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# The effects of authoritarianism, competition, reward and punishment on the psychological climate of schools.

Ronald Dean Robinson  
*University of Massachusetts Amherst*

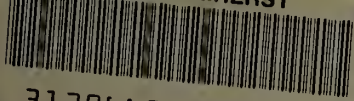
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THE EFFECTS OF AUTHORITARIANISM, COMPETITION, REWARD  
AND PUNISHMENT ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL  
CLIMATE OF SCHOOLS

A Dissertation

By

RONALD DEAN ROBINSON

Submitted to the Graduate School of the  
University of Massachusetts in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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June

1975

Leadership and Administration

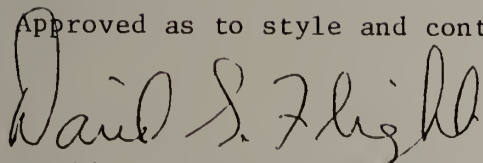
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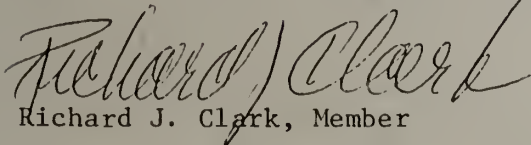
By

RONALD DEAN ROBINSON

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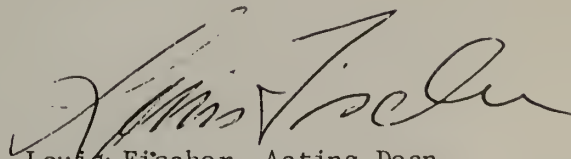
David S. Flight, Chairman of Committee



Richard J. Clark, Member



Charles A. Sorenson, Member



Louis Fischer, Acting Dean  
School of Education

June, 1975

## PREFACE

It is perhaps no mere coincidence that this paper serpentineed its way through a period of forgettable personal turbulence and emerged, at long last, hand in hand with new sources of strength and contentment.

Immodesty compels me to hope that this dissertation will be the least important work I will have written. Yet it has served to focus thoughts, create ideas, dispel some melancholy, and renew purposes.

Special acknowledgements go to the National Association of Independent Schools, whose generous fellowship for graduate study provided me with a sense of honor as well as a year of comfortable residency at the University of Massachusetts. I also offer my thanks to Hawken School for the year's leave of absence and supplemental stipend.

I am indebted to Mr. and Mrs. Nathaniel S. French who, in their respective ways, went beyond the call to assist me through the mysterious procedural patterns of the Graduate School. My deep appreciation is extended to Dr. David S. Flight and Dr. Charles A. Sorenson for their counsel, patience and insistence on quality work.

Included among those whose lives were touched by this dissertation are my children to whom I confirm my

devotion. Finally, my love and gratitude remain for my wife, Jean, whose quiet support, constancy, and long hours of typing helped to bring it all to fruition.

The Effects of Authoritarianism, Competition, Reward and  
Punishment on the Psychological Climate of Schools

(June, 1975)

Ronald D. Robinson, B. S., Ohio State University

M. S., Western Reserve University

M. S., Western Michigan University

Directed by: Dr. David S. Flight

ABSTRACT

The "climate" of a school is an important factor in an evaluation of the school's effectiveness. Roughly akin to human personality, school climate is difficult to define and is often equated with such concepts as "openness," "morale," or "authenticity."

Halpin studied organizational climate and created climate profiles based on the results of a large survey of faculty perceptions of themselves and of their administrators. Hartley and Hoy attempted to relate these climate descriptions to levels of alienation using the five variants of alienation given by Seeman. Their results showed high correlations between Halpin's "closed" climates and their own measures of alienation.

The present study was designed to provide some possible explanations for the relationships found by Hartley and Hoy. Since organizational climate refers exclusively to



faculty perceptions of their leader and of how they get along with one another, it seems likely that student alienation is not merely a function of organizational climate per se, but rather of something that is generated out of that climate and which is observable by students.

As a result of the author's own experience in schools, and as a result of a wide review of educational literature, three "processes" were selected as phenomena which emanate from a school's climate and which, in turn, serve to explain the relationship between that climate and the level of student alienation which exists. The three processes are: Authoritarianism, Competition, and Reward/Punishment.

It is proposed that these processes will be viewed by the student to be highly operative in the school to the same extent that the faculty of that school describe their organizational climate as "closed." Further, it is hypothesized that the greater the degree to which these processes are operative, the higher the level of alienation that will be reported by the students.

In short, Authoritarianism, Competition, and Reward/Punishment are proposed as links between organizational climate and student alienation.

Faculty and students of eight independent schools participated in the study. Faculty completed a revised



form of Halpin's Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ). Students were asked to complete the Student Climate Description Questionnaire (SCDQ) which was designed by the author to measure both the degree to which Seeman's alienation variants existed and the degree to which the students perceived the three processes to be operative.

The results of the study indicate the following:

1. A "closed" climate correlated significantly with Authoritarianism and highly with the other two processes.
2. Authoritarianism correlated significantly with Powerlessness and Meaninglessness. Competition correlated significantly with Isolation. Reward/Punishment correlated significantly with Meaninglessness, Isolation, and Self-Estrangement.
3. Data concerning the interrelationships among the three processes suggest high Authoritarianism leads to high Reward/Punishment contingencies which, in turn, generate high Competition.
4. Administrators tend to regard their organizational climates as more "open" than do their faculties.

No attempt is made to place value judgments on climate types or on the levels at which the three processes should be operative. Nevertheless, the results of this study suggest that the "closed" climate is highly related to the

existence of those processes which in turn are related to the alienation variants. .

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## INTRODUCTION

### Background

School evaluation teams nearly always end their visit with a general "impression" of the school. This impression is quite aside from the data they have collected from checklists and forms. It is a "feel" for the place, a vague but certain reaction to the school's "climate."

An extremely difficult notion to define, climate is nevertheless a key aspect of a school and a major influence on its effectiveness.

Some but little research has been done in the area of school climate. Two studies in particular serve as starting points for this paper and set the stage for the definition of the problem. The first is the Halpin studies of organizational climate.<sup>1</sup> Using the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ), Halpin used a factor analytic approach to create organizational climate profiles. These profiles were not placed along a continuum from good to bad, but were simply used to describe climates according to high and low ratings on the eight parts of the OCDQ. These ratings were all made by the faculties of the schools, and so organizational climate refers only to that

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<sup>1</sup>Andrew W. Halpin, *Theory and Research in Administration* (New York: MacMillan Company, 1956).



portion of the total climate which involves faculty outlooks on their leadership and on how they as faculty interact with one another.

The Halpin study will be critiqued in Chapter Two, but for now it must be emphasized that organizational climate only partly characterizes the overall school climate.

The second basic study is that of Hartley and Hoy who sought to expand on the idea of climate by relating organizational climate to student alienation.<sup>2</sup> Using the five variants of alienation given by Seeman,<sup>3</sup> Hartley and Hoy measured levels of alienation in the student bodies of a sample of schools. At the same time, they administered the OCDQ to the faculties. More detailed results of this study will be reviewed later, but the predicted correlations between Halpin's "closed" climates and high levels of alienation did generally result.

#### Problem and Purpose

By including students, the Hartley and Hoy study took an additional step in encompassing a greater portion of the total school climate. However, the focus was only

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<sup>2</sup>Marvin C. Hartley and Wayne K. Hoy, "'Openness' of School Climate and Alienation of High School Students," California Journal of Educational Research, 23, January, 1972, pp. 17-24.

<sup>3</sup>Melvin Seeman, "On the Meaning of Alienation", American Sociological Review, 34, December, 1959, pp. 783-91.

on student alienation. There remains a two-part problem.

First, it can be agreed that organizational climate and student alienation do represent aspects of a school's climate, but they certainly do not represent all of it or, perhaps more important, not necessarily even a controllable part of it.

Secondly, the discovered relationship between organizational climate and student alienation may provide some directions toward a better understanding of a school's climate, but it does not explain very much about why the relationship exists. Hartley and Hoy never promised cause-and-effect conclusions, but the idea that alienation is the dependent variable is but thinly disguised. Common sense may allow some acceptance of that, but it seems unlikely that alienation is a direct function of organizational climate per se. Since the OCDQ deals only with faculty-faculty and faculty-administration relationships to the complete exclusion of students, the Hartley and Hoy study's failure to seek connecting causes appears to make organizational climate and student alienation almost mutually independent in spite of the statistical relationships found.

In summary, the problem addressed by this paper is one of connection between organizational climate and student alienation. Why is it that that which is measured by the OCDQ has any bearing at all on the degrees of student

alienation? What intervening variables, if any, exist between organizational climate and student alienation? Why?

The purpose of this paper, then, is to attempt some answers to these questions. Accordingly, three variables were selected to be tested as possible connecting links. These variables were chosen as a result of the author's own experience in schools and as conclusions reached following a thorough research of the literature. (Nearly every entry in the Bibliography contains viewpoints which eventually lead, in one way or another, to these variables.)

The three variables, hereafter called "processes," are Authoritarianism, Competition, and Reward/Punishment. Chapter One is devoted to a more elaborate discussion of these processes as viewed by the author and by a number of other writers. The processes will receive operational definitions in Chapter Two.

### Research Method

Specific hypotheses are stated in Chapter Two, but in general, a relationship is being sought among three aspects of a school's climate, viz., (a) the organizational climate, (b) student alienation, and (c) the three processes which are proposed as emanating from the organizational climate and mediating between that climate and alienation. The prediction is that schools which tend toward closed organizational climates will reflect a high level of the processes,



as observed and felt by students, and that these processes will vary directly with the amount of alienation reported by the students.

The faculties of participating schools completed the OCDQ to obtain a description of the schools' organizational climates. Students of the same schools were asked to complete the Student Climate Description Questionnaire (SCDQ) designed by the author to measure (a) the level at which the students perceived the processes to be operative, and (b) the degree of student alienation, again using Seeman's five variants.

Following the collection of data, an organizational climate profile was assigned to each school using a best-fit procedure to be described. Mean scores for each of the processes and for each of the alienation variants were calculated. Using statistical methods discussed in Chapter Three, correlations were computed in two directions. First, the tendency for closed climates to relate to high processes levels was found; second, the tendency for high processes levels to associate with high alienation variants.

As secondary results, the interrelationship among the three processes is reported, as well as a brief comment on the tendency for administrators to perceive their organizational climates as more open than do their faculties.

Finally, Chapter Three provides a detailed account of the methods by which data were used and the specifics concerning the results of the testing.

This Introduction must end with the same caveat with which the paper itself ends: School climate is an elusive, nearly mysterious, phenomenon. Possibly for this reason, few seem to have held much hope for researching it with much success. Like any other human science, school climate will be understood only after many tentative steps have been made to investigate it. Accordingly, while many of the results of this study are statistically significant, many others show only directional tendency. Yet these tendencies may finally be the clues which beckon others to refine the methodology and to proceed with greater promise toward a grasp of this vital and dynamic element of the schools.

C H A P T E R I  
THE SOCIAL PROCESSES

The School Climate

Modern philosophy, and educational philosophy in particular, has sought explanations of the nature of man by thinking of him in ways quite unlike those of the classical period or of medieval times or of the "Age of Reason." No longer content to believe in the existence of pure Form, pure Ideas, Absolutes, Essence, or perfect Rational Intelligence, the greater thinkers of this century have turned toward the more subjective question of man as he exists within his environment. Indeed, even such disjoint camps as Humanism and Behaviorism must consent to recognize this common ground between them.

Within such a construct, it is important to consider the ways in which man organizes his consciousness as a result of his experience with his external surroundings. Some of this kind of thought has already made its way into educational practice as illustrated, for example, by the wide variety of open classroom concepts which all stress a rich environment in which a youngster is encouraged to "do education" by participating in that environment.

The natural inclination of the practitioner is to



concentrate on the more visible, tangible features of the youngster's surroundings. Space, color, lighting, resource materials, seating arrangements, and the like, now receive the attention of specialists in educational design. However, there is another part of an educational environment by which all in the school community are affected and heavily influenced. It is a highly complex set of processes, social in origin, but like all elements of society, reflected in the schools. They are difficult to identify and analyze and they do not enjoy consistent value judgments concerning their worth or effects. As a result, they tend to be ignored in everyday practice. Yet the existence and influence of these processes lie at the heart of the climate in which each student and educator conducts his daily life.

Of particular interest to the purposes of this paper are three processes which are part and parcel of the social milieu and which carry translations into the schools: Authoritarianism, Competition, and Reward/Punishment.

These processes are highly operative in society and therefore have become accepted practice in the schools. Since the school is considered an agency of society, this is hardly unexpected. But a lack of awareness of the degree and form in which these processes exist in a school seriously interferes with a clear understanding of both the school's intentions and its consequences on students. In addition,

obviously, to ignore the effects of such processes is also to disregard alternatives to them.

### Authoritarianism

The god-fearing man fears what, to him, is the ultimate authority. To a less encompassing, but perhaps more intense, degree is the fear one holds for the living authority figures who control his life.

The social system and the schools are organized, in most cases, in a strict hierarchy of authority power. The fear that attends this situation is often not only taken for granted, but even considered necessary for man's own good. One writer argues that the phenomenon is "natural"!

. . . anxiety is an anticipatory reaction to a perceived threat, such as a planned visit by the building principal. To say that anxiety in such a situation is inappropriate is to be insensitive to a natural aspect of human behavior.

A more realistic view is that authority power, far from guaranteed by the nature of things, is self-serving and is captured by those for whom authority is necessary to the preservation of their status.

There are influential men at the head of important institutions who cannot afford to be found wrong, who find change inconvenient, perhaps intolerable, and who have financial<sup>5</sup> or political interests they must conserve at any cost.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Bert L. Kaplan, "Anxiety--A Classroom Close-Up," Elementary School Journal, Vol. 71, No. 2, (November, 1970) p. 71.

<sup>5</sup>Neil Postman and Charles Weingartner, Teaching As A Subversive Activity, (New York: Delacorte Press, 1969), p. 2.

In any case, the system simply cannot do without it. "The price of maintaining membership in the Establishment is unquestioning acceptance of authority."<sup>6</sup>

Authority in one form or another is inevitable and inescapable. No one is able to suggest the abolition of one form of authority without suggesting the institution of another form. Even Rousseau, who believed that man is born free but is put in chains by a society that corrupts him or makes him unnatural, argued that the unguided man would be too susceptible to such slavery. The teacher must remove the student from social life and place him under the natural authority of a benevolent environment.

Kant believed in the authority of knowledge and discipline in order that man can rationally will what is right. Dewey argued for the authority of interaction between man and his social and natural environment. Plato supported the "good" as the best authority. The theists, of course, place their authority faith in a god.<sup>7</sup>

These kinds of philosophical positions do not, however, always hold a predominant place in the contemporary thinking or behavior of man. Part of the reason is that most young people are not exposed to these ideas unless they

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>7</sup>Maxine Green, Teacher As Stranger, (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc., 1973).



stumble across them in some freshman philosophy course or by chance reading. The reason, of course, is that the school is not encouraged to reveal alternatives to the social authority structure necessary to the health of the system. Even if these matters are included in the curriculum, they are meant more for scholarly discourse than to be thought of as viable options for man in modern society.

Our schools, like our social system, embody two styles of authority, both geared toward obedience of students to preconceived notions of who or what they should become. One style is described by Duberman who, supporting legitimate authority, saves a pejorative meaning for another term:

A crucial distinction must be made between authority and authoritarianism. The former represents accumulated experience, knowledge and insight. The latter represents their counterfeits: age masquerading as maturity, information as understanding, technique as originality. Authoritarianism is forced to demand the respect that authority draws naturally to itself. The former, like all demands, is likely to meet with hostility; the latter, like all authenticity, with emulation. Our universities--our schools at every level--are rife with authoritarianism, all but devoid of authority.

The second form of authority is defined by Fromm as "anonymous authority." It is authority which tends to hide the fact that force is being used and which functions as if all is done with the consent of the individual. "Anonymous

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<sup>8</sup> Martin Duberman, "New Directions in Education," Daedalus, Vol. 97, No. 1, (Winter, 1968), P. 323.

authority employs psychic manipulation."<sup>9</sup>

Traditional school authority is absolute and pays little, if any, attention to the few rights a child has. The nadir of the author's experience with non-acknowledgement of the child as a citizen occurred when one of his students was hauled before the principal for allegedly breaking a window. The student, who claimed innocence, had been accused of the act by another student. When it was suggested that the accused student had the right to face his accuser, the principal replied, "In a court of law, perhaps, but this is not a court of law; this is my office and my school."

This case, as well as those which every teacher has observed, is summed up simply:

The authority exercised by the school is in the purest sense lawless, in that the school authorities have virtually unlimited discretion. They make and change the rules, they provide whatever procedure there is for deciding if the rules have been violated, they determine punishments (backed, if necessary, by the law). There is no rule of law<sup>10</sup> by which the student can assert any rights whatever.

Students who come from high-control, high-discipline homes are students whose parents generally expect the same

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<sup>9</sup>Erich Fromm, in his introduction to A. S. Neill, Summerhill, (New York: Hart Publishing Company, 1960), P. 5.

<sup>10</sup>Charles A. Reich, Greening of America, (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 150.

kind of tight control at school. The reverse, however, is not necessarily so. Students who come from loosely controlled families are often expected by their parents to toe the mark in school. The aggregate expectation of the school, then, is control. "The most important characteristic schools share in common is a preoccupation with order and control."<sup>11</sup> "The organizational life of most public schools is dominated by a concern with controlling students."<sup>12</sup>

Serving again as agents for the system, teachers and administrators are the visible authority figures in the child's school life. Leonard points out that the only two entries under the word "disciplinarian" in the index of Roget's Thesaurus are "tyrant" and "teacher."<sup>13</sup>

Much of the superior-subordinate relationship between teacher and student is derived from the teacher's own insecurity over his tangle with authority. Teachers who are expected to behave with respect and obedience to their

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<sup>11</sup> Charles E. Silberman, Crises In The Classroom, (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 122.

<sup>12</sup> David W. Johnson, "Students Against The School Establishment: Crisis Intervention In School Conflicts And Organizational Change," Journal of School Psychology, Vol. 9, No. 1, (1971), p. 86.

<sup>13</sup> George Leonard, Education And Ecstasy, (New York: Delacorte Press, 1968), p. 8.



superiors are likely to demand the same from their students. Theory X runs right down through the hierarchy. School administrators often regard their teachers with the same sour attitude as do teachers their students.

A major responsibility administrators assume in schools is to ensure that teachers are working hard. If administrators do not perform this function, they assume teachers will get away with as little work as possible.<sup>14</sup>

As a result, the teacher's need for security is translated into the exercise of authority. Some of this may come out good-naturedly, but more often than not the need for power will surface in some authoritarian way. Typical is the assertion of knowledge authority. "A teacher can kill a subject by his own eagerness--egoness--to show himself its master."<sup>15</sup> Others may complain bitterly in the faculty room of their students' stupidity; they storm about having "taught it" but that "they didn't learn it." "The teacher presents himself to his students as their necessary opposite; by considering their ignorance absolute, he justifies his own existence."<sup>16</sup>

But the authoritarian teacher pays a price. His

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<sup>14</sup> Roland S. Barth, Open Education And The American School, (New York: Agathon Press, Inc., 1972), p. 151.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 88.

<sup>16</sup> Paulo Freire, Pedagogy Of The Oppressed, (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), pp. 58-59.

practices turn him into a fictitious person, a mannequin at the front of the room.

We are not honest about ourselves, our own fears, limitations, weaknesses, prejudices, motives. We present ourselves to children as if we were gods, all-knowing, all-powerful, always rational, always just, always right.<sup>17</sup>

The teacher who craves authority learns what every other adult in the system knows. He must sacrifice most of his true self and learn to live with the self-alienation that always results from unceasing role-playing.

In the traditional school, where he is expected to play the "paragon" role, the all-too-human-teacher finds himself suppressing feelings, masking resentment and hostility behind a facade of rational and loving calm.<sup>18</sup>

The student is faced with a variety of impersonal authorities as well. The incessant authority of evaluation is as influential as is the stern disciplinarian. "People and things are processes. Judgments convert them into fixed states. This is one reason that judgments are commonly self-fulfilling."<sup>19</sup> The threat of a low grade which leads to a lowered grade-point-average which leads to a lower class rank is a chain reaction of authoritarian oppression which extends through college admission and

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<sup>17</sup>John Holt, How Children Fail, (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1964), p. 208.

<sup>18</sup>Barth, op. cit., p. 64.

<sup>19</sup>Postman and Weingartner, op. cit., p. 199.

eventual happiness. The power of the grade and of all the other links in the chain is every bit as awesome as the weight of the hierarchical authority pyramid which rests atop him.

In addition, there exists an authority of knowledge. In order to receive a diploma, the student is required to show evidence of having acquired information rarely of his own choosing. Both the knowledge and the framework of attitudes and practices surrounding it make for an authoritarian system all its own.

The teacher teaches and the students are taught;

the teacher knows everything and the students know nothing;

the teacher talks and the students listen--meekly;

the teacher chooses and enforces his choice, and the students comply;

the teacher chooses the program content, and the students (who were not consulted) adapt to it;

the teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with his own professional authority, which he sets in opposition to the freedom of the students.<sup>20</sup>

Working within the system, the teacher must see himself as utilitarian and so must rely on his knowledge as his only marketable asset. What he knows must be all that is worth learning, for only in this way can the teacher be assured his place as a producer and consumer.

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<sup>20</sup>Freire, op. cit., p. 59.



As a result, the narrow bands of knowledge possessed by a faculty become the sole information available which, in turn, causes that knowledge to take on an authoritarian illusion of its own. Even the teacher who prefers it differently has little choice but to bend to the extravagant authority structure of which he is a part. He is forced to walk the fragile line between the needs of his students and the power of the system. "There is an inherent conflict between the authority of the material to be learned and the learner. The teacher is caught in the middle."<sup>21</sup>

Another variation of authority to which the student is subjected is the authority of language. Students quickly learn that every question has a right answer and, moreover, every right answer has a right way of being expressed. A youngster who finds that two numbers can be "added either way" may have the enthusiasm of his discovery dampened when he is asked to state the idea in the jargon of the commutative law of addition. Youngsters at earlier and earlier ages are being asked to mediate expression and experience through the use of symbols and abstract thought.

The important question is not whether the child recognizes, understands, or uses the "right" word

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<sup>21</sup>Barth, op. cit., p. 70.

for his experiences, but rather whether he has developed a working concept of his own.<sup>22</sup>

Learning becomes lost in the shuffle of language if the language carries a higher authority than the meaning. Teachers smile benignly when they hear the right words, never stopping to consider whether the student has any idea what the words mean. "What students mostly do in class is guess what the teacher wants them to say."<sup>23</sup>

The effects of these forms of authority on the learning process are difficult to measure because of the many nuances in pattern, practice, and student reaction. Nevertheless, in an authoritarian school where teachers merely impart knowledge, where children are asked to learn predetermined packages of information in pre-established time sequences, where the only expected learning is that which is presented--in such a school the child is forced to accept without question, receive passively, standardize his interests. In short, he is alienated from his own curiosity, imagination and initiative. The goal of such a transmission-of-knowledge model is simply surrender to authority.

Authority which enables the teacher to have "power over" rather than to enhance the child's ability to achieve

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 86.

<sup>23</sup>Postman and Weingartner, op. cit., p. 20.

"power to" is mere manipulation and is certainly of questionable value in education. It is a cause for anxiety in the child, of fear that his own impulses are worthless, that he is incompetent to make decisions for himself, that he might be unable to keep up with the school's production quotas.

The rigidity of a school's authority structure is inversely proportional to its trust in students. The basic assumption is that a student cannot be trusted to know what is best for himself and so he must be coerced by the power of authority. The teacher fears that children are not learning, that they will run amuck in the halls, cheat on tests, and get away with everything they can. Children, fearing and distrusting their teachers, must be alert to the possibility of surprise tests, secret conferences with parents, report cards, and personal files in the office--files which they may not see.

Just as much of the teacher's daily energy is expended in response to a distrust of children, so a large part of the student's energy is dissipated in anxiety and anticipation stemming from his distrust of the teacher. Thus the conventional relationship between teacher and child is essentially one of adversaries in a constant struggle.<sup>24</sup>

Distrust, of course, is pervasive in all institutions because the negative assumption about man is that he is basically a crook. The pity is that authoritarian control

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<sup>24</sup>Barth, op. cit., p. 89.



is likely to generate anger and hostility which, in turn, makes dishonest behavior more likely. The entire cycle becomes a self-fulfilling prophesy because authority was conceived for the wrong purposes in the first place.

"Arguments based on authority are no longer valid; in order to function, authority must be on the side of freedom, not against it."<sup>25</sup>

The usual rationalization for authority power in the school is the same as it is in the system; it is for the individual's own good. This is a fair argument provided we do not examine the consequences. Is it, for example, for his own good to know that he is officially powerless even in the area of what he learns? Will a standard, inflexible, sometimes arbitrary authority structure benefit the individual when he must attempt to make his way through a novel, changing life environment? One answer is,

They gain no experience with other forms of organization or with the problems of shifting from one organizational form to another. They get no training for role versatility.<sup>26</sup>

Psychologically, authority in any form will inevitably result in some conflict. The issue, therefore, is not one of eliminating authority but of humanizing it in

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<sup>25</sup>Freire, op. cit., p. 67.

<sup>26</sup>Alvin Toffler, Future Shock, (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 409.

order to release the individual's potential for full development of personal power. As it stands now, we can expect and observe little else except psychological conflict bred from the constant worry and fear of satisfying the authorities. If the child errs, rebels, or fails, he is left with guilt; and the same is true if he is so obsequious in the face of authority that he is giving up too much of himself.

Holt believes that "the idea of painless, non-threatening coercion is an illusion."<sup>27</sup> The practice of authoritarian power over others is infectious and fear multiplies as increasing subjugation descends the authority ladder. The student on the bottom rung receives the full dose of authority and has no way to pass it on except in disagreeable attitudes and behavior. His only recourse is to react. The common results are alienation, aggression, bulliness, hostility; or, at the opposite extreme, servility, withdrawal, repression, helplessness. The system may prefer the latter and end up with the former. In either case, human beings are the losers.

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<sup>27</sup>Holt, op. cit., p. 221.

### Competition

A society may adopt certain means to pursue a goal, but the goal may lie outside the natural impulses of the members of that society. It is this point which most strongly illuminates the distinction between society and the "system."

Historically, the system developed beginning with the money-lenders and monarchs and arrived at the present financiers and power elite. The crafts and guilds of the Middle Ages gave way to full-flowered capitalism as invention and discovery served to improve the ability to wage war, expand production, and line the pockets of a few entrepreneurs. In fact, Mumford speaks of military might, industrial development, and capitalistic exploitation in the same breath.<sup>28</sup>

Over the years, the system has refined itself, has taken on the image of good taste, has kept some promises to a few more human beings, and, in general, has become the ultimate religion of Western man. But the system is not people. It is invisible, non-valued, psychological, and out of control. It is a social umbrella of actions, structures, threats, dominations, prizes, attitudes, and

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<sup>28</sup> Lewis Mumford, Technics and Civilization, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1934)

procedures. Underneath the umbrella is the society whose members gear their goals, fix their identities, relinquish their natural values, and direct their behavior, all in relation to how they see themselves with respect to the system.

Man, having the need for love, belonging, and esteem, is a social animal and is therefore naturally political. But he is not naturally economic, and, to the extent that his political structures are infested with economic overtones, his social system is external to his own needs and directions. Given this condition, the schools are obliged to divert their energies from the student's personal capability to his social "cope-ability." There can be little doubt that society's chief expectation of its schools is to prepare students for their experience with the system.

A major promise extended to individuals by the system is equality of opportunity, a wholly fallacious and misleading claim in itself. But behind this lure is the hard fact of scarcity, and man quickly realizes that the existence of opportunity for success by no means guarantees its attainment. Scarcity creates a bell-shaped curve for success achievement, albeit positively skewed, and "opportunity" pertains primarily to the willingness of the individual to scramble for the top by attempting to capture



a larger share of a finite set of benefits than anyone else. Not only is it a struggle for success on one's own, but also a battle against others who would deprive him of some measure of success should they surge ahead of him. Furthermore, since economic success is not limited by a humane regard for the economically unsuccessful, it is not a zero-sum game between two people. For every prince there are a thousand paupers. At the heart of the social process, then, is competition.

Particularly distressing for the youngster is that there exists not only a scarcity of success, but also a scarcity of means. No one hesitates to remind him that in order to achieve success, he must obtain a good job with a high salary and influential friends, which implies a good education at a good college, which implies high marks in school, etc. But good jobs are scarce, as are admissions to good colleges, and as are high marks. Hence, the student is faced with competitive pressure from the moment he can understand what his parents' goals are for him. The author has been told by more than one parent that enrollment in a "better" kindergarten and elementary school is an essential first step along the child's road to success.

The industrial influence is not lacking in this process. The world of commerce, itself a competitive enterprise, needs competitive workers. Promotions, salary

increases, prestige are all obtained through competition. Moreover, the employer is most likely to hire the individual who has proven himself as a competitor, and what better evidence than his competitive success in the schools?

And so the schools, expertly managed for the good of the social aim, must include competition in its daily patterns.

Competition became the chief ostensible motive force in Western mass education, as it seemed more and more to imitate the production line, with grades, honors and tests of all kinds gathering about them a power and glory all out of proportion to the quite limited function as learning aids.<sup>29</sup>

Competition is not a game that every youngster can or will play. The incredible dropout rate testifies to the fact that many school children and their families perceive the situation as hopeless from the beginning. But to those for whom doors are not closed in advance, the system beckons and the student enters into the competitive sprint for success. His constant companion is the fear that he will not succeed. Perhaps the main distinction between conforming achievers and casual non-achievers is that the former fear because they may not succeed and the latter fear because they know that they cannot succeed.

The competing high school student is always being diverted. So long as his goal is college, he is swayed

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<sup>29</sup>Reich, op. cit., p. 273.

away from any emerging interests which do not fit into the crisp criteria for college entrance. While he may be grappling with King Lear, the conjugation of Latin verbs, or the solution of trigonometric identities better than anyone else, his nagging personal concern and real attention may be on his new-found sexuality, his contemplation of the natural world, or his ability to relate to his family and peers--all of little interest to the college admissions officer.

School curriculums are designed by the narrow guide of the upward struggle. The "college track" curriculum leaves little room for the possibility that interests and abilities may lie outside it. College counselors, under pressure to achieve a good "track record" with the "better" colleges, must provide advice which diverts the student from all but one course of action.

Some schools have made a meager attempt to provide opportunities for the student to explore and experiment in areas which they might have avoided for fear of damage to the infamous grade-point-average. Various grading alternatives have been devised to allow the student to test his interest in a given area without being penalized should he lack the manners to find that field worth intense commitment. Such options also allow him to allocate his time so that he is not forced to maintain his average by



neglecting work of interest in favor of uninteresting work for which he may receive a low grade.

Typical of the mistrust of students is the accusation that most students will abuse grading options in order to escape the hold of the competitive grading system. Yet a study of the relationship between pass/fail options and fear of failure shows that avoidance of grades is not the sole or even major reason for electing the option. Pass/fail options were generally made by those with higher grade-point-averages and heavier course loads. "In contradiction to the carping of many critics, students did not seem to be using the pass/fail option to avoid being evaluated."<sup>30</sup>

Such wariness is to be expected because, again, the system has left its mark on those who design the competitive goals for youth. "A proposal to abolish competitive grading is brought to a vote before faculty members all of whom owe their positions to their success under the old grading system."<sup>31</sup> The fact is that a change would not be simply logical or based on reason. There is a psychological conditioning which governs the process. "The principles of grading and non-grading are not modifications of the same

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<sup>30</sup>William F. Stallings, et. al., "Fear Of Failure And The Pass-Fail Option," Journal of Experimental Education, Vol. 38, No. 2, (Winter, 1969), p. 91.

<sup>31</sup>Reich, op. cit., p. 364.



thing. They are wholly different frames of mind."<sup>32</sup>  
 Frames of mind are not easily revised. Furthermore, there is much more at stake than just grades, or honor rolls, or class rank. There is the whole notion of how the school translates the social idea of success into educational success. As usual, the student is given little to say about the ways in which he might regard his learning as successful.

Success and progress in school consisted largely of the ability to memorize accumulations of unrelated facts and to regurgitate these facts on demand. Success of this kind was translated into grades and test scores. The heavy emphasis on grades, test scores, and ranks in class which has developed in recent years has resulted in a kind of junior rat race in which the prime object is to achieve, at whatever cost, a high standing. When students speak frankly, they say that in school only marks count but that what really matters to them happens outside school.<sup>33</sup>

Alden suggests alternatives, but it is doubtful that they can be placed into the competitive framework as it now stands:

We need to look behind their academic records, their aptitude test scores, and their glowing personal recommendations for additional qualities that characterize the active, constructive participant in college life and society ... We must find ways to identify

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<sup>32</sup>Max S. Marshall, "Why Grades Are Argued," School And Society, Vol. 99, No. 2335, (October, 1971), p. 352.

<sup>33</sup>Frederich M. Raubinger, "Some Possible Causes Of Pressures," included in Ronald C. Doll (ed.), Children Under Pressure, (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Books, Inc., 1966), p. 86

such characteristics as motivation, creativity, imagination, and emotional maturity.<sup>34</sup>

The arguments used to support competition serve rather to indict it. The point that competition is a fact of life is, of course, circular. Most advocates of competition will eventually reveal the Theory X attitude about the human race, and rarely do they consider competition in any way other than its utility to the frenzied stampede toward material reward. One possible exception is competitive sports.

At one level, it is difficult to compare competitive sports with competition in the school or in society at large. For one thing, games are voluntary. When one handball player or eleven soccer players enter the game, they do so for recreation, exercise, and the expressed purpose of beating the opposition. But neither the victory nor the defeat has any permanent effects, nor should it be taken very seriously. It is precisely when it makes too much difference, as it does in some sports today, that the value of the game ceases to exist. The competitive aspects of scholastic sports have taken on some of the worst features of the process, especially for the adults who vicariously vent their rage and hostility while observing the proceedings.

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<sup>34</sup>Vernon R. Alden, "What Kind Of Excellence?" Saturday Review, Vol. 47, No. 29, (July 18, 1964), pp. 47-49.

McGuigan says,

Instead of recreational sports we have competitive athletics. The two are very different. Sport should be considered a means of relaxing tensions, of counteracting the emotional stress of life. Too frequently we destroy this aspect of sport in children by producing instead of relaxation another stress.<sup>35</sup>

What are the effects of hurtling our children into the competitive battle? In the overall social panorama, the result for Blacks, for the poverty-stricken, for women, and for all other oppressed groups alike is sickening. The very fact that competition exists as the only way to achieve some dignity and fulfillment in one's life is good cause to consider the system as the inhumane, degrading phenomenon that it is.

But even for those for whom competition is possible, can it be justified in any conceivable way? First, from an operational standpoint, one of its troublesome consequences is cheating, a fact of life in the school and the seed for all forms of swindle in adult life. The widespread use of cheating is simply evidence that the competition for grades is more important than the learning itself. In this respect, it is flabbergasting to find that parents, who never leave a doubt about the necessity for high grades, recoil with horror when it is discovered that their child

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<sup>35</sup>Robert A. McGuigan, "Children Under Pressure," from The Rotarian (January, 1965), included in Ronald C. Doll, op. cit., p. 51.



has cheated.

One way put it this way: cheating is not giving something to someone when they expect to get it. By using crib notes, he can give his teacher exactly what he wants and expects to get. Ergo, no cheating is involved!

Less facetious rationalizations were discovered in a study of students who cheat. The results were that such students evidenced a more positive attitude toward cheating; that they exaggerated the number of other students whom they believed to be cheating; and that they did not regard cheating as a problem.<sup>36</sup>

Second, from the human relations point of view, an effect of competition is its impact on cooperation. In our society, cooperation and competition are inverse functions. It is remarkable to hear the oratory of world cooperation from a nation so skilled in imperialism; or to hear of "shared industrial venture" from companies burning themselves out trying to capture one more percent of the market; or to hear the educational platitudes about learning as sharing and cooperation when, in fact, what we ask students to do is claw their way into the upper quintile.

Some schools confuse a lack of hostility in a student

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<sup>36</sup>David Sherrill, et. al., "Classroom Cheating: Consistent Attitudes, Perceptions, And Behaviors," American Educational Research Journal, Vol. 8, No. 3, (May, 1971), pp. 503-510.



body with cooperation. One does not imply the other. In fact, the relative calm may only indicate that cooperation is not taking place at all.

In competitive situations characterized by win-lose confrontations, observations may suggest lower levels of open conflict, since total interaction is significantly less and each group is committed to withholding its resources and information from the other group.<sup>37</sup>

Third, in terms of learning, competition may lead to increased production or speed, values in an industrial mentality, but problem-solving, synthesis, and insight, sometimes referred to as "power" learning, is either hampered or not affected at all.<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, as long as competition is valued, its companion pieces--grades, ranking, standardized tests, etc.--are propped up beyond justification. It creates acceptance of assumptions which have no place in education. Rogers, with tongue in cheek, names a few such assumptions:

Ability to pass examinations is the best criterion for student selection and for judging professional promise.

Evaluation is education; education is evaluation.

"Weeding out" a majority of students is a satisfactory

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<sup>37</sup>Paul Hersey and Kenneth H. Blanchard, Management Of Organizational Behavior, (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972), pp. 45-46.

<sup>38</sup>Margaret M. Clifford, et. al., "Effects Of Emphasizing Competition In Classroom Testing Procedures," Journal Of Educational Research, Vol. 65, No. 5, (January, 1972), pp. 234-237.

method of producing scientists and clinicians.

Students are best regarded as manipulable objects, not as persons.<sup>39</sup>

It is difficult to comprehend how any school can claim to hold to a reputable learning philosophy and, at the same time, include the forms of heavy-handed competition so prevalent in motivational practice. Eventually perhaps, "Competition will be seen for what it is: irrelevant to the learning process and damaging to the development of free-ranging, lifelong learners."<sup>40</sup>

Fourth, the effects of competition on the youngster himself must be examined. It is nearly impossible to find substantive support for the use of student competition. The concept is almost always associated with anger, anxiety, frustration, pressure, aggression--and, of course, alienation. Haines provides a comprehensive description of competition in the classroom:

Competition, in particular, a competitive grading policy, arouses tension in the individual. Many find it agreeable that competition should do so. What is little recognized, however, is that the contribution made by competition to undesirable consequences may follow. The present research demonstrated that students in competitive discussion situations became more anxious, displayed a greater incidence of self-oriented needs, and found themselves losing self-assurance. Further, they were less able to perform effectively in recitation,

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<sup>39</sup>Carl Rogers, Freedom To Learn, (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1969), p. 184.

<sup>40</sup>Leonard, op. cit., p. 129.

and they became dissatisfied with the discussion procedure. When the discussion was structured cooperatively, students felt less tense, displayed more task-oriented behavior, worked more effectively, and enjoyed the discussion.<sup>41</sup>

While the system may be callously unconcerned about the individual's internal state, it shows a brimming interest in aggressive behavior. Aggression won the West, brought progress, and defeated the enemy. It is by aggression that one keeps up with his neighbors or moves up in the class struggle through acquisition. There are, of course, limits to the system's tolerance of aggression, but society is having a difficult time with the increasing numbers of people who are exceeding those limits. The dilemma is that competition is encouraged without bound, but aggression needs to be curbed. Unfortunately, "A society that encourages competition and acquisition is almost sure to encourage aggression as well."<sup>42</sup>

In our schools, the two go hand in hand. Adults may be somewhat amused by aggressive behavior, especially from boys, and believe that they are just "letting off a little steam." However, aggression is not simply released; it spins off tangentially from the whirl of competition in ever-

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<sup>41</sup>Donald B. Haines and W. J. McKeachie, "Cooperation Vs. Competition," Microfiche ED 024 347, Reprinted from Journal Of Educational Psychology, (1967), III-9-3.

<sup>42</sup>Leonard, op. cit., p. 122.



increasing energy. Nelson's study showed that competition-induced frustration enhanced both imitative and total aggression, and that the increase in aggression appeared for those who experienced success as well as failure in the competition. Furthermore, "The present study and much other experimental evidence challenges the hypothesis that the expression or witnessing of aggression reduces the tendency to further aggression."<sup>43</sup>

The independence of success or failure from aggression was noted also by Berkowitz who found that, "Competition constitutes a frustrating situation which generates anger and which frequently results in aggressive behavior." He found that the strength of the anger generated by competition is a function of the importance of the outcome in terms of potential reward and punishment (such as grades), and by the duration of the competition (such as many years in school). Again, the student's level of achievement seems to have no effect on the resulting fear.

Failure or success in competition generates frustration--likely to be greater for the loser who has been denied the fruits of success and who has endured a greater number of thwarted responses. But winners, too, experience stress due to the

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<sup>43</sup>Janice D. Nelson, et. al, "Children's Aggression Following Competition And Exposure To An Aggressive Model," Child Development, Vol. 40, No. 4, (December, 1969), p. 1095.



unpredictability of the outcome and the fear of possible defeat.<sup>44</sup>

Competition in the school takes many forms, but the variation which most resembles a purely competitive game is a test. Every teacher has witnessed test anxiety ranging from nail biting or mind wandering to tears, vomiting or absence. DeBlassie, discussing the negative impact of such anxiety on learning and thinking, cautions educators about fear and pressure:

Test users should see that a test is the most visible part of the pressure that is brought to bear on children and youth as they are placed in the competitive scramble for marks, admissions, scholarships--for all the attainments which have both practical worth in our culture and high status value.<sup>45</sup>

Adults' support for the competitive style, especially in the schools, flies in the face of reason and empathy. Failure to recognize the terrible consequences is an ample indication of the power of the system over human beings.

Fifteen years of tracing the medical histories of 3,000 San Francisco men have convinced Dr. Meyer Friedman, a nationally known authority on heart disease, that, "...the majority of heart victims show the same common traits of excessive ambition, overwhelming aggression,

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<sup>44</sup> L. Berkowitz, Aggression: A Social Psychological Analysis, (New York: McGraw Hill, 1962), p. 181.

<sup>45</sup> Richard R. DeBlassie, "Test Anxiety: Education's Hang-Up," The Clearing House, Vol. 46, No. 8, (April, 1972), p. 527.

impatience and slavery to the clock."<sup>46</sup> He adds that these men suffer two-and-a-half times as many heart attacks as the more relaxed, easy going personalities; among men under fifty, the figure is three to one.

It does not seem overly compassionate to urge against the school's "production" of such people. But' this kind of plea will fall on the unhearing ears of an institution which, consciously or not, opts for the system rather than for the children. Heffernan provides a parting caveat:

Our demands that a child be forced to compete in all areas regardless of his ability to do so is damaging to the child's personality, his self-image, and his ultimate success as a mature adult.<sup>47</sup>

### Reward/Punishment

The competitive process operating within an authority power structure would be difficult to maintain were it not for a third characteristic of the system: the power to reward and punish. Without it there would be nothing for which to compete and authority would not have the wherewithal to maintain itself.

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<sup>46</sup> Edwin Kiester, Jr., "Your Personality Can Be A Matter Of Life And Death," Today's Health, Vol. 51, No. 2, (February, 1973), p. 16.

<sup>47</sup> Helen Heffernan, "Challenge Or Pressure?" New Jersey Association For Supervision And Curriculum Development, included in Ronald C. Doll, op. cit., p. 33.

Prior to such ideals as freedom and opportunity for all, the only reward that the non-privileged could expect was to remain alive; that is, reward was defined as non-punishment. With the advent of political participation, economic opportunity, and a less restrictive moral and social code, motivation could no longer be assured by punishment, or mere lack of it, alone. It was assumed that man had little reason to commit and toil for the sake of an elite class--an assumption which seems reasonably accurate. Therefore, those in wealth and power had to make it appear that members of lower social classes, if they competitively threw themselves behind the social system, could reap some of the benefits of higher living for themselves. Of course, "higher living" was a concept of the system and included prestige, wealth, leisure, and power over others. It was possible to offer these rewards because those already in power knew that such prizes were scarce; in the meantime, the individual's slavish efforts would further embellish the luxurious life-quality of the few and aggrandize their power within the system.

So it is today. Many youngsters represent a parent's second try at social rewards. Parents not only hope that their children will succeed in the pursuit of rewards; they also place enormous pressure on them to prepare for the chase. Their dream extends beyond hoped-for success for



their children; it is a relay race in which they pass the baton on to their offspring.

Most of us are unable to surpass the few who always seem to reach the mountain tops before we do. We fathers and mothers don't like this feeling. Thus, our children must carry on where we left off. Our children's successes become our reward.<sup>48</sup>

Education, formulated around the reward and punishment process, ceases to exist qua education. It represents, rather, a means to rewards which themselves constitute the end-goal of living and learning.

The process of formal education itself was kept in motion by punishment or the threat of punishment and by two main motivators, narrow competition and eager acquisition. These motivators became answers in themselves to the ultimate questions of life's purpose.<sup>49</sup>

As in this statement, the meaning and function of reward and punishment has switched somewhat. Punishment now refers to non-reward. The student knows that if he does not earn high marks, he may not be "rewarded" by a favorable college admission, etc., etc. The psychological orientation is toward aversion from punishment. The youngster who is conditioned by his need to avoid punishment and by the reinforcing nature of rewards is ripe for the system's assault on him, an assault which culminates in the school.

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<sup>48</sup> Geoffrey Esty, "Children In Trouble," New Jersey Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, included in Ronald C. Doll, op. cit., p. 71.

<sup>49</sup> Leonard, op. cit., p. 121.



Most teachers want to deny that they reward or punish a student with grades. The intent of the teacher, however, is not so important as the effect on the student. A student does not see a grade as something uniquely his as he would, say, the knowledge which he possesses; a grade is something bestowed on him from an external source. In this sense, a grade represents a response from his environment, a response which he categorizes as rewarding or punishing, good or bad.

The student is essentially correct in this view because evaluation is primarily a benefit for parents, teachers, colleges, employers, etc. His academic behavior is closely measured, usually in comparison with his classmates, and he is rewarded to the extent that he is victorious over his peers.

Competitive evaluation is useful for the teacher, of course, because if he had no "top" students, it would be a reflection on his teaching ability. By the same token, if he has no "failures" he might be considered "too easy on them" which would create concern that the students aren't being made to work hard enough. In these respects, then, grades, as rewards and punishments, have less to do with objective evaluation of a student's achievement and more with the inner state of and influences on the teacher who dispenses them.

Since the student devotes his energies to punishment avoidance and reward achievement, he has fear working at him from two directions: the fear of being punished and the fear of not qualifying for rewards. Constantly seeking approbation and security, the child becomes anxiety-ridden. He cannot release himself for other learning, other interests, or other activities which may be more meaningful to him.

External incentives such as marks and stars, and other rewards and punishments, influence children's learning mainly by evoking or representing parents' or teachers' approval.<sup>50</sup>

With respect to the learning process, punishment is most visible as a response to error. The new slogan in industry is "Zero Defects" and the concept has found its way into the schools. Many teachers express their evaluation of a student's work in terms of the number of errors made. The author's daughter had a teacher whose grade for a perfect paper was -0! This negative orientation for grading reinforces the ideal of not making any mistakes.

Schools which constantly identify mistakes and punish children for making them produce devastating effects upon learning. Children come to fear making errors and become afraid of acting at all.<sup>51</sup>

Aside from the pressure of grades as rewards and punishments, the emphasis on them devalues learning for its own sake--learning which might otherwise be rewarding

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<sup>50</sup>Barth, op. cit., p. 40.

<sup>51</sup>Barth, op. cit., pp. 103-104.

for itself.

Rewards are superfluous and negative. To offer a prize for doing a deed is tantamount to declaring that the deed is not worth doing for its own sake... Moreover, rewards support the worst features of the competitive system. To get the better of the other man is a damnable objective.<sup>52</sup> Rewards and punishment attempt to compel interest.

This emphasis takes on even greater strength when ability grouping exists. Of great concern to the brighter student is the fact that he would likely receive very high grades in an average ability section, but that his grade might suffer in a higher track. His choice is between a higher grade with less meaningful learning and the risk of a lower grade with learning more appropriate to his ability. Guilt and loss of self-esteem accompany the first choice; fear the second.

This kind of justifiable wariness is another indication that grades serve distinctly as rewards and punishments and, as such, make actual learning a secondary priority. Furthermore, the student sees the possibility of being more highly rewarded for aiming below his ability and punished for working up to it.

An underlying assumption, a derivative of Theory X, is that the student will not learn unless external motivation is supplied. We can not only scare a youngster into

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<sup>52</sup>A. S. Neill, Summerhill, (New York: Hart Publishing Co., 1960), p. 5.



knowledge, but also provide rewards as extrinsic motivation toward learning. This perpetuates the use of reward and punishment in the schools and theoretical and experimental evidence to the contrary has not been taken seriously.<sup>53</sup> In addition to the fact that grades, as rewards, have been shown to be subjective, inconsistent and invalid,

Things that we can and do measure are often trivial... Letter grades and other forms of competitive marking set production goals for teachers and students which have a poor effect on learning.<sup>54</sup>

Moreover, like the tribal chief who donned a green robe in order to assure the coming of spring, we may think that rewards and punishments are a necessary condition for learning when, in fact, they may have nothing to do with it. Perkins<sup>55</sup> places some perspective on it by admitting that extrinsic motivation may affect performance, but that performance is dependent on learning which, in turn, is primarily dependent on intrinsic motivation.

Undoubtedly more important than the negative effects of reward and punishment on learning is the damage it does to the attitude about learning. The process is one of

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<sup>53</sup>Howard Kirschenbaum, et. al, Wad-Ja-Get?, (New York: Hart Publishing Co., Inc., 1971).

<sup>54</sup>Barth, op. cit., p. 40.

<sup>55</sup>H. V. Perkins, Human Development And Learning, (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Publishing Co., Inc., 1969).



frightening a child into the narrow knowledge channels of the syllabus and positively reinforcing him for behavior which, in the long run, may bury the desire to learn.

We destroy the disinterested...love of learning in children, which is so strong when they are small, by encouraging and compelling them to work for petty and contemptible rewards--gold stars, or papers marked 100 and tacked to the wall, or A's on report cards, or honor rolls, or dean's lists, or Phi Beta Kappa Keys--in short, for the ignoble satisfaction of feeling that they are better than someone else.<sup>56</sup>

The lasting effects of reward and punishment on the student are too serious to be ignored. Children become the victims of the broken dreams of their parents and are led away from their individual learning needs into a high-pressured, success-oriented scramble.

"Kids have it too easy these days" is not simply an observation of the times. It represents a symptom of arrogant indifference to individual learners. From such indifference are born the fruits of intellectual deprivation and the grotesqueness of irrelevant rewards.<sup>57</sup>

Far from helping the youngster develop confidence, far from aiding his learning or the desire for learning, reward and punishment associated with grades, honors, tests, "...almost certainly emphasizes rote learning and mental agility rather than originality of thought and scientific curiosity, traits which in the long run are more valuable."<sup>58</sup> The value of

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<sup>56</sup>Holt, op. cit., pp. 208-209.

<sup>57</sup>O. L. Davis, "Pressure On Pupils In School," Educational Leadership, Vol. 21, (April, 1964), p. 428.

<sup>58</sup>Rogers, op. cit., p. 173.

reward is so heavily engrained in the youngster that his actions and behaviors cannot escape its influence. When he cheats, he shows that any means is justified for the goal of the reward. "Illegitimate actions would be foolish if nothing important could be gained from them. It is because they may be rewarded by a raised grade that students engage in them."<sup>59</sup> The student will even cheat himself if the reward he seeks is of sufficient value to him. One study shows that students who received an A grade for shifting their beliefs to something contrary to what they originally believed tended to cling to the new belief.<sup>60</sup> The strength of grades as reinforcing contingencies makes their use much too dangerous if left in the hands of the authoritarian.

Skinner notes the ways in which punishment may generate incompatible emotions.<sup>61</sup> The only lasting emotion one can expect from punishment is fear and the only predictable behaviors are responses to that fear. The result is the misshapen man--afraid to think, afraid to act,

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<sup>59</sup>William Bowers, Making The Grade: The Academic Side Of College Life, (New York: John Wiley And Sons, 1968).

<sup>60</sup>R. N. Bostrom, et. al., "Grades As Reinforcing Contingencies And Attitude Change," Journal Of Educational Psychology, Vol. 52, (1961), pp. 112-115.

<sup>61</sup>B. F. Skinner, Beyond Freedom And Dignity, (New York: Random House, 1971).

afraid to feel.

Still the tests, grades, standards, requirements, honors, report cards, transcripts, class ranks, ceremonies continue. Children represent a new breakthrough in industrialized schooling: the products pay the production costs.

## C H A P T E R I I

### THE RESEARCH

#### Introduction

The three processes discussed in Chapter One have been selected as possible explanations for the relationship between organizational climate and student alienation. In order to proceed, it is necessary now to consider these other two parts of the overall climate as well.

This chapter will provide the operational definitions of (a) organizational climate, (b) the social processes, and (c) student alienation. The next step will be to state the hypotheses to be tested, along with the rationale behind them. Following that, the methods by which data were gathered and assembled will be discussed.

#### Organizational Climate

Recent thinking has led to some equivocation concerning the implications of prescribed administrative practices for organizational success. A given leadership style is no longer recognized by many theorists as a valid predictor of effectiveness within an organization. The focus has been shifted from the leader alone to the leader within a setting. Asserting that "effectiveness results from a leader using a behavioral style that is



appropriate to the demands of the environment," Blanchard reviews a number of organizational development theories which take into account situational and environmental variables which loom large in the ability of a leader to facilitate goal attainment.<sup>62</sup>

With the conclusion that there is no one best leadership style, interest has shifted from theories of administration to theories of organizations. A well-known example of such work is that conducted by the Bureau of Business Research of Ohio State University. In this study, the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire emerged as a tool for measuring how a leader's behavior is perceived by subordinates.<sup>63</sup>

It is important to note that the LBDQ studies were never intended to measure leadership traits, but rather how a leader is perceived to behave in a given situation. The theory was that the leader cannot effectively lead independent of his followers' needs and expectations or of the situational variables of his environment. Theoretically, the heavy-handed authoritarian practices of the

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<sup>62</sup>Paul Hersey and Kenneth H. Blanchard, Management Of Organizational Behavior, (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972), p. 109.

<sup>63</sup>John K. Hemphill and Alvin E. Coons, "Development Of The LBDQ," in Ralph M. Stogdill and Alvin E. Coons (eds.), Leader Behavior: Its Description And Measurement, (Columbus, Ohio: The Bureau of Business Research, The Ohio State University, 1957).

scientific management movement were put to rest forever, unless, of course, the situation called for them.

It follows that the new focus on organizational effectiveness would lead to a consideration of organizational "climate." A major difficulty, however, in the formulation of a climate theory is one of language. For example, the investigator may sense a "mood" within an organization or gain some impressions about morale, tension, or cooperation. Unfortunately, these reactions are too dependent on the unique cognitive organization and value system of the observer himself and are not sufficiently definitive or objective for the purpose of analysis.

Seminal studies in this area have encountered the language obstacle every time. Halpin, whose work serves as one of the starting points for this paper, uses the term "organizational climate," but then is able to describe what he means only in an analogous way: "...personality is to the individual what organizational climate is to the organization."<sup>64</sup> Halpin and Croft made some headway by using a factor analytic approach to identify common elements of organizational climates. These methods provided the delineation of eight climate characteristics, four of them group characteristics and four of them leader

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<sup>64</sup> Andrew W. Halpin, Theory And Research In Administration, (New York: MacMillan Company, 1966), p. 131.

characteristics.

These eight subtests comprise the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire which served as the operational definition of organizational climates. The test consists of sixty-four Likert-type items and is administered to faculties whose responses reflect their perceptions of both group and leader behavior.

Table 1 provides brief synopses of the eight dimensions being measured by the OCDQ. Table 2 lists the actual test items, with revisions as prescribed by their use in independent schools. The test itself was constructed with the items in Table 2 listed in random order. Answers were of the form "Strongly Agree," "Agree Somewhat," "Disagree Somewhat," "Strongly Disagree."

TABLE 1

THE EIGHT DIMENSIONS OF  
ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE

Staff Behavior

1. Disengagement. This subtest focuses on staff behavior in task-oriented situations. It measures the teachers' perceptions of their ability to work together toward achieving goals. Some staffs, for example, work quickly and easily and are committed to the task. Others merely go through the motions and wait to be told what to do.

TABLE 1-Continued

2. Hindrance. This is a test of the staff's perceptions of whether the administration hinders or facilitates their work. Teachers may be relieved of excessive busy-work or they may be burdened by routine duties, paperwork, and other details.

3. Esprit. The area of morale is included in this subtest which measures the extent to which social needs are satisfied and a sense of accomplishment is felt in doing the job.

4. Intimacy. This dimension describes a social-needs satisfaction which is not necessarily associated with task-accomplishment. It refers to the teachers' enjoyment of friendly social relations with each other.

#### Administration Behavior

5. Aloofness. Such behavior is characterized by the administrator's formality and the emotional distance he keeps from his staff. He may be situational and flexible or he may prefer to be guided strictly by rules and procedures.

6. Production Emphasis. This subtest measures the faculty perceptions of the supervisory traits of the administrator. He may be highly directive, unilaterally communicative, and generally insensitive to staff feedback. Others may allow production to flow with leadership and initiative



TABLE 1-Continued

emerging from the staff in a cooperative manner.

7. Thrust. Rather than supervise an organization, the leader may serve as a model by setting his own example. He asks no more from his staff than he asks of himself. Though task-oriented, such behavior tends to be viewed favorably by staffs.

8. Consideration. This is a measure of the administrator's humaneness as viewed by the faculty. Some leaders have a tendency to do something extra for people by helping them to do their work, to solve personal problems, to settle differences, etc., while others are inconsiderate and care more about getting the job done than for the feelings of staff members.

TABLE 2

## OCDQ ITEMS (AS REVISED)

## GROUP BEHAVIOR

I. Disengagement

1. The mannerisms of teachers at this school are annoying.
2. There is a minority group of teachers who always oppose the majority.
3. Teachers exert group pressure on nonconforming faculty members.
4. Teachers seek special favors from the administration.
5. Teachers interrupt other faculty members who are talking in staff meetings.

TABLE 2-Continued

6. Teachers ask nonsensical questions in faculty meetings.
7. Teachers ramble when they talk in faculty meetings.
8. Teachers at this school tend to stay by themselves.
9. Teachers talk about leaving the school for another job.
10. Teachers socialize together in small select groups.

### II. Hindrance

11. Routine duties interfere with the job of teaching.
12. Teachers have too many committee requirements.
13. Student progress reports require too much time.
14. Administrative paperwork is burdensome at this school.
15. Insufficient time is given to prepare administrative reports.
16. The time schedule for classes and activities is confusing.

### III. Esprit

17. The morale of the teachers is high.
18. The teachers accomplish their work with great vim, vigor, and pleasure.
19. Teachers at this school show much school spirit.
20. Custodial service is available when needed.
21. Most of the teachers here accept the faults of their colleagues.
22. School supplies are readily available for use in classwork.
23. There is considerable laughter when teachers gather informally.
24. In faculty meetings, there is the feeling of "let's get things done."

TABLE 2-Continued

25. Communications among the faculty are effective.
26. Teachers spend out-of-class time with students who have individual problems.

#### IV. Intimacy

27. Teachers' closest friends are other faculty members at this school.
28. Teachers invite other faculty members to visit them at home.
29. Teachers know the family background of other faculty members.
30. Teachers talk about their personal life to other faculty members.
31. Teachers have fun socializing together during school time.
32. Teachers cooperate with each other in doing routine tasks.
33. Teachers support each other in times of stress or frustration.

#### LEADER BEHAVIOR

##### V. Aloofness

34. Faculty meetings are organized according to a tight agenda.
35. Faculty meetings are mainly to hear reports from the administration.
36. The administrators run faculty meetings like a business conference.
37. Teachers often cannot be found when they are needed.
38. Teachers generally prefer to eat lunch with the rest of the faculty. \*\*
39. The rules set by the administration are never questioned.

TABLE 2-Continued

40. Administrators do not spend much time with the faculty.
41. School secretarial service is not offered for faculty use.
42. Teachers are informed of their evaluations by the administration.\*\*

(\*\*Scored negatively)

#### VI. Production Emphasis

43. The administration makes all class scheduling decisions.
44. The administrators schedule the work for the teachers.
45. The administration checks the subject-matter ability of teachers.
46. Administrators correct teachers' mistakes.
47. The administration assures that teachers work to their full capacity.
48. The administration assigns extra duties to teachers without checking with them in advance.
49. The administrators talk a great deal.

#### VII. Thrust

50. Administrators go out of their way to help teachers.
51. The administrators set an example by working hard themselves.
52. The administrators use constructive criticism.
53. Administrators are well prepared when they speak at school functions.
54. Administrators explain their reasons for criticism to teachers.
55. Administrators look out for the personal welfare of teachers.
56. Administrators are in the building before teachers arrive.



TABLE 2-Continued

57. Administrators tell teachers about new ideas they have run across.
58. The administrators are easy to understand.

VIII. Consideration

59. Administrators help teachers solve personal problems.
60. The administrators do personal favors for teachers.
61. Administrators recognize the individuality of each teacher.
62. Administrators help staff members settle minor differences.
63. Teachers help select which courses will be taught.
64. The administration tries to get better salaries for teachers.

Halpin administered the test to seventy-one different schools (1,151 individual respondents) resulting in six major patterns of factor loadings which were then labelled as types of organizational climates. Table 3 lists some of the characteristics of these climates.

TABLE 3

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SIX  
ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATES

1. "Open" Climate
  - a. staff works well together without bickering or griping (low disengagement)
  - b. administrator's policies facilitate the staff's accomplishment of tasks (low hindrance)

TABLE 3-Continued

- c. staff's social needs are satisfied and a sense of accomplishment is felt (very high esprit)
  - d. friendly relations among staff, but not overly so (average intimacy)
  - e. administrator is flexible and personable (low aloofness)
  - f. administrator does not monitor the staff closely (low production emphasis)
  - g. administrator sets an example by his own commitment (very high thrust)
  - h. administrator constructively criticizes work and goes out of his way to help (high consideration)
2. "Autonomous" Climate
- a. staff achieves goals easily and quickly (very low disengagement)
  - b. staff does not feel excessively burdened by routine duties (low hindrance)
  - c. morale is high mostly because of social-needs satisfaction (high esprit)
  - d. staff is left alone to provide their own structure (very high intimacy)
  - e. administrator is businesslike and impersonal (very high aloofness)

TABLE 3-Continued

- f. administrator lets the staff work at their own speed and provides little supervision (very low production emphasis)
  - g. administrator works hard himself (high thrust)
  - h. administrator is genuine and flexible but restricted in his relationships with others (average consideration)
3. "Controlled" Climate
- a. staff feels pressure to achieve and expects to be told what to do (very low disengagement)
  - b. procedures and paperwork keep the staff very busy (high hindrance)
  - c. morale is high mostly because of task accomplishment (high esprit)
  - d. staff has little time to establish friendly social relations (very low intimacy)
  - e. administrator is dogmatic and impersonal (high aloofness)
  - f. administrator is dominating and directive and insists on his own way (very high production emphasis)
  - g. administrator works hard and sees to it that everything runs properly (average thrust)

TABLE 3-Continued

- h. getting the job done is more important than the staff's social or personal needs (low consideration)

4. "Familiar" Climate

- a. staff accomplishes little because of administrator's lack of control (very high disengagement)
- b. staff is not burdened by duties (low hindrance)
- c. morale stems mostly from social-needs satisfaction (average morale)
- d. staff feels like part of one big happy family (high intimacy)
- e. administrator issues few rules and is not official or impersonal (low aloofness)
- f. administrator does not emphasize task accomplishment (very low production emphasis)
- g. administrator does not direct or evaluate staff actions, but is viewed as a good person (average thrust)
- h. administrator is interested in staff welfare (high consideration)

5. "Paternal" Climate

- a. staff is split into factions and administrator is ineffective in controlling activities (very high disengagement)



TABLE 3-Continued

- b. administrator does most of the busywork himself  
(low hindrance)
  - c. morale hurt by lack of satisfaction of social  
needs and task accomplishment (low esprit)
  - d. staff does not enjoy friendly relationships  
(low intimacy)
  - e. administrator is intrusive, trying to control  
things everywhere at once (very low aloofness)
  - f. administrator does everything and emphasizes all  
the things that should be done (high production  
emphasis)
  - g. administrator attempts to move the organization,  
but does not provide a good example (average thrust)
  - h. administrator tends to be seductively over-  
solicitous rather than genuinely concerned (high  
consideration)
6. "Closed" Climate
- a. group achievement is minimal (very high disengage-  
ment)
  - b. staff spends most of its time with housekeeping  
duties (high hindrance)
  - c. low job satisfaction and low social needs satis-  
faction (very low esprit)

TABLE 3-Continued

- d. staff clings to each other for social relationships (high intimacy)
- e. administrator controls and directs in an impersonal manner (high aloofness)
- f. administrator is arbitrary with rules and demands harder work (high production emphasis)
- g. administrator expects everyone else to take the initiative (low thrust)
- h. administrator is seen as inconsiderate, not genuine, a phony (low consideration)

For the purposes of this study, then, the OCDQ is the operational definition of organizational climates and is to be used to describe the organizational climates of the sample schools.

#### Social Processes

The position taken in Chapter One with regard to the three processes also suggests a way of dealing with the problem of narrowing down some very large concepts into a more quantifiable definition. In order to obtain a sense of students' perceptions of the level to which these processes are in operation, the approach was to condense the ideas of Chapter One into some very broad questions, such

as the following:

1. Authoritarianism

Do students feel oppressed by an artificial authority of organization, tradition, knowledge? Is the climate custodial and punitive or is it built on trust?

2. Competition

How do students see the competitive process as it might affect their ability to learn, their willingness to cooperate with others, or their state of mind? Are they excessively concerned about grades, class rank, and other forms of recognition?

3. Reward/Punishment

What effects do the reward and punishment contingencies of the students' environment have on their behavior? To what extent are these contingencies used on them?

With these questions in mind, test items were constructed which were to be answered with the same choices as the CCDQ. The test items, by category are shown in Table 4. The actual test instrument listed the items in random order.

TABLE 4

PROCESSES TEST ITEMS BY CATEGORY

Authoritarianism

Most students at this school

1. do not feel manipulated or pushed around by adults.

TABLE 4-Continued

2. do not feel that teachers try to impress them with their knowledge.
3. do not feel that the school's traditions are out of date.
4. do not feel that there is too much discipline and punishment.
5. feel like they are trusted and respected by their teachers.
6. do not feel that their teachers demand respect which they don't deserve.

Competition

Most students at this school

7. do not worry about their class rank or standing.
8. believe that their grades reflect only their own ability and not how they compare with other students.
9. do not feel that competition with their classmates is enough to interfere with learning.
10. feel that they need not compete for recognition in order to be successful in school.
11. are willing to help other students even though it could mean that the others would end up getting better grades than they do.
12. do not feel much stress from competing with classmates.

Reward/Punishment

Most students at this school

13. will not say things they don't really believe even if it would mean getting a better grade.
14. work as hard as they do because they find school activities rewarding in themselves.
15. doubt that they will be deprived of things they want if they do not learn what is expected of them.
16. do not feel pressure to avoid making mistakes.
17. do not believe that grades, honors, etc., are important motivations to good learning.



TABLE 4-Continued

18. doubt that teachers use grades as a weapon.

Unlike the Halpin study, no approach is used here to attempt climate profiles. The reason is that the processes are of separate interest and no purpose would be served in merging them. In fact, Andrews believes the same thing about the Halpin study: "...the overall climate does not predict anything that is not better predicted by subtests."<sup>65</sup>

The test items themselves represent the operational definitions of each of the processes. They are incorporated as part of one questionnaire given to the students. The other part deals with alienation, the subject of the next section.

#### Student Alienation

The choices of ways to think of alienation abound. Orientations range from Cleaver<sup>66</sup> through all the counter-culturist literature and on into psychological and sociological thought of writers like Slater<sup>67</sup>.

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<sup>65</sup>John H. M. Andrews, "School Organizational Climate: Some Validity Studies," Canadian Education And Research Digest, 5, December, 1965, p. 329.

<sup>66</sup>Eldridge Cleaver, Soul On Ice, (New York: McGraw Hill, 1968).

<sup>67</sup>Philip Slater, The Pursuit Of Loneliness, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970).

The choice for this study is that of Seeman's variants of alienation. The reason is that no single meaning of the word is adequate fully to describe it. It is preferable, certainly for the sake of analysis, to consider various aspects of alienation. In this way, it is easier to determine functional relationships, if any, between the social processes mentioned previously and the variants of alienation that can be sorted out. In short, the intent is to break apart the general notion of alienation, to identify some of the variants of it, and then to seek relationships between those variants and the social processes.

Seeman provides five different variants of alienation which he defines as follows:

1. Powerlessness: The expectancy or probability held by the individual that his own behavior cannot determine the occurrence of the outcomes, or reinforcements, he seeks.

2. Meaninglessness: The individual is unclear about what he ought to believe. His minimal standards for clarity in decision-making are not met. He has a low expectancy that satisfactory predictions about future outcomes of behavior can be made.

3. Normlessness: A high expectancy that socially unapproved behaviors are required to achieve given goals.

4. Isolation: A low regard value to goals or beliefs that are typically highly valued in the given society.

5. Self-Estrangement: A high degree of dependence of the given behavior upon anticipated future rewards.

These definitions can be translated into terms applicable to a school setting:

Powerlessness: The student senses a lack of personal control over his state of affairs in school. He believes that he is being manipulated by teachers and administrators, and he doubts that there is much that he personally can do to influence his future in school.

Meaninglessness: The student senses an inability to predict outcomes. He lacks an understanding of the school activities in which he is engaged, and he is not at all sure that schooling is going to help him in his future. He is even unclear about what he should believe about the future.

Normlessness: The student believes that certain socially unapproved forms of behavior are required to achieve school goals. The formally prescribed conduct in a school is put aside in favor of conduct which, legitimate or not, is most effective. He does not consider the violation of school rules and regulations inappropriate provided he does not get caught.

Isolation: The student does not accept the goals of the school as his own. He does not accept completion

of school or achievement in school as important. His priorities are so different from the school's that he simply rejects much that the school stands for.

Self-Estrangement: The student finds little in the school to be inherently rewarding. He participates in school mostly for external rewards, present or future, and seldom pursues activities for their own sake.

Following the same procedure as that of the previous section, these translated synopses were condensed to some general questions which, in turn, were used in the construction of the test items:

Powerlessness: To what extent do students see themselves as able to control their environment? Do they have any sense of control over the subjects they study, the grades they earn, decisions that are made?

Meaninglessness: To what extent are students able to understand the purpose of their school involvement and to predict the outcomes of their behavior? Do they know the goals of the school and does it matter to them?

Normlessness: How prone are students to allow ends to justify means? Do they cheat, lie, violate rules, ingratiate themselves, in order to further their own cause?

Isolation: How committed are the students to the values held by the school? Do they respect the wishes and expectations of the school and of their families, and do



they try to live up to them?

Self-Estrangement: How much intrinsic worth do students see in their education? Do they view their activities merely as means to future rewards?

Table 5 lists the questionnaire items, by category, which were designed to tap information regarding the level of each of the alienation variants. Students were asked to answer using the same choices as for the OCDQ.

TABLE 5

ALIENATION ITEMS BY CATEGORY

- |   |                              |
|---|------------------------------|
| <u>Powerlessness</u>  | Most students at this school |
| 1. could earn any grades they wanted once they made up their minds.   |                              |
| 2. feel that they have as much choice as they want about the subjects they want to study.                   |                              |
| 3. feel that they have as much voice as they want in decisions about how the school is run.                 |                              |
| 4. feel that it is possible to appeal to teachers and to change their minds about decisions they have made. |                              |
| <u>Meaninglessness</u>  | Most students at this school |
| 5. believe that the education they are receiving here is important to them now.                             |                              |
| 6. feel that what the school expects of them will be of value to them in the future.                        |                              |
| 7. are aware of what the school's goals are.  |                              |
| 8. feel that their teachers are reasonably consistent in the ways they relate to students.                  |                              |

TABLE 5-Continued

Normlessness

Most students at this school

9. believe that violating school rules is rarely justified.
10. will not cheat in order to get a better grade.
11. do not try to get on the good side of their teachers by buttering them up.
12. would not lie in order to avoid punishment for misconduct.

Isolation

Most students at this school

13. believe that the school knows best about the knowledge which is most worth having.
14. have a desire to meet the expectations of the school and of their parents.
15. take it seriously when their classmates are recognized for their achievements.
16. really believe in what the school is trying to do.

Self-Estrangement

Most students at this school

17. work more to please themselves than to please their teachers.
18. would try to do as well even if there were no grades.
19. tend to be creative and imaginative even at the risk of disapproval by teachers.
20. do not consider their academic performance as having much to do with their own worth.

Again, these test items were arranged in random order and mixed with the items described in the section on processes. The combination of these items comprise the Student Climate Description Questionnaire (SCDQ).

It is important to emphasize again that neither the CCDQ nor the SCDQ is designed to measure an objective reality (if indeed such a thing exists). Whether or not the results from either questionnaire are deemed "true," the fact that students and faculty view their climate as they do is the matter with which the school must reckon. In short, what "really is out there" must be synonymous with what people "believe is out there."

### Hypotheses

Since the purpose of this study is to determine if the three processes are possible connecting links between a school's organizational climate and its student alienation, two sets of relationships will be hypothesized. One will deal with the extent to which a closed climate associates with high levels of processes. The other relationship will be between the processes and student alienation.

It is of ancillary interest to learn what inter-relationship exists among the three processes, and so the opportunity is taken to hypothesize those results as well. Finally, as a sidelight, it will be determined to what extent faculties and administrators differ in their views about their organizational climates.

## 1. Organizational Climate and Social Processes

A closed climate is characterized by circumstances that are expected to lead to high levels of all three processes. The administrator who is seen to be something of a tyrant with his faculty is likely to be one who projects authoritarianism to his students as well. It can be predicted that he tends to establish reward and punishment contingencies, as would his faculty who achieve little and are frustrated by busywork and low morale. In such a climate, it would be difficult to envision a sense of cooperation at any level, and so a high degree of competition can be expected, especially as it relates to punishment avoidance. All of this suggests:

Hypothesis 1. The more "Closed" the organizational climate of a school, the more the three social processes will be perceived by students to be operative.

## 2. Social Processes and Student Alienation

This analysis will correlate each of the three social processes with each of the five alienation variants. While some statistically significant relationships are expected to occur, the hypotheses which follow are again concerned primarily with directional tendencies.

Students who live in an Authoritarian climate are likely to feel that they have little control over their own affairs (Powerlessness), will use any means to seek favor and avoid disfavor from authorities (Normlessness),



will resent and reject the authoritarian's expectations even though they comply (Isolation), and will see little intrinsic worth in what they are doing (Self-Estrangement). Since meanings and decisions are provided for them, the students will have little personal commitment to or understanding of their purposes in school (Meaninglessness).

Hypothesis 2A. The greater the degree of Authoritarianism, the greater the sense of alienation in all five variants.

The student in a high Competition school will believe that much of his control rests in how well he measures up to others (Powerlessness). He constantly fears failure and cannot predict how well he will compare (Meaninglessness). He may believe that socially unapproved behavior is required to keep up with his competition (Normlessness). He anticipates a reward for beating out his competitors and ignores the intrinsic value of his activity (Self-Estrangement). While he competes as a matter of survival, he regards school as a game which must be played but which may not have much to do with his own values and beliefs (Isolation).

Hypothesis 2B. The greater the degree of Competition, the greater the sense of alienation in all five variants.

If the student's behavior is manipulated by forms of external motivation through Reward/Punishment, then he is likely to see the source of his control to exist outside of himself (Powerlessness), to use any means to earn rewards and avoid punishment (Normlessness), and to find it

difficult to consider his activities as self-rewarding (Self-Estrangement). He may value the reward, or value not being punished, but he is uncertain whether there is any value in the activity itself (Meaninglessness). As in the theory of cognitive dissonance, the more he is pressured by external motivation, particularly by reward, the less committed he is to the task (Isolation).

Hypothesis 2C. The greater the degree of external motivation through Reward/Punishment, the greater the sense of alienation in all five variants.

### 3. Interrelationship Among Social Processes

It is suspected that each of the processes is related one to the other. For example, if an attempt is made to manipulate the behavior of students by extrinsic forms of reward and punishment, it is predicted that the attempt is being made by a school whose "personality" is judged to be authoritarian. Moreover, the existence of reward and punishment contingencies would likely generate competition. Therefore, the following hypotheses will be tested:

Hypothesis 3A. Authoritarianism and Reward/Punishment are positively correlated.

Hypothesis 3B. Authoritarianism and Competition are positively correlated.

Hypothesis 3C. Competition and Reward/Punishment are positively correlated.

#### 4. Differences in Staff and Administrator Perceptions

This study provides an interesting opportunity to determine the amount of agreement between a school's staff members and administrators regarding the organization climate. In line with the concepts of situational leadership, the effective administrator would have to be well tuned-in to his job environment.

One could argue that the administrator's perception of "reality" is no better or worse than that of his staff. In practice, however, it is incumbent upon the leader to adjust to, and make the best of, his working situation. Therefore, it will be assumed that the staff perceives what is "really there" and so staff scores will be treated as expected values with administration scores being the observed values.

Again, a null hypothesis will not be needed since only a directional tendency is being sought.

Hypothesis 4. School administrators perceive the organizational climates of their schools to be more "Open" than do their staffs.

#### Procedure

The administrators of ten independent schools in the Greater Cleveland area were asked to participate in this study. A general statement of purpose, copies of the OCDQ and SCDQ, and the hypotheses to be tested were included in a packet of materials used in the initial contact.

The proposal to each school was that faculty be asked to volunteer to complete the OCDQ and that the administrative head do likewise for comparison purposes. It was also requested that approximately ten per-cent of the secondary enrollment complete the SCDQ, but that the students be upperclassmen.

School identities were guaranteed to remain anonymous. Faculty were provided stamped, self-addressed envelopes so that their responses could not be reviewed by anyone.

Of the ten schools approached, eight agreed to participate. In one of the eight, the administrator did not wish to respond. Table 6 summarizes the number of responses to the two questionnaires.

TABLE 6

## NUMBER OF RESPONSES TO THE OCDQ AND SCDQ

| <u>School</u> | <u>OCDQ (Faculty)</u> | <u>SCDQ (Students)</u> |
|---------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| A             | 21                    | 12                     |
| B             | 17                    | 28                     |
| C             | 19                    | 60                     |
| D             | 21                    | 28                     |
| E             | 20                    | 24                     |
| F             | 42                    | 64                     |
| G             | 17                    | 38                     |
| H             | 28                    | 18                     |



Three of the schools are parochial. Two are for girls with enrollments numbering about 600, and one is for boys with about 250 students. The other five, three for girls, two for boys, are non-boarding day schools with enrollments ranging from 150 to 300.

In every case, the head of the school was very interested and cooperative, and each asked for results from the study. Following the tabulations of questionnaire responses, a twenty-page report of gross results was sent to each school. These reports contained tables and graphs of raw data and made no attempt at interpretations or value judgments.

## C H A P T E R I I I

### THE RESULTS

#### Organizational Climate and Social Processes

Since Hypothesis 1 proposes a relationship between closed climate and the three social processes, it was first necessary to use the results of the OCDQ to assign climate names to the participating schools. As the beginning step, mean scores were calculated for each of the eight subtests for each of the schools. Scores were assigned to each response as follows:

- 1 - Strongly Agree
- 2 - Agree Somewhat
- 3 - Disagree Somewhat
- 4 - Strongly Disagree

Because of the wording of the questions, this point scheme means that low scores represent high ratings for a subtest, and visa-versa. Table 7 shows the mean score for each subtest, by school.

The mean scores in Table 7 represent the basic data, but they are not sufficient for assignments of climate names to the schools. Fortunately, Halpin provided the guidelines for accomplishing this.

In his own study, Halpin standardized his mean scores, normatively and ipsatively, and then created

TABLE 7

## OCDQ SUBTEST AVERAGE SCORES BY SCHOOL

| <u>School</u> | <u>Diseng</u> | <u>Hind</u> | <u>Espr</u> | <u>Intim</u> | <u>Aloof</u> | <u>Prod Emp</u> | <u>Thrust</u> | <u>Cons</u> |
|---------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------|
| A             | 2.84          | 3.03        | 2.20        | 2.35         | 2.42         | 2.32            | 2.11          | 2.22        |
| B             | 2.82          | 2.86        | 1.99        | 2.20         | 3.09         | 2.47            | 1.34          | 1.68        |
| C             | 3.13          | 3.10        | 1.56        | 2.02         | 3.10         | 2.77            | 1.69          | 1.87        |
| D             | 2.71          | 2.62        | 2.01        | 1.97         | 3.24         | 2.92            | 1.86          | 1.83        |
| E             | 2.92          | 2.62        | 1.98        | 1.77         | 2.68         | 2.67            | 2.76          | 2.63        |
| F             | 3.53          | 3.02        | 1.45        | 1.76         | 3.15         | 2.32            | 1.16          | 1.46        |
| G             | 2.89          | 2.78        | 1.75        | 1.98         | 2.78         | 2.55            | 1.72          | 1.60        |
| H             | 3.51          | 2.73        | 1.48        | 1.74         | 3.09         | 2.36            | 1.36          | 1.76        |

prototypic profiles for each climate using these standardized scores. Table 8 indicates the results.

It can be seen from Table 8 that the standardized scores can be clustered into ratings, such as "high," "very low," etc. One way of doing this is to use the fact that the standardized mean is fifty and the standard deviation is ten, and then to "rate" each score according to the number of standard deviations it is from the mean.

This was the method used in this study and the following key shows how the rating was done:

- "Very High" - At least one standard deviation above the mean
- "High" - Between 0.3 and one standard deviation above the mean
- "Average" - Less than 0.3 standard deviation from the mean
- "Low" - Between 0.3 and one standard deviation below the mean
- "Very Low" - At least one standard deviation below the mean.

Using this rating system, Table 8 can now be converted from mean scores to ratings for each subtest. Accordingly, Table 9 shows the climate profile by rating rather than by mean score.

The next step was to arrange the OCDQ results from this study in the same way. The mean scores shown in Table 7 were standardized to a mean of fifty and standard deviation of ten. Using the rating system above, these



TABLE 8  
 PROTOTYPIC PROFILES FOR SIX ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATES

| Climates   | Disen-<br>gage-<br>ment | Hin-<br>drance | Esprit | Inti-<br>macy | Alloof-<br>ness | Produc-<br>tion<br>Em-<br>phasis | Thrust | Con-<br>sider-<br>ation |
|------------|-------------------------|----------------|--------|---------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|--------|-------------------------|
| Open       | 43                      | 43             | 63     | 50            | 42              | 43                               | 61     | 55                      |
| Autonomous | 40                      | 41             | 55     | 62            | 61              | 39                               | 53     | 50                      |
| Controlled | 38                      | 57             | 54     | 40            | 55              | 63                               | 51     | 45                      |
| Familiar   | 60                      | 42             | 50     | 58            | 44              | 37                               | 52     | 59                      |
| Paternal   | 65                      | 46             | 45     | 46            | 38              | 55                               | 51     | 55                      |
| Closed     | 62                      | 53             | 38     | 54            | 55              | 54                               | 41     | 44                      |

TABLE 9  
SUBTEST RATINGS FOR EACH CLIMATE

| Subtest                | Climate      |                 |                 |              |              |              |
|------------------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|                        | Open         | Auto-<br>nomous | Con-<br>trolled | Familiar     | Paternal     | Closed       |
| Disengagement          | low          | very<br>low     | very<br>low     | very<br>high | very<br>high | very<br>high |
| Hindrance              | low          | low             | high            | low          | low          | high         |
| Esprit                 | very<br>high | high            | high            | average      | low          | very<br>low  |
| Intimacy               | average      | very<br>high    | very<br>low     | high         | low          | high         |
| Aloofness              | low          | very<br>high    | high            | low          | very<br>low  | high         |
| Production<br>Emphasis | low          | very<br>low     | very<br>high    | very<br>low  | high         | high         |
| Thrust                 | very<br>high | high            | average         | average      | average      | low          |
| Consideration          | high         | average         | low             | high         | high         | low          |

scores were then rated according to their distance from the mean.

At this point, both the Halpin profiles and the OCDQ results of this study were tabulated in exactly the same way, thus allowing comparison. As might be expected, however, the probability of a direct match was very slim. Since there are five ratings for each of the eight sub-tests, there are 390,625 possible profiles of which only six are of interest in this study.

To overcome this difficulty, each school was assigned a climate name based on a best correlation match-up. The method was to assign a coded score to each rating as shown in Table 10.

TABLE 10

CODED RATINGS FOR STANDARD DEVIATION RANGES  
OF PROTOTYPIC PROFILES

| Standardized scores<br>which were                 | received a<br>rating of | which was<br>coded |
|---|-------------------------|--------------------|
| At least one s.d. above<br>the mean (60+)         | Very high               | 5                  |
| Between .3 and one s.d.<br>above the mean (53-59) | High                    | 4                  |
| Less than .3 s.d. from<br>the mean (48-52)        | Average                 | 3                  |
| Between .3 and one s.d.<br>below the mean (41-47) | Low                     | 2                  |
| At least one s.d. below<br>the mean (40-)         | Very Low                | 1                  |

The same coded scores were assigned to the ratings in the prototypes. It was then a simple matter to calculate correlations of a school's ratings against each of the six prototypes to determine which profile came closest to that of the given school's. This was done for each school. Table 11 shows the climate name assigned to each school based on the highest correlation between the school's profile and the prototypes.

TABLE 11  
ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE RATINGS  
BY BEST FIT

| <u>School</u> | <u>Climate</u> | <u>r</u> |
|---------------|----------------|----------|
| A             | Closed         | .59      |
| B             | Paternal       | .79      |
| C             | Open           | .85      |
| D             | Familiar       | .64      |
| E             | Closed         | .74      |
| F             | Open           | .70      |
| G             | Closed         | .38      |
| H             | Open           | .54      |

It is instructive to note the ways in which certain characteristics measured differently from those in the prototypes. Interpretations are offered in the following summaries.



School A

A high correlation with a Closed climate was obtained in spite of a major difference in Intimacy. A Closed climate has an average to above average Intimacy rating, as explained by Halpin:

The salient bright spot that appears to keep the teachers in the school is that they do obtain satisfaction from their friendly relations with other teachers.<sup>68</sup>

This school showed a very low Intimacy rating and so reduced the correlation with a Closed climate to .59. Yet if one were to consider the connotation of "closed" he might expect Intimacy to be lower than the prototype indicates. From this point of view, School A's Closed climate appears to be even more legitimate than the .59 correlation might suggest.

School B

The .79 correlation is a result of consistent coding match-ups. In no case did a characteristic differ from the prototype by more than one range level. It is interesting that a parochial school for boys should yield a climate so closely identified as Paternal.

School C

Of the eight schools, only this one correlated to

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<sup>68</sup>Halpin, op. cit., p. 180.

more than one organizational climate with  $r$  over .50 in each case. The .85 for an Open climate is the best fit of all the schools, and yet there were also good correlations with an Autonomous Climate ( $r = .61$ ) and a Familiar Climate ( $r = .58$ ). The characteristic which kept the correlation with an Open climate from being even higher was Thrust which scored average compared to very high in the prototype. On the other hand, average Thrust contributed to the Autonomous and Familiar ratings. Low Aloofness and low Disengagement, essential to an Open climate, prevented the Autonomous and Familiar ratings, respectively, from being the best fit.

#### School D

Marked by very high Disengagement and very low Production Emphasis, School D fit the Familiar climate best. A major deviation from the prototype, however, was in Hindrance which the school ranked very high as opposed to low in the prototype. High Hindrance, alone, is more suggestive of a Controlled or Closed climate, but scores in the other characteristics do not support either rating.

#### School E

A very high correlation of .74 places this school in the Closed category. One feature of a Closed climate is an inconsistency between high Production Emphasis and

low leader Thrust. In the case of School E, the administrator is rated low on both counts. If a subjective judgment is permitted, one might speculate that a faculty would prefer the inconsistency to being ignored entirely. Within the quantified definition of a Closed climate, however, it appears that the administrator's preference not to be a task-master saved the school from being rated even more Closed.

#### School F

The reverse is true for this school which showed an Open climate rating supported by a correlation of .70. A very high Production Emphasis is perceived in the leader of the school, contrasted to a low rating in the profile, but it must be expected that this would not be seen as a negative factor in a parochial school for girls. Most nuns expect each other to work hard and most do!

#### School G

The only school with a highest correlation under .50, this school comes closest to a Closed climate, but it is truly a mix of many features. Unexpectedly high Esprit and Consideration ratings keep the school from being more Closed. This may suggest that the closed characteristics of the school are more a result of factors external to the personal style of the leader. It appears to be the kind of

school in which the faculty are willing to accept the system and believe in it with good spirit, due in part to the personal power of the administrator.

#### School H.

Following the prototypic high Esprit, Consideration and Thrust, School H is rated as Open, but less so because of high Production Emphasis and Hindrance. This is similar to the situation in School F (which is not surprising since School H is also a parochial girls school). The sisters of both orders are alike in their commitment to strong, directive leadership and their morale appears not to be diminished by it.

It is surprising, but helpful, that four of the six possible prototypic climates are to be found in this sample of eight schools. This allows for wider comparisons in social process scores and provides a broader base for interpretations.

Furthermore, six of the eight schools had best fits in the Open or Closed categories. Since Hypothesis 1 proposes a relationship between the extent to which a school is Closed and the extent to which the social processes are operative, these six are of the greatest interest to the analysis which follows. The other two schools, those with the Paternal and Familiar climates, cannot be located on



a spectrum between Open and Closed, and so they do not lend themselves to the test.

A further, somewhat arbitrary, elimination was of School G. While its best fit is Closed, its correlation to that rating was somewhat below .50 which indicates enough uncertainty as to suggest leaving it out for this purpose. Only Schools A, C, E, F and H had Open or Closed ratings with correlations above .50 and so only those five were used to test Hypothesis 1.

The five schools were assigned climate "scores," Closed climates receiving a score of 1 and Open climates a score of 0. Correlations were then calculated between the staff-derived climate scores and the student-derived social process scores (see Table 12) to determine the tendency of the processes to increase as the schools tended to be closed.

Definite directional tendencies were obtained in all three cases as Hypothesis 1 predicted. Authoritarianism showed the highest direct variation ( $r = .69$ ) but Reward/Punishment ( $r = .45$ ) and Competition ( $r = .48$ ) also varied in the expected directions.

It is likely that students receive some of the brunt and frustration from a faculty working in a Closed climate. The leader in such a climate is pressing his faculty to work hard, but he is not personally setting a

very good example. He is not involving himself with the faculty and is generally inconsiderate of them. The faculty, in turn, is not task-oriented as a group. They are feeling hindered in their work and are suffering from low morale.

Even if the faculty were inclined otherwise, the authoritarian style of the leader may force them into authoritarian roles with their students. The emphasis on results is felt by individual faculty members and is translated into short-run competitive situations which are reward and/or punishment oriented. Faculty cannot afford to think in terms of the school as a community and they tend to operate as every man for himself. The student who senses a harried, unhappy faculty cannot have a good feeling for what he is doing. Availability of choices, opportunities for cooperation, and recognition of intrinsic worth become lost in such a climate.

#### Social Processes and Student Alienation

The basic data used to test Hypotheses 2A, 2B and 2C, are given in Table 12. This table shows the mean scores derived for each of the five SCDQ subtests for alienation variants and for each of the three SCDQ subtests for the social processes.

TABLE 12  
SCDQ SUBTEST AVERAGE SCORES BY SCHOOL

| School | Power | Mean | Norm | Isol | Self-<br>Est | Auth | Comp | Rew/<br>Pun |
|--------|-------|------|------|------|--------------|------|------|-------------|
| A      | 2.48  | 2.44 | 2.66 | 2.15 | 2.31         | 2.79 | 2.50 | 2.67        |
| B      | 2.68  | 2.34 | 3.14 | 2.30 | 2.86         | 2.69 | 2.69 | 2.81        |
| C      | 2.37  | 2.11 | 2.71 | 2.28 | 2.59         | 2.33 | 2.62 | 2.69        |
| D      | 2.46  | 2.38 | 2.73 | 2.21 | 2.60         | 2.20 | 2.89 | 2.64        |
| E      | 3.04  | 2.21 | 2.44 | 2.40 | 2.73         | 2.64 | 2.79 | 2.66        |
| F      | 2.55  | 2.18 | 2.69 | 2.21 | 2.44         | 2.66 | 2.53 | 2.61        |
| G      | 2.53  | 1.79 | 2.72 | 2.12 | 2.56         | 2.41 | 2.75 | 2.64        |
| H      | 2.39  | 1.93 | 2.49 | 2.10 | 2.28         | 2.13 | 2.21 | 2.33        |

Table 13 shows the correlations found between the mean scores of each of the three social processes and the mean scores of each of the five alienation variants. Underlined correlations are statistically significant, based on Fisher-z transformations with tests of  $p_0 = 0$  run at  $\alpha = .05$ .

TABLE 13  
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN SOCIAL PROCESSES  
AND ALIENATION VARIANTS

|                   | Auth-<br>oritar-<br>ianism | Compe-<br>tition | Reward/<br>Punishment |
|-------------------|----------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Powerlessness     | <u>.63</u>                 | .59              | .57                   |
| Meaninglessness   | <u>.62</u>                 | .42              | <u>.73</u>            |
| Normlessness      | .11                        | .10              | .40                   |
| Isolation         | .53                        | <u>.67</u>       | <u>.80</u>            |
| Self-Estrangement | .00                        | .48              | <u>.77</u>            |

As expected, Powerlessness correlated significantly with Authoritarianism. Students can hardly feel that they have much control over their environment if they sense a high degree of Authoritarianism which is, in reality, the source of control over them. While Powerlessness did not associate significantly with the other two processes, the correlations were quite high, within .05 of being signifi-



cant. It is especially interesting that students, who theoretically have the "power" to choose whether or not to compete, feel powerless to the degree that the climate is competitive. It makes a great deal of sense, though, when one realizes that Reward/Punishment contingencies are external to the individual and, especially in a school setting, the student has little control over them. Instead, Reward/Punishment controls him and prods him to compete. Therefore, the student feels powerless in his competitive struggle because, in fact, he is powerless to control the prime cause of his need to compete.

Meaninglessness correlated significantly with Authoritarianism and Reward/Punishment. It is difficult for a student to understand the purposes of the school and of his involvement if he is living in a custodial and regimented climate. The student who is not in a position to make many choices will not be inclined to give much thought to the reasons behind what he is being asked to do. He is either unable or unwilling to predict the outcomes of his behavior because he does not enjoy that much personal initiative. Also, in a high Reward/Punishment climate, the student's concentration is on reward achievement and punishment avoidance, and so this becomes the purpose of his behavior rather than the purposes found in the school philosophy. Although the high correlation with Competition

was not statistically significant, the .42 certainly indicates a direction of association. Again, a student who devotes his energy to competition is probably ignoring the more noble purposes of his academic work. On the other hand, upperclassmen usually have a good idea of how much reward they will be entitled to because by then they will know how their competitive abilities rank with those of their peers. It is this aspect of the student's ability to predict outcomes which probably reduces the correlation between Meaninglessness and Competition to below significance.

Results for Normlessness were both surprising and, possibly, encouraging. Apparently, the Authoritarianism climate is not sufficient to provoke the student to cut corners on his integrity. The considerably higher correlation with Reward/Punishment suggests that it is not the authoritarian who induces socially unapproved but "effective" behavior; rather it is what the authoritarian has to offer, viz., reward and punishment. Even so, this end does not appear to justify the means, i.e., Competition, which does not correlate much with Normlessness. The cynic may argue that while the data tend to characterize the student as a straight-shooter, it is more likely that the rigid structure in an authoritarian climate prevents many of the devious methods which a student might otherwise use.

On the whole, Isolation was the variant that showed the strongest overall relationship with the three processes. The very high correlation with Authoritarianism confirms the notion that a student can become alienated when values and expectations are forced upon him. The highest correlation in the entire study was that obtained between Isolation and Reward/Punishment. The cognitive dissonance people would receive such news with a shrug. Their theory that external pressures of reward and punishment are inversely related to commitment is resoundingly supported by these results. Moreover, Isolation is the only alienation variant which correlates significantly with Competition. The student's commitment to competing for available rewards diverts his attention from a commitment to the values of education itself. He may even resent the expectation that he compete even though he seems to be doing it willingly.

The authoritarian climate appears to have nothing whatsoever to do with a student's sense of intrinsic worth in his work. Self-Estrangement, oddly, correlates not at all with Authoritarianism, but it correlates very significantly with Reward/Punishment. Of course, this is not surprising since the definition of Self-Estrangement involves the extent to which one sees his activity as self-rewarding. Obviously, if Reward/Punishment is presented as the goal of one's behavior, intrinsic value becomes



overshadowed. These results support such a notion overwhelmingly. A high correlation with Competition is also in keeping with this line of thought. The student who is interested primarily in the inherent worth of his study is not concerned about Competition. Competition itself can hardly be viewed as having any value, apart from its goals, yet the student competes and therefore becomes self-estranged.

While Hypotheses 2A, 2B and 2C are not confirmed in their entireties, forty per-cent of the various parts correlated at a significantly high level and eighty per-cent of them showed correlations above .40. In no case did an opposite result, i.e., a negative correlation, show up. Although refinements are definitely in order, it seems safe to say that the results of this section indicate a very definite tendency for alienation to exist and vary to the degree that the three social processes are found within the school climate.

#### Interrelationship Among Social Processes

To test Hypotheses 3A, 3B and 3C, correlations were calculated between pairs of the three social processes. Fisher-z transformations were made and a test of  $p_0 = 0$  ( $\alpha = .05$ ) for each pair.



Significantly high correlations were obtained between Authoritarianism and Reward/Punishment ( $r = .71, \alpha = .05$ ) and between Competition and Reward/Punishment ( $r = .75, \alpha = .05$ ). The correlation between Authoritarianism and Competition was positive ( $r = .19$ ), but not significantly so. Therefore, Hypothesis 3A and Hypothesis 3C are accepted; Hypothesis 3B is not confirmed although the directional tendency appears to be as expected.

While the correlations do not imply causal relationships, it is possible to speculate about the order in which these processes most likely emerge. For example, it would be difficult to argue that Competition alone causes Reward/Punishment to come into being. First would come the Reward/Punishment, then comes the Competition to earn or avoid it. Assuming that this is true, then it can be claimed that a school can regulate the competitive aspects of its climate by a deliberate manipulation of its rewarding and punitive contingencies. But some force must exist to perform the manipulation.

It is interesting to note that the students themselves seem to be aware of such a force because, in addition to judging climates high in Reward/Punishment to be highly competitive, they also judge them to be highly authoritarian. Again, it is reasonable to assume that the Reward/Punishment process has Authoritarianism as its source.

In short, an Authoritarianism-Reward/Punishment-Competition chain seems to be the most strongly supported by the data and by common sense. It is instructive to note that students who view themselves to be in a competitive climate seem to know why, i.e., because there are rewards to be gained. Furthermore, they consider the climate to be authoritarian to the same extent that they perceive reward and punishment to be used on them. As a result, students may be competing for rewards, whether they like it or not, but they may be resentful of the authoritarian climate which is perceived to control them with rewards in the first place.

#### Differences in Staff and Administrator Perceptions

In the previous section, each school was assigned one of six climate ratings according to their best fits. These ratings were made on the basis of data obtained from the faculties of the schools.

Hypothesis 4 predicted that administrators of the schools would judge their climates to be more Open than would their faculties. To test this, best fits were again calculated, this time for administrators' ratings. Since no administrator response was received from School A, the results in Table 14 are for Schools B through H only.

TABLE 14  
 COMPARISON OF FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATOR  
 CORRELATIONS TO AN OPEN CLIMATE

| School | Faculty | Administrator |
|--------|---------|---------------|
| B      | .00     | .65           |
| C      | .85     | .66           |
| D      | -.14    | .29           |
| E      | -.75    | .60           |
| F      | .70     | .44           |
| G      | -.49    | .02           |
| H      | .54     | .50           |

The hypothesis is confirmed for every school except Schools C, F and H which were all rated as Open anyway. But it is interesting to note that in each case in which a faculty rated its climate as Open, they did so with a higher correlation than did the administrator. Even so, in checking the other possible ratings for Schools C, F and H, it was determined that the administrator's best fit in each case was indeed the Open climate. That the administrators' correlations were highest for the Open climate, but less so than the faculties', suggests that the administrators of such schools may not be allowing complacency to set in and are working toward even greater openness than is already perceived by the faculty to exist.

In any case, it is obvious that schools whose faculties do not judge their climates to be Open have administrators who do. It is especially curious in cases in which the faculty actually rated the climate as Closed!

### Summary

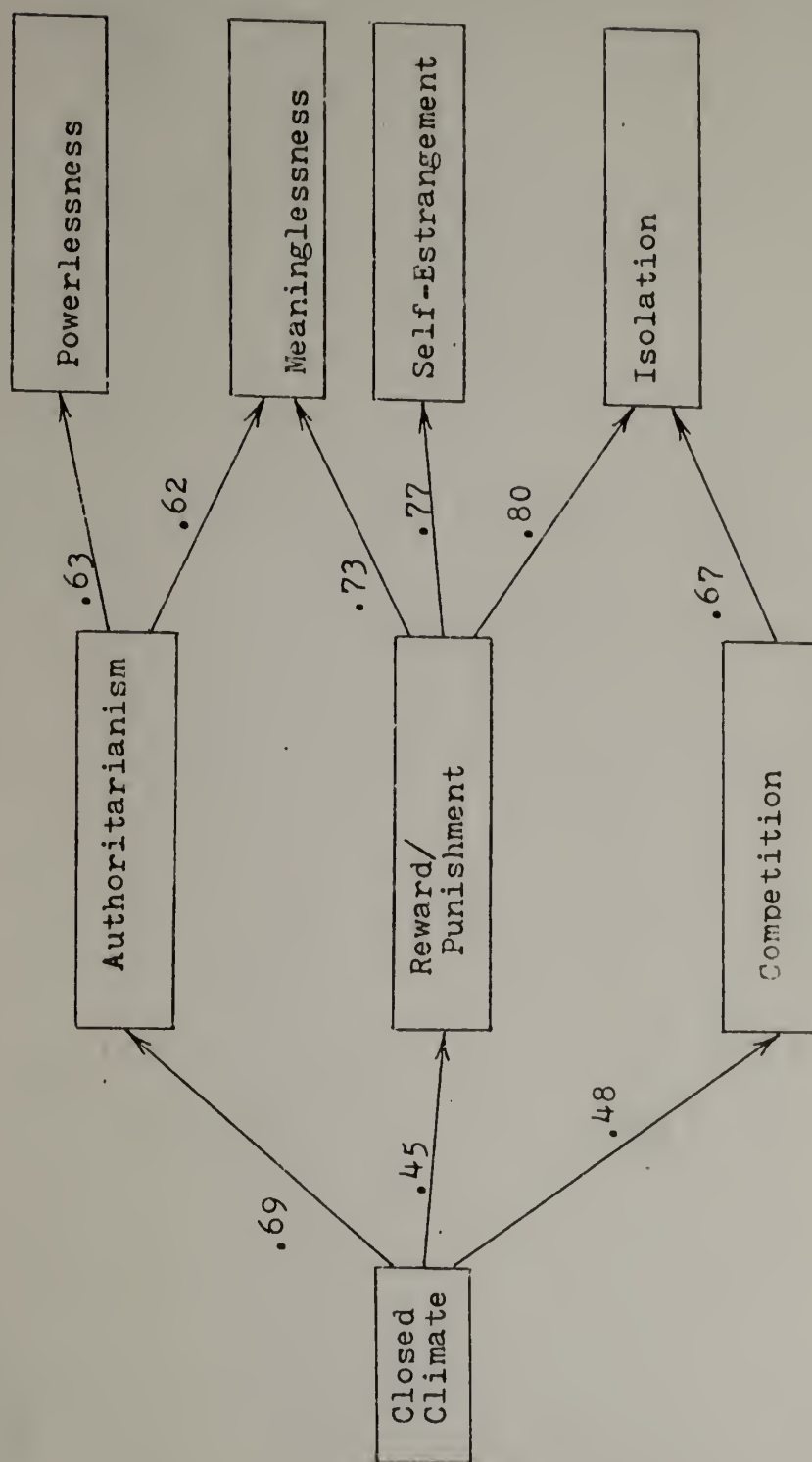
Since the basic premise of this study is that the social processes serve as intervening variables between climate and alienation ratings, a tie-in can now be portrayed on the basis of the data. Figure 1 shows the correlational directions obtained between the Closed climate and the social processes, and between the social processes and the significantly associated alienation variants.

While previous studies were able to show a strong relationship between a Closed climate and the existence of alienation, the results of this study have more to say to the practitioner who can see, at least in part, what it is that serves as a relay between his style as a leader among faculty and the attitudinal effects it has on students as they perceive their environment.

Much of the testing in this study might justifiably be referred to as a fishing expedition. Prior research has not sought connecting causes between organizational climate characteristics and degrees of student alienation.



FIGURE 1  
SOCIAL PROCESSES AS INTERVENING VARIABLES



Furthermore, the problem is compounded by the assumption of various alienation forms since alienation per se is too broad a concept to relate to anything else. In this study, for example, one would be almost willing to guarantee that if alienation exists at all, it would show up in the form of normlessness, particularly since the more overt forms of normless behavior (cheating, lying, etc.) do receive so much concerned attention from schools. The results of this study suggest that such attention may be overdrawn, at least where alienation itself is the concern, at the expense of ignoring other less visible variants which may deserve greater attention.

There is nothing in the design of this research to certify that the defined social processes are the links between organizational climates and student alienation, nor can it be claimed that there are no links between these links. The relationships portrayed in Figure 1 await further validation and refinement, but the research certainly gives the practitioner reason to believe that there are forces which are well within his control and which can be arranged in order to create any kind of climate for his organization and his student body.

Whether or not he should seek to reduce the impact of these social processes becomes a value judgment and one with which every school leader must reckon.

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