do, she can take them and work with them for a few days and she can find out those holes in the cheese and then we try and zero in and plug those holes. But sometimes they are only with us for 2 or 3 weeks so we do the best we can.

HOW ABOUT PUTTING CHILDREN INTO LOWER GRADES THAN THEIR AGE WOULD INDICATE, OR NOT PROMOTING TO THE NEXT GRADE? HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THIS AS AN EDUCATIONAL PROCEDURE?

I don't think children should ever repeat grades. If you look at the grade 7 class. Of those great mature boys and girls, many of them are problem-makers. They are problems to themselves, they are problems in the class, they have experienced so much failure down through the years. They're not mine, they're not there because I put them there because of failures. I wouldn't imagine that without exception those kids that are two, three years older, older than the norm they are there because they have repeated grades in some other institution, not mine.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT, AS IT WERE, INHERITING THESE CHILDREN FROM OTHER SCHOOLS?

This is part of the problem, just part of the problem.
It is the frustrating part of it because they are here for a while and then they are gone again. But the school has to be fluid at all times. And if there's one underlying truth behind the whole thing I think you can zero in on the social growth of the kid. Your one objective with these youngsters, if there is one, is to create a warm social atmosphere. Create the ability to relate between the teacher and the child. If you can do that, then you do the next major thing, to raise his self-image. To give him a sense that he is worth something, that he is somebody. Having done that then the academic aspects of learning might come. But God know unless you can do something about the social hangups of the kid, no matter what system, no matter what you use in the way of an academic programme it's doomed to failure.

I WOULD BE INTERESTED IN YOUR FURTHER RESPONSES TO THAT, AND PARTICULARLY HOW DO YOU, WITH THE RESOURCES, POLICY AND PERSONNEL YOU HAVE, ASSIST THESE CHILDREN WITH THEIR SOCIAL IMAGE MORE THAN THE REGULAR SCHOOL SYSTEM WHICH HAS TRIED TO IN THE PAST?

Well, you know, Graham, I don't know. I have been in the game over 35 years and I have no hesitancy in saying I don't know and I think it's an awfully honest question. But some things I do know. The teacher is all important. The teacher is absolutely vital and I know what that teacher has to be like and I know how that teacher has to work with youngsters. That teacher has to relate to the youngsters. That teacher has to accept the youngsters as they are, and to value them for what they are. They have to take coarseness and not be shocked. They have to see the child with needs, which are the same as the needs of all human beings. They have to see the child striving to satisfy those needs in what are normally called socially unacceptable ways and not be particularly shocked. They have to provide the child with an opportunity to see himself as an individual and as Glasser says, and by the way I admire Glasser of course, is to accept responsibility for their own conduct. What this teacher has to be I really don't, well I know, I know this teacher when I see him; at least I feel I do and think that perhaps if we could only find those characteristics of a teacher for these deprived kids. I know what they're not. It's loving, accepting, it's appreciation, it's
respect. It's certainly not pettiness, it's certainly not "you bad boy, sit in the corner." No, I think there has to be discussion, there has to be and here's the other concept of Glasser where he builds kids, sit around with the teacher and for God's sake get away from those sterile rows of desks, maybe in a horseshoe. I watched (Grade 5 teacher) get her kids upstairs here in a horseshoe and some of the most wonderful talks came out of those kids, and the teachers gain insight into their fears and into their problems and into their values. They've got to talk, they've got to talk it out, they've got to discuss it out and discuss it with one another. I think, and again you see it's not a waste of time if people and teachers take these youngsters and talk things over with them and listen to their problems, if one child can share his problems with another child, something happens. Just what it is I don't know, but something happens.

DO YOU THINK THAT THE TEACHER IS ALL IMPORTANT NO MATTER WHAT STRUCTURE YOU HAVE IN A SCHOOL?

No, no, not completely. I think that the instructional material has to be geared to the level of the child. I think that a lot of stuff is coming out lately in the last few years that is zeroing in on the needs of the inner-city kid. And we should always be alert to get this. And once again (the remedial reading teacher) is doing a fine job there. She has time you see to analyze the literature. I used to do this when I was working on the language arts but I haven't had time, but she has and we are getting supplementary instructional material in here which is geared to these kids. We are dealing with their problems as early as possible.

GIVEN THE IMPORTANCE OF EARLY SCHOOL EXPERIENCES FOR CHILDREN, WHAT ARE YOU DOING AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL BY WAY OF STRUCTURAL INNOVATION?

Well, you know there is just no question about the whole concept of the critical years I am so much impressed with that philosophy. So we've got to zero in on these kiddies earlier, and earlier and earlier. Now (the remedial reading teacher) is zeroing in at the earliest age, that is where the greatest hope lies. And (the counsellor) is zeroing in with his social counselling. He is
zeroing in at the lower age. There is a group of concerned parents who are operating a co-op kindergarten in town here for 4-year-olds. Many of these little people who go there are deprived, as a matter of fact, it’s one of the criteria. They get assistance from the welfare department of the Provincial Government I think it’s in the nature of $22 a month for each child and these children must be deprived children. Thereby hangs another tale how you select these children; how they’re brought into the picture. In short you’ve got to go to the parents, you’ve got to talk to them gently, you mustn’t frighten them for so often they’re afraid of bureaucracy and the recruitment is absolutely vital and if you get a person who can go to the people and can sit down and have a cup of tea with them and talk to them. Anyway, we have got about 48 of these little people in this 4-year-old programme. Now this is the first year they’re going to come into the schools and I think that we’re going to do something with those kids because they get a nice enriched social experience at the 4-year-old level. They’re like little animals when you bring them in September, in many cases, and if you see them now you can actually see the difference in their ability to play with one another, their respect for one another, well, their ability to socialize, to live together. And that of course is one of the most hopeful things of the whole programme, I think.

So that some of them will do the 4-year-old co-op, then kindergarten, then grade 1.

WHAT DOES THE ARRANGEMENT IN THE PRIMARY YEARS MEAN NOW THAT THE IDEA OF FORMAL CHRONOLOGICAL AGE GRADES HAS BEEN CHANGED?

Well, of course the language arts programme and that is the heart and soul of education in the early primary years is divided into 10 levels and children progress at their own rate through the levels. It is the one place, I think, the only one place, and I know my staff would know this so very well, I would go this far, it is possible that in some cases children will take 4 years to complete the 10 levels which is normally completed in 3 years. But that is the only place that I would say that retardation, if that be retardation, is permissible. Now the basic difference of course between this level system and the grade system is a very simple one. It was
the concept in the grade system and this is an oversimplification mind you. If a child did not meet certain standards in the first year primary, he would repeat all of first year primary—in other words he failed. But if first year primary consists of 4 levels and he has successfully completed 3 levels then he hasn't failed, he has travelled at a slower rate and he simply picks up at that point the next year.

DOES HE THEN TRAVEL ON WITH HIS PEERS INTO THE NEXT CLASSROOM THE FOLLOWING SEPTEMBER, SO THAT IN FACT THE TEACHER RECEIVING THE CHILDREN HAS THEM STAGGERED AS IT WERE AT DIFFERENT LEVELS?

Oh yes. You know one of our major problems which comes as a result of the introduction of the level system and it is a delightful problem, the problem of placing these children in instructional groups. And the primary staff meets and they thrash it out almost one by one. We take these little people and determine where they've arrived at, at this stage, and then we place them in an instructional level next year. And some of the criteria of course is the speed at which they're working. If it is advantageous for the child to remain with the teacher for a second year and sometimes that's a good idea. We have a Grade 2 teacher now, she's going to follow with a fair number of her youngsters. And she had an intermediate group, they're going to be pretty much on a 4-year programme with some of them but not all of them, a core group I think of about 16 of these youngsters, maybe 12 or 16 are going to be without her next year and hopefully the next year. And after 4 years she's got these little people ready for first year intermediate.

AFTER FIRST YEAR PRIMARY DO YOU THEN DIVIDE THEM INTO SEPARATE CLASSES, THOSE THAT WILL DO THE 10 LEVELS IN 3 YEARS AND THOSE OTHERS WHO WILL TAKE 4 YEARS?

Yes, that's right, then both will go into the intermediate programme of the school levels, 11, 12, 13, 14 in the old grade 4, 5, 6, 7, but one group who took 4 years to complete the primary levels will go into intermediate a year after the other group. So when you get into the intermediate levels if there's good teaching taking place what happens is that the spread of ability gets greater and greater and greater. In other words to those who shall be given and to those who have not shall be taken away that which they have, almost. So when you get them into the intermediate grades they are farther spread. And
now I think the most hopeful way of looking after them is differentiating the programme, and I think that is the way you make provision for grouping and individual differences you don't expect even at the grade 7 level. It's a fact that youngsters have gone through seven or if they took 4 years at the primary levels, 8 years of school, then still some of them are reading at a 4-year level and they will be when they go into high school and nothing that you can do about it is going to change that and you've got to take the child as the child is and provide him with materials at his instructional level. I think one of the greatest disservices that's done at the high school level and I have little experience at high school, is that they still in too many cases, place all youngsters who are theoretically in first year high school, grade 8, and they give them all the same text book and many of them just flounder through it. I think that's sad and I don't think it's necessary. I think they can differentiate and I think we're doing a better job of differentiating instructional materials at the elementary level than they are at the high school. Now I have a great deal of admiration, mind you, and I'm familiar with the high school language arts programme, they could do a fair job with the materials they have at differentiation; sometimes I wonder in fact whether they are doing it but the materials are there. We have to individualize for each and every child and not expect children to keep up with each other. That creates social problems in the classroom such as aggressiveness and non-cooperation.

HOW DO THESE CHILDREN APPEAR IN THE EARLY GRADES, WHO ACCORDING TO THE LITERATURE, ARE CHARACTERIZED BY BEING NON-VERBAL, NON-COMMUNICATIVE? AND SECONDLY, WHEN DOES THE HOSTILITY AND AGGRESSIVENESS AGAIN CHARACTERIZED IN THE LITERATURE SHOW UP?

I think the aggressiveness, very often, the overt aggressiveness, the overt antipathy, animosity is a result of realizing very often they live a less desirable social life than others. It's a realization of their place in society. I think that it's also they become conscious of the fact that their academic production is inferior, I think they're conscious of it. There's so much, that's an over-simplification but I think so. And therefore, and I'm coming back to it, they have got to sense success. We have got to provide an atmosphere where they can sense, realize success and some degree of achievement.
That is why I am apposed to retardation. That is why I'm opposed to school reports which indicate a comparison between one kid and another kid. I'm much happier toward anecdotal reporting where you report on a child in terms of what you as a professional person feel is his potential. A kid has to in short, and I guess I've said this before, but our one objective in dealing with these kids is to do what we can to give them this sense of self importance. Period.

Do you feel the social values of the school are in conflict to the life styles of the children? The school, again in the literature is said to have this "middle-class" bias, is there indeed a conflict in values, and if so how do we get around this?

I don't know, God, I don't know, and there is my second don't know. Yes, punctuality, regularity, sure it doesn't tend to be a characteristic of the deprived child. Come day, go day, immediacy you see seems to be a value, a characteristic of the lower-class child. They don't see too much value in what's going to happen 10 years from now, they can't see it. Yet they are values you can't overlook they've got to be important, you've got to try too. You've asked the old question should you come in when you are dealing with inner-city kids, should you impose on them, quotation marks "middle-class" values but dammit, there has to be verity somewhere. I'm an old fuddy-duddy here, of course, but I think punctuality is a value that is desirable in all aspects of life, sense of responsibility, a sense of feeling for one's fellow man. And so it is so hard to determine. You have to accept their values. You have got to do what you can not to ridicule them. You've got to set before them values. How about the traits such as neatness in appearance, in work, completion of work and other characteristics that describe the "middle-class" image? How important is it to press these upon the children?

I think those are criteria that we should strive for. I think the basic objective of what we are trying to get at is more than the physical manner in which they put things down. I think the standard rules of good usage, spelling, the ability to compute accurately and swiftly are highly desirable values. I think the ability to do a rough draft
followed by a fine draft. I think they're valuable, I think they're necessary and I think they are standards we should set before them. Somewhere along earlier in the day I was saying that we have got to set before them reasonable standards. I think they are valuable, I think they are necessary and I think we should be striving for them.

TO MOVE ALONG A LITTLE TO THE ACTUAL STRUCTURAL PROGRAMMES DESIGNED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD. TRADITIONALLY IN INNER AREAS THE CHARACTERISTIC OF SUCH CHILDREN HAS BEEN STATED AS BEING ORIENTED TO CONCRETE LEARNING, THE ABILITY TO WORK WITH THEIR HANDS, AND AS A RESULT THE OCCUPATIONAL PROGRAMME HAS BEEN SEEN AS AN EDUCATIONAL ALTERNATIVE FOR NON-ACADEMIC YOUNGSTERS OFTEN REFERRED TO AS A "DUMPING GROUND" FOR INNER-CITY CHILDREN (Principal: Yes, and retarded). HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT RECOMMENDING YOUNGSTERS FOR THIS PROGRAMME WHICH IS SAID TO BE BY MANY SOURCES A STIGMATIZED PROGRAMME?

The occupational programme is a terminal programme which may last three, at the high school level, and in exceptional cases, 4 years. It is terminal. Being terminal it does not provide the child with a full choice of say, of eventually going, you've got the full prerequisites of going right on to become a surgeon or something of that nature. It emphasizes for the girls the domestic science and the boys shops of the various natures. It is an excellent programme but it depends so very much again on attitudes. Now unfortunately and this is terribly unfortunate at the present time, our kids will say "nobody is going to get me into that with those occies" and they use the word "occie" just as you might use the word "nigger," "wop," "chink." It has a nasty ring to it. They sense that the occupational programme, and this is very unfortunate, is just for a select group and they are very undesirable. I don't know what the solution is. The high school, the administration at the high school, and I was just there yesterday and expressing my deep concern about it. The programme is an excellent one. There must be 5 or 6 of our youngsters who would benefit from it greatly, yet it has this aura of undesirability that's been developed. Our problem again, that's a social problem, isn't it? Once again our problem is
to try to convince these kiddies that that is not so. It's a social problem. And that's what I'm talking about, self-image you see. They feel it lowers their self-image. If the occupation programme were such, and maybe that is the answer, that it is an integral part just the same as any other programme in the high school, and they have a number of programmes. If it could be considered that, but it's not, you see, it's financed on a different basis, did you know that? You get Federal aid for the occupational programme. And it is not exactly the same, its financial background is not exactly the same as the standard high school programmes, the many high school programmes, and there are many varieties. Therefore it has to be in the high school, it has to be identified as a unit in order to qualify for the Federal aid grants. Therefore it has to be recognized, as, well, shall we put it this way, it has to be sort of segregated on its own, it's parallel, it's not integrated.

Another thing is this being a terminal programme it is deemed desirable that the parents of these children say, sign their name that "I give permission to enter this programme" so that the parents are given a choice and they having the final decision are influenced by factors perhaps that are not too sound. And they themselves may feel that it is a mark against their child. They themselves may feel it is another illustration of discrimination and they meet the opposition of the child who himself feels it is discriminating and those influences cause them not to give their permission and therefore their child does not go to occupational. Perhaps the answer there is, and this is highly very argumentative, where, where in education do you say in that I God Almighty, I the educator, decide where this child shall go? I don't know. Anyway, they do have to sign and those are two factors the parents must permit his child to go into occupational and the child has an antipathy towards occupational here. Those are factors which make it difficult to recruit.

THE OTHER PROGRAMMES INCLUDE REGULAR GRADE 8 AND I BELIEVE A MODIFIED 8. COULD YOU ELABORATE ON THIS? Yes, now I think that's promising from at least two points of view. The less academically inclined
youngster will have an opportunity to go into a modified grade 8. I said two, maybe there are three. It gives us as elementary administrators the opportunity to move a child on if we feel it would be to his advantage so to do. Secondly, the modified 8 programme can serve as a sort of holding pan, they can take the children into the modified 8 programme for a period of months, and this district has a semester system so perhaps during the first semester, it gives the high school an opportunity to evaluate. It gives the high school an opportunity for their counsellors to become familiar with these youngsters, it gives the high school an opportunity to try to convince them if they can't hack the academic programme to transfer into occupational and they can transfer into occupational from modified 8. And the modified 8 if, and I believe it is, properly organized, if they recognize the limitations of these youngsters, if they take these youngsters where they are and if they provide them with material in which they can have some reasonable expectation of success, well that is a continuation of the philosophy of the elementary school and for that I think it is good.

AS A FINAL SUMMARY QUESTION, WHERE DO YOU SEE THE INNER-CITY CONCEPT MOVING TO IN TERMS OF POLICY OVER THE NEXT TWO TO FIVE YEARS? CAN YOU PREDICT HOW THIS WILL ASSIST INNER-CITY CHILDREN?

I think we have to emphasize early education. There is the little pilot project with 48 children here in this city. I think this has to be emphasized. Number two, I think we have met with very limited success in meeting with the parents in a non-crisis situation, we meet the parents that come in here when their children are in trouble, and/or we call them in when their children are in trouble. We have had little success in meeting them in a non-crisis situation when we can just sit down and chat. I'm hoping that next year that the counsellor with some professional assistance, and I know he agrees, he's thinking about this very seriously, might establish some sort of a programme that will meet, that will bring out the parents themselves, bring them together. We might call them some innocuous name such as "single-parents anonymous" or something like that
and let them come together and even as we find success in having the children sit around in the horseshoe and discuss their problems; maybe the parents' problems.

We'll have to zero in as far as the youngsters are concerned in the group discussion. "Say and tell" in a much more sophisticated way I think.

I dream of bringing to the area and God knows one of the great problems of dealing with the inner-city people is that you have got to bring the programme to them; they won't go to the programme. I see the school serving the needs of the community more. Some of the practical programmes include the evening programme we have, early opening of the school for mothers in the morning who go off to work, the library open all summer, and open to adults as well as children.

I don't think we can evaluate the programme much under five years. But I do see on the horizon and I can't put my finger on it now and I do think it would be very difficult to measure the results but I think I sense a change. I think the programme has been well accepted in the district. I hear from some almost unexpected sources that the programme is being recognized.

I think we have to get the kids out of this area, this sounds strange, but I think it is true, it's another aspect, I think we've got to get them out of the area into other places. We could take them to the airport, we can take them to the zoo, we can take them up to see the salmon spawning, we can take them to do this, we can take them to see that, we can take them to the bird refuge, we can take them out to the animal place. Give them wide experiences, take them out of this area but you've got to do it almost physically. They have north of Toronto a farm where they take the kids for 2 weeks or a week out in the woods, on the farm. Dealing with animals, living with animals, those are some of the things that these kids have missed out on by living in this kind of district.

WHAT SORT OF AREA IS THIS THAT IS SERVED BY THE SCHOOL? IS THERE LOW-INCOME SUBSIDIZED RENTAL APARTMENTS WHICH ACCOUNTS FOR THE CONCENTRATION OF LOW-INCOME FAMILIES?

No, but the fact remains that low rental apartment
complexes are sociological abortions, they are sociological hell-holes. Because for some reason and maybe I could give reasons and I don't hesitate to do so, it is a concentration of problems and I think that has proven itself from Halifax to Victoria and anyway you want to go. Wherever they have concentrated low rental housing in a concentrated way, wherever parents and children with problems, deprived people have been concentrated under one roof it's led to undesirable results. Now the (Apartment complex), it is a fact that there are more problems in (Apartment complex) and we have maybe 60 of those kiddies attend our school and they have greater need and they create greater problems in the school, than any other 60 children in the school. How does that come about, Graham, I don't know. But as I told you there are 103 suites and 53 of them are single parents and I believe 48 of them are on welfare. How do they get there? I don't know; the suites with single bedrooms start at $145 and they go up to $160, $190 for 2 to 3 bedrooms. It disturbs me. I imagine that if the welfare department had more staff and more time to investigate there would be a different picture.

THE AREA IN GENERAL; IS IT PREDOMINANTLY LOW-INCOME?
Oh yes.
WHAT IS THE MAIN INDUSTRY? IS THIS THE ATTRACTION TO THE AREA OR LOW RENTAL AREA?
I don't think the question of employment is a permanent one. I don't think it is one of jobs. Because this is a bedroom city and people work anywhere within 20-30, 40 miles.

I think people can find a fair number of low rental houses because up until now this area has been an area of rapid growth because 3-storey multi-dwelling housing has just mushroomed. Now the houses adjacent to here will likely be raised, torn down very shortly and another high rise will be built on that lot. The owners of those houses know that they're going to sell those houses at a tremendous profit because the land is valuable so they just hold property, don't spend too much time in maintaining it, and rent it while they're waiting to sell at a profit. That seems to be one of the
reasonable answers. And down here it's a low
district anyway at the best of times. We have low-
income families, welfare families, one-parent
families, a fast-moving population which means a
tremendous turnover of children in any one year as
you will know from this year you have been with us.
These are all of the problems we face. But it's
not just social problems we face but educational
ones and what we have to do is to find out what to
give the kids that's best for them. These are our
concerns.
APPENDIX B

REMEDIAL READING TEACHER

WITHIN THIS INNER-CITY CONCEPT OF SCHOOLS WHY IS THERE A NEED FOR YOUR POSITION AND WHAT EXACTLY DOES IT ENTAIL?

My whole position is basically to work in the language arts area and it's important here, because so many kids come into this school lacking in this area. In the ability to speak, to write, to read and a lot of this is because of the constant moves they have. They are going in and out of schools, some of them have been in and out of 10 or 12 schools by the time they hit grade 5. So their reading background is like Swiss cheese, holes all over the place. So I am to assist the teachers in whatever way the teachers think I can best work. Sometimes this means taking a youngster out of the classroom and filling in particular background. Sometimes it's going into the classroom and working with a group over a period of two or three months. Sometimes it's going into a classroom and working with a child for a couple of weeks. Or maybe it's setting up an individual programme for a child. I do what the teacher wants me to do. That is basically it.

ARE THE TEACHERS TUNED INTO WHAT IN FACT YOU CAN DO, THAT IS FROM YOUR TRAINING, EXPERIENCE, YOUR GENERAL AREA OF SPECIALTY?

I think this year they have found out. This past year I wasn't sure what I was supposed to do and they weren't really sure how I could best help them but I think over the year we have both learned this. NOW FROM YOUR EXPERIENCE, TO RELATE SPECIFICALLY TO DEPRIVED CHILDREN, WHAT DIFFERENCE IS THERE ON ENTRANCE OF THESE CHILDREN THAT MAKES THEM STAND OUT FROM OTHER CHILDREN?

What do you mean on entrance?

WHEN CHILDREN ENTER GRADE ONE OR TWO. You mean difference in ability of the youngsters?
WE ALL DIFFERENCES SOCIALLY, BEHAVIOURAL TRAITS, ACADEMIC ADAPTATIONS AND SO ON. IN OTHER WORDS ARE WHAT IS CALLED "DEPRIVED" CHILDREN A DISTINGUISHABLE GROUP FROM OTHER CHILDREN, IF SO ON WHAT CRITERIA?

For the children coming into the early grades some of them seem immature, and their world is rather narrow. They seemed very informed about some things and very much lacking in others. The ability to sit down and talk about things. For instance when I am working with a group of children in grade 1 getting them to talk about things they have done, and getting them to do things and to share. At the grade 1 level you expect them to be able to do this, most of them. We seem to have a larger group that can't do this. They are ready for readiness, for a long, long time. We are setting up situations where they are interacting with one another and finding out what's going on around them and usually you expect the parents have done this, but this seems to be lacking.

SO THAT SOCIALLY YOU WOULD FIND THEM DISTINGUISHABLE FROM OTHER CHILDREN?

Yes.

ON THE READINESS TESTS ARE THEY DISTINGUISHABLE?

That doesn't have too much bearing. The teachers in primary have said they spot the youngsters that you're going to have trouble with, that are not quite ready to learn to read for instance, but they can also do that in a week of school because they are experienced, they know what to look for. But a high score on that readiness test does not mean a child will do well in school. On the other hand they have found the opposite is true sometimes, that the youngsters who are progressing extremely well are not the ones who score high on those tests.


We had a great flare-up because of the achievement tests that were given in this school this year because we don't believe the achievement tests measure what we are trying to teach. We sent a brief into the school board presenting our case to the testing committee. Because we feel we are teaching kids or should be teaching kids, not necessarily content. On the whole the achievement
tests that we had to give this year, the teachers resented the time they had to give them, they resented the time they had to mark them because they didn't really show anything, they never covered the areas, they were just not valid. They saw no use in them as they didn't cover the areas of our particular curriculum and we are on our way to getting this changed.

WHICH TESTS DID YOU GIVE?
The Stanford Test of, isn't that awful? I can't remember the names of them. That's how important they were. I can't even remember the names of them. They are so unimportant I haven't even committed them to memory, we couldn't be bothered with them, couldn't care less about them. We went down to (Principal) and said, "Look, we don't want to give these tests to our kids, it's a waste of time". He said, "Fine, get it down on paper. I'll take it to the committee."

WHAT DID THE COMMITTEE SAY?
Well, they listened to us, they have indicated some changes are necessary in the testing situation in the district in the elementary schools. I believe, and this is informal now, but word got round that they want to set up a committee, with teachers on it, to discover the areas we feel need to be tested and which tests will be most valid.

WHY DID ALL THIS COME ABOUT THIS YEAR? HAVEN'T THESE TESTS BEEN GIVEN IN THE PAST?
Yes, they have. I think probably they came about because quite likely the teachers have been unhappy about them before, but there hasn't been anyone that has had the time to say "Look, these tests are useless" and probably it was because I asked for their reactions to the tests. Finding six teachers reacting violently against them I got them together and went and spoke to the Principal. But probably before there was no one person who had the time to get their reactions.

WHAT GRADES WERE THESE TESTS GIVEN AT?
Grade 3 level, grade 6 and 7 level. We went through the same procedure last fall when the grade 3 level children were given IQ tests, group IQ tests. The teachers at the grade 3 level could see no validity in this type of testing procedure.

WHAT ABOUT THE INDIVIDUAL IQ TESTS? WHEN ARE THEY
USED AND HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THEIR USE?
If we feel a youngster is not functioning at his full potential we can suggest to the psychometrician that she give him an individual one-to-one IQ test, the WISK. We set the machinery into motion by filling out the paper and sending it to ______ (Principal) and he looks it over and sends it in to the office and sooner or later the child will probably be tested. Every child we have submitted for testing this year has been tested. And we get a written report back indicating areas of weakness and their IQ of course. Sometimes from that test we might find they have a normal IQ but an ITPA (Illinois Test of Psycholinguistics) should be given and this also tells us a good deal about how a child learns. Until recently I was unable to do this test myself but the psychometrician has shown me so I will be able to do this myself next year. She hasn't got the time to do everything.

WHO REFERS THE CHILD? THE TEACHER?
Yes, the classroom teacher. Usually before they refer the child the teacher sends them to me to test them out on an informal reading inventory and the other little tests as far as reading is concerned because they want some back-up. They say I think this child is of low IQ, and I'm expecting too much of him or he's got lots of potential and he's not reaching it. Will you check him out? Then if our opinions balance then we can refer him, but sometimes he's a total puzzle and then of course we refer him.

DO THEY TEND TO BE BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEM CHILDREN?
Yes, the youngsters that I work with in the remedial reading programme that have good potential for reading but are not reading up to their ability I would think with only one or perhaps two exceptions out of the twelve I work with regularly, the others all have some hang-up of some sort, emotional, behavioural problem. There's a problem definitely there and in some a severe one as far as shoplifting, breaking and entering--this type of thing.

WHAT GRADE LEVEL ARE THE REMEDIAL GROUP OF TWELVE STUDENTS MAINLY FROM?
Mainly from the primary grades because the teachers indicated that this was the area they wanted me to work in. I could have dozens of youngsters from grade 7, grade 6, grade 5, but there is no time so
they said to concentrate on the primary and try and prevent this failure reaching a higher level.

HOW DO YOU PREVENT THE LEARNING PROBLEMS, OR ASSIST THOSE CHILDREN WHO COME INTO THE SCHOOL, AS IT WERE, THOSE INHERITED FROM OTHER SCHOOLS?

Well, if there is time I try to see them, if not, I try to assist the classroom teacher as best I can with some type of material. I have a couple of youngsters at the grade 7 level that I've tested out and I have them working on a programme at home, this is nothing to do with their school programme. Their parents have indicated that they want help and I've talked with the parents and this is just separate. They keep coming back and I keep sending out material and the classroom teacher doesn't have anything to do with that material. He has classroom material for use in the classroom but this is all done at home and I never see the child unless it is at recess or after school but those cases are quite rare and really stems from parents' involvement.

IS THERE ANYTHING IN THE BACKGROUND OF THE CHILDREN THAT WE LABEL TEACHING "PROBLEMS" THAT MAKES THEM HOMOGENEOUS?

Well, the only thing that is really constant is lack of interest on behalf of the parents perhaps. For instance, I am working with one boy and we can't even get his father to come down to the school to talk with us. We have used every method possible including the Principal going down to the home on two occasions and we can't communicate with him, and this is bad. But I would think that this is the only common denominator and not to all of them but probably over seventy-five per cent of them.

WHAT ABOUT INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL THAT IS CURRENTLY OUT SPECIFICALLY FOR INNER-CITY CHILDREN? HOW HAVE YOU BEEN ABLE TO EVALUATE THIS FOR USE?

Yes. Well we haven't really used the inner-city materials other than getting books which are high interest, low vocabulary. We have a lot of that material but it is not exclusively inner-city of course. But when I am ordering things I do tend to order things which are city background. Particularly in the primary levels.

WHAT ABOUT THE BANK STREET READERS?

Yes, in fact we are getting those in for next year.
THERE IS A CONTROVERSIAL SERIES IN ENGLAND: THE NIPPERS. I HAVE HEARD POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE TO THE EXTREMES. ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH THESE?

No. Not at all.

SO CHANGING THE ACTUAL MATERIAL IS TAKING PLACE.

IF I MIGHT JUST GO BACK TO THE TESTING PROCEDURES, IS THERE A MOVE TO CHANGE THIS? THERE WERE GROUP IQ TESTS GIVEN AGAIN THIS YEAR AND SOME CHILDREN DID MAKE REFERENCE TO THESE.

I don't really expect that the grade level 3 one will be given next year. We hope not. Well as everyone says they are put on the card and an experienced teacher probably never, well they look at it, it's there on the card, but it's not that important to them.

WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO THE TEACHER?

How the child performs and what the teacher sees as his potential. And—what is important?

DOES IT DIFFER FROM TEACHER TO TEACHER?

Yes, I think it does, you have probably already found that. The big problem with IQ to go back to our concern about them is that the group IQ test relies strongly on reading so if a child is not able to read he is not going to score well on the IQ test and it just bounces back and forth. And if he can't read he is probably concealing the fact from everybody, he is trying to conceal it from his teacher, he's definitely trying to conceal it from his classmates and in this way his inability to function in the reading area you erupt into an emotional problem or a behavioural problem. This is why we can't look at the IQ tests as being valid—you have to be able to read well, you can't function on them if you can't read very well.

ISN'T THE SAME TRUE THEN, OF THE ACHIEVEMENT TESTS?

Yes, you have to be able to read well to function on these tests. If achieving is giving the right answer in written form the achievement tests may be alright, but we don't think achieving is being able to regurgitate what some text-book, or perhaps some teacher or someone in the group has said. It's being able to apply what you have learned to some other area, or within the same area. I think we are getting away from this that you must know this, this, and this, as far as facts go. It's being able to apply what you have learned.
IS THIS PART OF THE MOVE TOWARD INDIVIDUALIZED PROGRAMMES? AND HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT ADOPTING THIS KIND OF ARRANGEMENT?

Very much so. I think individualized attention is important. Our youngsters now in the primary stage are promoted according to whether they are ready to go into it. For example, we had a class last year who could not, were not beginning to read, so we put them into the second year. They had first year reading materials. They did fairly well in arithmetic so they went on to usual second year arithmetic programme. So we take them from where they are at and take them to where they can go and then we take them from there the next year. So we are trying to start off this flexible approach with the primary levels, and to some extent the intermediate levels as well. It becomes quite complicated at times, trying to figure out where who's going at which times.

THE INNER-CITY CONCEPT IS BASED UPON THE IDEA THAT WHAT WE MIGHT CALL THE REGULAR SCHOOL IS INAPPROPRIATE FOR DEPRIVED CHILDREN. NOW THIS SCHOOL HAS JUST STARTED INTRODUCING CHANGES IN THE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS ITSELF, AS YOU HAVE STATED PRIMARILY, AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL. NOW IN WHAT WAYS DO DEPRIVED OR INNER-CITY CHILDREN STAND OUT FROM THE MIDDLE-CLASS CHILD GENERALLY?

I'm not even sure what an inner-city child is, or what a deprived, or disadvantaged child is because it depends who he is and where he's at. If you take him and put him into a middle-class school he is going to show remarkable ability because he'll conform to his peers, he'll disguise his inabilities in such a way as he will not stand out as inadequate.

Now in a school like this serving the inner-city area, yet at the same time having some middle-class children as well, you get different values present. I know a system of values and I know that my values are not their values and I have had to do a lot of adjusting myself because I have to constantly think now where is this youngster going and what is important to him and readjust my thinking and my teaching to those goals. I think this is really the important thing because their values are different. With this mixture of children we have here you have to be aware of both sets.

WITH THIS MIXTURE HAS THE MIDDLE-CLASS CHILD IN
COMPARISON WITH THE DEPRIVED CHILD, WHETHER THIS COMPARING IS LEGITIMATE OR NOT, TENDED TO PERFORM MORE CLOSELY TO THE TEACHER'S VALUE SYSTEM?

Probably, I'm not sure in all cases. It's hard to generalize about groups of children, but that is probably part of the whole situation. This is my first year for working in this type of school other than a school in Winnipeg about ten years ago. So I think they probably do respond differently in some respects but I'm not sure what ways.

WELL, WHAT ABOUT THE SCHOOL WORK ETHIC THAT ONE PRESUMES MOST TEACHERS HOLD IMPORTANT? IS THIS AN IMPORTANT VALUE TO DEPRIVED CHILDREN?

Oh, I see, social values like doing well in school. If doing well is going up to the high school and doing well and getting a job and contributing to society, which I happen to feel is rather important, I feel in the situation here, that they may not have the same value attached to what is doing well. But I really don't know what is important to them. I am so confused. This year has just upset my thinking completely. It really has.

ANY FINAL COMMENTS OR INSIGHTS THAT MIGHT LEND TO UNDERSTANDING DEPRIVED CHILDREN?

During the year the thing I have found, that I have been shocked at, is what these youngsters have experienced in their home life. Their rough deals that some of them have come up against and they still have this childhood sense of wonder about things that rather surprises me because of the background they come from. And they are not turning into hard shelled little people, they are still children, very vulnerable. But they do tend to put up this wall because I have felt this wall and wondered if I was going to get through to them. I feel there is a wall; this was quite a shock to me. They do perform because they are trying too high and their inability to perform in the academic areas, because they know they don't function extremely well when it comes to the regular type of academic work. So they put up this wall, this sophisticated attitude but once you get through this they are just ordinary kids, and that they are individuals it is fine. But they do put up this bold, harsh exterior, even the little children. I find even these little children can be cruel, and this is something which might be interesting,
particularly about things such as home situations. We might just be talking about families and someone will just blurt out "George hasn't got a father" and poor George is sitting there. Then you have to talk about half the kids in the room haven't got fathers, so what! They are getting knocks themselves and they are giving them back and you have to see beyond this.

In this school with these children I think there is more need to teach children and not to teach grade 5 or social studies. You have to do a lot of teaching of how to get along with that type of thing. I think the teacher is very important in this kind of situation, and I have seen more teaching of children in this school than in any school that I have been in.
A COUNSELLOR AT THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LEVEL IS QUITE UNUSUAL. HOW DID THIS COME ABOUT AT INNER-CITY SCHOOL AND WHY?

Well, I think probably the need for a counsellor in this particular situation came about through the vision of this Inner-city concept where there is a contact with the child and his environment outside of the school situation, and meeting with the parents in the home, which obviously indicated that this could not be done by a teacher nor what by what we ordinarily consider a school counsellor who is really a guidance teacher and is not really a counsellor in the true sense of the word. Someone who is counselling students because he is just a teacher who has a few extra periods who gets the title of a counsellor as well, or the usual situations of a district counsellor who goes from school to school and obviously in this way has never any real contact nor really can ever get to know the children. For instance in where they do have at the elementary level a district counsellor. He has 8 elementary schools to which he goes. Well, it is obvious he can never have any real relationship with these kids. So I think in getting an elementary school counsellor here, the idea was that there would be a relationship not only with the child in the school and with the teacher but with the home. Part of the whole concept of the inner-city school is the relationship that exists between the school and the home. It also means the teacher has an added resource in that the teacher can bring a problem that they realize they cannot handle in the classroom situation to the counsellor and refer the child to the counsellor without herself or himself being tied down with trying to deal with the problem. And not really being adequately prepared or competent to deal with most of the situations anyway.
THE SITUATIONS WHICH OCCUR THAT TEACHERS FIND PROBLEMATIC ARE THEY THEREFORE DIFFERENT HERE THAN IN OTHER SCHOOLS, PARTICULARLY AT THE ELEMENTARY LEVEL?

In some cases, due to the high density of single-parent families and welfare families there are problems that come up in the classroom which are definitely of an emotional nature. And you have a higher incidence of attention-getting features within the classroom because of this high density of children from one-parent situations who are continually vying for attention. Particularly at the grade 4 or 5 level this can be very frustrating for the teacher because you have all these children vying for attention and naturally disrupting in many instances the classroom situation. We have a good demonstration of this in ______ room where you have a lot of this where you have attention-seeking children who disrupt the whole class. Not specifically because they are necessarily bad but that their needs are so great that they are in a situation and they just have to stand out and say 'Look, I am here,' and the only way they are going to do that is by disrupting things. So I think that whilst to some degree this kind of thing would happen in all schools it would happen with greater intensity in a school like this where you have a higher density of deprived children.

SO THE PROBLEMS THE TEACHERS REFER TO YOU TEND TO BE OF A BEHAVIOURAL NATURE THAT AFFECTS THE SCHOOLING PROCESS, RATHER THAN SAY OF A COGNITIVE OR PERHAPS SAY AN ACADEMIC NATURE?

Yes, Behavioural situations, emotional problems, problems that come about through environmental situations. Sometimes teachers have a tendency to send children to me who have been a problem in the classroom because they're not doing their work or if they break a rule, they are thinking of the child as a disciplinary problem it is really not my position to deal with these sorts of infractions. There may be other factors which may mean they should see me but if they, both teachers and children see me as the one who gives out the discipline, this is entirely wrong. To see me as a disciplinary figure would destroy the whole value of having a full-time counsellor and if the kids saw this as the punishment room and me as the punishment figure this would not be good at all.
DO THE BEHAVIOURAL OR EMOTIONAL PROBLEM CHILDREN
THAT ARE REFERRED TO YOU ALSO HAVE ACADEMIC PROBLEMS
IN THE CLASSROOM?
No. I would say that a fair number of these children
are academically, mind you some of them are not
achieving to their capabilities, but quite a few
of these kids are doing reasonably well academically
but have other problems as well. I think quite
often the kid who is not doing well academically
probably can do better if his own situation is
improved, particularly his environmental situation.
DO YOU MEAN HIS HOME?
Yes, that is a major part.
WHAT CONTACT DO YOU THEN HAVE WITH THE HOME AND IN
WHAT WAYS CAN THIS IN FACT ALTER WHAT GOES ON IN THE
SCHOOL?
Well, sometimes the parent will phone and ask to
see me. They realize there is a problem and therefore
will sometimes want the opportunity to discuss it.
Or if the child has been involved in a serious
delinquency involving the police, the youth detail,
in every likelihood, I will also go to the home to
try and get the whole picture of the total situation
and to see if the parents are willing to cooperate
with us in trying to help the child. Because if the
parent is not willing to go along with what we are
trying to do there is not very much we can do and
then there's not very much we can do. And sometimes
a parent will say this "I know that the relationship
between this boy's father is not going to change and
there's no point in you talking to him". Then I
will simply have to say that I think our hands are
tied too because we can't do anything if it's not
going to be carried on in the home situation as well.
This happens fairly regularly. Sometimes I suggest:
"Is there any hope that the father will seek help,
psychiatric help?" and in most cases they say "no".
It is the kid who is all wrong and not the father.
So if this happens and it has happened, I have one
family where the mother has asked her husband to
go to the psychiatrist with her and the psychiatrist
has recommended this and the father has refused to
have anything to do with him and his attitude is:
well, it's a second marriage and they are her children.
He just refuses to be involved with the kids at all.
Well, when you get a situation like that you get a
kid who is continually running to me saying "I just can't take this any longer". Well, there is not very much you can offer him really. You can't tell him to run away, because where's he going to run away to, or where is he going to go to? Or even if there was a place it's very likely there's another hundred kids waiting to go there too. All you can hope is that you can help this child learn to live in the environmental situation which he finds himself. He has to adapt to it in a situation in which there is obviously no hope that the environmental situation is going to change. Then the only hope you have is to help the child to adapt to live with it.

WHAT OTHER HOME PROBLEMS DO YOU FEEL ARE PRESENT IN THESE CHILDREN?

Problems of control. Parents not able to control the hours of the child, not able to control the type of friends the child has. Problems of petty thievery often starting in the home. Problems because of home situations in which a child reacts strongly to one or other parents, or sibling group, he may have temper tantrums as a reaction to the home situation. And sometimes depending on home situations and the standards of the family involved quite often there will be involvements of a sexual nature between children within the family or an incestuous relationship—a stepfather with a stepdaughter. This type of thing comes up more often than you would suspect it would.

HOW ABOUT PARENTAL ATTITUDES TOWARD THE SCHOOL, ARE THEY CONCERNED? AND SPECIFICALLY HOW HAVE YOU FOUND THE PARENTS REACT TO THIS SCHOOL?

Yes, some of them are concerned. And quite often in fact parents who have spoken to me about their academic problems blame this particular school. They will say that when they went to _______ school or _______ school or to some other school they never had academic problems there. It is only since they came here. They will say that the academic students aren't the same as they are in other schools. A lot of the parents do tend to take this attitude because the school has somewhat of a reputation, they tend to play on this if their child is having an academic problem and say it is only because the child is at (inner-city) school. Even if you can say here is the child's permanent record card and
are able to say, "well here in grade 4 at ______ he didn't do very well here either". Then the parents get flustered once they realize you know this, but there is a tendency as far as academic problems are concerned to blame this particular school and the kinds of kids that are in the school. Also they infer that the teachers are of an inferior type, they sort of suggest that most of the teachers here are rejects from the better schools. Which again is just their way of trying to answer the problem which they don't understand.

WHEN DO ACADEMIC AND/OR THESE BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEMS START TO SHOW?
You mean at what age?
YES.
I think that they tend to become quite predominant in the fourth or fifth year if there are problems there. They seem to really stand out at this point and it also seems to be the point where you can do most with the child. From the point of view of the counsellor. This is the age group you can help more readily, they are far more acceptable. Their minds are not closed toward adults yet. They haven't got any set ideas about people. Whereas you get kids midway between grade 5 and through to grade 7 it takes a long time to break their shyness down to be able to do anything with them. But I think kids at the fourth and fifth year level are very acceptable to help and it's also where problems stand out. If you can get things here you are a long way ahead of the game. So often a child gets up to the high school and he's considered a problem child but in no way is anyone going to be able to do any counselling with them. Where again at the high school level most of the counsellors are really guidance teachers. They are there to tell the child which courses to get into. Children have told me this that they don't really do anything in the way of counselling--often because of the density of school population. Here again they are not just a full-time counsellor but have academic teaching to do as well and they are really guidance teachers and the term counsellor is just used. Most of them have no real background in counselling techniques, basic psychology, and understanding of the types of problems they are dealing with and what to look for and when to refer the child for psychiatric help.
THIS SCHOOL IN PARTICULAR HAS MANY DEPRIVED CHILDREN AND THE EXTENT OF TRANSIENCY IS TREMENDOUS. WHY IS THIS?

Well, actually it is the welfare recipients in the local apartments are the people who seem to stay and it is the non-welfare, the working people who move away to other areas to live. The welfare people stay because they can't afford to move around and probably they are getting better accommodations than if they were getting welfare elsewhere. Although there's much to be desired. Well, is a new building, from the outside it appears that way, people see it as a new building and feel they are in a nice place which from the physical appearance they are, but it is the density of the type of families and the problem in there that make it in fact a ghetto. Although it has the facade of a respectable apartment building but inside within those walls it is really a ghetto. Our terminology for a ghetto sums up rundown tenement building but it is the people in such high density such as eight or nine children in a one- or two-bedroomed apartment. We have a number of families like this. This creates its own problems.

SO MOST OF THE PROBLEMS IN THE SCHOOL YOU WOULD THINK TEND TO BE OF A NON-COGNITIVE NATURE BUT RATHER OF A SOCIAL CONSEQUENCE?

Yes, I think so. In terms of IQ for example, most of these kids are perfectly sound. Although we might have scores down for them which are very low. It is so obvious for some of these kids that they just don't care at all and just put down anything that comes to mind on the IQ test. I have seen kids register 67 which makes them candidates for a special class certainly, when in fact they have just given up, and really are of normal or better intelligence. They just don't care. The type of IQ test we seem to use are all American and basically, structured on a middle-class basis, the terminology, phrasology, is geared to the middle-class American child and so naturally a child in a ghetto or inner-city situation is going to do predominantly poorer, giving a so-called lower IQ, simply because the test is not geared to his environment. He just doesn't grasp some of the ideas being asked. They have to relate things and in many cases they have never seen them.
I think an IQ test is a very deceiving thing and perhaps, although not as much now, that once a child had his IQ put on that permanent record card, he was labelled right through school by everybody. If he had a low IQ rating he was simply stuck in the corner of the room because the teacher said "Well there's not much we can do with him. It's just a matter of biding time until we can get him out". Here many kids have been labelled who in reality are of normal intelligence but they are just seen in light of the label. I really question the validity of having teachers possess the IQ scores, I think it should be confidential information and used by trained people as a guideline and not as an ipso facto situation.

You mention that many children do not even try when faced with an IQ test, this would appear to indicate a great measure of alienation from the process, and probably the school process also, why is this? Children readily see people who are phonies. Who really don't care about kids who supposedly are either teaching them or helping them in certain situations, but who don't really care. Children recognize this. Young children like this very rarely can you fool them about your intentions. They know whether you really care about them or whether it's all a front. Therefore, they react in things like tests and relationships with adults, they react to what they feel in many instances are fronts, people who just don't care or people they think do it because it's their job.

Is there a special inner-city teacher then? Well, to me I think the situation in inner-city schools is just a more accentuated position, it shows up the problems more clearly but most of the problems would appear to be present in all schools. To me teaching, working with children should be a vocation—not just looking down a job list measuring pay and holidays and deciding on teaching. I have a friend on the Island who simply hates kids, he despises them but he likes the holidays it provides. Believe me it is a good life for many teachers but they shouldn't be teaching children at all. And the children recognize this and react to this.

So perhaps both the home and the school militate against the children, and particularly of course deprived children? How do we assist them? Yes, I think that the problems of relationships
affect the whole child and he cannot just divorce experiences from him. As for coping with the situation I think we have got to have more counsellors, with ideally each elementary school having a counsellor who can maintain a close relationship between child, teacher and parent. Secondly, the teaching profession itself has to be more selective in who comes into teaching, what are their motivations? This is not an easy area to define but somehow we have to make this a profession that people see as a vocation and recruit people who are really concerned about working with children. Not just people to stand up at the front of a classroom and telling them this and how to evolve the answer for that. I think if you have the right kind of people, we have to encourage the right type of person. If you have a teacher in a classroom situation, particularly in an inner-city school, but it certainly works in any school situation, who really has a vocation to teach, then you are a long way along the road to helping that child to being a better person when he grows up and to develop healthy self-feelings and feelings toward others as well. I am quite convinced that this is so. It has to be a vocation not just a job. He she whichever the case, has to really want to work with children, has to really care. The children know, they know who does and who doesn't. It's the same with parents. They know if the parents want them and unfortunately not all of them do, we have to accept this and in the school we have to do whatever we can to offset negative experiences and we must not add to those through teachers or structures which don't meet the kids' needs.

WHAT ABOUT THE STRUCTURED SCHOOL? IS THIS ON THE WAY OUT FOR INNER-CITY CHILDREN?

I think in some situations the structured school has bombed out. But fortunately in education there are places and people with imagination who are allowing the school to be a place of learning. We basically for a long time never taught children to learn at all, we taught them to do what they were told and to believe what we told them what was good for them to believe, about any aspect of education. I think this is one of the lights in education today that there seems to be this movement where more and more young people are being encouraged to learn by being
put into learning situations. But this also has its dangers with extremes of total abandonment, this will always happen. And of course the reaction going toward a hardening of the conservative line with the demands upon the child going to be greater as a reaction to any sense that the child has a right to share in the learning process. But I think basically what will come out of this milieu will be a good learning situation with extremes at either side which occurs in any aspect of society not just education. We are in a changing situation and people react to both the good and the extremes in the same vein and become frightened. Like they read "RCMP officer investigating free school" and then they say "Well, I hear my kids are not having regular classes now" and they get all excited about this. It is because of this reaction that change in education is a slow moving process. To a certain degree this slows down the evolving to a good learning situation. But more and more schools and more and more teachers are hopefully becoming more concerned about children being put into learning situations.

I'M SURE I HAVE NOT COVERED EVERYTHING. HAVE YOU ANY FURTHER COMMENTS TO MAKE YOURSELF FROM YOUR EXPERIENCE?

Well, the only other thing I can really add to it is that as the years go by and you become more and more involved in the situation, is that in any situation I strongly feel the key word is still love. The child without love is in danger of becoming a misfit. Many times with all sorts of kids who have seen me for all kinds of problems I ask them if you could sum up in your life what you need most. "Could you tell me in one word?" and nine times out of ten they will say "love". They really don't believe it. That really to me is the key to the whole thing. A child has to believe that he is a person of worth, therefore, if he is, some person must love that child and if they don't then the child takes upon himself this figure of an unworthy person. Therefore, an unworthy person is a problem person and he becomes a problem person. HOW DO YOU THINK THE SCHOOLS IN GENERAL, NOT SPECIFICALLY THIS SCHOOL, REACT TO MANY OF THE VERY APPARENT PROBLEM CHILDREN THAT DISPROPORTIONATELY DEPRIVED CHILDREN BECOME? CHILDREN WHO HAVE THIS
LEGAL OF BEING BEHAVIOURAL AND ACADEMIC PROBLEMS
ALMOST THROUGHOUT THEIR ENTIRE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LIFE.
Children like many of the ones you are referring to
know that a record of failure and problems are
coming with them. They build a shell around
themselves so they won't be hurt any further.
Children like Andy for example, he personifies
the record that is on its way from his former school
simply because he has to protect himself against
the situation. In this particular case with this
particular boy I've sat down and told him this: 'I
really believe, you sit here and tell me you really
don't care about anything or anybody but that it's
not true. I really believe that underneath you
really do but you are afraid to show it, afraid to
be loved, afraid to trust another person because if
you don't trust anybody you are not going to be let
down again.' Basically this is what happens; he has
been let down throughout his life so he builds up a
shell around himself to protect himself and takes on
the outward and visible signs of the hardrock kid.
Underneath all of this is another person but whether
it is too late. It should never be too late but
where does a child like that go? If he does return
to school next fall and goes up to the high school
then obviously as soon as his record and he is
recognized, he is over 15, then he will be quietly
lost and out the door one day and therefore we will
have solved another problem because he isn't here
anymore so the school doesn't have the problem.
And unfortunately this is what will probably happen.
Simply because there is no place for him to go. We
don't cater for children who are considered the
misfits, who don't respond to school in ways that
we expect them to. They feel a stigma attached or
we attach a stigma to them and they usually live up
to our poor evaluation of them.
APPENDIX D

DISTRICT PSYCHOMETRIC SPECIALIST

A COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO IQ TESTS WERE GIVEN TO GRADE 7, WHAT OTHER TIMES ARE THEY GIVEN? Usually do group tests every so often but not every year. They are given in grade 3, grade 5 and then grade 7. WHAT ABOUT THE INDIVIDUAL TESTS? WHEN ARE THEY GIVEN? The individual test nearly always comes from the teacher because the child is not achieving, or because they apparently have emotional problems and can't settle down in class, or they're just not working for some reason. They're deviating from the usual behaviour of a child at that age level. I rarely look at PR (Pupil Record) cards myself anymore, as that in itself is a very subjective thing because each teacher uses it maybe somewhat differently and the "C", "B", "A" thing depends upon the class. I mean if it is a low class and the teacher gives these marks according to what each child is achieving, to look at the PR card at those levels doesn't mean a thing. It could be a slow child and if the slow child is working to capacity as far as the teacher can see, then she might give that child a "B". So if you look at the card and see a "B" you might think, well the child is doing alright but he could have been doing terrible as regards the rest of the class, but could have been doing well for himself. I simply look at the Group IQ Score Tests to see if they coincide with my test. But that alone, an IQ score for a group test would not be enough for me to see him. I would not see a child unless he scored very low, 70-75 say, and the teacher felt we need a more thorough, more accurate, more valid assessment, then she would get me in to see the child. Sometimes there is a conglomeration of scores. Some might be 80's, some might be 100 and that sort
of thing and if the child is not achieving as well, then they would call me in to test, and give an individual test. I would give the WISK or the Stanford Binet, usually the WISK. The recommendations should then come from the Special Counsellor.

ARE MANY CHILDREN RECOMMENDED FROM THIS SCHOOL FOR TESTING?

A lot of children are usually referred for individual tests at this school and at this school you test children and usually they are between 90 and 110. They are average ability really, maybe a bit below average, but average really and yet they do very poorly and they are particularly down in general information, vocabulary and this sort of thing. They test as I say average, yet they are not achieving in school and they are not interested and they are the kind that never read, they just watch TV all the time and they really do seem to lack experiences and this often reflects in the test in the general information and the vocabulary and just how to cope with situations and this sort of thing.

WHICH GRADE LEVEL DO YOU MOSTLY TEST?

It is with the children in the early grades, mainly 3 and below and certainly it shows there, and I get whole families of them from this area. There are whole families that are these problems. There's no interest in academic achievement, there's no support at home. At least this is all what, I mean we don't have any definite evidence but it seems that this is the only thing to explain why these children don't do as well as someone of the same IQ but from a different background. They have the same IQ but do not achieve in school and the teacher refers them to me for testing.

SO THE CHILDREN'S TEST SCORES AND ACHIEVEMENT PERFORMANCE SHOW DISCREPANCIES?

Yes, they may have the same IQ or higher but do not do as well as children from a different social class. I have not tested as many here this year, I know there has been a few families in this area, you know the ones who move a lot oftener, that's another thing, and nearly always split homes or fathers who come and go, or who work away from home for a long time. The children are really either often very apathetic or very attention-seeking. They often have this sort of problem as well as they are
sometimes very withdrawn or sometimes very aggressive or rebellious and so on. They are different from the average child. There is this category of children that we are talking about. I think of that as quite different from the average child. The problems come en masse sort of. They are low achievers, they have split homes, they have poor economic standards, they move around a lot. Some have been to so many schools, I think there was one here who had been to 15 schools in a few years. They lack stability in their whole pattern and so consequently they don't do well. This shows up as early as grade 1. There is a family, there's about 10 or 12 children and I see all of them regularly within the first year or two of school, because they are apathetic, they just sit there, they don't learn yet when I test them they test average. What do they do at home? They just sit and watch TV. They can't talk with you; this is often the problem with them. They don't communicate. This is probably why they do poorly on some tests because we rely so much on verbal communication and it's as if they don't have any experience of it at home either.

WHAT HAPPENS WITH THE IQ SCORES AS THEY PROGRESS THROUGH THE GRADES?

With the fifth or seventh grade children the IQ doesn't change, it is usually within the acceptable range. On the behaviour thing there is a quantitative judgement area. There is a section in the test, in the WISK, that is called comprehension and it's mostly a sort of social intelligence some people call it. It's dealing with everyday problems or understanding relationships between people, or people and situations of what you should do. On this particular test these children do particularly poorly. They're the kind that say what you should do and they come back at you with this sort of almost delinquent-type pattern, it comes out in the way they respond to these questions. Questions like "What should you do if someone smaller than you, say, hits you?" and they tend to be the ones more who would hit back, that would fight back rather than be nice about it and try and pacify. And I think this comes from their backgrounds from the standards at home and that sort of thing. I think these children when I see them early on in the early grades, they may be apathetic, quiet, withdrawn and so on, but I often wonder if as they get older they
become the ones that I see as aggressive, hostile. They might still be quiet but they become hostile as they go through the school. Like and yet they are often alright to test they're alright with me but in general situations in school, like Jon in grade 7 who is fine to test, he is average ability, I don't know much about his behaviour here but he is one of the kind we are talking about. And also there is this other boy in grade 6, the huge boy. Did you talk with him? Derek is average, good average ability of 100 and something on his verbal IQ and he talks well, as you know from talking with him. He really talks well. You know he has some really sound thinking but he does nothing. He just sits. Fortunately he has not become aggressive with it as some do I think when they have got really bad home situations.

ALL THIS FOCUSES ON SO-CALLED UNDERACHIEVERS, WHAT ABOUT THE REVERSE SITUATION?

Overachievers are very rare in a school like this. I see very few children like that here. This sort of thing usually comes when parents are anxious, and the children we are dealing with here, the parents don't seem inclined to push them or to take much interest, so it doesn't fall into this category. It is schools which are in a different social class area where you get the overachievers, if anywhere.

DO YOU GET A REPRESENTATIVE SPREAD OF CHILDREN RECOMMENDED FOR TESTING?

In this school I don't often get the middle-class child to test, they are a minority of the number I test. Often the referral in these cases comes from the parents who think their child should be doing better so they want an assessment. For the others the referrals come through the teacher. These can be because of behaviour problems in that they just do not apply themselves, I'm not meaning behaviour problems in terms of naughty or deliberately aggressive or anything like this although the two may go together in some cases at this school, but mainly because they just don't seem to work, not able to work, or sometimes just very quiet or disinterested, and this seems to go along with the low achievement as well. So they're referred to me because they're low achievers.

YOU MENTIONED RECORD CARDS BEFORE, DO YOU LOOK FOR GRADES ON THE REPORT CARD?

I wouldn't look for the grade on the report card in
the particular subjects, although it would tell the child something. That is why I think teachers should adapt it maybe to the child's level rather than the group's, but this varies from teacher to teacher and this is why I don't rely on the cards. They have now changed it to check marks, good, satisfactory, needs improvement.

WHAT IS OF USE TO YOU ON THE CARDS?

I go off the reading tests, the Gates score on the card. Often the children I see are low in reading as well. And the Gates score gives the grade they're reading at and the grade they should be reading at and so it is a very useful thing to see. And I talk to the teachers about other achievement tests they've been given and at what level the child's working at. But I rarely go off the letter grade.

I DIDN'T FOCUS ON CHILDREN IN THE EARLY GRADES, THE ONES YOU MOSTLY TEST, WHAT HAVE YOU FOUND THERE?

You would have found that these children that you are more interested in at grade 1 level are even more difficult to communicate with than you know in their first years of school. I think probably because they've been deprived of socialization.

HOW DO YOU MANAGE THE IMPORTANT COMMUNICATION WITH THEM, IN ORDER TO TEST THEM?

They are very cooperative to me. They are often hostile to authority in the school like the teachers, whether provoked or not I don't know. But someone like Andy probably does arouse feelings against him, these children often do I think in a class even if they don't do anything to warrant it, I think often they provoke negative feelings just by their appearance. Certainly with me they are always alright, with a few exceptions. Take Danny; I know you spoke with him as well and probably found the same background factors. He was so easy to talk to. He had lots of problems at home. His mother had shelved him out onto his older married sister. And practically one of the first things he said to me was "well, I'm a mistake". So we talked for a while and then I gave him the test and talked a long time. Then I got the referral form which I hadn't had before and it said "inconsistent behaviour, aggressive, withdraws" and after talking with him you can't believe it is the same child. I suppose in groups they need the attention. I don't know quite what it is. There's lots of reasons I suppose. I don't know why it is they are so negative about
their schooling. It builds up over years I suppose, over years.

WHAT USE ARE THE TESTS PARTICULARLY IN LATER GRADES?
I do the tests for placement. This is mainly why I'm employed, well not mainly, but one of the reasons, for placement. Because before any placement is made whether occupational or special class they have to have an individual test. This year the number for occupational classes has decreased. This year it is maybe 3 or 4 from this school going to occupational. Most of the other schools in the district haven't referred any for testing. That is they are going to put them all on the grade 8 or modified grade 8. I don't know why but there is a lot of feeling against the occupational programme. Some children from here will go onto the occupational programme. There is at least one girl who will probably be put onto the occupational programme and there's a couple of boys I saw. There is that boy Jim (grade 7). Unless the children or the parents object strongly in which case they wouldn't be placed. We never place them anywhere against the parents' wish. The girl from Fiji is very slow as well. Most of them we thought we would give them a chance on modified 8.

Jim is not that slow. He is not going on occupational because he is a slow child. It's his attitude. We combine attitude as well. He's very non-academic. Really he is just not interested in school subjects. So the teacher is going to discuss with him what he would really like and maybe he'd prefer to do more mechanical—you know, mechanics, woodwork and metalwork and so on, rather than continue with French, and English and all this sort of thing which he will still do but in a lesser degree. He won't do French at all of course, but he'll do some academics but it will be played down on the occupational programme.

WHICH SCHOOLS PROVIDE THE CHILDREN FOR THE OCCUPATIONAL PROGRAMMES?
More children from this kind of school go to the occupational programme. Schools like _____ rarely have children referred for special programmes. Every year I have a sizeable number from every school referred for testing and maybe 4 or 5 or 6 from each school go. This year it is going to be a really small group because all I've had is a handful from
the whole district. Big schools like haven't referred any and the low-class area haven't referred any. The teachers haven't referred any. The teacher usually refers children. Which as I say often goes together. Their attitude will be poor and their achievement poor. If their attitude's poor and achievement was good, they will probably give them a chance on the regular programme. If they are achieving at that grade level they would put him on the regular or a modified programme.

If they're achieving at that level they would probably not place them below unless the child was especially interested in doing mechanics or metalwork or they felt maybe the child would leave school or drop out if they weren't put into something they were interested in. Or they might drop out anyway so they would put him onto occupational.

LARRY (GRADE 7 TRANSFERRED TO OCCUPATIONAL IN MARCH 1971.) WHAT ABOUT HIM?
I never tested him. He is one of the rare cases that they knew where he belonged, where he just should be.

I see some children with good attitudes, really work hard, but they're low achievers. But again if they're academically interested and they obviously don't want to go to Occ. and so then we would also put them into a modified grade 8. It is difficult for a child to go from occupational back to the modified grade 8 or regular programme. It shouldn't be but it is. If a child does not want to go to occupational then they would put him on modified 8. They would try and sway him depending on how strong a feeling they had. It is nearly always boys. The majority of children I test are boys.

HAVE YOU KEPT ANY RECORDS OF CHILDREN FROM THE SCHOOL?
No. I know from the four years that I have been testing I've been throwing away my old tests which is a pity because I have a wealth of information that could be quantified, factual things like that, and home situations and number in family and so on.

FROM WHICH GRADES DO YOU GET MOST REFERRALS, AND FROM MEN OR WOMEN TEACHERS?
It is really not possible to assess whether men or women refer more. Men teachers usually take the older grades anyway, and they are of course in a minority anyway so that I couldn't say. It would be interesting to know that some teachers refer a lot and some teachers hardly refer at all. It would
be interesting to know the difference there, if you want to get into teacher personality differences.

WHAT ABOUT CHILDREN YOU HAVE RECENTLY TESTED IN THIS SCHOOL FOR PLACEMENT?

I saw Rick (grade 7) for example we will be putting him on modified grade 8. Then there is the Indian boy, he is very slow so we are thinking of putting him in a special class for a year before moving him over to the high school. Often as a requirement for occupational they have to be 14 at the end of that year, which means they must have failed at least one or two years. This again goes along with all the other things. So they are older, they must be 14. Alex (grade 7) they are going to put on modified grade 8 because of his low achievement. Unless he is specially interested in doing occupational. I think he is expecting it in a way because he knows he is the kind that we put in occupational and he doesn't believe he has the ability to do anything else. He tested average and I hope they put him on modified.

Jim (grade 7) tested a little below average, he is a bit slower. He probably does have more real difficulty in his school work. But then again people of that level we do put on modified or even let them to through regular if they work hard, and try and want to do well, but with Jim I don't think there's much interest.

A girl like Shirley is the kind that might go on occupational. Simply because there's no interest again. That is as I know her. She is the kind that might just drop out anyway as the years go on. So it is better perhaps to put her on occupational and to give her something more concrete. Her brother seems to have dropped out, he seems not to be here anymore. I tested her a few months ago, I don't remember offhand what she tested but I saw her more in connection with behaviour again at the time. Although the test doesn't tell us anything about this apart from my subjective opinions, except for the comprehension terms and the way they answer the vocabulary, the general information this seems to reflect their background and their behaviour. If it is a severe behaviour problem then I would refer them to clinic because I am just employed to test.

YOU SEEM TO HAVE A LOT OF INFORMATION ABOUT BACKGROUND FACTORS. DO YOU ATTEMPT TO COLLECT THIS?

I do not pry into background beyond my scope, about the home and that although I might get a lot of interesting information, it is beyond my scope.
Sometimes the children go home and tell their parents and then there can be trouble. I am not a therapist, not at the clinic. I might talk to teachers about my personal thoughts about the child but it is on a verbal thing. If it is severe I refer the child to clinic so I just collect enough information to refer the child but I could not write down my findings in the report.

WHAT INFORMATION DOES THE TEACHER GET FROM THE TESTS?

For a child not for special placement, I always see the teacher the same day when possible and talk to them. Then we may discuss other things that will not be written in the report, but there is always a written report and the recommendation if any. But rarely the personal factors.

I FOUND NUMEROUS TESTS ON THE PR CARDS. WHY IS THIS?

Many of the children have had different tests although most of them will probably have had the Otis, but then the Otis changes, there is the Otis Lennon and the Otis Alpha and all different things. I have whole sheets that they computed on children that have been given different tests and the variations the scores on the one child on the different tests it is really quite interesting. Because you can get for example that there are quite a lot of children who score 80 on one group test and 110 on another.

WHAT DO TEACHERS DO WITH THE TEST RESULTS?

I do not know how much a teacher uses the tests. But sometimes after giving the group tests and looking through, a teacher may see a child with an IQ of 75 which is obviously low and if the child is doing poorly as well, they might call me in to get a valid assessment to see if he is that low because obviously he needs special placement. So it would provoke them to do this. Then there is the child who doesn't bother to try on a group test, who knows what teachers think about them. Again the children, the problem children we are discussing are the ones who maybe won't try and so score more poorly and so perhaps get referred to me and then when I test them and say to the teacher he's average they just can't believe me. The children will try in a one-to-one situation but not in the group test. Some just sit there and I'm sure they don't do a thing. Well this is it, and then when I see the teachers find it hard
to accept that they're average ability, because the child has shown nothing in that direction at all. Children can overscore on group tests also. I've had children who have scored 95-100 and really they are in the 80's.

WELL, WHAT CAN THE TEACHERS DO IN USING THE RESULTS? The teachers unless they really know what they're dealing with, it means very little to them and it may mean all the wrong things to them. I just wonder how the teachers do view them sometimes. Because a lot of teachers have very little idea of what an IQ test is and what it measures or why it is that a child can test average on my individual test and yet not achieve in class. They don't realize that this is possible. We came up against a brick wall because they have average ability yet they don't do well. They usually have poor homes. With this lack of support at home I think it must go far back to when they are very little really. They just don't orientate themselves towards school, they lack motivation. It's like there's no incentive there to achieve. Maybe no-one at home cares what they do. It's as if there's nothing been built up in them so they can motivate themselves, the motivation has to come from outside. Like with someone like Russ (grade 7) if you stand over him all day, and keep at him he produces and he produces quite well but he hasn't got the motivation or the caring for himself. I think they feel very worthless these children. They really lack a lot of self esteem. He really thinks himself that he should be put in occupational because that is what everyone has led him to believe. You know that he has passed everyone aside, for him and that he is not worthy of going the regular course. If he goes on a modified 8 I really believe he might be able to get close to it. Modified 8 is a really part of the academic which just moves at a slower rate, but without the French.

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE CAUSE OF MANY OF THESE PROBLEMS? Well, it is not surprising that some of these children do like they do. Some of the backgrounds these children come from I don't know how they manage to cope with anything. Perhaps considering this I often think it is amazing that they do as well, just the fact that they maintain so much stability.
Someone like Derek (grade 6) seemed a really nice boy really. Maybe he doesn't work at school but he seemed a very considerate, pleasant person as long as we don't knock it out of him then he'd feel otherwise. I think we do that to children. I think so. These little children that I see early on are very withdrawn, they're low achievers and they may be average but they came from this very poor type background and as they go through school they see they're different from others or they're put aside in some way and made to feel different, because they're not achieving, or not accepted or whatever and they fail and continue failing and we maybe keep them down a year and all this sort of thing. I think it builds up and changes either into a complete apathy and disinterest or it becomes hostility and aggression as the years go on. I'm amazed children survive all the failure we put them through in a way, I mean by our system. So these things are a sort of defence against failure. A lot of them are afraid of failing. They say to me am I going to fail? And they make excuses for why they have failed. They really do feel it we have really made them feel failures. And they can't look at it in a more reasonable light. I'm sure we shouldn't fail them the way we do and yet sometimes it seems necessary simply because they haven't completed the work and they have to go through the work before they can go on to the next year. And somehow we have to get them through the work but it is a pity we can't do it in a different way than the way we do it. I mean the level system; it doesn't operate as far as the children are concerned. If they are kept down in grade 1 they have failed. Everyone else has gone on and they are still there so they see it as a failure. It is no use telling them that you are still at level 2 and we have to get you through level 3. Failing children at any grade is part of the problem certainly. At the time you did fail them it might not have any apparent effect. But as they go on and they realize they are older, various people might say to them "did you repeat a grade?" and they begin to feel they did something terrible, that it is a great weakness in them. Then they seem either to withdraw into themselves or else become openly aggressive and rebellious. There seems to be predominantly these two extremes.