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# What are some of the causes that produce discipline problem cases in the junior high school?

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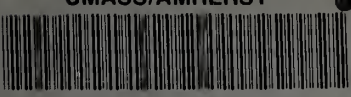
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WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CAUSES THAT  
PRODUCE DISCIPLINE PROBLEM CASES  
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WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CAUSES THAT PRODUCE DISCIPLINE  
PROBLEM CASES IN THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL?

BY

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"Thesis submitted for degree of Master of Science"

MASSACHUSETTS STATE COLLEGE

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# A STUDY OF DISCIPLINE CASES IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

## CHAPTER ONE

### PROBLEM AND INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

#### PROBLEM

The question of discipline is by no means a local one, nor is it confined to one country or one period of time. Dr. E. G. Malherbe of South Africa, in speaking of "Delinquency as an Educational Problem," said "....criticizing the behaviour of the young has been a favourite pastime for many generations, and each generation views the coming generation with dismay. The following lamentation was taken from a clay tablet inscribed some 6000 years ago and found by archaeologists in the Mesopotamia valley: 'Our earth has degenerated in these latter days. There are signs that the world is coming to an end. Children no longer obey their parents. The end of the world is manifestly drawing near.' 1

In days gone by, every teacher had her problem children, her discipline cases. But, she also had her remedy, the hickory stick, when conditions necessitated its use. Today, educators and parents alike frown upon such inhumane methods of procedure. Yet, both educators and parents must face the grave situation to be met in the average school today. There is a growing lack of respect for law, order and authority not only in the schools but also in the world in general. The proof of

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1. Campbell, A. E. (ed.) "Modern Trends in Education" p. 112

this statement is to be found on the front page of every newspaper in the country. We admit that our schools are not perfect but a mere glance at the situation will show that the schools are being asked to carry more than their share.

"There is a strong tendency for parents to transfer to the school those functions of physical development, character building and moral training, that even two generations ago belonged almost entirely to the home and the church." 1

The question of discipline is a serious one worthy of diligent investigation and profound consideration. Discipline cases are increasing. They are the bane of a teacher's life and the cause of much misery and weariness. The hickory stick, however inhumane, was one remedy at the hand of the teacher of yore. Where is today's teacher to turn to obtain aid, what agencies are at her disposal to assist in quelling the ever increasing number of discipline problems? To answer this question one must first know the causes that produce discipline problems. The present task has been set: "What Are Some of the Causes that Produce Discipline Problem Cases in Junior High School?"

#### INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

Every author of an educational book has a different definition for the word 'discipline.' It has truly been stated that the word has become obsolete in educational circles because its meaning has been changed so often. The New Century Dictionary of the English Language (1927, 1929) defines discipline as "in-

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1. National Industrial Conference, "Public Education as Effecting Adjustment of Youth to Life" p. 12



struction, teaching, or education" followed by a mark which connotes the idea that these meanings are obsolete. Funk and Wagnall's "New Standard Dictionary of the English Language" (1938) defines discipline as "systematic training or subjection to authority; especially, the training of the mental, moral, and physical powers by instruction and exercise, and by authoritative control and direction." Part of this definition implies the idea of formal discipline. This aspect of the subject of discipline will not be considered as such in this work.

Discipline, at one time, was known as a system of rewards and punishments. With the passing of time this view was also discarded. At the present time the tendency of educators seems to be in favor of discipline as a means of practicing self-control. Winifred Bain feels that "it (discipline) begins in the cradle when a child first becomes accustomed to the law of systematic routine. Since it is so inevitably bound up with social considerations, it becomes more obvious and acute when a child gets a little older and comes in contact with more people." 1

Discipline, then, is a learning process, largely in the hands of the individual. It should help him to develop "the knowledge, interests, ideals, habits and powers whereby he will find his place and use that place to shape both himself and society towards ever nobler ends." 2

What is the relationship between discipline and the Junior High School student? The average pupil in the Junior High School is experiencing the awkward stage of adolescence. He is "too

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1. "Parents Look at Modern Education" p. 248

2. N. E. A. 6th Yearbook, Superintendence Division, 1928

big for a serviette and too small for a tablecloth." 1 He is neither child nor man yet he is a combination of both. He has passed through the transition stage and the formative stage and is now experiencing the age of adolescence. Mentally, he is acquiring the social instincts of love, hate, fear, pity, emulation, ambition, etc.; physically, the adolescent is growing rapidly; morally, he is in the process of developing ideals. This period of rapid change, often called a period of storm and stress, demands unlimited tact, sympathy and understanding on the part of parents, teachers and all others who come in contact with the adolescent. Is it so strange then, that during the period of adolescence the question of discipline is a serious one?

The ever increasing number of discipline cases during the past few years offers a challenge to every parent, teacher and social worker. Of late, teachers and social workers have been viewing the situation with alarm. They have become disturbed over the increasingly careless attitude on the part of children and adults toward law and order. At the same time "more and more responsibility for the training of children is being placed on the school and the parents are taking an increasingly smaller part in the task....This increasing dependency upon the public school brings upon it much criticism that was formerly leveled against the various institutions that contributed toward the training of children." 2 It is to be assumed then, that the task of training children is becoming more and more a public rather than a family responsibility.

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1. Campbell, A. E. (ed.) op. cit. p. 113

2. National Industrial Conference op. cit. p. 12

"Whoever controls the child, controls the future" was one of the principles upon which Frederick the Great and Napoleon established the school systems of their respective countries. In both systems the state was paramount. 1 The present situation will lead inevitably to state control if parents refuse to accept their responsibilities.

In the meantime, an earnest effort is being made by educators to take over the new duties thrust upon them. One local superintendent of schools is of the opinion that teachers are people of extraordinary ability since parents and the public in general expect so much more from them than the usual "reading, writing, and arithmetic."

Once again the question is set before the reader. "What Are Some of the Causes that Produce Discipline Problem Cases in Junior High School?"

1. Campbell, A. E. (ed.) op. cit. p. 3

## CHAPTER TWO

### RELATED READINGS

#### CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Corporal punishment is generally considered an unpleasant memory of the past yet one finds considerable space given to the subject in many of the more recent as well as in the older educational studies. Many studies have been made which show that corporal punishment brings about the loss of the feeling of cooperation that is so vital between the teacher and the pupil. There are still a few administrators who feel that a little physical force now and then will have the desired effect. Floyd Dell, in his book, "Were You Ever a Child?", maintains that "there are few adults who can with any dignity inflict punishment upon children - for the dignity with which punishment is given depends upon the equality of the punisher and the punished, and on the implicit understanding that if the case had happened to be different the roles would have been reversed." 1

Almost one hundred years ago, in 1845 to be exact, there was a report published in the Common School Journal, extracts of which are reprinted in "Then and Now in Education," to the effect that "...if the right to use corporal punishment be not taken away from the teacher, he can govern his school, if he has any competency for his office, but with a rare resort to it; and that other things being equal, the less he uses it, the

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1. Dell, Floyd "Were You Ever a Child?" p. 176

greater will be the proficiency of his pupils." 1 During the years the attempt on the part of the educators to reduce corporal punishment in the schools is "in part responsible for the almost complete disappearance of corporal punishment from the schools." 2 Quoting from the same book one finds that "both schools and homes are using more teaching and less physical force in meting out punishment for wrongdoing." 3

The question of corporal punishment has been introduced into this study mainly because it is the antithesis of self-discipline and self-discipline is that elusive quality which is missing in the fifty-four pupils who comprise this study. Self-discipline is the aim of most educational institutions today. Its acquisition by the students is most edifying and parents are most grateful.

"The contrast between 'self-discipline' and 'one flogging every six minutes throughout a six-hour day' tells a story of remarkable progress. It is not uncommon for more or less mystified parents to give conscious testimony to the efficacy of modern education. They come to schools seeking to understand why children like school, and marvel at their growth in intelligent self-control. However, there are many parents who still have to learn that true discipline can come only from within; that the use of force or physical compulsion is a sign of failure in the development of true character." 4

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1. Caldwell and Courtis, "Then and Now in Education" p. 265
  2. Bain, Winifred, "Parents Look at Modern Education" p. 268
  3. Ibid. p. 265
  4. Caldwell and Courtis, op. cit. p. 14

HEREDITY AND ENVIRONMENT

Heredity and environment play a very important part in any study of children. If the administrative agents of a school are thoroughly familiar with a child's background and his environment many questions are automatically eliminated. The teacher in charge then knows just how much she can expect from the child in school. She doesn't expect the impossible from him. She knows, too, to what extent she can expect cooperation from the parents. In the book, "The Education of the Modern Boy," one reads that the school and the home must work together in their common cause.

"Sympathetic understanding between home and school is the first essential in the shaping of young lives and the development of dependable character. Without this the task of the school becomes a well-nigh impossible one. With it seeming miracles can be wrought." 1

All are more or less in agreement that the home is the logical starting point for the beginning of character development. The consensus of opinion is usually unanimous in the belief that "bad environment, unfortunate street influences, and lack of regular and healthful occupation are three extremely potent causes of criminality and pauperism." 2 One does not intend to convey the idea that the children in this study will necessarily become criminals or have criminal tendencies but modern conditions are alarming as is evidenced in the statement

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1. Stearns, Drury, and others "The Education of the Modern Boy" p. 14
  2. Carlton, Frank T. "Education and Industrial Revolution" p. 240
  - 3.

made by the State's Attorney of Baltimore when he was discussing the extent and causes of youthful delinquency.

"The laxity of parents, the apparent failure of heads of households to make the home attractive enough to compel the juvenile members to consider it more than a place to partake their meals, sleep, and change their clothing, and the neglect of the male parent to establish a feeling of comradeship, brotherly interest, and an understanding of the anxieties and vicissitudes of the growing man, are in great measure accountable for this alarming and recent juvenile menace." 1

Another quotation from "The Education of the Modern Boy" lists some of the many agencies that are at work lessening the responsibility of parents.

"Many agencies are today busily at work undermining the foundations of the home and rendering next to impossible the maintenance of conditions and relations without which a real home is impossible. City life with its hotels and apartment houses; the increasing speed of life itself in a material age; the exacting demands of business, professional, and social life; automobiles, movies, and jazz; and the new and wider responsibilities assumed by woman all hammer increasingly at the foundations of the home." 2

The above quotation was found in a book published in 1925. Consider how many more distractions are to be found in the year 1940: radio, television, aviation, comic strips, comic magazines, jitter-bugging, just to mention a few. Modern tendencies have done their part to disrupt the influence of the parents in the home. These same modern tendencies are having their effect on the youth of today.

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1. Stearns, Drury, and others op. cit. p. 53

2. Ibid. p. 36

"....the increased pace at which modern civilization is changing makes it more and more difficult for young people to find themselves, and to make the adaptation required of them. Young people today are living in a most difficult transition period. Old sanctions of the home and church are breaking down and new ones have not yet been built up." 1

### RELIGION

The home, the school and the church comprise the triad upon which character building depends. The citizens of the United States of America pride themselves upon their insistence that there shall be a complete and absolute separation of church and state. As time passes and one witnesses the increasing irreligious attitude on the part of these same citizens one wonders if there is reason for being so proud of this separation.

"Religion in the sense of real intimacy with a real God is impossible in the American public schools. In most states the teaching of religion in any form is absolutely forbidden within their walls." 2

Religious teaching, then, appears to be rapidly disappearing; children, not to mention adults, are no longer on familiar terms with the Bible which is listed as one of the greatest classics of all time. The religious element of human culture is vitally necessary and it should be presented by some agent to every child in order to fit him with a well balanced education. This irreligious attitude is not a new one. An article in the Atlantic Monthly over a century ago included the follow-

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1. Campbell, A. E. (ed.) op. cit. p. 113

2. Bell, Bernard Iddings "Common Sense in Education" p. 125



ing passage.

"And what is to become of our youth? Where one child hails the Sabbath with delight, as the day for Bible Study, one hundred young mortals are growing up in ignorance and sin. The lamentable dishonesty, fraud and wickedness among our boys and girls shocks the nation." 1

### GENERAL INTELLIGENCE

Mental ability is a very important consideration in a study of human beings. The earliest intelligence tests were used chiefly to identify and to grade the feeble-minded. As the use of tests increased and educators were able to interpret them with greater skill they were able to distinguish several levels of feeble-mindedness. "One of the most important facts brought to light by the use of intelligence tests is the frequent association of delinquency and mental deficiency.....Such tests have demonstrated, beyond any possibility of doubt, that the most important trait of at least 25% of our criminals is mental weakness, .....Without exception, every study which has been made of the intelligence level of delinquents has furnished convincing testimony as to the close relation existing between mental weakness and moral abnormality." 2

Terman goes on to give many statistics of studies made of feeble-minded people in prisons, reformatories and other like institutions. All the studies show a marked relationship between low intelligence and criminal tendencies. Morality, ac-

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1. Campbell, A. E. (ed.) op. cit. p. 112

2. Terman, Lewis M. "The Measurement of Intelligence" p. 7

ording to the same author, depends upon: "(a) the ability to foresee and to weigh the possible consequences for self and others of different kinds of behavior; and (b) upon the willingness and capacity to exercise self-restraint." 1 All criminals are not feeble-minded but all feeble-minded people are potential criminals. It is the duty of the home, the school, and the church to do all in their power to reduce criminal tendency in individuals by using every means at their disposal.

1. Terman, Lewis M. op. cit. p. 11

## CHAPTER THREE

### PROCEDURE AND SCOPE

#### PROCEDURE

In an attempt to get at the causes that produce discipline problem cases in Junior High School the staff of a particular Junior High School was asked to pick out the discipline cases that seemed to be the most outstanding cases. The preliminary work was done by the teachers in their respective grades, that is, the teachers of Junior I picked out the discipline cases in Junior I; the Junior II teachers decided upon the cases in Junior II to be chosen for this study; and the Junior III teachers studied the discipline situation in Junior III and then presented their list of cases. The second step was to present the Junior II list to the teachers of Junior I who had had these students the previous year. Some of the names chosen by the Junior II teachers were eliminated by the Junior I teachers on the grounds that these children whose names were removed were more apt to be temporary cases of mischievousness than the remainder of the cases on the list. Next, the list presented by the Junior III teachers was given to the teachers of Junior II and Junior I, all former teachers of the group. A few names were eliminated from this list also. As far as possible, former teachers of the Junior I discipline cases were contacted to obtain their opinion on the Junior I discipline list. The final and approved list contained the names of fifty-four discipline cases.

### METHOD OF ATTACK

After the list of discipline cases had been prepared it was necessary to determine how the desired information concerning their cases was to be obtained. It was finally decided that the problem was to be attacked by means of:

1. Case Studies - A case study was made of each student reported as a discipline case. The material for the individual case studies was obtained through questionnaires, personal interviews with parents or guardians, and interviews with the School Physician and the School Nurse as well as through personal interviews with the discipline cases themselves.
2. School Records - A study was made of various school records to check the age of students, to discover the child's previous school situation as far as class rank was concerned, to find out the number of grades repeated during the child's schooling, and to locate any outstanding physical weakness.
3. Intelligence Tests - The Terman Group Test of Mental Ability was administered to the group to find the intelligence quotient of each pupil in the discipline group.

After the number of discipline cases had been decided it was thought that a questionnaire would be the most efficient and desirable way to collect much of the information that was

sought. The question that seemed most obvious for a starting point was that of heredity. An attempt was made to learn the birthplace of the parents of the discipline cases as well as the birthplace of the children themselves. It was thought that a lack of knowledge of the English on the part of foreign-born parents, together with their lack of understanding concerning the customs practiced in the United States of America might in some way contribute to the non-conformist attitude of their children.

Environment was the next point of attack. The questionnaire was planned so as to obtain the answers to such questions as the number of children in the family; the parental situation: were both parents in the home, only the mother in the home, only the father in the home, or neither parent in the home.

The use of leisure time was probed next. The idea governing this question was that time well spent could not then be spent in idleness, mischief, and trouble. Questions were asked regarding the child's hobby and his further use of leisure time. If the child claimed that he had no leisure time he was asked to tell if he worked, and if so he was asked to tell the type of work he did.

The religious question is always an interesting one. It was assumed that a child who conscientiously attends Church or Sunday School does not readily fall into the problem child situation. Thus an inquiry was made concerning the pupil's regular attendance at Church and Sunday School.

The questionnaire could not supply all the information that was desired. Supplementary material was obtained from the School Nurse who knew the home conditions of the children and who also knew the health condition of all concerned. A few consultations were held with the school physician. Personal interviews with the discipline cases and with their parents were a source of additional information.

No attempt was made in the questionnaire to obtain information about the pupil's past school record. Promotions and retardations were tabulated from the school records.

#### SCOPE

Fifty-four outstanding discipline cases were found in a group of four hundred and fifty-three students enrolled in the "X" Junior High School in a Connecticut Valley Town. The cases were chosen by the members of the faculty. The number of cases made it possible to conduct a thorough investigation.

The school in which these cases are enrolled is the largest Junior High School in a city of approximately 25,000 inhabitants. The school, situated in the center of the city, serves a wide area and draws upon a well assorted group of families in all walks of life. The school might well be called a representative Junior High School and therefore these cases under discussion might be considered a representative group of discipline cases.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DISCUSSION OF DATA

#### DISTRIBUTION OF CASES

For the past six years I have had an excellent opportunity to study an unusually large number of discipline cases. The actions of the students in the discipline group have been many and diverse. This year the number of discipline cases seemed greater than ever. My suspicions were confirmed when the final and approved list of fifty-four cases was presented to form the nucleus of this study on the causes that produce discipline problem cases in the Junior High School.

The fifty-four cases were distributed in the following manner: in the seventh grade or Junior I, there were fourteen cases out of an enrollment of 160 or 8.75%. Of this number two cases were found in the Special Seventh, a name given to a small group of children whose mental ability necessitates special individual attention. One teacher has charge of all subjects as compared with four or five teachers doing departmental work in regular classes. It is interesting to note that of the fourteen cases reported in Junior I, one was a girl and thirteen were boys.

In the eighth grade or Junior II thirty-one cases were reported from an enrollment of 158 or approximately 20%. Practically speaking, these figures mean that every fifth child in the second year of Junior High School was considered a discipline problem - a person who had incorrect behavior patterns, a person who needed to be taught correct behavior patterns, a per-

son who needed to learn and practice self-control. Of the thirty-one cases cited, five were members of Special Eighth, a group similar to that mentioned in Junior I. Five girls and twenty-six boys comprised the discipline problems of Junior II.

In the ninth grade or Junior III, nine cases were reported or 6.67% of the total enrollment of 135. Of this number one was reported from Special Ninth. Two of the nine cases were girls and seven were boys.

The total number of cases was fifty-four; the enrollment in the Junior High School was 453. Approximately 12% of the entire student body were classified as discipline problems or about every eighth child was a discipline case.

Even the most casual reader cannot overlook the fact that the majority of the cases are to be found in the second year of the Junior High School. At the time the children filled out the questionnaire which will be discussed at length in a later section, the ages of these Junior II students ranged from twelve years and one month to sixteen years and three months. Five in the group were repeating the grade. This unusual discipline situation had been a topic of interest for some time. Before this study was started it was felt, and rightly so, by the teachers of Junior II that each year the greatest number of discipline problems occurred in the second year of the Junior High School. This observation led to a discussion of possible reasons for such a situation. To begin with, it was the first year upstairs (Special Eighth students excepted since they are in a portable building adjoining the main building), the novelty of which may



or may not have a bearing on the situation; five teachers have charge of classes as compared with four in Junior I; Latin is a new subject in Junior II as are Algebra and Geometry. These new subjects are, of necessity, very elementary yet they are new, something to get stirred up about. Compulsory school attendance entered into this discussion of reasons. Many of the children, especially the boys, were just waiting until they were fourteen when they could obtain home permits enabling them to leave school. Others were putting in time until they could "quit school" at sixteen. Some children of more or less limited ability who were interested in sewing and cooking or in sheet metal work, painting, carpentry, etc., were merely completing grade eight without any thought of promotion. In order to be admitted to the local vocational school a student must complete grade eight although promotion is not a requisite for admittance. These reasons explain, in some degree, the great number of discipline problems that arise in the second year of Junior High School in this particular school.

By the time the children have reached Junior III, the equivalent of the first year of high school, they have begun to assume a little responsibility for their own progress and behavior. Added to this, much of the chaff has been eliminated in the various methods just discussed. This situation automatically reduces not only the number of pupils in Junior III but also the number of non-conformists in the group.

CHAPTER FOUR

(continued)

PARENTAGE

The question is raised: "Are the children of native-born parents more or less inclined to be discipline cases than the children of foreign-born parents?" In an attempt to answer this question the children chosen for this study were asked to tell the birthplace of their parents. The following results were obtained from the questionnaire.

Table I. Birthplace of Parents of Discipline Cases

Fathers	No.	Per Cent	Mothers	No.	Per Cent
United States	32	59.26	United States	33	61.11
Poland	13	24.08	Poland	15	27.79
Great Britain	3	5.56	Great Britain	2	3.70
Italy	2	3.70	Italy	1	1.85
Russia	1	1.85	Russia	0	0.00
Lithuania	1	1.85	Lithuania	1	1.85
Greece	1	1.85	Greece	1	1.85
Unknown	<u>1</u>	<u>1.85</u>	Unknown	<u>1</u>	<u>1.85</u>
Total	54	100.00	Total	54	100.00

The fathers of 32 discipline cases were born in the United States of America or 59.26% of the fathers are American-born; 13 fathers or 24.08% were born in Poland; 3 or 5.56% were born

were born in Great Britain; 2 or 3.70% were born in Italy; Russia, Lithuania and Greece contributed one father. Of the 54 mothers, 23 or 61.11% are native-born; 15 or 27.79% were born in Poland; 2 or 3.70% were born in Great Britain; and one each in Italy, Lithuania and Greece. One girl did not know the birthplace of either parent and no records were available that contained the information. One boy could not give the birthplace of his mother until he made a special inquiry at home. Two boys were in doubt concerning the birthplace of their parents so the school records were consulted and the desired information was obtained.

A study of the foregoing table in connection with the questionnaire shows that the spirit of nationalism was very strong. For the most part, Americans married Americans and those of foreign birth married members of their own nationality. This situation automatically eliminated the possibility of several different types of customs in the family. This very situation should aid the harmony in the home since all are accustomed to practically the same type of environment. With approximately 59% of the fathers and 61% of the mothers American-born the question of language difficulty in the home practically disappears. Therefore, it is not a question of parents not understanding the language taught to and spoken by their children in school. There is no possibility of placing the majority of the parents at a disadvantage when they inquire about their children's progress in school. This situation also eliminates the possibility of children misinforming their parents about marks and re-

marks on their report cards. The parents, then, are, for the most part, capable of understanding the language used by the teacher and principal and they, in turn, can be understood by the teacher and principal.

To throw more light on this interesting subject information was collected on the birthplace of each discipline case. The results of this investigation are to be found in Table II.

Table II. Birthplace of the Discipline Cases

Place of Birth	Number of Pupils	Per Cent
"X" City	43	79.6
Elsewhere in Massachusetts	8	14.8
Other States	<u>3</u>	<u>5.6</u>
Total	54	100.0

Table II shows that approximately 80% of the pupils or 43 of the 54 cases were born in the city in which they are now residing and attending school. Eight pupils were born elsewhere in Massachusetts and the remaining three were born outside the state of Massachusetts, one in Maine, one in Connecticut and one in Florida. This seems to be more or less conclusive proof that there should be absolutely no difficulty on the part of the children understanding the language and customs of the school. Granted that some of the parents speak poor English it remains to be seen that the children have attended English speaking schools for at least seven years and some of them for twelve

years. Therefore the children themselves are not handicapped from the standpoint of language.

It may be assumed, then, from a study of Tables I and II that in the majority of cases the language spoken at home and in the school is the same; and the customs of the parents and the children are more or less identical since the United States of America is the birthplace of the majority of the parents and of all the children under study. These statistics tend to prove that the children of native-born parents are more apt to be discipline cases than the children of foreign-born parents although there are obvious reasons which do not warrant such a situation.

This unexpected conclusion is not in conformity with the many studies that have been made which show that language difficulty and a lack of understanding of the customs practiced in America make it an easy matter for children to confuse well-meaning but little educated parents.

## CHAPTER FOUR

(continued)

### HOME LIFE

"To what extent does the home life of an individual effect his conduct in school?" There are several aspects of the home situation to be discussed before a satisfactory answer can be advanced. A partial answer to the question can be obtained from a study of the parental situation. The discipline cases were asked, in the questionnaire, to provide information concerning their parents presence in or absence from the home. This information is recorded in Table III.

Table III. Parental Situation of the Discipline Cases

Parents	No. of Cases	Per Cent
Both parents in the home	40	74.10
Parents divorced	1	1.85
Fathers dead	4	7.40
Mothers dead	3	5.56
Father in mental institution	1	1.85
Parents remarried	3	5.56
Parents away from home	2	3.70
Relatives caring for children	2	3.70

A total cannot be arrived at in this table because of the obvious overlapping of conditions. In some cases where one

parent was dead the other parent remarried; relatives were caring for two children whose parents for one reason or another were away from the home. Forty of the fifty-four cases had the benefit of both parents in the home. One family was broken because of divorce. Four fathers and three mothers were dead and one father was an inmate of the state hospital for the insane.

The figures presented in Table III convey the idea that an ideal situation prevailed in forty of the fifty-four cases, that is to say that both parents were in the home. One would very naturally suppose that the children in these homes were benefiting from the union in the family. These children should be living in happy homes and therefore should not be discipline cases in school because of broken homes. This study was necessary because these very children who should work in harmony with others were not doing so. In fact, these cases were outstanding because of a more or less advanced degree of discord in school. Such conflicting situations demanded a further probe into apparently peaceful conditions. Although Table III showed that 74% of the parents were both in the home this same table failed to show the exact conditions of the home.

A study of individual cases showed that the home life of many of these cases was far from ideal. Of the fourteen cases in Junior I nine answered the questionnaire to the effect that both parents were in the home. The first case to come to our attention was that of a boy afflicted with St. Vitus' Dance. The school health authorities provided the information that the parents would not have a doctor for the child. At the same time

a report was made that the parents were over-indulgent; the boy had only to name an article or express a desire and the parents saw to it that he had what he wanted. Here was a situation abounding in contradictions. If the parents couldn't be consistent in their actions and if they couldn't make up their minds how could the child, an only child at that, be expected to obey the rules of correct behavior and order in school. Evidently, school life was to him a contradiction of his home life; and since his home life was more enjoyable to him he chose the type of behavior he used at home to get what he wanted.

A study of a second case in Junior I threw much light on the child's behavior. His father married again following the death of his first wife. To his new home he brought his three small children. The second union produced three more children. It was only natural that the present wife should consider her own children superior to those of the first wife. The boy under study, the oldest of the second group of three, has been pampered and spoiled to such an extent that he expects to be catered to in school at all times. If this attention is not forthcoming he resorts to various tricks and antics. The parents have made periodic visits to school and they have promised to help the youngster to understand why he must practice self-control in school. There is every reason to believe that there is continual friction in the home.

Another boy has a very cantankerous father who is an invalid. Economic family conditions have made it necessary for the work at home to be done by the children, two boys, while the mother is employed outside the home. The father's dispo-



sition was more or less responsible for friction in the home.

Since this study was started many of the families of the discipline cases have aired their family troubles in the courts, illness has reached a point of crisis, serious disease has necessitated the hospitalization of a mother followed by the breaking up of the home, fathers have been jailed and numerous other situations have arisen.

One family of thirteen children, two of which are members of this discipline group, were living in a four room house practically devoid of furniture. The kitchen boasted of a small table and a couple of chairs. The children had to take turns eating because there were not enough chairs and there was not enough room around the table. How and where the children slept remains a mystery. The house in which they lived was rumored unsafe. Naturally, they were receiving aid from the city. The health department found a clean home for the family on the outskirts of the city but they would not even consider it because it was too far from the center. Since this study was started the father was arrested for drunkenness and the mother was committed to the state hospital for the insane. Nine of the thirteen children were sent to an orphanage. Before they were allowed to enter the orphanage they had to be taken out and scrubbed and cleaned. One need look no further for the cause of their discipline trouble in school. These children didn't have a decent start in life, they did not know how the rest of the world lived and acted. They did not know how to respond to kind treatment never having been on familiar terms with it.

A state ward, completely spoiled by her guardians, constituted one of the worst discipline problems in Junior I. Her home life was not a natural or healthy one.

A difficult situation was, no doubt, greatly responsible for one boy's behavior. There was one colored child in the family. The evidence gathered seems to show that a colored man was residing at the home. All the other children in the family, including the one in this study, were white. Such home conditions caused this individual to be on the defensive at all times; he was always ready for the proverbial fight at the drop of a hat and there were many of them.

Conditions in the families of Junior II students were not always of the best. There were cases of illegitimate children living with aunts or grandmothers; there were families having a step-father or a step-mother; parents who were lax about the school laws; fathers who were habitually drunk, etc.

One attractive thirteen year old Junior II girl made a habit of attending public dances at least once a week. It was not unusual for her to be out until the early hours of the morning. Naturally, her school work suffered under such conditions. Probably she could not be blamed for staying out nights since her home life was anything but a happy one. The mother had the father in court several times for non-support and drunkenness. The last time the father was sent to jail the children were sent to the children's home temporarily. They were later removed to an orphanage where late hours are not in order.

Another girl in Junior II came from a family whose home had been broken. The boys in the family lived with the father

and the girl lived with the mother. The parents had been divorced and reunited several times. The mother was definitely not interested in the welfare of her children.

A boy in Junior II who had repeated four of the eight grades he had attended came from a family where friction was very common. The mother worked hard to support the family. Occasionally the family received assistance from the city welfare department. The boy's home life was most unstable. The boy's favorite pastime was roaming the streets at all hours of the day and night.

An unusual case presented itself the day the group was asked to fill out the questionnaire. When one boy reached the question "How many children are there in your family?" he wrote eight first and then seven and then admitted that he did not know how many brothers and sisters he had. The number was finally set at nine and was arrived at when boys who live nearby helped him to count the number in the family by name. One wonders about living conditions in a home where the children do not know how many brothers and sisters they have living under the same roof and supposedly having the same father and mother.

Another unfortunate home situation was brought to light in interviews with the members of the school health department. A boy's father committed suicide and his mother married again. The second marriage was to a divorced man. The home life was anything but ideal. The boy acquired such an inferiority complex that he was afraid to look a person straight in the eye. The boy always appeared to be ashamed of something.

Many of these same situations were repeated in Junior III.

One case would be amusing if it were not so tragic. The parents of one boy had difficulty understanding English although, as a rule, it was not difficult to make them understand that their son had not been behaving himself in school. The father, in his excitement and anger, threatened, before the child and the teacher, to take the child and drag him by the hair around the school yard a certain number of times. Such foolish threats had been made so often that the child merely stood and smirked while the father became more enraged. Misguided cooperation is sometimes more detrimental to all concerned than no cooperation at all.

One more tragic situation presented itself. A well meaning woman, having difficulty in making herself understood in English, was most concerned over the welfare of her children. She had very little cooperation from her husband who was an inveterate drunkard. Stormy battles raged so often and so long at home that the children either walked the streets during the hours before midnight each evening or they attended the movies. In either case they were not getting their proper sleep. Recently, the father was committed to the state hospital for the insane and the mother was sent to a cancer hospital. The children are now being cared for by relatives.

These cases were chosen at random and could be duplicated in most of the fifty-four cases. To all outward appearances Table III showed that the ideal situation, having both parents in the home, was true in the majority of cases. It was not until a deeper investigation was begun that evidence was brought to light showing that home conditions have a most influential

effect on the children of that home and on their behavior outside the home.

The children in this study are at the adolescent age. They are experiencing a period in their lives when new habits and new standards are being formed. It is during this period of adolescence that children are in constant need of friendly interest and encouragement. The discussion following Table III showed that actual living conditions in many of the homes of the discipline cases were poor, thus providing scant opportunity for the friendly interest and encouragement so vital in the adolescent years. When parents themselves are not setting a good example in self-control and general behavior it is not surprising to find this lack of self-control and lack of self-discipline reflected in their children.

Another point must be studied before complete judgment can be made on family conditions. The size of the family, that is, the number of children in the family, appears to be an important consideration in the matter of home life. The questionnaire was used to learn the number of children in the family of each discipline case. The results are recorded in Table IV.

Table IV provides the information that of the fifty-four cases studied seven are the only child in the family; nine come from a family of two children; eight are in a family of three children; nine are in a family of four children; two are in a family of five children; five are in a family of six children; four each in families of seven and eight children; three from a family of nine children and two from a family of thirteen children. One girl, a state ward, did not seem to know anything

Table IV. Number of Children in Family

Number of Children in Family	Number of Cases
Only child	7
Two children in family	9
Three " " "	8
Four " " "	9
Five " " "	2
Six " " "	5
Seven " " "	4
Eight " " "	4
Nine " " "	3
Ten " " "	0
Eleven " " "	0
Twelve " " "	0
Thirteen " " "	2
State Ward	<u>1</u>
Total	54

about her family.

The greatest number of individual cases came from families of two, three, and four children. Two cases, brothers, were from a family of thirteen children.

Usually, in the study of actual family conditions, it was found that the parents who were most indulgent, who left no stone unturned to grant children every little whim, had only one child. These seven 'only child' cases were so spoiled at home that they could not realize that teachers had between

thirty and forty other children to interest and teach. Such a situation was a blow to their ego. The only way to get attention under such conditions was to misbehave. After misbehaving the first time and getting the desired attention it was just a question of time before their misbehavior was a bad habit. The parents of these children were shocked when they learned of their offspring's behavior. It was something not easily explained to them or understood by them.

As is usually the case, the families with the least amount of money were the largest families. This situation presented an obvious difficulty - that of having enough to provide for the necessities of life for each and every member of the family. Then, too, in very large families each child does not receive a great amount of attention unless he is sickly or can find some other way to attract attention to himself. If the home does not provide the required attention then the child turns to the school as the next logical place in which to receive it. Many of these cases were not capable of receiving attention in school for scholastic attainment and so the ego turned the individual toward incorrect behavior patterns thus bringing about the desired attention.

A consideration of these three main topics related to home conditions namely, the presence of both parents in the home, the actual living conditions in the home, and the number of children in the family have a positive bearing on the behavior of children in school.

"In this matter of teaching personnel, as in every other phase of education, the problem in the last analysis revolves itself into one of parental interest and application. When fathers and mothers understand that they, and they alone, are responsible before God and society for the proper upbringing of those to whom they have given life, most pedagogical problems will be well on their way to solution." 1

1. Bell, Bernard Iddings op. cit. p. 307



## CHAPTER FOUR

(continued)

### HEALTH SITUATION OF THE DISCIPLINE CASES

"The close relationship between good health, or the abundant life, and conduct is proverbial." 1

It is generally agreed that good health is an absolute essential in the performance of good work. In an effort to maintain a high standard of health among the school children an individual health examination is given to each child by the school physician assisted by the school nurse during the first few weeks of school every fall. The examination is not given in great detail but it is sufficient to check nutrition, posture, teeth, throat, nose, glands, heart and lungs. Any unusual or unhealthy condition is immediately noted for more thorough investigation. The physician also visits the school once a week to inspect any cases of disease or illness noted by the teachers in their individual classrooms.

The school nurse supplements the work of the school physician by weighing and measuring every child periodically. When children are found to be considerably underweight their parents are notified of the condition and are advised about a proper diet and the correct amount of sleep needed by the child. The progress of these children is recorded at regular intervals.

Children who are found to be susceptible to tuberculosis are further examined at the Chadwick clinic. Tests and examina-

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1. Bryan, Elmer Burritt "Fundamental Facts for the Teacher." p. 18

tions are given at stated intervals and the correct treatment is prescribed for each child.

The school nurse has the further responsibility of treating minor aches, pains and accidents that occur during school hours; serious cases are referred to the family doctor. Teachers who are in doubt about the health of the children under their supervision send those children to the school nurse who inspects them and determines the correct procedure to be followed. A suspicion of a contagious disease demands that the child be sent home to avoid spreading the condition.

Another health measure provided by the school department is the dental clinic where a school dentist and a dental hygienist examine and treat pupils' teeth. Each child is given a thorough dental examination during the fall months of each school year. The dental condition at the time of the examination is recorded and a report is sent to the parents. The children whose parents cannot afford to pay a dentist are treated by the school dentist.

Preventive and corrective health measures are provided in the regular gymnasium classes which are held in the high school gymnasium in the winter months and on the playgrounds during the fall and spring months. These classes consist of setting-up exercises, exercises to encourage correct posture and various games. The athletic directors, a man and a woman, plan games and activities that are appropriate for the different seasons. As a rule, the boys and girls have their gymnasium classes in separate groups.

It is evident from the material just presented that a considerable part of the school staff and the school year are engaged in maintaining a healthy condition in the pupils of the school.

It is logical to assume that normal health should be conducive to normal behavior. The children in this discipline group were not practicing good behavior so the health situation of the individuals was investigated to determine to what extent lack of control in classroom situations can be attributed to the child's general physical condition.

The school nurse and the school records were consulted to obtain the information that was desired on the health situation of the discipline cases. Table V presents the situation.

Table V. Health Condition of the Discipline Cases

Health Situation	Number of Cases
Normal health	25
Poor teeth	14
Poor eyes	10
Malnutrition	5
Asthma	2
Ear defect	1
St. Vitus Dance	<u>1</u>
Total	58

The total is not in agreement with the number of discipline cases because four of the cases had two physical defects: one

had poor eyes and St. Vitus Dance, another had poor eyes and poor teeth, a third child had poor eyes and was undernourished, and the fourth child had poor teeth and asthma. Twenty-five of the fifty-four cases were enjoying normal health; fourteen had poor teeth; ten were wearing glasses; five were undernourished; two were asthma sufferers; one had an ear defect; and one was a victim of St. Vitus Dance.

Aching teeth were directly responsible for some of the abnormal behavior of several of the discipline cases. Whenever information concerning aching teeth was presented to a teacher the pupils were sent to the dental clinic where temporary treatment was given to alleviate the condition. Later, the situation was relieved permanently either by the school dentist or the family dentist.

Children who are known to have poor eyesight have their eyes tested regularly by the school nurse. Other pupils who, because of squinting and scowling, are suspected of having defective vision are also given eye tests. Defective vision has contributed much to the lack of self-control in many of the discipline cases. When these children had difficulty reading material on the blackboard they disturbed their classmates by asking them to read the material for them. Sometimes they did not bother to ask what was on the board; they simply copied other children's work. Usually, an effort is made each fall to prevent such a situation by placing children known to have poor eyesight near the blackboards where a minimum strain is placed on their eyes.

This particular Junior High School does not have the proper facilities for maintaining a lunchroom where hot lunches could

be provided. Because of limited space and money there is little that can be done by the school itself to relieve the amount of malnutrition found among the students in the school. However, the school does provide a half-pint of milk, either plain or chocolate, every school day for children who are considered undernourished if the parents are on relief or if they cannot afford to pay for the milk. When conditions are such that parents can afford to pay but do not the school does not assume any responsibility beyond notifying the parents of the undernourished condition of the children and suggesting an improved diet.

Two discipline cases, suffering from rather severe cases of asthma, were being treated by their family doctors. Their physical condition effected their attendance at school and their attention in school.

The girl who had a bad ear defect had begun to assume a bold attitude in an attempt to keep her condition a secret. If she did not hear a question she would not only refuse to answer but she would not even ask to have the question repeated. She would stand still and look very defiant giving the false impression that she knew the answer but did not intend to impart the information requested of her. After a teacher discovered the real cause of her apparent boldness she discussed the matter with the girl and made her realize how foolish she had been in pretending to hear all that transpired in the classroom. The girl's condition was brought to the attention of the school nurse who tested the child's ears and found that one ear was not functioning normally. It was suggested that she should attend a lip-reading class.

A review of the health situation of the discipline cases reveals that twenty-five of the cases were enjoying normal health while the remaining twenty-nine cases were suffering from one or more health defects. It would seem that the health situation is a very serious one in the study of the causes of the incorrect behavior on the part of these children.

Statistics show that 53% of the discipline cases had some physical defect. Ten members of the group or about 18% had defective vision but all ten cases were equipped with eyeglasses which rectified the situation. Fourteen of the cases or approximately 26% were suffering from poor teeth but the cavities had been filled either by the school dentist or by the family dentist. Thus the poor dental situation was corrected. The health situation now takes on a new appearance. To begin with, approximately 46% of the cases were in normal health at the beginning of this study; now 18% have had their defective vision taken care of and 26% of the cases have had their teeth treated. Allowing for the fact that that a few of the cases had two physical defects there still remains approximately 85% in good health. The remaining percentage, about 15%, is too small to have much bearing on the discipline situation.

At the beginning of this study of the causes that produce discipline problem cases the worst ten cases were grouped together in an attempt to discover one or more common factors that might furnish the solution to the causes of misbehavior. Up to this point there had been no occasion to use the material thus gathered. It seemed necessary at this point to study the

health situation of these top ten cases to solve the health situation of the entire group. Seven of the top ten discipline cases were enjoying normal health. Therefore, it cannot be assumed that health was a contributing factor in the behavior of the discipline cases.

## CHAPTER FOUR

(continued)

### ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CONDITION OF THE FAMILY

The economic and social condition of a family, a neighborhood, a city or the nation in general is determined largely by occupations of the male members of society. In an attempt to get at the causes that produce discipline problem cases the question was raised, "Can discipline problems be blamed to any extent on the financial condition of the family?" The logical starting point was the source of income. To obtain this information the discipline cases were asked in the questionnaire to tell the occupation of their fathers. The results are recorded in Table VI.

It is easily discernible from a study of Table VI that 22% of the fathers were employed in various types of household and personal service, the greatest number being employed as handymen and electricians. Only two fathers or about 4% of the total number were employed as help in industry, one was a chemist which presupposes more than a high school education, and the other was a knitter in the local hosiery. Three fathers or about 6% were employed in public service, one a police officer, one a prison officer, and one a tree surgeon. 44% of the fathers were employed in various other types of work, the majority of them being employed as laborers. Six fathers were unemployed, one was in an institution and three were unaccounted



Table VI. Occupations of the Fathers of the Discipline Cases

Occupation	Number of Fathers	%
<b>Household and Personal</b>		
Barbers	2	
Painter	1	
Janitor	1	
Cook	1	
Handymen	3	
Electricians	3	
Shoe Shiner	1	
Total	<u>12</u>	22.2
<b>Industrial</b>		
Chemist	1	
Knitter in Hosiery	1	
Total	<u>2</u>	3.7
<b>Public Service</b>		
Police Officer	1	
Prison Officer	1	
Tree Surgeon	1	
Total	<u>3</u>	5.6
<b>Varied Occupations</b>		
Laborers	6	
Business (small)	4	
Salesmen	3	
Works Progress Administration	3	
Mechanics	2	
Blacksmith Assistant	1	
Farmer	1	
Fruit Dealer	1	
Truck Driver	1	
Cutlery Inspector	1	
Mason	1	
Total	<u>24</u>	44.4
<b>Unemployed</b>		
In an institution	1	
Not given	3	
Dead	3	
Total	<u>13</u>	24.1
Grand Total	54	100.0

for, that is, the children did not know how their fathers were employed although there was proof of their employment somewhere.

Interviews with the school nurse and other members of the staff produced evidence that at least one of the three was employed at a gambling establishment.

"Since all of the men inducted into the army were required to give their former civil occupations, important data regarding the comparative intelligence of different occupational groups may be gleaned from the army records. In the groups scoring A and B on the tests, we find the professions, for the most part, the civil engineers, mechanical engineers, physicians, lawyers, teachers, and business executives. In the C+ group were men who described themselves in civil life as stenographers, bookkeepers, clerks, photographers, and workers at skilled trades. In the C group were carpenters, policemen, tailors, butchers, printers, farmers, and small storekeepers. Store clerks, cooks, fishermen, firemen, barbers, and day laborers made up the lowest groups (C- and D). Common observation and experience, as well as other studies as have been made on the subject, all emphasize the wide difference in mental level among occupational groups. The army tests confirmed these findings." 1

Having this classification in mind, a study was made of the various occupations of the fathers listed in Table VI. Only one occupation could be classified in the A and B group, that was the chemist. All the remaining occupations fell into the C- and D group.

There is a possibility that depression and post-depression days have had an effect on the type of occupations held by the fathers of the discipline cases at the present time. However, it appears that with the possible exception of the chemist, that the general intelligence of the fathers of the discipline cases was not of sufficiently high calibre to enable them to

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1. Garrett, Henry E. "Great Experiments in Psychology" p. 39

instruct and guide their children wisely in the best methods of correct behavior. Parents must, of necessity, be very good examples and show their children by their actions the characteristics they hope to find in them. The low intelligence level evidenced in the classification of occupations resulting from the army tests shows that the fathers are not capable of carrying out the advice offered by the District Attorney of Atlanta, Georgia in "The Education of the Modern Boy."

"Home earlier in the evenings, more of the fireside frank discussions, and closer companionship with the family is the only salvation for posterity." 1

It seems hardly possible to make a study of the occupations of a particular group without simultaneously gathering information on the financial condition of the family. Although the range of occupations presented in Table VI is great the amount of income is of a fairly uniform low rate. It was necessary to make a further investigation into the family conditions to determine the financial situation in the homes of the discipline cases. The results of this investigation are recorded in Table VII.

Table VII. Financial Condition of the Families of the Discipline Cases

Situation	No. of Cases	%
Self-supporting	35	64.8
Receiving partial aid	12	22.2
Completely dependent on charity or welfare	7	13.0
Total	54	100.0

1. Stearns, Drury, and others op. cit. p. 53

In spite of the fact that the fathers, for the most part, are classified in a low income bracket, the table shows that thirty-five of the fifty-four families or 64.8% of the families were apparently self-supporting. Due credit must be given to the mothers who did work outside the home to keep the family off relief rolls. Nine of the families or 16.6% were receiving partial aid either from the city welfare department or from some religious or charitable organization. Three of the families were being assisted by Soldiers' Relief. Only seven of the fifty-four families were completely dependent on welfare, city aid, or charitable organizations.

Although the table shows that thirty-five of the fifty-four families were self-supporting this same table fails to show whether there was sufficient money to pay for the necessities of life. Several of the cases listed as self-supporting cannot always be placed in such a classification. Information was supplied by the school nurse that at least one family listed as self-supporting occasionally found itself in straightened financial circumstances. At various times during these periods financial assistance was offered to the family by the city welfare department and charitable institutions. In every case, the assistance thus offered was refused. Family pride would not permit them to accept charity.

At the beginning of this section the question was raised, "Can discipline problems be blamed to any extent on the financial of the family?" The answer, in the light of the material just presented, is "Yes." A school child, however young, is capable of understanding short rations, ill-fitting and insuf-

ficient clothing which straightened financial conditions bring about. When a family has pride it won't readily admit a lack of necessities. Rather, it will struggle along trying to keep up appearances. As a result, a child who is hungry or a child who is conscious of his ill-fitting clothes cannot concentrate on school work. Sooner or later he will be brought to task for being inattentive. His inattentiveness easily develops into idleness. By then, the child is well on his way to becoming a discipline problem. Thus, a child reacts very readily to the financial condition of his family.

## CHAPTER FOUR

(continued)

### RELIGION

The adolescent period is generally looked upon as a most important period in the religious life of an individual. "Examination of the lives of the saints revealed that their religious fervor frequently reached a high point in adolescent years." 1 It is during this period of adolescence that there is a groping for a workable philosophy of life.

When parents fail to assume responsibility for the religious education of their children the task is then added to the many duties now performed by the school. It becomes the duty of the school to create a sympathetic attitude toward Church and Sunday School. This statement is not to be misinterpreted in such a way that a person would assume that the schools shall teach one religion or one set of religious beliefs. It is the duty of the school, especially in the teaching and discussions of the social studies class, to stress the tremendous part played by religion in the development and maintenance of civilization. Great among the literary masterpieces of the world is the Bible. The study of the Bible, then, not from the standpoint of any particular religious sect, but for the moral principles to be found between its pages, should be an important and vital part of the course in literature.

Many authors of present day literature have stressed the importance of teaching religion in the schools. In reading

"The Education of the Modern Boy" one finds the following passage dealing with the religious instruction in the schools.

"A voice says to the school: Here are my children. Show them all things that are noble and of good report. Teach them to grow in wisdom and in stature, in favor with men and in love for me. My Grace is sufficient for thee and for them. Let them fear not, but be of good cheer. Let them do my will in my world. Certainly I will be with them." 1

The duties of the home, school and the Church are closely interrelated. All three agencies must work together to help mould the plastic minds that are groping around for a workable philosophy of life. The home is the logical place for laying the foundation of character and citizenship. It remains for the school and Church to cement these foundations laid by the home and to build upon them. If the homes are irreligious there is little that can be done in the schools to make the pupils religious minded.

"Three agencies above all others in our nation's history have contributed to the shaping of American character and American life - the home, the church, and the school." 2

Acting on the assumption that all conduct based on habit would effect good behavior if the habits were good data was

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1. Stearns, Drury, and others op. cit. p. 106

2. Ibid. p. 3

gathered on the Church and Sunday School attendance of the discipline cases under observation. The children were asked in the questionnaire: "Are you in the habit of going to Church or Sunday school?" A multiple choice selection provided for one of three answers: usually, occasionally, or never. The results are recorded in Table VIII.

Table VIII. Church and Sunday School Attendance of the Discipline Cases

	Number of Cases	Per Cent
Usually	47	87.04
Occasionally	5	9.26
Never	<u>2</u>	<u>3.70</u>
Total	54	100 .00

Of the fifty-four cases under consideration forty-seven made a habit of attending Church and Sunday School regularly. Five cases attended religious services occasionally and only two cases or 3.7% never attended any type of religious service.

It is evident from a study of Table VIII that the majority of the parents had impressed upon their children the necessity of receiving some moral instruction. In cases where the parents had failed in their obligation some of the children had taken the responsibility upon themselves. The children whose attendance at Church was irregular admitted that they attended religious services only on special days when they



were accompanied by their parents. Of the two who never attended Church or Sunday School one assumed an air of complete indifference when questioned about his lack of attendance. This same attitude of indifference was present in everything he did. It seemed impossible to find anything in which he was really interested. The second boy who admitted that he never attended Church claimed membership in the Jehovah Witness sect. Proof of this statement was lacking but it was generally assumed that he made this claim in order to attract attention since this religious group, at the time, was receiving a great amount of publicity in the newspapers because of the children who were refusing to salute the flag.

Generally speaking, the children who comprised this study were in a position to receive moral instruction at more or less regular intervals. But, information concerning their school behavior seemed to indicate that these same children were not applying their religious instruction to their school activities.

"....the more a child can be made to realize the truth of Bacon's famous maxim: Knowledge is Power - no matter from what standpoint we view it - power which makes in every way for the highest self-realization, both of the individual and society, the more will he take a moral attitude toward its acquisition." 1

## CHAPTER FOUR

(continued)

### THE USE OF LEISURE TIME

Present working conditions, the forty hour week and the five day week, have placed a great amount of free time in the hands of everyone. It is essential that children should be taught a worthy use of leisure time. To help meet the present conditions many schools have increased their interest in extra-curricular activities. The Junior High School which was the setting for this discipline study has a club program which provides for fourteen different activities. Each pupil is expected to choose a club which appeals to his interests. Two clubs, namely, social dancing and newspaper, have had to limit the number of members because existing conditions do not warrant more than sixty members in the dancing club and thirty members in the newspaper club. Preference in such cases is given to Junior III pupils who are completing their last year in Junior High School. Those students who are unable to gain admittance to these clubs must make a second choice. The whole club program provides an opportunity for the children to discover their abilities and their interests. This is vital from the standpoint of mental hygiene.

For the sake of convenience, the clubs may be divided into three groups: social, musical, and special interests. The social grouping includes Social Dancing, Dramatics, Junior Red

Cross, and Newspaper. The musical clubs are Drum Corps, Glee Club, Harmonica, and Orchestra. In the special interests group are found Reading, Local History, Model Club for Boys, Stamp and Coin, Nature, and Handwork Clubs. In a class entirely by itself is No Man's Club. This name was given to the club by the student body. Children who cannot or will not assume responsibility in the club of their choice and who cannot find another club that will interest them automatically become members of No Man's Club. Here the club period is spent in doing assigned school tasks.

"Education, from the psychological point of view, consists in giving proper direction to the normal activities of the child, and in the formation of regular and good habits of action and expression." 1

The club period offers a splendid opportunity for the formation of good habits in view of the fact that the majority of the clubs are carried on in a more or less informal manner. The club period is probably the nearest approach to real life that can be found in this school system. It is truly a period of social activity. According to John Dewey, "the school is primarily a social institution. Education being a social process, the school is simply that form of community life in which all those agencies are concentrated that will be most effective in bringing to share in the inherited resources of the race, and to use his own powers for social ends. I believe

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1. Carlton, Frank T. "Education and Industrial Revolution"  
p. 243

that education, therefore, is a process of living and not a preparation for future living." 1

The choice of clubs of the discipline group is recorded in Table IX.

Table IX. Club Membership of the Discipline Cases

Club	No. of Cases	Total Enrollment
<b>Social Group</b>		
Social Dancing	12	60
Junior Red Cross	5	65
Dramatics	3	35
Newspaper	1	30
Total	21	190
<b>Musical Group</b>		
Drum Corps	10	45
Glee Club	2	20
Harmonica	0	9
Orchestra	0	15
Total	12	89
<b>Special Interests</b>		
Reading	7	70
Model Club for Boys	3	35
Local History	3	15
Stamp and Coin	2	18
Nature	2	10
Handwork for Girls	0	16
Total	17	164
No Man's Club	4	10
Grand Total	54	453

1. Dewey, John "My Pedagogic Creed" p. 8

The statistics presented in Table IX show that twelve of the fifty-four cases were enrolled in the Social Dancing Club, three were in the Dramatics Club, five were in the Junior Red Cross Club, and one was in the Newspaper Club. The clubs in this particular grouping provide an excellent opportunity for social activities. The members of the Social Dancing Club are taught the fundamental steps of ballroom dancing by a W. P. A. dancing teacher. Music is provided by a musician on the W.P.A. payroll. Besides learning the dance steps the children are taught the common rules of etiquette especially applicable to dance hall behavior. When the club was organized it was assumed that knowledge of correct behavior thus gained would be applied to all social activities. Since there were about sixty members in this dancing club and since only twelve of those members are in this group of discipline cases it appears that the majority of the children do apply the information they gain in this club.

The Junior Red Cross Club provides a direct opportunity wherein children are given time to do something worthwhile for someone else. The Junior Red Cross Pledge contains the aims and objectives of the club: "We believe in service for others, in health of mind and body to fit us for better service and in worldwide friendship. For this reason we have joined the Junior Red Cross. We will help to make its work successful in our school and community and will work together with juniors everywhere in our own and other lands." A great amount of club time is given over to making holiday table decorations and menu cards for the United States Veteran's Hospital nearby and to

raising money at Christmas time for the Toy Fund of the local newspaper, and to raising money at the time of local and national disasters, such as floods and hurricanes. Only five members of this large club had failed to be real members of the Junior Red Cross.

The newspaper Club provides group as well as individual activity. The members work individually to perfect a group activity. This club attempts to teach cooperation, to encourage school spirit and to inculcate a desire to help others. The money obtained from the sale of the monthly edition of the newspaper is presented to the principal at the end of the school year with the express desire that the money be used for playground equipment. Of the thirty members enrolled in the club only one person had not learned the valuable lessons taught in the club.

Table IX shows that twelve of the fifty-four cases were enrolled in the various musical clubs. Ten were members of the Drum Corps and two were in the Glee Club. None of the discipline cases were found in the Orchestra or Harmonica Clubs, the obvious reason being that the members of these clubs must possess a knowledge of musical instruments and they must be able to play an instrument.

As was stated previously, in the discussion of home conditions, many of the children in this study were looking for attention. Their scholastic standing was not sufficiently high to merit attention so many of these children joins clubs that would put them in the limelight. The Drum Corps, a very color-

ful organization, has many opportunities to participate in city, county, and state affairs. At such times much attention is drawn to the children by virtue of their uniforms, their formation and drill and their delightful music. The attention-loving discipline cases are thus in a position to attract attention at least momentarily. They receive attention not only from the interested spectators but also from the members of the student body who ordinarily have no time for them. These children who are discipline cases in the classroom are the very ones who forget their fifes and bugles at practice sessions and who do not know the songs on time. They learn to work with the other members of the corps only when they realize that they will not be allowed to parade with the corps unless they meet the requirements.

The two members of the Glee Club were girls, who like the Drum Corps members, were looking for attention. It is customary to have the Glee Club present several songs at each school assembly. At such times the girls in the discipline group receive the attention so much desired by them.

Table IX further supplies the information that seventeen of the fifty-four cases were enrolled in the special interests clubs. These clubs, as compared with the two preceding classifications are of a more individual nature. The members work more or less by themselves and carry on individual projects. In this group of clubs are found many children whose personalities are anti-social and who prefer to work alone. Seven of the discipline cases were members of the Reading Club. Here

club periods are spent in reading books sent to the school by the public library. In this club the children are given an opportunity to browse at their leisure. Many of the children in this study had little or no time for reading in their homes and many of the homes did not provide the proper surroundings conducive to reading.

Model Club for Boys claimed three discipline cases. In this club the boys build airplanes and make small articles of furniture. This club affords an opportunity to build, to start from scratch, as it were, and gradually make an object assume correct proportions. Here, too, is that chance to attract attention by displaying one's handwork.

Local History is the choice of those who are civic-minded and who desire to obtain information about the early settlers of the city, their homes and their customs. Ordinarily these club members are seriously interested in supplementing the information acquired in the regular history classes. The three discipline cases recorded as members of this club really should have been called members of the No Man's Club because they were not worthy members of the Local History Club.

Two of the discipline cases were members of the Stamp and Coin Club. This club aims to impart information about stamps and coins in various countries and the history and geography which are represented by the stamps and coins. Members of this club are usually serious minded individuals but occasionally a few minus quantities slip in.

Nature Club contributed two members to the discipline



group. As the name implies, the club is devoted to a study of common birds, wild flowers, and trees and an appreciation of their beauty in their natural surroundings. Usually, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts join the club in order to obtain nature awards. Some pupils have been known to join the club because their friends were members and not because of any particular interest in the club. It is to be assumed that these two discipline cases were in the club, not because of an interest in it but because a pal was joining.

No discipline cases were found in the Handwork Club for girls. At the time this study was made of the discipline cases four of the cases were members of No Man's Club, the group composed of children who are not now worthy members of any club or who have caused disturbance in clubs.

The main purpose of the club program is to provide one period a week of school time to help children to discover their interests and abilities. Of necessity, the school time allotted to this discovery is short. It is intended merely as a starting point to discover the interests that will be developed in great detail as the child progresses through life. In other words, an effort is made during club periods to help children to find a worthy use of leisure time, to find an interesting hobby.

In order to determine the success of the club period in assisting children to find a hobby the discipline cases were asked to tell what hobby they had. The answers were tabulated and recorded in Table X.

Table X. Hobbies of the Discipline Cases

Hobby	Number of Cases
Collecting stamps	9
Making models	8
Collecting pictures	4
Reading	4
Sports	4
Mechanical work (radios)	2
Raising rabbits	2
Aviation	1
Collecting postal cards	1
Collecting coins	1
Collecting and selling ferns	1
Collecting miniature dogs	1
Collecting music sheets	1
Music	1
Target Shooting	<u>1</u>
	Total 41
No hobby	<u>13</u>
	Total 54

Table X shows that nine of the fifty-four cases collected stamps, eight made models, four collected pictures of one type or another(usually, pictures of movie stars collected by movie-struck girls), four spent their leisure time reading, four had

various sports for hobbies, two were interested in the mechanism of radios, two raised rabbits, and there was one enthusiast for each of the following hobbies: aviation, collecting postal cards, collecting coins, collecting and selling ferns, collecting miniature dogs, collecting music sheets, music and target shooting. Thirteen of the fifty-four cases had no hobbies. From the information gleaned from Table IX and Table X there seems to be sufficient evidence to bear testimony to the fact that the club periods during school time bore fruit in the hobbies chosen for leisure time. Of the thirteen who claimed that they had no hobby two were members of the No Man's Club which might be considered a carry-over of a negative type.

Earlier in this discussion of the use of leisure time mention was made relative to the fact that club periods are the nearest approach to real life that can be found in this particular school system. For the most part, the children in this study have caught the idea behind the club period and have applied it to their leisure time. This may be taken as an indication that there is a definite relationship between the club program and leisure time.

Once again resort was made to the group of the top ten discipline cases in this study to determine what effect the worthy use of leisure time, or the lack of it, had upon the behavior of these children in school. A study of these ten cases revealed that only four of the ten cases did not have a hobby. In other words 60% of these top cases did have a hobby.

This information seems to indicate that, in this study, hobbies did not have the restraining influence that one usually associates with them.

## CHAPTER FOUR

(continued)

### INTELLIGENCE OF THE DISCIPLINE CASES

The utterly wrong assumption that all people are born mentally equal dates back, no doubt, to the Declaration of Independence which states that "all men are created equal." One modern writer has facetiously remarked that the only sense in which all men can be said to be equal is that they are all born without clothes on. 1 Roughly, all people can be classified as being subnormal, normal, or supernormal. Educators have not yet arrived at an agreement as to whether the public schools of this nation are catering to and spending all their efforts on the normal group or the subnormal group. They are fairly well agreed, however, that the supernormal person is suffering untold hardships because of the present educational set-up. Theoretically, the course of studies should be so flexible that children of all mental levels can be taught effectively according to their mental ability. Practically speaking, taxpayers would rise up as one in protest against additional money being spent in the schools which would be necessary if education is to meet the demands of all. To pacify the taxpayers and to lessen the prickings of the educators' conscience an average child has been set up. An educational program has been built around this normal child, this "mathematical abstraction." The

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1. Bell, Bernard Iddings "Common Sense in Education" p. 103

dull children whose heredity and environment have placed restrictions on their mental ability are grouped with children whose background has left nothing to be desired, the best of ancestors and every environmental advantage. To compensate for these two extremes an average was arrived at, a mythical average person around whom education revolves.

In order to discover the intelligence quotients of the discipline cases the Terman Group Test of Mental Ability, Form B, was administered to forty-eight of the fifty-four cases. The six cases not tested had already left school. The intelligence quotient results obtained from these tests are recorded in Table XI.

Table XI. Intelligence Quotient of the Discipline Cases

<u>Intelligence Quotient</u>	<u>Number of Cases</u>
130-139.99	1
120 - 129.99	2
110 - 119.99	10
100 - 109.99	15
90 - 99.99	10
80 - 89.99	5
70 - 79.99	3
60 - 69.99	2
Unknown	6
	<hr/>
	Total 54

A study of Table XI reveals that the intelligence quotients of the discipline group had a tendency to follow the normal curve. Of the forty-eight cases tested one had an I. Q. of 133; two were located in the 120 - 129.99 grouping; ten had an I. Q. between 110 and 119.99; the I. Q. of the largest group of cases was between 100 and 109.99; ten cases fell in the group between 90 and 99.99; five cases were between 80 and 89.99; three were between 70 and 79.99; and the two remaining cases were 69 and 67 respectively. As it was stated before, six I. Q.'s were not available because the pupils had already withdrawn from school and a perusal of school records failed to disclose the desired information.

These statistics, when arranged in a frequency distribution according to seven classifications: very dull, dull, below average, average, above average, superior, and very superior, based on the I. Q.'s obtained from the aforementioned Terman Test, show very clearly the groupings that appear in this discipline study. The frequency distribution appears in Figure 1.

The five classifications were planned as follows: an intelligence quotient less than 75 was rated very dull; between 75 and 85 was rated dull; 85 to 95 constituted the group below average; the average group was found between 95 and 105; above average was between 105 and 115; superior was between 115 and 125; and any intelligence quotient over 125 placed the pupil in a very superior group.

A study of Figure 1 shows that 9.3% of the cases were in

the very dull class; 3.7% were dull; 18.5% were considered below average; 20.4% were average; 25.9% were above average; 9.3% were superior; 1.8% were very superior.

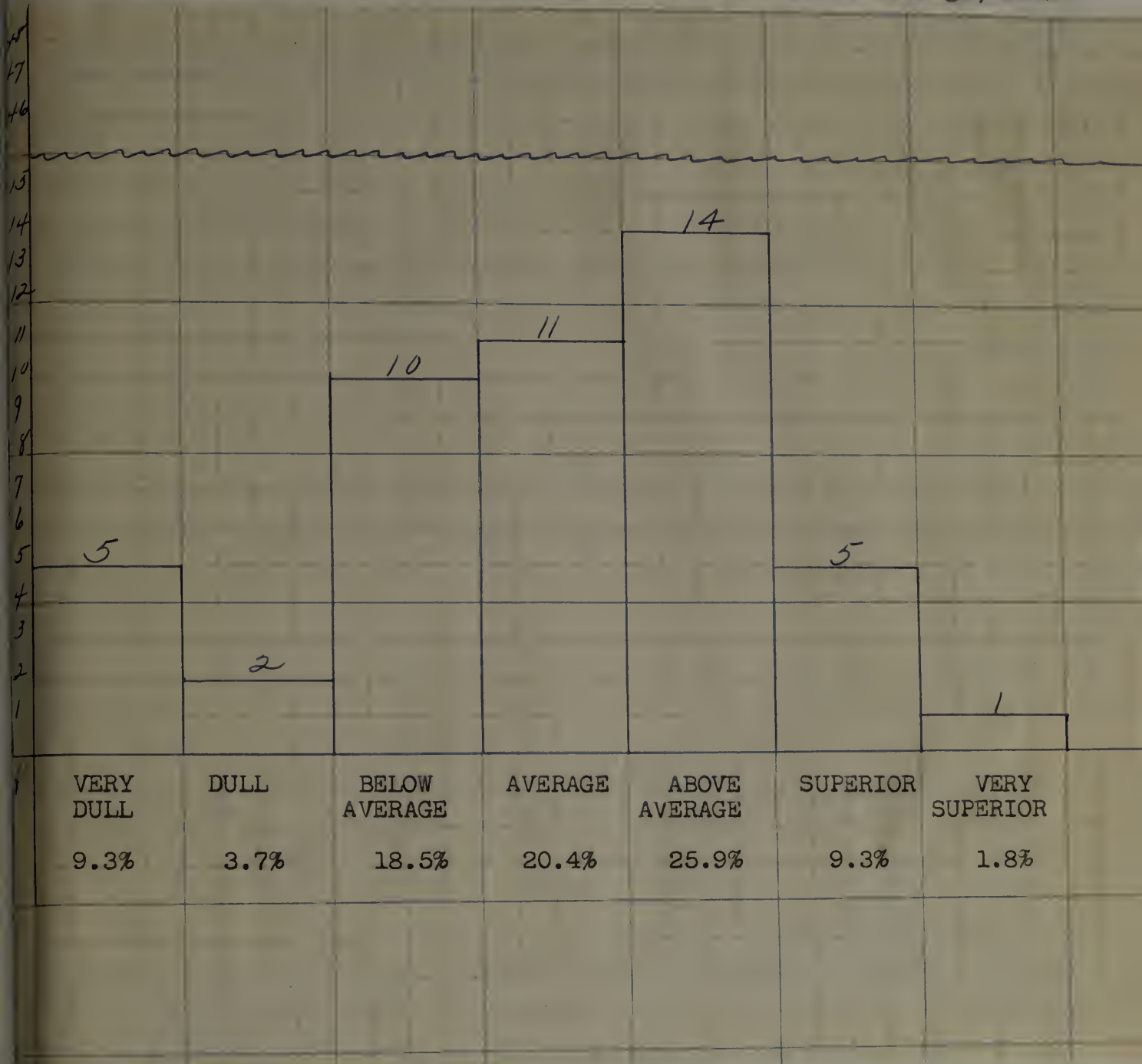


Figure 1. Showing frequency distribution according to seven classifications of pupils in the Junior High Discipline Group based on the I. Q.'s obtained from the Terman Group Test of Mental Ability, Form B. Median is 100.83.



were superior; and one pupil was very superior. Six I. Q.'s were unobtainable.

In an earlier section of this study mention was made of the fact that eight of the fifty-four cases under observation were enrolled in small classes known as Special Classes. Of the eight cases two, in Special Seventh, had I. Q.'s of 72 and 74; of the five cases in Special Eighth one I. Q. was not available, the remaining four had I. Q.'s of 66, 69, 71, and 87; the lone case in Special Ninth had an I. Q. of 95. It would seem from the foregoing information that these children were in the right group for their mental ability.

A further study of Figure 1 shows that eleven of average intelligence, fourteen above average, five superior and one very superior total thirty-one cases or 67.4% of all the cases. It would appear, then, that from the mental standpoint, the members of this discipline group were well endowed. They should have shown normal group behavior. These existing conditions and the fact that these cases are listed in this study prove that an ideal situation did not exist and that these children, instead of being models of correct behavior and an influence for good, were actually disrupting normal school conditions by their incorrect behavior.

The results of this investigation made it necessary to delve a little deeper into existing conditions. Granted that these children were, for the most part, of average and better than average intelligence, the question arose as to their grade placement in school. Were these children in a grade that

required them to make full use of their mental ability or were they enrolled in a class superior to their ability? There was also the possibility that these children might be in a class far inferior to their ability.

A study was made of the grades in which these students were enrolled and the age of the students in each grade. The ages of the discipline problems were obtained from the school registers. The material that was gathered was tabulated as follows.

Table XII. Age - Grade Level of the Discipline Cases

No. of Cases	11-12 yr.	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	Total
Junior I	3	4	6	1	0	0	14
Junior II	0	6	11	10	3	1	31
Junior III	0	0	3	2	4	0	9
Total	3	10	20	13	7	1	54

Over-age for grade 42 or 77.8%

The school committee ruling in regard to minimum age for entrance to the first grade at the present time is five years and six months. At the time these children entered school the minimum age was five years. Chronologically, an average child progressing at an average rate of speed should be between eleven and twelve years of age in the first year of Junior High School; an average Junior II student should be between twelve and thirteen years of age; and an average Junior III student

should be between thirteen and fourteen years of age. Table XII bears evidence that there were eleven children in Junior I who were over-age for the grade, twenty-five pupils in Junior II, and six pupils in Junior III. A total of forty-two cases of the fifty-four cases were over-age for the grade. Obviously, such a situation demands that adjustments be made to eliminate a situation like this as soon as possible.

The question of adjusting the curriculum to the ability and requirements of the students is a difficult one when the school does not readily lend itself to such adjustments. The Junior High School which was the setting for this study is located in a building of twenty classrooms and four portable buildings. In the basement of the school are the first three grades and a sewing room. The first floor contains fourth, fifth, and sixth grades as well as four rooms of Junior I and Special Seventh. The second floor contains four rooms devoted to Junior II and four rooms for Junior III. One portable building is used solely by an opportunity class; two portables are used by Special Eighth and Special Ninth respectively. The fourth portable is used exclusively by the Junior High School boys for Manual Arts classes. Crowded conditions make it necessary to employ every available room. Thus it becomes more or less compulsory to provide a course of study that will benefit the greatest number of students. The result has been that all the students in Junior I take exactly the same course, more or less general in scope but with the idea of laying the foundation for a college course. The Junior II curriculum provides

an opportunity for students, except Special Eighth students who follow a general course, to choose between Latin and science. Their choice at this time determines their high school course. The majority of the students at this time are about thirteen years of age and are quite apt to choose a course which they consider an easy one. At this age they hardly know what they do want. Usually the children of lower mental ability choose the science course. Many children try Latin for a few weeks or a month and finding it difficult choose science as the only alternative.

Another opportunity for adjustment is provided at the end of the second year of Junior High School. Those children who, after a year of study, have found Latin beyond their grasp may choose science in Junior III; but a child who is dissatisfied with science in Junior II cannot change to Latin in Junior III unless he is willing to repeat the entire second year of Junior High. Junior III is definitely divided into two courses, college and general. The college course provides the usual classical subjects while the general course provides the commercial subjects.

A few paragraphs ago a question was raised concerning a child's enrollment in a class superior to, equal to, or inferior to his ability. The preceding explanation points out the difficulty of adjusting the program to any great extent when the pupils fail to succeed in the established order of studies. Often a child who chooses science in preference to Latin in Junior II finds himself grouped with pupils whose mental ability is in-

ferior to his. Since the inferior group is in the majority a great amount of time is spent in explaining work to them. This work is easily and quickly understood by the person of higher mental ability. Eventually the more intelligent child becomes weary of the lack of understanding on the part of his fellow classmates and he turns to more entertaining diversions which lead him sooner or later into difficult situations.

Only a few of the discipline cases in this study were found in the "A" or best mental division in each grade. As the groupings decreased in mental ability the number of cases of behavior problems increased. It is possible to assume that the existing courses of study are too difficult for many of the discipline cases. Yet, the general intelligence of the group, as found in Table XI, was average or above average.

Once again, the results of various aspects of this study are not in strict conformity with other studies that have been made.

"The truants, the hold-overs, the disciplinary cases are preponderantly of the dull normal type. They are a symptom of protest against our inadequate school organization. Under our present arrangements, the dull normal child misses out all along the line." 1

The more or less contradictory evidence presented here demanded further investigation into the school situation.

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1. Irwin and Marks "Fitting the School to the Child" p. 165

## CHAPTER FOUR

(continued)

### RETARDATION

In the opening paragraph of Chapter I in "The Measurement Of Intelligence," Lewis M. Terman stated:

"Numerous studies of the age-grade progress of school children have afforded convincing evidence of the magnitude and seriousness of the retardation problem. Statistics collected in hundreds of cities in the United States show that between a third and a half of the school children fail to progress through the grades at the expected rate; that from 5 to 8 per cent of the \$400,000,000 annually expended in the United States for school instruction is devoted to re-teaching children what they have already been taught but have failed to learn." 1

The seriousness of the retardation problem among the discipline cases in this study is evidenced in Table XIII.

Table XIII. Retardation Situation of the Discipline Cases

Data	Number of Cases	Per Cent
Regular promotion	17	31.5
Repeated one grade	14	25.9
Repeated two grades	12	22.3
Repeated three grades	10	18.5
Repeated four grades	1	1.8
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	Total 54	100.0

Table XIII shows that seventeen of the fifty-four cases, or 31.5%, had been promoted regularly, that is, they had not experienced the humiliation of repeating a grade. Fourteen of the cases, or 25.9%, had repeated one grade; twelve children, or 22.3%, had repeated two grades; ten or 18.5% repeated three grades; and one pupil had repeated four grades. This was an alarming situation in view of the fact that the study of discipline cases was confined to Junior High School pupils which means that no child had yet completed Junior III or ninth grade. The boy who had repeated four grades, third, fifth, Junior I and Junior II, was still enrolled in Junior II. He had spent twelve years in school and was just completing the eighth grade. The statistics presented here show that the retardation of this group is greater than the average as presented by Terman.

The information gleaned from Table XIII is sufficient to support the idea that children do not enter with enthusiasm upon school work in which they already have studied but in which they have failed. It is logical to assume that their self-confidence has been destroyed and that they lack the right spirit of work. When people are not interested in the work assigned to them they will turn very naturally to some other activity. These statistics lead one to believe that the discipline cases, because of retardation which brought about a lack of interest in regular and legitimate school work, automatically looked about for some outlet for their surplus energy. The old saying that the devil finds work for idle hands

was demonstrated in these cases.

A further study was made of the intelligence quotients of the discipline cases and their retardation. The results of this study are found in Table XIV.

Table XIV. Comparison of Intelligence Quotients and Retardation of Fifty-Four Discipline Cases

I. Q.	Number of Grades Repeated				
	None	One	Two	Three	Four
130 - 139.99	1				
120 - 129.99	2				
110 - 119.99	7	2	1		
100 - 109.99	2	9	2	2	
90 - 99.99	3	2	3	1	1
80 - 89.99		1	3	1	
70 - 79.99			1	2	
60 - 69.99				2	
Unknown	2		2	2	
Total	17	14	12	10	1

Table XIV tells its own story. As the general intelligence of the individuals decreased the number of retardations increased. The children who had progressed through school at the normal rate of speed had a range of intelligence quotients



from 90 to 133 or from about average intelligence to very superior intelligence. It is evident, then, that the regular school work assigned to these seventeen individuals was not too difficult for them. Fourteen of the fifty-four cases had repeated one grade. The intelligence of this group ranged from 80 to 120 or from slightly below average intelligence to the group classified as being above average in intelligence. Twelve children whose intelligence placed them between the very dull group and the slightly above average group had repeated two grades. Ten pupils had repeated three grades, one of these, now in a special class, had spent three years in the third grade. One boy in the group had repeated four grades. His intelligence test provided the information that he had an I. Q. of 93 which is just below average. This same boy was fifteen years and eight months old at the time he answered the questionnaire for this study. He was very immature in his actions. Physically, he was about six feet tall and of big build. His very size among so many short, small and young children made him most self-conscious. Several of the children in the last two groupings, those who had repeated three and four grades, were tested by the Belchertown State School authorities. As yet, no action has been taken on the cases tested by these authorities.

A vicious circle presented itself in Table XIV. Low mental ability is conducive to retardation and retardation in turn is often the cause of behavior problems. These behavior cases often lost valuable school time because of their actions and

this lost time meant additional work to be made up when the child returned to regular classes. If the mental ability was low it was difficult for the discipline case to keep pace with his class in doing regular work. Failure to keep up with regular class work usually meant forfeiture of promotion and that, in turn, meant retardation. The more one studies the situation the more involved one becomes. Nevertheless, there is a very positive relationship between mental ability, retardation, and discipline problems.

The thoughts and discussions on this question of retardation led very naturally to a consideration of the grades repeated by the pupils in this study. It must be remembered that only nine of the fifty-four cases were completing the third year of Junior High School which means that it was their ninth year in school if they had progressed at normal speed. Thirty-one of the cases were in the second year of Junior High School and fourteen cases were completing their first year in Junior High School. Under the circumstances, the number of cases listed in the table as repeating the different years of Junior High School does not present a complete picture of the Junior High School situation. The school grades repeated by the discipline cases are listed in Table XV.

A total cannot be arrived at in Table XV because of overlapping conditions. The information provided by this table may have little or no bearing on the present discipline situation. Yet there are two points that seem to be significant. The greatest number of repetitions appear in the first grade

Table XV. School Grades Repeated by the Discipline Cases

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Grade Repeated	Number of Cases
1	13
2	3
3	6
4	8
5	5
6	5
Jr. I	17
Jr. II	11
Jr. III	2

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of grammar school and in the first year of Junior High School. This information may throw a little light on the characteristics of the discipline cases. At the beginning of a new social order many of the discipline cases failed to make the grade. Twelve of the thirteen cases who failed the first grade also failed either one or more grades before reaching high school. It is evident, then, that these discipline cases started out early in life by failing to adjust themselves to existing conditions and by failing to exert a little self-control over themselves.

In general, one may say that the information gleaned from Table XIII, Table XIV, and Table XV proves beyond the shadow of a doubt that general intelligence is a very important factor

in determining a child's rate of progress in school and that the question of retardation is a vital one in discussing the causes of discipline in the Junior High School.

## SUMMARY

Material was gathered on the most plausible reasons (seven in all) for misbehavior in Junior High School, namely, (a) parentage; (b) family conditions - socially, financially, and economically; (c) general health; (d) religious instruction; (e) worthy use of leisure time; (f) general intelligence; and (g) retardation in school.

- a. Approximately 60% of the parents of the discipline cases were born in America, automatically eliminating the possibility of language difficulty in the majority of homes. Therefore, the percentage of varied language cases was not large enough to be significant as a cause of lack of understanding on the part of parents concerning the language spoken by their children in school. The existing conditions seem to indicate the foreign-born parentage is not a cause of discipline problem cases.
  
- b. In some cases, broken homes were partially responsible for the child's behavior in school. An analysis of the statistics shows that 74% of the homes were intact insofar as both parents were in the home. Further investigation into home conditions indicated that continual fric-

tion exists in more than 50% of the homes and therefore has a definitely bad effect on the behavior of the children in school. The parents themselves were, in many cases, very poor examples of good behavior. It was very natural, then, that children mimicked the behavior of their parents. The actual living conditions in the homes of several of the discipline cases were very poor, thus providing scant opportunity for the interest and encouragement so vital in adolescent years. The material presented under the discussion of data indicates that poor home conditions are partially responsible for misbehavior in school.

The number of children in the family does not appear to be a contributing factor in misbehavior in school. When a pupil is the only child in the family he usually receives more than ordinary amount of attention from his parents and he very naturally expects the same amount of attention from his teachers in school. Children in large families seek attention in school because they are sometimes deprived of it at home. In either case, the child, whether the only child or the child from a large family, seeks attention from classmates and from the

teachers and when attention cannot be directed to him for scholastic attainment he seeks other means of getting attention. The methods of getting attention used by these discipline cases made them members of this group. Conditions were apt to be similar whether a child was the only child or a child from a family of many children.

Post depression days had their effect on the financial condition of many of the families presented in this group of discipline cases. Insufficient funds frequently meant light rations and scanty clothing. A hungry child, conscious of his ill-fitting clothes, cannot concentrate on school work. The attendant feeling of insecurity on the part of the child caused his work to suffer and his behavior, also.

- c. Although a great many of the discipline cases were not in normal health at the beginning of this study the evidence presented under the discussion of data seemed to indicate that health could not be called a contributing factor, in the majority of cases, in the misbehavior of the children in this study.
- d. Religion played a relatively unimportant part in this discipline study. A decided majority

(87%) of the cases were receiving regular religious instruction but their behavior seemed to indicate that these same children were not applying to their daily life the information acquired in religious classes.

- e. As a result of the study on leisure time and hobbies it seems that the evidence produced is sufficient to indicate that hobbies, or the worthy use of leisure time, did not have the restraining influence that one usually associates with hobbies.
- f. Mentally, most of the discipline cases were well endowed. 70% had an I. Q. of 90 or above. The range of I. Q.'s was from 67 to 133. Theoretically, these children should have shown normal group behavior.
- g. The age-grade level of the discipline cases showed that approximately 80% of the children in this study were over-age for the grade in which they were enrolled. This very condition was conducive to difficulty in behavior.

The most serious situation found in this study of the causes that produce discipline problem cases in the Junior High School was the too common state of retardation. As the general



intelligence of the individuals decreased the number of retardations increased (see Table XIV). Mentally, the group was average or above average but the evidence presented under the discussion of data shows that only seventeen of the fifty-four cases (31.5%) had been promoted regularly. Social maladjustment, with consequent derangement of behavior patterns, was a common state in this group.

What apparently are the causes that produce discipline problem cases in the "X" Junior High School in this Connecticut Valley Town? The evidence produced in this study answers the question by pointing to the example of home conditions and social consequences of retardation as the principal causes of misbehavior in this particular Junior High School.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The important phase of this study of discipline cases was that of the underlying causes of incorrect behavior patterns. No attempt was made by the faculty in general to use corrective measures in remedying the discipline situation. Neither was any attempt made to use remedial measures on the entire group of students who comprised this study. However, some members of the faculty worked with individual cases. Their methods could be modified and adjusted to the entire group. One of the very stubborn cases was gradually improved by constant comments praising the boy whenever he made an extra effort to rectify his own conduct. Praise for school work, praise for his effort in trying to improve not only his school work but also his attitude toward school, praise when he tried to influence other discipline cases to turn over a new leaf! This may appear to convey the idea that praise was lavished on him by the hour. That was not the case. His teachers made a special effort to notice any little improvement in his behavior and awarded him accordingly. Before this study was finished he was well on his way to becoming a model of good behavior for the other members of the discipline group. Praise was used on several other discipline cases with the same results. In a few cases praise did not bring about the correct response but rather it aggravated the situation.

An experiment was tried out in Special Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth classes. Ordinarily, the Junior High School students receive one double period (about an hour and a half) of instruction in sewing and manual training. During this year an extra hour of sewing and manual training was provided resulting in an improved attitude toward school work in general and a corresponding improvement in behavior. The result of this experiment seems to indicate that the course of study should be revised in order to provide for an increased amount of manual instruction with a decreased amount of business and classical subjects especially in groups where mental ability falls into the low brackets.

I feel that a visiting teacher could do much to alleviate the discipline situation in this school. At present, it is impossible for the regular teachers with their heavy teaching assignments to take school time to visit the parents of these wayward children. A visiting teacher could be of great assistance in bringing about a closer relationship between the school and the home.

An educational and vocational guidance program might be influential in reducing the number of discipline cases in this particular Junior High School. All the teachers make an effort to guide their students but there is no central agency for guidance at the present time. Part of the organization of such a program should provide for teachers to act as student advisors not only in school matters but also in their relations

outside of school. There is a real need for such a program in this particular school system.

A detention room for solitary confinement might be an asset in controlling some of the more advanced cases of misbehavior.

The city welfare department needs a little investigation when it permits families to live in the type of homes discovered in this study of discipline cases.

Possibly the introduction and practice of some or all of these suggestions might be instrumental in bringing about an improved situation in regard to the behavior of the students in the "X" Junior High School in a nearby Connecticut Valley Town.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DISCIPLINE CASES

1. Name
2. Address
3. Where were you born? When?
4. In what country was your father born?
5. In what country was your mother born?
6. Is your father living?
7. Is your mother living?
8. How many children are there in your family?
9. What is your father's occupation?
10. With whom do you live now?
11. What club are you in?
12. What is your hobby?
13. How do you spend your leisure time?
14. Are you in the habit of attending Church or Sunday School?  
Check one.    Usually            Occasionally            Never

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SCHOOL NURSE INTERVIEWS

1. Name of pupil
2. Address
3. Parents' names
4. Father's occupation
5. Health condition of the child
6. Social condition of the family
  - a. Type of home and home life
  - b. Personality of the parents
7. Financial condition of the family
8. Additional information

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHER INTERVIEWS

1. Child's name
2. Child's age (to be taken from the school register)
3. What information can you supply concerning the child's activities in school?
4. What information can you supply concerning the home conditions of this child?

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENT INTERVIEWS

1. Child's name
2. Child's health condition
3. How does the child spend his leisure time?
4. Can you explain the child's behavior in school?

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