

1-1-1971

The trapdoor effect : special education for inner-city schools.

John Peter Delaney

University of Massachusetts Amherst

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations_1

Recommended Citation

Delaney, John Peter, "The trapdoor effect : special education for inner-city schools." (1971). *Doctoral Dissertations 1896 - February 2014*. 2801.

https://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations_1/2801

This Open Access Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. It has been accepted for inclusion in Doctoral Dissertations 1896 - February 2014 by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. For more information, please contact scholarworks@library.umass.edu.

(c) John Peter Delaney 1971

All Rights Reserved

THE TRAPDOOR EFFECT:
SPECIAL EDUCATION FOR
INNER-CITY SCHOOLS

A dissertation presented

by

John Peter Delaney

Submitted to the Graduate School of the University

of Massachusetts

in partial fulfillment of the requirements of

the degree of

Doctor of Education

June 1971

Major Subject: Urban Education

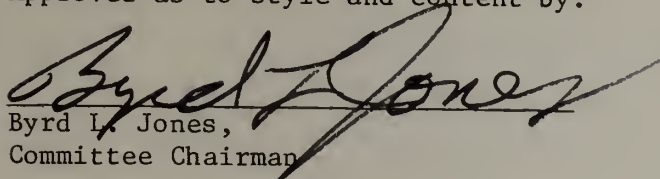
THE TRAPDOOR EFFECT:
INNER-CITY SPECIAL EDUCATION


A Dissertation

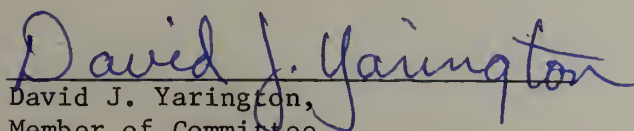
by

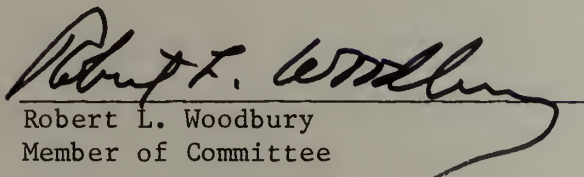
John Peter Delaney

Approved as to style and content by:


Byrd L. Jones,
Committee Chairman


Dwight W. Allen
Dean, School of Education


David J. Yarrington,
Member of Committee


Robert L. Woodbury
Member of Committee

June 1971

PLEASE NOTE:

Some Pages have indistinct
print. Filmed as received.

UNIVERSITY MICROFILMS

ABSTRACT

TRAPDOOR EFFECT:

SPECIAL EDUCATION FOR INNER-CITY SCHOOLS

(June 1971)

John P. Delaney, B.A. Providence College

M. Ed. University of Hartford

Directed by Byrd L. Jones, Ph. D.

This dissertation, "Special Education for Inner-City Schools", attempts to describe relevant issues faced by teachers of urban retarded children. Considerations include method of placement of children in classes for mentally retarded persons; an examination of the values and goals of self-contained classes; an exploration of some alternative educational approaches to self-contained classes; and an outline of a new curriculum in the teaching area.

In the initial chapter entitled "Introduction to Special Education", historical aspects governing concepts, and treatment procedures are discussed. Emphasis is placed on that segment of the special population which is not neurologically impaired but judged to be functioning on an academic level with organically impaired persons.

A further portent of this chapter is an examination of non-hereditary, non-organic factors contributing to the state of supposed mental impairment. Conclusions as to the origin of these causes are forwarded. Primarily discussed are teacher expectancy, teacher motivation, and

the use of standardized intelligence tests.

Chapter II, "Institutional Racism", is concerned with various methods and demonstrations of racial prejudice directed against non-white children which may result in their placement in classes for mentally retarded children. Contained in this chapter is a discussion of the validity and effect of the label "disadvantaged" when placed on inner-city children.

Chapter III, "Case Studies", is a presentation of histories of nine students contained in a single urban special class for the mentally handicapped. In this chapter may be found evidence for contentions forwarded in the two preceding chapters. Clearly evident is the existence of multiple problems unrelated to organic impairment. Many of the difficulties experienced by the children discussed here are the results rather than the cause of labeling.

Chapter IV, "An Evaluation of the Self-Contained Class", is an in-depth examination of the predominant method of education in urban areas for non-organically impaired children. Inherent in the discussion of urban special educational systems is the larger system of urban education. Also, examined is the effect of special class placement on the youngsters and families involved. Academic and vocational goals of such programs are also discussed.

Chapter V, "The Differences Between Functional and Brain Damaged Children Placed in Special Education Classes for the Mentally Retarded", is essentially a study designed to determine how children

thus contained perceive themselves.

One result of this study is the theory of the "trapdoor" effect by which children are made "retarded" by special educational systems. Included, also, is a study determining achievement motivation of contained and non-contained "functionally" retarded children.

Chapter VI, "Program Alternates for Special Education", examines innovative programming for two specific groups within the special system. Proposed is the idea that self-contained classrooms as such be abolished and a "resource-approach" and a "challenge" approach be substituted.

The final chapter, "Urban Special Education", outlines the need for the creation of a category, within the urban system, of urban special education specialist. Initially an urban special education teacher must be a good urban teacher. In addition the person must possess experiences and skills to deal with both legitimate and pseudo retardates. How this can be accomplished is the content of the final chapter.

"There are only two things wrong
with Special Education for the
mentally handicapped: it isn't
special and it isn't education:"

Alice Metzner

To my wife Kathleen, for the
love, moral support, and
understanding which she unfal-
teringly exercised during the
past year, I dedicate this volume.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express sincere gratitude to the members of my committee for their interest, co-operation, encouragement and support: Dean Earl Siedman, Dean Robert Woodbury and Dr. David Yarrington.

To Dr. Byrd Jones for his guidance, constructive criticisms, and encouragement throughout the development and execution of this dissertation, I offer particular thanks.

For continued guidance throughout my graduate studies at the University of Massachusetts, a note of thanks to Dr. Atron Gentry, Director of the Center for Urban Education.

To members of the Center for Urban Education, Billy Dixon, Diane Nolan, and Herbert Pierce for their efforts in my behalf in the areas of proofreading and correction and to Dr. Richard Lacey for his editorial comment, I extend my gratitude.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
	ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	vi
	LIST OF TABLES	ix
Chapter		
I	INTRODUCTION TO SPECIAL EDUCATION	1
	Historical Aspects	1
	Teacher Motivation	8
	Teacher Determination	11
	Intelligence Testing	16
II	INSTITUTIONAL RACISM	22
	The Tracking System	22
	The Non-White Cultures	27
	Adult-Child Interaction	32
III	CASE STUDIES	35
	Outside the Files	35
	The Children	36
IV.	AN EVALUATION OF THE SELF-CONTAINED CLASS	47
	Academic Curriculum and Vocational Training	47
	Special Education Teachers	53
	Community School Relationship	60
V.	THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FUNCTIONAL AND BRAIN DAMAGED CHILDREN PLACED IN SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASS FOR THE MENTALLY RETARDED	66
	The Trapdoor Effect	66
	The Self-Concept Study	72
	Achievement Motivation Study	86

Chapter		Page
VI	PROGRAM ALTERNATES FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION	92
	The Resource Room	92
	Project Challenge	98
VII	URBAN SPECIAL EDUCATION	112
	Needs of Special Education Teachers	112
	Components of a Special Education Teacher Training Program	116
VIII	BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY	122

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
I	Self-Concept and Mental Age of Children Classified Educable Mentally Retarded	83
II	Self-Concept and Months in Special Class of Non-Organically Impaired Children Classified Educable Mentally Retarded	84
III	Self-Concept and Months in Special Class of Organically Impaired Children Classi- fied Educable Mentally Retarded	85
IV	Achievement Motivation Study	87
V	Project Challenge	108
VI	Project Challenge-Financial Report	109
VII	D. V. R. Financial Involvement	110
VIII	Refinishing Supplies	111

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO SPECIAL EDUCATION

Historical Aspects

In the spectrum of mental retardation labels of affliction are placed on organic retardates in an attempt to describe the degree of their handicap. "Trainable" and "educable" are general labels for the two main degrees of affliction. Typically, individuals are described or defined according to standard intelligence quotient scores. A trainable person displays measurable brain damage and legally has an intelligence quotient below 50. The educable group displays visible brain damage, but to a less degree than the trainable group. Intelligence quotient scores range between 50 and 75.

There is however, a group of children who exhibit no neurological impairment, but are judged by school officials to achieve at the same intellectual level as brain damaged educable children. This group is referred to as functionally, environmentally, or "psuedo" retarded. The non-organically impaired may comprise 75-99 percent of all urban special education classes for the educable mentally retarded.¹

¹L. M. Dunn, "Educable Mentally Retarded Children", Exceptional Children in the Schools, ed. L. M. Dunn (New York, 1963), quoted by Rodger Hunley, Poverty and Mental Retardation: A Casual Relationship, (New York: Random House, 1969), p. 45.

These children exist today because of the public school systems which create them. A disproportionate number of "psuedo" retardates are non-white. The placement of these children in special education classes occurs because of the system of labeling which is widely practiced in most urban public schools. This practice is racially biased in origin, and used to segregate the poor, non-communicating non-white children from the academic mainstream.²

Historically, mentally handicapped persons have been regarded as family and social burdens, consumers rather than producers. Their education and treatment of the past 300 years has perpetuated this non-productivity. Much of this negative treatment is traceable to either misconceptions concerning the source of the problem of organic brain damage or invalid assessment of the capabilities of these people.

The most damaging myths concerning retarded persons are the misconceptions about the origin of mental impairment. For a long time educators viewed mental retardation as a disease, and/or punishment by The Supreme Being on the parents for cruelty or supposed wrongdoing. In truth, legitimate mental subnormality, while it may be the effect of a disease, is not of itself a disease and is therefore not curable. Organic impairment as a result of Divine intervention is not generally considered plausible. Organic retardation is caused

²Louis Knowles and Kenneth Prewitt, eds., Institutional Racism in America (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1969), p. 38.

by infection, physical insult to the brain, organ dysfunction of the mother or child, poison, and heredity.

Before 1900, the organically handicapped were linked with the mentally ill. Young children were hidden in bedrooms, attics, and cellars by their parents or guardians. They had little or no actual contact with society. As adults, these people were committed to insane asylums or prisons for real or imaginary misconduct.

Between 1890 and 1921, at least thirty state institutions for the retarded were established throughout the United States.³ The basic rationale for these constructions and their philosophies was that the retarded must be protected from society and society from the retarded. Mental retardation was considered chiefly a medical problem. Custodial care and seclusion appeared to be the answer. Experts assumed mentally retarded persons were incapable of acquiring academic knowledge and so education for them was not a primary concern.

In the late 1920's and early 1930's many parents of the retarded formed groups and organizations. These organizations exerted pressure on institutions and state legislators to make positive commitments to the education of their children. In response educators attempted to adopt prevailing educational philosophies to the retarded.

³F. Porter Sargent, Directory for Exceptional Children (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1965), pp. 337-398.

In the second decade of the twentieth century, an attempt was made to introduce the "unit method of learning". This philosophy maintained that all education in general has to be involved directly with the community if it is to succeed in motivating the individual and in preparing him for living in the community.⁴ This curriculum ideal, proposed, in essence, the reintegration of the retarded into society. While no data on the particular attitude of the at-large community toward such programs exists, it is reasonable to assume they were not in favor of the return of rejected persons. Secondly, with retardation at a low priority level, it can be assumed there was little money available for personnel and program development.

In the late 1930's and early 1940's the theory of "watered-down" curriculum held sway. In essence, this system advocated the reduction of regular academic subjects to a level where the retarded person could learn. Inherent in this theory are several faults. There is, for example, an aura of "golessness". The learner need not accomplish any academic level either to remain in school or to "pass". The learner needed only to advance to a chronological age at which education would cease for him. Another facet is that much irrelevant academic data was thrust upon the retarded, to the exclusion of pertinent socialization and vocational skills.

⁴John Cawley and A. J. Papanikou, "The Educable Mentally Retarded," in Methods in Special Education, ed. by N. Haring and R. Schiefelbusch (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), p. 78.

In the early 40's the ideal was that of handwork sessions. Special education programs emphasized manual activities. Under the guise of education, handwork sessions such as weaving, ceramics and knitting classes were formed to offer some type of activity. The belief that retarded persons were incapable of academic learning still existed. Meaningful vocational training and experiences for these children were virtually unknown.

In the late 1940's and early 1950's informing society about the facets of retardation made rapid progress. Legislation was passed and most states instituted incentive or mandatory laws concerning society's obligation to educating these children. Reaction to these laws generally took one of two forms. In the more rural areas of states, cooperative measures were taken. For example, five small towns may have combined resources in one location to provide a single class for retarded pupils. These, by the nature of the population, tended to be organically impaired children. In urban areas, however, numerous classes were formed. As the pool of professionals and existing methods were institutionally developed, cities tended to grasp the existing model--the institution. Past institutionalization theory manifested itself in the self-contained special class.

When servicing an organically impaired population, self contained classes provide a distinct advantage over both the institution and regular classes. In the area of socialization, the public school class youngsters were allowed contact, albiet minimal, with

the regular school population. These classes also provided a relief for parents who found this arrangement not as emotionally trying as institutionalization. The establishment of public school special classes brought the retarded youngsters into contact with supportive personnel independent of the institution. Potentially, these classes opened areas for vocational and training possibilities not available through the institutions. With regard to the relationship of "regular" and "special" class, the basic philosophy when practiced is sound. The class removes the child from a failure situation. Additionally the youngster is protected from much ridicule by "normal" classmates.

The nexus of the problem of adaptation of institutional ideals to public schools is the dichotomy between the actual and supposed populations of the urban special class. In a single class for the mentally retarded, as many as six separate disabilities may be represented. To assume one set of educational criteria is valid for such a diverse group is to assume all children are the same and will react to the same stimuli and methods.

As an example of the uniformity of treatment of institutionalized and public school retarded persons consider the extremes of special containment for the retarded. In public school classes for the educable mentally retarded few real academic lessons are attempted. Academic activities are generally a matter of personal preference on the part of the teacher. Supportive services are

minimal or non-existent.

Similarly, the residents of the "back wards" in many state institutions for the retarded are held in custodial captivity. Any attempts at even the most basic skills such as toilet-training, dressing, self-feeding and speech are generally at the option of the attendant. Consequently when a severely retarded person grovels on the floor, is unable to control his bowels or will not wear clothers, it is assumed he cannot.

Philosophically many of the guiding principles and methods utilized in institutions may be accurate and acceptable for public school classes for organically impaired youngsters. Questions arise concerning their validity when applied to youngsters who are not organically impaired yet contained in the same classes.

Relevancy of life and happiness should be viewed in terms of the individual. Goals set for a "normal" population are not necessarily feasible or desirable for a special population. The vast majority of brain injured and organically impaired persons contained in public school classes for the mentally retarded are potentially employable.

The duty and responsibility of educational systems is to provide the training needed for the legitimately retarded to obtain and maintain positions in the working world. In order to do this the present system of "watered-down academics" needs to be reoriented to include intensive functional academics and vocational training.

In the area of "pseudo" retardation, the containment procedure

must be discontinued. These children are the recipients of treatment usually afforded organically impaired children. Any vocational orientation they may possess is generally the result of the intervention of an outside agency and does not usually represent the goal of the school program. These youngsters ideally should be placed in regular grades rather than be punished for poor teaching or other problems over which they have little control.

The lack of diverse curriculum and methods in the special class is at once the greatest potential advantage and the greatest possible disadvantage to the youngsters contained therein. In lieu of an established curriculum the teacher is fairly free to determine class activities. If properly trained and realistic about goal setting for individuals in the class, academic and vocational experiences can be beneficial. If, however, the teacher is trained "in the classical manner" with a focus on organically-impaired educable children, non-education and mutual frustration may follow.

Teacher Motivation

Motivation for entering the field of education of the mentally retarded may be as varied as the number of persons engaged in teaching. However, several reasons or combinations of reasons become immediately evident from teacher observation and conversation. Classically, most reasons are subjectively altruistic at the start, although some become frustrated ultimately.

Among the idealistic rationales for entering the area are non-teaching experiences with retarded persons, as well as a general desire "to do something" for disenfranchised groups. Among the former a significant number of persons have witnessed the non-education and non-training of retarded relatives and friends. These persons enter the profession with a determination to alter the situation. Among the latter is feeling that, given proper training and guidance, the situation of children destined to nowhere can be changed.

A number of reasons for entering the field which do not particularly reflect humanitarian motivation also exist. A large number of urban special education teachers entered the discipline as permanent substitutes. This, in essence, indicated that no qualified person was willing to accept the assignment. Still other persons were requested by school personnel to transfer from "the regular grades" to special education. The rationale for this is readily apparent. If a good teacher has rapport with regular grade children, that teacher should be good with children labeled special.

Two additional rationales exist. Many cities offer a substantial pay differential for teaching "difficult" children. Additionally, the job of teaching special education in the city is only as demanding as the teacher desires to make it. Because of the underlying dictum "keep them quiet and invisible", the special education teacher who wishes to, can draw a regular salary for startlingly little effort.

Whatever the combination of factors that cause entry of persons into the field of special education, certain situations occur almost universally within three years of the initial year of teaching. The first and most frustrating occurrence is the loss of perspective with regard to academic achievement of the contained children. Faced with a spectrum of intellectual and behavioral capabilities, the teacher tends to regard the least handicapped children as "gifted". This leads to the dual problem of at once crediting the child with more intellectual ability than he possesses and has the social effect of considering the child as a "big fish in a small pond".

A second possible effect of long association with labeled children is the alteration of basic perception of children in general. Like the policeman who views persons with an eye for their crime potential or the ambulance driver who views people in terms of potential accidents, many special education teachers view children in terms of their disability. Many teachers tend to view retarded children in terms of the degree of retardation rather than in terms of their "child-ness".

After a number of years many special education teachers come to believe they are the only ones who know about or care about "their children". This feeling is the result of the teacher generally being left isolated with the children, and being the sole provider of "special services". An air of maternalism or paternalism can pervade the classroom. Teachers may have a tendency to be jealous of their

charges and threatened by other personnel, thereby adding to the existing isolation.

The result of a prolonged special education teaching experience may result in any of three outlets. The teacher may resign all special duties to teach a "regular" class or leave teaching. The teacher may cooperate with the system and lose much of the idealism with which she entered, or the teacher may withdraw her class from any association with the "normal" population of the school. Because of the low priority, status, and attendant difficulties of the field, few retain perspective, dedication, and the ability to remain objective about their charges.

Teacher Determination

Kenneth Clark has observed "stimulation and teaching based on positive expectation seem to play an even more important role in a child's performance in school than does the community environment from which he comes."⁵ This says in effect that the quality of teaching provided largely determines a child's future. A high teacher expectation is crucial for poor inner-city children who lack many of the supportive services and parental expectations usually found in middle-class homes.

Numerous studies have indicated that many teachers of inner-

⁵Kenneth Clark, Dark Ghetto (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), p. 132.

city children do not have positive expectations toward their pupils. Research relating to teacher expectation need not rest solely on Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson which has been questioned by Thorndike.⁶ There are, in addition to common sense, several other studies. Among them is an incident related by Arthur Pearl in which a computer in Scotland mixed up the "tracking" of "bright" and "slow" students.⁷ The result was that after one year the children had largely reversed their achievement levels. In another study black and white teachers were polled regarding their expectations toward their students.⁸ The results confirmed acceptance by the black teachers who generally perceived the children as children. The white teachers on the other hand tended to stereotype the children as "lazy", "dull", and "disinterested".

Much of the problem of teacher expectation is due to teacher training offered by Schools of Education. This training is generally conducted as though all children were white-middle-class. Little knowledge is given to teachers concerning cultures other than their own. Their training tends to reenforce that which they have experienced all their lives. When inner-city children fail to measure up to the standards the teachers sets, they become "slow" or "non-success oriented".

⁶Robert Rosenthal, Pygmalion in the Classroom (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1968). Robert L. Thorndike, "Review of Pygmalion in the Classroom", in Teacher Educational Record, 70, May, 1969, pp. 805-807.

⁷Knowles and Prewitt, p. 38.

⁸Ibid., p. 43.

The present response on the part of the teacher is to not challenge the child. This is a variation of the idea of the "watered-down" curriculum discussed above. In effect, this treatment causes children to realize they are being treated as intellectually inferior and further causing them to respond in a manner to verify this belief.

Even if the teacher does not consciously discriminate in her expectations, she may manifest a discriminatory attitude in other ways. Commonly heard in ghetto schools is the phrase "I only have him five hours a day". This excuse absolves the teacher from any guilt as to the academic condition of the student. If the overworked "deprivity of the home" reverses gains made in school the teacher is not responsible. Not strangely, teachers who take time to know the parents and homes of their students do not find many such reversing effects there. To the contrary, they generally find parents eager to learn how to aid in the academic excellence of their children.

A definition of behavior in itself summarizes the necessity of positive reinforcement for inner-city children. "Behavior is the result of motivation, language proficiency, expectancy of success, anxiety preferred strategies for perceptual analysis, and degree of evaluation to name only a few elements."⁹

Most teachers, however, use positive reinforcement inconsistently. Negative attitudes regarding the child's abilities to learn,

⁹ John Conger, Paul Mussen, Jerome Kagan, Child Development and Personality (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), pp. 588-589.

especially to verbalize academically, often contribute to negative feelings which are apparent in observing teacher-child relationships. Anxiety levels of children increase with repeated failures at school tasks, and motivation for attempting to learn diminishes.

Such students are often labeled from Kindergarten age as behavioral problems. By first grade another label is attached regarding reading-readiness. Reading groups categorize him according to his perceived abilities--a classification system of which most first graders are well aware. The primary teacher's initial recognition of the child's "slow learning patterns" determine teaching practices, which often result in the child's rapid decline of motivation and ability. By third grade the child is labeled as "retarded".

There are of course exceptions to this model. Teachers with understanding, patience, awareness, and high degrees of ability to interact with deprived students can increase the child's self-concept and motivation to learn. If this type of teaching persists the child improves academically and psychologically to a level of standard abilities or better. More often than not, "Schools in deprived communities have a disproportionately high number of substitutes and unlicensed teachers. Some of the classes in these schools have as many as ten different teachers in a single school year."¹⁰

¹⁰Kenneth Clark, Dark Ghetto (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), p. 132.

The outcome is devastating: Black and Puerto Rican children cannot identify with one adult figure. Teaching practices are extremely varied. New routines add to the frustration and anxiety level. Poor teaching practices and disciplinary tactics are used. Finally, the child suffers and his academic calendar is reduced to a few weeks of accomplished learning.

The physical school setting and supplies used in the classrooms are important to the child's learning. The depressive setting and overcrowded classrooms in which most urban children are placed signify that the academic environment is comparable to that of the underprivileged home. Psychologically this type of visual surrounding contributes nothing positive to the student. Likewise, the reading materials used in ghetto urban areas are not motivating to children. Most books are of the standard "Dick and Jane" type which portray lifestyles of the middle to upper class neighborhoods of white children. Again, the child is unable to identify for it is difficult to relate to experiences without previous associations. Workbook materials are also outmoded and express little familiar to the Black, Puerto Rican, Chicano or poverty area whites. Not only does the child fail to comprehend the contents of such matter, but his self-concept is assaulted by the feeling of being left out, different, and alone.

In summation, the environment and adult models to which the low socio-economic pre-schooler is exposed, the limitations placed on his five sensory organs, and his lack of nutrition and medical

attention handicap his potential as a student. His motivation, self-concept and emotional stability are damaged. The urban school's system of education are as foreign to the poor as another nation's language and school system would be to American children.

The "system" expects the underprivileged to enter school with the same ability to vocalize, score adequately on intelligence tests, and learn to read along with his middle and upper class counterparts. In truth, underprivileged children need exceptional teachers, tutoring and added educational equipment. The necessary opportunities must be offered at the earliest possible age. This realistic approach to the problem is not available on a large scale.

Intelligence Testing

The major criterion for labeling children as "educable mentally retarded" is an intelligence quotient score derived from one of the individual standard intelligence tests. In reviewing intelligence testing three components must be separated: data used as criteria for testing and relevancy to the pupil being tested, competency of the instructor to administer the test and pre-disposition of the tester in relating instruction to the student, test result, interpretation of scores, and measurement of the child's academic potential.

Intelligence tests which are primarily verbal in content penalize the child whose language and speech are different. To use a tool, which the child has insufficient skill to manipulate, as the gauge by which to judge his intellectual capacity can result in nothing

other than an inaccurate evaluation of the intellect. Supposedly non-verbal tests are often given orally so that interpretation of oral instruction is necessary in order to achieve. A sufficient number of trained examiners are not available. In fact, children of many school systems are not referred for individual examinations unless they are well below average in academic or behavioral areas. Even then, tests which are said to be non-verbal are given orally and demand interpretation of instructions from the pupil. These instructions are often misunderstood by the pupil for many non-verbal children have auditory shutoff limiting their ability to listen properly.

A survey of three New England cities (Boston, Springfield, Hartford) indicated that the primary tests administered to non-verbal children were the Stanford-Binet and the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC).

The revised Stanford-Binet scale is essentially verbal in nature and few performance items are included. Other objections to the Binet made by Cronbach include:

1. The scores on the Stanford-Binet do not reflect native capacity, but are affected by previous educational experiences.
2. The subtests are essentially verbal in nature.
3. Cultural differences affect the scores.
4. The scores at different levels represent different mental abilities.
5. The varying standard deviations affect the various intelligence quotient distributions.

6. The scores are affected by emotional involvements.
7. Specific mental abilities cannot be defined by use of the test.¹¹

These tests are culturally biased toward the white middle class. Lately, however, parents have been contesting the authority of the Stanford-Binet to categorize their children. Twenty one children from Boston's predominantly Black and Puerto Rican South End were diassified as retarded on the basis of intelligence quotient scores obtained from the Stanford-Binet test. These same children were later privately retested and it was found that more than half of them had been misclassified. This event occurred in 1970, Spanish speaking students are still being tested in English in many schools. The parents of these children filed a suit against the Boston School Board citing a guarantee of equal treatment contained in the Civil Right Act of 1871.¹²

The Wechsler Intelligence Scale is divided into two parts: the verbal scale--general information, general comprehension, arithmetic problems, similarities; vocabulary, and the non-verbal scale--picture completion, picture arrangement, block design, object assembly, and coding, Although the second section of the WISC

¹¹L. J. Cronbach, as quoted by Max L. Hutt and Robert G. Gibby, The Mentally Retarded Child (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1969), pp. 257-261.

¹²F. J. Weintraub, Recent Influences of Law on the Identity and Placement of Children in Programs for the Mentally Retarded (Council for Exceptional Children: Mimeograph, 1971), p. 9.

is designated non-verbal, the instructions are given orally. Also, this portion of the test is essentially an exercise in taking directions.

Examination of the competence of the examiner and his ability to administer the test and determine by measurement the child's ability is necessary. In Connecticut, the qualifications can be completed by anyone holding a B.A. or B.S. degree and completing six semester hours of administration techniques of the Stanford-Binet. This is one reason why the Stanford-Binet is so widely used by public schools.

The examiner may be biased before testing is started, since he has been permitted to study the cumulative folder of the student, which contains comments and recommendations of past performances for teachers. The principal and present teacher usually complete forms which describe emotional and intellectual performance of the child. These determinations are bound to be negative statements if the teacher wants the child out of the classroom. The examiner's limited experience and qualifications may render an attitude of prejudice against the child prior to the examination. Many students sense a lack of confidence in the examiner and may be aware of the reason for the test itself. Anxiety levels can run high and influence performance. The attitude of the examiner may also influence the motivation of the child, especially if the child is pre-disposed to failure. Finally, the evaluation of response is subjective on the part of the examiner. While no statistic is readily available on "tester toward testee" attitudes, an

example from a Springfield school teacher exemplifies the experiences of several special education teachers interviewed:

One morning the examiner called me out to the hall. She had the test results of those special education pupils who had been tested. She wanted to discuss the results of one child in particular. That was Pat.

I was quite surprised that her score on the Stanford-Benet was 85. In discussing Pat and her performance the examiner said to me, "There were many of Pat's answers that could have gone either way, but I decided to call them wrong." Further comments made by the examiner convinced me that she lacked even the least amount of sensitivity to the pupils that she had tested at our school. I say this because had Pat scored only five more points, she would have achieved a score which would have warranted placement in a regular class. The tester was aware of this as well as I.¹³

Despite evidence indicating intelligence scores are contaminated with racially biased, culturally directed irrelevant data, the urban system does allow them to serve as measurements for future academic potential, as well as a means to categorize children. The "tracking system" or ability grouping serves to place children in classes populated with peers of equal potential. The theory appears to be that bright children stimulate one another and average or slow learners should not have to compete with them. The hypothesis is not factual and indeed the "tracking system" serves an altogether different purpose, as stated by Knowles and Prewitt: "Ability groupings are used to maintain segregated classrooms in desegregated schools."¹⁴

¹³Marlene Rodrequiz, "Crisis in Education: The Disadvantaged" (Term Paper, University of Massachusetts, 1970), p. 12.

¹⁴Knowles and Prewitt, p. 37.

These ability groups, not strangely, range from almost totally black at the bottom to totally white at the top. The special education group is, of course, a separate entity below E. Tracking is another means of labeling children. The end result is too often apparent: when in secondary grades, students categorized as slow learners (80-95 I. Q.) drop out of school. Reasons for leaving school most frequently given are, "lack of interest, inappropriate curriculum, and inability to maintain acceptable grades."¹⁵

Faulty expectation, inferior materials and facilities, pre-determination of the children's abilities, and the use of irrelevant instruments to judge his potential are some of the causes for failure within the urban system. Often times the result is eventual containment of children in special education classes. These classes are not designed to deal with the population they now contain. The history of custodial, rather than educational, treatment of the retarded has reached its lowest limit by artificially manufacturing mental deficient.

¹⁵Miles to Go (report of the Connecticut Mental Retardation Project Report, March, 1966), p. 130.

CHAPTER II

INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

The Tracking System

The genesis of the recognition of "Pseudo" or functional retarded non-white children from low socio-economic backgrounds is related to the fact that a significant proportion of these children are not organically handicapped, yet comprise the largest statistical group within urban special education classrooms. In contrast, the suburban special education classes are populated with middle and upper class, predominately white, organically impaired children.

Although educators are aware of the differences which exist between organic and non-organic handicapped, these differences are seldom given serious consideration when placing the latter in urban special education classrooms. The criteria for placement of the "pseudo" retardates in these classes are: underachievement in relation to peers of the same school grade, low achievement on standard intelligence tests, lack of motivation, and/or repeated demonstrations of emotional instability. Special education classrooms are in fact "catch-alls" for problem students. These urban classes are a means of alleviating the regular classrooms of underachievers and disruptive personalities. Such placements are the final expression of prejudice

by schools authorities which can condemn the child to an academic experience which may rob him of any potential for realizing his capabilities. This practice is consistent with the American system of institutional racism.

Prejudice has as one of its basic tenets the systematic rejection of a group or sub-group which is deemed inferior by another group. A conscious effort is made to keep the two groups distinct and in a hierarchy of goodness. Daniels and Kitano hold that the American system of institutional racism has been so ingested by the white American public that they tend to view all matters of race as a two category system: whites - superior, and non-whites - inferior. They contend that this general belief pervades all American institutional ideals.¹

Knowles and Prewitt amplify this belief by noting that in order to maintain the system it is necessary that it be practiced and reinforced by social structures. The most effective methods of "race control" are found in urban public schools.²

The urban educational system in general and the urban system of special education in particular are instruments designed for the

¹Roger Daniels and Harry Kitano, American Racism (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1970), p. 5.

²Louis Knowles and Kenneth Prewitt, eds., Institutional Racism in America (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1969), p. 21.

preservation of institutional racism. Prejudice by nature demands that a hierarchy be established to prevent interaction between the "in group" and "out group". The various populations of the "college bound" group and the "dropout" group in urban high schools attest to the system's effectiveness.

The labeling or tracking system tends to create a self-fulfilling prophecy. Together they guarantee white dominance in American education. These processes activate what might be termed as a domino effect within non-white societies. The initial disenfranchisement of minority group adults in policy making and controlling functions within the public schools bring about a fear and resentment toward the system. This gives way to a certain helplessness concerning their ability to change the system to fit their needs. These feelings of despair result in the acceptance of inferior standards which in turn create non-productivity and disillusionment on the part of the student. Disenchantment and the inability of the school to act as an aid in uplifting the economic and social standards of the student follows. The student may then drop out of school. Without the necessary tools, the student cannot obtain good employment and becomes further disenfranchised from the system. This cycle demonstrates what white society has held all along--he is inferior. His social and academic standards cannot possibly adjust, nor reach the demands of middle class white society.

For the past decade it has been fashionable to refer to children

from inner-city areas as "culturally deprived". This terminology explicitly states the basic concept of racism: there are two societies, one superior (white) and one inferior (non-white). The ideal further suggests that those of the inferior culture should strive to become acculturated to the superior society, thus denying their own culture. Attempts to force children to cooperate with this system may result in "...damage to personality--self-doubt, self-hate, impulsiveness and often superstitious behavior, a resignation to fate and lower status".³ These damages, not coincidentally, are characteristics of "pseudo" retarded children.

The view of inner-city children as disadvantaged is a demonstration of the lack of knowledge of non-white cultures and an attempt to salve guilty consciences by denying the failure of the schools. In practice it is the naive mistaking of the effects of racism for the causes of academic failures.

A series of rationales are used to explain away the causes of non-achievement of inner-city children in the schools. These generally take three trends, the instability of the family, the negative effects of the environment, and the psychological adoptability of learning.

Much of the current literature tends to portray American

³ Roger Daniels and Harry Kitano, p. 21.

Negro families as disrupted, poverty stricken and matriarchial. Andrew Billingsly⁴ and E. Franklin Frazier⁵ disagree sharply with these concepts: Billingsly aptly demonstrates "misconceptions concerning who the poor are in relation to Negro society both old and new and representative of the professions; forty percent are of middle class society and represent skilled workers, the remainder percentage figure is divided between the working and non-working poor, both skilled and unskilled laborers."⁶ He sharply differentiates between the various levels of the lower class, indicating that only twelve and one half percent of American Negroes fall into the economic model which is forwarded as "typical" of the Black poor.

Similarly the misconceptions regarding the number of one parent families is blown out of proportion. There are four times as many white one parent families (four million) as there are Black one parent families (one million) in the United States. Billingsly suggests that the myth of the matriarchy exists because of the desire of white Americans to believe the fallacy.

⁴Andrew Billingsly, Black Families in White America (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1968).

⁵E. Franklin Frazier, The Negro Family In The United States (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939).

⁶Andrew Billingsly, p. 123.

The Non-white Cultures

In opposition to social scientists who feel that the American Negro should be encouraged to become acculturated to the white American life style Billingsly states:

Social scientists who have recently discovered the Negro family have not yet produced a study of that 75 percent of Negro families who have stable marriages, or that half of Negro families who have managed to pull themselves into the middle class, or that 90 percent of all Negro families who are self-supporting, or that even larger portion who manage to keep out of trouble, often despite the grossest kinds of discrimination and provocation. It would be very instructive indeed to know how two-thirds of all Negro families with less than \$2,000 annual income in 1966, could manage to hold themselves together and meet the American test of family stability. For surely that is the statistic which needs explaining, rather than the minority of poor families where the man disappears in order to let the family survive economically. In addition, some understanding of how this majority of Negro families manages can help provide clues for the rehabilitation of other families, and at the same time can enlighten the society about the problems these Negro families still face.⁷

Generally any propositions forwarded concerning the non-white American's adaptability of learning are falsely postulated and tend toward circular reasoning.

...because of his slum family and environment he (the disadvantaged child) arrives at school two years educationally retarded before he begins. In the crowded classroom of the first three grades he does not learn how to read, write and count.⁸

⁷Andrew Billingsly, p. 123.

⁸Miles to Go (report of the Connecticut Mental Retardation Project, March, 1966), p. 128.

Fully developed and extended this quote typifies many of the problems concerned with accepting the "disadvantaged" theory. The theories behind the term "disadvantaged" work something like the following reasoning: Because of environment the child is retarded academically upon entering school. School conditions do not eradicate this initial setback, therefore the retardation becomes more severe. Retarded children cannot do very well academically. No attempt should be made to overburden defective intellects, therefore the curriculum should be scaled to their level. Some children, after eight years in school cannot read. Culturally deprived children cannot read, therefore these children are culturally deprived.

An initial difficulty with accepting the disadvantaged theory is that the beholder is the victim of his own training, background, prejudices, and fears. He tends to view the child through several screens--background, training, bias, myths, and fears. Lack of appreciation for what the appraiser sees may in a large part be due to what he expects to see. Stated simply it is theoretically possible that inner-city children have as large a vocabulary as the teacher may not be able to communicate on more than superficial level. If this is the case, the mores of society then state the teacher is correct in her language use and the child is non-verbal. Numerous legal cases conducted recently have amply demonstrated this point.

Another major tenet of the disadvantage theory concerns itself with the physical dwelling place of the child in formative years.

"Culturally disadvantaged environments seem conducive to producing and maintaining progressive retardation in cognitive (thinking, reasoning, and conceptualization) development and intelligence."⁹

Educational theorists avoid the larger question of why people live in ghettos. Without belaboring the "why" of ghetto existence some explanation of the factors leading to the containment of persons in substandard housing areas are noted:

The impoverishment of the black man stems from long standing discrimination. Because of school segregation, he was offered an inferior education. Because of discrimination, he was hired for only the most menial jobs, which permitted him to purchase only the bare essentials of life, if that.¹⁰

The non-white persons of this country have been denied the tools and skills necessary to leave the slums. Restrictions and labor union policies, have ensured their lack of upward mobility. In short, lack of well paying jobs and ghetto existence are directly tracable to this country's history of racism toward non-white citizens. Lack of generally available higher education as well as good educational systems continue the cycle.

Daniels and Kitano state two possible explanations beyond economics and education.¹¹ Initially, the "out group" may be forced to

⁹Basil Bernstein, as quoted by Paul Mussen, John Conger and Jerome Kagan, Child Development and Personality (New York: Harper and Row, 1969) pp. 311-314.

¹⁰Robert Liston, The American Poor (New York: Dell, 1970), pp. 122-132.

¹¹Roger Daniels and Harry Kitano, p. 24.

reside in a specific dwelling. The substandard housing and ghetto existence of the poor presents the child's initial limitation. Yet other facts should be considered by those standing in judgement. In what way is the location of the child the initial limitation? Perhaps only in the sense that the environment ill-prepares him to accrue the white middle class values and norms upon which he will later be tested by the "in group". The rationale for this appears to be the safety of the "in group" in terms of knowing the boundries over which the "out group" may not step.

Kenneth Clark¹² further contends that the ghetto is at once a trap and a cocoon. Here members of the "out groups" can find people with whom they identify. This gives the advantage to the group member by allieviating the necessity of battling daily to survive with members of the "in group". This cocoon effect has generally been distorted by white society to support the rationale for exclusion of non-whites as a demonstration of "those people seem happier by themselves".

Environmentalists also state that the poor child is auditorally deprived. "There is plenty of noise, but little of it has any meaning. Indeed, the environment of the slum not only inhibits verbal aptitude, it often fosters inattention as a means of survival."¹³

¹²Kenneth Clark, Dark Ghetto (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), p. 67.

¹³Bruce Catin, ed., Miles to Go, p. 108.

More to the point perhaps is a study conducted by May Mira. In her work she found that there were hearing and other discrimination differences between normal and learning disabled children. "Noise levels which surround him, (the learning disabled child) can and in many circumstances do, not only impair his ability, but desire to hear."¹⁴ On the face of the presented facts, learning disabled children, i. e., disadvantaged--"pseudo" retarded appear to be tuned out. It is apparent this situation is either a physical hearing defect or the result of conditioning. If it is a physical defect, chances are it will be neither noted nor corrected by urban school authorities.

Barring physical defect the nexus of the problem becomes the origin of the conditioning. Writers such as Martin Deutsch tend to lay the blame on the home environment of the child. There are alternate positions which may be as valid.

Seldom taken into account are the factors of inter-personal relationships and the relevancy of the curriculum to the population. A reasonable assumption states that a person placed daily in a hostile and unpleasant situation (which many urban schools are to non-white) in which he receives token representation at best, will tend to withdraw from, and screen out unpleasantness. The degree of auditory shutoff may be the degree of teacher turn off.

¹⁴Mary P. Mira, "Individual Patterns of Looking and Listening Preferences Among Learning Disabled and Normal Children", Exceptional Children (vol. 34, No. 9, May, 1968), pp. 649-658.

Adult-child Interaction

The educational factors mentioned above place limitations on the adult models with whom the inner-city child comes in contact in day-to-day living. Initially, the mother-child relationship can be considered. The mother presents the central teaching figure in the home for pre-school children. The pre-school child spends most of his waking hours imitating and learning from the mother. In the low socio-economic home the mother will tend to have a low educational level. Citing statistics, Liston finds that, "Among the heads of the nation's poor families (black and white) fifty-three percent did not go to school beyond the eighth grade and another twenty percent did not finish high school. Only seventeen of poor family heads were high school graduates."¹⁵ How can a mother perform that of which she is incapable? A child cannot imitate good speech if he does not hear it. Yet speech or language is the key factor in intelligence testing and academic progress. "To develop the ability to conceptualize, the child need vocabulary and the ability to categorize."¹⁶

Conceding the inability of the mother to articulate the academic language of the schools, the answer to the larger question of responsibility for this situation must be sought. The parent himself is the

¹⁵Robert Liston, p. 36.

¹⁶Cynthia Deutsch, "Breaking Through to Learning", Council Women, (February, 1965), p. 51.

possessor of a multifaceted educational disability. This presents little in the way of formal academic communication. This is not to impugn lower class language as inferior, but rather to note the sharp contrasts between the public language of the lower class and the formal language of the higher classes. The latter is the language which will determine the child's academic success or failure.

The child's unpreparedness for school in terms of middle class norms is not so much a case of "won't do" on the part of the parent, but rather a case of "can't do". No one has taught the parents of inner-city children how to prepare their children for school.

For example, the area of visual discrimination is extremely important if the child is to be "reading ready". Environmentalists, citing the lack of visual discrimination as a major reason for disadvantaged children state:

Children from deprived environments usually live under very crowded conditions and have few toys and even household objects (with) which they can develop their ability to see and recognize different dimensions.¹⁷

The need for elaborate games and toys to instruct in visual discrimination is not great. Were the mother properly instructed in the necessity for a variety of shapes and sizes such objects could be manufactured from objects within the home.

In summation, the never ending cycle of racism against non-white cultures is perpetrated in our public school systems, by the

¹⁷Cynthia Deutsch, p. 53.

middle class standards on which education in America is based. The extent of damage done within our educational institutions can only be estimated since each individual case varies. In the following chapter specific case studies will be used in order to demonstrate some of the points presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER III

CASE STUDIES

Outside the Files

This chapter will look at case studies of one half of the students contained in a single urban special class for the educable mentally retarded. This particular class consisted of eighteen students labeled retarded by the school system. Five of these children display neurological impairment, a high number for an urban class.

These studies are presented with the intent of demonstrating the heterogenous aspects of such classes. At one end of the spectrum is Anne who is essentially a trainable child. At the other end is Marie whose difficulties, if they ever existed, have long since disappeared. There are strong universals which may be abstracted from the following pages. Initially it can be clearly seen that the "pseudo" retarded children have problems which far outweigh their supposed mental impairment. Most of these children were placed in a special class because of low academic behavior which in fact represents a manifestation of other problems. These children have had a series of a disinterested and poor teachers who were only too willing to relegate them to the "mental" class in the public school.

The most significant fact demonstrated is that the children retain the ability to be human. Further, they attempt to emulate that

which they have been taught as normal behavior. This is done in spite of the fact that they have been told in a hundred different ways that they are socially inferior to their peers in regular class set ups.

In special education classes success is measured in inches. Occasionally a teacher can convince skeptical principals and colleagues that a child is "cured". Usually only after the child has demonstrated a reading ability superior to the eighth grade average. When a child is replaced in the regular grades, he generally becomes a "model" student. This is presumably the case for two reasons. First he maintains the stigma of special class and must work overtime to dispell it, and secondly the child lives in mortal fear of being placed once more in the "mental" room if he does not demonstrate excellent behavior.

The Children

1. Earl is a tall good-looking Negro boy, thirteen years of age. He lives at home with his mother and nine brothers and sisters. He is the second oldest child. His father is not at home and the family receives welfare.

He was recommended for inclusion in special education five years ago, because he had "difficulty keeping up with his peers". He was tested using the Stanford-Binet with a resultant Intelligence Quotient of sixty nine.

In physical appearance Earl is inconsistent. At times he is well dressed, in a suit and tie. At other times he appears in a dirty sweatshirt. He is always pleasant and co-operative with adults.

He possesses a fine sense of humor.

Socially Earl either gets along with the other children in the class or stays away from those who he does not care for. He is reasonably popular both inside the class and out. He has a girl friend in the regular seventh grade and plays on the first string of the school basketball team.

In September Earl was quite reluctant to leave the primary reader with which he was working. As the year progressed it became apparant that he had mastered the text, but still would not proceed. Through the use of "sight vocabulary cards", a determination was made that he could not read at all, but had instead almost completely memorized the book using the pictures as guides. Through an eye examination, it was found that he could not see correctly. His mother was contacted and she promised to take him to an eye doctor. In June this had not been done.

Earl is usually quite tired during the school day. This is due in part to the fact that he spends many nights helping his grandfather, who is a custodian in a Federal building downtown.

II. Michael lives at home with his mother, 14 year-old twin brother and two younger children aged 4 and 3. The boy is extremely good natured and eager to please although quite immature. In school he achieves almost on a fourth grade level in all subject areas. Michael was referred for testing two years ago for his failure to achieve academically. On the Weschler Intelligence Scale for children,

he earned an overall Intelligence Quotient of 57. His mother has taken Michael for E. E. G. examinations on at least two occasions. These tests have indicated organic involvement.

Because of obvious immaturity, Michael sustains a great deal of abuse from the other children. In spite of this, he seldom misses a day of school other than "to take care of the younger kids". This immaturity is further evidenced by Michael's choice of playmates. They are all three to four years younger than himself.

Mrs. R., Michael's mother, has been to the school several times in the past year. On each occasion she has smelled of alcohol and has been mildly abusive toward Michael's teacher. She seems to blame the teacher for Michael's condition. This may partially be due to the imminent break up of her third marriage and the loss of a series of waitress jobs throughout the past year.

III. Vanessa lives with several brothers and sisters in a low-income housing project not far from the school. Two of her younger brothers are also in classes for the educably mentally retarded at another school. The father is sporadically at home. He is apparently greatly missed when he is not at home. Vanessa tells me that when he is gone her mother is "strict". Mrs. C. works as a hairdresser in downtown Hartford.

Vanessa was referred for testing, because of her "inability to co-operate with her teacher". On the Stanford-Binet she attained a score of seventy seven. Although this score is legally two points

higher than the accepted range for special education, the principal felt such a placement was desirable.

It is the opinion of most teachers who know her that she had a personality conflict with a previous teacher, which resulted in her placement.

Vannessa is an extremely pretty, poised young Negro twelve years of age. In earlier school experiences she stuttered quite obviously. This has almost completely disappeared during the past year.

In class Vannessa is always well-groomed and usually well behaved. She works quite diligently in academic areas and is achieving near the fifth grade level in most subjects.

IV. Thomas, a Negro boy of fourteen, lives with his mother and step-father in a middle-income housing development on the Northern outskirts of the city. Judging by his appearance and manners he is from a strong family unit. On the few occasions a parent conference was requested Mrs. S. always responded in person indicating a desire to solve any problems with her child.

The present placement requires him to ride a bus for an hour to arrive at school on time. He has not been late through any fault of his own this year.

Thomas is an energetic boy who transferred to Hartford from a rural school in South Carolina. Prior to testing or the arrival of his records he was placed on a "visiting basis" in special education

in another school. He arrived at his present placement, because of "causing disruptions with former teachers".

On the Stanford-Binet Thomas received an overall score of sixty seven. His academic achievements range between the third and fourth grade levels. This type of indication may be deceiving. On one occasion during the winter the question of tobogganing arose. When queried Thomas replied that the idea of sliding on one's hat was ridiculous. The class and teacher laughed. In the South, a hat with earflaps is referred to as a toboggan.

V. John came to the class from a series of state school and foster home placements. At present he is living with his forty-five year old grandmother and fifteen year old uncle. Immediately prior to this no one, with the exception of John himself, knows where he was living. He told his teacher he had been living in an abandoned car.

On the one occasion of a parent conference, which was requested because John had worn an identical outfit for six consecutive weeks, the boy's mother confided in the teacher that she no longer wanted him around. She stated this was because John was attempting sexual intercourse with his seven year old step-sister.

Standard test results from the Stanford-Binet indicated John possessed the Intelligence Quotient of seventy two. His reading level and other academic scores ranged in the third to fourth grade level.

John's conduct in school was singular. He related only to his teacher. In fact, all other teachers in the school are terrified of

the boy. This can probably be attributed to the fact that he has attacked most of them by the year's end with sticks, knives and bottles.

As the situation deteriorated, attempts were made to seek professional help for the boy. The teacher was told John had committed no crime and so could not be treated. Since he was a Negro adolescent, foster home or institutional placement was nearly impossible.

John solved part of the problem of obtaining professional help by being caught behind the wheel of a stolen car. He attacked the policeman in the process, resulting in his placement at Connecticut Valley State Hospital for observation and eventual committment.

The day before Christmas an incident occurred that reveals another side of John. As the children were filing out with their "Merry Christmas" salutations, John, who had not been in school that morning, entered the classroom. Without a word he reached up under his filthy sweatshirt, carefully brought out a mongral puppy, handed it to the teacher and left.

VI. Anne is a pleasant child, eager to please both her teacher and classmates. She is somewhat obese and partially blind; the school system transports her to school each day from the housing project where she lives with her mother and sister. She seems quite interested in work and her friends. The highlight of her year was an overnight nature hike in which she participated with a special education teacher from another school.

Anne at the age of twelve has an Intelligence Quotient estimated at forty. Her mental age is approximately seven. She has a sight vocabulary of about twenty words. Anne came to the class from a class for trainable children at another school in the city. The transfer was arranged, because she had reached the upper limit of the trainable curriculum.

Anne tries very hard to accomplish academic tasks. Some of the other children, sensing this, help her.

VII. Juan is a large, tough Puerto Rican boy of fourteen. He arrived this year from the "feeder" elementary school near the housing project where he lives with his parents and an undeterminable number of brothers and sisters. At the other school he was apparently "teacher's pet" and after a year has not adjusted to his new surroundings. He is a bully (particularly with the girls in the class) and is given to violent temper flare ups. Tony is the only one who can keep him "in line" behaviorally. Juan was referred for special education because of his 'emotional outbursts'. He was tested using a Stanford-Binet. His estimated intelligence is seventy five plus. He does well in all academic areas and, behavior excepted, responds like any other fourteen year old to instruction.

On the one visit the teacher had with his family (on the doorstep of his home) Juan's mother threatened to "cut his heart out" for abusing her child. The teacher attempted to explain he had never

touched Juan. When she went to get a knife from the kitchen the teacher left.

Perhaps the best thing that could happen to Juan yet with the least possibility of happening, would be placement in a regular class with peers his own age. A great deal of his problem is due to his size and temperment in relation to the other children in special class. There is little hope he will progress beyond Junior High School as he is rapidly approaching the age of entrance into the High School program. To date there are no signs he will be accepted.

VIII. Marie is a small, frail Negro girl, fifteen years of age. She lives in a low-income housing project with her mother and nine brothers and sisters. Her mother was deserted some time ago by her husband. Other members of her family have also participated in the city's special education program.

At nine years of age Marie was tested using the Stanford-Binet Scale. The result indicated an overall Intelligence Quotient of sixty three. At the age of fourteen she was retested with a resultant forty six score. Surprisingly her academic levels are high for her estimated intelligence. She has a 3.0 - 3.5 reading average.

Marie is not a happy child. She is constantly teased and ridiculed because of her gait. When she walks, she propels herself sideways, crab like. She does, however, enjoy playing with little children and has been used as a "teacher's aide" in one of the school's kindergartens. She will not speak unless the mood suits her.

Similarly she is generally far more aware than the rest of the children give her credit for. This ability to "tune out" whatever is unpleasant may be the major reason for her apparent intellectual determination.

On the telephone her mother seems to be very concerned about her academic progress. She has, however, never kept an appointment with this teacher. On one occasion the mother informed me that Marie had drunk a significant quantity of paint when she was a young child and hence the odd manner of walking. If this is so Marie's older sister must also have drunk paint because she has an identical gait.

Next year Marie will be attending the continuing education program at the high school. This must be viewed as a mixed blessing as she will open herself to increased ridicule from older students.

IX. James is a tiny Negro boy of eleven years of age. He has been named "Buck Wheat" by his mother and the name has spread to the other children in the school. When he was seven years old he was recommended for psychological testing because of "inattention" in class. His resultant Intelligence Quotient on the Stanford-Binet was seventy nine. He has not been retested since then.

James lives at home with his mother and two older brothers. His father is not present. His brothers are contained in a "special help" class at the school. Personally James is a very warm, tender little boy. He is unable to comprehend much of the school work which

he feels is required of him. He seldom brings his lunch and is often caught stealing other lunches. When this occurs he is usually beaten and cries easily - a grave error in his present environment.

Once when his teacher was talking to the class about fishing, James related tall tales of his exploits as a fisherman. Several days later the teacher took him fishing. At the side of the river he fell asleep. After a few hours he awoke. When questioned as to his fatigue he explained that his mother had given another all-night party and he could not sleep, but that he really enjoyed being out in the woods.

X. Jesus is a small, slight Puerto Rican boy of twelve years. He arrived six months ago from the islands. He now lives with his mother and sister in the low-income project near the school. When he came from Puerto Rico he was tested using the Stanford-Binet. The resultant Intelligence Quotient was seventy five. At this point he became an "official" member of special education. Prior to the testing, he was received on a "visiting" basis.

Jesus began school with virtually no academic abilities in English. Classically he has been placed in a class where neither the teacher nor any of the children speak Spanish. Jesus has had a cold and sniffles since he started the class.

He also demonstrates many of the symptoms of worms. That is to say he constantly scratches and eats anything at anytime.

Several times he has been caught eating apple cores and orange rinds from the garbage can located in the school yard. In the past he pilfered lunches, however the other children soon became aware of this and guarded their possessions. Strangely they did not react with beatings as with James, but rather they tend to avoid him.

Due to his academic progress during the past six months (mastery of English), the sixth grade teacher has agreed to take Jesus on a "trial basis". This should work out because Jesus's problems are chiefly those of health and not intellect.

CHAPTER IV

AN EVALUATION OF THE SELF-CONTAINED CLASS

Academic Curriculum and Vocational Training

"Special class" and "special program" hold similar connotations for urban school teachers. The child described in chapter one may be in need of special programming; more often, he will be placed in special classes for the educable mentally retarded. Educators have undergone few real changes in philosophy since the mandate of educating the retarded was assigned to public schools. Initially this task was welcomed as a method of separating the retarded children from normal peers. This relieves the regular teachers from the stresses of teaching "problem children".¹ Also, it is supposed by authorities in educational and medical fields that retarded students are happier away from the frustrations encountered in regular classes, and in a group that achieves academically at a much slower rate. Pessimistic and negative attitudes are commonly expressed concerning the capabilities of the retarded. Present theories of the components of the earlier institutional programs, to wit: isolation, segregation, ridicule, and lack of meaningful academic experiences.

¹Jim Haskins, Diary of a Harlem School Teacher (New York: Grove Press, 1969), p. 14.

Homogenous special education grouping presupposes the uniformity of personalities, aspirations; intellectual potential and maturity of the youngsters confined there. This uniformity has never been true. In urban special education classes for the educable mentally retarded there may be as many as six separate disabilities represented. Possibilities include physical handicap, mild organic retardation, moderate organic retardation, emotional disturbance perceptual problems, and language difference.

To assume that these children will react identically to the same methods and curriculum assumes all children are the same. Most arguments in favor of special classes are not valid. These arguments are especially inapplicable to urban special education classes which contain a majority of students who display no organic dysfunction--the "pseudo" retarded.

In order to illustrate the good and bad aspects of containment, the following arguments, usually used to justify the existence of special classes, are outlined and refuted below.

"They serve both the needs and the abilities by offering a more functional curriculum."² Much like the state institutions, traditional academic subjects taught in special classes are greatly oversimplified or "watered-down". In many schools emphasis is placed on handiwork

²Marian Erickson, "Current Trends and Practices in the Education of the Mentally Retarded", The Exceptional Child. (New York: Holt, Rinehart, Winston, 1960), p. 89.

or manual activities. As demonstrated in chapter one, few opportunities for formal pre-school education are available to the non-organic retarded child placed in special classes. Adequate academic development for these children has not occurred because skills such as language development, reading and abstract thinking were not facilitated either at home or in early school experiences.

In constructing a curriculum for educable mentally retarded children, most authorities tend to emphasize the exceptionality, rather than the similarities of these children to normal children. For example, most curricula in the field stress only the needs and goals of organically impaired children. By use of these courses of study, the differences in ability, personality, and aspirations of the two groups is negated.

Curriculum development should proceed from the ideal that one type of mental retardation is truly irreversible, while the other type (pseudo) is not necessarily permanent and may be reversible. In reality the organically impaired child is a subnormal mind reacting to society, while the "pseudo" child is a normal mind reacted upon by society.

The curriculum to be used by urban classes for the "pseudo" educable mentally retarded must concentrate on building skills. These skills would be those which were not evident at the time of initial placement in special class. They include language development, reading, and mathematics. The course of study must emphasize academic subject areas on a real and challenging basis.

The major aspiration of the syllabus must be changed from

"making the most of what we have", to "doing the most to alter what we have". The chief goal must be to return the "pseudo" child to the mainstream of education. In order to return these children, methods other than serious academics must be employed.

Another important area of concern is behavior modification. Modification only in the sense that the child's social development is increased to meet the accepted norms of the academic society. It is rather ironic that the special teacher must devote a significant amount of time to the undoing of a previous year's teaching. The deviant behavior of contained children is partially due to their containment. In order to alleviate the containment, it is necessary to modify the behavior. Thus, the curriculum must contain strategies for breaking the cycle in which the "pseudo" educably retarded child is caught.

Educational objectives for the organic and non-organically impaired educable are a major consideration in planning curriculum. Many public school systems continue to ignore the needs of the retarded in the area of vocational training with the assumption that these children have little or nothing of worth to contribute to society. This philosophy exists in conjunction with the lack of goal oriented special classes. Pre-high school vocational training practically does not exist in most urban special education classes. Transfer to a secondary level of special education will include limited vocational opportunities. Realistically organic educables cannot attain skilled employment; however, many

unskilled and semi-skilled jobs should be available to them if employers are prepared in advance. Graduation for the "pseudo" retarded to high school programs are rare. These educables are capable of skilled labor, but it is improbable they would gain such a job. Such training is not usually available to them on any level in public schools.

Social interaction is an important factor in preparing a child for later life. If occupational opportunities cannot be provided in the special class curriculum, then the student must be aware that he has a future place in our social structure. The "pseudo" retardate must feel responsible for his personal actions in the school, home and community. He must be socially aware of our society's standards and feel competent to meet these standards. Any independence expressed by the "pseudo" retardate must be reinforced by the teacher. The child should realize that tardiness, truancy, irresponsible behavior within the class are actions which would place his employment in jeopardy in the working world. Proper hygiene and decorum should be stressed.

The special education teacher must initiate interaction, which will motivate the child toward becoming a responsible member of society. Self reliance, awareness and pride should be instilled as much as possible. A good teacher-student relationship is primary in special education. The students need an adult model with whom they can identify.

The special education teacher does not have to sacrifice discipline in order to establish good relationships with his students. If he

is genuinely concerned about their individual well-being and displays this concern openly and honestly, his students will be much more receptive to his desires. "Optimal academic and personal growth will not be stimulated in most students by the teacher who is either rigidly authoritarian, hostile, or unresponsive to student needs."³

Urban teachers should understand the life styles of their students. Disadvantaged children obviously come from backgrounds, which are foreign to middle class whites. As cited previously, most special education students are non-whites from ghetto areas. Their values, attitudes, and behaviors differ widely from that of most urban teachers.⁴ The majority are Caucasians from middle class backgrounds. It is extremely important that the racially prejudiced teacher be screened from a special education position. The "pseudo" retardates are aware of the racial prejudices, which caused their initial containment in special class. Any displays of further prejudice by the special education teacher will only heighten their general resentment of the public school environment.

A child will lose all incentive to work if he feels frustrated by a curriculum which is above his understanding and comprehension, or which holds no value for him. Realistic evaluations of each pupil's

³ John Conger, Paul Mussen, Jerome Kagan, Child Development and Personality. (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), p. 558.

⁴Ibid., p. 554.

abilities will aid in establishing individual goals. Individual physical handicaps should also be considered, and special areas of concentration such as motor co-ordination and speech therapy are necessary for some students. An exceptional teacher is a must for the planning of such a daily curriculum. Ideally, the special education teacher is expected, not only to accomplish this task by being highly imaginative, modern, and innovative, but he must also have the necessary teaching abilities in order to help each student, progress to his highest academic capabilities. Also, the special education teacher has within his student body many dramatic cases of emotionally disturbed children. He must be psychologically and morally equipped to deal with behavioral problems and impart the social decorum of the "white world". To suppose that such special education teachers exist is idealistic, rather than realistic.

Special Education Teachers

The initial problem involving special education teachers is providing teachers with the necessary qualifications. A basic argument in favor of special classes contends that "the special class teacher is trained to understand the problems of the exceptional child."⁵ Each state has its own level of special training for teachers needing certification in special education. In fact many teachers teach with emergency or temporary certificates. This means that the teachers

⁵Marian Erickson, p. 89.

do not have the training to understand handicapped children, nor the ability to cope with the special problems these children represent. The necessary teaching techniques are absent in their training. To compound this situation, most teachers receive little or no supervision during the school year by trained personnel.

Certification regulations must be amended or rescinded. Many teachers are trained in special areas, which could be greatly utilized by the "pseudo" retarded. In most urban communities these services are not available to them, because these teachers are said to be unqualified in the area of special education. A rotating system, whereby many teachers would enter the day's program to teach their expertise would alleviate overcrowded special education classes and the lack of one certified supervisor.

Most special education teachers have no established unity; there is need for co-ordinated interaction within the special education programs. Ideally, each special education teacher should not have more than fifteen students in one class year unless a teacher's aide is provided. The average teacher-pupil ratio in urban area special education classes is one to eighteen or more.

There are a great many indignities suffered by special education teachers. Generally speaking, the special teacher is considered the low man on the academic scale. Upon taking the assignment he is given the mandate, either verbally or non-verbally, to "keep those kids quiet and busy." There is usually no indigenous curriculum or supportive aid

from his colleagues. This lack of support is something, which can be called the "relief factor", inasmuch as regular teachers, relieved of responsibility to care for "problem children", refuse to become involved once these students are labeled retarded and placed in special classes. This attitude is best illustrated by the following:

As a substitute teacher, I was often sent to special classes at various urban schools. As is customary, many faculty members would ask, 'What class do you have today?' My reply was followed by such comments as, 'Oh, you have those animals... so you have the zoo today... how are you going to last until 3:15 with those monsters?'⁶

The state law requires that each child (special education or not) be provided an equal opportunity in special subject areas, but there is no enforceable provision as to the academic level at which special education students should participate. Pupils generally go to special subject areas such as: gym, art, and music as a group or with their "M. A. peers". Many teachers refuse to allow retarded pupils into their classes, classes which would be extremely beneficial both academically and socially. Should the special education teacher desire to exclude recreation, home economics, music, art and woodworking from the curriculum, these children simply go without. Social interaction with "normal" peers is often denied the retarded children because of

⁶Marlene Rodriques, "Crisis in Education: The Disadvantaged" (Term paper, University of Massachusetts, 1970), p. 21.

faculty attitudes.⁷ Protecting these children by isolating them completely may be the alternative of the special education teacher. The decision to do so is up to his own discretion, assuming he is capable and willing to initiate the necessary programs himself. If such is the case, however, these children lose all social interaction and feel even more isolated from their school and peers.

Another point of frustration for the special education teacher is the limitation of clinical services. Often the "pseudo" retarded child has emotional problems. A typical day may entail many demonstrations of violent or disruptive behavior within special classes. Just as often, a child becomes inhibited and refuses to participate in class activities. There are many defense mechanisms characterized by aggressiveness, distrust, impulsiveness, self-indulgence, and withdrawal. Patterns of behavior are symptoms displayed by the low achiever. The special education teacher, for the most part, is expected to handle these situations,

⁷A personal interview revealed that:

One Hartford, Connecticut special education teacher, after much effort, convinced the principal that his fourteen and fifteen year old girls should be allowed to participate in the cooking portion of the home-making course. On the prescribed day he appeared at the kitchen door with five girls, all of whom had been keeping house for younger siblings for five or more years. He was met by the homemaking teacher who informed him, in taking them in. 'After all,' she informed him, 'I get all the garbage anyway.' This incident was an attempt on the part of the special education teacher to integrate his class with the "mainstream". He claimed that the damage done that day set his self-concept building program back six months.

but serious demonstrations require the knowledge of trained specialists.

Clinical services in urban public schools are sorely limited. Guidance counselors, thought to act as referral agents, are both understaffed and overworked. Psychologists and psychiatrists are often not included in referrals because of the multi-cases and financial burdens which would result. Most classes for severely disturbed, e.g., "600 schools", function in much the same manner as special classes for the educable mentally retarded. Psychological testing is practically non-existent in public schools. Medical problems other than those handled by the school nurse are avoided. Only in extreme cases, usually through a social worker, are children sent to clinics for medical care, yet it is impractical to expect social workers to intervene with school officials and parents on every occasion. In the clinical sense, the special education teacher is again isolated. Thus the behavior rather than the cause usually receives treatment. Early detection, prevention and treatment are the answers.

Many organic and non-organic retardates have problems with perception, motor control and speech. These students require tutoring beyond the capabilities of the special education teacher, for he has neither the intricate training, nor the time. Often specialists for these classes are not assigned to teach retarded children. The reasons may simply lack of volition, overextended caseloads, or the decision on the part of school authorities not to assign them to special classes.

A Hartford, Connecticut speech pathologist reports:

"In sixteen years of teaching I have never been assigned to tutor a special education pupil, even though I have taught in ghetto schools containing "Opportunity Rooms".⁸

There are instances in which a "pseudo" retarded pupil may make progressive strides in all academic areas as demonstrated by performance within the special class. This achievement may indicate to the teacher that the child is capable of returning to regular class or classes. The special education teachers find it difficult to re-enter "pseudo" retardates to regular classroom set-ups. Initially, the child is expected to "prove himself" by increasing the scored results obtained from intelligence tests. The probability of this achievement, and the accuracy of measurement from these tests was discussed in chapter one. In addition, prejudices of other faculty members and administrators often hamper reinstatement as a "normal" student and curtail the phasing-in process completely.

Absenteeism and truancy rates are high in special education classes. The lack of interest on the part of school authorities occurs frequently and places the pupil, who is already behind in studies, further behind on the academic calendar.

During an interview, one special education teacher reported: "A youngster, aged fifteen, spent a total of five and one half days in school. No follow-up as to his absenteeism ensued, because the boy

⁸Conversation with N. Daniels, October 3, 1969.

would turn sixteen within a year."⁹

In conclusion, twenty percent of special education teachers are unqualified and uncertified to meet the needs of educables.¹⁰ The teacher is surrounded by prejudices from faculty members and receives little or no assistance in combating the many problems involved with mental physical handicaps. He usually lacks the resources and training to collate and teach the most basic academics. Often he is devoid of ambition and tolerance to educate and special education can be the easiest "cop out" in the teaching profession. In lieu of the many frustrations the special education teacher must face daily, even the most exceptional may choose any of these alternatives: he may give up completely and acquiesce to the desires of the "system"; he may transfer to a regular classroom' or he may completely withdraw from the teaching profession. In any case, the rewards of this position are small and unrecognizable to most educators.

A general belief of the public is that added equipment and materials are provided for special classes in urban areas. "Special equipment and facilities not generally found in the regular classroom are needed to facilitate learning for the mentally retarded."¹¹ Part of this statement is true. Special equipment and facilities are needed for the mentally retarded. This special equipment, however, is not

¹⁰Miles to Go, p. 44.

¹¹Erickson, p. 89.

usually found in urban special classes. In truth, funds allotted to these classes in public schools are few and far between. Teachers must work with leftover books and materials.

In order to find books with copyrights dated beyond the 1940's, I had to go to lost and found. Anything not claimed within five days became the property of my class... A seventh grade social studies teacher reported having three sets of dictionaries. Although reading is my most important subject, my students did not even have one dictionary in their class. This obligated me to permanently "borrow" a set of dictionaries!¹²

Most laymen are under the impression that modern mechanical devices such as talking desks, earphones, tape recorders, etc., are supplied for special classes. Actually, most urban special classes lack the most basic tools. Scant evidence exists that monies allocated to the superintendent of schools for special materials filters down to the actual classroom.

Community-School Relationship

In numerous interviews concerning the role of the parents in urban special education, three facts became immediately evident: Parents of the organically impaired child are more amenable to the placement than the parents of the non-organically impaired child; the parents of the organically impaired usually appear more interested in the progress of the child; the parents of the organically impaired generally correctly attribute the child's intellectual state for the placement.

¹²Conversation with C. Trout, December 1, 1970.

The parents of the organically retarded child are more positive about the youngster's placement in the special class because they have lived with the problem since the child's birth. By school age the parents of the organic child are painfully aware of the realities of retardation in relation to learning. Parents of the "pseudo" retarded are less willing to accept the placement, because the child has only been "retarded" as long as he has been enrolled in public schools.

The lack of interest on the part of many parents of the "pseudo" retarded may be due to informational gaps in the relationship between the school and the home. In a New York study it was found that eight of every ten parents of children contained in special class were not informed of the child's placement until after the fact. Seventy-seven percent of the parents interviewed in the study indicated reasons other than academic or emotional problems, the quasi-legal technicality for inclusion, for their child's placement.¹⁵ Hartford and Springfield interviews confirmed this information. If indeed, the parents were informed prior to or just after the placement, the nature and meaning of the placement were not made clear to them.

Another reason for the apparent disinterest on the part of the parents is the disenfranchisement of poor and non-white parents from public school policymaking:

¹⁵Thelma M. Williams, Opinions, Attitudes and Perceptions of Parents of Children in Special Classes for the Socially Maladjusted and Emotionally Disturbed in New York City Public Schools. (The Center for Urban Education, 1969).

The parents and leaders of the black community who recognize the problems of the schools are efficiently cut off from any power to make changes in the education of their children.

Working class (black) mothers feel a powerlessness and lack of personal effectiveness against the authority of the school system.¹⁶

Community active parents of children in special education, usually are parents of severely organically retarded.

Various insights for the lack of attendance at PA and PTA functions by parents of the "pseudo" retarded were offered:

"I have seven children, and I have never received any invitation for the PTA meetings; therefore, I don't know the date of the meeting."

"No PTA in this school."

"I work at night."

"I can drink coffee at home."

"Meetings are at night, too dangerous."

"Don't have money to go to PTA meetings for paying dues. Children have to have money to go on trips. I have five children and on Welfare--can't afford to pay all this money."¹⁷

Many parents of the "pseudo" retarded children are dissatisfied with the type of education their children receive even though they feel they personally cannot augment the school situation. In a study based on 270 completed interviews, the ethnic backgrounds were as follows:

¹⁶Louis Knowles and Kenneth Prewitt, eds., Institutional Racism in America (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1969), p. 32.

¹⁷Thelma M. Williams, pp. 43-44.

Black, 130 (49 percent); Puerto Rican, 128 (47 percent); White 12 (four percent).¹⁸ The following quotations were obtained from this study to illustrate the dissatisfaction parents have with public urban schools:

"School is racially unbalanced, mostly white, and my son doesn't like the school, because the children tease him."

"Children that are slow in school work shouldn't be in a 600' school for bad children. There is a difference."

"Too many substitute teachers."

"I don't think she's learning anything. She never gets any work at all to take home. I just wonder what will happen."

"Classes are too large, tutoring classes are not organized, in general, there's a 'don't care' attitude."¹⁹

These same parents expressed recommendations to the interviewers:

"More reports should be sent home for parents to know what's going on--more contact with the parents. Teacher should see the parents, more efforts to inform the parents. They only notify the parents when he (child) gets out of hand."

"Son needs someone to talk to him about what goes on inside him. Need help from psychiatrist."

"Give him the right kind of teachers who understand how to give him his work."

"Marks given in school on paper bring utter confusion to us. Papers show A and 100, and on final grades he receives failing marks. Marking system and school records are confusing. Wish they'd explain sometimes."

¹⁸Thelma M. Williams, p. 14.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 59-60.

These same parents expressed recommendations to the interviewers:

"More reports should be sent home for parents to know what's going on--more contact with the parents. Teacher should see the parents, more efforts to inform the parents. They only notify the parents when he (child) gets out of hand."

"Son needs someone to talk to him about what goes on inside him. Need help from psychiatrist."

"Give him the right kind of teachers who understand how to give him his work."

"Marks given in school on paper bring utter confusion to us. Papers show A and 100, and on final grades he receives failing marks. Marking system and school records are confusing. Wish they'd explain sometimes."

"We need more guidance. Parents and children are confused about which school child should attend and what jobs they should prepare for, after leaving Junior High School."

"There should be someone in school who speaks Spanish, to explain to Spanish speaking families and guide the children."

"He needs a lot of help, anything to develop interest in school will help."

"More guidance."

"I think all schools should be modernized and this would greatly benefit the learning of pupils and give them more incentive to attend."

"Developing better programs and a better teacher-pupil relationship."

"I would like to see more Negroes and Puerto Rican teachers, guidance counselors, principals and vice principals."

"Negro guidance counselors and teachers."

"I suggest they try to get permanent teachers."

"Children might benefit better by getting special attention and remain in regular classes."

"I feel that placing slow children all in the same class doesn't help them. Some smart students should be mixed with them."

"I doubt that this class (special education) will help him that much. He would probably do as well in a regular class."²⁰

Obviously, these parents do care about the education and welfare of their children. Much like a patient describing symptoms of an illness to a doctor without the knowledge of the symptoms, a proper diagnosis and cure is improbable. The urban public school's responsibility is to gain parents aid by actively demonstrating the need for their support.

The following chapter will give a realistic insight into the actual special education program as viewed by the "pseudo" retarded child, who is placed in a self-contained class.

²⁰Thelma M. Williams, pp. 65-67.

CHAPTER V

THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FUNCTIONAL AND BRAIN DAMAGED CHILDREN PLACED IN SPECIAL CLASSES

"Trapdoor Effect"

This chapter will demonstrate that "pseudo" retarded children do not function well in special education classes. The labels of "retarded" increase frustration levels of normal children and diminish their self-concept. In addition, the "pseudo" retardates disrupt the learning process for the organically brain damaged children when they are contained in the same class.

The following is another widely accepted misconception held by those who are in favor of special classes for the retarded: The term "retarded" is used to describe both organic and non-organic handicaps, since educators do not distinguish between the two in placement. "Mentally retarded pupils have greater opportunities for success when they are placed with pupils who are nearer their own level."¹ The best programs are those which do not label children as socially-emotionally mal-adjusted or culturally disadvantaged. Diagnostic labels group

¹Marian Erickson, "Current Trends and Practices in the Education of the Mentally Retarded, The Exceptional Child. (New York: Holt, Rinehart, Winston, 1960), p. 89.

and classify children's learning disabilities as needing one type of learning program. Instead of this type of assumption, special areas such as speech therapy should be provided and the individual should be aided in achieving his highest potential within the regular classrooms. This of course, is not provided under our present school systems.

Special classrooms in an urban school building, can usually be found at the basement level. Many classes in cities surveyed are at ground level or below. Physically isolated they attract little attention from the visitor. Various euphemisms are used to hide the class. For example, in Springfield, Massachusetts the classes are called General Auxillary Classes, in Hartford, Connecticut - Opportunity Classes, in New York City, Children with Retarded Mental Development.

These classes are isolated in more than the physical sense. They are segregated. The occupants are removed from the mainstream of public education and permitted only minimal contact during school hours.

Inclusion in self-contained special class initially confirms for the child what he has already begun to suspect about himself - he is different and dumb. The manner in which these classes are treated and viewed by those outside of special education does nothing to alter these beliefs.

"Dummy...mental...crazy room" are the most common labels used by peers of the contained children. The children in regular grades are not unaware of the conduct of the children contained in special

education classes. Many have been threatened with inclusion if they were not "good". The relaxation of the academic rules within special class are obvious to them. In the regular "pecking order" of children, organic and non-organic retardates are considered the lowest.

The "pseudo" retardate finds this discrimination especially upsetting. He knows he is considered inferior to peers yet prior to his inclusion in special class, his peers may have been unaware of the differences.

Once the label of "retarded" is attached to the "pseudo" retardate, he is socially considered an outcast. He views his placement with organic retardates as a punishment. Much like any prisoner serving time in jail, this child finds complete social isolation, which will continue for the extent of his entire academic enrollment in special class. The damage done to the child who lacks good peer relationships is summed up in the following quotation:

The influence of the peer group appears stronger in America than in some other societies, where children live more in the family and less in peer society... In contrast, anxiety, uncertainty, social indifference, withdrawal, and hostility emerge as attributes of low-status or rejected children... In contrast, the culturally disadvantaged student, deprived of such experiences, is likely to be handicapped in approaching academic tasks... progress in school may be further limited by feelings of inadequacy and a depressed self-concept resulting from feelings of not "belonging" in a social setting characterized by middle-class goals and codes of behavior.²

²John Conger, Paul Mussen, Jerome Kagan, Child Development and Personality (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), pp. 588-589.

The greatest contributing factor of the "trapdoor effect" is the negative attitude of other teachers in the school outside the special class. Once the "pseudo" retardate is removed from the regular class structure, he is often not allowed to participate in many activities he previously enjoyed. Music, art, woodworking, gym, etc., may no longer be offered him. If indeed, these subjects are included in his daily schedule he may be forced to share the activities with much younger children. This is not only a source of embarrassment added to his displeasure, but deeply frustrating and self-defeating. As an example, it would not be uncommon to find fourteen-year-old adolescents sharing a physical education class with fourth or fifth grade children.

Once a child is placed in a class for the mentally handicapped, his chances to rejoin his "normal" peers are minimal. Teacher bias, administrative indifference, and the self-concept of the child all contribute to the cycle of special class containment. A student labeled retarded will remain so in the minds of his teachers for as long as he remains in that particular school. The uselessness of the entire program is quite apparent to the "pseudo" retardate; there are no short or long range goals with which he can identify. At the end of perhaps six years in special class the child is not expected, nor guaranteed advancement to a high school program. This of course, may be fortunate; if he is not sixteen years of age, he will have to be placed in "general studies" at the secondary level. The high school special education program

duplicates the junior high school special class and is not usually offered as an extension program to the non-organic educable. The difference between these classes is possibly the addition of some type of limited vocational training in the high school special class program.

The "pseudo" retardate rapidly becomes resigned to the idea that he cannot leave the stigmatized class and no amount of academic endeavor will help him. Lacking incentive, he widens the academic gap between himself and his school peers. The student loses his self-confidence and his motivation to learn. The end result is an artificially produced retardate--one who anxiously awaits the day he is old enough to drop out of school.

Understandably few behavior problems improve when a "pseudo" educable is placed in a self-contained class. These children often "act out" in reaction to many frustrations they face academically and socially. Cases of extreme misconduct are usually accompanied by poor attendance and result in eventual suspensions. The "pseudo" retardate usually displays some type of emotional or mental disturbance in a special class, although his behavior might have been excellent prior to special class placement.

The most tragic situation is the non-organic child who seems to conform to the ideals set for him by the "system". In reality he just gives up and waits until he is sixteen years old to quit school. He may read On Cherry Street³ or not be able to do long division, but he is a

³A primer text used extensively in primary grades.

quiet, co-operative child.

Urban special education teachers are aware of and disgruntled by the placement of certain youngsters in special classes who seemingly do not belong there. These youngsters may be roughly divided into two groups: those who have too low an ability or depressed desire to learn, and those who are definitely academically superior to their organic classmates. Each of these two groups is problematic to the teacher in a different way. In the first instance, the frustration of giving precious time, needed by all the students, attempting to motivate a few who are no longer interested in learning that creates a problem. In the second instance, the children who are achieving well in special classes could function in a regular class setting, but to re-integrate them in a departmentalized situation is extremely difficult. The reasons for this appear to be numerous. These children have little class changing experiences, damaged egos, and little genuine desire (in many cases) to leave the security of the special class once they become institutionalized. Added to this are the racial and non-racial prejudices demonstrated against them by other faculty members which deter acceptance of them in regular classes.

Several studies have cast serious doubt on the validity of the philosophies, effectiveness and the advisability of continued use of the self-contained special class for non-organically impaired youngsters. Current research indicates that the objectives and environment

conducive to learning are not being met. The disadvantages of the system of containment far outweigh the advantages.

The Self-Concept Study

The intended purpose of the Self-Concept Study was an attempt on the part of the teacher to convince faculty members and administrators of the psychological detriments of containing non-organically impaired children in self-contained classes by labeling them as "retarded."⁴

The Self-Concept Study examined youngsters contained in a single urban education class for the educable mentally retarded in a large Connecticut city. A total of thirteen children were used in this study, six of whom were judged to be organically handicapped. Due to absenteeism, five children also contained in this class were not involved with testing procedures. The youngsters ranged in age from twelve years five months, to fourteen years seven months. The ethnic backgrounds of these youngsters were not considered as a variable, since all were from disadvantaged backgrounds. The length of their placement in special classes ranged from four months to six years. The services of a qualified psychological examiner were donated for guidance and assistance.

It was determined at the outset of this project that a "yardstick" for measuring what the educable mentally retarded child thought of

⁴John P. Delaney, "Self-Concept Study" (an unpublished study, New Park Avenue School, Hartford, Connecticut; October, 1967).

himself would have to be established. Various personality tests were considered, but all standard tests had to be discarded because of the inappropriateness of the test for the specific purpose of measuring self-concept, the professional time requirement and unavailability of materials. In order to maintain background materials, cumulative files were consulted for data such as age, home situation, specific organic impairments, etc. Past Stanford-Binet intelligence tests yielded an intelligence quotient span of twenty-nine points.

Initially, a questionnaire was devised in an attempt to obtain verbal conformation of the students' self-concept.⁵ The results of the questionnaire are not thought to be valid, inasmuch as the students exhibited a desire to please their teacher, rather than honestly evaluate their personal feelings. It is thought, however, that the questions pertaining to vocational aspirations are indicative of realistic answers. Twelve out of thirteen children in the class aspired to vocational positions well within their intellectual grasp.

Consultation with psychological examiners determined that a human figure drawing would be the simplest and most effective instrument in evaluating the self-concept of the organic and mental age figures be applied to academic achievement (demonstrated by reading levels), and the chronological age, as well as the time actually spent in special classes by these youngster.

⁵A copy of the questionnaire is enclosed in this chapter on pp. 74-75.

QUESTIONNAIRE

CODE _____

M. A. _____

C. A. _____

I. Q. _____

B. D. _____

1. Why do you think you are in the Opportunity Room?
2. Do you mind being in the Opportunity Room? yes ___ no ___
If yes, why?
3. Do you think a regular class is doing harder work than you are?
yes ___ no ___
4. What is your favorite subject?
5. Do you want to go to high school? yes ___ no ___
Why?
6. What do you think you have to do to get to high school?
7. Do you think you are doing it?
8. Do you like school? yes ___ no ___
Why?
If no, why then do you come to school each day?
9. What do you think could be done to make this class better?
Or, what would you like to do in school?
10. Where do you live?

11. How many brothers and sisters do you have?
12. Do they attend regular classes?
13. Is your father living at home?
14. Do you think your parents mind you being in a special class?
yes ___ no ___

Why?
15. Who do you play with after school? boys ___ girls ___ both ___.
16. What types of games do you play?
17. How old are most of the kids you play with?
18. Of all the kids you play with, who don't you like?

Why?
19. What do you want to do for a job when you get out of school?
20. If we gave you the choice of what we would teach you, what would you choose?
21. What are you really good at doing?
22. If you had one wish, what would you wish for?

Why?

The method employed in administering this test was to instruct each child individually to draw a picture of a person. When this was done, the youngster was given another piece of paper and told to draw a person of the gender opposite to the one illustrated.

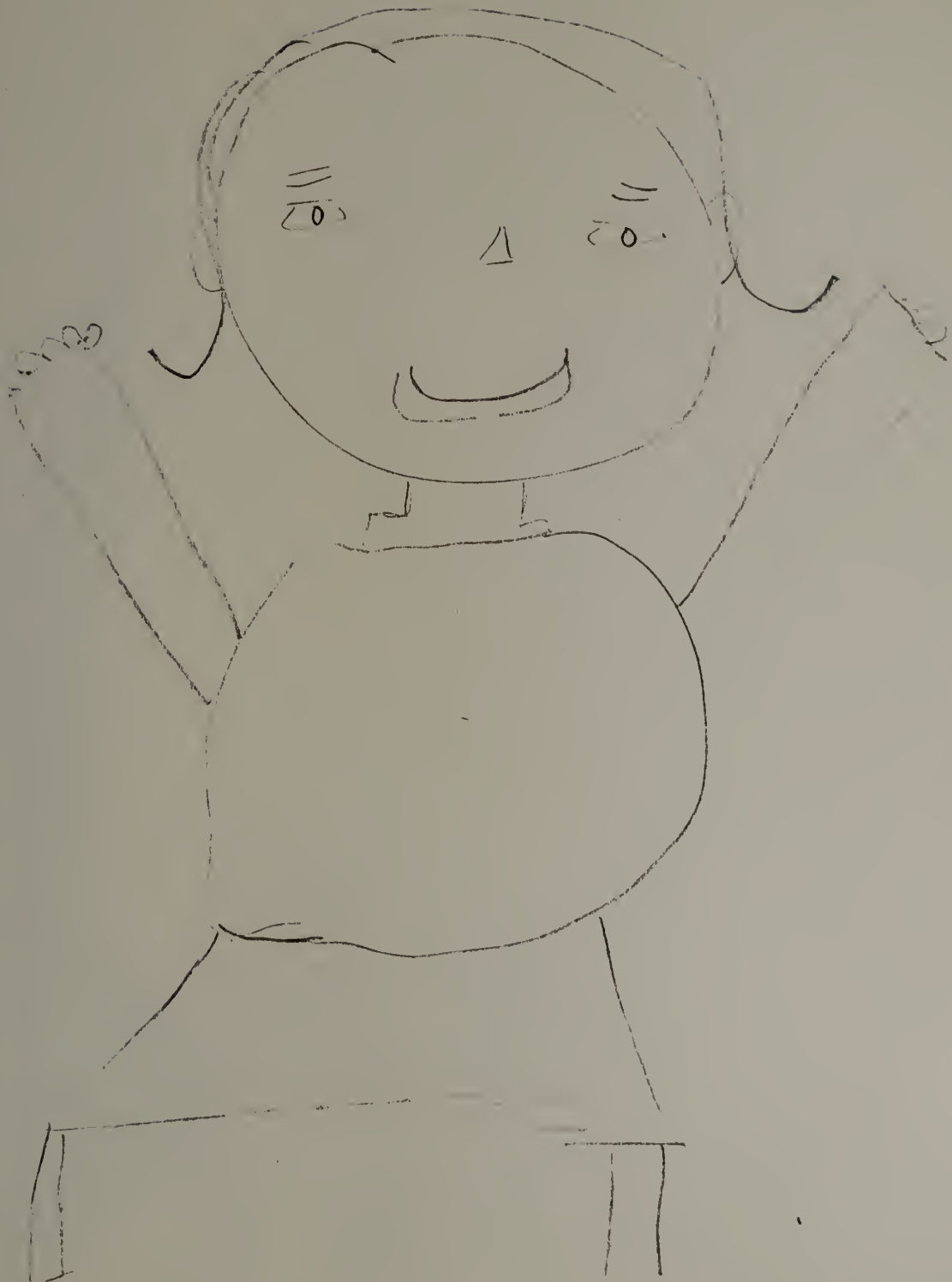
These drawings were then examined to study the positioning, size, location, and detail of the figures. For example, a figure appearing in the upper left corner of the paper, devoid of any detail, would indicate a poor self-concept.⁶ A centrally located figure containing all human components and limbs in position would be indicative of a good self-concept.⁷

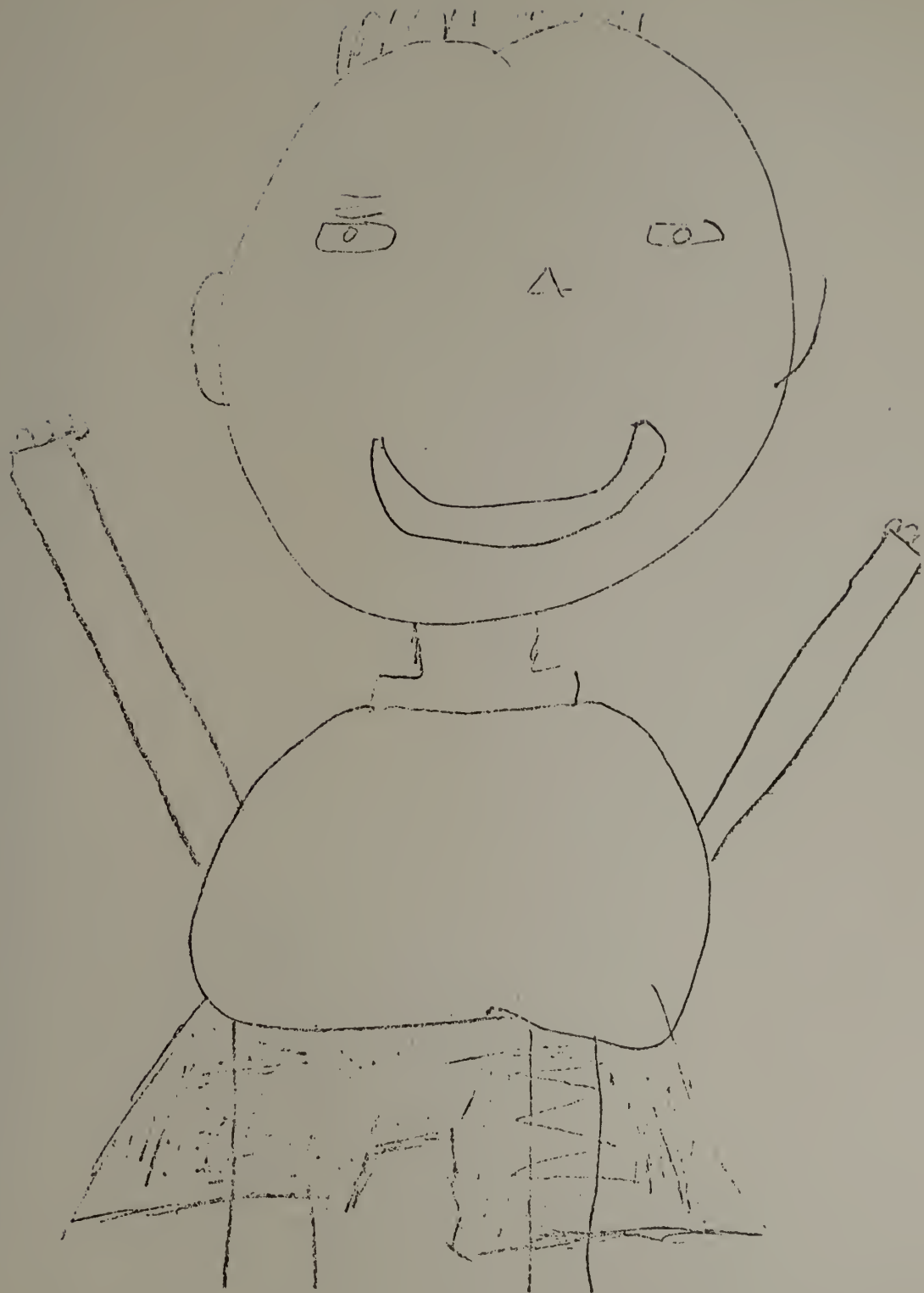
⁶See actual examples on pp. 77-78, of this chapter.

⁷Example located on pp. 79-80, of this chapter.









A thirty point scale was devised in order to graph these findings, and the self-concepts are divided into these five categories:

Poor - Figure is minute and cornered. No proportion or detail.

Low - Figure is tending toward corner, below two and one half inches in size, no detail given.

Neutral - Figure is two and one half to five inches in height, left or right of center, little or no detail

Good - Figure is five inches in height, centrally located, limbs in position and proportion; details of figure contain all necessary clothing and components of a person.

Excellent - Figure is more than five, but less than six inches in height, centrally located, lines in position and proportion; details of figure containing all necessary clothing and components of a person.

Of the thirteen youngsters evaluated, four registered excellent, five were good to fair; two were low to poor. Six youngsters produced drawings similar to those of identified organics, (confirmation of brain damage was obtained from the cumulative records of the two children). The Goodnough Criteria applied to these scores yielded mental ages ranging from ten years, no months to six years, three months.⁸

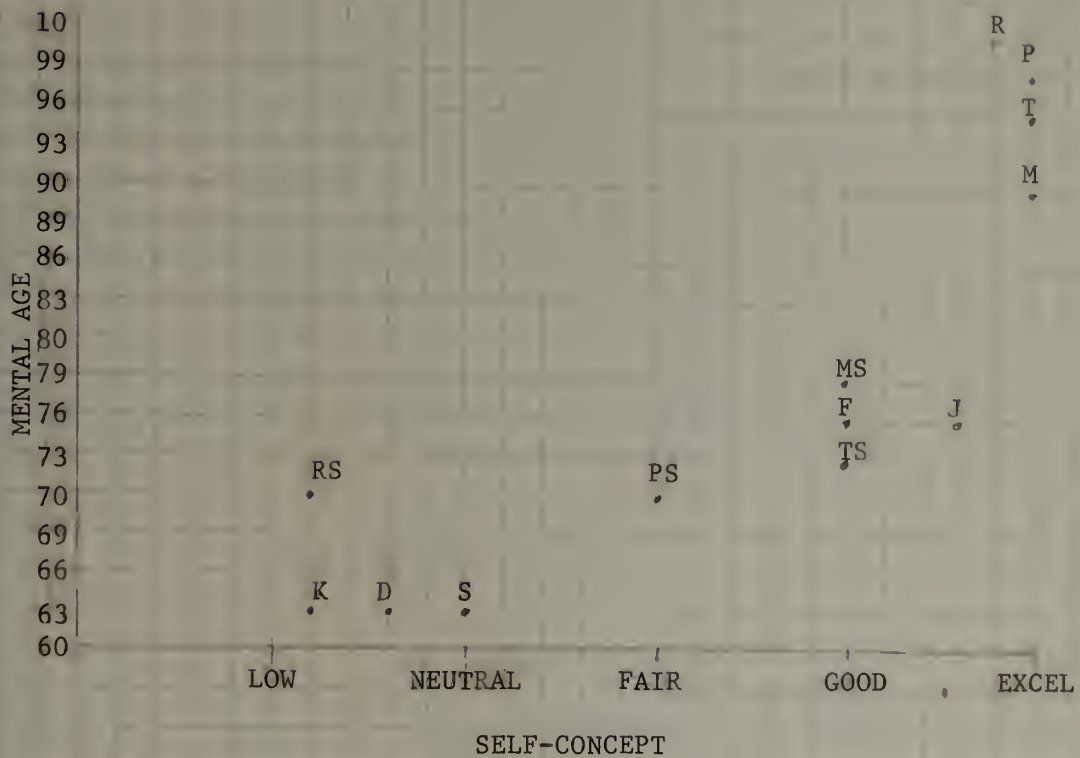
Significantly, of the five children rated as excellent, four of them were brain damaged, with varying months in special class. In a comparison of mental age and self-concept certain facts are evident: all students with M. A. of seven years three months to nine years and

⁸A graph indicating the mental age results of this study is shown on p. 83.

no months, have good self-concepts; there is little relation between the M. A. and self-concept in students below seven years, three months. The amount of time spent in special classes in relation to self-concept is an important factor. Brain damaged youngsters with an intelligence quotient over 50, have an excellent self-concept with their special class placement after twelve months. The results also prove that the functional or non-organically impaired student's self-concept tends toward excellence with initial placement; remains fairly stable for the period of 14-32 months, and then declines to fair or poor.⁹ The statistics related to the non-organic child indicate the impact of the "trapdoor" effect. After the initial inclusion of the "pseudo" retardate in special class, and a period of rebellion, he realizes he can accomplish academically on a level higher than the organically impaired child. Possibly for approximately four to twenty-four months, he may work ambitiously toward achievements which will reunite him with his "normal" peers. At about thirty-two to thirty-four months placement, the child realizes that a promotion to a regular class is improbable, and begins to withdraw his co-operation from his teacher. From this point on, his self-concept and academic achievement decline at the same rate. This motivation factor would account for the short period positive self-concept by the "pseudo" retardate.

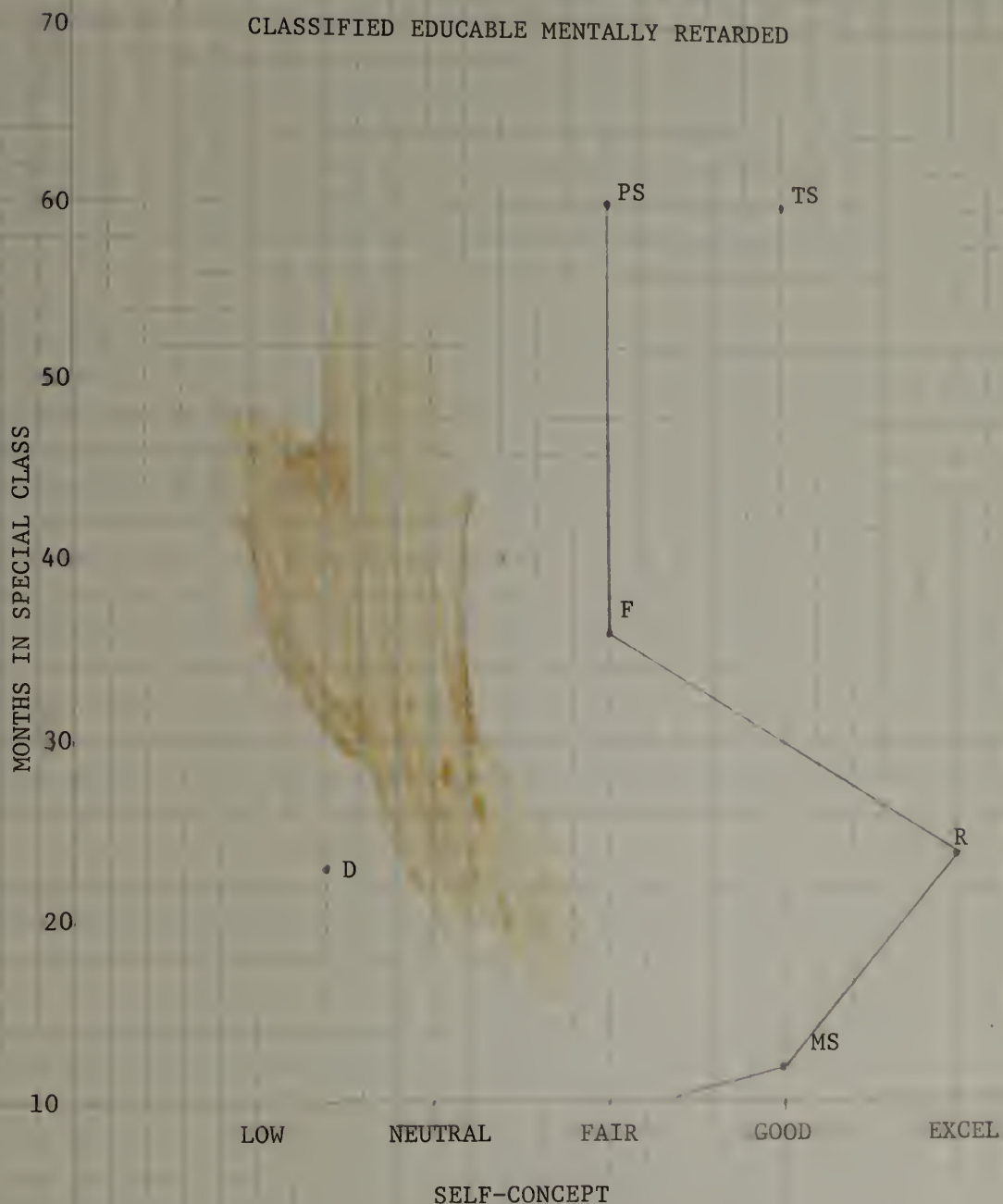
⁹Graphic results of this study are enclosed in this chapter on pp. 84-85.

SELF-CONCEPT AND MENTAL AGE
OF
CHILDREN CLASSIFIED EDUCABLE MENTALLY RETARDED

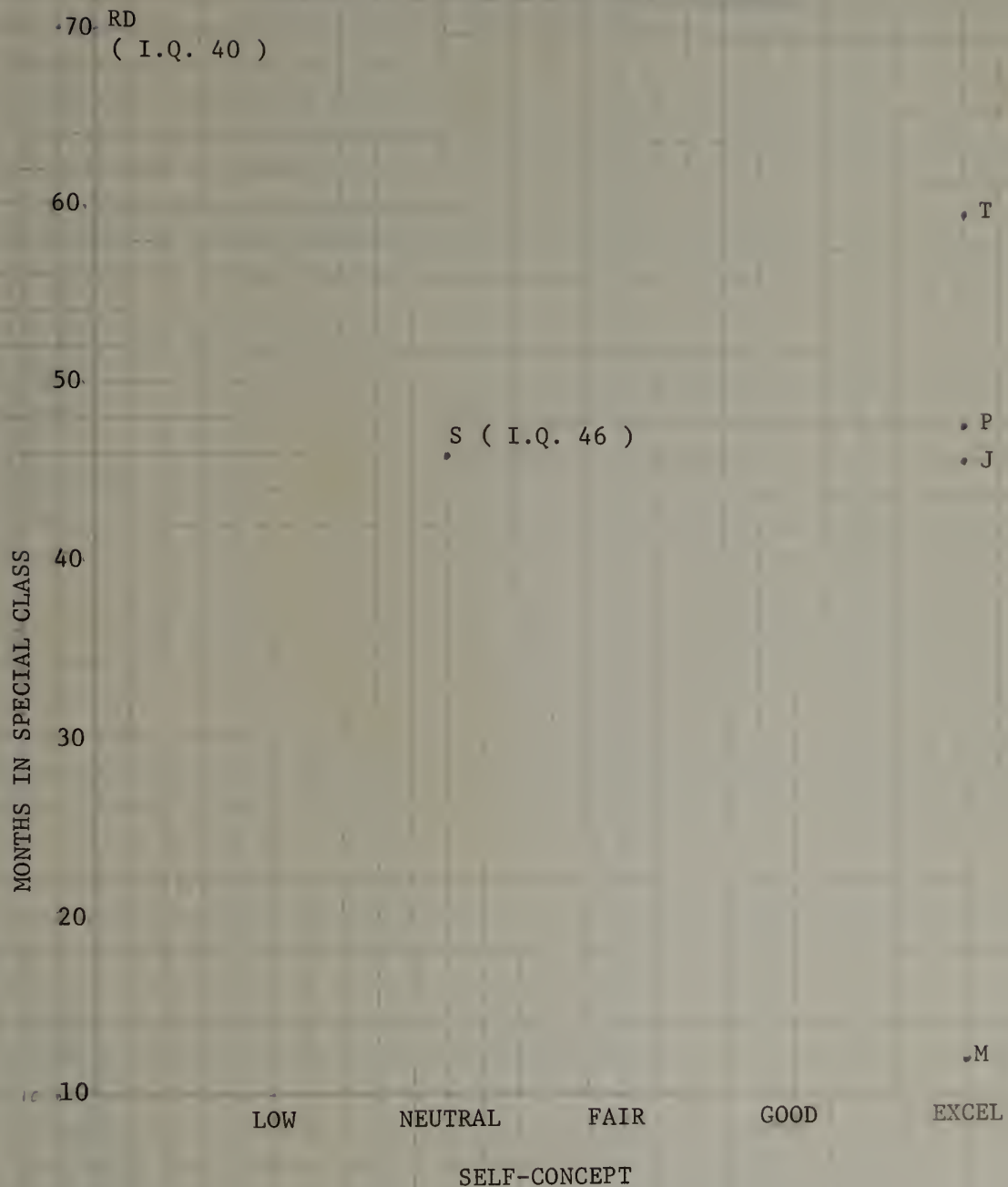


Mental Age or MA reports to indicate the intellectual level at which the child is functioning. For example, a mental age of seven years indicates that the child has a mental age equal to that of an average seven year old child.

SELF-CONCEPT AND MONTHS IN SPECIAL CLASS
OF
NON-ORGANICALLY IMPAIRED CHILDREN
CLASSIFIED EDUCABLE MENTALLY RETARDED



SELF-CONCEPT AND MONTHS IN SPECIAL CLASS
OF
ORGANICALLY IMPAIRED CHILDREN
CLASSIFIED EDUCABLE MENTALLY RETARDED



The average time spent in special classes by organically impaired children in this study was forty-seven months, indicating most of their school enrollment. Proportionately, the results indicate that these children have self-concepts which are higher and more stable. It is assumed that their lack of experience in regular classes make comparisons to regular classes less noticeable and account for their more optimistic approach to containment in special class.

Achievement Motivation Study

The purpose of this field study was to investigate differences, if any, in motivation to achieve between a group of Negro educable retarded adolescents experiencing a special education program and another group of Negro educable retardates experiencing a regular school program. A third group of Negroes of normal intelligence in regular classes was included for comparative purposes.¹⁰

The youngsters examined in this study were from the Negro educable mentally retarded public school of one section of a large New Jersey city. They ranged in age from thirteen years to fourteen years and nine months. The mental age of these students ranged from seven years eight months to eleven years and two months. The intelligence quotients were in the sixty to seventy-five range. From the fifty students contained in special classes, the mean number of

¹⁰ Robert Zito and Jack Bardon, "Achievement and Motivation Among Negro Adolescents in Regular and Special Education Programs, American Journal of Mental Deficiency, (Vol. 74, #1, July, 1969), pp. 20-26.

3A

	I SELF CON- CEPT	II INTEL- LIGENCE QUOTIENT	III MEN- TAL AGE	IV MONTHS IN SPECIAL CLASS	V READ- ING LEVEL	VI CHRON- OLOGICAL AGE
Excellent						
M	30	57	9/0	12	4	12
P	30	63	9/9	48	5	14
T	30	72	9/6	60	7	13
R	29	77	10/6	24	5	13
J	<u>28</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>7/6</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>13</u>
(Averages)	29.4	69.0	8.98	48.5	6.25	13
Good-Fair						
MD	25	75	7/9	12	4	14
TS	25	69	7/3	60	.5	14
F	25	75	7/6	36	3	14
PS	<u>20</u>	<u>72</u>	<u>7/0</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>6.5</u>	<u>13</u>
(Averages)	23.75	72.75	7/4	42	3.5	13.75
Neut-Low						
S	15	46	6/3	46	3.5	14
D	<u>13</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>6/3</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>3.5</u>	<u>14</u>
(Averages)	14.0	56.5	6/3	34.5	3.5	14
Low-Poor						
K	10	79	6/3	4	3	12
RD	<u>7</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>7/0</u>	<u>72</u>	<u>.5</u>	<u>14</u>
(Averages)	8.5	59.5	6.65	38	1.75	13

3B

Brain Damaged Average	23.3	59.	8/3	47.3	4.0	13.3
Funct. Average	21.	73.1	6/1	34.5	3.58	13.4
	2.3(B)	14.1(F)	2.2(B)	12.8(B)	.42(B)	.1(F)

years spent in those classes was three years and eight months. The second group of youngsters were contained in regular classes and were on waiting lists for placement in special classes.

The cumulative records of these children were examined in order to obtain information on background, home environment, physical problems, behavior problems, etc. There were no significant differences noted between the two groups. None of the children were organically impaired.

In order to measure specific variables, various instruments were employed. Four thematic apperception pictures were used and instructions were designed to arouse achievement imagery. The children were asked to look at the pictures and interpret a story pertaining to each picture viewed. The reading test section of the Wide Range Achievement test, 1946 edition, a page of random alphabetic letters were shown to the students with the instructions to cross out a specific letter within a period of time. These tests were administered individually under uniform conditions.

Two major aspects of motivation were studied: achievement fantasy and objective goal-setting behavior. The following operational definitions were used:

Achievement Imagery was defined as a theme of striving toward attainment of a goal in a story produced by the subject.

Hope of Success was scored when someone in the story thought about expected, or actually achieved success of a goal.

Fear of Failure was scored when someone in the story was concerned about the possibility or the fact of failure to attain a goal.

Reality of Level of Aspiration was defined as the difference between the subject's initial aspiration level under neutral conditions and his stated goal expectancy prior to testing under success or failure conditions.

Aspirational Shift was defined as the difference between the subject's goal expectancy prior to testing under success or failure conditions and his goal expectancy after exposure to success or failure conditions.

Word Recognition was defined as the grade level attained by the subject on a standardized test of work recognition.¹¹

The results showed that special class retardates showed less hope of success in their achievement imagery than did the retardates in regular classes. This again, indicates the "trapdoor effect", whereby once a child is labeled retarded by placement in special class, his ability to even fantasize success becomes affected.

Significantly, the retardates in special classes expressed a fear of failure far in advance of the retardates in regular classes. In examining aspirational shift it became apparent that both special class retardates and normal children scored similarly. This suggests normal children might feel the effects of separation and isolation if removed from the academic "mainstream". Goal expectancy for normal children also decreases under failure conditions.

In word recognition the normal children scored a mean of middle

¹¹Robert Zito and Jack Bardon, p. 21.

sixth grade level, even though subjects were actually in middle seventh or middle eighth grade at the time. The significance of this test result might indicate that these children are non-white and come from disadvantaged backgrounds. As highlighted in chapters one and two, non-whites are behind their white school peers in reading-readiness from the time they enter public school. This condition prevails as the child is promoted to advanced grades, because our present system of education is geared for middle class white society.

The retarded youngsters in regular classes scored a mean word recognition of middle third grade level, and the retardates in special classes scored a mean word recognition of late second grade level. The results of this segment of the test again illustrate the misconception that special classes and special education teachers can devote more time and have more training to work with retardates than do regular teachers.

In summary, the Self-Concept Study and the Achievement Motivation Study document the facts that non-organic retarded children do not belong in special education classes. The combined results of these two studies indicate that "pseudo" retardates placed in special classes experience low-self-concept levels, low motivation levels, low academic achievement levels, and high frustration and fear of failure levels.

In contrast to these findings, there is reason to believe that special classes do serve a purpose. That purpose is to teach the organically impaired or brain damaged child. Statistics and research indicate that the organically handicapped achieve better and are more contented

when they are separated from the academic "mainstream". Socially they can adjust more readily to their counterparts than with children who are not handicapped. Academically, they perform on a much higher level within these classes, possibly because the teacher can devote more time to individualized instruction. This occurs when the idealistic approach to teaching is used. In addition, the entire structure of the special class for organically impaired children needs improvement and drastic changes. Although these children do not feel the impact of isolation from the school as do the "pseudo" retardates, the total isolation, which they presently experience in most urban school systems, is not conducive to social and academic growth.

Non-organically impaired children do not belong in special classes and perform better in regular classes, but these children require more learning assistance than is available presently in most urban public schools. The following chapter will offer alternatives to special classes for the non-organic students, and suggest methods for improving and revising special classes for the organically impaired students.

CHAPTER VI

PROGRAM ALTERNATES FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Resource Room

The present system of urban education is failing to meet the needs of inner-city children. The overall process of today's education works much like a jigsaw puzzle. This analogy is formed by likening the children to the pieces of a puzzle, while the educational programs form the contour of the picture. These "pieces" are being categorized, separated and arranged to fit into the "picture" uniformly, yet it is obvious to all educators that this puzzle has never been completed. The blame for incomplete education has been placed on the "odd pieces". These are the children who come from low socioeconomic backgrounds, and cannot adjust to middle class values and goals which comprise urban education.

It is proposed that the pieces of the jigsaw puzzle represent the academic programs, and the contour of the picture is comprised of the individual children. This arrangement theorizes that the individual needs of children will be met by the altering of academic programs, rather than the children themselves. Also, there are specific programs, which must be completely discarded as pieces of the puzzle before the "picture" can be completed. One such program is the present use of special

education classes for non-organically retarded children.

The special education programs were originally intended only for children who displayed organic handicaps. Today, it is also the vehicle, which separates and labels children with academic deficiencies as "retarded". This program employs the use of negative, rather than positive reinforcements.

In effect this means that non-organically impaired children belong in regular classes. They do not adapt, adjust, nor learn well when they are joined with brain damaged children and isolated socially and academically from their peers.

The institution of a non-graded system of education in public schools represents one solution to eliminating the "tracking system". Not a unique idea, this alternate method is presently being tested in some urban school systems. In addition, most of these same systems use variations of differentiated staffing. Faculty members do not always readily accept these innovation. As employees they would prefer to keep the security of the status quo, because it is easier and more familiar to them. The difficulties encountered in instituting non-graded classes and differentiated staffing often occur, because the benefits of such programming have long range, rather than short range effects. Under evaluation, these effects offer many beneficial aspects and far exceed the trial and error problems encountered at the onset.

The most obvious benefit of differentiated staffing is that teachers can choose the area of education best suited to their abilities. They can

collectively and individually perform using their most proficient skills. Also, the teaming of primary and secondary teachers alleviates some of the economic handicaps of teaching since resource materials can be pooled. This type of teaching technique provides opportunities for interaction and co-operation between staff members.

The students also benefit in several ways. The "slow learner" receives individualized tutoring in all academic areas from the most knowledgeable and interested teacher. This special assistance is provided without the stigma of labeling the child as an underachiever. Probably by remaining in regular classes, the self-concept of such a child would not be damaged and the mental age would also be stabilized. Curricula geared for individual needs improve the motivation factors, because each child is allowed to achieve academically according to his ability and intellectual capacity.

This multi-teacher aspect affords students an opportunity to interact with a variety of adult models, most beneficial to children who display problems in social adjustment. Educators can observe many teacher-child relationships within the classes and learn techniques of relating to students who represent behavioral problems. Clinical services are also utilized in a most advantageous manner. This type of programming insures that "problem" children will not be isolated, nor discarded from the "mainstream" of education. They are, instead, allotted many services and opportunities, which are lacking in special classes for the retarded.

The utilization of a differentiated teacher staff and non-graded system will not mean that all non-organically impaired children can be immediately placed in regular classes. Those who have felt the effects of isolation and given up all demonstrations of achieving in public schools need special attention. These are the children who display low self-concept and mental age. For these students the phasing-out process must be gradual. Re-entry into regular classes will be accomplished by the use of a resource room.¹ This same type of programming will replace the outmoded special education class for the brain damaged child.

The theory of the resource room is that only a minimal number of children contained in special class need to be there one-hundred percent of the time. It is thought that when a child is competent in a given school area, social or academic, he should participate in that area with his chronological peers. For example, the individual may spend as little as one hour a week with his chronological peers in regular classes, or as much as thirty nine hours in the various study areas, as the case may indicate. Eventually, academic and social involvement with regular classes should negate the "trapdoor effect" of special classes to the point of complete reintegration of the child into non-graded, regular classes.

¹A resource room designed and used at New Park Avenue School in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1967. The program is still in operation.

A slightly different resource concept-one designed to include disturbed children-is in operation at Amherst (Massachusetts) Regional Junior High School.

Brain damaged children, in varying degrees, require and positively respond to the containment of special classes. For this reason, the purpose of the resource room as originally proposed should remain the same as that of the special class, with certain modifications.

Organically impaired children within these classes tend to develop their own subculture. This subculture is an adaptation of the values and needs of the retarded persons. These same children, also enjoy the security of the separation from "normal" children, for they can then compete academically with those peers most closely related in ability. This separation from the academic "mainstream" for reasons just mentioned, does not lower their self-concept. The present system of special education classes, the brain damaged child cannot form a subculture, nor compete socially or academically on the same level with them.

For the organically impaired the resource room provides the equal benefits of partial inclusion and partial social and academic integration. This partial integration is necessary in order to explore their highest capabilities in study areas not found in special classes. Educable brain damaged children are often capable of doing work in particular study areas along with their chronological peers. Also, because they are contained in special classes for only a portion of each day, it is important that they have opportunities to interact with "normal" children. It is, however, necessary to mention that brain damaged children are aware of the realities of their handicaps, both physically and mentally.

While social contact is desirable, the sarcasms and taunts of other children can be extremely unpleasant, and therefore, the protection of their own subculture is necessary to maintain.

Vocational and pre-vocational training offered in Junior High School special education programs are minimal. The very nature of the special classes lacks all aspects vital for future preparation. The non-organically retarded children who spend the majority of their academic lives in special classes become adolescents incapable of adjusting to society and the "working world". For these reasons, vocational training is one of the most important avenues to be considered in planning alternate programs for special education.

Within most urban public school systems, special education children are contained as a unit, although they chronologically range in age. Many retarded adolescents drop out of school entirely upon reaching age sixteen because, for psychological and physical reasons, they feel uncomfortable in the presence of younger children. As a result of dropping out of school they are forced to accept the limitations of their handicaps and education. At this point, four avenues are open to them.

The first alternative is to seek gainful employment. Rarely are they successful in this endeavor, because they are not equipped to compete in the technological society. Their knowledge of how to obtain a job and actual training is negligible. Secondly, there are work-study programs offered in some public urban systems, which enable youngsters

to remain in school and work on a part-time basis. These programs cannot possibly absorb all of the eligible youngsters who apply. Expansion of facilities is not probable due to economic factors and lack of job placements. Thirdly, although each child is legally able to return or remain in school, he may be unhappy and uncomfortable in a formal, structured classroom. Also, they are aware that continued attendance in special classes does not further prepare them for the outside world. Finally, the retarded or "pseudo" retarded adolescent may become a human parasite on society. At the age of sixteen, life becomes meaningless. Without the security of being self-supporting, these children must rely on handouts from relatives or the state.

The type of vocational programs needed for these children are those that will create and maintain an independent existence for them. Few vocational programs for the retarded and "pseudo" retarded have been proposed and even fewer have been successful. In lieu of the plight of the retarded children in Hartford, Connecticut a program of vocational training was accepted and funded by the state of Connecticut in 1967.

Project Challenge

Project Challenge was an original pilot program designed to teach vocational training to the adolescents of special education classes.²

²Project Challenge was designed and directed by John P. Delaney, special education teacher in Hartford, Connecticut, 1967, (funded by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation).

This segment of chapter four will detail the program's objectives methods of personnel recruitment, operations, attitudes, financial statements, accomplishments, limitations, and values both tangible and intangible. The fact of its' success demonstrates the worth of the guidelines implemented for use in future programs of this kind.

The purpose of Project Challenge was to give emotionally disturbed and retarded boys the basics of pre-vocational skills, a "job ready attitude" and actual job training and skills. The program implemented the use of a fix-it shop in the city, which employed these youngsters for a period of nine weeks. The shop was managed by a director and an assistant and was organized as an out of school enterprise. Workers were told they merited their employment on the bases of ability, personality and recommendations. At no time did the employees feel that the shop was in business for them, or that they were the recipients of charity. The entire project simulated realistic working conditions and policies.

In June, 1967, initial requests for referrals to Project Challenge were sent to teachers of the Senior Opportunity Classes and to the Hartford High School. The employment policy stipulated a desire to apprentice boys over sixteen years of age, who were considered unmanageable, unemployable and potential dropouts. Eight of the participants in the project were recruited in this fashion and the remaining four were directed to the program by the original eight.

The boys were psychologically tested and evaluated at the

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation before being referred to the project. The twelve employees represented a variety of disabilities, personalities, and problems for a pilot program. They spanned the spectrum of the intelligence quotient scale and ranged from severely retarded to economically and emotionally deprived normal. Most of them displayed a tendency toward violence and all were unkempt.³ Due to the multi-problems of these individuals, it was necessary to utilize various methods and techniques of instruction.⁴

The format of this program included an introduction and explanation of the machines and tools to be used. These tools included soldering iron, electric drill, sandpaper, electric sander, lawnmower (rotor and reel), most small hand tools, i. e., hammer, saw, paint brush, hedge clippers, trimmer, etc. The boys practiced with the tools until some degree of proficiency was attained, although most skills were actually acquired on the jobs in the community. These jobs were sought through handbill publicity and personal recommendations from satisfied customers.

The jobs obtained by the fix-it shop were divided into two main groups - outside and inside jobs. Most of the outside jobs entailed gardening or maintenance work. Inside jobs included furniture, re-finishing, light appliance repair, antique restoration, and automobile simonizing.

³For specifics, see the employee chart on pp. 106-107. Included are disabilities, methods of instruction used, final results of each individual, and the skills and knowledge displayed by each employee.

⁴See the key for method chart on p. 105, this outlines the methods of instruction and direction used in relation to the individual problems.

The prices for these jobs were \$1.50 per man-hour inside; \$1.80 per man-hour outside. Initially, the director would select a foreman for each job, who would then accompany him to the work site in order to estimate the amount of work involved and the cost to the client. As the program evolved the employees as a group selected their own foreman for each job. This foreman was usually the most knowledgeable boy in the particular area of work. His job was to estimate a fair price for the work involved, contract the conditions with the client, and help the director in the supervision of the work. This set-up seemed most satisfactory to the workers involved with each job, since once a job was contracted, they were collectively held responsible for the completion of the task to the satisfaction of the customer. At times, the clients themselves seemed to be the program's major problem. The word "retarded" was not used in any of the handbills or communication, nor was the idea "sold" to recruit business. Often the client would not question the backgrounds of the employees until a job was completed and it was time for the client to pay for the services. At that point, although a job was done professionally and satisfactorily, the employees might be told that they would receive less money than had originally been agreed upon. Eventually, the director or assistant was able to persuade the customer to pay. Contracts were signed before the work was started after this type of attitude became more and more obvious. Signed contracts also eliminated the explanations and apologies which had to be given to the boys by the director and assistant.

In the event that some of the boys were not busy with contracted jobs, they were employed on the non-profit Ropehold Project. This project was a sub-contract of the HARCO Company carried by Project Challenge so that it would not be lost to the Senior Trainable class at Dwight School, who assembly the product throughout the school year. The project consisted of placing a rivet, turning it, inserting a length of rope and packaging the "ropehold" for delivery. The ropeholds are used as fasteners and as part of straight jackets and other restraining devices. This project was useful in occupying the trainable and more problematic youngsters, and taught them something of the assembly line technique. Initially, the Ropehold Project called for close supervision, for the employee's concepts of an acceptable finished product were not up to industrial standards. Often they would consider pieces completed that were dirty or damaged. This problem was eliminated completely in most cases, once the boys began to take pride in their accomplishments.

During the first few weeks, it became obvious that a minority of the boys were doing all the work. These same individuals demonstrated a willingness and motivation that was lacking with the remaining crew members. When it seemed apparent that criticism, individual "pep talks", and heavy supervision were failing to instill incentive, Project Challenge developed a company within a company, which was based on the idea that each member would be paid according to the individual work output. This profit sharing arrangement was similar

to that of the Junior Achievement Companies. The endeavor was named Challenge Company and organized democratically by the employees.

The boys decided through their own volition that wages were to be prorated in relation to the effort demonstrated by each worker in a particular contracted job. After the first pay day, when according to company policy some boys did not receive a salary, loafing was decreased considerably and free riders realized they could not achieve an "easy touch".

Challenge Company provided many aspects, which were beneficial in developing a sense of responsibility and self-esteem. Although the boys were competing with one another, they maintained a sense of fairness. Accomplishment was not the only criteria for pay. The boys never criticized anyone, who after displaying an honest effort, could not or did not do the job correctly.

At the completion of the nine weeks, all the boys returned to public school. Seven out of the twelve of the boys are presently employed in full or part-time jobs. The long range and total effect of Project Challenge on the youngsters employed that summer is difficult to assess, for many of the program's accomplishments are intangible.

Project Challenge offered these boys a unique type of learning situation. For them it was a "first time" experience in many ways. The vocational training, experience, community interaction, job competition, delegation of responsibility, and personal satisfaction received from independently succeeding and accomplishing in society cannot be evaluated or measured.

Boys with low self-concepts developed pride, self-esteem, and established new and important sets of values. Through the natural human dynamics of the group emerged self-confidence and personalities capable of becoming contributing members of society.

Practical skills were learned along with lessons in job application, interviews, decorum, etc. The attendance record shows a percentile of ninety-two, which demonstrates the interest that these boys had in work and self improvement.⁵

Many more programs of this type are necessary if the organically impaired and emotionally disturbed are to become contributing members of our society. It is the responsibility of our educational system to institute such vocational training programs in the public schools. The future of all students contained in special classes depend on their capabilities of contributing to the "working world" and success in being prepared for employment by the time they are of working age. In addition, job placement centers should be provided by the guidance committees, along with job aptitude testing. Certainly these youngsters deserve as much assistance and guidance as do future college students.

⁵See the Attendance Record on p. 108.

KEY FOR METHOD CHART

- #1 Basic slow repetition of instructions. (the task being repeated until successful and correct completion was achieved)
- #2 Outside sources of influence: parents, teacher, social worker, friends. (adult models and positive reinforcement factors involved)
- #3 Withholding funds (no work; no pay policy)
- #4 Personal contact with the director and the assistant director of Project Challenge. (adult models used for personal relationships to initiate incentive)
- #5 Influence of other workers by example. (peer group control and influence)

The above methods were employed for individual problems, as decided upon by the discretion of the director and assistant. This chart is enclosed in conjunction with the employee records cited on pp.

- A. Disability - untrained mentally retarded.
Method - #1
Results - very promising, training received and appreciated.
Motor and auto repair ability should be developed.
- B. Disability - emotionally troubled
Method - left program
Results - none
- C. Disability - mentally retarded, untrained, sloppy, unable to follow direction, easily distracted, extremely immature, no concept of work habits or desire to learn.
Method - 1, 3, 4, 5, 2
Results - After nine weeks of frustration, began to take pride in his work, and was demonstrating progress when the program ended.
- D. Disability - mentally retarded, untrained, emotionally disturbed, personality disorder with a search for gender.
Method - 1, 3, 4, 5
Results - No progress. Became more feminine as the summer progressed. His work was not acceptable as a finished product. He did appear happier when allowed to work at his own pace.
- E. Disability - economically, socially, mentally disturbed.
Method - #5
Result - left program
- F. Disability - severe mentally retarded, dellusions, violent behavior.
Method - none
Result - referred to Division of Vocational Rehabilitation for confinement consideration.
- G. Disability - mentally retarded, untrained
Method - #1
Result - Grasped work habits very well, genuine willingness to be trained, excellent production, works hard in all areas.
- H. Disability - severe mentally retarded, untrained
Method - #1, 4, 5
Result - small steps forward. Happy in sense of accomplishment. Work not up to industrial standards.

- I. Disability - emotionally, socially, mentally retarded. Racial bitterness
Method - #1, 4
Results - extremely successful. Absorbed all areas of pre-vocational training with zeal. Works hard in all areas.
- J. Disability - Emotionally, socially, mentally retarded. Immature, no concept of or desire to learn. Minute attention span, mouthy, unable to compete or get along with other boys. Violent behavior.
Method - # 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Results - very little success. Viewed the other boys who worked at learning as fools. It is my feeling that he is agency conditioned to the point that unless something very drastic happens th this boy in the near future, he will never be self-supporting.
- K. Disability - mentally retarded, untrained, unkempt, unable to follow instructions
Method - 1, 4, 5
Results - Satisfactory effort and achievement noted. Successful vocational training a reality if continued. Attempts assigned tasks.

PROJECT CHALLENGE

Attendance: July 3 - September 1

	<u>7/7</u>	<u>7/14</u>	<u>7/21</u>	<u>7/28</u>	<u>8/4</u>	<u>8/11</u>	<u>8/18</u>	<u>8/25</u>	<u>9/1</u>	Total Days <u>Employed</u>	Total Days <u>Attended</u>
1 A	---	---	---	---	4	5	4	5	5	24	23
2 B	5	3	3	---	---	---	---	---	---	15	11
3 C	5	5	0	3	4	4	5	5	5	45	36
4 D	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	45	44
5 E	5	4	3	---	---	---	---	---	---	15	12
6 F	---	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
7 G	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	44	44
8 H	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	45	45
9 I	5	4	4	5	5	4	4	4	5	45	40
10 J	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	45	45
11 K	1	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	3	41	36
12 L	1	4	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	41	39
TOTAL										409 $\frac{1}{2}$	379 $\frac{1}{2}$

Project Challenge
Financial Report
September 1, 1967

\$5,074.76

I.	Physical Plant	(Htfd. Board of Education)	
	Housing		250.00
	Telephone		32.00
	Secretary		396.00
		TOTAL	\$678.00
II.	Supplies	(Conn. Ass. Ret. Children)	
	Shop equipment		174.98
	Transportation		113.80
	Gas & Oil		86.03
	Lawnmowers (3)		121.95
		TOTAL	\$496.76
III.	Salaries	(Div. Voc. Rehab.)	
	Director		1234.50
	Ass't Director		1100.00
	Client Main.		1565.50
		TOTAL	\$3,900.00

D. V. R. FINANCIAL INVOLVEMENT

<u>Name</u>	<u>7/7</u>	<u>7/14</u>	<u>7/21</u>	<u>7/28</u>	<u>8/4</u>	<u>8/11</u>	<u>8/18</u>	<u>8/25</u>	<u>9/1</u>	<u>Total</u>
1 A., R.	---	----	----	----	19.00	19.50	19.00	19.50	19.50	\$ 96.50
2 B., W.	19.50	18.50	18.50	----	----	----	----	----	----	\$ 56.50
3 B., R.	19.50	19.50	----	18.50	19.00	19.00	19.50	19.50	19.50	\$154.50
4 D., R.	19.00	19.50	19.50	19.50	19.50	19.50	19.50	19.50	19.50	\$175.00
5 E., G.	19.50	19.00	18.50	----	----	----	----	----	----	\$ 57.00
6 F., C.	----	19.00	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	\$ 19.00
7 J., D.	19.00	19.50	19.50	19.50	19.50	19.50	19.50	19.50	19.50	\$175.00
8 M., M.	19.50	19.50	19.50	19.50	19.50	19.50	19.50	19.50	19.50	\$175.50
9 M., D.	19.50	19.00	19.00	19.50	19.50	19.00	19.00	19.00	19.50	\$173.00
10 P., R.	19.50	19.50	19.50	19.50	19.50	19.50	19.50	19.50	19.50	\$175.50
11 N., G.	----	19.50	19.00	19.50	19.50	19.50	19.00	19.00	18.50	\$153.50
12 R., S.	----	19.00	19.50	19.00	19.50	19.50	19.50	19.50	19.50	\$155.00

Delaney, John P., Director \$1237.50
 Heneghan, Thomas M., Ass't Director \$1100.00

TOTAL FINANCIAL INVOLVEMENT \$3,900.00

REFINISHING SUPPLIES

BLACK PAINT	1.50	PUTTY KNIVES	1.50
ALUM. PAINT	.40	STEEL WOOL	.69
WALNUT PAINT	1.26	CARBON TET.	3.00
UNDERCOAT	1.26	SAND DISCS	.70
FRUITWOOD STAIN	.94	COAR. DISCS	.60
BLACK AUTO PAINT	<u>9.50</u>	FINE DISCS	.35
	<u>14.92</u>	FINE DISCS	.50
		VARNISH REM.	1.95
WAX	21.00	PROCESS PAPER	.69
CHROME POLISH	2.00	RUBBER GLOVES	1.50
PRESTO	1.40	SAND DISCS	.70
WINDEX	.99	SAND DISCS	.60
WHITEWALL CLEANER	.98	WIRE BRUSH	.75
CHOMOIS	3.00	PROCESS PAPER	.81
CAR WASH	.85	MASKING TAPE	.69
VISTA	1.98	BRUSH	.25
VISTA	1.98	CARBON TET.	1.50
CHROME POLISH	.50	SUB TURPS	.75
WINDEX	<u>.99</u>	BRUSHES	5.90
	<u>35.67</u>	PROCESS PAPER	.46
		DISCS	1.00
RAKES (3)	10.47	PROCESS PAPER	2.40
RAKE (1)	2.25	TURPS	.35
SPADE	4.95	SAND DISCS	1.35
PITCH FORK	3.95	PROCESS PAPER	.34
HEDGE SHEAR	7.95	PROCESS PAPER	.65
PRUNER	3.50	VARNISH REMOVER	1.00
L. HAN. PRUNER	7.50	PROCESS PAPER	.84
GRASS SHEARS (2)	7.50	PAINT REMOVER	<u>1.00</u>
EDGER	6.45		<u>32.82</u>
WEED CUTTER	2.50	SHOP EQUIPMENT	114.98
SCYTHER (1)	5.65	TRUCK RENTAL	113.80
STONE	.75	GAS AND OIL	86.03
HAMMERS (2)	1.70	LAWNMOWERS (3)	<u>121.95</u>
CHUCK KEY	.75		
SANDER	<u>19.95</u>		
	85.82		
SCYTHER BLADE	<u>5.75</u>		
	<u>91.57</u>		

TOTAL FINANCIAL INVOLVEMENT

\$491.01

CHAPTER VII

URBAN EDUCATION

Needs of a Special Education Teacher

A major agreement in the proliferation of literature on the ills of urban education focuses on the point the problem is the teacher. The teacher's pre-service and in-service training has become the nexus of the controversy. "A major reason for the inappropriateness of teaching methods in low-income schools is that teacher training institutions persist in training all teachers as though they were going to be fed into suburban middle class schools."¹

Present teacher training programs are not only inappropriate for inner-city teachers, but appear to be a time wasting device on the part of colleges. Most college education majors are familiar with middle class education procedures, having experienced them all their lives. To expect these individuals to adjust and accept the values, attitudes and behaviors of low socio-economic students without specific training is naive.

"Teachers assigned to (inner-city) schools often begin with negative attitudes towards their students and their willingness to learn."²

¹Rodger Hurley, Poverty and Mental Retardation, A Casual Relationship, (Vintage Books: Random House, New York, 1969), p. 119.

²Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, (New York: Bantam Books, March, 1968), p. 429.

Traditionally, it has been the teacher training institutions which have promoted negative attitudes toward inner-city children by ignoring their needs completely. Coleman reports finding "...a higher proportion of teachers in schools serving disadvantaged areas are dissatisfied with their students than are their counterparts in other schools."³

Negativism and prejudice are key factors for teachers failing to close the educational "readiness gap" of inner-city children. In addition, they are not well enough versed in the culture of the ghetto to provide alternate programming. It is much easier for the teacher to ignore the "slow learner" or to use the tracking system as a vehicle to label and remove the "pseudo" retardate from the classroom via special education containment. Teachers label and categorize children partially because their criteria of a normal child is the child they have been trained to teach, the middle class child.

Teachers who are unable or unwilling to understand and relate to their students cannot possibly perform their duties at varying degrees of need. In part, this lack of communication between the middle class teachers and low income non-white students perpetrates the "trapdoor effect" of special education on non-organically impaired youngsters.

As a microcosm of urban education the same teacher training problems plague urban special education. Most special education training programs are geared to the needs of organically impaired

³Paul Mussen, John Conger, Jerome Kagan, Child Development and Personality (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), p. 565.

educable students. The youngsters at this degree of handicap may comprise ninety-eight to one hundred percent of suburban special education classes. This figure is reduced to below forty percent when applied to the population of urban special classes. In urban areas the majority of contained children are non-organically impaired.⁴

The philosophy behind present special education teacher training applies the "irreversible factor" to teaching techniques. As has been demonstrated, the organically impaired child has a condition which cannot be changed. In light of the given physical entity of the condition, efforts are made to elevate the child to his intellectual limit, which is not considered high:

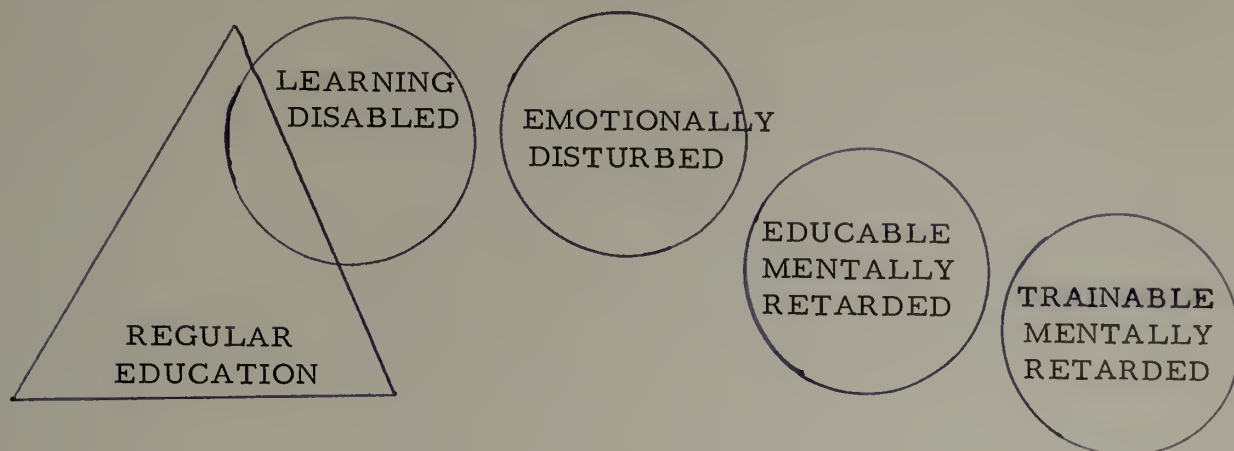
In contrast (to normal children) their rate of learning is slower and they rarely learn as much, particularly in academic areas. In the course of learning, they apply, like other children, the process of imitation, reasoning, and generalization. To the degree that they can, they acquire concepts and develop value systems consistent with social living.⁵

When special education student teachers are placed in urban schools, academic and organic impairments are dealt with similarly, to the detriment of each. Teacher training institutions consider special education a group of separate entities placed outside of normal education. A diagram of the teacher training institution's point of view shows regular classes and special education for the perceptually

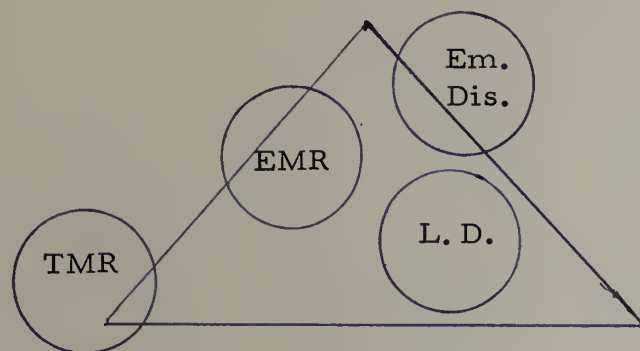
⁴Personal interview with Dr. Joseph Lavender and Richard Clancy, Hartford Board of Education, October, 1969.

⁵Herbert Goldstein, ed., A Curriculum Guide for Teachers of the Educable Mentally Handicapped: (Interstate, Danville, Illinois, 1963), p. 9.

handicapped, emotionally disturbed, educable mentally retarded and trainable mentally retarded as perceived:



A more realistic view of special education needs should include all, but the most severely emotionally disturbed or organically impaired children in the "normal" group. Children with learning and emotional disabilities stemming from a non-organic source, as well as some educable mentally retarded children, could profit more from "regular" education than from containment. The following diagram illustrates this point:



"It is estimated that of these mildly retarded persons, about seventy-five percent have the same basic mental endowment as those in the ninety to one hundred intelligence quotient range, except that their measured or functional intelligence level has been retarded..."⁶

⁶Miles to Go (report of the Connecticut Mental Retardation Project Report, March, 1966), p. 108.

The difference appears to be one of direction for teacher training programs. All purport to concern themselves with rehabilitation of a very basic nature. In truth the organically impaired child is in need of habilitation--he has never lost skills which he can regain. The "pseudo" retarded child is in need of rehabilitation--to regain the skills and self-confidence he lost upon containment. Few teacher training institutes in the United States presently make this distinction.

Components of Special Education Teacher Training Program

A program intending to train teachers for the area of special education must have as its basis a curriculum relevant to both the potential teacher and the population which he will serve. This, in essence, requires a redefinition of the role of special educators and a comparable adjustment in their training procedures. Because of the multi-disabilities and overlapping of disabilities in a single class of "special" children, it makes little sense to continue training personnel to fill a particular narrow niche in the field.

The professional entering the field must be a teacher capable of dealing effectively with the diverse problems he will encounter, and he must become an agent of change within the system. To do this effectively he must be schooled in the strategy, technique, and implementation of positive change. An urban special education teacher must primarily be a good urban teacher.

Initially, the student teacher must be exposed to basic training skill. These should include methods in reading, language development, mathematics and science. Once the basic skills of teaching "normals" have been mastered, the expertise of teaching those who deviate from the norm can commence.

Guidelines for a special education teacher training program should be viewed as a continuum in four phases. The initial segment should be the academic preparatory phase. At this time the student will be introduced to an interdisciplinary view of mental subnormality. It is essential that as many diverse views, i. e., educational, psychological, medical and parental be included in the potential student's exposure. A typical schedule might include:

- I. Introduction to Urban Education
- II. Nature and Needs of the Retarded
- III. Psychology of subnormal and unadjusted children
- IV. Educational Measurements
- V. Practicum at State or Association for Retarded Children facility.

This segment will give the student a background in diagnostic techniques and allow him to become familiar with the languages of the different disciplines.

The second or observatory/choice segment should be of an experiential nature. It is mandatory that the student be interned to work directly with handicapped children in at least two settings. This may be accomplished by arrangement with a nearby institution and/or urban

school district.⁷ From this exposure the potential teacher will augment his theoretical knowledge with practical application. In the urban school system mobility between the classes may not be as great, however, as a volunteer the student may divide his time among several of the following possibilities: Day Care Centers, classes for educables (3 levels), trainables (3 levels), emotionally disturbed, physically handicapped, autistic children and parent organizations, generally obtaining a knowledge of the inner-city special education system. In consideration of the length of the school semester, and to add to the continuity of the course of study, this period should be divided into segments of six weeks' duration. At the completion of this phase, the student teacher will be more aware of the real differences in the personalities and aspirations of the varying groups of persons with whom he comes in contact. As a bonus, while the student is acquiring methodology, his presence in a classroom, workshop, or institution will provide valuable manpower notoriously lacking in these areas.

At the culmination of phase two the student teacher should be in a good position to judge the specific area in which he wishes to teach and will have completed several of the certification requirements.

⁷In November, 1970, a letter was sent to ten Massachusetts schools, agencies, and institutions serving the retarded, requesting their willingness to support such a program of teacher training at the University of Massachusetts. The results were strongly in favor of such a program, for nine out of ten replies indicated a willingness to co-operate with the university in the area of inter-teacher training.

Many of the state certification requirements are in need of modification for they are not realistic. For example, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires that all teachers of special classes (no differentiation) be required to take a minimum of three hours of "Industrial Arts and/or Crafts".⁸ While this may be beneficial in teaching the trainable mentally retarded child, its worth is dubious in the education of inner-city children. The student teacher has been exposed to both institution and city organically impaired and the "pseudo" retarded. Also, he will be aware of the deficits in his own background. The special education training program should be of two years duration with options for withdrawing from the program if it is not indigenous to the student's expectations or talents.

The specific preparation or third phase of the teacher training should involve the subjective selection of the majority of course work designed to further professional development. In addition, in order to foster the commonalities among the various branches of the discipline certain areas, familiar to both must be nurtured. This might take the form of a series of modular seminars in community development, parental perceptions of the educator, role playing, survival skills, legal aspects of retardation, and sheltered shop management, etc.

⁸ Commonwealth of Massachusetts, General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 386.

The final or participatory phase should be entered when the student feels confident in the area of his choice. Ideally, the student will be housed in proximity to the area in which he is assigned. For example, if the student chooses to train in an institution, he will be required to live on the grounds. If the student elects urban special education, it will be necessary for him to live in the inner-city. Throughout this phase seminars and other supportive functions of the teacher training program must be maintained.

The gains expected from this type of exposure, an academic oriented program, will substantially change the character of special education programming. Many of the misconceptions and injustices of both urban and institutional special education practices will be apparent to those persons working in the field. Through their variety of experiences the special education teachers can be expected to exercise a positive influence on the perspectives of other professionals and to aid the development of innovative instructional and vocational programs.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

CHAPTER I

A number of books formed my opinion regarding the origins and growth of special educational systems. Among these are Louis B. Blan's, A Special Study of the Incidence of Retardation (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1911); Thomas Simon and Alfred Benet's, Mentally Defective Children (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1914); Raymond E. Callahan's, Education and the Cult of Efficiency (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962); and the Connecticut Mental Retardation Planning Project and Report, Miles to Go (Connecticut State Department of Health, 1966).

An overview of the role of the urban teacher in determination of retardation was gleaned through many volumes. These included Robert Rosenthal's, Pygmalion In The Classroom (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1968); Jonathon Kozol's, Death at an Early Age (New York: Bantom Books, 1968); Herbert Kohl's, 36 Children (New York: Signet-New American Library, 1968); and Estelle Fuchs', Teachers Talk (New York: Anchor Books, 1969).

Opinions expressed in the section relating to the validity of standardized intelligence testing were compiled from John L. Phillips', The Origin of Intellect Piaget's Theory (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman and Company, 1969); Paul Mussen, John Conger, and Jerome Kagan's, Child Development and Personality (New York: Harper and Row, 1969);

Frederick Weintraub's, Recent Influences of Law on the Identity and Placement of Children in Programs for the Mentally Retarded (Council for Exceptional Children, Mimeograph); and from numerous conversations with public school psychological examiners and teachers.

CHAPTER II

Several references were consulted to describe the condition of racist feeling which exists in America's urban public schools. Selected volumes contributed to my conclusions. Among them were Barry Schwartz and Robert Disch, eds., White Racism (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1970); Louis Knowles and Kenneth Prewitts', Institutional Racism in America (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1969); Roger Daniels and Harry Kitano's, American Racism (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1970); Gordon Allport's, The Nature of Prejudice (New York: Doubleday Press, 1958); Price Cobbs and William Grier's, Black Rage (New York: Bantom Books, 1968) and Robert Liston's, The American Poor (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1970).

In order to gain a perspective on children from low income inner-city areas, it was necessary to consider the theory of the disadvantaged. Oscar Lewis', LaVida: A Puerto Rican Family in the Culture of Poverty-San Juan and New York (New York: Vintage, 1966); Harry Miller's(ed.), Education for the Disadvantaged (New York: The Free Press, 1967); Charles Valentine's, Culture and Poverty (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968); and several presentations by Cynthia Deutsch, Breaking Through to Learning (Council woman, mimeographs).

To complete the study of ignored non-white cultures and to re-emphasize the role of environment in learning, several books were used. Among them were Rodger Hurley's, Poverty and Mental Retardation: A Casual Relationship (New York: Vintage Books, 1960); Kenneth Clark's, Dark Ghetto: Dilemmas of Social Power (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1965); Joseph Hunt's, The Challenge of Incompetence and Poverty (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1969); E. Franklin Frazier's, The Negro Family in the United States (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939); and Andrew Billingsly's, Black Families In White America (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1968).

CHAPTER III

The material for chapter three was largely compiled while I was employed as a teacher of the urban mentally retarded, 1966-1969. The materials in the file number some 3,000 pieces, psychological examinations, reading and math work, taped interviews, notes drawings, and cards. Some information, particularly that pertaining to standardized scores and evidence of organic impairment, was obtained from the children's medical and cumulative records. Although the names and locations of the children have been altered, persons and incidents are factual.

CHAPTER IV

The chapter presented two immediate problems. The first of these was to investigate contention among urban special teachers that the classes were designed to contain rather than educate inner-city children. In order to do this correctly it was necessary to examine the theoretical basis upon which the existence of these classes is posited. To this end several curriculum guides were consulted Edward Stark's, Special Education: A Curriculum Guide (Springfield, Illinois, Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, 1969); Willard Abraham's, The Slow Learner (New York: Center for Applied Research in Education, 1964); Frances P. Connor and Mabel E. Talbot's, An Experimental Curriculum for the Young Mentally Retarded Children (New York: Teacher College Press, 1966); and Oliver Kolstoe's, Teaching Educable Mentally Retarded Children (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., 1970).

A second consideration is the methods used to transmit the curriculum content. William Cruickshank and Orville Johnson's, Education of Exceptional Children and Youth (Englewood-Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1967) and Norris Haring and Richard Schiefelbusch's, Method's In Special Education (San Francisco: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967) provided data pertinent to the subject.

Journals of students at the University of Massachusetts provided data as to the effectiveness and value of the present system. Jim Haskin's

in his Diary of a Harlem School Teacher (New York: Grove Press, 1969) and Therma Williams', Opinions, Attitudes and Perceptions of Parents of Children in Special Classes for the Socially Maladjusted and Emotionally Disturbed in New York City Public Schools (New York: The Center for Urban Education, 1969) bare out the contention of the students.

CHAPTER V

The differences between organically impaired and functionally retarded students is readily apparent to a teacher of such a group. Little research, however, has been done into the social ramification of joint containment. To meet this need, I conducted a study designed to gauge the self-concept of contained youngsters. From this study grew the concept of the "Trapdoor Effect" in urban special education.

Certain works, while not directly spelling out the trapdoor of special education, strongly suggest its existence: Elliot Liebow's, Tally's Corner (Boston: Little-Brown, 1967); Oliver L. Hurley's, Special Education in the Inner-City: The Social Implications of Placement (Yeshiva University, Mimeograph, March, 1971); Roger Hannan's, "A Program for Developing Self-Concept in Retarded Children", Journal of Mental Retardation, 6, No 21 (1968); and Robert Zito and Jack Bardon's, "Achievement and Motivation Among Negro Adolescents in Regular and Special Education Programs", American Journal of Mental Deficiency, 74, (1969).

CHAPTER VI

The idea of a non-contained, yet especially helped group of children in a school is not a new one. In small communities it has been the practice to have a "helping" teacher. Yet this idea has not spread with any rapidity to the city.

While employed as a teacher of the urban retarded, I devised a means of allowing my charges to re-enter the main stream of school life. This evolved into the concept described in chapter five. While the concept is not original, the method for which it was utilized was unique--namely the removal of children from special education classes who did not belong there.

In a slightly different manner Project Challenge accomplished the same goal of turning the youngsters involved back in to learning. The majority of the youngsters involved were either excluded from school or not expected to finish high school. When it was demonstrated to them that they could achieve something, they once more became interested in the system.

CHAPTER VII

Preparation of teachers for inner-city special education classrooms presents the dual problems of adequately preparing teachers to deal with and appreciate the inner-city and preparing them to educate the children, real and pseudo retarded, they find there.

In order to begin to devise a program for the training of teachers it was necessary to analyze the deficiencies in the present system. To this end numerous urban special education teachers were consulted for their suggestions. In addition, several books on the subject of urban education document voids in training. Among them were James Coleman's, Equality of Educational Opportunity (Washington: GPO, 1966); Eleanor Burke Leacock's, Teaching and Learning In the City Schools (New York: Basic Books, 1969); Peter Schragg's, The Village School Downtown (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968); Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (New York: Bantam Books, 1968); and Charles Silberman's, Crisis in the Classroom (New York: Random House, 1970).

