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A STUDY OF A SELECTED SAMPLE OF MIDDLE CLASS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO DETERMINE ENVIRONMENTAL AND CHILD REARING FACTORS WHICH MAY HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THEIR BECOMING DROPOUTS

A Dissertation Presented
By
ROBERT ELIAS RIEMER

Submitted to the Graduate School of the University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
May 1973
Education
A STUDY OF A SELECTED SAMPLE OF MIDDLE CLASS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO DETERMINE ENVIRONMENTAL AND CHILD REARING FACTORS WHICH MAY HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THEIR BECOMING DROPOUTS

A Dissertation Presented

By

ROBERT ELIAS Riemer

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School of Education
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This writer has been extremely fortunate in working with a doctoral committee comprised of individuals who are dedicated to Humanistic concepts. During these past few years, both teacher and student were open and truthful with one another, interacting as individuals. Ideas, facts and feelings have been openly expressed and discussed. The learning activity of the doctoral process has been integrated with the personal interest of this student and the learning goals of the school, for this I am grateful.

Dr. Emma Cappelluzzo, the Chairperson of the committee has provided me with immeasurable insight, guidance and supervision. Her dedication to her students and her work will be a positive influence in my future professional endeavors. Professor Harvey Friedman has continually given of his time and has afforded me the use of his keen critical analysis tempered by a supportive, warm approach which has added depth to my study. Dr. Michael Greenebaum has been a source of support and guidance from initial enrollment in the program through the final oral examination. His employment of unique skill in provocative questioning and analysis and synthesis has added to the excitement and purpose of the study and
will remain a source of inspiration to me.

Appreciation is further extended to the many persons who rendered valuable assistance. The writer is grateful to Dr. David Flight for his encouragement and help in initiating the study. I wish to thank Mrs. Ruth Perilli for technical assistance. The writer is further grateful to Ms. Ruth Nordlicht whose patience and understanding made it possible for me to complete this study. And lastly, appreciation is extended to my three children, Claudia, Scott and David, who were accepting, supportive and encouraging throughout.
ABSTRACT

A Study of a Selected Sample of Middle Class High School Students to Determine Environmental and Child Rearing Factors Which May Have Contributed to Their Becoming Dropouts

(May 1978)

Robert Elias Riemer, B.S., City College of New York M.A., New York University Ed.D., University of Massachusetts

Directed by: Dr. Emma Cappelluzzo

There has been a great deal of research concerning etiological factors in the dropping out of school. Earlier studies have, for the most part, viewed the adolescent act of dropping out as a component of lower social class background. A recent research trend has begun to examine early childhood and the possible cumulative impact on the child's development of early parent-child interaction across the boundaries of the social classes.

This study draws its sample population from a middle class suburban community on Long Island, New York.

It was the hypothesis of this investigation that certain dependent variables act upon the student's early childhood development in a causal relationship as determinents in his/her decision to drop out of school. It was hypothesized in relation to these variables that:
1. The parents of high school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly low standards of behavior expected of their children.

2. It was further hypothesized that high school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly:
   
a) Low family encouragement on matters concerning education.
   
b) Low occupational aspiration level with levels of responsibility, difficulty and prestige.

3. Less fruitful relationship with fathers as compared with mothers.

4. Low acceptance with regard to perceived father's and mother's attitudes, and a low degree of confidence and trust between parents and dropouts.

5. Low level of perceived parental interest.

6. 
   a) Low level of achievement motivation.
   
b) Low family encouragement of self-reliance and autonomy.

7. Low level of self-esteem.

Questionnaires were administered to the dropouts and their respective parents. The dropouts responded to
two standardized instruments: 1) Elias Family Opinion Survey and 2) The Berger Scale of Acceptance of Self and Others. In addition, the sample and their parents responded to questionnaires designed by the author.

Hypotheses 2b, 3, and 6a were supported; hypotheses 2a, 5, 6b and 7 were not. Hypotheses 1 and 4 were inconclusive.

This sample, as a group, reflected low occupational aspirations in contrast to occupations held by both fathers and mothers. They reflected, too, a low level of achievement motivation. There was a less fruitful relationship with fathers as compared with mothers. The father was seen by the dropouts as interested but not particularly loving nor attentive, especially, in the earlier years. The dropouts reported family encouragement on matters concerning education with encouragement of self-reliance and autonomy. Yet, they reported also that their parents felt the dropouts would not be successful. The self-esteem of the sample was high, despite poor academic status and low occupational aspirations. The dropouts displayed features of passive-aggression in their adjustment reaction to parental expectations. This "getting even" with the parents was seen as a lashing out at the father in particular, who did not offer the needed emotional support. Despite the scores on the self-esteem
scale, these young adults appeared troubled emotionally, lacking in a clearly defined self-image and sense of identity.

In general, it was inferred that environmental and child rearing practices contributed to the dropping out of school of this sample. The parent's teaching style was confusing and resulted in anxiety. High achievement was demanded without positive support. The father was demanding and arbitrary while the mother was controlling and oversolicitous. The parents seemed unaware of the positive aspects of stimulating the child prior to the onset of schooling.

A general observation emerging from this study is that social class defined either by father's occupation or education, ownership of a family house and residence in a suburb has less influence on adolescent behavior and family patterns related to the adolescent behavior than a great deal of previous research might lead us to expect.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

"This year was really bad. I just didn't care if I passed or failed. The days dragged and I began cutting classes."

"What happened then?"

"I left school!!....I used to like school but I felt like I was going without learning anything."

"Would you return to school if you could?"

"No way! When I left school, not one teacher even asked about me!" (Interview with author, 1977).

This statement was made by a recent high school dropout. The affect of the student did not reflect hostility and anger, but rather, resignation and depression. This student, now only 17, was apprehensive and confused and unable to offer any plans for the future. With limited skills at his disposal, what kind of a future does he have in our society?

The Nature and Extent of the Problem

Never before in our history has a secondary education been so readily available to American youth. Never before has so much emphasis been placed on a high school education as a minimum educational goal. Parental and community pressures are used to convey the importance
of a high school education. Yet, even in the face of these pressures many young people are leaving school prior to graduation. It is clear that although schools can provide the facilities for the education of youngsters, they are unable to provide optimum conditions for all students.

In each decade of this century there has been a rise in the percentage of students enrolled in the high schools of our country. This increase in enrollment is linked with a higher percentage of students who remain in school long enough to graduate. (Jones, 1977).

We note that while the percentage of dropouts has been decreasing, the actual number of dropouts has been increasing. This peculiar situation is due to the steadily increasing population in school enrollment, which reflects the population increase of some 50 million people since the 1940's.

Statistically, one out of every four children who entered the fifth grade in the fall of 1966 failed to graduate with the class of 1974--their class. The total number who should have graduated was 4.1 million, but approximately 900,000 fell by the wayside, according to the estimate by the U. S. Office of Education. (National Advisory Council on Supplementary Centers Report, April, 1975).
More recently, Time Magazine (November 14, 1977), reports that 25% of high school students across the nation quit before graduation. They feel "the health of U. S. education in the mid-1970's--particularly that of the high schools--is in deepening trouble."

Although a corollary of required schooling is dropouts, dropping out of school may be said to be a symptom of pre-existing problems rather than the problem itself. The source of that problem may well be the fiber of society of which our schools are an integral part, as well as the individual and/or his family. (Hunt and Clawson, 1975).

**Concern Over the Problem**

In view of the numbers and the likelihood that there will be a total of eight million more dropouts in the decade of 1974-1984, the plight of the dropout remains a continuing dilemma. (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1974).

Many governmental, community, social and educational agencies are concerned over the problems of youth, the dropouts, who leave school prior to graduation. And yet, for all the concern, today's dropout is not a unique phenomenon.

School dropouts have long been a national concern. The problem of the dropout is as old as the
educational system itself. Today, more than ever before, the value of retaining potential dropouts until completion of their public education has become a subject of importance to most communities.

Reflecting the seriousness of the problem in the mid-1970's, psychologists study how dropping out of school effects an individual's emotional growth. Educators are concerned with the lack of development of the dropouts' brain power. Sociologists express concern with the loss of the dropouts' contribution to both the community and the nation. (Meyer, 1974).

The federal government has been cognizant of this situation and has expended much energy in an attempt to understand and ameliorate this problem. (National School Public Relations Association Study, 1972). The chapter on Review of the Literature will document the concern in this area.

**Statement of the Problem**

Motivation for this specific study on dropouts has been centered on the following observations:

1) The limited research, coupled with a paucity of empirical evidence and statistical data on etiological factors concerning middle class dropouts.
2) The recent trend in early childhood research (pre-school) and the possible cumulative impact on the child's development of early parent-child interaction.

At the present time there is a growing inclination in the field to alter the focus of research and programming from remediation in the high school to early identification and intervention programs that are likely to be more successful.

The recent attention, work and studies devoted to the early identification of potential dropouts has aided in postulating the problem of this dissertation: whether or not early family relationships and practices seem to be significant in middle class dropouts.

This study will focus on a selected sample of middle class high school students to determine environmental and child rearing factors which may have contributed to their becoming dropouts.

Limitations of the Study

As the writer develops the parameters of this study, the reader should be aware of the following limitations.

The design deals only with a group of early school leavers, observing their characteristics after the
point of leaving and obtaining recollections of characteristics prior to leaving without reference to any control group.

The sample does not represent a random selection of subjects. These students may not be representative of early school leavers as a whole.

The limitations of the sample population and the ability to generalize about all dropouts should be noted. One cannot attempt to generalize concerning child-rearing practices to an entire social class from a sample in one part of the country—even if it were a representative sample. There may be cultural differences between two samples of apparently similar occupational status, due to regional differences, religious differences, and differences of nationality background. Furthermore, there may be differences between occupational groups within the same social class.

The retrospective nature of the questionnaire/interview introduces memory errors and contamination because of intervening events and biasing factors which increase with time.

There is a lack of control over independent variables. Within the limits of selection, the investigator must take the facts as he finds them with no opportunity to arrange the conditions or manipulate the variables
that influenced the facts in the first place.

There is difficulty in being certain that the relevant causative factor is actually included among the many factors under study.

A phenomenon may result not only from multiple causes but also from one cause in one instance and from another cause in another instance.

When a relationship between two variables is discovered, determining which is the cause and which is the effect may be difficult.

The fact that two or more factors are related does not necessarily imply a cause-and-effect relationship. They all simply may be related to an additional factor not recognized or observed.

There are limitations characteristic of interviews in general: (Isaac, S., and Michael W., 1974)

1) The respondent must cooperate in answering the questions.

2) He must be relied upon to tell what is—rather than what he thinks ought to be or what he thinks the researcher would like to hear.
Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study a number of terms need definition.

a) Dropout - Many researchers have alluded to this term and most have given their descriptive characteristics. This study uses the definition of Delbert Elliot and Harwin Voss (1974). A dropout is a pupil who leaves school, for any reason except death, before graduation or completion of a program of studies and without transferring to another school. The concept dropout implies either a personal decision to leave school, presumably permanently, or an official decision by an educational authority to exclude a student from school.

b) Self-esteem - Coopersmith (1967) uses this term interchangeably with self-concept and defines it as follows: The evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself; it expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval and indicates the extent to which the individual believes himself to be capable, significant, successful and worthy. In short, self-
Esteem is a personal judgment of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes the individual holds towards himself. It is a subjective experience which the individual conveys to others by verbal reports and other overt expressive behavior.

c) Alienation - James Mackey (1977) describes this condition as: Characterized by three independent and measurable dimensions: 1) personal incapacity, the feeling of not having the skills needed to succeed; 2) guidelessness, the rejection of the conventional rules for succeeding; and 3) cultural estrangement, the rejection of the predominant criteria for success. William Jones (1977) describes alienation as a general term for feelings of not belonging, rootlessness, estrangement, and hopelessness.

H. and A. English in *A Comprehensive Dictionary of Psychological and Psychoanalytical Terms* define ambivalence, hostility, anxiety and passive-aggressive as follows:

d) Ambivalence - Tendency to be pulled in psychologically opposite directions as
between love-hate, acceptance-rejection, etc.

e) Anxiety - 1) an unpleasant emotional state in which a present and continuing strong desire or drive seems likely to miss its goal; 2) marked and continuous fear; 3) a fusion of fear with the anticipation of future evil; 4) a continuous fear of low intensity, a feeling of threat.

f) Hostility - Tendency to feel anger toward and to seek to inflict harm upon a person or group.

g) Passive-aggressive - A person, lacking genuine independence who reacts to difficulties either by indecisiveness and a clinging to others for help or by temper tantrums, irritability, and misdirected destructiveness or obstructionism.

h) Middle class - In order to establish a working concept of "middle class", the author felt that it was incumbent upon him to enter into the following discussion. A short summation of pertinent work in this area is included and finally, there is the rationale establishing the sample population and geographical
location as "middle class".

The author does not intend to become formally involved in the fine conceptual nuances of class structure that currently divide the sociological literature. The view of class structure as a composite of the major empirical descriptions employed in the literature is acceptable. Although there is awareness of the more fundamental conceptual and theoretic assumptions that underlie the empirical dimension of social class analysis, the immediate concern for this study is with the stratification system as it is currently viewed on the descriptive level.

Sociologists have been investigating whether the location and identification of a person in a certain social stratum may help us understand his behavior. They have attempted to ascertain whether there is a constellation of specific traits and behavior patterns associated with certain classes. A number of studies have been made by American sociologists to determine an answer to this question.

American society has been described in terms of from two to six classes. Objective categories such as occupation, income level, educational achievement and neighborhood are often employed in arriving at judgments of community stratification.
W. Lloyd Warner and Paul S. Lunt analyzed class structure in the study of "Yankee City", Newburyport, Massachusetts (1941). Both objective criteria, such as income, membership in certain clubs and subjective criteria, such as self-evaluation and evaluation of oneself by other members of the community, were used in classifying the citizens of "Yankee City" into upper-upper; lower-upper; upper-middle; lower-middle; upper-lower; lower-lower.

Later, Warner developed a technique to determine actual social class participation utilizing his "Index of Status Characteristics". (1960-Social Class in America).

There are three separate steps in obtaining an Index of Status Characteristics for any individual or family:

1) Making the primary ratings on the status characteristics which are to comprise the Index—usually occupation, source of income, house type and dwelling area.
2) Securing a weighted total of these ratings.
3) Conversion of this weighted total into a form indicating social class equivalence.

In examining class structure in New Haven, Hollingshead and Redlich (1958) systematically employed four units of analysis: Neighborhood, occupation,
educational achievement and what might be called judged estimates of class positions. These four factors were assigned numerical weights and through use of a statistical procedure a sample of New Haven residents was ranked in five classes. Two are of interest to this discussion:

Class II - Upper-middle - consisting of executives, business managers and professionals such as teachers, engineers, accountants, pharmacists.

Class III - Lower-middle - proprietors, salaried administrators and clerical occupations, semi-professionals, technicians and skilled workers.

Joseph Kahl (1957) goes beyond one geographic community in constructing an image of the upper-middle class and lower middle-class in terms of the national society. There are similarities to Hollingshead's systematic study of a particular stratum in a "real" community and Kahl's abstract generalizations to the national society. They both stress the same occupational levels and educational levels; they both note the suburban movement of the upper and lower middle class, their high degree of mobility and the homogeneity of their contacts.

Robert J. Havighurst (1962) in Growing Up in River City, utilized an Index of Status Characteristics to describe four socio-economic classes. He based his
stratification system on Hollingshead's *Elmstown Youth* (1949), and W. Lloyd Warner's stratification study, *Social Class in America* (1960). He categorized groups on a range of scores determined by four facts: 1) Occupation of the father; 2) House type (according to size and condition of the grounds); 3) Area type (in accordance with River City standards of prestige); 4) Source of income (rated on a scale of prestige from a high for "inherited income" to a low for living on public charity.

He describes the middle class as follows:
Upper and Upper-middle, Group A - higher in prestige to professionals and managers.
Lower-Middle, Group B - white collar, highly skilled, some proprietors.

On January 6, 1976, the newspaper Newsday reported the findings of Richard P. Coleman, senior research associate at the Harvard-M.I.T. Joint Center for Urban Studies. In a study based upon a sample of 900 persons, he found that people classed the public into seven economic and social layers. The groupings and approximate 1975 incomes are as follows:

1) Success, elite $50,000.
2) Doing very well $40,000.
3) Good life-U.S.A, Middle American style $20,000.
4) Comfortable $15,000.
5) Getting along $9,500.
6) Having hard time $6,000.
7) Poverty-up to $5,700

Coleman concludes that Americans are class conscious and judge others by their money and the way they spend it.

In order to determine the Social-class position of the families of the dropouts reported in this thesis, this writer utilized Warner's Index of Status Characteristics. Ratings on the separate status characteristics are combined into a single numerical index assigning to each one a weight and securing a weighted total of the separated ratings in accordance with the following table:

<table>
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<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<td>Occupation</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of Income</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House type</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwelling Area</td>
<td>2</td>
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</table>

Each of the four areas are scaled from 1-7. If, for example, the occupation of the father was as a Clerk, (Warner rates this as 3), we then multiply this number (3) by the base number (4) and the resultant 12 is added to the score of the other three categories. The total is found in his table describing the status, e.g., a total of 27 is: 25-33 Upper-Middle class. In accordance with Warner's suggestion, the author computed the I.S.C. for
100 families from the school to ascertain critical points on the scale in separating one social class from another. Only six of the twenty-six families reported in this study were lower-middle class; all others were upper-middle class.

**Social Class**

Social class must be discussed as an important dynamic that is basic to this study. Warner (1960) states, "Each family has a place on a stratification continuum that reflects its socio-economic status."

Although there are frequent references in the literature to the lower-socio-economic groups, there is a dearth of studies reported concerning middle class dropouts. Zeller (1966) concludes that the lower the socio-economic level, the more likely a student is to become a dropout; although it can and does occur with frequency anywhere along the socio-economic scale. Schreiber (1969) cites a 1965 study in the Los Angeles City School District where 12% of the dropouts came from families from the highest income brackets.

Martin Deutsch (1968) feels that the middle class child is more likely than others to have the importance of school imprinted in his consciousness from the earliest possible age. He argues that the middle class child may have more personal anxiety about school success but he has
available to him other avenues for handling the school situation: a) there is more likely to be contiguity of the school-faculty orientation with his home-family orientation; b) failure can be interpreted to him in appropriate and familiar terms, and methods of coping with it can be incorporated. Deutsch is at a loss, however, to explain why middle class children drop out of school. He feels that there is a higher incidence of psychological malfunctioning among middle class dropouts; yet, the greater resources and support available from the family, community and school should result in a successful school experience.

Middle class students are dropping out and there is need for further investigation. This dissertation examines the middle class dropout and explores a number of influential variables.

**Early Identification**

Recent literature suggests that few high school students come all at once to the dramatic decision to leave school. For most, the decision is long in the making and is rooted in years of unrewarding and unhappy school experiences. This final act has its beginning in the elementary school years. (Hilton, 1973).

On the other hand, Bachman (1972) feels it is
more appropriately viewed as the end result or symptom of other problems which have their origin much earlier in life. He states the problem as involving a serious mismatch between some individuals and the typical high school environment. Dropping out, as reflected in his longitudinal study, was symptomatic of the clash of these variables: environmental background, ability characteristics, school experiences and traits of personality and behavior. He suggests greater emphasis be placed on early school and pre-school intervention.

A major role of the elementary school in prevention of school dropouts is in the early identification of potential dropouts. For many years students would manifest signs that went unrecognized and subsequently they dropped out. Today there is some evidence to suggest that the dropout can be adequately identified early in elementary school.

Educators of Poudre, Colorado, (1972) say that as early as second grade there are indicative signs that point to possible "potential dropouts". It is the premise of their early identification program that early detection and remedial action will keep a student in school. They conjecture, further, that the symptoms reflect environmental causality that apparently predates the onset of school attendance. The implication, then, is
that it may be possible to identify potential dropouts prior to school entry.

**Pre-School Environment**

The milieu of the pre-school child is, as a member of a primary group, the family. The family serves as an instrument of cultural transmission. The values, attitudes and patterns for living are transmitted by the potential dropout's family. Its values and norms form the frame of reference as well as the anchorage for early self-concepts and perceptions of others. (Hornbostel, et al, 1969).

In the past decade, a host of studies has presented theoretical and empirical evidence supporting the thesis that the family, not schooling, holds the key to the child's education, socialization and inculturation. No simplistic answer, however, is possible, when one considers that parents educate children, children educate parents, siblings educate siblings, and parents educate one another. In addition, the family can no longer be viewed as a closed system; it is a system open to a multitude of external forces. (Leichter, 1976).

An awareness of the major role of the parent as educator is emerging from child development research.

From research findings (reviewed in Chapter II, a rationale
for early education can be developed emphasizing provision of experience that contributes to intellectual development (Schaefer, 1972). Furthermore, a recent study by Werner, Bierman and French (1971) suggests the amount of emotional support and the amount of educational stimulation provided by parents in the pre-school years is directly related to school achievement.

In Chapter II we will discuss pertinent and selected research that bears upon factors concerning the dilemma of the dropout.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Educators across the nation are looking for new ways to cope with a rise in dropouts from public schools. Overall, the U. S. Bureau of Census estimates that at any given time there are at least 2.4 million Americans between the ages of 7 and 19 who are "non-enrolled"—many of whom remain out of school until they pass into adulthood. Whatever the individual reasons this flight is prompting educators to take a fresh look at the problem—its size, what is wrong and what to do about it. (U. S. News and World Report, March, 1976).

As research begins to respond more directly to these needs, it is desirable to consider the problems, approaches and content of what has already been done.

To review the literature related to the school dropout is a formidable task. The literature is being developed at such a rate that Schreiber in 1968 stated that over one thousand references to the dropout problem have been published.

This review attempts to categorize the literature into the following general areas:

A. The problem facing the lower and middle class dropout. The studies surveyed deal
primarily with the antecedents and consequences of early leaving from secondary schools.

B. Characteristics of the dropout - in general, the concentration has been on selecting studies that analyze processes and relationships between variables rather than merely describing the problem.

C. Possible solutions to the dropout problem -
   1. Federal approach
   2. Early identification
   3. Other programming
      a. Teacher's attitude
      b. Alternative schooling
      c. What more can schools do?

D. Social class

E. The pre-school milieu and its relationship to schooling
   1. Home and family

A. The problem of the lower and middle class dropout.

Elliott and Voss (1974) define a dropout as: A dropout is a pupil who leaves a school, for any reason except death, before graduation or completion of a program of studies and without transferring to another school. The concept, dropout, implies either a personal decision
to leave school, presumably permanently, or an official decision by an educational authority to exclude a student from school.

The modern dropout encounters a different world than did his counterpart in the 1920's who found ready employment in the mills, factories and mines. In that earlier era, a dropout found a job, married and raised a family; without great difficulty, he became a conventional citizen.

Technological changes, however, have drastically reduced the range and number of jobs available today for the person with less than a high school education. There is no longer a ready-made place for the dropout in the community's economic system. Not only have many unskilled jobs been eliminated, but a high school diploma has become a credential needed for entry into many jobs. (Elliott and Voss, 1974).

Braulio Alonso, a former president of the National Educational Association (NEA), (1972), has commented: "The American dream of creating and building an educational system that will provide an adequate educational opportunity for all is still a dream and far from fruition. For millions of Americans affected by race, color and place of abode, this dream is farther away than ever--it has disappeared in some places. Today the high
school diploma is practically a necessary certificate for employment. But, in our large cities, frustration and despair run high. Here about two-thirds of the unemployed will never finish high school."

This limited educational level will have detrimental effects both on the individual and the nation. The kind of education as well as the amount he completes will affect the young person's lifetime career. Generally, more education will result in higher earnings and a lower degree of unemployment. (Schreiber, 1968).

"In terms of the economic consequences of dropping out, we found that dropout's career options appeared to be limited. This was evidenced by the relatively large proportion of the dropouts who were unemployed or working blue collar jobs." (Blake, 1973).

The main emphasis at the time of the initial federal funding of dropout prevention projects (USOE, 1969), was on the economic reasons for staying in school: a high school diploma was equated with a job. To prove the point, the Select Committee on Equal Education Opportunity requested Henry M. Levin (1972), Associate Professor at Stanford University to find the cost to the nation for "Inadequate Education". In his study, Levin concluded that the failure to attain a minimum of high school completion among the male population, 25-34 years
of age in 1969, was estimated to cost the nation:
a) $237 billion in income over the lifetime of these men, and b) $71 billion in foregone government revenues. He noted, to the contrary, the probable cost of having provided a minimum of high school completion for this group of men was estimated to be about $40 billion. He estimated further that each dollar generated for the social investment in education generates six dollars over the lifetime of the group. Thus, Levin was equating lifetime earnings with graduation from high school. "The differences in lifetime earnings by a dropout and a high school graduate was due", he said, "to the higher employment among high school graduates."

The cost of educational neglect, as documented by the Senate Select Committee, is compelling reason for increased investment in having more youths complete high school. A return of six dollars for one invested cannot easily be matched in business life. (Jones, 1977).

Samuel Kavruck, Chief of Dropout Prevention, U. S. Office of Education, (1975), says that, "the schools have gone as far as they can with their limited resources. It is essential that we tie in with the larger context, that is, the entire economic social and political context which can alleviate the basic problems which produce dropouts: population control, food and housing concerns
and employment for all."

B. Characteristics of the dropout. The school dropout problem is not a new phenomenon on the American educational scene. Indeed, for much the greater part of public education history, the dropout has been as much a part of the fabric of national life as the high school graduate. (Hunt and Clawson, 1975).

Mussen, Conger and Kagen (1974) state both sociological and psychological factors appear to be involved in the adolescent's leaving school prematurely. The dropout rate is higher among the poor than among the well-to-do, and it is highest among ethnically segregated youth living in urban and rural slums. The proportion of dropouts among upper-middle class youth is one in six. Among lower-middle and upper-lower class youth it is one in four. At the bottom of the socio-economic ladder, one in two lower-lower class youth drops out prior to completing high school. They summarize the data from several studies and show that dropouts, compared to graduates, tend to be more troubled emotionally, less confident of their own worth, lower in self-esteem, more lacking in a clearly defined self-image and sense of identity and less likely to have structured values and personal, social or occupational goals.

Two of the studies reported in-depth were those
of Cervantes (1965) and Bachman (1972, reported elsewhere in this chapter. Cervantes studied 300 high school students, 150 graduates and 150 dropouts. He tested and found relevant the following hypotheses: a) the typical dropout would have an unsatisfactory family relationship; b) his family would have fewer close friends and fewer "problem free" friends than the graduate's family; c) his own friends would tend not to be approved by his parents; d) his school experience would be characterized by low level of participation and chronic trouble with authority.

Schreiber (1968) summarizes his findings as to characteristics in what he describes as "brief sketch":

1) The dropout is a child just past his 16th birthday.
2) Has average or slightly below average intelligence.
3) Is more likely to be a boy than a girl.
4) He is not achieving according to his potential.
5) He is not reading at grade level.
6) Academically he is in the lowest quarter of his class.
7) He is slightly over age for his grade placement.
8) Has been held back once in the elementary
or junior high school.

9) He has not been in trouble with the law but does take an inordinate amount of the school administrators time because of discipline problems.

10) He seldom participates in extra-curricular activities.

11) Feels rejected by the school and his fellow classmates.

12) He is insecure in his school status.

13) He is hostile towards others.

14) Is less respected by his teachers because of his academic inadequacies.

15) His parents were school dropouts as were some of his brothers and sisters.

16) His friends are outside of school, usually older dropouts.

17) He says he is quitting school because of lack of interest but that he intends to get a high school diploma in some manner because without it he knows he can't get a job.

18) He knows the pitfalls that await him in the outside world, yet believes that they can't be worse than those that await him here if he were to remain in school.
Who drops out? In the 1974 study reported by the Los Angeles Unified School District on Characteristics of School Leavers, 5% came from families where the head of the family was a professional or managerial worker and, in addition, 12% came from families with a "skilled" head of family. They report five principal reasons for leaving school:

1) No interest in school
2) Academic failure
3) Health reasons
4) Reading deficiency
5) Home problems

They conclude there is no such person as a "typical" school leaver. The dropout comes from all levels of abilities and from all types of backgrounds. They state further, if one is willing to settle for less than perfection in such prediction, it can be said that the young person who might be identified as dropout-prone is one who: a) is reading poorly and whose reading is not improving; b) has a relatively high rate of absenteeism; c) is more deprived than his fellow students; d) is older than his classmates; e) is beginning to lose interest in school; f) is beginning to receive poor marks in school subjects, work habits, and cooperation; g) the student's skin could be any color, and h) the student is about as
likely to be a girl as a boy.

In a study to provide information concerning intellectually above average youth, French and Cardon (1968) found that the school reported: 60% of the boys leaving school either had entered the armed forces or had passed the required age. A similar percentage of girls were reported to have left school because of pregnancy or marriage. The dropouts, however, provided a different set of reasons for withdrawal. In their words, the majority of male dropouts left because they did not like school (20%); they were asked to leave (18%); they wanted to get a job (17%), or because they wanted to get married (11%). Twenty percent of the unmarried females left because they did not like school; others left to obtain employment (16%); because of failing grades (12%) or because they were needed at home (12%). A large majority did leave to be married (40%).

Ahlstrom and Havighurst's (1971) study done in Kansas City assessed attitudes as a reason for leaving school. Negative attitudes were especially strong in regard to: a) irrelevant curriculum, b) being bored, c) teacher's stress on the grades, d) teacher prejudice, and e) school restrictions.

Thornburg (1975) lists the reasons cited by the schools for students dropping out. They are: a) lack of
interest in school; b) failing grades; c) couldn't get along with teachers; d) couldn't get along with other students; e) negative attitudes towards school; f) wanted to find a job; g) wanted to get married; h) pregnancy; i) enlistment in the military; j) being asked to leave.

The Maryland State Department Report (1969), Project New Hope in compiling their statistics state: "The reasons why students elect to leave school are many and in an assessment of the individual cases, there is usually more than one cause present. The act of withdrawing from school before graduation is only the final culminating act in a pattern of evolving frustration which may have been set in motion in primary grades or even earlier."

Statements of actual dropouts as reported in the study revealed the following causative factors: a) failing grades; b) feelings of humiliation or inadequacy at lack of school success; c) financial difficulties; d) peer or sibling pressure; e) perceived lack of relevance of curriculum offerings; f) perceived lack of "caring" on the part of the school personnel.

As viewed by Schreiber (1969), dropouts seem to be "losers". "They are much more dissatisfied with their social relationships in school than are the stay-ins. They frequently consider themselves poorly treated or unesteemed by teachers and other pupils. They often feel
that the teacher is not interested in them or their problems. Perhaps, more often than not, they are correct in their perceptions. Too frequently they permit these perceptions to downgrade an already deflated self-image contributing to a vicious cycle of further failure, non-participation and social withdrawal. Sometimes they engage in acts of rebellion in the form of remarks or other behavior. Girls are especially sensitive to "snubs", to lack of clothes (their definition of the 'right' clothes) and to rejection by established cliques."

Hiroshi Kanno (1974) in his study of self-concept and school dropouts concluded that the levels of self-concept can be affected by a positive educational experience. In his study, passing of the GED (High School Equivalency Exam) was the criteria. He believes that the typical dropout has a low self-concept. He points out that the high school dropouts who, in addition to a low self-concept, have had experiences of failure in our educational system, will respond and work towards educational achievement under appropriate conditions. When his sample achieved this goal, it was almost immediately reflected in their self-concept.

The Modesto, California, High School Study cited by Schreiber (1969) revealed that the dropout tends to reject both school and self and is usually insecure in
his school studies; is less respected than other students by his teachers because of his academic inadequacy; is usually hostile towards other persons, and has not established adequate goals.

Coopersmith (1967) in his studies of the Antecedents of Self-Esteem worked with fifth grade children over a period of years. He feels that self-esteem remains constant for at least several years. He suggests at some time preceding middle childhood the individual arrives at a general appraisal of his worth, which remains relatively stable.

This appraisal can be affected by specific incidents and environmental changes but apparently it reverts to its customary level when conditions resume their "normal" and typical course. In his search for etiology, he concludes that self-esteem is far more likely to be related to parental behavior and attitudes than any school related experiences.

Jones (1977) states categorically when discussing characteristics of dropouts: "Their upbringing has not and does not provide the self-concept, opportunity and motivation or the capacity to cope with their problems and become responsible citizens." In breaking down the student population, he notes: approximately 15% are students from other than poor families who are usually
bored, lack ambition, desire to start work, or for some other personal reason, do not choose to continue school.

Solomon Lichter (1962) has offered an analysis of the middle class dropout. Although he points to the considerable variation among middle class dropouts, three types seem to emerge: a) the dropout with school related emotional difficulties; b) the disturbed dropout whose difficulties are family related and c) the dropout from a family which is economically and/or educationally marginal to the middle class.

In his study, 105 adolescents were in case work treatment. All had at least average mental ability and were white. The following similarities were noted:

1) Dropouts had unsuccessful and unhappy school experiences.
2) The dropouts were not leaving to effect constructive plans. They were motivated to 'run away' from a disagreeable solution.
3) Emotional problems were the major cause of the school difficulties and the resultant school leaving.
4) The emotional problems were severe.
5) The dropouts and their parents had unhealthy and distorted relationships.

Lichter expresses his concern that a significant
number of middle class children who would be expected to complete schooling are dropping out.

Students sometimes drop out of school when the school drops them, through expulsion or suspension. Determining cause and effect and who is right in such cases is difficult. Serious charges were leveled against school districts in December, 1974, as a result of an 18 month study by the Children's Defense Fund. The study reports that as many as 2 million children aged 7 to 17, were out of school in 1972-73, not by choice but because they had been excluded. The report, based on Census data and interviews with 6,500 families and 300 school officials around the country, found 10 states that have more than 6% of their school age population out of school.

How can we, then, work towards the amelioration of the dropout problem that debilitates the country in its social, emotional and economic deprivation?

C. Possible solutions to the dropout problem. Staples (1977) points out the increase in the past decade by school systems interested in introducing programs designed to attract and obtain commitments from students who have been "turned off". These programs include youngsters whose range of intelligence is from average to superior, who have no physical handicaps that could interfere with learning, and who come from homes and backgrounds that are
no different from those of many students who have accepted schooling. He states as "puzzling" that disaffection among students is manifested among the advantaged as well as the disadvantaged and is a universality in our country.

In a special report by the National Advisory Council on Supplementary Centers and Services (1975) on Dropout Prevention, it was strongly recommended that:

a) the U. S. Office of Education take the lead in identifying and developing methods of early identification and intervention to overcome the social, home and school problems of children that may lead to school failure, through the use of funds (see footnote) approved by the Special Projects Act; b) the U. S. Office of Education stress early identification and intervention as the exemplary approach in dropout prevention.

Footnote-(Abstracted from National Advisory Council report, 1975)-Under the Education Amendments of 1974 (P.L. 93-380) ESEA Title VIII (Elementary and Secondary Education Act) is no longer a categorical program. The amendments revised and replaced the expired ESEA and dropout prevention became part of a consolidation called, "Education, Innovation and Support". The consolidation went into effect fiscal 1976 and is officially known at Title IV, Part C. No money was approved by Congress for fiscal 1975 for dropout prevention, and the projects that were in operation during fiscal 1975 operated on previous 1974 impounded funds. In essence the National Advisory Council is disturbed by the national spotlight turning away from the problem of the dropout. Recommendations have been made to Congress urging appropriations for additional funds under Title IV.
1. Federal approach. Approximately $42 million were allocated under Title VIII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1975, for dropout prevention. These funds were expended from 1969-1974. Starting in 1969, ten target school districts began programs. Nine additional areas were added in 1971 and appropriations doubled to $10 million. In 1973, funding began to dwindle to $7.2 million and $4 million in 1974 to none in 1975.

Howard (1972) reports in detail the scope of federal programs. The scope of the programs is far-ranging and weighted toward introducing youngsters to the world of work. The objectives of the initial ten programs are:

**Objective: Involvement of private industry.** The Dade County Program, Miami, Florida, involves a work-experience program using business and industrial resources such as local meatpacking firms, landscaping firms, IBM is working with the project in providing students with communication skills.

Project STAY in St. Louis has work-study programs with McGraw-Hill, Sinclair Oil, department stores and hospitals. They receive promotion and wage increases as school progress and skill development are shown.

In Project KAPS (Keeping All Pupils in School) in Baltimore, the Telephone Company and local hospitals
help students learn communication skills and receive hospital training.

Objective: Reform and renewal of school structure. Each of the 10 USOE-funded projects is working toward elimination of unproductive instructional programs, of outmoded curricula and of facilities which do not yield sought after objectives.

Project EMERGE in Dayton, Ohio, for instance, has a work-study component in which students receive a stipend for working at a part-time job away from the regular school, in hospitals, food services, etc.

In Seattle, a newly organized Personal Development Academy provides individualized instruction for students with special problems.

Fall River, Massachusetts, has instituted an experimental science program and an individually prescribed math program.

Baltimore gives home instruction and counseling for sick, retarded or pregnant students.

The Texarkana project has integrated instructional centers to upgrade reading and math in Texas and Arkansas schools.

Objective: Motivating students through rewards.

In Baltimore, an "earn-learn" component in elementary schools allows students to perform tasks for which
they earn points. Pupils trade points for school supplies, games and toys and trips.

In Texarkana students receive coupons for merchandise. Students who complete two grade levels of achievement will receive transistor radios.

Objective: Relaxing traditions which inhibit programs. In Chautauqua, New York, clubs have been developed around motivational interests of students identified as high potential dropouts.

Batesland, South Dakota, uses teacher aides to assist Indian students in appreciation of their culture.

In Dayton, college students with inner-city backgrounds have been hired to assist younger students to stay in school.

The 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. schedule has been discarded for students with special problems in St. Louis. This permits night classes, special care centers, schools for pregnant girls, etc.

Objective: Preparing students for job education. In St. Louis, one unit involved students in house and apartment renovation to provide them with skills useful in construction work.

All of the ten programs have counseling and pupil personnel services to better prepare the students for entry into careers and vocations.
Objective: Insuring student mastery of curriculum skills. In Baltimore, secondary tutors are paid to help in raising the achievement levels of students.

Paducah established an "intensive unit program" to provide specialized learning techniques for high potential dropouts.

Miami provides a self-instructional center coupled with part-time work. All others have remedial training.

Objective: Insuring quality and responsible training. At least two prime causes of student dropouts relate to the teaching ability of staff and to outmoded instructional procedures, both of which force a student to conform to patterns which he is unable to accept.

In Paducah, Baltimore and Chautauqua, as well as South Dakota, teachers are involved in an "extensive training program" to provide better instruction and to improve their attitudes toward disadvantaged youth.

Objective: Accountability for results. Strict concepts of accountability for attainment of stated educational objectives had been accepted by each of the projects for which a grant award was made. Toward this end, each project used a portion of its award to secure needed technical assistance not available in the school system. Such assistance has been provided by outside
consultants, such as Educational Testing Service or regional educational laboratories and universities. They have provided aid in assessing school needs, developing specific performance objectives, improving school management, producing evaluation designs.

The following nine cities have been added to the original ten: Tuskegee, Ala.; Hartford, Conn.; Fort Logan, Colo.; Philadelphia, Pa.; Detroit, Mich.; Oakland, Cal.; Trenton, N. J.; Minneapolis, Minn., and Riverton, Wyo.

These nineteen USOE projects have divided four million dollars as funding for the school year 1974-75. It was the feeling of the USOE that the schools have gone as far as they can go. They are assuming that the 19 projects will point the way for dropout treatment in the future. (See Table 1).

Even more significant for future dropout projects is the recognition that the dropout phenomenon is not a single problem that can be cured in isolation from the student's other deeper problems. What seems to be emerging is an awareness of the need to not only provide remedial help and work/study programs to the real or potential dropout but to pay particular attention to the preventive measures that have potential for meeting the needs of students of whatever age, color, ethnic background and
## Table 1
### Comparison of Dropout Rates in 10 Target Schools
#### USOE Dropout Prevention Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Number of Students Who Dropped Out Of the Target Schools</th>
<th>Dropout Rate of Target Schools</th>
<th>Enrollment of Target Schools (7-12)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shannon County, S.D.</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore, Md.</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seattle, Wash.</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis, Mo.</td>
<td>581</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dayton, Ohio</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall River, Mass.</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chautauqua, N.Y.</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami, Fla.</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>428</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paducah, Ky.</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texarkana, Ark.</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Base year, before program started

Source: Dropout Prevention Programs Branch, U.S. Office of Education
family situation. (National Advisory Council on Supplementary Centers and Services, 1975).

2. Early identification. A student analysis system for identifying potential dropouts has been in operation in Poudre, Colorado. (Howard, 1972). The system utilizes certain characteristics of each pupil, charting them and predicting by fourth grade possible dropping out. The data are used to write a diagnosis and prescription for those with problems. Items included in the diagnosis range: ability, achievement, reading level, family situation, health, attitudes, emotional outlook, readiness, ability to relate to peers and adults, nutrition, behavior patterns, feelings of self-esteem, identification of special needs and feelings toward school and life. The effectiveness of the prescription is measured again in eighth grade when an analysis form is readministered to those identified as potential dropouts.

Lloyd (1976, 1972) in a study using 307 males and 200 female secondary school dropouts stated results indicated that a combination of measures would significantly predict grade of dropout two to six years in advance of the time students left school. He concludes that the dropout phenomenon contains the same elements that influence development over the entire range of educational attainment.
In his discussion, Lloyd argues further the stigma associated with dropout also presents the danger that labeling students as potential dropouts will have the negative consequence of making them the victims of the very efforts designed to help them. He states viewing dropout in terms of level of educational attainment may reduce the stigma by putting the focus on the real problems involved—the factors in a child's capacity, his social background (family), and importantly, the school system that limit or enhance his educational development. In his conclusion he makes two interesting statements: 1) evidence that prediction of withdrawal from secondary school can be made from elementary school data clearly indicates that dropout is only an event marking the end of a long, developing process; 2) there is also evidence that the high school dropout phenomenon is not as exceptional as might be thought. Rather, it contains the elements that influence development over the entire range of educational attainment.

Lloyd and others in the field were influenced by the work of Jerald Bachman (1972). He conducted a longitudinal research study (Youth in Transition Project) at the Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan. The results were based on a panel of over two thousand young men in tenth grade from 87 public schools across the
country. Interviews began in 1966 and followed for a total of four data collections, concluding in 1970. This "before and after" research—which looked at the same young men both before any had dropped out of school and then later after some had become dropouts—appears uniquely suited to distinguishing between causes and effects.

Bachman's conclusion on employment of dropouts was somewhat counter to that of Levin's analysis for the Senate Select Committee.

Bachman concluded that any difference between unemployment of dropouts and of graduates was due largely to the background and ability of the person, not to the amount of education or the attainment of a high school diploma. The two differing conclusions leads to the speculation that the national emphasis on dropping out before attaining a high school diploma was neither warranted nor wise. Bachman stated that a nationally advertized anti-dropout campaign seemed to have one basic thrust: "Stay in school long enough to get your high school diploma; your chances of making it will be better." He felt that this was a misleading "come-on" for students who were wise enough in the ways of the world to realize that "dropping out does not change things a great deal", at least not in the ways that are apparent by the time a
young man reaches the age of 19 and 20. The dropout campaign, Bachman argues, only instilled in the minds of employers a belief that any job should require a high school diploma, which in effect makes it merely a credential or an admission card into the world of work. Bachman provocatively states: "Dropping out of school is overrated as a problem in its own right. Actually it is the end result or symptom of other problems originating much earlier in life." More specifically, dropping out is symptomatic of certain background and ability characteristics, school experiences and traits of personality and behavior.

The study has two major recommendations: 1) The mass media campaign against dropping out should be sharply curtailed.

a) The campaign implies that if the potential dropout merely remains in school he can be just like his classmates who continue to graduation. This simply is not so. Another year or two in school will not "cure" his basic problems or limitations.

b) The over-simplification underlying the mass media campaign can have a general effect of eroding credibility.

c) The media campaign may have some features of
a self-fulfilling prophecy. A side effect of downgrading the dropout encourages employers to make the diploma a requirement when it need not be.

2) Remedial efforts designed to improve individual performance must begin far earlier than high school—perhaps well before elementary school.

Earlier intervention holds the possibility of avoiding some of the problems which are deeply ingrained by the time an individual is ready to drop out. Bachman emphasizes that his own research provides no guarantee that early intervention will work; it simply demonstrates that later intervention is a much poorer risk.

Dade County (Miami, Florida) runs an Early Childhood Preventive Curriculum aimed at determining and eliminating whatever it is that prevents the child from beginning to read in the first grade. The project uses a diagnostic-prescriptive approach that identifies high risk children at the beginning of the school year. The classroom environment is organized for individual instruction. In addition, there is a complete psychological evaluation with appropriate placement or treatment after evaluation. (Howard, 1972).

Belle Benchley School in San Diego, utilizes individualized instruction for youngsters beginning at
age four, by grouping children in multi-age, multi-grade classrooms. Children are from lower socio-economic backgrounds as well as the middle class. In 1974, the project evaluator stated: "These children develop socially and psychologically without negative attitudes toward school." The children were some six months above the national norms in math and reading. Social maturity and positive attitudes toward school are maintained and enhanced. (National Advisory Council Report, 1975).

3. Other programming.

a) Changing teacher's views toward "low achievers". There is a project in Los Angeles County known as Equal Opportunity in the Classroom. It has been implemented in 100 schools in 30 districts. (National Advisory Council Report, 1975). A teacher's training inservice model evolved. It was developed on the theory that how much a child learns is directly related to how much the teacher thinks the child is capable of learning. Los Angeles believes there is a direct relationship between teacher attitude and dropout prevention.

The importance of a teacher in establishing a climate that would effect self-esteem and intellectual performance was established by Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) in a highly controversial study. They found that teachers
encouraged those students who, in the teacher's judgment, would "flower" and discouraged those whom they believed would not, even though the results of tests previously administered showed that the two groups of students did not differ in ability. Teacher expectations for the student's performance gave rise to teacher behaviors that eventually made the original expectation come true. (Self-fulfilling Prophecy). Those students who were expected and encouraged to do so, performed at a higher level than those who were discouraged.

Because of several methodological flaws in the Rosenthal and Jacobson study, Brophy and Good (1970) set out to study the self-fulfilling prophecy in much greater depth, giving more careful attention to detail. In their research, the teachers who were observed were found to demand better performances from those children for whom they had high expectations and were more likely to praise such performance when it was elicited. Conversely, the same teachers were more likely to accept poor performance from those students for whom they held low expectations and were less likely to praise good performance from these students when it occurred. Brophy and Good (1970) interpreted their findings as supportive of the hypothesis of Rosenthal and Jacobson concerning
teacher expectation and, in effect, indicative of the self-fulfilling prophecy.

Kannel and Sayles (1974) conducted an unusual Dropout Forum involving prison inmates, asking how they perceived their school experiences. The majority indicated that they had felt estranged from the teacher, sensing a distance imposed by the teacher and his/her low expectations of the individual.

b) Alternative schools. In Chicago, two popular projects for dropouts are:

1) the Urban Youth Program. This program offers forty weeks of intensive training which prepares the student to return to the public school or to accept full-time employment.

2) the Industrial Skills Center. This is basically a work-study program. Students spend a portion of each day in classes at the Center receiving training in those specific skills required for successful employment in industry. Through the cooperation of large industrial corporations located
in the immediate area, the students spend the remaining portion of the day at a plant site with opportunity for practical application of the skills being developed at the Center.

In St. Paul, Minnesota, two Career Study Centers have been established. These Centers are supported in part by the local school districts and in part by contributions from private donors. The Center accommodates 250 teenagers who attend classes fifteen hours each week and work ten hours each week in pursuit of their chosen careers. This is made possible through the cooperation of local hospitals, day care centers and hotels where the students are employed on a part-time basis.

Los Angeles has developed "Project Furlough" as an alternative program for those students who have been identified as potential dropouts in the tenth through twelfth grades. This unique program allows a student to leave regular classes for a short period of time for any one of a number of reasons including family emergency, economic necessity, dissatisfaction with school or the simple need to get away to find oneself. During such furloughs, the student is required to keep in constant contact with the assigned school counselor and to report
to the school for consultation with the counselor on a regularly scheduled basis. (U. S. News and World Report, 1976).

Los Angeles has thirty-six continuation high schools for 16 and 17-year olds who cannot function in a regular high school. This includes potential dropouts, students with severe problems, and students referred on a last-stop basis when other options have been exhausted. Special efforts are made to encourage those who have already withdrawn to reenter the school program. (Los Angeles Unified School District Report No. 343, 1974).

Eighteen schools in Los Angeles provide some form of alternative education or open education. The first was started in 1970 and the most recent late in 1974. Some follow the "school within a school concept" with 150-300 students. (National Advisory Council Special Report, 1975).

Edison High School in Philadelphia, had the highest dropout rate in the city--60%. The Edison project was initiated in an effort to reverse the trend. As of 1973, there were three hundred students enrolled. An alternative school which focuses mainly on work/study has been successful in getting real and potential dropouts, as well as truants, back in school. One of the more successful
parts of the project was the inception of outside learning stations as part of an emphasis on career education. Students spend up to a week at learning stations located throughout the city. Each learning station is a business or agency which has agreed to let students learn and sometimes work on the facilities. Participating agencies have included banks, the zoo, courts, IBM and the U. S. Post Office. (National Advisory Council Special Report, 1975).

Students in Roseville, Minnesota, who are not performing well and are socially or academically "in trouble" may participate in Project Focus. Some of the students are identified as potential dropouts; others are unable to function within the traditional classroom. They reflect a pattern of behavioral problems and are generally recognized as underachievers. In addition, they manifest other problems that impede growth in school. (All are between grades 10, 11 and 12).

The "Family Group" is the backbone of Focus. Each Family Group consists of eight to ten students and a teacher/adviser. They meet for one class period daily throughout the year. The group leader directs the influence of peers to help a given youngster face up to and deal with problems causing his disaffection. The group leader continually builds trust and strives to show students
that no matter how much they have been rejected in the past, rejection is not inevitable. (National Advisory Council Special Report, 1975).

c) What more can schools do? Hyram Smith, (National Advisory Council Special Report, 1975), former head of the Federal dropout prevention office, said, "It is my firm conviction that in order to prevent young people from dropping out of school, two approaches are vital:

1) They must be identified as early as the first grade and before. It is clear that children who do not learn the basic skills, who cannot read or compute simple arithmetic rather than be embarrassed will find excuses to drop out of school as soon as they become eligible.

2) It is possible to save 75% of the dropouts if you alter the school system...you cannot keep children who are dropping out in the same situation. There has to be a change of program, a structural change and a change of personnel."
Bachman (1972) in his longitudinal study attempted to measure high school characteristics in order to distinguish "effective" schools. In an effective school, students grow in self-esteem with positive self-concepts and maintain realistic occupational aspirations. After years of the study, he states: "We found differences between schools to be sure, not only in test scores, but also in educational and occupational aspirations, values and attitudes, affective states, and so on. But, when we sought the causes of these differences, we found almost invariably that they could be attributed to individual differences in background and basic abilities. In short, the differences among schools in our study appear to be due to input characteristics of pre-school conditions rather than genuine school effects."

Geisinger (1973) in his report of Pennsylvania school dropouts lists the ways schools could deal with the dropout problem:

1) A special counselor to work with low achievers.
2) Summer counseling to help students towards a diploma.
3) Group guidance.
4) Family assistants (volunteers) to go into
the home.

5) Special teacher-counselor for potential dropouts.

6) Vocational counseling-personalized contact.

7) Teaching machines.

8) Social Clubs and hot-rod clubs.

9) Texts and materials adapted to interests and vocabulary level.

10) Custom auto shop to motivate students.

11) Use of Behavioral Modification--token economy.

12) Acceleration for overage potential dropouts.

13) Inner city dropouts as teachers for inner city children.

Potts (1977), Principal of Amherst Regional High School, discussed with the author a unique approach that seems "to delay the student from dropping out by defusing the need for that immediate decision." He discussed the Amherst High Schools' program known as ALPS (Alternate Learning Program). Although this program was initiated for the bright student who wanted to earn additional credits in an independent study, it has been effectively used for potential dropouts. A student is
enabled to earn credits towards graduation by contracting with a teacher. The curriculum and amount of credit is determined by mutual agreement.

Dr. Potts stated that "Usually in 11th grade the student becomes aware that he will not have sufficient credits to graduate. Some are 'short' credit because of inactivity and inattentiveness to programming. They have either cut classes and received a failure or have not complied with other basic requirements. These concerned students are then given an opportunity to 'work' for enough credits to graduate in 12th grade."

Although Potts feels that it is too early to make a determination as to the programs' complete effectiveness, he does feel encouraged by the small (1-2%) dropout rate.

Schmuck (1974) discusses the issues in question among critics of the public schools. These issues have to do primarily with relationships among school participants. While some are aimed at curricula, facilities or instructional strategies, most criticisms about joylessness, fear, mutual lack of respect among teachers and students, the absence of spontaneity, growing alienation and personal disinterest have become dominant. The crisis of schools lies in the area of human relationships. He defines an
idealized humanized school as: "...those where the environment sets the stage for successful personal encounter; where ideas, facts and feelings are openly expressed; where conflict is brought out into the open, discussed and worked on; where emotions share equal prominence with the intellect; and where learning activities integrate the personal interests of students and the learning goals of the school. Humanistic schools are places where teachers and students can be more open and truthful with one another, and where they can inter-act as individuals in addition to carrying out their tasks of teaching and learning."

This thesis to humanize the schools, Schmuck feels, will result in greater attendance and achievement and reflect itself in a more emotionally secure society.

Maynard (1977) states experience and research have shown that there are several critical elements over which the school has some control that would enhance the student's success in school. These elements include:

a) the climate of the school
b) expectations of the student as learner
c) the level of self-esteem of the students
d) the value students place on learning
e) effective teaching strategies
f) the relationships that students of all ethnic groups can and should learn in school. These are what schools can do.

D. Social class. Research studies have reported the theme of dropping out as a function of social class background. However, in an ongoing longitudinal study of adolescents being carried out in a county in the Pacific Northwest, Gerald Blake (1973) finds that social class background as measured by the father's occupation and level of education, had little influence upon the student's decision to leave school. Early school leaving cuts across the entire spectrum of class structure.

Kelly and Pink (1974) in another longitudinal study involving 309 males, report, "the data suggest that academic failure is strongly associated with high school dropout while social origins (class) seem associated with dropout only rather slightly. The control variable, social class, was measured by father's occupation and utilizing Hollingshead Index of Social Position. In addition, the high school dropout experiences restricted post-school career options irrespective of class origins. Statistics seem consistent in the statement that once a dropout leaves school, the probability of his returning is very low. Class origins have little impact on this pattern."
In the Pennsylvania study of high ability, dropouts (I.Q. 110 and above), French and Cardon (1968) differed from others in that, noticeably absent as indicators of dropout was generally low parental education and lower parental employment status. The implication they draw is that social class may not be significant in either predicting or precipitating dropout.

Havighurst (1962) emphasizes educational achievement of children from middle class homes is superior to that of children from working class homes. He recognizes that there are dropouts from middle class homes but dwells with those on the lower socio-economic level.

Warner (1960) states that social class analysis can be used to predict the dropout. He argues that when studying students of equal intellect, ability and interest, the social class of the student could be the factor determining if a student becomes a dropout.

Jencks and Brown (1975) report that high school characteristics such as social composition, socio-economic status, explains less than 1% of the variance in individual attainment.

Gordon Miller (1970) argues it is customary to find correlations from .30 to .35 between social classes
as indexed by father's occupation and academic achievement. Correlations of that order leave about 90% of the variance in achievement to be accounted for by other factors, including errors of measurement.

Of importance is the finding that factors associated with achievement are generally less associated with social class. Suggestions regarding the relative lack of importance of social class are made by Swift (1970) who states that social class is too vague a concept to describe the different home environments of children (in spite of the correlations usually found). These suggestions are supported by Miller (1970) and Cattell (1966). These latter two studies showed that variance in achievement can be accounted for by personality differences and dynamic interests, besides other influences not necessarily related to ability or social class.

Coleman (1969) tested the hypothesis that school success and dropout are not class phenomena but are actually contingent upon certain parental school-reinforcement behaviors. He studied the attitudes and behaviors of representative samples of lower working and upper middle class parents of successful children. The hypothesis was supported. It was significant that the parents of both groups used the same or similar control
techniques with their children. Item analysis showed that behaviors common to both groups and family characteristics were similar.

The literature on dropout seems replete with sweeping statements that socio-economic level is directly related to educational achievement. Recent studies, as reported above, are beginning to question this generalization and explore the large number of students from both lower and middle class who "make it" to graduation as well as those who do not.

Caro and Pehlblad (1972) state while it is apparent that young men from more favorable family backgrounds tend to fare better in the educational system, it is also the case that many persons from modest social origins can and do use the educational system as a vehicle for social mobility.

More important than "class" may be exploration of the pre-school environment, parenting and family process.

E. The pre-school milieu and its relationship to dropping out of school.

1) Home and Family. The dropout problem begins in the cradle--or more accurately, at the point at which the child leaves the cradle and begins to crawl around his
home, exploring his environment and developing the basis for his future intellectual development. (Silberman, 1964).

Schaefer (1970), from a summary of findings on early language and intellectual development concluded, "The evidence of the coincidence of the emergence of early language skills with the emergence of mental test differences between social groups, of the relationship of verbal skills with socio-economic status, ethnic groups, I. Q. scores, reading achievement and academic and occupational success, supports the conclusion that the education of the child should begin prior to or at the beginning of early language development."

Hess (1969) has developed a list of parent behaviors that have been found to be related to intellectual development and academic achievement. Hess summarized some of the significant findings from a short-term longitudinal study that correlated measures on 160 middle class and lower class mothers collected at the child's age of four years with the child's school performance two to four years later. A similar list of variables of parent behaviors was developed by Rupp (1969).

The Hess list is as follows:

1) Intellectual Relationships
   a) Demand for high achievement,
b) Maximization of verbal interaction.

c) Engagement with and attentiveness to the child.

d) Maternal teaching behavior.

e) Diffuse intellectual stimulation.

2) Affective Relationship

a) Warm affective relationship with child.

b) Feelings of high regard for child and self.

3) Interaction Patterns

a) Pressure for independence and self-reliance.

b) Clarity and severity of disciplinary rules.

c) Use of conceptual rather than arbitrary regulatory strategies.

Rupp (1969) tested hypotheses about the relation of parent practices to reading success through a questionnaire study of a range of socio-economic groups. Family process was found to be more highly related to intelligence and achievement (academically) than was socio-economic status.

Douglas (1968) in a longitudinal study (in
of ability and educational achievement documents the influence of the home and of the school. He concluded that: "The influence of level of parent's interest on test performance is greater than any other factor." After controlling for socio-economic level of the family, variations in the children's test scores were much more related to variations in degree of parent interest than to variations in the quality of the schools.

Werner, Bierman and French (1971) presented a longitudinal study of the effects of socio-economic status, educational stimulation and emotional support upon achievement problems, learning problems and emotional difficulties of children. They found that school achievement and learning problems were significantly related to educational stimulation and emotional support. Their findings were similar to Douglas (1968) in that family environment is more significant than socio-economic status in affecting school achievement.

An increasing number of researchers are turning from descriptive and correlational studies of parent behavior and child development to research on programs that, through varied methods, teach parents methods for fostering the intellectual development and academic achievement of their children.
Gray and Klaus (1969) utilized visitations to the home as a means for actively engaging parents in the education of their own children. Designed as a supplement to a planned pre-school program, it provided opportunity to reinforce and augment training and learning experiences. A comparison of test results showed significant differences in mental scores achieved by children involved in both the pre-school and home visitor programs when compared with scores achieved by children in the control group. Gray and Klaus state that the level of intellectual ability was higher in the experimental group. In their conclusions, the authors suggest that, with sufficient reinforcement, the children probably will continue to perform at a higher level.

Gray (1970) compared and contrasted a pre-school program which provided training for children with a program designed to provide training for mothers. The intent was to acquaint the parents with a wide variety of ways to foster the development of their own children. Post-treatment assessment showed equal effectiveness for both programs. In addition to being much less costly, the home program produced a most beneficial side effect--it developed an increased awareness and enthusiasm on the part of the mothers who participated.
There has been a most interesting revision in the psychoanalytic theory pertaining to a child's view of learning. According to Erik Erickson (1972), basic trust is the foundation of all later trust in others (including one's teachers) and in oneself.

Our autonomy--including the qualities required to attack intellectual problems--is a reflection of the experiences (and their effects) which occur at a very early stage of childhood. Equally affected by such experiences is our ability to take the initiative in meeting and resolving problems. When school age is reached, it is the combination of trust, autonomy and initiative that will determine whether or not we have acquired the wherewithal so important for success in the learning situation. If our pre-school experiences have bred mistrust, shame, doubt or guilt into the personality, the result will be a school experience which reflects an inferiority.

If Erickson is correct, then the school experience of one kind of child will stand under the triad of trust, initiative and autonomy (assuming intelligence and good cultural circumstances) and the result will be successful educational achievement. The school experience of another child will stand under the triad of mistrust, shame and doubt, and will lead to the personality of the
non-learner or underachiever. Every experienced teacher has noted that when the latter qualities are present, even though the child has a fairly good cultural background paired with intelligence, they will make learning and teaching unfeasible.

Bloom (1966) summarized pertinent longitudinal studies (which followed youngsters ten or more years) of educational achievement indicating that approximately 50% of general achievement at grade 12 (age 18) has been reached by the end of grade 3 (age 9). This suggests the great importance of the first few years of school as well as the pre-school period in the development of learning patterns and general achievement. These are the years during which general learning patterns develop most rapidly. Failure to develop appropriate achievement and learning in these years is likely to lead to continued failure or near failure throughout the remainder of the individual's school career and thereby contribute to the determinants that result in dropping out of school.

Studies such as these support the need for powerful and effective home environments and, especially at the primary level, powerful and effective school environments. On the other hand, such research raises serious questions about the value of educational remedial
measures at later stages of the child's school career. The consequence of repeated success or failure over several school years must surely have major effects on the individual's view of himself and his attitudes toward school and school learning.

The writer has attempted to point out the relevancy of home environment on the developmental process of the child. We have examined trust and lack of it, the need for autonomy, attitudes positive for learning and, in a general sense, a wholesome environment.

Following a dramatic study almost 20 years ago, relative to intelligence and academic achievement, Anastasi (1958) stated what appears to be the broadest implications of her findings. In her studies, she found that when identical twins are separated shortly after the time of their birth and are brought up in radically different environments, their intelligences varies markedly. When one twin was reared in an environment that was highly nutritive both to his intelligence and his emotional life, and the other grew up in an opposite kind of environment, their I. Q.'s, measured at maturity, varied by as much as 20 points. These 20 points, she states, could mean the difference between a life in an institution for the retarded and a productive life in society. It could mean the difference between a professional career and an
occupation which is at the semi-skilled or unskilled level.

According to Bloom's findings it is only during the first four years of life that the I. Q. changes markedly as a result of environment--up to two and a half points per year. From ages eight to seventeen, the highest average effect that even the most radical change in environment produces is not more than 0.4 I. Q. points per year. In ten years, this does not exceed a change of four I. Q. points, too little to be significant. The conclusion again must be that it is important to provide infants with the most favorable environment during the first four years of their lives. The influence of the environment on intelligence becomes smaller and smaller with each year after the fourth, and by school age is not significant.

At this point, one can begin to appreciate Bachman's annoyance with the trend to keep dropouts in school for additional years as though this in itself would make a difference. Bloom states: A central finding in this work is that for selected characteristics (intelligence, academic achievement, aggression, etc.) there is a negatively accelerated curve of development which reaches its midpoint before age five. This means that if we want to raise the intelligence and, ultimately,
the achievement of children, then we must influence the environment prior to the onset of schooling.

In a recent collection of essays, Leichter (1976) presents theoretical and empirical evidence supporting the thesis that the family, not the school, holds the key to the child's education, socialization and inculturation. She comments about intervention programs and states that intervention has no lasting effect without early and continuing parent-child interaction and support.

Gordon (1975) in his book, The Infant Experience, pursues as his underlying theme, the concept that infant development is a transactual process in which the child influences or shapes his or her environment, and, in turn, is influenced by the response of the environment, most particularly of the significant adult in that environment. Although Gordon specifies the mother as the most significant adult, he stresses the need for positive interaction with the father. He never loses sight of the model of the "family" and its significance to adult adjustment.

Barman (1973) places great importance upon "motivation" and encourages motivation in the child. She stresses Erickson's first level of development...the importance of love and trust in infancy. Emphasis is placed on the need to hold and fondle the child. She then identifies the importance of mimicry, whereby the child
models himself or herself after the adult. Her third step toward positive motivation is encouraging competence in some specific area of performance. Barman clearly states that "competence" is not necessarily synonomous with "superiority". Barman stresses the fact that the child does not have to be superior in the area of performance...only secure in it. Inherent throughout is the importance of really caring about children. The emerging competencies which she construes as having special importance in the child's development are the patterns of a) intellectual, b) linguistic, c) perceptual, and d) social competencies. Because the parent becomes the key to motivating the child, it is important that he or she be schooled in how to do it properly. Barman supports the parent role of educator as well as the provider of a nurturing and stimulating environment.

According to White (1975), the first three years of life represent the key to the child's future. It is during these first three years that "we nurture:
a) language development, b) the development of curiosity, c) social development, and d) the roots of intelligence." Although his statements indicate that he is influenced by Piaget, White places emphasis on language development and its relationship to intelligence. White feels that
the crucial period is from the eighth through the thirty-sixth month of life. It is during this time that well-developing, average and less-well-developing children begin to diverge.

White divides the first three years of life into seven "phases". For each phase White outlines the characteristics of the child, the proper educational and developmental goals for him, and recommended procedures for meeting these goals.

He discusses nature vs. nurture. Rather than trying to determine how heavily each factor contributes to development, White asserts that the two factors have different significance across time. He states that for the first eight months of life, (Phases I - IV) nature largely determines the child's development. He points out that from eight months onward it is nurture that determines development. This is the crucial period. During the time from eight to thirty-six months, parents must intervene effectively if their child is to realize his maximum potential—a feat accomplished, according to White, by no more than one child in ten.

He suggests activities for bolstering the child's educational foundations during the first eight months. Parents are told to "love" their infants and stimulate their interests by moving devices on the crib, textured
materials to touch and varied colors to observe.

After eight months of age, the child needs ample opportunities for exploration. At this point, parents are urged to provide a variety of objects which the child can learn to manipulate and problem situations which the child can learn to solve. White stresses the importance of talking to the child, regardless of age and response.

The author's concept of the effective mother is firm, yet patient and loving. He sees her as the architect planning and constructing her child's environment. She is his source of discipline, but also his confidante and consultant. She instructs; she directs, but she does not force.

He continually stresses the importance of parenting and of the family process during this pre-school time as insurance for positive educational achievement and emotional adjustment.
Summary

The problem of the dropout manifests itself in his inadequate relationship with society and he becomes, in essence, a waste of human resources. We live in a culture that projects the image of boundless social and economic opportunities for its young adults. The bitter truth is reflected in its limitations for a large segment of the population. The dropout categorically remains on the low rung of the vocational and economic ladder and, hence, becomes "locked in" to the lower social strata. Shortage of employment is continually encountered and, in addition, the dropout's minimal education may limit his opportunities for advancement for the remainder of his working career.

Analysis tends to strengthen the belief that dropping out of school is the result of a complex sequence of events that undoubtedly is unique for each individual. Caution should be exercised in generalizing the cause of school leaving.

A great deal of research on dropouts has been devoted to descriptions of "characteristics" in an effort to ascertain why he or she leaves school. It becomes apparent that dropping out of school most often occurs around the age of sixteen. In the attempt to categorize these characteristics, divisions are generally made:
problems that are oriented in school, social, personal or with the family.

Dropouts tend not to accept the school's organizational goals as their own. They feel alienated if the school does not respond to their own personal goals. This conflict accelerates the trend toward withdrawal.

Most causal factors, reflected in the literature, on dropping out include: a) failing grades; b) feelings of inadequacy at lack of school success; c) financial difficulties; d) peer pressure; e) perceived lack of relevance of curriculum offerings; f) lack of interest; g) perceived lack of caring on the part of the school; h) parental indifference; i) teacher stress on grades; j) desire for marriage; k) pregnancy; l) enlistment in the military, m) being asked to leave.

The realities reported by the school are as valid as the realities reported by the dropout. Each sees his own truths. Literally, they have a different set of values and goals. This difference colors their perceptions.

The problem of the dropout has not diminished. How then, can we work towards ameliorating this social, emotional and economically debilitating difficulty?

Emile Durkheim (1956), either pragmatist or cynic depending upon one's philosophical position, stated: "Education, far from having as its unique or principal
subject the individual and his interests, is above all the means by which society perpetually recreates the conditions of its very existence....Education, then, consists in one or another of its aspects of a systematic socialization of the younger generation."

The federal government has funded programs to ameliorate the dropout problem. Since 1969, the "target" schools have been located in 19 areas throughout the country. The program approach is remedial in areas of skill deficiency and support strongly is in areas of vocational and occupational education. The latter utilized the schools, community and interested industry.

Reading difficulty remains a base cause for dropping out. But, this deficiency in reading is often combined with peer group pressures, family discord, poor motivation to achieve and lower self-esteem. Increasingly, school administrators are realizing the dropout dilemma is more complex than was believed when it first gained national attention.

Career education and job training are important, but learning to read and to cope with social pressures should precede the offering of job-related skills for many youngsters. For students who are potential or real drop outs, a most significant aspect of a successful dropout prevention program seems to be a knowledgeable, caring
person who takes into account the student's past experiences and who requires the student to plan for and work towards future goals. Indeed, teachers should also look to alter their attitudes.

Increasingly, researchers are citing early intervention in the life of many children as the way to prevent school failure and poor social adjustment. Such researchers say early identification, combined with skilled intervention and evaluation, is the most significant force in the attempt to reduce the dropout rate.

A great deal of literature reflects the recent pressure of early childhood researchers indicating the need for an active role on the part of parents in preschool education. Gordon (1975) says that "ways must be found to support the family as primary caregiver and the parents as the child's earliest and most influential teachers." Tanner and Tanner (1974) in an attempt to neutralize this research report the findings of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, December, 1973, showing that while home background has an important influence on achievement in reading and literature, variations in school conditions and resources have a more significant effect than the home on achievement in other subjects.

They cite the IEA study that involved 250,000
students and 50,000 teachers in 22 nations as refuting the notion advanced by a number of school critics that we should not adopt a social policy of investing more in schooling since such investments do not improve educational achievement.

The solution to the dropout dilemma is elusive. Perhaps it was best stated eloquently and poetically by Alan Graubard (1972) in talking about schools: "If, in short, it is not doing what needs to be done, it can be changed. It can be changed, we believe, because there are so many wise men, who, one way or another, have offered us clear, intelligent and new ideas to use; and as long as these alternatives and ideas they suggest are available, there is no reason to abandon hope."

It may be a myth to say that reasons for dropout fall into diagnostic categories. Characteristics are present but they tend not to explain why a characteristic leads to dropout nor how events might be changed to cope with the problem. Dropout is not a single problem that can be considered primarily either a school or parenting problem. It does, however, remain society's problem. In the attempt to understand the dropout and school relationships, the literature of late seems to reflect the need to be aware of the premise that emotional development is as important as cognitive development.
Research studies in the early 1960's have reported the theme of dropping out as a function of social class background. Recent studies have found that social class background seemed to have little influence on the decision to stay or dropout. Whether these "findings" are truly significant remain to be seen. Socio-economic level is a consistent factor in most research concerning dropouts. In most studies there is an attempt to control the socio-economic level and other background factors statistically. Results en toto are not that definitive.

The accumulating evidence suggests that parents have great influence upon the behavior of their children, particularly their intellectual and academic achievement, and that approaches which make parents cognizant of skills in educating their children are an effective supplement to pre-school education. Bachman (1972) emphasizes strongly the remedial efforts designed to improve individual performance must begin well before elementary school. Hess (1969) summarizes well in stating that parents must take an active part rather than a passive role in the child rearing process if the child is to be "productive"; in spite of imperfections in methods and occasional blow ups, it is better to do something than nothing at all.

The failure of the dropout, in essence, reflects a pluralistic failure: failure of the school system,
failure of family preparation and the failure of our society.

Some questions raised by the review of the literature.

Implicit in the research on consequences of education is the assumption that differing amounts of education result in differing amounts of learning. The research appears to assume that differences in outcomes, e.g., employment, attributable to differences in level of education completed are a function of graduates knowing more, having different skills or attitudes, or somehow being different in person, than dropouts. However, none of the research that relates education to social or economic achievement looks to see if differences in grade-levels of schooling are in fact accompanied by differences in knowledge, abilities, or attitudes.

Is it possible that there may be significant differences between students who drop out in the middle of the year as opposed to those who leave at the end? Similarly, are there differences between those who leave during the middle of the school year but do not reappear for the beginning of the next year?

There seems to be a limitation to the research on follow-up studies about what happens to students after they leave school. One explanation, perhaps, is that most research on education is done by people associated with
school systems, and this system generally considers its responsibility to the student terminated when he leaves school. Consequently, research tends to focus on the school world and school variables that affect early leaving rather than the outside world and the relation of education to the dropouts' role in it.

Follow-up studies have not determined the significance of students who drop out with differing amounts of education. For example, those who leave after tenth, eleventh or twelfth grade. Would this follow-up provide data for a better understanding of the process of education and social change?

What levels in the system must be reached by the student for there to be a significant difference in the social effects of schooling? Is there a difference in the social effects of schooling if the student leaves after two years of general as opposed to specialized education at the secondary level?

If a central goal of our society is an improvement in the quality of individual lives, and, therefore, national life, then studies of the dropout takes on a fundamental importance in this context. Any review of literature raises unanswered queries; this review is no exception. The trend in research is beginning to examine the pre-school years and family relationships as
antecedents to dropping out. This present study takes a similar direction.
CHAPTER III
PROCEDURAL DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This study attempts to examine the question: Are early family relationships and practices significant in middle class dropouts?

The direction for this study was outlined in Chapter I with the following statement of the problem: A Study of a Selected Sample of Middle Class High School Students to Determine Environmental and Child Rearing Factors Which May Have Contributed to Their Becoming Dropouts.

The author is aware of the many forces that can effect middle class students and influence their thinking relative to dropping out, such as: religion, social issues, ethnicity, general family factors, job opportunities, economic factors, school experiences, psychological, health, intellectual, attitudes and values, etc. Some issues remain major and others reflect that casual nuance that becomes difficult to quantify, although one is aware of its presence.

Due to repetitive citations in the literature, this study attempts to explore and analyze certain dependent variables. As stated, it is the hypothesis of this study that these variables act upon the student's early childhood development in a causal relationship as determinants in
in his/her decision to dropout of school.

**Variables.**


6) Parental standards of behavior expected of their children. (Hess, 1969), (Peck, 1967), (Kohn, 1967), (Katkovsky, 1967), (Wall and


8) Degree of self-esteem. (Kanno, 1974),
(Werner, Bierman and French, 1971),
(Gruendal, 1961), (Phifer, 1971), (Sears, 1970), (Peck, 1967), (Kohn, 1967),
(Katkovsky, 1967), (Moore, 1968),
(Rosenberg, 1965).

It was hypothesized in relation to these eight variables that:

1) The parents of high school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly low standards of behavior expected of their children.

It was further hypothesized that high school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly:

2) a. low family encouragement on matters concerning education. b. low occupational aspiration level with low levels of responsibility, difficulty and prestige.

3) less fruitful relationship with fathers as compared with mothers.

4) low acceptance with regard to perceived
father's and mother's attitudes, and a low degree of confidence and trust between parents and children.

5) low level of perceived parental interest.

6) a. low level of achievement motivation and b. low family encouragement of self-reliance and autonomy.

7) low level of self-esteem.

Nature of the Community. This research traces the selected sample of students going back in time to their early childhood. The sample population is from Valley Stream, Long Island, New York, a middle class suburban community in Nassau County.

In its 22nd edition of Population Survey, the Long Island Lighting Company (LILCO, January, 1976) describes Nassau County as having a population of 1,460,421. This is more than double the Census taken in 1950. Population density, or the number of persons per square mile is now 4,869. As a comparison, neighboring Queens County (New York City) has a density of 18,400 persons per square mile.

Valley Stream has not had the type of growth cited above. In the 1960 Census, the population was 38,629, and sixteen years later as of January 1, 1976, the population increased to 40,977. This stability is primarily
due to its proximity to New York City and its completion of possible growth rapidly after World War II.

Valley Stream is known to this writer who has been a participant-observer for the past eighteen years through employment in the public school system.

Valley Stream is a suburban community, the first town across the New York City Line. The topography is flat. Middle class homes are bounded on the four sides by communities that are not unlike themselves. Fifty percent of the homes were constructed prior to 1940, forty percent between 1945-1955, and the remaining ten percent since 1955. (Thomas Ward, former Mayor, 1975).

Valley Stream has several shopping centers including a large Mall with many of the popular retail and department stores. The Mall attracts large groups of teenagers from Valley Stream and other feeder areas who congregate in this enclosure utilizing the space for socialization.

The town is accessible to downtown New York City by train or by major highways that cut through the town. It is located seventeen miles from midtown Manhattan and is geographically differentiated by its residents as being on the "South Shore". (Ward, 1975).

Former Mayor Ward describes the town as a "Bedroom Community of New York City". He estimates that
seventy-five percent of the wage earners work in New York City. However, he feels this is changing. People prefer to work in Nassau County and its proximity to their homes. In addition, he states, New York City has lost its excitement for many suburbanites who express concern about reported changes in population and environment.

There are no published statistics on the population of Valley Stream. But, based upon the last census and his knowledge of the town, Ward estimates the ethnic breakdown as follows: "The population is Caucasian with less than one-half of one percent other races; Catholic, 55%; Protestant, 30%; Jewish, 12%, and 3% others. The community is middle class with approximately 75% of the wage earners working in professional, technical, managerial and craft occupations."

South High School. The high school opened in October, 1955. Enrollment for 1976-1977 in grades 9-12 is 1151, and in grades 7 and 8, 425 for a total student body of 1576.

Faculty. The Faculty represents widely different backgrounds and experiences. Seventy-five percent of the certified staff have M.A. degrees or have done graduate work beyond the M.A. degree. The staff has an overall average of ten years teaching experience.

Pupil Personnel Services. Pupil Personnel Services are
provided in the areas of vocational, educational and personal counseling. It consists of a Chairman of Pupil Personnel, seven full time counselors, a school psychologist, three remedial reading teachers, a speech therapist, and a school nurse teacher. Each senior high school counselor has a caseload of approximately 250 pupils. Each counselor works with his group of students for a three year span of time. In addition, services of a social worker are made available to students and parents.

Testing. In October, 1974, the Otis-Lennon Mental Ability Test indicated a median I.Q. of 108 in grade 11 and a median of 107 in grade 8. The group I.Q. range of the dropouts in this study is 97-117.

Of the present senior class (June, 1977), a recent poll indicated 80% are planning for higher education after graduation.

Curriculum. South High School offers a six year program for grades 7 through 12. For those students who seek employment immediately after graduation, programs are available in the areas of Business, the Arts, Industrial Arts and Home Economics. In addition, Vocational programs at the County Vocational High School under the auspices of the Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) are used extensively to introduce students to the "trades".
The school subscribes to the concept of ability grouping. When questioned, Mrs. Holman (1977), Chairperson, Pupil Personnel Services, said: "We refer to our programming as meeting the different needs, aspirations and abilities of the students. Courses of varying difficulty are offered in most subjects."

The ability grouping is divided into Academic, Non-Academic, and Skills. Academic is the standard pre-college training. This area is subdivided into four levels, Advanced Placement (college credit courses), Honors (above average in difficulty), Average, and Standard (easier course work). The Non-Academic are those students who will not go to college but who may very well advance to specific vocational training. The Skills program is made up of students who lack basic skills in communication, math or reading. Lastly, there is a class for the educable retarded. Mrs. Holman explained that there is individualized programming for each student who may actually take course work along the whole continuum.

The dropouts in this study were participants in the Average, Standard and Non-Academic groups.
Sample population.

Subjects. The high school released an "official" list of dropouts to this writer. Forty-eight students have dropped out during the school years, September, 1972, through June, 1976. This list did not include: those who dropped out and returned; those who have moved out of the district with address unknown; those who moved out of the state with unknown address, and those who are now attending either a vocational or other training school. All of the forty-eight are either working or looking for work and still live in Valley Stream.

From this pool of forty-eight families, thirty-one families completed successful interviews. Each family unit represented separate interviews. The dropout was seen separately from the parents who, in turn, were not interviewed together. Therefore, a total of ninety-one separate interviews were completed. Five complete family interviews were used in pre-testing the questionnaire and, subsequently, were discarded. The final study consists of seventeen boys and nine girls. A total of fifty parents were interviewed, twenty-six mothers and twenty-four fathers. Two fathers were deceased.
Data collection and instrumentation.

Developing and field testing the questionnaire.

Several drafts of the instrument were developed over a period of time. Each draft was reviewed by some members of the guidance department at the high school and a school psychologist, each of whom has a background in interviewing students and parents and testing knowledge. Their suggestions for revisions were incorporated into the final questionnaire.

A near final version was field tested. Students and parents were asked to comment as to reactions for possible alterations and other suggestions. The five pre-test interviews were completed at their homes under conditions comparable to those anticipated in the final study. Appropriate additions, deletions, and modifications were then made to the questionnaire.

As a result of the field test, some revisions were made in wording and sequencing of questions.

The questionnaire for the student contains three parts:

Part I - consists of forty questions. Numbers 1-17 are quantitative and fact gathering; numbers 18-37 seek responses to a Likert-type scale. Numbers 38 and 40 require a yes-no response and number 39 is open-ended.

Part II - The Elias Family Opinion Survey,
also known as the Family Adjustment Test, was administered.

Part III - The Berger Scale of Acceptance of Self and Others.

Description - Elias Family Opinion Survey (copyright, 1954), Purdue Research Foundation, Indiana. One hundred fourteen statements on a Likert-type scale are responded to by: Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely or Never. There are two types of questions to be scored. Positively worded ones (Items: 1, 6, 9, 10, 12, 19, 25, 38, 43, 54, 65, 74, 78, 93, 96, 103, 104, and 106) are scored: \( A = 1, O = 2, S = 3, R = 4, \) and \( N = 5. \) All of the remaining items are negatively worded and are scored conversely, thus: \( A = 5, O = 4, S = 3, R = 2, N = 1. \) Split-half reliability on the final draft of the test was found to be .97 when corrected for attenuation.

The instrument is designed to measure feelings of intra-family homeliness-homelessness while appearing to be concerned only with the testee's attitudes toward general community life. The ten sub-tests reflect: Attitudes towards mother; attitudes towards father; father-mother attitude quotient; Oedipal; struggle for independence; parent-child friction-harmony; interparental friction-harmony; family inferiority-superiority; rejection of child; parental qualities.

The final Family Adjustment Test has undergone four revisions. Originally, five hundred twenty-four items
had been gathered to reflect unhealthy intra-family attitudes gleaned in interviews with and reading case histories of U. S. Army casualties and veterans of World War II. Ultimate validation was attained by one hundred twenty-three individuals from schools for delinquents. On the final battery, three thousand individuals were tested with the results that have uniformly confirmed its practicality, validity and utility.

Total test scores and sub-test scores are easily obtained. Item scores are converted in a table to percentile norms.

In addition to serving its main and general function of measuring feelings of intra-family homeliness and homelessness, the scale provides sub-test scores and clinical indicators of a number of adjustment trends. The sub-tests indicate, specifically, the following:

1) Serious family friction, as measured by Sub-test A (attitudes toward mother); Sub-test B (attitudes toward father); Sub-test C (father-mother attitude quotient).

2) Guilt, fear or jealous feelings related to the testees love of either parent, Sub-test D.

3) Feelings of being overprotected and resulting desires to free one's self from parental
control, Sub-test E (struggle for independence).


5) Sub-test G (inter-parental friction-harmony).

6) Feelings of being overtly or covertly rejected by either or both parents, as measured by Sub-test I (rejection of child).

7) Feelings of inferiority with regard to the testee's family or parents, i.e., he feels personally unacceptable because of who they are and is ashamed of them. Sub-test H (family inferiority-superiority).

8) Testee's evaluation of his parents with respect to characteristics which are most likely to be reflected in or to cause homelessness, as measured by Sub-test J (parental qualities.

Footnote: The test was reviewed in Oscar Buros, The Sixth Mental Measurements Yearbook, 1965, under Tests and Reviews: Character-Non-Projective. "It is assumed that 'giving opinions about general family life that existed in your neighborhood as a child' leads to an expression of feelings directly related to the current adjustment of the subject and his family."
In the fifth edition of the Buros, *Mental Measurement Yearbook*, Albert Ellis reviewed the test with the following statement: "This relatively new instrument is of the projective questionnaire type. The assumption is that the respondents will project their own attitudes and feelings into the answering of these questions, rather than give objective responses. It has some advantage when used within limited areas. It measures several aspects of homelife and attitudes which few other paper and pencil tests try to assess. A possible shortcoming is the basic assumption of the projection. Although there is some experimental evidence that while some actually do project themselves into this kind of a test in the assumed manner, many do not. Yet its armchair validity has been checked and attested by several groups of clinical psychologists."

The researcher must point out that no allowance seems to be made for individual respondents who do not project their own attitudes into the test, but answer all of the questions with reasonable objectivity. The basic assumption that the average respondent will project his own attitudes into this paper and pencil test has not been clearly substantiated and is controversial. Therefore, researchers and practitioners should exercise extreme caution in the use of the instrument for clinical diagnosis.
Description. Berger, E. (1952), *Acceptance of Self and Others*. This instrument is a scale to measure attitude toward self. It was developed by Berger using the Likert procedure. The self-acceptance scale is made up of 36 items. These items were selected from an initial pool of 47 statements on self-acceptance on the basis of an item analysis. The top and bottom 25% of a sample of two hundred were selected, and the difference between the mean scores of these criterion groups was used as an index of the discriminating power of the item. The standard error of the difference between means did not exceed .30 for any item, and all items in the final scales had critical ratios of 3.0 or more, except three which had critical ratios close to 2.0.

Subjects. The subjects used in selecting items for this scale were two hundred students who were in first-year sociology or psychology courses. They differed widely in socio-economic backgrounds and vocational interests. Ages ranged from 17 to 45, but about 90% of the subjects were in the 17 to 30 age group. For reliability and validation, studies samples were drawn from day and evening session college students, prisoners, stutterers, speech problem cases, adult classes at the YMCA and counselees.

Response Mode. The response mode is a modified Likert
type. The subject responds to each item by entering a 1 for "not at all true of myself"; a 2 for "slightly true of myself"; a 3 for "about halfway true of myself"; a 4 for "mostly true of myself" and a 5 for "true of myself".

Scoring. The score for any item ranges from 1 - 5. For items expressing a favorable attitude toward self, a score of 5 is assigned to a response of "true of myself" and so on to 1. The direction of scoring is reversed for negatively worded items. After this adjustment has been made, the acceptance of self score is computed by summing the item scores for all items on that scale.

Reliability. Split half reliabilities were obtained for five groups ranging in size from 18 to 183. These were reported to be .894 or better for the self acceptance scale for all but one group, which was .756. All estimates were corrected by the Spearman-Brown formula.

Validity. Several estimates of validity were obtained by these scales. Groups of students were asked to write freely about their attitudes toward themselves. These essays were then rated by four judges and the mean ratings correlated with the corresponding scale scores. Correlations were .897 and .796.
Parent Questionnaire. Fifty-eight questions were chosen from an original pool of ninety. Guidance counselors and the school psychologist were asked to choose questions that reflected the eight variables to be investigated. The fifty-eight represented consensus opinion. Question numbers 1 - 9 are quantitative and factual. Numbers 10 - 43 reflect early childhood development as perceived by the parent on a Likert-type scale. Numbers 44 - 54 reflect general statements concerning parental interest, aspirations, both educational and occupational, standards of behavior expected, harmony and discipline. Numbers 55 - 58 are open-ended.

The five field tested sets of parents were asked to comment on the interview and questionnaire as follows:

1) Was the meaning of any of the questions hard to understand?

2) Would you suggest any changes in the order in which the questions were asked?

3) Were there any questions that you felt uncomfortable in answering?

4) Were there any questions which you feel should be omitted?

5) Are there any additional questions that should be added?

6) Any other comments about the study?
Collection of the data. The interviews were conducted between June 1, 1976, and January 30, 1977. The author contacted parents and dropouts by phone to explain the study and to arrange a date and time for the interview. All of the interviews were in the evening, usually just after dinner, in the parent's home. All of the dropouts still lived with their parents. The telephone dialogue was pre-written with little variation in presentation to insure consistency. Both in the telephone dialogue and the initial opening remarks during the interview, assurance was given that family names will not appear in the study. Permission was granted in some cases to tape the entire proceedings.

The desire to obtain further insights relevant to the dropout dilemma serves to guide the analysis and interpretation of the findings. The next chapter will be a presentation and analysis of data. It is the aspiration of the writer that the results themselves will aid in the understanding of the dropout and serve to suggest direction for additional research.
CHAPTER IV
PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

It is the purpose of this chapter to present the findings of the study by analyzing the responses to the interview schedule administered to dropouts and their parents.

The questions utilized in the interview schedule reflect the dependent variables based upon the hypothesis of the study. It was hypothesized in relation to these variables that:

1) The parents of high school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly:
   a. low standards of behavior expected of their children.

   It was further hypothesized that high school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly:

2) a. low family encouragement on matters concerning education,
   b. low occupational aspiration level with low levels of responsibility, difficulty and prestige,

3) less fruitful relationship with fathers as compared with mothers,

4) low acceptance with regard to perceived father's and mother's attitudes, and a low
degree of confidence and trust between parents and dropouts.

5) low level of perceived parental interest.

6) a. low level of achievement motivation.
   b. low family encouragement of self-reliance and autonomy.

7) low level of self-esteem.

Both the Berger Scale of Acceptance of Self and Others and the Elias Family Opinion Survey have been standardized by their authors and the use of the data will reflect this validation. (see Chapter III).

The Berger Scale is direct in that the student answers statements that deal with the concept of "I", i.e., I do this, I think that...

The Elias Family Opinion Survey, as explained by its author, "is designed to measure feelings of intra-family homeyness-homelessness while appearing to be concerned with the testees' attitudes toward general community life." This indirect method is less threatening to the testees and, hopefully, produces fewer distortions in their value judgments of historical recollections. (Elias, 1954).

Procedures for presenting and analyzing data. Data gathered from the subjects' and their parents' questionnaires will be examined for face validity only. The
The majority of questions utilized in the interview schedule will be analyzed by examining the number of responses and determining percentages. Line and bar graphs will be used to assist in presentation and clarification of data. Open-ended questions that do not lend themselves particularly well to statistical treatment will be reflected in lists of responses or sample responses and dealt with in a narrative content analysis. Each Hypothesis will be examined in a similar fashion. Data will be explored as to:

a) the fifty parents opinions of issues reflected on the questionnaires, including open-ended responses;
b) the twenty-six dropouts opinions on issues reflected on the questionnaires including open-ended responses.

Graphs simulating the opinions of father-mother-dropouts will show trend lines to help in the clarity of understanding. These lines reflect the statistical Mean. The responses on the Likert-type scales of Strongly Agree, Agree, Uncertain, Disagree, Strongly Disagree and Always, Very Often, Sometimes, Rarely, Not at all, etc., have been converted to a 5 point scale to ease the clarity of presentation and interpretation. (Tables 2, 11, 12).

In order to present Table 8 clearly, the words "Father" and "Mother" were combined to read "Parents". Separate columns were then used to describe reactions to "Father" and to "Mother".
Hypothesis 1 - The parents of high school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly low standards of behavior expected of their children. Standards of behavior, as such, fall under the umbrella of a broad socio-psychological spectrum. Therefore, the two aspects reflected in this study are: the number and extent of rules established as the boundaries of permissible behavior (limits) and the decisiveness of parental decision.

On the basis of the data, the evidence was inconclusive. In the family constellation, parents establish different rules and differ in the degree of seriousness, severity and decisiveness in expressing these rules. The importance of all rules varies from parent to parent. Tables 2 and 3 reflect the feelings of the parents. In general, the fathers seem more concerned and decisive in standards of behavior (limits) expected of their children. Mothers appear more bending in extending liberty, punishment for infractions, and demands of strict obedience.

Table 4 presents a picture of the child during his pre-school years as reported by father and mother. Fathers found the child to be more selfish, less affectionate, less helpful, less respectful, less obedient, less agreeable than seen by the mother.
## Table 2

**Parent Questionnaire: Standards of Behavior**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father's Statements</th>
<th>Mother's Statements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strongly Agree</strong></td>
<td><strong>Strongly Agree</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agree</strong></td>
<td><strong>Agree</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Uncertain</strong></td>
<td><strong>Uncertain</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disagree</strong></td>
<td><strong>Disagree</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strongly Disagree</strong></td>
<td><strong>Strongly Disagree</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Children should be trained to do things for themselves as early in life as possible.**
  - 34 Strongly Agree, 66 Agree
  - 13 Always, 67 Very Often, 16 Sometimes, 4 Rarely

- **Young people should obey their parents because they are their parents.**
  - 20 Strongly Agree, 70 Agree
  - 15 Always, 50 Very Often, 10 Sometimes, 30 Rarely

- **A child should obey his parents with strict obedience.**
  - 80 Strongly Agree, 16 Agree
  - 80 Always, 16 Very Often, 25 Sometimes, 59 Rarely

- **If parents refrain from punishing a child they will spoil him.**
  - 16 Strongly Agree, 34 Agree
  - 16 Always, 34 Very Often, 30 Sometimes, 12 Rarely

- **A child's liberty should be restricted as to danger situations only.**
  - 8 Strongly Agree, 59 Agree
  - 8 Always, 59 Very Often, 20 Sometimes, 13 Rarely

- **Did you keep track of exactly where and what the child was doing?**
  - 73 Strongly Agree, 15 Agree
  - 73 Always, 15 Very Often, 12 Sometimes, 12 Rarely
Table 2 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father's Statements</th>
<th>Mother's Statements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Very Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When things ran smoothly between the children, did you do anything to show them that you noticed this?

Did you discipline when he/she was annoying and deliberately disobedient?

How often did you say that you will punish and then for some reason you did not follow through?

How often did you spank?

Responses to each individual question are expressed in percentages. N=24 Fathers, 26 Mothers.
Table 3

Parent Questionnaire: Standards of Behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father's Responses</th>
<th>Mother's Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Often</td>
<td>Very Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at All</td>
<td>Not at All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In a situation when both husband and wife are there and the child had to be disciplined, Father usually did it.

In a situation when both husband and wife are there and the child had to be disciplined, Mother usually did it.

In general, did Mother and Father agree about the best way of handling the child?

How about things besides that which affect the child directly, does Father generally make the decisions in the family?

Does Mother generally make the decisions in the family?

Responses to each individual question are expressed in percentages. N=24 Fathers, 26 Mothers
Table 4  
Parent Questionnaire: Description of the Child  
Prior to the Age of Schooling  

| CHARACTERISTIC | FATHER'S STATEMENT | | | | MOTHER'S STATEMENT | | | |
|----------------|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|                | VERY             | MORE THAN AVERAGE | AVERAGE | LESS THAN AVERAGE | NOT | VERY | MORE THAN AVERAGE | AVERAGE | LESS THAN AVERAGE | NOT |
| Selfish        | 5                | 30             | 30       | 20             | 15  | 8     | 20             | 50       | 22             | 22  |
| Helpful        | 4                | 12             | 54       | 28             | 5   | 7     | 23             | 27       | 43             | 12  |
| Affectionate   | 4                | 16             | 29       | 50             | 5   | 11    | 15             | 38       | 24             | 12  |
| Considerate    | 4                | 12             | 45       | 33             | 6   | 26    | 26             | 38       | 30             | 6   |
| Courteous      | 8                | 33             | 41       | 20             | 6   | 15    | 19             | 38       | 26             | 2   |
| Respectful     | 8                | 20             | 33       | 29             | 10  | 15    | 19             | 30       | 36             | 4   |
| Obedient       | 8                | 13             | 25       | 50             | 12  | 15    | 15             | 46       | 35             | 4   |
| Agreeable      | 8                | 16             | 37       | 47             | 8   | 27    | 37             | 30       | 6   |
| Lazy           | 5                | 5              | 35       | 25             | 15  | 20    | 20             | 30       | 20             | 10  |
| Careless       | 4                | 46             | 30       | 16             | 8   | 4     | 24             | 46       | 15             | 10  |
| Dependable     | 4                | 12             | 25       | 59             | 11  | 11    | 11             | 40       | 25             | 13  |
| Reasonable     | 4                | 60             | 30       | 36             | 7   | 20    | 43             | 30       | 30             | 30  |

Responses to each individual question are expressed in percentages. N= 24 Fathers, 26 Mothers.
In open-ended questions there was a general undercurrent of irritation and anger on the part of the father toward the dropout while the mother was more resigned and condescending. Yet, both parents felt that the reason for dropping out, for 35%, was a negative attitude with an inherent inability to follow the rules and regulations of school.

Table 5 lists the responses of the dropouts on the Elias Family Opinion Survey. Although 85% wished their parents would act differently "sometimes-often", 42% feel that their parents handle them well. A majority of 68% state that children fight to be free of their parents "often-always". Forty-two percent feel that fathers try to run their lives "often-always". One does not see an exacerbating home environment but the researcher feels a strong dominated male household. (Table 3). This is not necessarily derogatory since the dropouts answered the question: Would you say your childhood was a happy one? Very Often 12%, Often 43%, Sometimes 33%, Rarely 4%, Not at all 3%. The dropouts, as a group, seemed to report a satisfactory childhood.

The evidence supporting the hypothesis is inclusive. In retrospect, parents seemed to have established clear limits but it is unclear as to whether or not they were consistently carried out.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Children wish their mothers would act differently.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Children wish their fathers would act differently.</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parents handle their kids well.</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mothers scold their children unjustly.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Children are let down by both parents.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fathers scold their children unjustly.</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Children fight to become free of their parents.</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fathers try to run their children's lives.</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parents force children to do what kids do not like.</strong></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Children do things to spite their parents.</strong></td>
<td>34</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses to each individual question are expressed in percentages.

Solid line = reaction to father
Broken line = Reaction to mother
Hypothesis 2 - High school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly: a) low family encouragement on matters concerning education; b) low occupational aspiration level with low levels of responsibility and difficulty as well as prestige. On the basis of the data, hypothesis 2-a was not supported; hypothesis 2-b was supported.

Although the students were encouraged concerning education, the difference between encouragement and low expectation seemingly had a deleterious effect.

The limited mobility aspirations (occupational) of this student sample was somewhat surprising. The anticipated upward viewpoint of the stereotype middle class was missing and in turn reflected a downward trend.

Parents were asked to respond to questions that flowed back and forth in time. They responded strongly in giving encouragement to continuing education beyond high school. Fifty-four percent of the fathers and sixty-one percent of the mothers gave "strong encouragement", and, in addition, thirty-seven percent of the fathers and twenty-seven percent of the mothers gave "some encouragement". Yet, when asked specifically, "Before starting Kindergarten, did you teach him/her anything like reading words or writing the alphabet or telling time?" The response of the fathers was seventy percent did so "rarely or not at all". Mothers responded differently. Seventy-
five percent stated, "very often and sometimes", but twenty-five percent stated "rarely or not at all". Fathers "encouraged" later, but were inactive in the earlier years.

In the open-ended questions, most parents became somewhat defensive and alluded to "strong encouragement" over the years on matters concerning education, communicating their great disappointment over the decision to drop out of school. Ninety percent of the parents stated they were "not happy" about what the dropout thinks is important at the present. They felt the priority should be schooling, a return to school for training in some future occupation.

The students felt that their parents did encourage education. In response to the question: Did your family encourage you and help you in your plan for a job or in school plans?
Father: Very Often 15%, Often 42%, Sometimes 23%, Rarely 4%, Not at all 16%. Mother: Very Often 11%, Often 34%, Sometimes 34%, Rarely 7%, Not at all 14%. Although the dropout regarded his parents as supporting education, he/she was also quite aware of the low parental expectation concerning that support. When asked, "Do your parents appear to doubt whether you will be successful?"--the response was: Yes 77%, No 23%.
Table 6 shows, graphically, a downward trend in mobility. It compares the present occupations of the fathers and mothers and asks the dropout to predict his occupation in ten years or so. Of the dropouts who are presently working in positions such as stock clerk, gas station attendant, factory clean-up, truck loader, 65% indicated they will have the same type of employment in ten years or so. Although stated in percentages in Table 6, the actual count of predicted occupations for the twenty-six dropouts is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-skilled</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proprietor</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On open-ended interviewing, the dropouts viewed their future with some confidence and little depression. Overtly, such statements as: "I'll be O.K.", "It will be fine", were made.

It is the view of this writer that although achievement was considered, it: a) was apparently deemed beyond attainability or b) was a negativistic response to parental aspirations. We strongly suspect the latter.

Within the framework of the population sample,
Table 6
Comparison of the present occupation of the parents and the dropout's prediction of his/her future occupation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Classifications</th>
<th>Percentage of Parents/Dropouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proprietor Administrator</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled and Technical</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-skilled</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Present work of Father
Present work of Mother
Work that the dropout predicts he/she will be doing in ten years.
Table 7 compares responses of the student with the parents to the following questions: Student Question #18: Did your family encourage and help you in your plans for a job or school plans? (Code: F = Fathers, M = Mothers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>F</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>M</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Often</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parent Question #52: Over the years did you encourage to prepare for a particular occupation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>F</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>M</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Often</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using Chi square, analysis indicates no statistical significance. Chi square = 10.6 with 9 degrees of freedom. Significance 0.3017 (not significant). Interestingly enough, the dropouts saw the parents as more encouraging than the parents saw themselves. Sixteen percent of the fathers and twenty-six percent of the mothers "never" offered encouragement to prepare for an occupation.

It would seem that these parents, those who "never gave encouragement" and those who "rarely gave encouragement," urged preparation for an occupation much later when the child was in high school and only when the crisis was upon them--the dropping out. In the open-ended questions period, parents did voice their concern
### Table 7

**Relationship of Parental Encouragement and Student Perception of This Encouragement**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not at All</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Very Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Dropouts/Parents</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Parents</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**N= 26 Dropouts, 24 Fathers**

**N= 26 Dropouts, 26 Mothers**

**Student Question:** Did your family encourage and help in your plans for a job, or school plans?

**Parent Question:** Over the years did you encourage _____ to prepare for a particular occupation?
and apprehension over the future of the student.

Hypothesis 3 - High school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly a less fruitful relationship with fathers as compared with mothers. On the basis of the data this hypothesis was supported. Not from the parental view, but solely from the perception of the dropout. This may have resulted from a socio-psychological process. American society emphasizes a man's ability to achieve and produce. The father who has difficulty in this regard might be considered a failure. So, too, the "successful" father may feel a sense of failure, theirs and his, in regard to low achieving low producing children. This view is communicated to the children in a variety of ways.

On open-ended questions, the fathers may have expressed concern over a strained relationship at times, but never did they reflect overt rejection on either the part of the dropout or themselves. Mothers, at times, alluded to annoyance with the father in his relationship with the dropout. Some statements of the mother in relationship to the fathers show of affection to the dropout were preceded by "he was never around to show anything", "you must be kidding". In spite of these remarks, fifty-eight percent of the mothers thought the fathers were affectionate "very often-always". The fathers responded by indicating seventy-four percent of
the mothers were affectionate "very often-always".

It is almost impossible to make a valid judgment as to a relationship so far in the past, especially when the interviewer is a stranger asking subjective questions. Yet, the fathers did give some clues. Question: Some parents think that they ought to take good behavior for granted and there is no point in praising a child for it. Sixty-six percent stated "mostly true-true". Only sixteen percent of the mothers responded similarly. Question: Did it upset you when he/she hung onto you and followed you around? Sixteen percent of the fathers answers "always-very often", while none of the mothers made a similar response. Fifty-four percent of the fathers and twenty-three percent of the mothers stated, "sometimes". A further clue as to father's relationship was perceived in answers to the following questions:

Did you discipline him/her when he/she was annoying and deliberately disobedient? Sixty-seven percent of the fathers and thirty-eight percent of the mothers answered, "always-very often".

Some parents praise their children quite a bit when they are good, did you? Eight percent of the fathers and forty percent of the mothers answered, "always-very often". Thirty percent of the fathers "rarely" praised the child.
A child should obey his parents with strict obedience. Ninety percent of the fathers answered, "always-very often" while sixty-five percent of the mothers answered similarly.

Tables 8 and 9 reflect the dropout's perceptions of their relationship with fathers and mothers. Table 8 is abstracted from Elias Family Opinion Survey, while Table 9 asks specifically for a weighted measure of feelings on an either-or basis.

There is apparently greater preference for mother over father, with the father seen as less giving, more apart, more disciplining and rigid, and less accepting.

There appears to be an undercurrent of family friction and negativism. It appears in a rather subtle fashion in the open-ended questioning and becomes more pronounced in the scoring of the Elias Survey. In Chapter III, an explanation of the sub-tests points out the relevancy to: parent-child friction harmony (Sub-test F), and inter-parental friction-harmony (Sub-test G). The scores of these tests reveal the students are experiencing family irritations which disturb the calm in the household but which are not sufficient to disrupt the students capacities to evaluate the family inter-personal relationships.
## Table 8

**Dropout’s Perception of Relationship With Parents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELIAS FAMILY OPINION SURVEY</th>
<th>REACTION TO FATHER</th>
<th>REACTION TO MOTHER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ALWAYS</td>
<td>OFTEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents are hard to get along with.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents are mean.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents scold their children unjustly.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children want more love from their parents than they get.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children hate their parents.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents are close friends with their children.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children are afraid of their parents.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents are jealous of the love their children have for one or the other.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses to each individual question are expressed in percentages. N = 26 Dropouts.
Table 9

Student Questionnaire: Dropout's Feelings Concerning Relationship with Fathers and Mothers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Father Much More</th>
<th>Father Somewhat More</th>
<th>Both about the Same</th>
<th>Mother Somewhat More</th>
<th>Mother Much More</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Which parent is more likely to praise you?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>46</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which parent shows you more affection?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When your parents disagree whose side are you usually on?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which parent is it easier for you to talk to?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses to each individual question are expressed in percentages.
Hypothesis 4 - High school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly low acceptance with regard to perceived father and mother's attitudes, and a low degree of confidence and trust between parents and dropouts.

On the basis of the data, the evidence was inconclusive.

Basic to parental feelings toward their child are their attitudes of love and approval for the child as he is. The child need not gain nor earn this love and approval; in a theoretical sense, he has achieved it by being their child. In our review of the literature, we have indicated some of the important ways in which acceptance can be expressed; devotion to the child's interests, sensitivity to his needs and desires, and expressions of affection and approval.

Mothers and fathers were asked to respond to these questions:

Prior to school, did your husband/wife show affection to the child such as hugging and kissing and that sort of thing? Mothers: Always 4%, Very Often 54%, Sometimes 15%, Rarely 20%, Not at all 7%. Fathers: Always 4%, Very Often 70%, Sometimes 26%, Rarely 0, Not at all 0.

Mothers, again, are more affectionate, but the fathers were not rejecting as a group. Yet, twenty-seven
percent "rarely or not at all", made a show of affection.

Still speaking of the child prior to school age, the parents answered these questions as follows: When ______ was a baby, besides the time that was necessary for feeding, changing and just regular care, would you say that you had time to play with him/her? Father: Always 0%, Very Often 4%, Sometimes 36%, Rarely 25%, Not at all 35%. Mother: Always 8%, Very Often 54%, Sometimes 26%, Rarely 12%, Not at all 0%.

For a parent, the first four years of a child's life are the most enjoyable. Father: True 12%, Mostly true 12%, Sometimes 54%, Slightly true 12%, Not true 10%. Mother: True 42%, Mostly true 30%, Sometimes true 28%, Slightly true 0%, Not true 0%.

The mother appears to offer more affection and acceptance at an early age. It may be significant that sixty percent of the fathers "rarely or not at all" had the time to play with their children at an early age (prior to school).

The interviewer's impression, in attempting to make a judgment as to the genuineness of the feelings expressed in the formal and open-ended questioning, is that both parents became nostalgic when asked to think in the past, perhaps for different reasons. The mothers, as a group, expressed affection for their children; the
fathers seemed to recall a safer, less distressing time.

These questions (above) coupled with Table 9 seem to reflect a closeness between mother and children. There is greater acceptance on mother's part.

The dropout's interpretation of the acceptance of the parents and matters concerning confidence and trust are viewed in Table 10. This Table is also a measure of parental interest.

The dropouts feel they do not get enough love, parents love their children less than they show, feel a sense of being gypped by the parents, and are fearful they cannot come up to parental expectations. In open-ended questioning, they feel they can rely on their father over the mother in concrete attainments such as money, when needed. Other questions in this Table concerning confidence and trust appear in conflict with denial of love. Perhaps this is perceived as a dichotomy and receiving of love or lack of it does not militate against feeling of trust and confidence.

Hypothesis 5 - High school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly: low level of perceived parental interest. On the basis of the data, this hypothesis was not supported.

By innuendo and sometimes by a snide remark, the mothers succeeded in giving the interviewer the
Table 10
Elias Family Opinion Survey: Dropout's Perception of Acceptance and Parental Interest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents love their children less than they show.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children feel &quot;gypped&quot; because they do not get what they want.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When things go wrong, fathers blame it on the fact that they have children.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>41</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents show they are disappointed in their children.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children are let down by one or both of their parents.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children feel their parents are better to other people than to them.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children want more love from their fathers than they get.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children want more love from their mothers than they get.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children think their mothers are sorry they had them.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children can rely on their fathers when help is most needed.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children can rely on their mothers when help is most needed.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children are afraid they cannot come up to parental expectations.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mothers keep their promises with children.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fathers keep their promises with children.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fathers show dissatisfaction with their families.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers show dissatisfaction with their families.</td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fathers do things to spite their children.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers do things to spite their children.</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children distrust their mothers.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children distrust their fathers.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fathers disbelieve their children.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers disbelieve their children.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses to each individual question are expressed in percentages. N=26 Dropouts
of friends?" The responses are as follows: Very Often 12%, Often 12%, Sometimes 48%, Rarely 14%, Not at all 14%. If they did oppose, what usually happened? Saw friends secretly 90%, Stopped seeing them 10%.

The majority of parents showed interest and made their opinions known. At this point the dropout is talking about the present not when he/she was a youngster. Although they acknowledge the interest of the parents, they feel that frequent questions about their friends are an intrusion upon their private affairs. The frequency of questioning by parents was revealed in asides by the dropouts during our query.

Table 11 presents a series of statements from the parents pertinent to parental interest prior to the onset of schooling. It is apparent that there is interest in the child but mother appears more involved with the child. It is only at a later stage that father manifests interest. Possible reasons will be discussed later.

Hypothesis 6 - High school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly: a) low level of achievement motivation and b) encouragement of self-reliance and autonomy. On the basis of the data the hypothesis was neither supported nor rejected.

a) Low level of achievement motivation was verified, but b) low encouragement of self-reliance and
### Table 1!

**Parent Questionnaire: The Child Prior to the Age of Schooling**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father's Responses</th>
<th>Mother's Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>StrONGLY AGREE</strong></td>
<td><strong>AGREE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Quite Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Did mother take care of him/her?**

**Did father take care of him/her?**

**Besides time for feeding, changing and regular care, did you have time to play with him/her?**

**Did you eat meals with the children?**

**For a parent the first four years of a child's life are the most enjoyable?**

**Did it upset you when he/she hung onto you and followed you around?**

**Did m/f agree about the best way of handling the child?**
Table 11 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father's Responses</th>
<th>Mother's Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Quite Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite Upset</td>
<td>Upset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When you were busy and demanded your attention, were you upset?

Before starting kindergarten, did you teach anything like reading words or writing the alphabet or telling time?

Some parents praise their children when they were good, did you?

Did your husband/wife show affection to the child like hugging and kissing and that kind of thing?

If you could think back to when you first discovered the pregnancy, how did you feel?

Responses to each individual question are expressed in percentages. N=24 Fathers, 26 Mothers.
It was anticipated that middle class parents would make a strong showing in their commitment to the virtue of autonomy, to encourage the child toward early independence in making decisions and governing his day to day activities. This writer expected to find in middle class dropouts a precocious loosening of family ties, an early move toward autonomous social functioning, and toward location of significant emotional relationships outside of the family. Table 12 shows the feelings of the parents who, indeed, encouraged self-reliance and autonomy.

Eighty-three percent of the fathers and ninety-six percent of the mothers agreed to "encourage their children to bring friends home". This helped the child take the initial step toward early independence and making his own decisions as who could share in his playtime at home. One hundred percent of the fathers and ninety-five percent of the mothers voiced their agreement that "children should be trained to do things for themselves as early in life as possible." Sixty-six percent of the fathers and seventy-seven percent of the mothers felt "children should be able to make up their own minds as to what they want to be when they grow up." A question that elicited some qualification upon answering was "A child's liberty should
### Table 12

**Parent Questionnaire: Encouragement of Self Reliance and Autonomy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Father's Responses</th>
<th>Mother's Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parents should help their children with homework if they need help.

Parents should allow their children to make up their own minds as to what they will be when they grow up without trying to influence their decisions.

Good marks in school were important to you.

As to continuing education beyond high school, would you say that you gave encouragement to continue?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father's Responses</th>
<th>Mother's Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STRONGLY AGREE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALWAYS</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VERY OFTEN</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOMETIMES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RARELY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT AT ALL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses to each individual question are expressed in percentages. N = 24 Fathers, 26 Mothers.

Parents should encourage their children to bring friends home.

Children should be trained to do things for themselves as early in life as possible.

Children of high school age should earn most of their spending money.

A child's liberty should be restricted as to danger situations only.
he restricted as to danger situations only." The parents all felt that the younger the child, the more restrictions were to be imposed as to freedom of movement. The restrictions usually were translated into safety precautions. As the child attained teenager status, more freedom was accorded.

The parents stated time and again that they "encouraged the child to achieve." In later years they did verbalize their encouragement but apparently they were unskilled in communicating this appropriately to the dropout.

When asked, "Before kindergarten, did you teach anything like reading words, or writing the alphabet or telling time?" Seventy percent of the fathers stated "rarely-not at all." Twenty-five percent of the mothers answered similarly. These parents did not see that this was part of the process of achievement motivation. On the other hand, ninety-two percent of the fathers and ninety-two percent of the mothers believed "parents should help their children with homework if they need this help." The parents tended to handle and respond to the concrete while missing subtleties.

In order to ascertain the students perception of their parents' attitudes toward autonomy and self-reliance, they were asked to respond to the questions in Table 15.
Table 13

Dropout's Perception of Parental Attitudes Toward Autonomy and Self Reliance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elias Family Opinion Survey</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mothers nag their children.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One or both parents stop him from having fun.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fathers nag their children.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers get in the way of their children when it is none of their business.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children fight to become free of their parents.</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fathers try to run their children's lives.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents force children to do what kids do not like.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children can reason with their mothers.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children want to run away from home.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fathers get in the way of their children when it is none of their business.</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses to questions are expressed in percentages. N = 26
The direction of growth of these young adults seems to be towards emancipation from the family. The students sensed the inability of the parents to "let go" for reasons they do not understand. What appears to be the problem to the parents is not whether the child should be offered autonomy but rather the concern of what will he/she do with the autonomy so freely given.

A clear demonstration of autonomy is seen in the analysis of the question: "If you needed help and advice to make a big decision to whom would you go for that advice?" Table 14 shows the distribution and choice. Almost half (46%) of the dropouts sought advice from friends.

An additional problem arises in this study from this line of questioning. Some of the questioning designed to reflect a child's capacity to separate himself/herself from the family revealed, in additional asides, a more intense negative conflict. This study does not show the effects of conflict on the development of autonomy. Some of this conflict was revealed in response to the question: "Do you usually like to be somewhere else than home? If yes, where?" Home 12%, Friends 42%, Anywhere but home 40%, Traveling 6%. The answer of "anywhere but home" was always said with a vehemence that revealed underlying stress.
TABLE 14

Student Questionnaire: Dropout's Choice when Seeking Advice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relative</th>
<th>Percentage of Dropouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brother</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sister</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 26 Dropouts
Hypothesis 7 - High school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly low level of self-esteem. On the basis of the data, this hypothesis was not supported.

In Chapter I, we have defined self-esteem as the evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself; it expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval and indicates the extent to which the individual believes himself to be capable, significant, successful and worthy.

On the open-ended questions, parents were asked, "What does the future hold for your child in these areas--education, occupation and social relationships?" Ninety-five percent of the fathers and ninety percent of the mothers responded, "Socially there is no problem at all; there are many friends and he/she has good feelings about him/herself." Parents were less positive when discussing the dropouts' future in education and occupations.

The Berger Scale of Acceptance of Self and Others was administered to each of the twenty-six dropouts. Table 15 summarizes some of the questions on the scale and reflects the attitude toward self of the dropouts.

Previous studies had led us to anticipate that the dropouts would score low in self-esteem. Table 15 shows that this is not so with this sample. With the exception of one male student, all scored within the normal
Table 15
Dropout’s Responses to the Berger Self Esteem Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not True</th>
<th>Slightly True</th>
<th>Halfway True</th>
<th>Mostly True</th>
<th>True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I don't say much at social affairs because I am afraid people will criticize me or laugh if I say the wrong thing.</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I realize that I am not living very effectively but I just don't believe that I've got it in me to use my energies in better ways.</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel different from other people, I'd like to have the feeling of security that comes from knowing I'm not too different.</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm afraid that people I like will find out what I'm really like and they will be disappointed in me.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am frequently bothered by feelings of inferiority.</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because of other people I haven't been able to achieve as much as I should.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am quite shy and self-conscious in social situations.</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 15 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not True</th>
<th>Slightly True</th>
<th>Halfway True</th>
<th>Mostly True</th>
<th>True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses to each individual question are expressed in percentages. N=26
range.

**Siblings.** The dropouts were asked to record all siblings in rank order including themselves. The largest family was five and there was one family with the dropout as an only child. The dropouts themselves were ranked in the following ordinal position:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ordinal position of the dropout</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youngest</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next youngest</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next oldest</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oldest</td>
<td>$\frac{45}{100%}$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When asked to acknowledge if an additional sibling had dropped out of school prior to graduation, twenty percent reported in the affirmative. Of the twenty-six dropouts, five had other siblings who dropped out. Curiously, all of these were the oldest in the family.

We asked the dropouts: "Who is your father's favorite child?" "Who is your mother's favorite child?"

We asked the parents: "Who is your favorite child?"
The dropouts and fathers both chose the oldest (84%) and the youngest (16%). Subjected to cross-tabulation analysis, the results are Chi Square 9.95906 with 4 degrees of freedom with statistical significance of 0.0411. This finding of the relationship between father's choice and the dropouts awareness is statistically significant.

The comparison between the mother's selection of "favorite child" and the dropout's was equally significant. Chi Square = 12.4800 with 2 degrees of freedom with statistical significance 0.0019. The mothers chose the youngest (76%) as their favorite.

Basically the dropout knows his/her place in the hierarchy of the family. They knew that father favored the oldest while mother favored the youngest. In addition, father was very much aware of who the mother favored, and mother was aware of father's favorite.

Significant sibling rivalry did not surface from our line of questioning. Both dropouts and their parents seemed to sense that for the most part siblings were not in conflict. Only one dropout stated that he could never get along with his brothers and that was corroborated by his parents. In that case, there was a disparity between the ages of the dropout (21) and the next oldest (10).
There was no indication that the siblings were particularly close, as indicated by the results of the following questions:

When you needed help did you go to your older brother or sister? Very Often 0, Often 15%, Sometimes 25%, Rarely 15%, Not at all 45%.

When your younger brother/sister needs help does he/she come to you? Very Often 5%, Often 5%, Sometimes 40%, Rarely 10%, Not at all 40%.

Open-ended questions. Parents were asked at the conclusion of the formal questioning, "At this point, may we ask your personal opinion? Why do you think your child dropped out of school?" Table 17 categorizes the responses made by fathers, mothers and the dropouts themselves. Few limited themselves to one response but this writer attempted to report the main category emphasized.
Table 17 - Reasons for Dropping Out

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons by category</th>
<th>Fathers</th>
<th>Mothers</th>
<th>Dropouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative attitude</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative attitudes by school staff</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failing grades</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire for job</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To join armed forces</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer pressure</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional pressure</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug related</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of parental interest</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There appears to be a strong similarity in the reasons set forth by the fifty parents and the twenty-six dropouts. Differences were slight. The concept of "emotional pressure" is vague with the fathers using such terminology as "overwhelmed by the pressure"; "bad scene at the high school, very upsetting"; "couldn't take all the demands by teachers and other children."

Some parents were convinced that the friends of the student, who were themselves dropouts, influenced the decision to terminate school.

One dropout who told us he dropped out "because I was so gone on the stuff (drugs) that I didn't know where I was. My parents think they know me and never thought to ask if I was "on" something."

Two parents responded that the primary cause was their lack of interest. No dropout reported this category.
In comparing the reasons given for dropping out between mothers, fathers and dropouts, Chi Square was used. Chi Square = 15.49206 with 4 degrees of freedom. Significance is 0.0038 (statistically significant). The views are close.

Question to parents: What do you think the future holds for your child? (Occupation). The twenty-four fathers and twenty-six mothers statements are broken down by category and sex of the child.

Table 18 - Parental Prediction of Future Occupation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fathers concerning male students</th>
<th>Fathers concerning female students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>He/she will hold a menial job</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He/she will be a nothing</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He/she should join the Army</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He/she will do well-a hard worker</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will get him/her a job</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She will marry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mothers concerning male students</th>
<th>Mothers concerning female students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>He/she will hold a menial job</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He/she will be nothing-a bum</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He/she should join the Army</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He/she will do well-a hard worker</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>His/her father will get him a job</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She will marry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By the nature of the responses and the categories chosen by the parents the dropouts are expected
to have a bleak future as a group. When the dropout was asked: "When you are a father/mother yourself would you try to prevent your child from dropping out of school?" Eighty percent responded "yes". When this group was asked how they would do this, the following responses were noted:

**Table 19 - Dropout Prevention for Dropout's Children**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pay more attention to him/her while growing up</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send him/her to a better school</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show you care by talking it out</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show you care by talking to the school officials</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide love</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The theme of not enough love and attention runs through the data from the Elias Survey and now again in direct conversation with the dropout. The need for stronger interpersonal relationships with the parents is felt.

The examiner senses that the dropout is, in part, blaming his parents and is angry with them for the dropout process. Although it may be a rationalization and an inability to accept full responsibility for the act, the dropout seems to feel accountability is to be shared. The eighty percent of the dropouts who responded affirmatively to the query, felt that their child would
not drop out because they would not have allowed all of
the events precipitating the action to have occurred.

The results reported in this chapter will be
used to support the conclusions and recommendations in
Chapter V.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

The major focus of this exploratory research study was to determine, with a selected sample of middle class students, whether a relationship exists between environmental and child rearing practices and dropping out of school.

The study examined variables relating environmental and child rearing practices as reflected by the perceptions of individual dropouts (seventeen boys and nine girls) and the perceptions of their individual parents.

Prior to a discussion of the results of the study, this writer would like to depict the interview setting so that the reader has a clear understanding of that environment. All the interviews took place in the living room/dining room of middle class, privately owned homes. Since we are reporting about a middle class sample, what then, can we expect to find? Surely, the effects of privilege should make its way into the findings.

We expected the dropouts to show greater poise in an interview because they were socialized to middle class standards and at home in a world of middle class premises. In addition, we anticipated their sense of the future and their involvement in that future would be
firm and articulated.

We did find the social poise of the middle class adolescents apparent in the approach to the interview situation. Based upon this writer’s knowledge and experience with these and others from this socio-economic background, we found that face to face, with a strange adult, the youngsters, as a group, were poised and at ease. Their overt presence was high in self-confidence and self-esteem. This writer was impressed with the clarity and organization of their ideas. Each maintained eye contact looking directly at the interviewer and oftimes displaying a keen sense of humor.

The parents were cooperative and gracious and somehow felt that their participation in the study would result in a) attaining a better understanding of the events and the process leading to the dropping out of school; b) prevention of others from dropping out, and c) a veiled hope that after the interview the student would have second thoughts and return to school.
Summary of findings.

Hypothesis 1 - The parents of high school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly low standards of behavior expected of their children. The evidence supporting the hypothesis is inconclusive.

All of the questions in the parent questionnaire that were designed to mirror standards of behavior and opinions in the open-ended discussion were stated in strong positive terms. Intellectually, these parents know that they provide the criteria by which one's performance is interpreted and the models for what they believe is fitting and proper behavior. In addition, they also define their relationship to one another. These definitions vary from one sphere of behavior to another. Thus, there was parental agreement over the need for early training for independence but disagreement over the need for severity of punishment. The fathers tended to speak of the need for physical punishment. The perceptions of the dropouts did not verify this as realistically executed. Fathers seemed to be more likely to make the major decisions with a decisiveness in establishing rules although not necessarily consistent in carrying them out. The father appears authoritarian, contrary to middle class stereotyping, while the mother is more stereotyped, obtaining cooperation through employment of conditional love and
manipulation of guilt feelings rather than by the use of coercion. Mothers appear more flexible. It is difficult to gauge how restrictive each family really was over the years. It is the opinion of this writer that parents of middle class children oftentimes judge their success in parenthood in measures of their own personal worth. All of these children are dropouts and may be judged by these parents as their failure. If this is true, then the retrospective view of standards of behavior may be colored.

Hypothesis 2 - High school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly: a) low family encouragement on matters concerning education; b) low occupational level with low levels of responsibility and difficulty, as well as low prestige. On the basis of the data, Hypothesis 2 a) was not supported; 2 b) was supported. The parents stated emphatically their support for further education. They encouraged the student to remain in school. Fathers gave more encouragement upon entering high school than in previous years. Despite the overt parental encouragement, it seems apparent that the students reacted to the subliminal limited expectation of success. (Seventy-seven percent thought their parents doubted their future success). Thus, began the spiral stated by R. D. Laing (1966), "What I think you think of me reverberates back to what I think of myself, and what I think of myself in
turn affects the way I act towards you." This may explain some of the bewilderment felt by parents when what they deem as encouragement is reflected back by hostility and alienation.

Because downward mobility is widely disapproved, we did not expect to find such a high percentage of this sample choosing an occupational status below that of their parents. What causes the boy or girl to have lower occupational aspirations? One possibility is that the expectation is a realistic one. Since our sample population has dropped out and is between the ages of 16 - 21, they have had ample occasion to appraise their talents and opportunities. They have had poor academic experiences and may sense themselves to be less able than their peers.

Another possibility is that downward mobility reflects a rather active, hostile seeking of lower status, representing a protest against the values of their parents and society at large. This downward trend may reflect the demoralization and alienation of these youths. From personal experience and the impression gained from the interviewing, this author tends to support the latter explanation. However, the working at a lower occupational level and its tangential lower level of responsibility and prestige, yet at the same time partaking of the middle class economic advantages (parents' car, living in the house, etc.)
reflects confusion and conflicts regarding the dropout's values.

These children, then, appear to be caught in an infantile ambivalent tie to their parents, dependent and conflict ridden.

Hypothesis 3 - High school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly less fruitful relationships with fathers as compared to mothers. On the basis of the data this hypothesis was supported.

It appears to be a truism that the mothers of this sample group played a more active role in their children's lives, at least in early childhood, on a day to day basis. In these families, it would seem that the father makes the major decisions and lays down the general goals and directions that the family is to follow. This was not anticipated in middle class families though this had been frequently reported in the literature with working class families. The dropout felt that the mother figure was more supportive, showing greater affection, easier to talk to, while the father figure was more removed, distant, disciplining and less giving.

The fathers as a group seemed unable to maintain warm affective relationship with the dropouts. Sixty-six percent of the fathers did not praise good behavior but took it for granted. This supported the demand of ninety
percent of the fathers who thought children should obey their parents with strict obedience. Forty-six percent of the fathers responded to the question, "How often did you spank?" with the statement, "Very Often". Eighty percent of the fathers agreed that if parents refrain from punishing a child they will spoil him. All of these clues apparently reflected a posture that resulted in a less fruitful relationship with father than mother.

Hypothesis 4 - High school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly: low acceptance with regard to perceived father's and mother's attitudes, and low degree of confidence and trust between parents and dropouts. On the basis of the data the evidence was inconclusive.

The dropouts reflected their ambivalent feelings towards the parents when on the one hand they expressed their hurt by not having received enough love; on the other hand they indicated confidence and trust. This ambivalence is reciprocated by the parents. At times, the parents are warm and accepting and are concerned with the student's whereabouts and welfare, are concerned about his health and are supportive when he experiences distress or failure. At other times, they seem to be cold and hostile and disapproving of their child. At that moment, they may regard him as a negative object that is valueless and intrusive. This rejection can take a passive or active
form. The passive rejection is likely to be expressed in an indifferent attitude or ignoring the child. The active form may express itself in obvious hostility, harsh punishment, deprivation of physical necessities or declarations of dislike.

The data for the most part reflected the vacillation of the feelings of parent to child and child to parent. Unfortunately, the very people who could bring joy to a child are also the source of greatest frustrations and anger. As the needs for love are not fulfilled by the parents, the student becomes caught in an inner conflict between love and hate and suffers from the ambivalence of his feelings. In addition to the need for love, these students felt the need for acceptance on another level. Seventy-seven percent of the students felt that "their parents appeared to doubt that they would be successful." This knowledge must have been a blow to the ego.

Ambivalence on the part of the parents may have stemmed from another source. In the parent questionnaire, we asked, "If you could think back to when you first discovered the pregnancy with _____, how did you feel about it?" Thirty-two percent of the mothers responded, "very upset-upset" as did twenty-four percent of the fathers. Perhaps these were unwilling mothers and fathers,
who never meant to have a baby or did not mean to have one at the time they did.

In summary, acceptance as construed by the dropout in relationship to his parents is tenuous at best.

Hypothesis 5 - High school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly: low level of perceived parental interest. On the basis of the data, this hypothesis was not supported.

The students perceived their parents as interested in them. They saw the parents as people to be trusted and believed. They indicated that the parents were interested in their schooling, encouraged future occupations and did not show dissatisfaction with their families. The parents showed interest in the child's progress as the dropout negotiated his way through school.

As stated earlier, the mother's perception of the father was that he showed less interest than she, especially in the pre-school years. In these early years, the mothers report sixty-one percent of the fathers either "rarely" or did "not at all" take care of the child. Similarly, in those years, sixty percent of the fathers stated that they either "rarely" or did "not at all" have time to play with the baby. The fathers' interest increased as the child became older and more mature. The dropouts cannot recall the earlier years (pre-school) with any
vividness. They accept the parental role of today as interested, with the qualification of not loving enough. We will discuss "love" further in this chapter.

Hypothesis 6 - High school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly: a) low level of achievement motivation and b) encouragement of self-reliance and autonomy. On the basis of the data, the hypothesis was neither supported nor rejected-a) low level of achievement motivation was verified but b) low encouragement of self-reliance and autonomy was not.

The findings show that the middle class parents give encouragement of autonomy. While encouraging autonomy and self-reliance there is some ambiguity as to the encouragement of emotional independence. It must be noted that all of the dropouts in this sample are still living in the family milieu, reflecting some dependence. What these youngsters are free or not free to do and decide on their own may tell us more about the parents and the family environment and their concepts of socialization than the youngsters themselves. In this vein, the parents establish guidelines for their children but are apt to employ punishment rather than reward, as a controlling method. The parents, of this sample, apparently feel that punishment is a preferred method of control, yet are aware that it has not been effective. The children believe that
the control behaviors of their parents are unwarranted.

The parents encouraged the children to achieve; but there was not the anticipated achievement motivation of the middle class. We assumed that in cases where parents were ambitious for themselves and their children, we may expect to find emphasis upon standards of excellence, coupled with expectations for high achievement and deep parental involvement in the child's performance. One possible explanation may be that this is a retrospective study and the recollections of events and feelings may have been colored and altered. Each dropout has a history of failure academically. When we ask the parents to respond to questions pertaining to encouragement, we must consider that we have not been party to the years of performance below level with its inherent frustrations for all of the family members.

We note that prior to kindergarten, the majority (70%) of the fathers seemed unable to participate in educational stimulation. More disconcerting was that twenty-five percent of the mothers also stated "rarely" or "not at all" were they able to teach anything like reading words, or writing the alphabet, or telling time. The lack of educational stimulation and corresponding emotional support could have had a deleterious effect on the student's school performance as he/she entered elementary school. This deprivation places the child behind his peers in
experiential background necessary for success in school. The parents became more aware of the needs of the child as the child matured and reflected difficulty in the school setting.

Hypothesis 7 - High school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly: low level of self-esteem. On the basis of the data this hypothesis was not supported.

Previous studies of dropouts have reported perceptions of low self-esteem. This sample scored high in self-esteem. There are some possible explanations. First, this sample is one of middle class dropouts as compared with the lower socio-economic strata researched in previous studies. In a subtle way, these children may have received strength from middle class families of high activity, strong-minded parents, greater possibilities for open dissent and disagreement, exposure to many more experiences by virtue of greater economic stability and income.

Bachman (1972) frequently raised the question of whether the criteria of adjustment to one's social group is a suitable basis for judging psychological health (i.e., the student remaining in school and not dropping out). This sample, though they have dropped out of school are apparently as aware as other persons of their social and academic world. They appear inclined to pay attention to their own personal beliefs and convictions with assuredness.

Another explanation may be stated in simplistic
terms. In spite of the test design (Berger, 1952), the students may have presented themselves either as they wanted to be seen or as they thought the researcher wanted to see them. From the beginning of this research, we were impressed by the ability of this sample to establish rapport with an adult interviewer and respond to questions in a sophisticated way. This explanation may fall under the classification of defense reaction. A defense reaction stems from the individual's desire to present a public response that may differ from his private attitudes and convictions. The responses made to the Berger Test by a sophisticated student were generally supportive of socially accepted norms thereby establishing a self-acceptance that might have been lost had the genuine attitudes been expressed.

The self-esteem status of the dropouts, as reflected by this test (Berger), is consistent with their feelings about autonomy. Sixty-eight percent stated a need to become free of their parents and almost half (46%) preferred to seek advice from a friend when an important issue was to be resolved. There is striving for independence as these children enter adulthood.
Discussion of Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

This research has explored factors within the early environment and to some extent, within the child himself which may be important and relevant to his later school achievement. The ultimate aim of this research is to determine which factors in that early environment might be varied to enable the child to cope within the school setting and make a positive adjustment to society.

Table 20 summarizes the variables explored in this study.

The findings are:

High school aged male and female dropouts show:

a) Family encouragement on matters concerning education.

b) Low occupational aspiration levels with low levels of responsibility and difficulty as well as prestige.

c) Less fruitful relationship with fathers as compared with mothers.

d) Perceived parental interest.

e) Low level of achievement motivation.

f) Parental encouragement of self-reliance and autonomy.

g) Positive self-esteem.
**Table 20**

**Summary of the Results of the Study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Supported</th>
<th>Not Supported</th>
<th>Inconclusive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The parents of high school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly low standards of behavior expected of their children.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. High school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly:</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Low family encouragement on matters concerning education.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Low occupational aspiration level with low levels of responsibility and difficulty as well as prestige.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. High school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly less fruitful relationship with fathers as compared with mothers.</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. High school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly low acceptance with regard to perceived father's and mother's attitudes and a low degree of confidence and trust between parents and dropouts.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. High school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly low level of perceived parental interest.</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. High school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly:</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Low level of achievement motivation, and</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Low encouragement of self reliance and autonomy.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. High school aged male and female dropouts would show significantly low level of self esteem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The findings were inconclusive with two variables:

a) Low parental standards of behavior expected of their children.

b) Low acceptance with regard to perceived father's and mother's attitudes and a low degree of confidence and trust between parents and dropouts.

It is very difficult to fix the boundaries of any one family in an attempt to understand the significance of its interpersonal relationships. Within the scope of this paper we are interested in the marital relationship of husband and wife and the parental and sibling relationship of husband and wife to sons and daughters and the children to each other. The family network provides most of the intimate social context in which the differentiation and integration of each young person can take place. In a deeper sense, this writer feels the matrix of family relations is a truly dynamic system in which growth and development take place. In the family, a dynamic interacting situation always exists.

Within this social context, emotional relations between family members vacillate as the family attempts to function and thrive. During the interviews, this writer noted some underlying process of conflict. Directly after
each interview, impressions were written down. A description of interpersonal relationships within the family was described by words and phrases such as: tension, conflict, dissatisfaction, harmonious, etc. The evaluation was based upon the relevent statements of both mother and father and the references one to each other or to the student. These included direct slurs and inuendo pertaining to other parties. Of the fifty parent interviews, twenty-seven were noted to have made deprecative remarks. Of these twenty-seven, twenty were remarks by the wife about the husband.

It is difficult to ascribe significance to this conflict and its relationship to dropping out of school. Nor can the conflict be explained based upon the data. It may be the characteristics of the parents themselves that contribute to the noted tension in some of the families. The mothers may be less secure and stable in their own right, appearing more fearful and disturbed by the consequences of child-rearing (their consternation over the dropping out of school). The fathers in these families seem less involved and concerned about their sons and daughters and this may be a source of dissatisfaction for their wives. There may be a disappointment in the expectation of the parents, one for each other. The reader should be aware that the conflict noted is at the present time. It may not be assumed that the environment of the
dropout when he/she was much younger reflected similar tensions. But, let us explore some possibilities.

Most of the research on parental influence has been based upon information supplied by parents. From our parent questionnaire and the added view of the dropouts, we are able to reconstruct some of the child rearing practices that influenced our sample population.

We have found the father to be interested but not particularly loving nor attentive in the earlier years. The father was the disciplinarian, the maker of the rules in the established order. He was seen as giving less emotional support as being more rigid and less accepting. In our sample, the mother appears warmer and accepting.

It has been the experience of this writer that children who have been treated aggressively treat others the same way. Let us look into the dropping out of school. The importance of ambition and curiosity in relation to school performance is clear, but it is not immediately obvious how aggression is related to learning. Aggression is often thought of only as hostile or anti-social behavior; we would like to use it in a broader sense. There are many features to the dropouts personality observed during the interview that would give us pause to think of the "passive-aggressive" child. The passivity being expressed in terms of "yes, I wish very much to learn" and the aggressiveness
expressed in not learning. How often have teachers, especially in elementary school, seen the passive youngster who elicits adult sympathy and interest? Teachers try to spare him and encourage him, and offer him special help. The child is usually of average intelligence but other subtle difficulties are involved. The child seems willing, but he can't remember anything. He makes no effort and forgets his assignments. The teachers look to the parents for an explanation of the child's unsatisfactory progress. The parents feel anxious and unconscious aggression is directed toward the child. The child has a sense of insecurity, but at the same time has a powerful weapon against his parents. This refusal to do well in school can be a way of getting even without being consciously or overtly aggressive. It is a particularly efficient symptom because the child feels no inner guilt. The symptom itself brings enough external punishment in its wake to make self-punishment unnecessary. Parent-child interplay, on the subject of school work, is similar to the interplay which may have occurred with pre-school children regarding eating habits. Parents can provide opportunity; they can set a good example and set limits, but they cannot force the child to eat, nor to learn.

The dropouts have complained that they do not receive enough love from their fathers. Both student
and mother see the father as less affectionate than the mother. Erickson (1972) states that the early experiences in a child's life will affect and condition him into adulthood. Early experiences set the foundation for basic trust as the child learns to love. The child who does not achieve a fairly early identification with a loved person may go through life unable to love. Usually, this initial identification is with the mother, as in the case of our sample. Of all the human relations influencing early childhood development, the attitudes of the mother are of central importance, i.e., her attitudes toward the pregnancy, toward her husband and other members of the family, toward her career and social life, toward her role as a mother and, most of all, her attitude toward the child and his need for affection. However, priorities have changed in the last decade with the rebellion of housewives to their stereotyped roles. This sample is comprised of educated, aware, sophisticated women who do not necessarily see their roles as "raising the children". The inuendo reported earlier in hostile "asides" about the father may have been precipitated by feelings of being relegated to the household while he (the husband) had the needed freedom of movement. Twenty-four of these women are now working and all worked prior to the pregnancy. During the early childhood years, the mothers did not work and may still harbor the resentment.
Some of the women have a higher professional position than the father in these households. We found these mothers to be more self-assured during the interviews than the rest of the sample and perhaps they have a higher status in the household.

Father's role playing may also be stereotyped. It is conceivable that the fathers viewed affection, love and playing with the infant as effeminate; certainly, not masculine. It is almost a cliche but how often have we heard a father say to a whimpering child, "Hold on now; men do not cry" perpetuating an absurdity? The cliche of the father, as wage earner who must be apart, rigid, disciplining and unemotional, has not been eliminated. In this cultural background a father may show interest but may not be able to show love.

We found close to 50% of the dropouts were the oldest in the family. Traditionally, there has been little preparation for parenthood and knowledge of early child development for prospective parents. These parents found themselves inexperienced, perhaps feeling socially isolated by the pregnancy or by the small children who are always underfoot and overwhelmed by a sense of the full weight and responsibility of parenthood. We all blunder and err and learn, perhaps at the expense of the oldest. It is difficult to ascertain the exact teaching style of parents
in a retrospective study. The way parents use information; the way they support and pressure their child, not only reveals their teaching style, but may have a profound effect on the way the child approaches learning and problem solving. It seems likely that if a mother/father offers emotional support in a learning situation but is unable to give information about how to solve the problem, the child may respond with a casual attitude toward learning. Parents who place pressure on a child to achieve and who are unable to supply the necessary information for learning may induce disappointment and frustration. Parents who offer information and pressure without the emotional support may incite anxious feelings around learning and achievement. Some combination of learning style has had a negative effect on the educability of our sample.

Our sample population appears typically less committed to academic values and intellectual achievement. It has been the experience of this writer, in studying children's achievement, that success, or lack of it, depends on the attitudes they bring with them to school. If on entering school, they thought of themselves as readers, were sure of the value of reading (from home environment), were convinced that they could read easily (basic trust in themselves and others), then they read easily. Those coming to school, who doubted the value of reading and their
ability to learn to read, were not usually successful, although they shared the same classroom environment with all the others exposed to the same stimuli. For this group, our sample, the identical setting became a negative experience.

Our sample appears to reject many of the values of their parents but there is an emotional tie to the mother. The mothers of these students are apt to be controlling and intrusive, over-solicitous and limiting. There is, or appears to be, a parental schism supplemented by a special mother-son alliance of mutual understanding and maternal control and deprecation of the father. The father as disciplinarian and overtly less affectionate, fostered a dependent relationship between the dropout and the mother. The mother was less restrictive, encouraging the relationship to satisfy a whole range of her personal needs. Her needs, in addition to nurturance and mothering, may have been on additional levels. The dependency of children on her may satisfy a need to dominate or in a subtle way attack the husband for placing her in this role. The children could be used to "get back" at the mate leaving the father on the periphery of the group. There are many inconsistencies arising from marital discord. In these cases, the dropout is not blameless. The literature is replete with reported cases of how a child will play one
parent against another. By so doing, he can escape a feeling of guilt or responsibility by getting one of his parents to take his side. There is another inconsistency between the spoken word and the latent feeling. Children are very sensitive to underlying feelings and can see through subterfuges better than adults. Children seem to be able to interpret body language and its subtle nuances. Our sample was aware their parents did not expect them to be successful. One wonders about this self-fulfilling prophecy and thinks back over the years. When was this first sensed? One can readily sympathize with the child who is afraid of failure. He responds well to encouragement and praise and reacts favorably when he has had some successful experience. The educator often sees such children and they clearly prove that nothing succeeds like success. Other children, however, make it difficult for educators because they won't try. They never do enough to achieve an honest, successful experience; one failure or near failure brings on another. In some instances, such children will not exert any effort because they prefer to fail as a result of not trying, rather than risk the disappointment of failure after they have made a genuine effort. It is face saving to think "it doesn't matter because I didn't really put much into it." By assuming this attitude, they are protected in advance against embarrassment or disappoint-
ment. This is our passive-aggressive child responding to the early influence of their parents. This is our sample. These personal influences of the family shape the personality so that our young adults appear troubled emotionally. They are lacking in a clearly defined self-image and sense of identity. They are more influenced by frustrations from which they are trying to escape than by longer term goals toward which they are striving.

Conclusions and recommendations. The writer concludes that the study supports the thesis that environmental and child-rearing practices have contributed to dropping out of high school for this sample population. We note that disturbances in the broad background against which the family carries out its educational task are likely to have their impact on the child's growth, development and powers to learn. The parent's teaching pattern and behavior, the experiences they provided their children, and the model they set are important influences.

These parents seemed unaware of the positive aspects of stimulating the child prior to onset of schooling. Verbal interaction and attentiveness to the child, on the part of the fathers, in these years were limited. The fathers had difficulty establishing a warm, affective relationship with the children for reasons explored in this chapter. Indeed, the father appeared as a disciplinarian
who did not foster feelings of high regard because of his use of arbitrary regulatory strategies. In the earlier years, both parents easily satisfied the physical needs but did not understand the necessity for nurturance of affective and cognitive needs. Although the mothers fostered a dependency relationship with the dropouts, we note that none of the mothers breast fed. With the same body language and facial countenance, perhaps understood by the young child, the mother succeeded in communicating to this writer her distaste for breast feeding.

The dropouts themselves complained of not enough love and affection, especially from father. Their dropping out of school coupled with poor learning and achievement over the years may be a passive-aggressive act of hostility to the parents, aimed specifically at the father. Their occupational aspirations, undoubtedly, are a source of embarrassment to their parents whose middle class standards are being rejected. This act and the verbal desire to be "anywhere but home" gives one a clear insight as to the intensity of the dropouts' reactions.

The parents demanded high achievement, but did not lend positive support to the child so that he could comply with the request. The parents teaching style was confusing and resulted in anxiety. The father was demanding and arbitrary and the mother was controlling and over-
solicitous.

The increased complexity of society makes it extremely difficult for those who have problems in adaptation and learning. In our review of the literature, we have discussed the declining opportunities for the school dropout and have implied society's social responsibility. We have discussed the variance of home environment and school environment and feel conscience ridden to reconcile these differing milieus. We need to ask society: If we can predict school dropout, why do we wait for the prophecy to come true? If remedial actions are so much less effective at a later time (high school) in a person's development, how can we perpetuate these actions when it is much too late? The need for intervention is prior to schooling.

If we negate our responsibility to 900,000 students a year, surely, society must suffer.

Perhaps, the most significant outcome of this study is awareness that dropping out of school may be the result of inconsistencies within the dynamics of the family. The interplay between mother and son has, as its etiological factor, the inability of the father to step beyond the role playing affect of "maleness". We see the mother's role as a reactive one to the environment over which she had minimal control.
The study supports previous research, in concluding that there is a need for educational stimulation and emotional support prior to schooling, as a mechanism to prevent subsequent dropping out of school.

A general observation emerging from this study is that social class defined either by father's occupation or education, or by ownership of a family house and residence in a suburb has less influence on adolescent behavior and family patterns related to adolescent behavior than a great deal of previous research might lead us to expect. Previous studies (Hess, Rosen, Katovsky) indicated that the parental attitudes and ideology, achievement, autonomy and methods of discipline, as reported in this study, would actually be reflecting the "working class" household; yet, our sample is unquestionably middle class. Our student sample, children of the middle class adults, does not conform to a stereotype attribute of middle class in the concept of future orientation. This study neither confirms nor strengthens this general conception. This sample of the population was preoccupied with existential living for the present.
Recommendations for Future Research

There are several areas for further research that suggest themselves as a result of this study.

There is a need for research in which important aspects of parental influence are examined concurrently with the appraised behavior of children and relationships between the two sets of variables determined. It is possible that the answers to the questionnaires administered to the parents, in this study, may have been the parent's response to the child's behavior rather than parental influence upon the child's development.

Since this writer sensed conflict within the family constellation but could not substantiate it in a formal way, we would like to suggest that future research examine conflict in the family environment as antecedent to dropping out of school.

There has been a paucity of research in attempting to understand the role of the father in the formation of personality tendencies among children. Knowledge of the father's attitudes in relationship to personality formulation would be an important ingredient in understanding development.

We know very little about how the informal education of pre-schoolers is carried on in the home. We need detailed accounts of the characteristics of home
learning environments for children. We would like to see the following hypotheses tested in establishing the characteristics of this environment:

a) A highly stimulating home environment is associated with accelerated development.

b) Maternal-paternal verbalization in the first two years is associated positively with school achievement in the first two grades.

c) Maternal-paternal teaching style is related to cognitive functioning.

The relationship between "class" and self-concept needs to be explored further. The findings in this area appear to this writer to be contradictory, and, hence, confusing. Further, the question of class distinction in our social system needs redefinition in light of our present society.

There is need for a study to determine whether persons who differ in self-esteem also differ in the personal standards they set for themselves and in the standards they set for occupations they fully expect to enter.

There is an apparent need for research in techniques to enable the school or other agencies to analyze the home environment and to determine the best strategy whereby the school and the home can provide environmental conditions necessary for school achievement.
A most important contribution would be a study that examines the time in the individual's development when educational growth, in a particular area, is most effectively influenced by learning experiences both in the school and home environment. If these time zones can be established, learning can be appropriately spaced.

There is a need for research to determine how much environmental forces affect the development of a characteristic, (i.e., intelligence) and what are the limits for affecting a characteristic by educational or other environmental forces.

There is a need for additional longitudinal studies of dropouts in the area of environments and its effects. The effectiveness of such a longitudinal study has the advantage of not only repeated measurement of the individual but there is also evidence of the environmental conditions under which each person lived during the period of time under study. The ongoing evidence of the environment would be more reliable than in a retrospective study asking for recollections of previous years.

Some additional thoughts about environments that may lead to future research:

Can we determine the process by which the individual and the environment interact to produce changes in the individual? What are the dynamics that retard or
develop characteristics in change and what determinants suddenly develop a characteristic further after it is considered to have peaked? Can we determine when and if characteristics can be altered? Can this alteration be initiated by change in the home, school or in the general environment? Can we analyze these environments sufficiently to understand their components in relationship to the initiation of change?

This writer would presume that a clearer understanding of the dynamics of change in environments would lead to the strengthening and support of the family unit in the care and education of the child.

In our review of the literature, we cited a number of researchers (Gray and Klaus, 1969, Gray, 1970, Moore, 1968, Schaefer, 1971) who have initiated programs that teach parents methods for fostering the intellectual and academic achievement of their children. The researchers state that the results are promising. These parent-centered intervention programs show effective gains in intellectual functioning and suggest not only the need for early and continuing education of the child but also early and continuing support for the parents in their roles as educators of their own children. Such programs have been primarily designed for lower socio-economic groups. The research in developing these programs was
with lower socio-economic groupings. A major question, and a suggestion for future research, is whether these programs would have significant effects in upper socio-economic groups? A question put forth in that research would be: Could intensive parental stimulation contribute substantially to a child's superior level of functioning as well as fostering an average level of functioning?

Although the view presented in this dissertation is that the dropout syndrome has its origins at the preschool level in the nature of the interaction between parents and child, we would like to discuss some implications for educators. It is our hope that these issues can be accommodated in some future programming.

   a) In order to insure a better educated generation of parents, we would propose course work dealing with parenting be included in the high school curriculum.

   Indeed, the New York Times reported (11-28-77) that the New Jersey Commissioner of Education has mandated that "sex education" be part of the curriculum of grades K - 12. The course content was not discussed. However, if well planned, a practical "what to expect and what to do" approach in terms of understanding affective and cognitive development of the
child can be incorporated. It has been the experience of this writer that many parents would react differently if they had had ample opportunity for discussion and some guidance in expectations during the developmental years of their children.

b) Other implications for the school that might lead to future research and change are in the form of questions:

What curricula aspects could be improved to increase the retention power of the schools?

What can we learn about teachers and their personality in relationship to children feeling they are unwelcome or unable to learn?

How can teacher training programs and in-service programs improve the teacher's perceptions and abilities to involve students?

Do poor physical facilities contribute to early leaving from school?

What role do grading policies play?

What is the role of retention?

In effect, can we modify the school to decrease the dropout rate and to increase the positive consequences of education?
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APPENDIX A

The instruments administered to the students and their parents are presented in this section. The reader will note that responses to the questionnaire are inserted. Responses to individual questions are expressed in percentages, unless otherwise noted.
To the Student: This is a study of some of your attitudes. Of course, there is no right or wrong answer for any statement. The best answer is what you feel is true of yourself. You are asked to respond to each question on the answer sheet according to the following scheme:

1. Not at all true of myself (NT)
2. Slightly true of myself (ST)
3. About halfway true of myself (HT)
4. Mostly true of myself (MT)
5. True of myself (T)

Please use the letter key and circle your feeling, e.g.

The encircled NT indicates that you thought the statement to be "Not true of myself"

Remember, the best answer is the one that applies to you.

1) I'd like it if I could find someone who would tell me how to solve my problems.

2) I don't question my worth as a person, even if I think others do.

3) When people say nice things about me, I find it difficult to believe that they really mean it. I think maybe they are kidding me or just aren't being sincere.

4) If there is any criticism or anyone says anything about me, I just can't take it.

5) I don't say much at social affairs because I am afraid that people will criticize me if I say the wrong thing.
6) I realize that I am not living very effectively, but I just don't believe that I've got it in me to use my energies in better ways.

   NT  ST  HT  MT  T
   62  12  11  11  4

7) I look on most of the feelings and impulses I have toward people as being natural and quite acceptable.

   NT  ST  HT  MT  T
   4   27  23  46

8) Something inside me just won't let me be satisfied with any job I've done. If it turns out well, I get a smug feeling that this is beneath me.

   NT  ST  HT  MT  T
   46  19  12   8  15

9) I feel different from other people, I'd like to have the feeling of security that comes from knowing I'm not too different.

   NT  ST  HT  MT  T
   12  23  34  20  11

10) I'm afraid that people I like will find out what I'm really like and they will be disappointed in me.

    NT  ST  HT  MT  T
    69  11  12   8

11) I am frequently bothered by feelings of inferiority.

    NT  ST  HT  MT  T
    30  47  15   8

12) Because of other people, I haven't been able to achieve as much as I should.

    NT  ST  HT  MT  T
    62  15   8  11  4

13) I am quite shy and self conscious in social situations.

    NT  ST  HT  MT  T
    42  23  23   8  4
14) In order to get along and be liked, I tend to be what people expect me to be.

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15) I seem to have a real inner strength in handling things and it makes me sure of myself.

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16) I feel self conscious when I'm with people who have a superior position to mine.

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<td>44</td>
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17) I think I'm neurotic or something.

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18) Very often I am not friendly with people because I think they won't like me.

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19) I feel that I am a person of worth, on an equal plane with others.

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20) I can't avoid feeling guilty about the way I feel toward certain people in my life.

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21) I'm not afraid of meeting new people. I feel that I am a worthwhile person and there is no reason why they should dislike me.

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22) I sort of only half believe in myself.

23) People say things and I have a tendency to think they are criticizing me or insulting me and later when I think about it, they may not have meant that at all.

24) I think I have certain qualities and abilities, and other people say so too; but, I wonder if I'm not giving them an importance beyond what they deserve?

25) I feel confident that I can do something about the problems that may arise in the future.

26) I guess I put on a show to impress people. I know that I'm not what I pretend to be.

27) I do not worry or condemn myself if other people pass judgement against me.

28) I don't feel very normal, but I want to feel normal.

29) When I'm in a group, I usually don't say much for fear of saying the wrong thing.
30) I have a tendency to sidestep my problems.

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<td>34</td>
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31) I feel that I'm on the same level as other people and that helps to establish good relations with them.

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32) I feel that people are apt to react differently to me than they would normally react to other people.

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33) I live too much by other people's standards.

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34) When I have to address a group, I get self conscious and have difficulty saying things well.

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<td>26</td>
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35) If I didn't always have such hard luck, I'd accomplish much more than I have.

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</table>
To the Student: We would like to know what people think about families in general. Give opinions about the people who were parents and children when you were a child. You don't have to base your opinions on your family alone. Many people base their opinions on all the families they have known.

The questions sometimes have different meanings for different people. The meaning which comes easiest to you is the best one to use. If you are not sure about any question, give it the meaning it would have if you had made it up yourself and were saying it to a friend.

Work quickly. Give it the first answer that comes to your mind. This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers. It is necessary that you finish this questionnaire quickly. To do so, you cannot spend much time on any one question.

The following is a sample sentence.

1) Parents and children play together.  A  O  S  R  N

For each question decide which one of the following words - Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely or Never would make the sentence most correct for you. Then circle the letter on the right that stands for the word you have chosen.

A = Always  R = Rarely  S = Sometimes
O = Often   N = Never

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>N</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Parents are happy when they are together.</td>
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<td>2) Children have to make excuses for their parents.</td>
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<td>3) Children wish their mothers would act differently.</td>
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<td>4) Fathers show dissatisfaction with their families.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5) Fathers are hard to get along with.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>6) Mothers are close friends with their children.</td>
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<td>39</td>
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</table>
7) Father is jealous of the love his children have for their mother. A 0 S R N
   4 8 42 15 31

8) Children fight with one or both parents. A 0 S R N
   28 30 34 8

9) Mothers love their children equally. A 0 S R N
   30 15 23 24 8

10) Parents handle their children well. A 0 S R N
    4 38 53 5

11) Children have trouble with their families. A 0 S R N
    8 19 65 8

12) Mothers keep their promises with children. A 0 S R N
    8 34 34 24

13) Children do things to spite their parents. A 0 S R N
    34 54 12

14) Children think their fathers are sorry they had them. A 0 S R N
    4 30 54 12

15) Fathers are mean. A 0 S R N
    8 54 23 15

16) Children feel their families are disliked. A 0 S R N
    4 27 42 27

17) Mothers nag their children. A 0 S R N
    4 42 34 16 4

18) Children feel "gypped" because they do not get what they want. A 0 S R N
    4 30 46 20

19) Children can reason with their mothers. A 0 S R N
    8 27 46 19

20) Children are spanked unjustly. A 0 S R N
    8 38 34 20

21) Mothers neglect their children. A 0 S R N
    27 50 23

22) Mothers are ashamed of their husbands. A 0 S R N
    12 58 30

23) One or both parents of a child become angry easily. A 0 S R N
    4 34 54 8
24) When things go wrong, fathers blame it on the fact they have children.

25) Children can discuss sex matters with both parents.

26) Children feel they bring trouble to their parents.

27) One or both parents of a child stop him from having fun.

28) A child thinks the parents of his friends are better than his own.

29) Children are afraid to show great love for one parent in the presence of the other.

30) Fathers nag their children.

31) Parents show they are disappointed in their children.

32) Fathers are happiest when their wives are not around.

33) Children are afraid of their mothers.

34) When something goes wrong, mothers blame it on that they had children.

35) Children are let down by one or both parents.

36) Mothers act queer before their families.

37) Fathers are afraid of their wives.

38) Mothers love their husbands.

39) Matters dealing with sex cause trouble between children and parents.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
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<tr>
<td>40)</td>
<td>Mothers scold their children unjustly.</td>
<td>O S R N</td>
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<td>4 48 40 8</td>
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<td>41)</td>
<td>Children distrust their mothers.</td>
<td>O S R N</td>
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<td>8 20 44 28</td>
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<td>42)</td>
<td>Parents love their children less than they show.</td>
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<td>24 24 12 20 20</td>
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<td>43)</td>
<td>Both parents understand their children.</td>
<td>O S R N</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>4 4 56 28 8</td>
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<td>44)</td>
<td>Mothers are cruel.</td>
<td>O S R N</td>
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<td>45)</td>
<td>Mothers show their dissatisfaction with their families.</td>
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<td>46)</td>
<td>Children feel their parents are better to other people than them.</td>
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<td>20 36 40 4</td>
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<td>47)</td>
<td>Mothers get in the way of their children when it is none of their business.</td>
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<td>48)</td>
<td>Children are jealous because their mothers love another person very much.</td>
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<td>49)</td>
<td>Children are ashamed of their fathers.</td>
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<td>4 12 64 20</td>
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<td>50)</td>
<td>Mothers are mean.</td>
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<td>32 52 16</td>
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<td>51)</td>
<td>Children want more love from their fathers than they get.</td>
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<td>4 40 32 20 4</td>
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<td>52)</td>
<td>Children are jealous of their brothers and sisters.</td>
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<td>8 40 36 16</td>
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<td>53)</td>
<td>Children believe their parents should not have married.</td>
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<td>54)</td>
<td>Children like their homes as they are.</td>
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<td>55)</td>
<td>Children hate their fathers.</td>
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<td>56</td>
<td>Children make fun of their mothers.</td>
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<td>57</td>
<td>Children have grudges against their mothers.</td>
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<td>58</td>
<td>Fathers are selfish.</td>
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<td>59</td>
<td>Fathers disbelieve their children.</td>
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<td>60</td>
<td>Children love one of their parents in ways that aren't nice.</td>
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<td>61</td>
<td>Fathers do things to spite their children.</td>
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<td>62</td>
<td>Children love one parent while fearing the other.</td>
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<td>63</td>
<td>A child hears his parents say bad things behind each other's back.</td>
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<td>64</td>
<td>Parents get so mad they do not talk to each other.</td>
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<td>Fathers love their wives.</td>
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<td>66</td>
<td>Husbands are ashamed of their wives.</td>
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<td>67</td>
<td>Fathers scold children unjustly.</td>
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<td>68</td>
<td>Children wish their fathers would act differently.</td>
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<td>69</td>
<td>Children want to run away from home.</td>
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<td>Children think their mothers are sorry they had them.</td>
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<td>71</td>
<td>Parents dislike their in-laws.</td>
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<td>72</td>
<td>Fathers wish they hadn't married.</td>
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<td>73</td>
<td>Mothers disbelieve their children.</td>
<td>A 0 S R N</td>
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<td>74</td>
<td>Children can rely on their fathers when help is most needed.</td>
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<td>16 32 44 8</td>
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<td>75</td>
<td>Children fight to become free of their parents.</td>
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<td>76</td>
<td>Children distrust their fathers.</td>
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<td>8 50 38 4</td>
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<td>77</td>
<td>Fathers are moody before their families.</td>
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<td>8 12 50 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td>Parents respect each other.</td>
<td>A 0 S R N</td>
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<td>16 54 30</td>
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<td>79</td>
<td>Parents disagree on religious matters.</td>
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<td>80</td>
<td>Mothers act moody before their families.</td>
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<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>Children have grudges against their fathers.</td>
<td>A 0 S R N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12 46 38 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>Fathers try to run their children's lives.</td>
<td>A 0 S R N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8 34 34 20 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>Children are jealous of other families.</td>
<td>A 0 S R N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>22 46 20 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84</td>
<td>Parents disagree in ways that make children suffer.</td>
<td>A 0 S R N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 26 58 8 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>Fathers get in the way of their children when it is none of their business.</td>
<td>A 0 S R N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 26 46 20 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86</td>
<td>Parents force their children to eat.</td>
<td>A 0 S R N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 20 60 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87</td>
<td>Parents blame each other when they should not.</td>
<td>A 0 S R N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 22 54 16 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88</td>
<td>Children are afraid of their fathers.</td>
<td>A 0 S R N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8 60 20 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>Classifications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89)</td>
<td>Children are jealous because their fathers love another person very much.</td>
<td>12 22 54 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90)</td>
<td>Mothers are happiest when their husbands are not around.</td>
<td>4 30 50 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91)</td>
<td>Fathers neglect their children.</td>
<td>4 52 24 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92)</td>
<td>Children hate their mothers.</td>
<td>20 54 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93)</td>
<td>Fathers are close friends with their children.</td>
<td>8 12 50 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94)</td>
<td>Children make fun of their fathers.</td>
<td>8 26 30 36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95)</td>
<td>Mothers are hard to get along with.</td>
<td>16 54 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96)</td>
<td>Fathers love their children equally.</td>
<td>8 26 34 24 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97)</td>
<td>Parents nag each other.</td>
<td>18 54 16 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98)</td>
<td>Fathers are cruel.</td>
<td>34 54 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99)</td>
<td>Children want more love from their mothers than they get.</td>
<td>14 54 24 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100)</td>
<td>Mothers are selfish.</td>
<td>12 54 34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101)</td>
<td>Children dislike the size of their families.</td>
<td>8 76 8 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102)</td>
<td>Parents argue with each other.</td>
<td>4 12 64 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103)</td>
<td>Fathers keep promises with their children.</td>
<td>34 46 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104)</td>
<td>Children like to spend time with their parents.</td>
<td>4 30 58 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
105) Mothers do things to spite their children.

106) Children can rely on their mothers when help is most needed.

107) Parents force children to do what kids do not like.

108) Mothers are afraid of their husbands.

109) Mothers act worried before their children.

110) Children are afraid they cannot come up to their parent's expectations.

111) Mothers wish they had never married.

112) Fathers act queer before their families.

113) Children are ashamed of their mothers.

114) Mother is jealous of the love her children have for their father.
To Parents: This is an anonymous questionnaire. It is part of a study to help us gain meaningful information about young men and women who leave school early.

Do you own____ rent____ your home? (100% own the home)

1) How old were you when ____ was born? (Fathers 23-30)  
   (Mothers 20-25)

2) Do you work?____ What kind of work do you do?____
   (Table 6, Chapter IV)

3) How many years of schooling have you had?____
   M   F
   (High School) 12  20%  24%
   (One year College) 13  36  30
   14  12  8
   (College Degree) 16  24  34
   17  8  4
   100 100

4) How many children do you have?____ (1-5)
   Please rank them by age.____

5) Which of these children left school prior to graduation?____ (20%)

6) Between all of the children, who did you tend to favor?
   (See discussion Chapter IV)

7) Who did your husband/wife tend to favor?____
   (See discussion Chapter IV)

8) Was____ breast fed? (Yes 10%, No 90%)
   If yes, for how long? (4-5 months)

9) If no, how did you happen to decide to use a bottle
   instead?____ (Professional advice 60%; would not consider it 40%)

There will be many questions I am going to ask now.
You may not be able to recall all of the answers clearly.
I, too, have children ages 16, 18, and 20 and if you asked me these questions, I, also might be hard pressed to recall everything with clarity. But, to the best of your ability
and recollection try to remember your home life and how was prior to schooling. Now try to think back to those years when was very young.

10) Did mother take care of him/her?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father:</th>
<th>58</th>
<th>42</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Quite Often</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother:</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11) Did father take care of him/her?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father:</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>35</th>
<th>38</th>
<th>15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Quite Often</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother:</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12) When was a baby, besides the time that was necessary for feeding, changing and just regular care, would you say you had time to play with him/her?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father:</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>36</th>
<th>25</th>
<th>35</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Quite Often</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother:</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13) For a parent, the first four years of a child's life are the most enjoyable.

| Father: 12 | 12 | 34 | 32 | 10 |
| True | Mostly True | Sometimes True | Slightly | Not True |
| Mother: 42 | 30 | 28 |

14) Did you eat meals with the children?

| Father: 8 | 37 | 35 | 20 |
| Always  | Quite Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Not at all |
| Mother: 80 | 12 | 4 | 4 |

15) Did wet the bed up to the age of five?

| Father: 4 | 12 | 4 | 8 | 72 |
| Always  | Quite Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Not at all |
| Mother: 4 | 12 | 8 | 4 | 72 |

16) If yes, was he/she punished for this act?

| Father: Not at all 100 |
| Mother: Not at all 100 |
17) At that age when you told _, to be quiet or pick up something, did he/she obey?

Father: 26
Always       Quite Often     Sometimes     Rarely     Not at all
66         8          32         58         10

Mother: 70
Always       Quite Often     Sometimes     Rarely     Not at all
15         50         30         5

18) A child should obey their parents with strict obedience.

Father: 20
Always       Quite Often     Sometimes     Rarely     Not at all
70         10            50         30         5

Mother: 15
Always       Quite Often     Sometimes     Rarely     Not at all
20         50         30         5

19) Did you keep track of exactly where and what the child was doing?

Father: 8
Always       Quite Often     Sometimes     Rarely     Not at all
55         22         15

Mother: 73
Always       Quite Often     Sometimes     Rarely     Not at all
15         12

20) Did it upset you when he/she hung onto you and followed you around?

Father: 8
Always       Quite Often     Sometimes     Rarely     Not at all
8         38         32

Mother: 73
Always       Quite Often     Sometimes     Rarely     Not at all
23         50

21) Was the child upset generally when you left home and left him/her with someone else?

Father: 8
Always       Quite Often     Sometimes     Rarely     Not at all
8         30         42

Mother: 73
Always       Quite Often     Sometimes     Rarely     Not at all
8         8         50

22) When you were busy and _ demanded your attention, were you upset?

Father: 25
Always       Quite Often     Sometimes     Rarely     Not at all
54         16

Mother: 65
Always       Quite Often     Sometimes     Rarely     Not at all
8         8

23) Before starting kindergarten, did you teach him/her anything like reading words or writing the alphabet or telling time?

Father: 10
Always       Quite Often     Sometimes     Rarely     Not at all
50         40         30

Mother: 3
Always       Quite Often     Sometimes     Rarely     Not at all
26         46         3
24) When things ran smoothly between the children did you do anything to show them you noticed this?

Father: 25 33 33 4
Always Quite Often Sometimes Rarely Not at all
Mother: 12 23 46 11 8

25) How much of a problem did you have with shows of temper and angry shouting and that sort of thing below the age of five?

Father: 19 23 27 31
Always Quite Often Sometimes Rarely Not at all
Mother: 33 21 38 5 8

26) Did you discipline him/her when he/she was annoying and deliberately disobedient?

Father: 8 59 33
Always Quite Often Sometimes Rarely Not at all
Mother: 8 30 53 5 4

27) Some parents praise their children quite a bit when they are good, did you?

Father: 8 62 30
Always Quite Often Sometimes Rarely Not at all
Mother: 16 24 46 14

28) Some parents think that they ought to take good behavior for granted and there is no point in praising a child for it.

Father: 20 46 25 9
True Mostly True Sometimes True Rarely Not True
Mother: 8 8 42 20 22

29) While training did you ever hold up as a good example "your brother (or sister) does it this way and you should too!"

Father: 8 38 33 21
Always Quite Often Sometimes Rarely Not at all
Mother: 8 12 50 30

30) How often did you spank?

Father: 46 24 22 8
Always Quite Often Sometimes Rarely Not at all
Mother: 4 8 30 50 8
31) Did you ever use depriving of something as a way of disciplining?

Father: 12 58 30
   Always  Quite Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Not at all
Mother: 20 61 12 7

32) How often did you say that you were going to punish him/her and then for some reason you did not follow through?

Father: 4 67 25 4
   Always  Quite Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Not at all
Mother: 12 31 39 13 4

33) Did your husband/wife show affection to the child such as hugging and kissing and that sort of thing?

Father: 4 70 26
   Always  Quite Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Not at all
Mother: 4 54 15 20 7

34) In a situation where both husband and wife are there and the child had to be disciplined father usually did it.

Father: 16 45 35 4
   Always  Quite Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Not at all
Mother: 8 50 30 12

35) In a situation where both husband and wife are there and the child had to be disciplined mother usually did it.

Father: 15 40 25 20
   Always  Quite Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Not at all
Mother: 20 40 30 10

36) In general, did mother and father agree about the best way of handling the child?

Father: 46 46
   Always  Quite Often
Mother: 7 43 30 15

37) If you could think back to when you first discovered the pregnancy with____, how did you feel about it?

Father: 8 16 8 54 14
   Very Upset  Upset  Unconcerned  Happy  Very Happy
Mother: 16 16 54 14
38) From the standpoint of your financial condition and the ages of the other children, did you feel that this was a good time to have a baby?

Father: Yes 70 No 30
Mother: 50 50

Now I would like you to respond to the following statements. Please return to the present in your thinking and respond accordingly as you now view things.

39) Parents should encourage their children to bring friends home.

Father: Strongly Agree 25 Agree 58 Uncertain 17 Disagree 4
Mother: Strongly Disagree 34 Agrees 62

40) Children should be trained to do things for themselves as early in life as possible.

Father: Strongly Agree 34 Agree 66 Uncertain 4 Disagree 4
Mother: Strongly Disagree 23 Agree 73

41) Children of high school age should earn most of their own spending money.

Father: Strongly Agree 4 Agree 70 Uncertain 10 Disagree 16
Mother: Strongly Disagree 4 Agree 50 Uncertain 30 Disagree 16

42) Young people should obey their parents because they are their parents.

Father: Strongly Agree 13 Agree 67 Uncertain 16 Disagree 4
Mother: Strongly Disagree 85 Uncertain 11 Disagree 4
43) Parents should help their children with their homework if they need help.

Father: 4 88 4 4
Strongly Agree  Agree  Uncertain  Disagree
Mother: 12 80 8
Strongly Disagree

44) Parents should allow their children to make up their own minds as to what they will be when they grow up without trying to influence their decisions.

Father: 16 50 14 20
Strongly Agree  Agree  Uncertain  Disagree
Mother: 15 62 12 11
Strongly Disagree

45) If parents refrain from punishing a child, they will spoil him.

Father: 80 20
Strongly Agree  Agree  Uncertain  Disagree
Mother: 39 34 27
Strongly Disagree

46) A child's liberty should be restricted as to danger situations only.

Father: 16 25 59
Strongly Agree  Agree  Uncertain  Disagree
Mother: 16 34 38 12
Strongly Disagree

47) Good marks in school were important to you.

Father: 25 41 30 4
Strongly Agree  Agree  Uncertain  Disagree
Mother: 50 23 20 7
Strongly Disagree

48) Over the years would you say that ____ got along with his brothers and sisters?

Father: 16 16 58 10
Always  Quite Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Not at all
Mother: 19 27 46 8
49) Now about things that which affect the children directly. Does father generally make the decisions in your family.

Father: 16 Always 54 Quite Often 30 Sometimes Rarely 30 Not at all
Mother: 70 Always 25 Quite Often 5 Sometimes Rarely 5 Not at all

50) Does mother generally make the decisions in the family?

Father: 8 Always 34 Quite Often 50 Sometimes Rarely 8 Not at all
Mother: 16 Always 34 Quite Often 42 Sometimes Rarely 8 Not at all

51) Do you think as a parent that ____ takes after you more than ____?

Father: 4 Strongly Agree 15 Agree 19 Uncertain 19 Disagree 46
Mother: 4 Strongly Agree 27 Agree 23 Uncertain 23 Disagree 27

52) Over the years did you encourage ____ to prepare for a particular occupation?

Father: 28 Always 44 Quite Often 12 Sometimes Rarely 16 Not at all
Mother: 26 Always 36 Quite Often 12 Sometimes Rarely 26 Not at all

53) As to continuing education beyond high school, would you say that you:

a) Gave strong encouragement____, b) Gave some encouragement____, c) Never said much about it____, d) Better off going to work____ e) He/She was correct in quitting school and going to work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fathers</th>
<th>Mothers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) 54</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) 37</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) 4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) No answer given</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
54) The following is a list of traits of personality. Below each trait are five descriptive expressions. Please draw a line below whichever of the descriptions most nearly describe your child.

For statistics, see Table 4.

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

55) At this point I would like to ask your personal opinion. Why do you think your child dropped out of school?

See Table 17

56) Does he/she also think this is the reason? If not, what reason does he/she give?

See Table 17

57) Are you happy about what he/she thinks is important at the present time? Are there things that you wish he/she thought more about?

I wish he/she would think more about school and the future.

58) What do you think the future holds for your child?

a) Education

b) Occupation See Table 18

c) Social

59) Please make any other comments that you feel are important.
APPENDIX A

To the Student:

This is an anonymous questionnaire. It is part of a study to help us gain meaningful information about young men and women who leave school early.

Male-Total 17  Female-Total 9  Single-All Married-None

1) How old were you on your last birthday? 16-21 range

2) What grade did you leave school?  10th 8 11th 58 12th 34 Other ___

3) a. Are you working? Yes 80  No 20

   b) What kind of work do you do? See Table 6

4) What kind of work do you think you will be doing in 10 years or so? 65% same as now.

5) a. Is your mother living? Yes - 100%

   b. Is your father living? Yes 92% (2 deceased)

   c. With whom do you live? Parental home - 100%

6) Are your parents separated or divorced? No (100%)

7) What is your father's occupation? See Table 6

8) Did mother generally work outside of the home? Yes 92%  No 8%

   If yes, what is her occupation? See Table 6

9) Number of years of schooling finished by your father? See parents questionnaire, question 3

10) Number of years of schooling finished by your mother? See parents questionnaire, question 3
11) Numbers of brothers?  
1 - 68%  
2 - 18%  
3 - 14%  

Numbers of sisters?  
1 - 60%  
2 - 18%  
3 - 22%  

Please rank them by age including yourself.  
See Table 16.

12) Which of these brothers and sisters left school prior to graduation:  
20%

13) Why do you suppose they left?  
Work - 40%  
Armed forces - 20%  
Drugs - 10%  
Don't know - 30%

14) a. Who do you think was your mother's favorite child?  
Oldest - 34%  
Youngest - 76%  

b. Who do you think was your father's favorite child?  
Oldest - 84%  
Youngest - 16%  

15) Which two individuals were most opposed to your leaving school?  
Father_Mother_Relative_Friend_Teacher_Other  
Father and Mother - 46%  
Father and Friends - 12%

16) What circumstances or incident made you decide to stop your formal education?  
See Table 17

17) Do you think you were right in leaving school at the time you did?  
Yes - 50%  No - 50%
18) Did your family encourage and help in your plans for a job, or in school plans?

**Father:**

Very Often15  Often42  Sometimes23  Rarely 4  Not at all 16

**Mother:**

Very Often11  Often34  Sometimes34  Rarely 7  Not at all 14

19) Did your parents oppose your choice of friends?

**Very Often12**  **Often12**  **Sometimes48**  **Rarely14**  **Not at all 14**

If they were opposed, what usually happened?

90% saw them secretly
10% stopped seeing them

20) If you needed help and advice to make a big decision, to whom would you go for that advice?

See Table 14

21) Do your parents appear to doubt whether you will be successful?

Yes - 77%  No - 23%

22) Generally, do you get along with your brothers and sisters?

**Very Often19**  **Often27**  **Sometimes30**  **Rarely20**  **Not at all 4**

23) Do you favor any one sibling in particular? If yes, who?

Yes - 27%  No - 73%

24) If you had a choice, how many brothers and sisters would you have preferred?

1 - 38%
2 - 33%
3 - 12%
None 17%
25) Would you prefer to be the oldest, middle or youngest child in a family?

Oldest - 42%
Middle - 27%
Youngest - 31%

26) When you needed help did you to to your older brother/sister?

Very Often ___ Often ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely ___ Not at all ___

27) When your younger brother/sister needs help does he/she come to you?

Very Often ___ Often ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely ___ Not at all ___

28) a. What did your mother want you to be?

She did not say - 80%

b. At what age did she make you aware of this?

29) a. What did your father want you to be?

He did not say - 85%

b. At what age did he make you aware of this?

30) a. Were you ever tutored? Yes - 10%

No - 90%

b. At what age and grade level.

1 - Age 10 - Grade 5
1 - Age 9 - Grade 4

31) a. Do you usually like to be somewhere else than home?

Yes - 88%  No - 12%

b. Where? Home - 12%

Friends - 42%

Traveling - 6%

Anywhere but home - 40%
32) Do high school students need to follow their parents' instructions even though friends advise them differently?

Very Often ___ Often ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely ___ Not at all ___

33) How important would you say your getting good grades was to your parents?

Very Important ___ Quite Important ___ Somewhat Important ___ Not Important ___

Don't Know ___

34) Which parent is more likely to praise you?

1) Father much more ___
2) Father somewhat more ___
3) Both about the same ___
4) Mother somewhat more ___
5) Mother much more ___

35) Which parent shows you more affection?

1) Father much more ___
2) Father somewhat more ___
3) Both about the same ___
4) Mother somewhat more ___
5) Mother much more ___

36) When your parents disagree, whose side are you usually on?

1) Father much more ___
2) Father somewhat more ___
3) Both about the same ___
4) Mother somewhat more ___
5) Mother much more ___

37) Which parent is it easier for you to talk to?

1) Father much more ___
2) Father somewhat more ___
3) Both about the same ___
4) Mother somewhat more ___
5) Mother much more ___
38) Would you say your childhood was a happy one?

Very Often 12 Often 43 Sometimes 33 Rarely 4 Not at all 8

39) When you are a father/mother yourself, would you try to prevent your child from dropping out of school?

Yes - 80% No - 20%

If yes, how would you do it?

See Table 19

40) Why did you drop out of school?

See Table 17

41) Would you return to school if you could?

Yes - 65% No - 35%
APPENDIX B

Many of the interviews were recorded on audiotape. Oftimes, the content was poignant, capturing a feeling and tone that was not easily revealed in the accumulation of the data.

Two samples have been transcribed and are included in this section.
APPENDIX B

Abstract of interview with female dropout - 17 years old:

Question: "Tell me, why did you drop out of school?"

(After some moments of silence). "Why don't you take your time and tell me in your own way?"

(More silence and finally, with a pained countenance, she spoke):

"I came to the high school in my sophomore year. I was generally unenthusiastic about school and was cutting classes pretty regularly. Classes were unproductive for me because I had difficulty concentrating on the teacher and found myself drifting off thinking about other things that were happening in my life. Sometimes, I would not go to classes because I felt it was a waste of time. At other times, going to class when I was very untogether emotionally was inconceivable. The classroom was tense and demanding, and respect for my own well-being many times took priority over going to classes and school. Some teachers might respond to this by saying, 'you could have asked to be excused.' I can't see even the most understanding teacher excusing me two or three times a week, so, I didn't go.

Some teachers and administrators feel that school is for learning only subject matter. I disagree. School
is many things, and plays an important part in emotional development. When I have problems it affects the whole entire system of the person and then I can't concentrate or work. Then, too, home situations are brought into school. I don't think teachers fully realize the atmospheres in a lot of homes. I know that for myself being home often creates so much tension and discord that my mind is almost totally pre-occupied and the comprehension of school work becomes impossible. What I'm trying to convey is that junior high and high school years are full of confusion and instability and change. I sometimes feel that adults tend to forget their teenage years because they were so painful--a lot of insecurity, intense emotions worrying about the present and the future. This is the time when one is confused about his own identity and is searching for answers in himself. One feels like he is falling down a mountain he is climbing, and everything is shaky and off balance. Parents, then, give either too much or too little freedom, too much or too little attention, which all seems equally destructive. I had very little freedom or privacy at home for a long time, and I retaliated by not going to school. But, I did this not only for revenge. I felt as though I was locked in a cage, and I could not live by someone else's rules and decisions. I felt as though there was no air to breathe. I felt like shouting, 'Hey, I'm not an animal,
Taking away someone's freedom is like taking away someone's natural energies that enable him to wander free to see and feel. It's like taking away growth and making one a baby again, I may need guidance but not control."

(Silence).
"And so, you dropped out?"
"Yes".
"What will you do now?"
"I don't know."

Interview with the mother of a 19 year old male dropout.

Question: "What does the future hold in store for him in areas of education, occupation and socially?"

"Well, I think he could go either way. He could end up in jail or get a hold of himself. If he lasts, I'm sure later on he will conform to the pattern of society and go back to school to learn some way to earn a living. I think he will conform even though he fights it because he wants things--expensive things. He worked as a gardener ten hours a day, killing himself, and he wasn't too happy about that. So, he decided to go back to school. He got up at ten each morning, made two or three classes, never showed up for gym, and finally dropped out again. It isn't that he can't do it, it's that he won't do it. He understands and tells me that without a high school diploma
he won't be able to do anything. He knows what is right, yet, he wastes his life. He set it up with the guidance counsellor to return last time and proceeded to waste the entire year. He did not receive any credits. At this point, I do not want him to return to school if he just wastes time and fails things again. I told him he should get a high school equivalency at night, and then go to a community college and learn some technical trade. I told him he can no longer lay around and have the best of both worlds. He must learn to earn! If he can't learn, he has to work at something--this laying around the house does nothing for him and increases my anger. I suggested that he leave the house. He is being handicapped at home and never will be independent. I told him to find his own place.

He was always dependent. He always hung onto my skirts and never ventured out on his own. He always wanted me to fight his battles, at first with the children in the neighborhood and then with his teachers. I did that for too many years--he is almost twenty now. I'm twice his age and I'm going back to school to become a nurse. It's ironic--I go to school four nights a week and he can't get up the energy to get a high school equivalency. As long as he stays home he is a negative force, a catalyst that keeps us all arguing. I can't remember anytime since his birth that the house was peaceful. He was colic and allergic and
cried from the word "go". I knew immediately that I was going to be "in" for it, and he gave it to me, and gave it to me. I was happy only when he went to school and left the house. You know, maybe all that I am telling you is not as dramatic as it sounds. I'm so angry with him now, that it distorts my recollections of the early years. I used to remember pleasantries, but, now I find them pushed deeper into my mind. Today his sister (16) and his brother (14) argue with him incessantly. It's hard to remember but they did get along once. I would like him out of the house for his sake, and mine.