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FAMILIES AND SCHOOLS: THE DYNAMICS
OF INTERACTION BETWEEN PRIMARY GROUPS
AND BUREAUCRATIC ORGANIZATIONS

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By

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* * * * *

The Ohio State University
1980

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To my family—
Mark, Amy, and Liana
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In 1973, I began work on this dissertation. During the intervening years, many persons contributed to my understanding of the relationship between families and schools. We interviewed one hundred one mothers and thirty teachers, each of whom added her own point of view about parents and teachers. The variability of these accounts reminded me of two ideas that the best sociologists have long known. First, that people are out-there, not frequency distributions and disaggregated data; and second, that while the concept of the social remains valid, still those teachers and parents believed in the uniqueness of their own experiences.

Several colleagues and instructors also helped in special ways. At Case Western Reserve University, Marie R. Haug, William Holmes, and Mark Lefton offered insights, encouragement, and excellent advice. Marvin B. Sussman organized the project. As Director of the Institute for the Family and a Bureaucratic Society, he directed many projects, taught several courses and published. Marv was also available to answer questions, rethink concepts, make many telephone calls, and help this novice on her first job. Vivian R. McCoy
called to my attention the computer facilities located at the University of Kansas; Vivian, too, took time to listen to what I wanted to do.

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Al and Berte Rose gave their continuing support to me. My parents, Leo and Ethel Shapiro offered encouragement. My daughters, Amy Claire and Liana Isa, delayed my research
and writing, and I would happily make that trade again. They offered empirical evidence to Cooley's ideal primary group. Without my husband's patience and support, in addition to his editorial skills and numerous insights, I would not have completed this dissertation. Mark remarked many times that he was grateful to have learned early about the dual career family in principle—before he had to put it into practice.
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v1
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITA</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.   THE PROBLEM</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.  THE FRAMEWORK</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE MOTHERS</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV.  THE TEACHERS</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.   Variables and Indicators</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES

Table Page

1. The Conceptual Differences between Interorganizational Analysis, Client-Service Organization Interaction, and the Relationship between Primary Groups and Complex Organizations............ 29
2. The Final Sample Distribution................ 57
3. Percent of Students Attending Racially Segregated Schools......................... 59
4. The Mothers' Descriptions of the Kind of Student Their Child Would Be in First Grade................................. 63
5. The Mothers' Ideal Student Descriptions of Their Children............................. 63
6. How Far in School the Mothers Expected Their Children to Go (Expectations)........ 65
7. Ideallly How Far in School the Mothers Would Like Their Children to Go (Aspirations)............................. 65
8. The Kind of Teacher the Mothers Would Prefer for Their Children.................... 68
9. The Mothers' Descriptions of Their Children's Teachers............................... 69
10. How the Mothers Punish Their Children If They Misbehave at Home................. 71
11. What the Mothers Thought the Teachers Should Do If Their Children Misbehaved in School................................. 73

ix
12. Percent of Mothers Who Believed That the Teacher Should Be Allowed to Paddle the Students ....................... 73
13. The Mothers' Preferences for the Most Important Job of the School ............. 75
14. The Mothers' Combined Responses for the Three Most Important Jobs of the School ................................ 76
15. The Mothers' Preferences for the Most Important Job of the Family ............. 78
16. The Mothers' Combined Responses for the Three Most Important Jobs of the Family ................................ 79
17. What the Mothers Believed They Should Do About Their Childrens' Reading ................................ 81
18. Influences Which the Mothers Believed Were the Most Significant to Their Children ................................ 83
19. The Mothers' Feelings about the Defeat of the November, 1974 School Levy ................................ 84
20. The Mothers' Opinions on Why the School Levy Was Defeated ..................... 86
21. The Mothers' Opinions as to the Effect of the Levy Defeat on Their Childrens' Education ................................ 86
22. The Mothers' Scores for Anticipated Participation in School Activities ........ 87
23. The Mothers' Scores for Actual Participation in School Activities ............ 87
24. How Much the Mothers Believed They Could Do to Bring About a Change in the Schools' Reading Program ............... 89
25. Anticipated Responses of Mothers If Their Children Are Not Assigned to the Desired Teacher ............... 91
26. The Teachers' Self-Perceptions .................. 97
27. Percent of Teachers Who Thought They Were the Type Their Students' Mothers Wanted .................. 98
28. Percent of Mothers Whose Teacher Preferences Were the Same as the Teachers' Self-Perceptions ............... 98
29. Percent of Teachers Who Have Paddled Their Students .................. 103
30. Percent of Mothers and Teachers Who Agreed on Whether or Not There Should Be Paddling in the School .................. 105
31. The Teachers' Preferences for the Most Important Job of the Family .................. 106
32. The Teachers' Preferences for the Most Important Job of the School .................. 107
33. Comparison of the Percent of Mothers and Teachers Who Agreed on the Most Important Job of the Family and School .................. 109
34. What the Teachers Believed Had the Most Important Influence on the Children .................. 112
35. Percent of Mothers and Teachers Who Agreed on the Most Important Influences on a Child .................. 112
36. The Teachers' Scores on the Mother Participation in School Activities Scale .................. 114
37. Comparison before School Began of Mother and Teacher Participation in School Activity Scores .................. 115
38. Comparison at the Second Interview of Mother and Teacher Participation in School Activity Scores

39. The Teachers' Descriptions of the Kind of Student That Best Fits the Sample Children

40. The Kinds of Grades the Teachers Thought the Children Would Receive

41. How Far in School the Teachers Expected the Children to Go

42. Percent of Mothers and Teachers Who Agreed on Three Issues of Academic Success for the Children

43. Summary of Selected Issues and Findings for the Mothers

44. Summary of Selected Issues and Findings for the Teachers

45. Summary Table for Agreement between Mothers and Teachers

46. Percent of Mothers Who Agreed with the Teachers on Nine Selected Issues

47. Percent of Mothers Whose Children Had the Kind of Teacher the Mothers Wanted
### LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. An Organization-Set</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The School in Its Organization-Set</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

Education and families occupy lofty positions in the American imagination. The school serves to maintain the democratic ideals, to keep open the heavy door of opportunity, and to teach the skills and outlooks necessary for employment and social mobility. The family, in this tradition, prepares the child for the school's intellectual rigor, and works with teachers and administrators toward insuring an atmosphere in class similar to the one found in the home. That these notions never came-to-pass and remain widely violated is not disputed, and yet they remain among the guiding ideals in the minds of parents and administrators, a social fact demonstrated by the persistence of private schools and by the efforts of many to reshape the public schools through informal consultation as well as political action.

This study of family-school interaction came into being following course work in the history of cultural and structural change and in the sociology of complex organizations, the family, and educational agencies. The key ideas are well-known to social scientists, and have been
for quite some time. The family is a primary group. Members stand in an intense relationship to one-another, and through observation and instruction children acquire the preferences and prejudices of parents, neighbors, siblings, and others admitted within the intimate circle. But the school—often an employer of thousands, managed from a distance by experts, and in close touch with federal and local officials and the political processes in general—often looms in the popular and professional literature as another rigid bureaucratic agency susceptible to the intrigues of politicians. Schools are indeed bureaucratic; politicians do intervene; and yet in the setting and implementing of goals and in terms of the content and intensity of contacts with students and parents, the public school system is essentially a bureaucratic agency operated by professional teachers and administrators.

Sociologists have paid surprisingly little attention in the theoretical literature to the relationship between parents and schools; as a topic in interorganizational analysis, it has not been undertaken. Instead, sociologists treated schools in terms of the bureaucratizing and professionalizing processes, and more often as socializing agencies. Family sociologists examined parents and children as topics in interpersonal dynamics; only rarely have they linked families to the broader structural scene.
This study, then, leads in several directions. First, I focus on merging interorganizational analysis with the literature on client-professional interaction, suggesting that the relationship between families and schools fits neatly into neither one. Second, I assess the varying perceptions—by social class and racial-ethnic characteristics—of schools, children, and teachers. Next, what I study is the viability of primary groups, in this case the family, in attempting to influence a school bureaucracy. Given the superior resources of the bureaucrats, it is problematical that a less structured, less resourceful external agency can direct a more complex organization. But the families in this study remained conscious of themselves as independent agents in potential conflict with schools. On a day-to-day basis, though, most parents contented themselves with the prosaic problems of rearing children and hoped that their child's first year in school would be a good one.
I

THE PROBLEM

Primary groups—basically intimate associations among a few—allow members to learn new values, to reaffirm the traditional. The primary group, as sociologist Charles Horton Cooley had it, served in fact as the focal point around which men and women organized their personalities. If occasionally some asserted their own point of view, if at the same time still others spoke of the importance of harmony, Cooley himself preferred to think that primary groups remained a constant and stable source of inspiration regardless of momentarily unsettling passions to the contrary (Cooley, 1909).

Permanence, longevity, and stability are equally important features of a primary group. The fact is the dependability of a primary group far outweighs the transience of other interactions. Members may anticipate acceptance by others in the group over an extended period of time regardless of their actions. While primary groups are fairly tolerant, members remain accountable. The relationship in short is reciprocal: The primary group will continue to integrate its members as long as the
members maintain a constant flow of legitimate (i.e., accountable) behavior. In the primary group, "the individual is made accountable to one endurable group for all his actions, whether they be discharged within its presence or in other social contexts" (Falding, 1967).

Most persons accept such infringement on their independence, hoping in return for emotional security. The primary group, at least in the American imagination, is a haven, shelter, and retreat still available despite a sudden loss of abilities, influence, status, and youth. This universal acceptance of its members is a unique and important trait of a primary group.

Because we need to belong, because we need to have people for whom we can sacrifice, we long for a primary group. George C. Homans has furthered the long-standing belief that "membership in a group sustains a man, enables him to maintain his equilibrium under the ordinary shocks of life, and helps him to bring up children who will in turn be happy and resilient" (Homans, 1950). The security of the primary group and our affective as well as moral ties to it are imperative for creating mentally healthy individuals. Research on adolescent peer groups, for example, demonstrates that students would prefer performing below their capacity rather than risk alienating their peers. While academic peer groups are available, the brief period during which the student leaves one primary
group (e.g., athletic) for another (e.g., academic) is a time of marginality, and he would be leaving one group and not yet integrated into another. For many teen-agers, it is not worth the risk (Turner, 1964).

In addition to fulfilling our need to belong, primary groups gratify our yearning to sacrifice. Cooley believed that "One is never more human, and as a rule never happier, than when he is sacrificing his narrow and merely private interest to the higher call of the congenial group" (Cooley, 1909). We realize our need to forfeit individual cravings by membership in a primary group.

Thus a primary group provides fulfillment of some basic individual needs. In part because of their enduring nature, and in part because of our allegiance to them, membership in primary groups also preserves the social by maintaining a continuity of values and teaching critical behavior patterns. In fact, primary groups reflect the dominant themes of the different systems for which they prepare us. Primary groups, according to Kingsley Davis, are not even spontaneous. Should groups materialize as uncontrolled collections of men and women bent on gratifying the immediate wishes of one-another, social life in general would become chaotic and unpredictable. What is required is that primary groups become organized in such a manner that societal definitions of the rights and responsibilities of the members are made clear. Yet,
Davis believes, "so far as possible an attempt is made to give them an identity of ends, an intrinsic evaluation of the group as such, a sense of personal closeness and an unawareness of the impingement of social controls" (Davis, 1949).

Primary groups, for both European and American sociologists, continue to function in the interest of personal happiness and social order. In fact, a fundamental premise in much sociological literature is the necessity of preserving a sense of the Gemeinschaft, the mechanical solidarity, and the primary group ties (Applebaum, 1970). Not only are these close relationships vital for human emotional support, but they perform the tasks beneficial and necessary for the entire society, e.g., instruction in particularistic criteria and non-uniform behavior as well as the transmission of values, norms, and mores.

Particularistic standards are those which we use to judge members of a specific group according to criteria intrinsic to the person. Within the personality system, Talcott Parsons argues that particularism represents "a need disposition on the part of the actor to be guided by criteria or choice particular to his own and the object's position in an object-relationship system rather than by criteria defined in generalized terms" (Parsons and Shils, 1951). Parsons and others agree that this sense of self is best taught within a primary group (Parsons, 1959).
Men and women are most successful at internalizing non-uniform behavior inside the confines of a close-knit group (Litwak and Meyer, 1974). These behaviors include areas where so little knowledge is required that just about anyone can perform them such as changing a messy diaper or preparing a tasty dinner; complex problems for which we have only a minimal amount of information and opinions on the subject vary sharply, as for instance the best candidate for President or the best kind of husband; and events which occur infrequently such as floods and hurricanes. Because a primary group stresses particularistic criteria, it is best suited to socialize members on how to respond in non-uniform situations.

Similarly, the approved patterns of action as well as the major values of a civilization can be learned effectively in a primary group. In part, this is due to the socializing role of the family, the most important primary group during the critical early years of childhood, and in part because of the importance of gaining approval from primary group members regardless of age. Desire for acceptance reinforces behavior according to the norms and values the primary group teaches.

Primary groups, therefore, due to their intimacy and endurance can be conducive as a forum for both individual and societal needs. There is, however, variation between the four basic kinds of primary groups, each one functional
for the members and society in a different way. Although neighborhood gatherings, informal office cliques, peer groups, and even the family are primary groups, each retain unique characteristics.

Adolescents participate in a series of informal groups of friends, classmates, neighbors, and others with whom they share secrets, spend leisure time, and discuss problems peculiar to their age. These peer groups emerge at a time when the relative closeness of the family and elementary school become increasingly distant. In fact, the popularity and for that matter solidarity of the peer group during the teen years is an indication of the void left by increased independence from the family and single-teacher environment of elementary school. Peer groups fulfill the primary group needs of adolescents by serving as a setting in which they are comfortable and secure and allowing at the same time a continuous celebration of their own notions and worldly outlooks (Coleman, 1961; Scott, 1965; Turner, 1964).

Residential propinquity, age, and occupational role are the key elements in a neighborhood group. The coffee clutches of housewives along with the racquetball leagues, fraternal organizations, and drinking buddies of men provide all with primary group relationships external to the home (LeMasters, 1975). While demands from these groups often conflict with familial needs, many participate in them and consider them a comfortable source of friendship.
Informal office cliques, while more transient, offer a degree of spontaneity and friendliness lacking often in the milieu of rules, regulations, and programmed anonymity characteristic of large organizations (Homans, 1950; see also Blau and Scott, 1962).

Given Cooley's requirements, the family ought to be an ideal primary group; this is where babies are born, and for most of the members the family is the group which has the greatest influence on the child's life chances, behavior patterns, and goals. But the family is not a perfect primary group. True, for many it is the major source of emotional support for twelve to eighteen years and continues as a guide to acceptable conduct, by choice and habit, for decades. Continued contacts between parents and their children long after they left the home is one indication of familial closeness (Sennett, 1970; Sussman, 1959). Families also direct the cognitive and emotional growth of most children during the preschool years. Although the family's importance for the child declines as his world becomes increasingly complex, it remains for many people the most constant source of support.

For others, though, the family does not function as a close-knit group, one providing security and stability. There is the ideal family—Talcott Parson's conceptualization of the nuclear family and Charles H. Cooley's elaboration of a primary group—but for many Americans
the ideal is only useful to measure variation. Even within the middle-class nuclear home, differences are vast. There are upper and lower middle-class families (Kahl, 1957), intrinsic and utilitarian ones (Cuber and Harroff, 1965), fun, colleague, and nestling marriages (Packard, 1968), entrepreneurial and bureaucratic parents (Miller and Swanson, 1958), and so forth. Female-headed households, communal families, serial-monogamous arrangements coupled by high divorce rates are additional indications of the variations within the familial institution. Arlene Skolnick has explored and summarized much of the work on family definitions. Basically, she argues that affective bonds, permanence, and face-to-face relationships are a fantasy, an ideal in the family. Instead, the family is as diverse as other institutions and variations should not be interpreted as deviant but as differences in a pluralistic society (Skolnick, 1973).

By now, all are familiar with the argument that many family jobs have been assumed by more efficiency-minded organizations (Ogburn, 1968), leaving families to concentrate on directing the cognitive and emotional growth of their children, particularly during the pre-school years (Homans, 1950; Parsons, 1955). And the fact is that although pre-school, day care, and similar programs are ever-more popular, in most social circles children remain at home subject mainly to the directive hand of mothers.
Additionally, while historians and others have reported that families were at one time the economic producers for the nation as well as the sources of education for children, these functions are still performed by the family and persons participate as individuals but not as members of a family unit (Skolnick, 1973).

The debate on the utility of the family has proved sterile. Basically, the ideal primary group, like the ideal family is non-existent. Families, then, should be perceived as places into which we are born where affection is comforting although not always present. We learn different norms and values from the various family styles. And finally, most people leave their original families, although memories linger, whether warm or angry.

The situation changes radically at age five. Now, the school—a hodge-podge of professional educators, efficiency-minded administrators, and test-conscious counselors—emerges as a significant force in the socialization process. At that point, then, family members must share with school officials the direction of their children's emotional support and cognitive growth (Dreeben, 1968).

The drama of the child entering school is important not only for the child and perhaps the teacher, but for the family as well. Confronting the parents is the potential problem of the child's divided loyalties. For example,
many parents resent the introduction of the teacher's authority in areas where the parents feel inadequate, especially in vital spheres such as discipline (Klien and Ross, 1965) and sex education.

Part of the difficulty parents encounter in relationships with school officials arise because the child attends school daily, and for many years is exposed to ideas which may vary from those of the parents. Other problems stem from the inherent awkwardness of a primary group working with a bureaucracy. In short, the two organizations are in several ways antithetical to each other, despite a mutual interest and concern for children.

Regardless of the modifications, deletions, additions, and skepticism surrounding Max Weber's original assessment of the characteristics of a bureaucracy, his general outline has remained the standard for comparison. Guided by the twin norms of efficiency and rationality, Weber portrayed an ideal bureaucracy in terms of a division of labor, multi-levels of authority arranged hierarchically, a set of rules and regulations, and a system of advancement predicated upon skill (Gerth and Mills, 1946). But Weber described an ideal-type bureaucracy, and his portrayal is subject to the limits imposed by that tool. Because they are not grounded empirically, ideal types represent standards of excellence often unobtainable. The weakness of an ideal model are similar to those of other models. They
overemphasize symbols, form, and rigor, oversimplify for
the sake of elegance, and fail to recognize that models do
not apply entoto to all phenomenon (Kaplan, 1964). That
they have little to do with people themselves is an
additional disservice.

Weber's outline of bureaucratic organizations contains
additional weaknesses. First, he neglected to recognize the
significance of informal groups in a bureaucracy. While
these small groups are meaningful for the members, they are
equally consequential for understanding the operations of
a complex organization. Often violating the bureaucratic
chain of command, informal groups are capable of exercising
power over superiors (Gouldner, 1954). Elton Mayo in his
famous Hawthorn studies discovered that while the goal of
management was increased production, the workers had agreed
to limit production as a means of controlling one another
(Blau and Scott, 1962). Similarly, in schools, teachers
may clique together and present a viable threat to an
administrator's power base (Corwin, 1967). The net result
is that contrary to the organization, subordinates will
exert additional influence in the decision-making process.

Weber also failed to incorporate the importance of
external forces in shaping the structure and direction
of a bureaucracy. Federal bureaucrats, citing Supreme
Court decisions, an act of congress, or funding priorities
may reorganize local school systems (Clark, 1965).
Similarly, an angry group of parents may group together to defeat school levies, forcing a reordering of school priorities. Neighbors have forced a halt to highway construction, protesting a path too near home, too close to favorite rivers, trees, and bird sanctuaries. Finally, corporate leaders in public and private firms often modify structures with a view toward capitalizing on market changes.

Finally, Weber's model of bureaucracy overlooks variations in complex organizations. The fact is that organizations differ in the degree to which authority is centralized, rules and regulations are standardized, and the amount of specialization. Because of these differences, bureaucracies can be categorized according to the degree to which they are punishment or representative-centered (Gouldner, 1954), whether they conform to a natural or organismatic model (Gouldner, 1959a), and the specificity of organizational control over members along with the degree of non-member discretion (Thompson, 1962).

A heuristically useful technique for categorizing bureaucracies is the primary beneficiary of the organization. Originated by Blau and Scott, the typology includes four types of bureaucracies, each with its particular constituents, each with unique problems (Blau and Scott, 1962). Mutual-benefit organizations, including labor unions, fraternal clubs, and religious movements, are mandated to
serve their members. Membership apathy coupled with a potentially powerful leadership pose serious problems for this type of organization. In principle, mutual-benefit organizations are structured around democratic ideals, and the consequences of an oligarchy are to alter the fundamental requirement of membership decision-making. The primary beneficiaries of business concerns are the owners, whose goal in most cases is to operate their organization with a view toward financial profit. The guiding concepts of efficiency and rationality influence decision-making at all levels and a decline in either one will invariably result in a decrease of profits. "The distinctive characteristic of commonweal organizations is that the public-at-large is their prime beneficiary, often, although not necessarily, to the exclusion of the very people who are the object of the organization's endeavor." Lacking a specific clientele, a commonweal organization is accountable to the public. Members of police departments, prison staffs, and many government agencies resent external control over their organization, however, and in fact have managed to operate with a great deal of autonomy, ignoring their public mandate. Because a hospital and a school are service organizations, the designated beneficiaries are patients and students. But frequently, the concerns of administrators and/or staff supercede those of the client. Often labeled goal
displacement (Merton, 1968), in large measure the problem is a result of the potential conflict a professional meets when working in a bureaucracy. For example, the government funded a social welfare agency to rehabilitate blind people for employment. Evaluations of the agency, however, were based according to the number of clients who were successfully placed in jobs outside the agency. The result was an emphasis on training those clients who had some sight remaining while the less employable blind were neglected (Scott, 1969).

Using this scheme, the categorization of organizations can be fairly simple, in most cases the primary beneficiary is explicit. Moreover, once the primary beneficiary is determined, the major structural and organizational problems become clearer. There is one area where the typology weakens, however. The clarification between a service and commonweal organization is hazy and the consequences of miscategorizing great. Two notable examples are schools and prisons.

Prisons are entrusted with housing criminals and in principle with simultaneously punishing and rehabilitating them. In the sense that prisons are used to incarcerate deviants and outlaws in order to protect society, the prisons are commonweal organizations. But prisons house a rehabilitation program equipped with a professional staff of social workers, psychiatrists,
psychologists, criminologists, and counselors designed to prepare the prisoner for exit from jail and to outfit him with skills necessary to co-exist. Under this system, prisons operate as service organizations, meeting the needs of their clients—the prisoners (Blau and Scott, 1962).

Similarly, the orientation of schools is not entirely clear. Ideally, the relationship between the teacher and student is that of a professional and client. By placing the interests of her students ahead of her own, by making decisions based on the needs of individuals and by relying on her college training in making these decisions, a teacher behaves as a professional. Students are equally suited to a client role. The age difference, particularly in elementary school, along with the teacher's superior knowledge makes students vulnerable to professional control. In the sense that teachers and students maintain the professional-client relationship, the school is a service organization.

But teachers and school administrators must also serve their community and indeed the entire society. Along these lines, they are entrusted to teach presumably universal norms and values, occupational skills, and to assist the students in social development (Dreeben, 1968; Gottlieb and Hodgkins, 1963). In this case, the peculiarities of students become thorns to be avoided rather than issues with which to work. Schools, therefore, may be operated
as commonweal organizations.

Much of the conflict over school policy-making centers around the fundamental question, Who should benefit? If administrators organize their school around service organization principles, then the primary goal is to provide the most conducive atmosphere for student maturation and learning. According to this strategy, community demands, while acknowledged by school officials, will be neglected for the more important need to serve the students. I would suspect that the professional orientation of teachers and administrators, in this instance, is relatively high, and that most staff believe that they alone can and should determine pedagogy and instructional content. On the other hand, the school administrator who believes that his constituency includes students as well as parents, local influentials, and the leaders of private organizations, may structure his curriculum, disciplinary practices, and extra-curricular activities to serve this larger community. The fact is that many school officials perceive their task in public relations terms. They imagine themselves to be taking an extended goodwill tour and thus creating a positive image of the school and themselves (Gross, 1958; Lane, Corwin, and Monahan, 1967; McCarty and Ramsey, 1971).

On a day-to-day basis, administrators are not confronted with choices between student and community
welfare; the two are often compatible. Only in those instances where, for example, a teacher's "bizarre" techniques are at odds with the community's mores, but improve student achievement nonetheless, is the administrator forced to select his loyalties. He does not choose in a social void. Schools must compete with other agencies for funds, with private schools for clients, with peer groups and families for students' time and attention, and a degree of agreement with community beliefs is helpful in the struggle.

The schools, while traditionally assured of funds and clients, are not guaranteed large quantities of either one. The fact is that schools are not entirely domesticated. A domestic organization does not compete with other organizations for clients; in fact, a steady flow of clients is assured. There is no struggle for survival for this type of organization. Like the domesticated animal these organizations are fed and cared for. Existence is guaranteed. Though this type of organization does compete in a restricted area for funds, funds are not closely tied to quality of performance. These organizations are domesticated in the sense that they are protected by the society they serve. Society feels some apprehension about domesticated organizations. It sees support of these organizations as necessary to the maintenance of the social system and creates laws over and above those applying to organized action in general to care for domesticated organizations (Carlson, 1964). (underline added)

As private schools proliferate, and as public schools close for lack of youngsters, so it is no longer certain that politicians and voters will assure the current level of support for schools. In short, some schools are more
domesticated than others.

Basically, then, the school is a mixture of commonweal and service organizations. The mix--varying from one school to the next--defines the pattern of interaction with the students and their parents. This study will focus on the relationship between parents and the school; a questionable association centering around the interaction between a primary group and a bureaucracy. Each structure has a unique modus operandi, suggesting that the antithetical atmospheres of families and schools inhibits communication. Certain it is that relationships between the groups are difficult to establish.

Primary groups and bureaucracies operate under different sets of norms, values, rewards, and structures (Litwak and Meyer, 1974; Ogburn and Nimkoff, 1955). In bureaucracies, proponents of achievement, of skill, and of efficiency exercise great influence; in families, as in other primary groups, men and women speak often of kin ties, of emotions, of a common heritage. A secretary unable to type would be discharged from a business firm, but not from her family. Task-role assignment in a primary group is diffuse, one person performing many jobs, and each job handled often by more than one person. Bureaucracies, on the other hand, stress a clear-cut division of labor and a concomitant specialization. Thus, in a family all members may sweep the floor and dust the house;
in a bureaucracy, housecleaning is clearly the task of the janitor and his assistants. In brief, instrumental and task oriented behaviors dominate bureaucracies, leaving members to behave expressively and emotionally at home and with friends (Zelditch, 1955).

Although these distinctions may impede interaction, the absence of association between primary groups and bureaucratic organizations is not an inevitable by-product of their structures nor of their functions. Actually, connections between the two structures are useful and may provide a positive environment for individuals and for the social system in general. Lack of relevant interaction between primary groups and bureaucracies would result in strains and open conflict: Increasingly, for example, corporation executives and army personnel have recognized the importance for the workers' morale of involving his family in organization-sponsored events (Litwak and Meyer, 1967).

The important issue is not whether primary groups and bureaucracies interact, because communication has always taken place. The significant problem in assessing exchanges between them is the subsequent power balance which results from inter-dependency. Generally speaking, the relationship is asymmetrical. The vast resources, efficiency-mindedness, and goal-directedness which characterize a bureaucracy are useful tools for coping with external structures,
particularly a primary group. At the least, bureaucracies depend upon primary groups to provide emotionally stable and mentally healthy workers. But the emotive behavior and sentimental attachments that symbolize a primary group are not conducive to manipulating outsiders.

The relationship between families and schools is a case in point. At first glance, the relationship appears to be asymmetrical, dominated by the school. Administrators possess vast resources and are able to initiate contacts with parents. Eugene Litwak and Henry F. Meyer (1974) have elaborated at least eight approaches available to school administrators when communicating with parents, including sending messages through home-school agents, community leaders, auxiliary associations such as the Parent Teachers Associations, the student, or formal authority such as truant and attendance officers, and so on. Alternatively, the family's resources are not as vividly outlined nor for that matter as plainly legitimated. Families may withdraw their children from a school with a view toward locating one more compatible with their own needs. But the difficulties of moving suggest that this option may prove undesirable to most families (Barrett and Noble, 1973). Family members do exercise a degree of influence, either overtly or indirectly, collectively or alone. School systems depend upon families to accept school levys and bond issues, act as school volunteers, and instruct their
children in school-approved forms of behavior. Families and school administrators cooperate occasionally, then, mostly because they believe themselves operating within a framework of interdependence and accommodation (Jenkins and Lippett, 1951; Litwak and Meyer, 1966; Sussman, 1972).

Family-school relations are increasingly uncertain when family ideas vary from school officials'. Since the tools available to parents and students are more limited, the family's ability to influence schools is problematical. It is significant socially when primary groups cannot influence private organizations; it is significant politically when they are impotent before the organizations created to serve them. Commonweal and service organization administrators may invoke norms of efficiency to justify their hegemony and while bureaucracies may prove more efficient occasionally, bureaucratic domination negates community influence and limits the impact of the family in the child's education. At stake, then, is the direction of the educational process.

This study explores the relationship between families, especially mothers, and school officials, most notably teachers. I assess the different expectations, orientations, and behaviors of mothers and teachers. Ultimately, I appraise the potential linkage mechanisms employed by families to influence and direct school policy. The path of this relationship, I suspect, influences the child's
progress through school. Basically and hopefully, three questions will be answered:

1). What variations exist among social-classes and racial groups in their relationships with schools?

2). What are the areas of conflict and congruity between families and schools?

3). What linkage tools do families use to influence the behavior of school faculty?

I pose these questions with a view toward describing the patterns of interaction between bureaucratic and primary groups.
II
THE FRAMEWORK

Members of primary groups interact at varying times and in varying ways with members of complex organizations. The pattern and dynamics of the exchanges between partners is influenced and in large measure determined by their structural complexity. Analyses of these different levels of trade are reflected, in part, in the literature on clients and their relationships with service organizations as well as interorganizational investigations. There is, however, a sociological hiatus in conceptualizations and empirical data on the interactions between primary groups and bureaucracies.

Most of the research on primary groups has focused on the internal dynamics of the group, concentrating on the significance of the major processes for members (see Coleman, 1961; Cuber and Haroff, 1965; LeMasters, 1970, 1975; Parsons and Bales, 1955). There has been little work on the primary group within an institutional framework. As a result, we know little about the conduct of family relationships with schools, government agencies, and other complex organizations.
Linkages between bureaucratic organizations and primary groups must account for some form of exchange or bargaining in which there are continuous efforts by both parties to dominate the relationship along with the need to stabilize the interaction. Research on linkage to date has employed a theoretical framework which focuses on the needs, capabilities, and postures of bureaucratic organizations, and on the manner by which these may be satisfied, enhanced, and maintained in dealing with other organizations or primary groups such as families. For example, Litwak and Meyer in their research on Detroit families and schools were concerned largely with mechanisms and strategies used by school functionaries to control families (Litwak and Meyer, 1974).

This study offers another perspective in that the family is viewed as capable of influencing as well as being influenced by the school. The family may modify the school's socialization process by providing alternative socialization experiences within the home or by making demands for changes on the school. In turn, the family's own pattern of developing the roles of its children may be influenced by the school because of new ways of doing things introduced into the home by the child or through parent contacts with the school at conferences and meetings. Because primary groups are bound by emotional and not rational ties, the interdependency between a primary group and bureaucracy
is unique (Table 1). By understanding associations between organizations as well as between individuals and bureaucracies, we can further elaborate on family-school relationships.

Officers of a complex organization maintain a series of interdependent relations with other bureaucracies. Conditioned by such items as size, age, and degree of centralization, bureaucracies vary in the amount of interorganizational activity that takes place. Professionalized, innovative, and decentralized organizations are more involved in joint programs (Aiken and Hage, 1968). Universities, for example, are dependent upon other organizations, particularly other universities for personnel and for athletic and research programs. Exchanges among the Big 10, Ivy League, and other university groups are fairly routine. Additionally and particularly in the case of service organizations, the degree of involvement in a client's life influences the amount of formal collaboration with other organizations. Along these lines, among organizations which are interested in the entirety of a client's social space (laterality) over an extended period of time (longitudinality), there is a greater inclination toward establishing communication networks with other organizations. The health system is a case in point. The long-term therapeutic hospital, as compared with a local general hospital, has more active
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Analysis</th>
<th>Interorganizational Analysis</th>
<th>Primary Groups &amp; Complex Organizations</th>
<th>Clients &amp; Service Organizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>complex organizations</td>
<td>small group &amp; complex organization</td>
<td>individual &amp; complex organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamics of the Interaction</td>
<td>striving toward symmetry or dominance</td>
<td>some striving toward symmetry</td>
<td>straining toward asymmetry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanisms of Interaction</td>
<td>regulations, rules, &amp; formal contacts</td>
<td>indirect contact through involved member</td>
<td>direct contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Means of Influence</td>
<td>control of inputs &amp; outputs</td>
<td>primary group has some control of input</td>
<td>client has little control of input</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
linkages with outside organizations such as nursing homes and family welfare agencies as well as with other research and curative facilities (Lefton and Rosengren, 1966).

What we are dealing with is the amount of interdependency, since all organizations are influenced by decisions made external to their jurisdiction. The degree to which an organization can minimize the impact of outside forces upon its internal dynamics is an indication of its power in its organization-set. An organization-set is the complexity of organizations with which a bureaucracy has inputs and/or outputs (Blau and Scott, 1962; Evan, 1966). An example of an organization-set from the business sector would be General Motors or any automobile company, as the focal organization with labor unions, tire manufacturing firms, steel companies, local, state, and federal governments, and so forth. With a focal organization as a reference, we can assess the communication networks of a bureaucracy and evaluate the modes of interaction in an organization-set. Figure 1 represents a balanced organization-set model. The arrows represent paths of communication.

In most cases, asymmetry is the predominant characteristic with organizations striving to achieve a position of relative strength with other bureaucracies (Blau, 1964; Thompson, 1967). How organization leaders attempt to dominate their set, and the fate of the organization
FIGURE 1: AN ORGANIZATION-SET
in the competition influences the internal dynamics of
the organization and is basic to an understanding of
interorganizational relationships (Aiken and Hage, 1968;

A focal organization - the major source of data
interest - and its task environment - organizations
receiving inputs and giving outputs - are the central
Local task environments include those relationships
among community-based organizations while linkages outside
the immediate direction of the focal organizations are
extralocal (Turk, 1970). Either through Congressional
legislation, Supreme Court decisions, or funding allocations,
the Federal government is one of the key forces in extra­
local task environments.

Because organizations interact with others, because
there is a trading of goods and services, organization
leaders strive continuously to balance their inter­
dependency with an eagerness for autonomy (Katz, 1968a;
Perrow, 1969). The bartering within an organization-set,
all while promoting the flow of resources, introduces
some level of unpredictable behavior into organization
decision-making. The process by which organization
leaders attempt to reduce external influences, control
their task environment, and simultaneously insure the
arrival of needed inputs, is called exchange (Levine
and White, 1969; Reid, 1969; Thompson, 1967). Exchange includes "any voluntary activity between two organizations which has consequences, actual or anticipated, for the realization of their respective goals or objectives" (Levine and White, 1969). The balance in the exchange relationship and the mechanisms used to alter the balance are problematical with at least four alternatives available to organizations (Blau, 1964). 1) Complying with the demands of the providing organization, while gaining the necessary resources, reduces an organization's autonomy drastically. 2) Bargaining for a reciprocal arrangement whereby resources would flow between organizations, creating a more interdependent relationship. Basically, what is required is for one organization to supply key inducements for another, thus creating a mutually dependent association. 3) On the other hand, by maintaining a variety of resource and output organizations in their task environments, an organization can minimize their dependency on any one structure and in so doing maintain their autonomy. 4) Finally, an organization can do without certain resources, changing their goals and perhaps their task environment.

In addition to the difficulties of trying to maintain autonomy and interdependence, adjusting to changes in the task environment creates additional problems. Ideally, an organization should control and direct environmental
shifts. But much that occurs outside a bureaucracy and which influences it nonetheless, are removed from direct organizational control. In fact, changes in a task environment and the ability of an organization to adapt to those changes is one measure of the organization's viability--adaptability is synonymous with survival (Terreberry, 1968).

Along with an organization's resources to meet and possibly direct environmental changes, the amount of chaos in any environment varies. F.E. Emery and E.L. Trist (1965) believe that environments can be categorized as placid randomized or as placid clustered and also as disturbed or turbulent, the last exhibiting the greatest uncertainty for the organization. Because reliance upon other organizations increases, and because predictability declines in a turbulent environment, goal attainment as a measure for interorganizational effectiveness becomes increasingly inappropriate. The difficulties confronting the Chrysler Corporation, while in part a result of ineffective management strategies, may also be blamed on a commitment to build large, gas-consuming automobiles. Although this goal appeared profitable when gasoline was plentiful and cheap, the uncertainty of fuel supplies coupled with rising expenses necessitated a change in Chrysler's goals. As environments evolve from placid-
randomized to turbulent, the need to maintain flexible goals to adapt to the external changes is more and more important.

An alternative to the goal approach would be an assessment of an organization's ability to obtain resources under changing conditions. Viable organizations, under this scheme, compete successfully for significant resources, particularly those which are universally relevant for organizations such as personnel, physical facilities, technology, liquid capital, and for a few, prestige (Elling and Halebsky, 1961; Yuchtman and Seashore, 1967). Wealthier corporations, for example, hold more potential power in the exchange than poorer ones whose existence may be jeopardized by a genuine lack of money.

By using the coordinating agencies, by diversifying the product, and by maintaining flexible goals, bureaucrats are able to minimize their organizations' resource uncertainty. Basically, coordinating agencies such as the United Fund are mediators as well as administrators of communication networks in organization-sets with similar resource needs (Reid, 1969; Warren, 1967). By directing inputs from a central office, competition among organizations can be decreased and a degree of stability obtained. The organization's ability to vary outputs and shift goals also permits organization leaders to eliminate or decrease their dependency on scarce or expensive
resources (Terreberry, 1968). When money was no longer available for tuberculosis research, the Easter Seal campaign was broadened to include all lung ailments.

When explaining the relationship between two or more bureaucracies, social scientists explore the interdependencies of complex organizations, the trading of goods and services, and the competition for resources. Predicated on norms of autonomy and efficiency, organizations strive for a superior position in the exchanges. This rarely occurs in relationships between clients and professionals. The inequality of that interaction is institutional and stems from the belief that the professional's role is to guide the client who seeks help.

The fact is that the asymmetrical relationship between a client and professional results from far more than a motivation to help others unselfishly and thereby gain their trust. More important than altruism is the near monopoly a professional has on knowledge about key situations. Because a professional possesses a systematic body of knowledge obtained by virtue of his extended education (Corwin, 1965; Goode, 1957; Greenwood, 1972; Hagan, 1975), the demand for professional advice is usually greater than the supply, contributing further to the unequal relationship with clients. Additionally, when professionals tender service, they are in full-time
occupational roles, unlike their clients whose interest is temporary (Parsons, 1970). Autonomy from external control also promotes a professional's influence. A system of self-control and well-defined code of ethics eliminates lay people from directing professional behavior. Legalization of their autonomy further legitimates a professional's independence.

Oftentimes, professionals such as physicians and teachers propose that internal control and decision-making is imperative because of the complexity of the issues and the lack of lay understanding. Perhaps this is the case. However, a latent function of professional autonomy is to increase the social distance from clients. Similarly, while the manifest function of titles such as Doctor, Professor, and the ubiquitous Miss, Mrs., Ms., and Mr. of the elementary school is a sign of respect, the addresses have a latent consequence of granting authority to the professional. This is especially the case where the client is addressed by their first names. (See Merton, 1968, for a discussion of manifest and latent functions).

But the norms of the bureaucracy in which professionals are employed fixes limits on their power. Bureaucrats, for instance, stress uniformity and predictability in client transactions, while professionals would prefer to examine each case on its merits. Bureaucrats accent the need for rules and regulations
and gain their authority from their position in a hierarchy; research and personal competence are more a component of a professional's way of life (Corwin, 1965).

Basically, then, the relationship between a professional and client is most uncertain in a service organization. Service organizations are mandated to direct their activities toward client problem-solving, making flexibility an important component of the organization's structure (Litwak, 1961). Professional bureaucracies can be characterized by the way in which clients' needs can be met while general organization goals are kept intact. In large measure, the issue revolves around the availability of alternative responses by the professional. The specificity of responses open to an employee when interacting with a non-employee are relatively limited in a bureaucratic framework. Professionals, on the other hand, have a diffuse set of options and utilize them often. As an example, the alternatives in interacting with customers for a gasoline station attendant or sales clerk are fewer than those of a teacher, physician, or other professional when working with a client. Fewer organizational constraints act to limit a professional. The amount of control an organization exercises in limiting its members responses with non-members, as well as the non-members discretion in interacting with the
organization affects the method of problem-solving (Thompson, 1962). The issue for a professional is to devise a scheme whereby the needs of his client can be met while simultaneously performing in a manner compatible with the bureaucracy. A teacher may consider an intellectually alert student ready for a text two or three years above his chronological age. Central office bureaucrats, however, make text assignments, prescribing a core of readings for each grade level.

The organization, therefore, shadows the relationship between a professional and client. Underlying the entire transaction is the belief that the professional's advice is in the client's best interest (Bidwell, 1970; Parsons, 1970; Pavalko, 1971). Highlighted by the subordinate relationship with a professional, the amount of client trust is predicated on three basic criteria. 1). One of the easiest ways to gain control and trust from a client is from occupational prestige (Bidwell, 1970; Thompson, 1967). Along these lines, historical precedent, as in the case of the clergy (Haug, 1975), or popular notions of an esoteric field, such as with atomic physicists, contribute to a professional's prestige (Haug and Sussman, 1969b). 2). Additionally, the professional's public reputation, regardless of his occupation's image, will influence his exchanges
with clients (Bidwell, 1970). 3). Finally, the client's technical familiarity and his need for the professional service will also affect his trust (Bidwell, 1970). Basically, the less we understand about the professional's technology and the more imperative the advice, the higher the level of trust. Equipped with a well-defined discipline, a professional may administer decisions cognizant that most of his cohorts would act similarly. Ambiguity increases client doubts and distrust.

Trust in professional judgements has not gone unchallenged. In fact, important conflicts exist between professionals and clients, particularly over the boundaries of professional discretion (Bidwell, 1970; Haug and Sussman, 1969a). As a professional expands the scope of his judgements—for instance, as teachers have included sex education, extracurricular demands, and social activities in their lessons—clients have proved less inclined to accept their judgements in the newer areas.

Distrust results from more than disagreement over the limits of professional advice. Increasingly, clients have recognized that professionals are giving more attention to low-risk customers, reducing the idea in the popular mind that professionals are driven by humanitarian impulses (Haug, 1975). Low-income clients
have long recognized that professionals, much like their middle-class counterparts in the larger society, prefer middle-class clients (Blau and Scott, 1962; Scott, 1969). Additionally, the problems of operating in a bureaucracy have become increasingly apparent to clients. The secretness of decision-making and the perceived arbitrariness of an organization's rules and regulations often combine in the minds of clients to increase distrust of professional judgements.

Most important, perhaps, for understanding the erosion of client trust has been the loss of a monopoly of knowledge. Resulting in part from the increased level of education of most Americans, professionals must share with their clients a key resource—the science of their profession (Haug, 1975). In fact, the New Careers movement was partially an attempt to decrease the intellectual gap between professionals and clients and subsequently minimize the absolute trust in the professional (Pearl and Reissman, 1965). Along these lines, the growth of para-professionals and assistants further reduced the educational distance (Haug, 1975).

The withdrawal of client trust creates problems for both the client and professional. Largely resulting from a growing distrust, many clients have attempted to alter the power balance, either by legalizing client rights, seeking alternatives, or going without
non-critical services (Bidwell, 1970; Haug and Sussman, 1969a). However, if a professional or agency has an oversupply of services and seeks clients, then client control may appear excessive and could result in a distortion of ultimate service goals (Blau and Scott, 1962; Clark, 1965; Cummings, 1968).

Thus, the strains toward a balanced relationship which are present in interorganizational behavior are beginning to develop in the interaction of clients and professionals. The processes of change, accompanied as they are by conflict, are increasingly apparent and significant. Moreover, the demands for change permanently alter the status of an elite group of professionals in American society.

The problem is particularly acute in the case of elementary school teachers. Operating as they do with an unsophisticated technology, teachers are assigned the honorable tasks of skill instruction and the transmission of conventions, norms, and values. While their client is the student, the elementary school teacher's chief skeptics are his parents. Although parents are neither as ineffective as their children nor as resourceful as executives of major organizations, still parents pose a formidable threat to the autonomy of teachers.
At the heart of school decision-making is the expanded professionalization of school personnel and the immense increase in educational bureaucracies during the course of the past fifty years or so. Because administrators have expanded their influence, and because bureaucrats located in Washington have expanded their own, the place of parents, church leaders, and politicians in school matters has declined (Callahan, 1962; David, 1975; Gross, 1958; Katz, 1968b; Kimbrough, 1964; Koerner, 1968; Tyack, 1972). That professionalization was taking place in other agencies and other institutions provided little comfort to frustrated parents (Lubove, 1965). When parents and administrators disagreed, the question became: Who should make decisions about curriculum, about discipline, about the child's education?

The school's task environment includes local voluntary organizations such as the Lions Club as well as the teachers' organizations and community business leaders (Figure 2). But relationships between parents and school teachers and administrators follow a unique pattern. While contact with other organizations may be sporadic, contact with children is the school's chief activity. In this sense, the school is forced to maintain intimate ties with representatives of an external agency. In the second place, teachers and administrators have increased
FIGURE 2: THE SCHOOL IN ITS ORGANIZATION-SET
the scope of their work, now offering courses and advice about hygiene, medical delivery, dating and birth control along with doses of gymnastics, quarterbacking, cheerleading, and forensics. By expanding their boundaries, school teachers and administrators have increased the areas for potential communication with parents (Lefton and Rosengren, 1966). In addition, the broader range of school goals has encouraged parents to seek a measure of control over policies (Simpson and Gulley, 1962).

The indirect nature of parent-school contact serves to complicate communications. Acting often as a mediator, the child may be trapped between two adversaries—his parents on the one hand and the teacher and principal on the other. Because children detect dissension, the potential for a natural triadic relationship exists, in this case allowing the child to overstep his position and manipulate the partners in his education (Freilich, 1964; Simmel, 1950). Finally, the pattern of interaction between families and schools varies greatly for school administrators. For some, the parents are a nuisance, and for still others the key problem is community apathy (Gracey, 1972; Gross, 1958; Koerner, 1968; McCarty and Ramsey, 1971).

In most cases, families exercise the lowest level of decision-making in school affairs. For their part, even teachers are often without power (Koerner, 1968). The fact
is oftentimes the federal or state government bureaucrats make the critical policy decisions, implemented by administra-
tors and school board members (Clark, 1965; Gross, 1958).
"The schools are affected by decisions both public and private, which lie outside the authority of the board of education" (Kimbrough, 1964).

In part, the ineffectiveness of families is traceable to the nature of clients interacting with a service organ-
ization: The potential clashes may be understood in inter-
organizational terms where two institutions are bargaining to maintain and perhaps expand their autonomy. Disagreement, however produces strains in the relationship. Typically, discrepant expectations between parents and teachers which can result in conflicting socialization patterns, are potentially harmful to the child. Caught between two different behavior patterns, the child becomes a pawn in a conflict between two systems with varying goals, normative patterns, and structures. The problems are compounded by the turbu-
lent field within which families and schools operate, sug-
gest a continual adapting to external changes.

Parents, similar to other clients, will consent most likely to school decisions if they trust the teachers and administrators to behave in a professional manner. Parents speak of the needs of their child, raising symbols of his future and his competence as needed. During the past decade or two many have challenged professional judgements.
In public schools, places filled with low prestige females (Ziegler, 1971) who themselves lack technological skills or rhetoric to begin with (Lortie, 1975), erosion of confidence has proceeded even more rapidly (Miller, 1970; Pavalko, 1965; Smith and Cooper, 1968). In the past, usually only a few wealthy, more educated patrons doubted skills of professional men (Bidwell, 1970), but lately even poor and uneducated men and women have complained.

As a consequence of the so-called client revolt, more families are participating in school affairs and decision-making. In part, because of the studies linking student achievement and family background variables (Blau and Duncan, 1967; Coleman, 1966; Jencks, 1972), administrators themselves have tried to expand parental involvement in school activities (Litwak and Meyer, 1967). But many programs to involve parents have failed. The Parent Teachers Association (PTA) is an obvious bridge between parents and teachers. Parents are reluctant to employ the PTA as an intermediary agency, usually perceiving it as an extension of the administration (Corwin, 1965; Gracey, 1972; Gross, 1958; Koerner, 1968).

Structural and attitudinal barriers have also weakened family-school relationships. Teachers carry a heavy workload (David, 1975) and are not rewarded for encouraging contact with parents. Professionalization of teachers also restrains direct communication (Jenkins and Lippett, 1951).
Teachers, according to Robert Dreeben (1970), become jittery in the presence of parent volunteers, fearing that a mistake would prove disastrous to promotion plans, perhaps even to their own position. If mothers, acting as assistants, perform professional tasks, the teachers' authority might be undermined.

Viewed from a distance, parents comprise a heterogeneous cohort of non-specialists, who are usually fearful of the expertise of school professionals (Gracey, 1972; Koerner, 1968). Parents, then, are reluctant to intrude on the apparent superordinate position of the teacher and often transfer this apprehension into apathy (Gross, 1958; Koerner, 1968). Many mothers and fathers believe that efforts to promote change in curricula or resource allocation would prove futile. The findings from empirical studies suggest they are correct. Activitists in the Mobilization of Youth, as an illustration, were successful when their objectives were compatible with those of school administrators. When contrary or outside the scope of bureaucratic interest, the workers' plans were rejected (Prager, 1967; see also David, 1975).

Finally, the school system provides a safety valve for parent dissension when periodically parents can vote on bond issues, levies, and school board members (Gross, 1958; Koerner, 1968). In fact, many families may interpret voting down money issues and voting out school board members as the only genuine means of reforming schools. After completing a
study on lay participation in school fiscal and budgetary decisions, Mariam David concluded that "...citizens may not accept the legitimacy of participation. They may well accept the notion of a representative rather than participatory democracy whereby their attitudes are fed into the system through the electoral process" (David, 1975).

Ratifying a bond issue or electing officials occurs infrequently and the problem of family-school interaction worsens. This is particularly true among families whose socialization patterns and value orientations conflict with the school (Fein, 1973). Social-class as well as racial differences influence the parents' beliefs about school and the correct behavior patterns of their children. Similarly, the school is limited by the "status and ambition of the families being served" (Conant, 1961) and the stage is set for dissatisfaction and low achievement.

Poor white, black, and Puerto-Rican children suffer in their relationships with the school. Because their parents prefer disciplined children (Wilder, 1968), because some prefer a stiff dose of the three "R"s (Gracey, 1972), the childrens' beliefs about school are often different from their teachers'. Teachers, particularly at the elementary school level, prefer a relaxed pedagogy and a push toward the social and emotional development of their students (Wilder, 1968).
Poor home preparation for school contributes to weak family-school communication networks in working-class areas. Often, in working-class homes, language patterns are restrictive; youngsters then focus on a person's status rather than the internalizing of key values. Working-class parents want their children to succeed in school and often pressure them to do well. But however much their parents may talk of longterm academic success, working-class youngsters still think in immediate terms, thus creating a discontinuity between teacher and student which blocks academic progress (Fantini and Weinstein, 1968; Havighurst and Neugarten, 1967). Working-class students, at least according to one survey, even cheat in school more (Pearlin and Yarrow, 1969).

Because children from Puerto-Rican families, as those from black homes, are reared in a different value system, they encounter difficulty in school (Billingsley, 1968; Bracey and Meier, 1971; Coleman, 1966; Jencks, 1972; Rainwater, 1970; Scanzoni, 1970; Willie, 1970). Essentially, Puerto-Rican families emphasize collectivity and dependence, not individuality and independence. If familialism proved functional for maintaining their identity in a potentially hostile environment, it has reduced odds for achieving success American-style (Montalvo, 1974). Time orientation of Puerto-Ricans—toward the here and now, rather than the future—may retard mobility further (Papajohn and Spiegel, 1975), encouraging job seeking for cash rather than an
Faulty language skills and a value incongruity disadvantage many children of minority parents and from impoverished homes. Many of these same children also experience discrimination. In brief, teacher evaluate students as individuals and as members of special groups. An example of how easily teachers can categorize students is a study in which teachers were given pictures of students and asked to judge their IQ, social relationships, and the grade the child will complete in school. In almost all cases, the teachers thought the nicer looking boys and girls were smarter, more popular with peers, and would go further in school than the less attractive children (Clifford and Walster, 1973).

The fact is that many teachers, like other professionals, prefer to work with middle-class clients. They gain their own prestige from their clients, and thus often give more time to some, neglecting those who might benefit most from their services (Becker, 1968; Scott, 1969). James Coleman (1966) argued for example, that the teacher was more important in influencing working-class achievement patterns than those of middle-class students. But those who teach the poor, the black, the Puerto-Rican are often qualitatively inferior.

The pattern of resources flowing from poor, needy areas into wealthy, more responsive communities is repeated with money allocations as well. Again, Coleman (1966) found
that when the amount of money spent did affect achievement, poorer students benefitted most, middle-class students tended to succeed in almost any environment. But, as others have found, higher paid teachers and other resources stream to white middle-class schools. Finally, another researcher found that black schools had smaller class sizes and better teachers than Puerto-Rican classrooms where achievement was even lower. The author concluded that resource distribution to schools was a political rather than educational or professional response (Ritterband, 1973).

School administrators interact differently with parents, depending quite often on their constituents' race and social-class (Wilder, 1968). Because of their relationship with parents, principals define themselves into an awkward position. After all, unlike other organizations, "the exercise of authority in schools is not solely an internal matter." The fact is that as more parents demand control and as more administrators, for one reason or another, believe that parental involvement is important, families have increased their part in the decision-making structure of the school (Dreeben, 1970). Although the pattern of involvement has been uneven from school to school.

School administrators have a constituency larger than their local communities, however. Both teachers and administrators are more or less committed to teaching universal codes of behavior (Fein, 1973; Katz, 1968b; Sieber and
Wilder, 1967; Ziegler and Bass, 1974). Dominated by professionals, school decisions are often insensitive to the needs of families (Ritterband, 1973; Ziegler and Bass, 1974). It is this strain between autonomy from communities and interdependency with them which becomes increasingly apparent with local demands for school change.

A resolution of tensions is not readily available. Neither school administrators and teachers nor families are clear about their own goals. Between a desire to socialize their children toward independence and autonomy, between a desire to maintain a dependency relationship within a family and sustain the primary group, family heads are strained and confused (Hess and Handel, 1959; Slater, 1970). Contact with school, a place in which self-reliance and achievement are emphasized, just heightens the uneasiness.

Relationships between families and schools are established by law, minimizing the voluntarism and solidarity between groups (Parsons, 1970). Some attend for twelve years, others for sixteen or more, but for all, school administrators and teachers exercise increasing authority. After all, the school is the critical link between the private realm of the family and the public life of adulthood (Dreeben, 1968). Teachers and counselors, by manipulating grades and advice, can control the future direction of a student's career (Bidwell, 1974; Circourel and Kitsuse, 1963).
Families teach daily habits, whether useful or dysfunctional, moral or corrupt (Dewey, 1973), and often parents offer a sense of security and love in a competitive world (Parsons, 1959). Schools, on the other hand, teach cultural continuity (Dewey, 1973). Teachers try to "strengthen loyalties to the society itself and foster commitment to its central values and sentiments" rather than the parochialism of the family (Bidwell, 1974). The dissimilarities between families and schools in preparing children for adulthood does nothing to minimize the emotional transitions for both parents and children when they enter kindergarten (Klien and Ross, 1965).

Critical to a smooth relationship between a family and school is the ability of family members to adapt to bureaucratic processing of their children. Best equipped are modified nuclear families whose support system is strong enough to nurture dependency while allowing for geographic and social mobility (Litwak, 1965; Sussman, 1959). Most typical of middle-class homes, the modified nuclear family represents an additional bonus for a group which has a high level of academic achievement.

The relationship between family variables and interaction with the school is circular. Middle-class families, those whose speech patterns, socialization processes, and structure are most compatible with goals and ideals of educators, also produce the high achievers. In turn, high
educational rewards increase the parents' satisfaction with the school and their feelings are transferred to the child. Authors of one study found that when parents were pleased with the school, the child's achievement increased (Wilder, 1968).

Less fortunate families enjoy a less profitable relationship with schools. Parents are usually subordinate, enjoying fewer resources, little prestige, few options. The wealthy, if dissatisfied, may leave a district (Dobriner, 1973; Hirschman, 1970): the poor, at least most, endure.
III
THE MOTHERS

The data for this study were gathered from in-depth interviews with seventy-nine mothers whose eldest child was entering first grade in the fall, 1974. While almost 92% of the sample children had attended kindergarten, the first grade was selected as the study focus because it represents the first full-time family-school socialization setting. Limiting the study to Liami, a medium-sized (population of 79,000), heavily industrialized city in northern Ohio, we were able to obtain a proportion of white, black, and Puerto-Rican mothers. The predominance of factory workers did limit our social-class distribution, and only among the white sample was there a middle-class population (Table 2).

Of the sixteen elementary schools in Liami, we eliminated one because of a bilingual program and six because of populations under 600. By controlling for size and reorganization programs, which influence parent-school relations, we selected the sample from only nine schools. We examined kindergarten pupil registration forms, containing all
TABLE 2: THE FINAL SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social-Class</th>
<th>Racial-Ethnic Groups</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working-class</td>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle-class</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>46</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
relevant background variables for the final sample selection. Since we wanted to use only first-born children, all first-born Puerto-Rican and black students from the nine schools were included in the study. We did however take a random selection of white children from both social-classes.

The schools were segregated, mostly by race; a majority of white and black students attended schools where they were the dominant group. As for the Puerto-Ricans, most were in schools that were either white or Puerto-Rican in composition (Table 3).

The mothers were interviewed twice, the first time before school began in August and then a second time following the Christmas Holiday. Originally, one hundred three mothers participated, but the sample size was reduced because of moves to a new town, admission to private schools, and in a few cases invalid interviews. There were no interview rejections and so the original randomness of the sample remained intact. In fact, few significant problems arose during the data collection phase; and when snags developed they were remedied quickly. For instance, babysitters, usually local junior or senior high school girls, accompanied the interviewers during August to "liberate" the mothers for the hour long interview session. Additionally, the Puerto-Rican interviewers had English and Spanish interview forms with them when they visited Puerto-Rican mothers. The interviewer's race was matched for the other respondents
### TABLE 3: PERCENT OF STUDENTS ATTENDING RACIALLY SEGREGATED SCHOOLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School's Racial Composition</th>
<th>WMC&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>WWC&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>77.8 (14)</td>
<td>53.6 (15)</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>22.2 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>10.7 (3)</td>
<td>60.0 (9)</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto-Rican&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>16.7 (3)</td>
<td>14.3 (4)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>27.8 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White/Black&lt;sup&gt;f&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>26.7 (4)</td>
<td>16.7 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White/Black/ Puerto-Rican&lt;sup&gt;g&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>17.9 (5)</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>27.8 (5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

<sup>a</sup>WMC symbolizes white middle-class  
<sup>b</sup>WWC symbolizes white working-class  
<sup>c</sup>A majority of students in five of the schools were white.  
<sup>d</sup>A majority of students in one school were black.  
<sup>e</sup>A majority of students in one school were Puerto-Rican.  
<sup>f</sup>The student population in one school was divided almost equally between whites and blacks.  
<sup>g</sup>The student population in one school was one-third white, black, and Puerto-Rican.
as well.

In order to compare such items as expectations, punishment techniques, and levels of interaction, the head teacher for each sample student was interviewed in October and asked questions similar to the mothers. To protect the anonymity of the sample children, we spoke to the thirty first-grade teachers about non-sample children as well. Finally, by hiring a substitute for each teacher, we hoped to eliminate any potential resentment toward the study when the teachers had to leave their classrooms.

The analysis for this study was done in two parts. First, in this chapter I evaluate what differences, if any, existed between white mothers of middle and working-class positions as well as variations among white, black, and Puerto Rican working-class mothers. If there was a pattern of similarities, then traditional analysis along social-class and racial-ethnic lines would have to be revised. In fact, I found that neither social-class nor racial-ethnic differences were statistically significant on any of the issues. However, there was sufficient variation, particularly among the working and middle-class white mothers, to justify additional research with family background variables. Also, while we interviewed the mothers twice, I used the Time II data only when the responses varied dramatically from the mothers' original beliefs. As it was, then, the second interviews are not included often in my analysis.
The second part of this study, which is more fully developed in chapter four, includes two sections. First, I elaborate on the teachers' beliefs concerning aspects of school life according to the social-class and racial-ethnic characteristics of their students, followed by an assessment of the patterns of agreement between mothers and teachers on those issues. Again, the data from the second interview with the mothers is only occasionally contained in the analysis.

The sample of mothers was fairly young and predominantly working-class. Nearly half were between nineteen and twenty-two years old when their first baby was born and over 80% had at least two children to care for. Most of the mothers still had at least one pre-schooler at home, which might help to explain why only one-third had a job on the outside. Considering that at one time nearly 60% of the women worked, many of the mothers followed the conventional pattern, at least in 1974, of going home after children were born.

As both conventional wisdom and sociological fact would have it, family background influences, if not determines, our perceptions of reality, or moral righteousness, and of expectations and aspirations. Key studies of student achievement have highlighted the importance of family variables for explaining motivation and subsequent grades in school as well (Coleman, 1966; Jencks, 1972). Recently, however, as researchers explore the expectations of parents
for their children, traditional differences among groups appear to be fading. What has emerged from this study is a blending of aspirations across social-class and ethnic lines.

I measured the mothers' academic evaluations of their children on two items: closed-ended responses to six student types and a question on the number of years of schooling. The alternatives on the student-type list ranged from academic traits such as smart and creative, to behavioral characteristics such as well-behaved and cooperative, to negative features including uncooperative or uninterested in school (see Appendix A, item 13). We asked the mothers not only which sketch best described their children (Table 4), but also which type they would prefer (Table 5). There was agreement among white mothers that a well-behaved or cooperative student was the best description for their child and moreover, that these behavioral characteristics were preferable for first-graders. The differences within the working-class sample disappeared by the second interview, leaving a majority of all groups wanting and describing their children as well-behaved or cooperative.

The preference for obedient children is not surprising among the working-classes, where one suspects that the virtues of order and regularity tend to be routinely prescribed and enforced (LeMasters, 1975; Miller and Swanson,
### TABLE 4: THE MOTHERS' DESCRIPTIONS OF THE KIND OF STUDENT THEIR CHILD WOULD BE IN FIRST GRADE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Types a</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic-smart or creative</td>
<td>38.9 (7)</td>
<td>35.7 (10)</td>
<td>46.7 (7)</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral-cooperative or well-behaved</td>
<td>61.1 (11)</td>
<td>60.7 (17)</td>
<td>40.0 (6)</td>
<td>88.9 (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative-not interested in school or does not like schoolwork</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

aThis typology was borrowed from Wilder, 1968. See Appendix A, item 13 for a fuller explanation.

### TABLE 5: THE MOTHERS' IDEAL STUDENT DESCRIPTIONS OF THEIR CHILDREN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Types a</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic-smart or creative</td>
<td>33.4 (6)</td>
<td>39.3 (11)</td>
<td>40.0 (6)</td>
<td>50.0 (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral-cooperative or well-behaved</td>
<td>55.5 (10)</td>
<td>57.1 (16)</td>
<td>53.3 (8)</td>
<td>33.4 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative-not interested in school or does not like schoolwork</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>16.7 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

aThis typology was borrowed from Wilder, 1968. See Appendix A, item 13 for a fuller explanation.
1958). However, given the mobility emphasis in middle-class homes, I had assumed more mothers would want smart or creative children. An alternative explanation is that many middle-class mothers perceive good behavior as a vehicle to good grades (see Lewis, 1968).

Differences according to the mothers' social-class were more outstanding for the second measure of academic expectations—the number of years in school for the child. We asked the mothers how far in school they thought their children would go (Table 6), as well as how long the mothers wanted them to stay in school (Table 7). For both items, more middle-class mothers leaned toward a college experience.

Thus, the differences in the mothers' expectations and aspirations were more common between the middle and working-class whites than between white, black, and Puerto-Rican mothers of the same social-class. It is still possible that race and ethnicity can influence the parents beliefs about their children's potentials, particularly in those cases where a low self-esteem has been perpetuated. However, in Llamy a higher social-class with its myriad of accompanying privileges was a more meaningful barometer in evaluating parental hopes and predictions for their children. Christopher Jencks (1972), in his assessment of the impact of family background on school achievement, argued that there may be greater variation among whites than between whites and blacks. His evaluation remains accurate
### Table 6: How Far in School the Mothers Expected Their Children to Go (Expectations)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Education</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High school or below</td>
<td>27.8 (5)</td>
<td>60.7 (17)</td>
<td>33.3 (5)</td>
<td>44.4 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>61.1 (11)</td>
<td>28.6 (8)</td>
<td>26.7 (4)</td>
<td>22.2 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College graduate</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>13.3 (2)</td>
<td>16.7 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>7.2 (2)</td>
<td>26.7 (4)</td>
<td>16.7 (3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 7: Ideally How Far in School the Mothers Would Like Their Children to Go (Aspirations)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Education</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High school or below</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>39.3 (11)</td>
<td>20.0 (3)</td>
<td>33.3 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>72.2 (13)</td>
<td>46.4 (13)</td>
<td>46.7 (7)</td>
<td>38.9 (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College graduate</td>
<td>16.7 (3)</td>
<td>10.7 (3)</td>
<td>13.3 (2)</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>20.0 (3)</td>
<td>22.2 (4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
for mothers in Liamy.

In addition to the mothers' expectations for their children, we also sought to determine whether social-class and/or racial-ethnic characteristics were important indicators in understanding the mothers' perceptions of school related items. We included ten areas under the rather loosely defined umbrella of relations with the school. These included the teacher, discipline, jobs for the family and school, home reading programs, influences on the child, the school levy, parental participation in school activities, and finally, the mothers' willingness to change the schools' reading policies or the teacher. In general, I found that when differences existed, it was along social-class rather than racial-ethnic lines.

The family's relationship with the school most directly involves the teacher. She is the person to whom the children relate, the one who teaches them reading, who comforts them when they tumble in the playground. On the other hand, she can be an intruder of sorts, an alternative to an expressive mother, a disciplinarian who substitutes for the father.

Teachers are not of course a homogeneous group. Some are friendly and lenient, and others speak enthusiastically of stern disciplinary measures. In order to determine the mothers' preferences, we listed sketches of four kinds of teachers and asked the mothers which one they would select
for their children. Among the white sample, a majority chose a teacher who would make the class interesting (Table 8). However, there was also a sizeable number of working-class whites, along with blacks, and Puerto-Ricans who thought the best teacher was one who stressed the subject matter. Perhaps what was at issue was a more restricted sense of school responsibility. To the working-class, for whom fewer projected a college education for their children, the school may be perceived as a place to learn a trade, an occupational training center. On the other hand, among the middle-class, more important than technical skills is the positive orientation toward school (Gracey, 1972). At the second interview, we asked the mothers to select from the same four teacher descriptions the one which best portrayed their childrens' first grade teachers. More mothers chose a teacher who was most concerned with maintaining discipline (Table 9). Unfortunately, we did not probe this item further and I am unable to explain why so many more black mothers understood the teacher as a person concerned with discipline.

Learning to follow orders, however, is perceived as an important part of socialization and personal growth. Boys and girls are taught the rules and norms of our society and sanctions are applied when they are caught violating them. Because of our pluralist society, there is a diversity of norms as well as a diversity of punishments. Some
TABLE 8: THE KIND OF TEACHER THE MOTHERS WOULD PREFER FOR THEIR CHILDREN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Types</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A teacher who is most concerned with maintaining discipline</td>
<td>11.2 (2)</td>
<td>10.7 (3)</td>
<td>13.3 (2)</td>
<td>22.2 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A teacher who feels it is most important that students know their subject matter well</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>25.0 (7)</td>
<td>33.3 (5)</td>
<td>22.2 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A teacher who stresses making the class interesting</td>
<td>83.3 (15)</td>
<td>60.7 (17)</td>
<td>46.7 (7)</td>
<td>16.7 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A teacher who thinks it is most important that a teacher be friendly</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>38.9 (7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These four sketches are abbreviated from Wilder, 1968. See Appendix A, item 17 for a fuller explanation.*
TABLE 9: THE MOTHERS' DESCRIPTIONS OF THEIR CHILDREN'S TEACHERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Types</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A teacher who is most concerned with maintaining discipline</td>
<td>38.9 (7)</td>
<td>17.9 (5)</td>
<td>60.0 (9)</td>
<td>33.3 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A teacher who feels it is most important that students know their subject matter well</td>
<td>38.9 (7)</td>
<td>35.7 (10)</td>
<td>20.0 (3)</td>
<td>22.2 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A teacher who stresses making the class interesting</td>
<td>16.7 (3)</td>
<td>39.3 (11)</td>
<td>13.3 (2)</td>
<td>16.7 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A teacher who thinks it is most important that a teacher be friendly</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>7.1 (2)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>16.7 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>11.2 (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These four sketches were abbreviated from Wilder, 1968. See Appendix A., item 17 for a fuller explanation.*
spank, some yell, some try to rationalize with the offender. Exploring the mothers' techniques, we thought would help us further understand family-school relations.

When we asked the mothers what they did if their children misbehaved at home, they often reported a variety of punishments rather than only one. A working-class white mother, for example, reported that she would, "tell her why I don't like what she's doing, then I send her to her room. Paddling is only at the very last resort." Similarly, a middle-class mother would "try to find out why he's misbehaving, discuss the problem and explain it to him. If these measures fail, I will remove privileges or spank him."

However, we categorized most responses into four groups: 1). physical reprisals such as spankings; 2). scolding or yelling; 3). removal of privileges; and 4). explanations about the consequences or causes of the wrongdoings. The key difference among the whites did not center around the use of hitting or spanking the children, which over two-thirds of both social-classes thought was acceptable. Rather, we found over twice as many middle-class than working-class mothers wanting to explain the problem to their children (Table 10).

For many mothers there was a consistency between how they punished their children and what they thought the teacher should do if their children misbehaved at school. As an example, almost all those mothers who paddled for
### TABLE 10: HOW THE MOTHERS PUNISH THEIR CHILDREN IF THEY MISBEHAVE AT HOME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Punishment Techniques</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1). Physical reprisals such as spankings</td>
<td>66.7 (12)*</td>
<td>67.8 (19)</td>
<td>66.6 (10)</td>
<td>50.0 (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2). Scolding or yelling</td>
<td>27.8 (5)</td>
<td>28.7 (8)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>16.7 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3). Removal of privileges</td>
<td>50.0 (9)</td>
<td>67.8 (19)</td>
<td>46.7 (7)</td>
<td>55.6 (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4). Explanations about the consequences or causes of the wrongdoing</td>
<td>55.6 (10)</td>
<td>25.0 (7)</td>
<td>26.7 (4)</td>
<td>22.2 (4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Many mothers offered multiple responses such as, "I would yell and get angry at him and then tell him he couldn't watch TV." This response was coded as both #2—scolding and yelling—and #3—removal of privileges. Thus, the totals exceed 100%.
disruptive behavior at home also wanted the teacher to paddle at school. One black mother colorfully captured this theme when she responded, "If the teacher gives him a lickin' at school, I'll have another one waitin' when he come {sic} home."

When parents were asked more specifically what the teacher should do if their children misbehaved in school, racial differences were apparent. Many more whites were willing to let the teacher do what she thought was best. Conversely, far more black and Puerto-Rican mothers believed that the teacher should contact the parents if their children were disobedient in school (Table 11). Many middle-class mothers thought that punishment at the time of the crime was very important. "She should reprimand him; she's in the position to be giving instructions at that time and place and that is where correction should take place." "The teacher should handle the problem because I'm not there. The teacher knows what happened. You just have to trust that the teacher has enough sense to handle it."

Perhaps the white mothers were willing to trust the teachers more than black and Puerto-Rican mothers were.

When we questioned the mothers about corporal punishment, however, most of them regardless of social-class or racial-ethnic characteristics trusted the teacher to paddle the children (Table 12). The entire issue of corporal punishment in the classroom is deserving of more extensive
TABLE 11: WHAT THE MOTHERS THOUGHT THE TEACHERS SHOULD DO IF THEIR CHILDREN MISBEHAVED IN SCHOOL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selected Responses</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whatever the teacher thinks best</td>
<td>38.9 (7)&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>21.4 (6)</td>
<td>13.4 (2)</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact the parents</td>
<td>27.8 (5)</td>
<td>25.0 (7)</td>
<td>53.3 (8)</td>
<td>55.5 (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>55.6 (10)</td>
<td>82.1 (23)</td>
<td>73.4 (11)</td>
<td>66.7 (12)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>Because of multiple responses, the totals exceed 100%.

<sup>b</sup>This includes such things as talking to the child, removing privileges, paddling, etc.

TABLE 12: PERCENT OF MOTHERS WHO BELIEVED THAT THE TEACHER SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO PADDLE THE STUDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Should Teachers Paddle Students?</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>61.1 (11)</td>
<td>67.9 (19)</td>
<td>73.3 (11)</td>
<td>61.1 (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>38.9 (7)</td>
<td>32.1 (9)</td>
<td>26.7 (4)</td>
<td>38.9 (7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
research. Given Supreme Court decisions on the right of teachers to spank students, given the perceived escalation of violence by students, physical punishment as a method for behavior control is increasing. Community laws, however, vary and differences between schools where the paddle is used and those which rely on other disciplinary techniques have not been explored. For now, however, administrators, at least in Liamy, may be assured that only a few mothers do not want the teacher to paddle their children. Many of them probably agreed with the white working-class mother who said, "She (i.e., the teacher) should have the freedom to make the judgement, sometimes it is simply a human response to swat a child who is frustrating you."

Discipline is only one of the schools' jobs. In order for any institution to survive, it must preform key tasks unattainable elsewhere, guard its boundaries from intruders, and if possible increase its functions and subsequent indispensability. We gave the mothers in our study a prepared list and asked them to select the most important job for the school in first grade. Most of the mothers in Liamy chose instruction in reading (Table 13). While fewer black mothers ranked teaching reading first, nearly everyone placed it among the three main jobs of the school (Table 14).

There were other small, but perhaps noteworthy, differences between the mothers, usually along racial rather than
### Table 13: The Mothers' Preferences for the Most Important Job of the School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a). Instruction in reading</td>
<td>83.3 (15)</td>
<td>89.3 (25)</td>
<td>53.3 (8)</td>
<td>77.8 (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b). How the child should dress</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c). Sex education</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d). Religious training</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e). Leisure activities</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>11.1 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f). Moral instruction</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g). Citizenship training</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>7.1 (2)</td>
<td>13.3 (2)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h). Personal hygiene</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i). Determining when the child should be immunized</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>13.3 (2)</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j). Other</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>13.3 (2)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 14: THE MOTHERS' COMBINED RESPONSES FOR THE THREE MOST IMPORTANT JOBS OF THE SCHOOL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a). Instruction in reading</td>
<td>88.9 (16)</td>
<td>100.0 (28)</td>
<td>86.7 (13)</td>
<td>88.9 (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b). How the child should dress</td>
<td>11.1 (2)</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>13.3 (2)</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c). Sex education</td>
<td>33.4 (6)</td>
<td>46.4 (13)</td>
<td>13.3 (2)</td>
<td>16.6 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d). Religious training</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>11.1 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e). Leisure activities</td>
<td>22.2 (4)</td>
<td>10.7 (3)</td>
<td>40.0 (6)</td>
<td>50.0 (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f). Moral instruction</td>
<td>33.4 (6)</td>
<td>21.4 (6)</td>
<td>26.7 (4)</td>
<td>44.4 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g). Citizenship training</td>
<td>66.7 (12)</td>
<td>75.0 (21)</td>
<td>73.3 (11)</td>
<td>27.8 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h). Personal hygiene</td>
<td>11.1 (2)</td>
<td>21.4 (6)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>11.1 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i). Determining when the child should be immunized</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>20.0 (3)</td>
<td>16.6 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j). Other</td>
<td>33.4 (6)</td>
<td>17.8 (5)</td>
<td>20.0 (3)</td>
<td>27.8 (5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
social-class lines. Fewer black and Puerto-Rican mothers thought the school was the place for sex education, preferring instead more instruction on leisure activities. Additionally, Puerto-Rican mothers, for the most part, did not want citizenship training offered in first grade.

We also asked the mothers to select, from the same list, the most important task for the family. While the modal response was moral instruction, there was not as much agreement among the mothers as there was for the most important job of the school (Table 15). When I combined the top three selections, there were additional differences (Table 16). Within the white sample, for example, more working-class mothers considered religious training significant for the family, while more middle-class mothers believed citizenship training was something that should be taught in the home.

Among the working-class mothers, the differences were greatest between the Puerto-Rican mothers and the others, particularly on reading instruction in the home. A possible explanation for the unique Puerto-Rican response rests in the language and strong and ethnic ties. In all but one Puerto-Rican home, Spanish either predominated or was spoken frequently enough to be categorized as a bilingual family. Similarly, 61.1% of these families classified high on the ethnicity scale, compared to only three white mothers and none of the blacks (see Appendix A, item 6).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a). Instruction in reading</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>11.1 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b). How the child should dress</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>11.1 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c). Sex education</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d). Religious training</td>
<td>11.1 (2)</td>
<td>17.9 (5)</td>
<td>26.7 (4)</td>
<td>22.2 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e). Leisure activities</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f). Moral instruction</td>
<td>44.4 (8)</td>
<td>57.1 (16)</td>
<td>53.3 (8)</td>
<td>27.8 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g). Citizenship training</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h). Personal hygiene</td>
<td>22.2 (4)</td>
<td>10.7 (3)</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>22.2 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i). Determining when the child should be immunized</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j). Other</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>7.2 (2)</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasks</td>
<td>WMC</td>
<td>WWC</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Puerto-Rican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a). Instruction in reading</td>
<td>16.7 (3)</td>
<td>14.3 (4)</td>
<td>13.3 (2)</td>
<td>44.4 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b). How the child should dress</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>7.2 (2)</td>
<td>20.0 (3)</td>
<td>33.4 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c). Sex education</td>
<td>22.3 (4)</td>
<td>25.0 (7)</td>
<td>20.0 (3)</td>
<td>22.2 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d). Religious training</td>
<td>38.9 (7)</td>
<td>60.7 (17)</td>
<td>80.0 (12)</td>
<td>66.7 (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e). Leisure activities</td>
<td>22.3 (4)</td>
<td>10.7 (3)</td>
<td>20.0 (3)</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f). Moral instruction</td>
<td>83.3 (15)</td>
<td>82.1 (23)</td>
<td>66.7 (10)</td>
<td>50.0 (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g). Citizenship training</td>
<td>33.4 (6)</td>
<td>7.2 (2)</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h). Personal hygiene</td>
<td>66.6 (12)</td>
<td>82.1 (23)</td>
<td>66.7 (10)</td>
<td>55.5 (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i). Determining when the child should be</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>16.6 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>immunized</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j). Other</td>
<td>11.2 (2)</td>
<td>10.7 (3)</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teaching reading at home may be seen as a means to compensate Puerto-Rican children who have a language liability. While more Puerto-Ricans thought teaching reading was important for the family, there was little difference among the groups when asked what a parent should do about the child's reading in the first grade (Table 17). In all cases, the majority of mothers believed they should either read to their children, take them to the library, buy books, or encourage and support them. One mother thought she should do "nothing except encourage him when he wants me to." Others wanted to "help him at home mostly with sounds of letters." Still another mother believed she should "help her, take her to the library, buy books, teach her how to read." Only a small portion of the mothers thought they might consult with the child's first grade teacher, coordinating homework assignments and teacher pedagogy with home instruction. "I would leave teaching reading up to the teacher unless the teacher feels the parents can help in any way."

Believing that parents should read to their children is not necessarily an indicator of how effective parents might be in improving their children's reading skills. While we did not question the mothers specifically on how much they actually thought they could advance their children's reading, we did ask the mothers to choose from a prepared list who or what they believed would influence their children the most.
TABLE 17: WHAT THE MOTHERS BELIEVED
THEY SHOULD DO ABOUT THEIR
CHILDREN'S READING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1). Read to the child, go to the library, buy books</td>
<td>61.2 (11)*</td>
<td>53.6 (15)</td>
<td>73.3 (11)</td>
<td>72.3 (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2). Encourage and support the child</td>
<td>38.9 (7)</td>
<td>25.0 (7)</td>
<td>26.7 (4)</td>
<td>27.9 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3). Consult the teacher to coordinate efforts, e.g., homework</td>
<td>11.2 (2)</td>
<td>14.3 (4)</td>
<td>13.3 (2)</td>
<td>16.7 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4). Nothing</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5). Other</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>21.4 (6)</td>
<td>13.3 (2)</td>
<td>16.7 (3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Because of multiple responses, the total may exceed 100%.
The differences among the mothers were along social-class rather than racial-ethnic groups. More than twice as many middle-class mothers selected parents as the most influential people on their children (Table 18). If it is true that middle-class people, in part because of their positions of relative economic power, believe they have more control over their lives, the finding is not surprising.

The questions analyzed so far, while they increase our understanding of the mothers' preceptions of the school, are of an indirect quality—e.g., the mothers' opinions on teachers, discipline, jobs for the family and school, etc. We asked the mothers four additional sets of questions hoping to assess their understandings of more directly involved school-related issues. Additionally, and most importantly, the mothers' thoughts on 1) the school levy, 2) parental participation in school activities, 3) changing the school's reading program, and 4) dissatisfaction with the teacher, might indicate what social-class or racial-ethnic differences exist over the ability of parents to direct school policy.

In November, 1974, the citizens of Liamy overwhelmingly defeated a school levy. So decisive was the vote that the levy failed to carry in even one precinct. Within our sample, however, nearly a third more middle-class than working-class mothers voted in favor of the levy (Table 19). More surprisingly was the almost one-third to one-half of the working-class mothers who were unaware, uninformed, or
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influences</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a). Friends</td>
<td>5.6  (1)</td>
<td>28.6 (8)</td>
<td>26.7 (4)</td>
<td>38.9 (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b). Teachers</td>
<td>16.7 (3)</td>
<td>17.9 (5)</td>
<td>13.3 (2)</td>
<td>22.2 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c). Parents</td>
<td>72.2 (13)</td>
<td>32.1 (9)</td>
<td>33.3 (5)</td>
<td>16.7 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d). Minister or priest</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e). Books</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f). TV or radio</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>10.7 (3)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>16.7 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g). Relatives</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>20.0 (3)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h). Other</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 19: THE MOTHERS' FEELINGS ABOUT THE DEFEAT OF THE NOVEMBER, 1974 SCHOOL LEVY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1). Sad, they voted for the levy</td>
<td>72.2 (13)</td>
<td>39.3 (11)</td>
<td>40.0 (6)</td>
<td>38.9 (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2). Glad, they voted against the levy</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>28.6 (8)</td>
<td>13.3 (2)</td>
<td>11.1 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3). Unaware, uninformed, or indifferent about</td>
<td>16.7 (3)</td>
<td>32.1 (9)</td>
<td>40.0 (6)</td>
<td>50.0 (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the levy</td>
<td>4). Other</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

simply indifferent to the school bill. This non-involvement by working-class mothers, particularly among blacks and Puerto-Ricans, continued on other issues as well. In fact, a majority of the Puerto-Rican mothers did not know why the school levy was defeated. Many of the other mothers agreed that the parents' vote was a response to the perceived poor state of the economy and pressures from too many taxes. Few thought the school was deceiving the voters in its demands for additional funds (Table 20). Finally, most of the mothers seemed assured that defeat of the levy would not significantly affect their children's education (Table 21).

Clearly, the levy vote was not to manipulate school policy, to withhold resources for desired ends. Few mothers regardless of social-class or racial-ethnic characteristics voted against the levy because they were dissatisfied with the school and wanted change. If parents were not using the ballot to influence school policy, then perhaps they would understand direct participation as a means of influencing school activities. In fact, in most cases the mothers believed parents should be very involved in school-related activities (Table 22). Actual participation in school affairs was somewhat different. In January, at the second interview, we asked the mothers the same questions in order to measure their activity level in school events during the preceding four months (Table 23). In all groups
TABLE 20: THE MOTHERS' OPINIONS ON WHY
THE SCHOOL LEVY WAS DEFEATED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1). State of the economy, inflation, too many taxes</td>
<td>55.6 (10)</td>
<td>42.9 (12)</td>
<td>60.0 (9)</td>
<td>33.3 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2). People did not believe the school needed money</td>
<td>33.3 (6)</td>
<td>21.4 (6)</td>
<td>13.3 (2)</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3). School should cut back on programs</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4). Do not know</td>
<td>11.1 (2)</td>
<td>32.1 (9)</td>
<td>20.0 (3)</td>
<td>61.1 (11)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 21: THE MOTHERS' OPINIONS AS TO THE EFFECT
OF THE LEVY DEFEAT ON THEIR CHILDREN'S
EDUCATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, it will effect my child's education</td>
<td>33.3 (6)</td>
<td>17.9 (5)</td>
<td>20.0 (3)</td>
<td>44.4 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, it will not effect my child's education</td>
<td>55.6 (10)</td>
<td>78.6 (22)</td>
<td>60.0 (9)</td>
<td>44.4 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td>11.2 (2)</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>20.0 (3)</td>
<td>11.1 (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 22: THE MOTHERS' SCORES FOR ANTICIPATED PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation Levels</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>61.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*aThe scores represent the average for seven items. See Appendix A, item 22 for a fuller explanation.*

### TABLE 23: THE MOTHERS' SCORES FOR ACTUAL PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation Levels</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>77.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*aThe scores represent the average for seven items. See Appendix A, item 22 for a fuller explanation.*
participation scores fell.

Teaching reading is the primary educational goal in the elementary school and we questioned the mothers on what they would do if they thought their children's schools were not doing as good a job of teaching reading as other schools in Ohio. Far fewer middle-class than working-class mothers believed they could do something about their schools' reading program (Table 24). However, among those middle-class mothers for whom change was plausible a majority considered approaching the school board or organizing parents. "I would get parents banded together and then go to the Board of Education." "I would go to somebody who could do something--the School Board." "Join a group." "I'd start attending meetings," were some of the frequently voiced statements of the optimistic mothers. Given that middle-class people are more often employed in white-collar bureaucratic settings, given that the middle-class has more resources with which to combat organizational strengths, confronting the key power source might be expected. Among the working-class whites, on the other hand, while many believed they could do a great deal or at least something to change the reading program at their school, most of them considered conventional techniques, such as talking to the teachers or principals or attending Parent Teacher Association meetings, as the most viable strategy for change. As some of the mothers said, "Talk to other parents at PTA,
### TABLE 24: HOW MUCH THE MOTHERS BELIEVED THEY COULD DO TO BRING ABOUT A CHANGE IN THE SCHOOLS' READING PROGRAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>10.7 (3)</td>
<td>13.3 (2)</td>
<td>22.2 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Something</td>
<td>27.8 (5)</td>
<td>39.3 (11)</td>
<td>60.0 (9)</td>
<td>27.8 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only a little</td>
<td>50.0 (9)</td>
<td>46.6 (13)</td>
<td>20.0 (3)</td>
<td>22.2 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing at all</td>
<td>11.1 (2)</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>27.8 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td>11.1 (2)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
{and} work with the teacher to build a better program."
"On my own, I'd work with her {i.e., the child}. I'd bring it up at PTA." "Getting together with the teacher and seeing what I could do because I do want him to have a good education. You can only try and put forth the effort."

If many mothers believed they could affect school reading policy, far fewer of either social-class thought they could change their childrens' teachers (Table 25). The mothers' responses on what they would do if their children did not get the teachers they wanted ranged from indifference and adaptation to anger and wanting to move to another school. For most mothers, however, changing the teacher was unavailable as an alternative, or unacceptable. They were resigned in a sense, to a modestly unpleasant situation. "I probably wouldn't like it but there would not be a whole lot I could do about it," resolved one Puerto-Rican respondent. Another mother, white and middle-class, lamented, "I wouldn't make too much of it. But if she was making him nervous, I'd go to her first and then to the principal or counselor. I couldn't really do anything--I mean I couldn't have him changed or anything, could I?"
Perhaps a black respondent unknowingly summed up many mothers' feelings about not having the kind of teachers they would like for their children, "It wouldn't bother me as long as she was capable of teaching him something." For this mother, the means justified the end. One middle-class
TABLE 25: ANTICIPATED RESPONSES OF MOTHERS IF THEIR CHILDREN ARE NOT ASSIGNED TO THE DESIRED TEACHER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>38.9 (7)</td>
<td>32.1 (9)</td>
<td>33.4 (5)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjust or adapt</td>
<td>11.2 (2)</td>
<td>14.3 (4)</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>11.1 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing</td>
<td>50.0 (9)</td>
<td>46.4 (13)</td>
<td>53.3 (8)</td>
<td>88.9 (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>7.2 (2)</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>This includes talking to the teacher or principal, trying to change the teacher, or sending the child to another school.
mother replied philosophically, "I wouldn't do anything about it because I'd be setting a pattern for life. There were teachers I didn't like but I had to get along with them. I'd try to encourage him to learn and adapt himself to the situation where it was at all possible."

The alternatives available to parents were limited. They could leave the school district; attempt to change the unsatisfactory condition, often by organizing with other families; or they could decrease the perceived significance of the issue and adapt. In large part, a family's choice of strategies depends upon the lateral and longitudinal impact of the issue. Lateral effects include those decisions which parents believe are important, albeit for a brief time (Lefton and Rosengren, 1966). A student's grade or a teacher's pedagogy are examples of potentially short-term problems. School policies on reading instruction and such things as school board decisions on racial integration have a longitudinal impact, affecting the students schooling for many years. I suspect that more long-term problems would anger parents toward action. The early finding on changing the teacher (i.e., lateral) compared with wanting to do something about the reading program (i.e., longitudinal) appears consistent with this contention.

One of the surprising results from this data was the insignificance of social-class or racial-ethnic background in determining the mothers' beliefs about not only changing the
schools' reading program but about their childrens' academic success as well. Similarly among the teachers, the familial characteristics of their students were not statistically significant for influencing the teachers' beliefs on such issues as classroom discipline, influences on the child and so forth. Relationships between the mothers and the teachers will be discussed further in the next chapter.
IV

THE TEACHERS

The teacher is an important person in a first grader's life. She will teach him the basic skills necessary to succeed in the American economy and in community institutions. Equally, she will teach him how to read, the rudiments of math, and the importance of obeying instructions, all while tending to bruised knees, hurt feelings, and dirty hands. In this chapter, I explore whether the teachers' beliefs about items such as academic expectations of students as well as key family-school issues vary according to the social-class and/or racial-ethnic characteristics of their students. I will also analyze the patterns of agreement between mothers and teachers over these same issues.

During October, 1974, we interviewed all the teachers of the seventy-nine students selected for the study. Each of the thirty teachers held a bachelor's degree, and while only two had earned a master's degree, nearly all had taken additional college courses. Most belonged to the National Education Association or one of its local affiliates, but few were active in those organizations. A majority had been
school teachers for more than five years and planned to continue until retirement. The length of tenure did not vary by the racial or social-class composition of the school nor did the teachers' perceptions of their own professional status. In fact, there were few variations among the teachers on such areas as professional behavior or orientation scales, or perceptions of teaching as a profession. (See Appendix A, items 7-11 for an explanation of the various scales.) For example, most of the instructors (63%, N=19) ranked teachers in the bottom half on a professionalism ruler, somewhere between a county welfare social worker and a clinical psychologist (Appendix A, item 10).

Historians and social scientists have probed the processes and consequences of the professionalizing impulse. But on a day to day basis the exquisite models probably did not inform or reflect teacher conduct in Liams. I eliminated the scales on professional issues from any further analysis, largely because of the lack of differences among the teachers regardless of the social-class or racial-ethnic characteristics of their students. Instead, I concentrated on eleven items; three concerned the teachers' academic expectations of students and the remainder examined various aspects of school and family life. Where possible, I compared the mothers' and teachers' responses to similar questions.

Professional notions were not as important in determining the teachers' pedagogies as ordinary beliefs about
what constitutes a good instructor. A few stressed discipline; others considered friendliness vital; still others emphasized the subject matter or just making the class interesting. We asked each of the thirty teachers in our study which one of these four orientations most accurately portrayed her (Table 26). The key difference centered around those who stressed making the class interesting and those who wanted to maintain discipline. The modal response from teachers of white students, regardless of social-class, was to arouse interest in classroom activities, while minority students' teachers understood their main task in terms of keeping an orderly classroom. Many teachers of black and Puerto-Rican students thought that a disciplinarian was the kind of teacher their mothers wanted (Table 27). In fact, it was not, and because of that discrepancy, agreement between the kind of teacher the black and Puerto-Rican mothers wanted and the way in which their children's teachers described themselves was low (Table 28).

Many of the differences between the mothers and teachers over the ideal classroom style centered around the place of discipline in the first grade. Maintaining discipline is a complex phenomenon, however, particularly in educational pedagogy. The technique a teacher uses to maintain control influences the atmosphere of the classroom, teacher evaluations, and perhaps even achievement patterns. Beginning with the belief that order facilitates learning, maintaining
TABLE 26: THE TEACHERS' SELF-PERCEPTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Types</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A teacher who is most concerned with maintaining discipline</td>
<td>11.1 (2)</td>
<td>28.6 (8)</td>
<td>40.0 (6)</td>
<td>50.0 (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A teacher who feels it is most important that students know their subject matter well</td>
<td>22.2 (4)</td>
<td>21.4 (6)</td>
<td>33.3 (5)</td>
<td>22.2 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A teacher who stresses making the class interesting</td>
<td>55.6 (10)</td>
<td>42.9 (12)</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>16.7 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A teacher who thinks it is most important that a teacher be friendly</td>
<td>11.1 (2)</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>20.0 (3)</td>
<td>11.1 (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[a\] These sketches were abbreviated from Wilder, 1968. See Appendix A, item 17 for a fuller explanation.
TABLE 27: PERCENT OF TEACHERS WHO
THOUGHT THEY WERE THE TYPE
THEIR STUDENTS' MOTHERS WANTED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement</th>
<th>Student Groups</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WMC</td>
<td>WWC</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Puerto-Rican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>33.4 (6)</td>
<td>53.6 (15)</td>
<td>20.0 (3)</td>
<td>22.2 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>66.6 (12)</td>
<td>46.4 (13)</td>
<td>80.0 (12)</td>
<td>77.8 (14)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 28: PERCENT OF MOTHERS WHOSE
TEACHER PREFERENCES WERE
THE SAME AS THE TEACHERS' SELF-PERCEPTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement</th>
<th>Student Groups</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WMC</td>
<td>WWC</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Puerto-Rican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>55.6 (10)</td>
<td>42.9 (12)</td>
<td>20.0 (3)</td>
<td>33.4 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>44.4 (8)</td>
<td>57.1 (16)</td>
<td>80.0 (12)</td>
<td>66.6 (12)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
control is a key component in a teacher's academic program. Ideally, she can transfer a voluntarism of sorts to her students whereby they want to behave. This approach will minimize the need for an extensive reward-punishment system, or so runs the reasoning (Dreeben, 1970).

Teachers impose control mechanisms in a consistent fashion. Slow-learners and poorer children receive more control-directed teacher attention (Herriott and St. John, 1968; Rist, 1971). Poorer and to some extent less academically oriented students enter the school with a value orientation unlike those of middle-class teachers. Restricted speech patterns, poor hygiene, and low internalization of school mores inhibit learning. Once the pupil is characterized as a slow-learner, the teacher may direct her attention away from him or her and toward better prepared students. Often this results in low student self-evaluations, boredom, and in turn, non-acceptable behavior.

If the social-class or racial-ethnic characteristics of the students influenced the discipline patterns of the teachers we interviewed, it was not apparent from this data. Behavior-modification was the most popular strategy and yet just about everyone paddled students at one time or another. Differences among the teachers were small and statistically insignificant.

Given the desirability of an orderly classroom, there are options available to teachers on technique. David J.
Willower (1967) characterized pupil control on a continuum from custodial to humanistic (Appendix A, item 12). The custodial viewpoint is dominated by a pessimistic, distrustful, and generally negative perception of students. They are believed to be basically undisciplined, irresponsible, and in need of strict guidelines. The humanistic teacher, on the other hand, has a more positive image of students. She strives for a more open classroom where students can internalize appropriate school behavior. In all, the difference is an ancient one, revolving between those who believe in human perfectability and those who endorse the idea that people are basically crabby.

Using these conflicting ideal types, Willower prepared a twenty item Pupil Control Ideology Control Form (PCI) (Appendix A, item 12). Each item had five response categories ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." Dividing the teachers at the median, one half were grouped as humanistic and the others as custodial. While there were not statistically significant differences among teachers, I found some surprising trends. More teachers of middle-class children were custodial in their control tactics than those who instructed working-class whites. Among the teachers of working-class students, those who directed blacks were more custodial than teachers of white or Puerto-Rican children.

For most teachers, the day to day discipline problems were resolved with a variant of behavior-modification.
Rooted in John B. Watson's behaviorism of the 1920s, behavior-modification's most popular spokesman is B.F. Skinner. Underlying the technique is a belief that human behavior can be controlled, conditioned, and in some cases predicted through a series of positive and negative reinforcers.

One teacher in a predominantly white working-class school captured this program best in her response to our question, "Children don't always behave the way you would like them to act. What do you do when your students misbehave?" "I deprive them of privileges, some type of behavior modification. I take them into the hall {and} talk to them; I'm not a hard disciplinarian. I'll say something like 'Boy I really like what blank is doing.' In an extreme case they will go to the office." (Interviewer: "Can you give me an example?") "Calling the janitor ugly. The students make up the rules, it's very democratic; they sit in circles and discuss." Another teacher in the same school told us she uses "behavior modification. Rewards make them do something. If they don't behave I remove the reward and give it to someone else."

Almost 90% of the thirty first-grade teachers interviewed stressed the importance of selective use of rewards and punishments to change unruly behavior. An additional tactic, also part of a behavior-modification program, was to praise children for proper performances and for "setting a good example." Alternatively, unacceptable actions were ignored.
A teacher who had mostly black students remarked, "I tell them about their behavior, remind them and ask whether they think that's the way they should behave. I praise children who do behave well, draw attention to good behavior."

In addition to behavior-modification, most teachers paddled their students at one time or another and for one offense or another (Table 29). For most teachers, corporal punishment, if used, was only a last resort. As a teacher in an integrated school told us when asked what she does when a student misbehaves, "I scold them; they're big boys and girls. For the second offense I put their name on the board and they cannot go out to recess or they have to stay after school." On the other hand, when we asked if she paddled her students, she replied, "When they are consistently doing something that they know I really don't like such as lying, spit (sic) on each other, depending on how it hits me, they may get paddled."

I had anticipated that the entire issue of corporal punishment in the school would be more explosive than I found in Liamy. For many years parents had struggled to remove physical punishments from schools and in fact, teacher paddling of students is outlawed in many states (Jewett, 1952). Recently, however, teachers are again permitted to spank students. The Los Angeles school board, amid some controversy, voted to allow paddling, and in Ohio, school bus drivers are also permitted to hit unruly children. In
TABLE 29: PERCENT OF TEACHERS WHO HAVE PADDLED THEIR STUDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Groups</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>72.2 (13)</td>
<td>60.7 (17)</td>
<td>46.7 (7)</td>
<td>77.8 (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>27.8 (5)</td>
<td>39.3 (11)</td>
<td>53.3 (8)</td>
<td>22.2 (4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Liamy, most mothers thought teachers should have the power to paddle (Table 12; p. 73) although the actual agreement between the mothers and their children's teachers was somewhat lower (Table 30).

Discipline was something the children would learn both at home and at school. There were other items which many teachers believed should be discussed both at home and school. From a prepared list, most teachers selected, for example, moral instruction, citizenship training, and personal hygiene as the most important job of the family (Table 31). However, over a third of the teachers (N=11) thought these things should be learned in school as well. The social-class or racial-ethnic characteristics of the students did not influence the teachers' beliefs about sharing these three tasks.

The teachers' preferences for the most important job of the family did vary, however, according to the social-class of her students (Table 31). None of the teachers of white middle-class students selected instruction in personal hygiene as the most important job of the family, compared to over a third of the working-class students' teachers. For the teachers of middle-class students, moral instruction was far more important. Social-class was important also when the teachers were asked about the most significant job for the school (Table 32). All of the middle-class students' teachers considered instruction in reading their single most important task, compared to less that half of the black
TABLE 30: PERCENT OF MOTHERS AND TEACHERS WHO AGREED ON WHETHER OR NOT THERE SHOULD BE PADDLING IN SCHOOL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>44.4 (8)</td>
<td>64.3 (18)</td>
<td>46.7 (7)</td>
<td>61.1 (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>55.6 (10)</td>
<td>35.7 (10)</td>
<td>53.3 (8)</td>
<td>38.9 (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasks</td>
<td>WMC</td>
<td>WWC</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Puerto-Rican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a). Instruction in reading</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b). How the child should dress</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c). Sex education</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d). Religious training</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e). Leisure activities</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f). Moral instruction</td>
<td>50.0 (9)</td>
<td>21.4 (6)</td>
<td>26.7 (4)</td>
<td>27.8 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g). Citizenship training</td>
<td>38.9 (7)</td>
<td>21.4 (6)</td>
<td>26.7 (4)</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h). Personal hygiene</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>39.3 (11)</td>
<td>40.0 (6)</td>
<td>44.4 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i). Determining when the child should be immunized</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j). Other</td>
<td>11.1 (2)</td>
<td>14.3 (4)</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>16.7 (3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 32: THE TEACHERS' PREFERENCES FOR THE MOST IMPORTANT JOB OF THE SCHOOL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a). Instruction in reading</td>
<td>100.0 (18)</td>
<td>71.4 (20)</td>
<td>46.7 (7)</td>
<td>77.8 (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b). How the child should dress</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c). Sex education</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d). Religious training</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>26.7 (4)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e). Leisure activities</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f). Moral instruction</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g). Citizenship training</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>14.3 (4)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h). Personal hygiene</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i). Determining when the child should be immunized</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j). Other</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>13.3 (2)</td>
<td>11.1 (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
students' teachers and about three-fourths for the other teachers of working-class students.

Regardless of the students' social-class or racial-ethnic characteristics, there was near unanimity among the teachers that reading, or whatever their selection for the most important job of the school, should not be taught in the home. In fact, only two teachers thought that their choice for the schools' most important task had a place in the home as well. What emerges from these limited data is a belief by the teachers that perhaps families are not as qualified in their sphere as teachers and schools are in theirs. What this means, in part, is that for the teachers the boundaries of the school are more clearly defined and more agreed upon than those of the family. One consequence of this lack of distinct family roles is that the stage is set for conflict between teachers and mothers over the proper role of the family in preparing children for school. In fact, when I compared the mothers' and teachers' preferences there was substantially more agreement over the school's job than the family's (Table 33).

This does not mean that the teachers were unwilling to allow parents to help with something as important as reading. Only six teachers believed that the parents should do nothing for their children's reading unless, as one teacher said, "... the teacher explicitly details the type and nature of the help." The major concern among this group according
TABLE 33: COMPARISON OF THE PERCENT OF MOTHERS AND TEACHERS WHO AGREED ON THE MOST IMPORTANT JOB OF THE FAMILY AND THE SCHOOL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mother Groups</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agreement on the job of the family</td>
<td>27.8 (5)</td>
<td>14.3 (4)</td>
<td>13.3 (2)</td>
<td>22.2 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreement on the job of the school</td>
<td>83.5 (15)</td>
<td>60.7 (17)</td>
<td>20.0 (3)</td>
<td>61.1 (11)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
to one teacher was, "I have my way and they (i.e., the parents) may have a different one, don't confuse the child." Most teachers, however, willingly accepted this potential confusion stressing instead the importance of a positive home atmosphere for learning reading. "Show an interest in reading." "Encourage him to read." "Read to him." "Help him read." "Furnish books." "Be interested in his work and most important read, read, read to him," were some of the teachers' comments on parents helping in reading.

The teachers' responses on the important duties for the family and school conform to the conviction of the importance of social-class in determining educational success and personal worth. The belief that working-class parents should stress personal hygiene while their middle-class counterparts may broaden, cultivate, and somehow nurture the moral development of their children, in part, perpetuates the lower esteem with which teachers held working-class children. Certainly, the fact that fewer teachers of lower strata children listed reading as a top priority item substantiates the point further. While both the small sample size and the lack of any statistically significant findings restrict any generalizations, the data do conform to previous work on teachers' perceptions of students (Herriott and St. John, 1968).

With the exception of Operation Head Start and a few other programs, most federal aid for children's learning
Ill development has been directed at the schools. This assistance resulted in part from a general decline of faith in public schools to complete their assignment--value transmission and occupational training. However, one qualified result of this study is the lack of confidence in families to perform their job as well. Teachers and mothers are not as certain what a family's job is, but they are convinced that reading should be taught in the schools. Because schools are partially dependent upon families to teach their children the norms of behavior which will facilitate learning, perhaps the direction of assistance should be more toward helping families in this important job.

For most of the teachers in this study, the parents were the most influential persons in a first grader's life (Table 34). The teachers possibly recognized just how dependent they are upon the family for the kind of preparation which facilitates the school's job. Most working-class mothers, however, did not think that parents were as influential, and agreement between them and their children's teachers was low (Table 35). If teachers consider parents an important source of control and influence, many instructors may depend upon mothers for support, encouragement, and assistance in teaching their children. Mothers, for their part, often believing they are impotent to change their children, may fail to fulfill these expectations.
TABLE 34: WHAT THE TEACHERS BELIEVED HAD THE MOST IMPORTANT INFLUENCE ON THE CHILDREN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influences</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a). Friends</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b). Teachers</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>20.0 (3)</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c). Parents</td>
<td>94.4 (17)</td>
<td>82.1 (23)</td>
<td>73.3 (11)</td>
<td>55.6 (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d). Minister or priest</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e). Books</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f). TV or radio</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>17.9 (5)</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>38.9 (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g). Relatives</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 35: PERCENT OF MOTHERS AND TEACHERS WHO AGREED ON THE MOST IMPORTANT INFLUENCES ON A CHILD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>77.8 (14)</td>
<td>35.7 (10)</td>
<td>13.3 (2)</td>
<td>11.2 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>22.2 (4)</td>
<td>64.3 (18)</td>
<td>86.7 (13)</td>
<td>88.8 (16)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participation in school activities is one area which is potentially unsettling for mothers and teachers. Most of the thirty teachers for this study believed strongly that the mothers should participate in school affairs such as visiting their childrens' classes, attending PTA meetings, or becoming room mothers (Table 36). Most mothers agreed with them (Table 37). In January, when we asked the mothers in which activities they actually participated, there was almost no agreement with the teachers (Table 38); few mothers scored high on the actual participation scale and most were not involved in school affairs.

The teachers' perceptions of the Puerto-Rican mothers was unique. Over a third of the teachers of Puerto-Rican students believed television or radio was the most influential factor in a child's life (Table 34), and only slightly more than a third believed parent participation in school activities should be high (Table 36). Possibly, the teachers who ranked television or radio first believed it would facilitate a decrease in language barriers. Additionally, because fewer teachers believed Puerto-Rican parents influenced their children, perhaps fewer thought there was a need for them to share in school affairs.

Teachers' perceptions of parents, students, and family life in general are an important component in family-school relations. A teacher's expectations help to determine a child's achievement pattern in school. The self-fulfilling
TABLE 36: THE TEACHERS' SCORES ON THE MOTHER PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES SCALE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation Levels</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>7.1 (2)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>11.1 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>27.8 (5)</td>
<td>25.0 (7)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>50.0 (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>66.7 (12)</td>
<td>67.9 (19)</td>
<td>100.0 (15)</td>
<td>38.9 (7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The scores represent the average for seven items. See Appendix A, item 22 for a fuller explanation.*
TABLE 37: COMPARISON BEFORE SCHOOL BEGAN OF MOTHER AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL ACTIVITY SCORES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation Levels</th>
<th>Student Groups</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>White Middle-Class</td>
<td>White Working-Class</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Puerto-Rican</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mothers    Teachers</td>
<td>Mothers    Teachers</td>
<td>Mothers    Teachers</td>
<td>Mothers    Teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>5.6 (1) 5.6 (1)</td>
<td>3.6 (1) 7.1 (2)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>22.2 (4) 11.1 (2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>27.8 (5) 27.8 (5)</td>
<td>10.7 (3) 25.0 (7)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>16.7 (3) 50.0 (9)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>66.7 (12) 66.7 (12)</td>
<td>85.7 (24) 67.9 (19)</td>
<td>100.0 (15) 100.0 (15)</td>
<td>61.1 (11) 38.9 (7)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The scores represent the average for seven items. See Appendix A, item 22 for a fuller explanation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation Levels</th>
<th>Student Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>White Middle-Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mothers  Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>50.0 (9) 5.6 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>33.3 (6) 27.8 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>16.7 (3) 66.7 (12)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The scores represent the average for seven items. See Appendix A, item 22 for a fuller explanation.
prophesy whereby a teacher expects lower grades and/or more disruptive behavior from certain students who, in turn, receive poorer grades and often act unruly, is well known. Yet, teachers continue to pre-judge children's academic and social behavior by items such as race, social-class, and pretty faces (Clifford and Walster, 1973).

The interviews for this project were conducted during October, approximately six to eight weeks into a new semester. We asked the teachers three questions concerning the academic future of the seventy-nine sample children: what kind of student the children were, how far in school they expected the students to go, and the kind of grades they thought the children would receive. None of the teachers refused to respond because she opposed the potential labeling or because it was too early to evaluate. Nevertheless, there were no statistically significant relationships between the teachers' expectations and the social-class or racial-ethnic characteristics of the students, although the trends were in the anticipated direction.

We asked the teachers to select from six sketches the type of student which best described each of the sample students in her class. With less than two months to evaluate students, only four black and Puerto-Rican children had teachers describe them as "able to come up with the answers," or as having "original ideas and a good imagination" (Table 39). Far more white students were pictured in these academic
Table 39: The Teachers' Descriptions of the Kind of Student That Best Fits the Sample Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Types</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WNC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic-smart or creative</td>
<td>50.0-(9)</td>
<td>39.2 (11)</td>
<td>20.0 (3)</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral-cooperative or well-behaved</td>
<td>50.0 (9)</td>
<td>39.2 (11)</td>
<td>53.3 (8)</td>
<td>77.8 (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative—not interested in school or does not like schoolwork</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>17.9 (5)</td>
<td>20.0 (3)</td>
<td>16.7 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)This typology was borrowed from Wilder, 1968. See Appendix A, item 13 for a fuller explanation.
terms. Similarly, when the teachers told us the kinds of grades they anticipated giving, fewer minority students would receive "A"s and "B"s (Table 40). Finally, more teachers of white middle-class students expected they would go to college (Table 41).

Agreement between the mothers and teachers over these three issues of academic success was greatest among the white middle-class and lowest for the black mothers (Table 42). On school achievement and grades, 60-100% of the mothers regardless of social-class or racial-ethnic group had higher expectations than the teachers. But these differences were unknown to the mothers and teachers and for this study we could not assess the mothers' responses had they been aware of the incongruities. For the moment, in Liamy, complex mechanisms for conflict resolution were not required.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;A&quot;s and &quot;B&quot;s</td>
<td>61.2 (11)</td>
<td>50.0 (14)</td>
<td>33.3 (5)</td>
<td>33.4 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;C&quot;s</td>
<td>22.2 (4)</td>
<td>32.1 (9)</td>
<td>33.3 (5)</td>
<td>38.9 (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;D&quot;s and &quot;F&quot;s</td>
<td>16.7 (3)</td>
<td>14.3 (4)</td>
<td>26.6 (4)</td>
<td>27.8 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>6.7 (1)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 41: HOW FAR IN SCHOOL THE TEACHERS EXPECTED THE CHILDREN TO GO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Education</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High school or below</td>
<td>38.9 (7)</td>
<td>53.6 (15)</td>
<td>66.7 (10)</td>
<td>61.1 (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>61.1 (11)</td>
<td>39.9 (11)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>33.3 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College graduate</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>20.0 (3)</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.6 (1)</td>
<td>13.3 (2)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 42: PERCENT OF MOTHERS AND TEACHERS WHO AGREED ON THREE ISSUES OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS FOR THE CHILDREN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1). Percent who agreed on the kind of student which best described the children</td>
<td>55.6 (10)</td>
<td>42.9 (12)</td>
<td>26.7 (4)</td>
<td>66.7 (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2). Percent who agreed on how far in school the children would go</td>
<td>55.6 (10)</td>
<td>60.7 (17)</td>
<td>40.0 (6)</td>
<td>44.4 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3). Percent who agreed on the grades the children would receive</td>
<td>61.1 (11)</td>
<td>35.7 (10)</td>
<td>26.7 (4)</td>
<td>38.9 (7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONCLUSION

Primary groups help to shape the values and behavior of members, and also provide them with emotional support. The primary group is home base, a sanctuary of sorts, where participants are allowed emotional ease. Primary groups are also valuable to the larger social network. In these small, close-knit groups the norms required for successful interaction are demonstrated. Preparation for non-uniform tasks such as baby care and the coping mechanisms for natural disasters are also taught.

Primary groups include neighborhood gatherings, informal office cliques, and adolescent peer groups, but the intensity and duration of familial relationships make the family unique. Family ties in most instances, are the major source of emotional support over the course of one to two decades, and these ties often continue as an inspiration to members for the remainder of their lives (Sussman, 1959). In short, for many, the family continues to provide a stable setting in a turbulent society.

Over the years, however, families have transferred many of their tasks to other institutions. The school has been among the more successful predators. The historical
and legal precedents have legitimized and eased the transition of children into the school. Children between four and six begin the change from a family-centered to a school and peer-centered environment. Increasingly their waking hours are spend away from their home and family.

For some families, the passage into school is smooth, for others problems are always present. Conflicts over curriculum reform, teacher assignment, book lists, prayers, bussing, and many others plague relationships between many parents and their childrens' schools. A part of the potential parental aggressiveness toward the school flows from a recognition of the influence that administrators and teachers possess over aspects of their childrens' development. Parents may be responding also to the inherent problems of a primary group trying to direct and in part control a bureaucracy.

In most bureaucracies the labor is divided among many levels of authority, and rules and regulations dominate the day to day patterns of interaction. But there are many distinctions between different kinds of complex organizations. One useful way to characterize bureaucracies is based on the question, "Who shall benefit?" (Blau and Scott, 1962) Once the primary beneficiary of an organization has been established, we can predict the structure, orientation, goals, problems, and effectiveness of the bureaucracy. A case in point is the school. If schools are service
organizations, then the professional-client relationship between the teacher and student is important. Curricula are aimed at improving the students' behavior, academic or otherwise, and school evaluations are based on charting the students' progress. The overall theme of the service organization is particularistic, helping clients in a meaningful way for them. Commonweal organizations, on the other hand, operate for a wide constituency and are judged by how well they work for the entire society. When school administrators perceive their job in these universalistic terms, they direct their energies toward a fit between what goes on in their schools and societal needs.

The fact is schools are a mixture of a service and commonweal organization. Some teachers consider the students' social and intellectual development the raison d'être of the school system and have resisted occasional community pressures, teaching as they have considered best. On the other hand, schools are mandated to offer occupational training and teach our children the norms and values of society, as well as foster intellectual and social growth. In these terms, administrators must serve the public-at-large and perceive their job in public relations terms, linking teachers and parents. Additionally, because educators have to compete with private schools for clients, because schools must compete with other government agencies for funding, administrators may want to accommodate local
leaders. In the end, the norms of universalism and efficiency may prevail over client-centeredness.

But families are not entirely powerless. Viewed in terms of an interorganizational perspective, families and schools must maintain an interdependency if both are to function smoothly. The family by law must send their children to school, and they are dependent upon the school to instruct the children in proper behavior as well as formal academic skills. Schools rely upon parents to teach the norms and values compatible with academic success and to perform fund-raising and other peripheral tasks.

Schools are staffed by professional teachers and administrators. Their decisions, therefore, are subject to all the restraints and authority of professional-client relationships. Although, historically many have questioned the controls of schools and other service organizations, recent challenges have been substantial and particularly vocal. Clients in general and parents specifically, are demanding a more powerful hand in the decision-making process. A decline in the trust of the professionals coupled with a narrowing of the educational gap between them and their clients has contributed to the current "client revolt."

Believing that there existed an uneasiness in the relationship between families and schools, I aimed to explore the differences along social-class and racial-ethnic lines. At the outset, however, there were two qualifications:
1). This was a pilot project and therefore the sample was quite small. The goal was to suggest further areas of investigation rather than anything modestly definitive about the nature of family-school relations, or for that matter about primary groups and bureaucracies. 2). Additionally, the study was a group endeavor involving six faculty from two departments who did not always share a similar goal for the project. The final instrument represented a compromise of each investigator's interests.

REVIEW AND SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

At the beginning of this dissertation I outlined three questions:

1). First I asked what variations exist among social classes and racial groups in their relationships with schools?

I examined fourteen issues in order to determine if social-class and/or racial-ethnic characteristics influenced the mothers' perceptions of the school and of their children as students. Socio-economic status, as well as race, or so I reasoned, would influence such things as the mothers' expectations of their children, the kind of teacher the mothers' wanted, and their willingness to participate in school activities.

Conclusion: On none of the fourteen issues were the differences between groups of mothers either by social-class or racial-ethnic categories, statistically significant at a
probability of less than .05. This does mean that there were considerable similarities in parental expectations of their children as well as in beliefs about the nature of schools, teachers, and the parents' role in education. On the other hand, when variations were present, it was more often along social-class rather than racial-ethnic lines. There was more agreement among the working-class whites, blacks, and Puerto-Ricans than between the middle and working-class whites (Table 43).

2). Next, I wanted to know what are the areas of conflict and congruity between families and schools?

Before examining the patterns of interaction between mothers and teachers, I analyzed whether the students' social-class or racial-ethnic characteristics influenced the teachers' perceptions about themselves, their students, or the parents' role. Teachers, according to their critics, often perpetuate stereotypes of racial and social-class differences. I, too, presumed for example, that the teachers would entertain lofty expectations of middle-class students, stressing discipline in their direction of working-class students.

Conclusion: After examining eleven issues, I found none of the differences in the teachers' responses was statistically significant at a probability of less than .05 according to either the social-class or racial-ethnic categories of the students. Although small differences existed in the anticipated direction, from these findings it appears
TABLE 43: SUMMARY OF SELECTED ISSUES AND FINDINGS FOR THE MOTHERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Finding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Expectations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Kind of student</td>
<td>There were few differences, most mothers wanted a well-behaved child. (Table 5; p. 63)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. How far in school</td>
<td>Middle-class mothers had higher expectations and aspirations for their children. (Tables 6, 7; p. 65)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Expectations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Aspirations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Relations with the school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Teacher</td>
<td>Middle-class mothers had a stronger preference for someone who made the class interesting while more working-class mothers wanted a teacher who stressed the subject matter. (Table 8; p. 68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Preference</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Descriptions of the teacher</td>
<td>Many mothers described their children's teachers as disciplinarians, especially among the blacks. Otherwise there were few differences among the mothers. (Table 9; p. 69)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Discipline</td>
<td>Almost all the mothers spanked, but more middle-class mothers tended to explain the problem also. (Table 10; p. 71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The technique used at home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How the teacher should handle it</td>
<td>More black and Puerto-Rican mothers wanted the teacher to contact them, but white mothers thought the teacher should do what was best. (Table 11; p. 73)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Paddling</td>
<td>There were few differences among the mothers; most believed that the teachers should be allowed to paddle the students. (Table 12; p. 73)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 43 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C. Jobs for the family</th>
<th>Moral instruction was the modal response among all groups. When the three choices were combined, however, more middle-class mothers stressed citizenship training and working-class mothers wanted religious instruction. (Tables 15, 16; pp. 78, 79)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D. Jobs for the school</td>
<td>There were few differences; most mothers agreed on reading. (Tables 13, 14; pp. 75, 76)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Helping the child with reading</td>
<td>There were few differences; most mothers wanted to help the child without contacting the teacher. (Table 17; p. 81)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Influences on the child</td>
<td>More middle-class mothers believed that parents were the most influential people in their children's lives. (Table 18; p. 83)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. The vote on the school levy (November, 1974)</td>
<td>More middle-class mothers voted in its favor; but most agreed that it was defeated because of economic reasons and that the lack of money would not affect the quality of education. (Tables 19, 20, 21; pp. 84, 86)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Participation in school activities</td>
<td>There were few differences among the mothers; in most cases anticipated participation was high while actual participation was low. (Tables 22, 23; p. 87)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This refers to the original table in the text.*
that teacher prejudice is not as widespread as some may have believed (Table 44).

Conflict and congruity between families and schools, I believed, varied by the issue involved as well as the families social-class and racial-ethnic characteristics. The mothers from white middle-class families whose values and norms are compatible with the teachers' should have a higher rate of agreement with the teachers. On the other hand, mothers from poorer black and Puerto-Rican homes where the value system is different from the schools would more likely disagree with the teachers about such things as the role of the school and family, discipline techniques and expectations for the child.

Conclusion: There was a fairly low consensus for many mothers, albeit unknown to them, between some of their beliefs and the teachers' perceptions. In fact, on items such as how long the child would stay in school and the kinds of grades he would receive in first grade, 60-100% of the mothers held higher hopes and/or expectations than did the teachers. I compared the mothers and teachers responses on seven other items and in general there was greater congruity between white mothers, regardless of social-class, and their childrens' teachers, than for black or Puerto-Rican mothers (Tables 45 and 46). However, none of the differences between mothers and teachers was statistically significant at a
### TABLE 44: SUMMARY OF SELECTED ISSUES
AND FINDINGS FOR THE MOTHERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Finding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Expectations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Kind of student</td>
<td>Fewer blacks and Puerto-Ricans were described in academic terms and in general, more working-class students were thought of in negative terms. (Table 39; p. 118)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. How far in school</td>
<td>Teachers believed that middle-class students would go further in school. (Table 41; p. 121)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Grades</td>
<td>Teachers thought middle-class students would receive higher grades and that white working-class children would receive higher grades than blacks and Puerto-Ricans. (Table 40; p. 120)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Relations with the school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Teachers' self-perceptions</td>
<td>More whites of both social-classes had teachers who considered making the class interesting important, whereas teachers of blacks and Puerto-Ricans often emphasized maintaining discipline. (Table 26; p. 97)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Discipline</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Pupil Control Ideology Score</td>
<td>Teachers of the white middle-class and blacks were more custodial than those of white working-class and Puerto-Rican students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Paddling</td>
<td>Fewer teachers of blacks paddled; most of the rest used the paddle. (Table 29; p. 103)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. General discipline strategy</td>
<td>Almost all the teachers used behavior-modification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Jobs for the family</td>
<td>More teachers of middle-class students thought moral instruction was the most important job of the family,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 44 (continued)

D. Jobs for the school whereas those with working-class students stressed personal hygiene. (Table 31; p. 106)

E. Influences on the child More teachers of middle-class students stressed reading. (Table 32; p. 107)

F. Participation in school affairs Most teachers selected parents, although a sizeable number of Puerto-Rican students' teachers thought TV or radio was important. (Table 34; p. 112)

F. Participation in school affairs Only among the Puerto-Rican students' teachers did a majority not rank high on participation scores. (Table 36; p. 114)
### TABLE 45: SUMMARY TABLE FOR AGREEMENT BETWEEN MOTHERS AND TEACHERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. Expectations</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Kind of student</td>
<td>55.6 (10)</td>
<td>42.9 (12)</td>
<td>26.7 (4)</td>
<td>66.7 (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. How far in school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Mothers' aspirations and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teachers' expectations</td>
<td>55.6 (10)</td>
<td>46.4 (13)</td>
<td>26.7 (4)</td>
<td>38.9 (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Mothers' realistic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expectations and teachers'</td>
<td>55.6 (10)</td>
<td>60.7 (17)</td>
<td>40.0 (6)</td>
<td>44.4 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expectations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Grades</td>
<td>61.1 (11)</td>
<td>35.7 (10)</td>
<td>26.7 (4)</td>
<td>38.9 (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II. Relations with the school</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Teacher-Mothers'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>preferences and teachers'</td>
<td>55.6 (10)</td>
<td>42.9 (12)</td>
<td>20.0 (3)</td>
<td>33.4 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self-perceptions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Discipline-paddling</td>
<td>44.4 (8)</td>
<td>64.3 (18)</td>
<td>46.7 (7)</td>
<td>61.1 (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Jobs for the family</td>
<td>27.8 (5)</td>
<td>14.3 (4)</td>
<td>13.3 (2)</td>
<td>22.2 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Jobs for the school</td>
<td>83.3 (15)</td>
<td>60.7 (17)</td>
<td>20.0 (3)</td>
<td>61.1 (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Influences on the child</td>
<td>77.8 (14)</td>
<td>35.7 (10)</td>
<td>13.3 (2)</td>
<td>11.1 (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 46: PERCENT OF MOTHERS WHO AGREED WITH THE TEACHERS ON NINE SELECTED ISSUES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent who agreed with teachers</th>
<th>WMC</th>
<th>WWC</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Puerto-Rican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80 - 100</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 - 79</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 - 69</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 - 59</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 - 49</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 - 39</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 - 29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 19</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
probability of less than .05. This means that while there is the potential for conflict in Llamy between mothers and teachers over academic expectations for the children or the role of the family for example, in first grade the disagreements were not vital.

3). Finally, I sought to find out what linkage tools families use to influence the behavior of school faculty?

We asked the mothers their opinions on four issues which might have told us how they would respond if there was a problem with the school.

a). The vote on the school levy failed to pass in all precincts, although the middle-class mothers in our study were more sympathetic toward it. More importantly, almost none of the mothers interpreted the vote as a lack of confidence in school officials. Rather, they blamed economic circumstances (Tables 19, 20, 21; pp. 84, 85).

b). Actual participation in school activities might be another means of influencing school policy. While anticipated participation was fairly high by the second interview, five months after school started, most mothers admitted they were rarely involved in school affairs (Tables 22, 23; p. 87).

c). We also wanted to know what the mothers would do if their children did not receive the kind of teacher the mothers thought was best. In fact, most mothers believed that their children did not have the kind of teacher they wanted (Table 47), but few expected to do anything about it.
### TABLE 47: PERCENT OF MOTHERS WHOSE CHILDREN HAD THE KIND OF TEACHER THE MOTHERS WANTED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mothers</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White middle-class</td>
<td>33.4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White working-class</td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto-Rican</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For some, the lack of action stemmed from a sense of futility and impotence, while for others there was a virtue in the child learning to adapt to a mildly unpleasant situation. The desire to change the teacher did not vary by the social-class or the racial-ethnic characteristics of the student (Table 25; p. 91).

d). Finally, we questioned the mothers about how much they thought they could do to bring about a change in their schools' reading policies. More mothers believed they could alter the reading programs than change their children's teachers. There were small differences according to the mothers' social-class, but these were not statistically significant (Table 24; p. 89).

Conclusion: None of the signals of school dissatisfaction was discovered in Liamy. Few mothers believed the school should be patrolled either through the ballot or actual participation in school affairs. Displeasure with the teacher was not sufficient to evoke outcries of anger or reform. Only when questioned about reading policies did some mothers believe they would become involved in a potentially negative relationship with the school, but even this was not statistically significant.

In a general sense, the relationship between the mothers and teachers in Liamy is more an example of the interaction between a client and service organization than a study of interorganizational analysis. The mothers were not
striving to dominate the relationship, rather they acknowledged the authority of the teacher on school-related items. The interaction between families and schools, while predicated upon the legal requirements of compulsory school attendance, is dominated by informal contacts usually through the child. Finally, in Liamy the mothers exercised little influence over the teachers and made no attempts to control either inputs or outputs from the school.

IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In Liamy, neither the social-class nor racial or ethnic background of the students determined the mothers' or for that matter the teachers' expectations of the children or their perceptions of certain aspects of school life. True, there were differences such as teachers of middle-class students expecting them to have a higher achievement pattern than their working-class peers and black and Puerto-Rican mothers preferring that the teachers contact them on a discipline matter, but none of these differences was statistically significant. Instead of finding further support for the use of social-class as an independent variable, I found a merging of opinions, at least on the items explored for this study. I would suggest examining at least four additional variables to further our understanding of the family's relationship with the school:
1). The significance of a school policy decision for the parents is contingent upon its perceived lateral and longitudinal impact on the student and on them. Lateral effects include those decisions which the parents believe are important, but for a brief time (e.g., a student's grade, a homework assignment, or in the case of this research project, the teacher's pedagogy, etc.). Long-term or longitudinal policies, on the other hand affect the student's schooling over an extended period of time. Thus school board decisions on racial integration, school curriculum, and so forth, might play a role in students' lives for many years.

The relationship between parental anger toward the school and the laterality and longitudinality of an issue is not a linear one. That is, while, for the most part, families may be angered only temporarily by lateral issues, the more heated disagreements should concentrate on long-term school policies. However, the parents may perceive certain lateral issues such as a teacher's student evaluation or disciplinary strategy as being highly important for their child, more so than such longitudinal concerns as the menu in the school cafeteria.

When I examined the mothers' responses to disagreements on two issues, I found they were more willing to try to change a longitudinal issue such as the reading policy than the short-term consequences of a bad teacher. We need
to explore additional issues such as bussing, sex education, religion in schools, and even such basic items as the teachers' expectations for children, and disciplinary strategies. I found, for example, that quite often mothers and teachers differed over how long the children were expected to stay in school.

2). The amount of trust parents have in their school administrators and teachers will also influence a family's decision on how to resolve a problem. Because of the predominance of females and the fairly unsophisticated technology of teachers generally, primary level instructors do not enjoy a high prestige ranking in many communities. Whatever trust parents may have in the teachers often rests with the school itself, and varies with the social-class of the parents, among other things. After all, the greater the educational difference between professionals and clients, the more likely the clients will be to accept the professionals' advice unquestioningly. As it works out, then, the parents desire to change school policy depends upon the amount of leverage and jurisdiction they are willing to grant to the school. In turn, family trust of the school determines the degree of leeway granted.

3). Social integration also affects a family's resources during periods of conflict with school officials. If the marginal utility of leaving an area is greater than the discomfort of remaining, moving becomes a greater problem than
the original issue. If parents have emotional, familial, and political ties with their community, they are more likely to remain in that community and either fight it out with school officials or adapt.

4. Finally, variations in family themes lead the manner and degree of family protest against the schools. Family themes include the internal dynamics and structures which differentiate families. Utilitarian and intrinsic marriages, single and dual-career households, single-parent and nuclear families are all variations in the American family. We need to determine if and how these differences affect perceptions of and behavior toward the school.

Originally, I sought to uncover why parents were dissatisfied with the school and along those lines, to determine how families would try to ameliorate the conflicts. Rather than asking why parents are so distressed over school policies, the more legitimate question might have been why are they so placid and apathetic. Perhaps because of the multiplicity of school goals, failure in one area is often compensated in another. Another equally plausible reason is that parents, at least many in Liamy are either intimidated by school personnel and by bureaucratic administrators or respectful of their positions.

Communication between families and schools facilitates the educational success of the children. Conversely, a lack of action negates cooperation between two institutions so
important for child socialization. Admittedly, bureaucracies have more resources available to direct relationships than primary groups. However, there is an interdependency and it is preferable that interaction and communication are not entirely asymmetrical. While the mothers in Liamy appeared pleased with school affairs, there many discrepancies between the mothers and teachers, particularly for the black and Puerto-Rican mothers. Only after exploring more specific areas of concern for parents can we begin to suggest anything partially definitive about family-school relationships, about primary groups and bureaucracies. Hopefully, this study has indicated that such research is necessary.
APPENDIX

VARIABLES AND INDICATORS

1. Socio-economic status

The Liamy school district pupil registration form indicated the place of employment, occupation, and educational level for the mother and father. Borrowing from Hollingshead, the Institute on the Family and a Bureaucratic Society at Case Western Reserve University, where this research took place, used a system whereby education was weighted by four and occupation was weighted by seven to give a total social-class score. Social-classes I, II, and III were grouped as middle-class, and social-classes IV and V were working-class.

The remainder of the items were questions from the interview form. Below each item I have indicated whether it was asked of the mothers, teachers, or both.

2. Marital status
   Mothers

Are you married right now? Yes _____ No _____

3. Employment status
   Mothers

What is your occupation? ( ) If housewife, check here and ask about last occupation.
If Married: What is your husband's occupation? ________
4. Age
Mothers

How old are you? __________

5. Religiosity
Mothers

What is your religious preference? __________
Do you attend church services? Yes ____ No ____

6. Ethnicity
Mothers
I combined the responses to these three questions into one ethnicity score. I have also indicated the inter-item correlation coefficient.

Where were you born? __________
r = .95, s = .001
Where was your husband born? __________
r = .97, s = .001

Code
Country other than the United States score 1
United States score 0

What languages are spoken around the home? __________
r = .93, s = .001

Code
Spanish score 1
Bilingual score .50
English score 0

7. Professional behavior scale
Teachers
I combined the responses to these four questions into one professional behavior scale. I have indicated the inter-item correlation coefficient.

Do you belong to any professional organizations? __________
r = .63, s = .001

Code
The National Education Association or one of its local affiliates plus the International Reading Association, plus an additional professional
organization score 1
IRA plus an additional professional organization other than the NEA score .87
NEA or an affiliate plus an additional professional organization other than the IRA score .75
NEA or affiliate plus IRA score .62
A professional organization other than NEA or IRA score .50
IRA score .50
NEA or affiliate score .38
None score 0

How active are you in the organization?
\[ r = .70, s = .001 \]

\begin{tabular}{l}
How long have you been teaching? \hspace{1cm} \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_ \_ \\
\[ r = .72, s = .001 \] \\
How long at the present school? \hspace{1cm} \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_ \\
\[ r = .55, s = .001 \] \\
\end{tabular}

Code
\begin{tabular}{l}
8-9 years score 1 \\
6-7 years score .75 \\
4-5 years score .50 \\
2-3 years score .25 \\
1 year score .12 \\
\end{tabular}

8. Professional behavior
Teachers
These items were analyzed separately.

What is your highest college degree?
Do you have any credit hours beyond that? Yes \hspace{1cm} No \hspace{1cm}
At what type of college did you earn your degree? \hspace{1cm}
Your plans may not be definite at this time, but please indicate your present expectations.

a. Expect to continue teaching until retirement.
b. Expect to leave teaching in order to devote my time to homemaking, would not want to return to teaching later.
c. Expect to leave teaching for homemaking, would
want to return later.

d. Expect to leave education for another vocation.
e. Expect to continue in the field of education, but hope to move from classroom teaching into some other area of education.

9. Professional orientation
Teachers
These items were borrowed from Corwin, 1968. I have indicated the inter-item correlation coefficient.

Below are a list of statements with which some teachers agree and others disagree. Please select a number from this card which best expresses your opinions about these statements. Number 1 is strongly agree and number 7 is strongly disagree.

a. Teachers should be evaluated primarily on the basis of their knowledge of the subject that is to be taught and their ability to communicate it.
r = .63, s = .001
b. Schools should hire no one to teach unless she holds at least a bachelor's degree.
r = .59, s = .001
c. A teacher should consistently practice her ideas of the best educational practices even though the administration prefers other views.
r = .65, s = .001
d. The ultimate authority over the major educational decisions should be exercised by professional teachers.
r = .63, s = .001
e. It should be permissible for the teacher to violate a rule if she is sure that the best interests of the students will be served in so doing.
r = .83, s = .001
f. A teacher should try to put her standards and ideals of good teaching into practice even if the rules or procedures of the school prohibit it.
r = .82, s = .001

10. Professional "Ruler"
Teachers
Imagine all professions could be ranked in a series from least professional to most professional, where would you locate your field? (Draw an arrow on the line.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Least Professional</th>
<th>Mid-Professional</th>
<th>Most Professional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e.g., County Welfare</td>
<td>e.g., Clinical</td>
<td>e.g., Physician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td>Psychologist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. The characteristics of a profession
Teachers
We assigned each teacher a mean score based on her responses.

Below is a list of possible characteristics of a profession. Please indicate your feelings as to the extent to which these characteristics apply to teaching by using a number on the seven point scale. Remember this applies to the field in general, not to any specific teachers you may know. Number one is definitely yes and number seven is definitely no.

a. High individual responsibility for client (student) welfare
b. Highly specialized skills
c. Worthwhile service to humanity
d. Many years of training required
e. A self-imposed code of ethics
f. A body of scientific knowledge unique to the field
g. Self-imposed standards of performance
h. Self-sacrificing concerns for welfare of others
i. High prestige in eyes of public
j. A powerful professional association
k. Confidential relationship with client (student)

12. Pupil Control Ideology Form
Teachers
This was adopted from Willower, 1967.

Following are twenty statements about schools, teachers, and pupils. Please indicate your personal opinion about each statement by circling whether you strongly agree, agree, are undecided, disagree or strongly disagree next to each statement.

a. It is desirable to require pupils to sit in assigned seats during assemblies.
b. Pupils are usually not capable of solving their problems through logical reasoning.
c. Directing sarcastic remarks toward a defiant pupil is a good disciplinary technique.
d. Beginning teachers are not likely to maintain strict enough control over their pupils.
e. Teachers should consider revision of their teaching methods if these are criticized by their pupils.
f. The best principals give unquestioning support to teachers in disciplining pupils.
g. Pupils should not be permitted to contradict the statements of a teacher in class.
h. It is justifiable to have pupils learn many facts about a subject even if they have no immediate application.
i. Too much pupil time is spent on guidance and activities and too little on academic preparation.
j. Being friendly with pupils often leads them to become too familiar.
k. It is more important for pupils to learn to obey rules than they make their own decisions.
l. Student governments are a good "safety valve" but should not have much influence on school policy.
m. Pupils can be trusted to work together without supervision.
n. If a pupil uses obscene or profane language in school, it must be considered a moral offense.
o. If pupils are allowed to use the lavatory without getting permission, this privilege will be abused.
p. A few pupils are just young hoodlums and should be treated accordingly.
q. It is often necessary to remind pupils that their status in school differs from that of teachers.
r. A pupil who destroys school material or property should be severely punished.
s. Pupils cannot perceive the difference between democracy and anarchy in the classroom.
t. Pupils often misbehave in order to make the teacher look bad.

13. Student types
Mothers and Teachers
Because of the small sample, I collapsed the six groups into three. Types #1 and #6 are behavioral characteristics, #2 and #4 are academic traits, and #3 and #5 are negative descriptions of students.
The six sketches were borrowed from Wilder, 1968.

1). Student #1 is well behaved in class, pays attention to the teacher, works hard and tries to do well.
2). Student #2 is smart, able to come up with answers, grasps things quickly, and gets high grades.
3). Student #3 doesn't like most schoolwork, doesn't do his assignments, and is not cooperative.
4). Student #4 is creative, has original ideas and a good imagination, and likes to figure things out himself/herself.
5). Student #5 is not very interested in school work, doesn't try very hard to get good marks, just does enough to get by.
6). Student #6 is cooperative, is liked by others, and is friendly, good-natured, and well adjusted.
14. Grades in school  
Mothers and Teachers

What kinds of grades do you expect (child) to bring home in first grade?

15. Number of years the child will attend school  
Mothers and Teachers

Mothers: How far in school do you want (child) to go? and Realistically, how far do you think (child) will actually go in school?  
Teachers: How far do you think (child) will actually go in school?

16. Child's occupational potential  
Mothers

When your child is older, what would you like him/her to do for a living? _________

17. Teacher Types  
Mothers and Teachers
These four sketches were borrowed from Wilder, 1968.

1). Teacher #1 is most concerned with maintaining discipline, seeing that students work hard, and teaching them to follow directions.
2). Teacher #2 feels it's most important that students know their subject matter well, and that she/he cover the material thoroughly and test their progress regularly.
3). Teacher #3 stresses making the class interesting and encourages students to be creative and to figure things out for themselves.
4). Teacher #4 thinks it's most important that a teacher be friendly and well-liked by children and able to understand and to handle their problems.

18. Discipline  
Mothers

Children don't always behave the way you would like them to act. What do you do when (child) misbehaves?  
Who makes the decision about how to handle him/her?  
In case (child) disobeys the teacher, what do you think the teacher should do?
What would you do if he/she disobeys the teacher?
What about paddling? Should the teacher paddle?
Do you paddle?

Teachers
Children don't always behave the way you would like them to act. What do you do when your students misbehave?
What about paddling?

19. Jobs for the family and the school
Mothers and Teachers

Here is a list of things which are often considered important in a child's upbringing.
a). Please tell me which of these is the most important duty for the family?
b). Second in importance?
c). Third in importance?

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<th>Family</th>
<th>School</th>
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<tr>
<td>a) Instruction in reading</td>
<td>______</td>
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<td>b) How the child should dress</td>
<td>______</td>
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<tr>
<td>c) Sex education</td>
<td>______</td>
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<tr>
<td>d) Religious training</td>
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<tr>
<td>e) Leisure activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>f) Moral instruction</td>
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<td>g) Citizenship training</td>
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<tr>
<td>h) Personal hygiene</td>
<td>______</td>
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<tr>
<td>i) Determining when the child should be immunized</td>
<td>______</td>
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<tr>
<td>j) Other</td>
<td>______</td>
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</table>

Now, from that same list, please tell me which thing is the most important job for the school?
a). Second in importance?
b). Third in importance?

20. Home reading programs
Mothers and Teachers

After a child enters first grade what should a parent do about the child's reading? _________

21. Influences on the child
Mothers and Teachers

As you know, all kinds of people and things influence what a child thinks and what a child does. Here is a
list of possible influences. Which one do you think will affect children the most?

1). Friends  
2). Teachers  
3). Parents  
4). Minister or priest  
5). Books  
6). TV or radio  
7). Relatives  
8). Other

22. Participation in school activities
Mothers and Teachers

The teachers and the mothers before school began were asked to select a number from one to seven, number one being definitely yes and number seven definitely no. At the mothers' second interview, they were asked simply whether or not they participated in the activities.

Each mother and teacher was assigned a participation score based on the following codes:

Number one score 100
Number two score 83
Number three score 67
Number four score 50
Number five score 34
Number six score 17
Number seven score 0

For the second interview, the mothers participation scores were based on the following code:
Yes score 100
No score 0

We then used the mean scores to group the responses as follows:

Participation scores 70-100 = High
Participation scores 41-69 = Medium
Participation scores 0-40 = Low

Activities:

a) Visit your child's class in school during parent's day
b) Attend PTA
c) Become a volunteer school worker
d) Support any drives, clubs, parties, etc., at school
e) Become a room mother
f) Visit your child's class during the regular school day.
g) Go to community meetings concerned with school problems
23. The school levy
Mothers

In the November election there was a school levy for Liamy which was defeated, how do you feel about that? Why do you think it failed? What do you think the schools should do if they run out of money? Do you think it will make any difference in your child's education?

24. Changing the child's teacher
Mothers

If the mother's teacher preference and description of their child's teacher were not the same, we asked the following questions.

How do you feel about that? (i.e., not receiving the kind of teacher the mothers wanted) Do you plan on doing anything about it? Yes ___ No ___ If Yes: What do you plan on doing? If No: Why don't you plan on doing anything?

25. Changing the reading policy of the school
Mothers

Suppose you felt that (school) was not doing as good a job of teaching reading as other schools in Ohio. How much do you think that you could do to bring about a change?

A great deal
Something
Only a little
Nothing at all
Don't know

What, for example, could you do?
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