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**CHILDREN'S CONCEPTS OF OCCUPATIONAL  
STRATIFICATION**

By

**James M. Moynahan, Jr.**

**B.S. Washington State University, 1962**

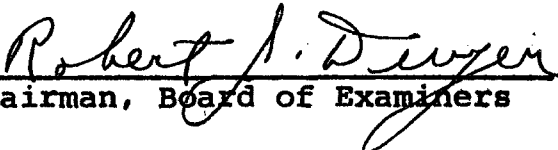
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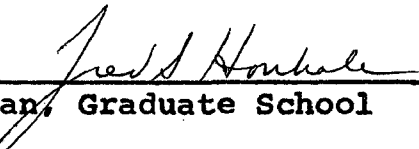
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J. M. M.

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"Man is astonishingly good at dealing with the physical world, but he is just as astonishingly bad at dealing with human nature; therefore, an inch gained in the understanding of and command over human nature is worth a mile gained in the understanding of and command over physical nature."

Arnold J. Toynbee  
The Prospects of Western  
Civilization



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. General

The presently proposed research is designed to determine when the responses of children (in various grades) to occupational stratification will correlate significantly with adult responses.<sup>1</sup> The writer will also attempt to discover what influences the child's social class standing will have on how he perceives occupational stratification.

Many factors are involved in social stratification. Warner found that four characteristics correlated highly with social class.<sup>2</sup> These characteristics were occupation, source of income, house type, and dwelling area. Mayer states that occupation, education, income, and wealth were all very important to class standing.<sup>3</sup> Broom and Selznick found that

---

1

Correlations considered significant will be those at the .05 level of confidence and above.

2

W. Lloyd Warner, Social Class in America (New York: Harper and Row, 1949), p. 40. Warner utilized these four characteristics of class in his testings in Jonesville and Yankee City. These characteristics were used in his measurement test, Index of Status Characteristics (ISC).

3

Kurt B. Mayer, Class and Society (New York: Random House, 1955), Chapter 4.

most of the class or stratification studies reported in the public press were selected on the basis of such criteria of income, occupation, and education (or some combination of these characteristics).<sup>4</sup> Although other determinants of social class were used by various researchers, the above cited appeared to be the most prevalent.<sup>5</sup>

Since occupation is one determinant of social class, individuals are aware that some jobs have a higher prestige than other jobs. Centers asked a group of adults to place a number of occupations from a list into one of four classes.<sup>6</sup> The respondents did this and thus arranged the occupations into a stratified order. Alba M. Edwards, while researching census material, made a general list of occupational stratification by presenting the following scheme which Kahl now terms "classic":<sup>7</sup>

---

4

Leonard Broom and Philip Selznick, Sociology (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 184.

5

Other characteristics important in identifying a person's position in a social class structure are family background, style of life, individual's perception of his position, etc.

6

Richard Centers, "Social Class, Occupation, and Imputed Belief," American Journal of Sociology, LVIII (May, 1953), p. 546.

7

Joseph A. Kahl, The American Class Structure (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1953), p. 65.

- I. Professional persons
- II. Proprietors, managers, and officials
  - A. Farmers (owners and tenants)
  - B. Wholesale and retail dealers
  - C. Other proprietors, managers, and officials
- III. Clerks and kindred workers
- IV. Skilled workers and foremen
- V. Semi-skilled workers
- VI. Unskilled workers
  - A. Farm laborers
  - B. Laborers, except farm laborers
  - C. Servant classes

Among the many studies conducted, probably the largest study of this kind was undertaken by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago. Here respondents stratified ninety occupations which they were asked to rate.<sup>8</sup>

Since it is evident that one is not born with the concept of hierarchy of jobs, this concept must be transmitted to the individual via culture contact and social interaction. The newborn child is not aware of the hierarchy of jobs, but the young adult is. It is evident that at some time during the socialization process, from birth to young

adulthood, this concept is developed.

Prior to the commencement of this study, the author interviewed different grade school principals and teachers and questioned them on children's awareness of occupational stratification. The individuals interviewed stated that they felt that students were able to differentiate the position of various occupations by the time they were in the sixth grade. They also felt that this awareness was present even before the sixth grade.

The principals and teachers were selected by the author for this source of information because of their relationship with students. It was hoped by the author that these people had some knowledge of the acquisition of concepts by the children. Also, it was felt that since they (the school personnel) were transmitters of knowledge from one of the institutions in society that they might be aware of the acquisition of occupational stratification in children.

The principals and teachers felt that they were aware of these attitudes by the way that various students reacted to mention of occupations during class discussions. They also felt that the types of questions which came from the students indicated knowledge of the stratification of jobs.

In some instances to which the teachers referred, the

child had not verbalized an awareness. The teachers did feel, however, that even these students were keenly aware of job stratification.

Stendler, in describing the ways children learn concepts of social class, grouped the learning process into three stages.<sup>9</sup> The first stage was that of pre-awareness, which was found in the first through the fourth grades. The second stage was that of the beginning of awareness. The third stage was the acceptance of adult stereotypes which was seen in the sixth grade through the eighth grade.

DeFleur has also come to the conclusion that as a child advances in chronological age, his awareness of social class and job stratification becomes more apparent.<sup>10</sup> But this degree of awareness as compared with that of adults has not been measured.

It has also been suggested by various writers that one's socio-economic class standing influences the rate at which one perceives the system of occupational hierarchy.

---

9

Celia B. Stendler, Children of Brasstown (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1949), pp. 90-92.

10

Lois B. DeFleur, "Assessing Occupational Knowledge in Young Children," Sociological Inquiry, Vol. XXXVI, No. 1 (Winter, 1966), 98-115.

(See Chapter Three for more information on this subject.)

### B. Assumptions and Hypothesis

The hypothesis, basically stated, is that children in the third grade will not respond as closely to adult responses (of occupational stratification) as will children in the fourth grade. Fifth grade students will be more aware than fourth grade students, and sixth grade students will be more aware than fifth grade students. The higher the grade, the closer the responses will be to adult responses.

The social class standing of the students tested will also influence their perception of the occupational hierarchy. Middle-class students will be more keenly aware of occupational stratification than will be the lower-class students.<sup>11</sup> Because of the lack of information on upper-class students, no speculations will be presented on their responses.

### C. Importance of the Study

It is hoped that this research will contribute to the field and practice of sociology in the following ways:

1. It will add to our understanding of where and how

---

11

The student's class standing will be determined by his father's occupational rank on the National Opinion Research Center's study of 1963.

children learn about occupational stratification.

2. It will contribute to our knowledge of the socializing process, in general, and of the development of children's awareness of occupational stratification, in particular.

3. It will reveal when (at what age) the child duplicates adult responses pertaining to awareness of some types of social phenomena.

4. It will help determine if social class has an effect on the rate at which one learns occupational stratification.

5. It will help us to contribute to the field of education by giving advice on when to teach occupational information in the education program.

6. It will help contribute to the field of counseling by suggesting the earliest age that children can be effectively exposed to job counseling.

#### D. Terminology

Presented in this section are those sociological terms utilized in this study.

Chronological age. The duration of an individual's life from birth to the date under consideration.<sup>12</sup>

---

12

Howard C. Warren, Dictionary of Psychology (Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1934), p. 44.

Concept. Generally refers to an idea or a notion.<sup>13</sup>

Esteem. The evaluation of an individual's role behavior in a given status; the judgment of others of how well he fulfills the expectations of his role.<sup>14</sup>

Kendall's Tau. A method of computing rank correlation coefficient (+.91 as efficient as the Pearsonian  $r$ ).<sup>15</sup>

Limited contact. That contact which the child has had which is very limited and/or consisted of no contact either personal or vicarious. This refers to the contact (or lack of it) which a child had with various individuals in different occupations.<sup>16</sup>

NORC. Refers to the National Opinion Research Center.<sup>17</sup>

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13

Julius Gould and William L. Kolb, A Dictionary of the Social Sciences (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1964), p. 120.

14

Kimball Young and Raymond W. Mack, Sociology and Social Life (New York: American Book Company, 1959), p. 456.

15

Sidney Siegel, Nonparametric Statistics (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1956), pp. 213-23.

16

DeFleur, op. cit., p. 98-115.

17

Robert W. Hodge, Paul M. Siegel, and Peter H. Rossi, "Occupational Prestige in the United States, 1925-1963," American Journal of Sociology, LXX (1964), 286-302.



Personal contact. This is contact with various persons in occupations, which the child would have in his normal rounds of the community.<sup>18</sup>

Prestige. The evaluation of a status; the judgment within a society's norms of the desirability of a given status.<sup>19</sup>

Role. The dynamic or the behavioral aspect of status. It is what an individual does in the status he occupies.<sup>20</sup>

Socio-economic class. As used in this text, it refers to the class standing of students as determined by their father's occupation. The upper, middle, and lower classes were derived by dividing the NORC study into three parts. The upper thirty jobs comprised the upper class, the middle thirty jobs comprise the middle class, and the lower thirty jobs comprise the lower class.<sup>21</sup>

---

18

De Fleur, op. cit., pp. 98-115.

19

Young and Mack, op. cit., p. 459.

20

Robert Bierstedt, The Social Order (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1963), p. 262.

21

See Table 1 in Chapter Three for the NORC occupations. See Chapter Four for more information on the occupational stratification of the children used in the study.

Status. A position in society or in a group. It is the position afforded by group affiliation, a group membership, or group organization.<sup>22</sup>

Stereotype. Denotes beliefs about classes of individuals, groups, or objects which are "preconceived."<sup>23</sup>

Stratification. In a social sense refers to the vertical arrangement of persons; a hierarchy; a system of higher and lower, greater and less, superior and inferior.<sup>24</sup>

Subliminal. Below the threshold. It applies to stimuli which are not sufficiently intense to arouse definite sensations but which, nevertheless, have some effect upon the responses or mental life of the individual.<sup>25</sup>

Vicarious contact. This is contact which is substitute in nature. The child has been made aware (or the occupation) through substitute sources such as television, books, and others. He has not had personal contact.<sup>26</sup>

---

22

Bierstedt, op. cit.

23

Gould & Kolb, op. cit., p. 694.

24

Milton M. Gordon, Social Class in American Sociology (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1963), p. 238.

25

Warren, op. cit., p. 265.

26

DeFleur, op. cit., pp. 98-115.

### E. Organization of the Thesis

With regard to general procedure, Chapter Two will deal with the review of the literature of studies approximating the one to be undertaken. Chapter Three will present the theoretical and hypothetical approach to the study. Chapter Four will be concerned with the method of the study; Chapter Five with the results and findings of the study. And, finally, Chapter Six will summarize the findings, draw some conclusions, and make general comparisons with the data found in the literature review. Suggestions for further research will also be found in the final chapter.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

There has not been a great deal of investigation concerning children's concepts of occupational stratification. The author was unable to find a study that exactly duplicates the proposed one.

Stewart investigated the relationship between fifth-grade students' socio-economic statuses and their occupational attitudes.<sup>1</sup> A sample of 243 fifth-grade boys from various elementary schools in the San Francisco Bay area were tested. Through interviews and a questionnaire, Stewart concluded that fifth-grade boys perceived certain class differences in the various occupations that they were asked to rate. He found, with one exception, that the perception of class appeared to be independent of the subject's own status.

Stewart went on to explain that the subjects used for the research had fairly well-defined expectations of how a boy from a particular socio-economic background would behave.

---

1

Lawrence H. Stewart, "Relationship of Socio-economic Status to Children's Occupational Attitudes and Interests," The Journal of Genetic Psychology, XCV (1959), pp. 111-36.

In general, these expectations were also independent of the socio-economic background of the subjects.

It should be emphasized that this study was confined to male students in the fifth grade.

Weinstein tested students in various grades for their perceptions of occupational stratification.<sup>2</sup> He concluded that children in various grades were aware of occupational stratification.<sup>3</sup> Weinstein says:

It has been pointed out that differences occur in the way the stratification system is perceived, depending on the position of the observer in the stratification system. The fineness of perceived status gradations decreases as distance in status from the observer increases.<sup>4</sup>

Weinstein made no statement as to how the members of different socio-economic classes perceive the overall system of occupational stratification. He did state that as age increases, the difference between status perception of groups also increases.

The study consisted of a two-part interview and was

---

2

Eugene A. Weinstein, "Children's Conceptions of Occupational Stratification," Sociology and Social Research, XLII (1958), pp. 278-284.

3

He tested fourth, sixth, and eighth grades.

4

Weinstein, op. cit., p. 284.

conducted in the Chicago Public Elementary Schools. It utilized seventy-two subjects. All of the subjects studied were white males. This was done so as to control possible variation due to sex and race.

DeFleur tested first- and fourth-grade students with regard to their concepts of occupational stratification.<sup>5</sup> She used fifty-one male and female students for her project. About half of these students were in the first grade and half were in the fourth grade. The tests consisted of lengthy interviews with the school children.

De Fleur concluded that children in the fourth grade were more aware of occupational stratification than were the first-grade children.

By the time that the child has advanced to the fourth grade, assuming that he is reasonably bright, he has internalized the idea that specific and complex skills are involved in many occupations and that jobs can be arranged in a hierarchy of prestige.<sup>6</sup>

She stated also that the chronological age of the child appears to be a very important link to the maturity of his conceptions of the occupational world.

---

5

Lois B. DeFleur, "Assessing Occupational Knowledge in Young Children," Sociological Inquiry, Vol. XXXVI, No. 1 (Winter, 1966), pp. 98-115.

6

Ibid., p. 115.

None of the above-cited studies indicated the extent of agreement between children's responses and adult responses of occupational stratification.

Simmons came close to the question of children's concepts of occupational stratification by comparing the responses of children in grades four, eight, and twelve with each other and the Deeg and Paterson adult rankings.<sup>7</sup>

He tested male and female students in the Corvallis (Oregon) School District area. His sample consisted of forty-six fourth-grade students, forty-seven eighth-grade students, and forty-eight twelfth-grade students.

Each of the students was asked to rank twenty occupations. Simmons found that there was a +.868 correlation between the fourth-grade males' rankings and the Deeg and Paterson adult ranking. He states that this implies a high degree of awareness of adult occupational prestige among boys. He found, however, that the fourth-grade girls had a relatively poor correlation of +.538. The lower correlation among the fourth-grade girls led to the impression that the development of occupational knowledge is different for girls than for boys.

---

7

Dale D. Simmons, "Children's Rankings of Occupational Prestige," The Personnel and Guidance Journal, LXI (December, 1962), pp. 332-36.

Simmons also came to the conclusion that elementary school children may be far more prepared to receive occupational information than had been assumed before.

Gunn suggested that, from her findings, boys in the grades four, five, and six no longer rank jobs in terms of what they mean personally.<sup>8</sup> She concluded that this trend begins in the third grade and advances as students increase in chronological age.

She used the National Opinion Research Corporation Survey, Number 244, as the reference for the occupations in her study. She tested students in the first through the twelfth grades. As the student increases in grade, he becomes more aware of an occupational hierarchy. Gunn suggested further that boys by the seventh grade see a definite ladder of occupational prestige.

Stendler suggested by the studies in "Brasstown" that middle-class children are more aware than others of class and symbols.<sup>9</sup> It is thus inferred that occupational

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8

Barbara Gunn, "Children's Conceptions of Occupational Prestige," The Personnel and Guidance Journal, XLII (February, 1964), pp. 558-63.

9

Celia B. Stendler, Children of Brasstown (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1949), pp. 90-92.



stratification may be learned at a different rate, depending upon one's class membership. This point will be elaborated on in the next chapter.

In summary, the author has thus established the fact that various studies have been conducted which produced the fact that students in different grades are aware that there is an occupational hierarchy within the United States (Stewart, Weinstein, and DeFleur).

Simmons, a researcher in this area of interest, has found that there is a high positive correlation between fourth-grade boys' responses (to occupational prestige) and those responses exhibited by adults. Another author (Gunn) suggested that as children increase in age (and grade) from the third grade they become more aware of occupational stratification.

And finally, Stendler suggested that there may be some awareness differences revealed by members of various socio-economic classes.

As the author indicated at the beginning of this chapter, he was not able to find a research project which correlated children's responses of the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth grades with those of adults with regard to occupational stratification.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THEORETICAL SUPPORT AND HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

#### A. The National Opinion Research Center's Study

The author is using, as the basis of his occupational listings, the study carried on under the National Opinion Research Center in 1963. This study, known as the NORC study, was a replication of the 1947 North-Hatt NORC study. The 1963 study was conducted by Robert W. Hodge, Paul M. Siegel, and Peter H. Rossi. The 1963 study produced approximately the same responses regarding occupational prestige scores as did the 1947 North-Hatt NORC study. A correlation of .99 was derived between the two studies.<sup>1</sup>

The 1947 study utilized a sample of the general population of 2,900 people.<sup>2</sup> In the 1963 study

because of the stability of prestige positions of occupations from subgroup to subgroup in the 1947 study, it was felt that a relatively small national sample

---

1

Robert W. Hodge, Paul M. Siegel, and Peter H. Rossi, "Occupational Prestige in the United States, 1925-1963," The American Journal of Sociology, LXX (November, 1964), 286.

2

Reinhard Bendix and Seymour Martin Lipset, Class, Status and Power (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1953), p. 414.

would be sufficient for the replication. In all, a total of 651 interviews was collected according to quota sampling methods from a national sample of adults and youths.<sup>3</sup>

It appears to the author that the size of the sample was justified, considering the high degree of correlation.

The interview method had only slight changes from that carried on in the March, 1947, study. The respondent was handed a printed card which asked him to pick out a statement which best gave his personal opinion of the general standing of each job that he would be asked about.<sup>4</sup>

The responses which appeared on the card are given below:

1. Excellent standing
2. Good standing
3. Average standing
4. Somewhat below average standing
5. Poor standing
- X. I don't know where to place that one

After giving the respondent a list of responses, a list of ninety occupations was read to him, and he was asked

---

3

Hodge, Siegel, and Rossi, op. cit., p. 288.

4

Joseph A. Kahl, The American Class Structure (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1953), p. 72.

to state his opinion about each.<sup>5</sup> The ratings given by the respondents were weighted so that an arrangement of occupations could be made. The occupations were listed in rank order from that with the highest rating (number one on the scale) to that with the lowest rating.

Table 1, entitled "The Distributions of Prestige Ratings Under NORC in 1963," has a complete list of the ninety occupations which were stratified in the research.

The results clearly show that the public had a prestige scale in mind and could place the various occupations on that scale with considerable consensus. Seldom did the people in the various groups disagree as to the standing of an occupation by more than five places in the rank order of the ninety occupations.<sup>6</sup>

Immediately after rating the occupations, each respondent in the NORC study was asked this question: "When you say that certain jobs have 'excellent standing', what do you think is the one main thing about such jobs that gives this standing?"<sup>7</sup> The answers were:

---

5

Ibid.

6

Ibid., pp. 73-74.

7

Bendix and Lipset, op. cit., p. 418.

TABLE 1  
THE DISTRIBUTIONS OF PRESTIGE RATINGS  
UNDER NORC IN 1963

OCCUPATION	NORC SCORE	RANK
U.S. Supreme Court Justice . . . . .	94	1
Physician . . . . .	93	2
Nuclear physicist . . . . .	92	3.5
Scientist . . . . .	92	3.5
Government scientist . . . . .	91	5.5
State Governor . . . . .	91	5.5
Cabinet member in the federal government .	90	8
College professor . . . . .	90	8
U.S. Representative in Congress . . . . .	90	8
Chemist . . . . .	89	11
Lawyer . . . . .	89	11
Diplomat in the U.S. foreign service . . . .	89	11
Dentist . . . . .	88	14
Architect . . . . .	88	14
County judge . . . . .	88	14
Psychologist . . . . .	87	17.5
Minister . . . . .	87	17.5
Member of the board of directors of a large corporation . . . . .	87	17.5
Mayor of a large city . . . . .	87	17.5
Priest . . . . .	86	21.5
Head of a department in a state government .	86	21.5
Civil engineer . . . . .	86	21.5
Airline pilot . . . . .	86	21.5
Banker . . . . .	85	24.5
Biologist . . . . .	85	24.5
Sociologist . . . . .	83	26
Instructor in public schools . . . . .	82	27.5
Captain in the regular army . . . . .	82	27.5
Accountant for a large business . . . . .	81	29.5
Public school teacher . . . . .	81	29.5
Owner of a factory that employs about 100 people . . . . .	80	31.5
Building contractor . . . . .	80	31.5

TABLE 1--continued

OCCUPATION	NORC SCORE	RANK
Artist who paints pictures that are exhibited in galleries . . . . .	78	34.5
Musician in a symphony orchestra . . . . .	78	34.5
Author of novels . . . . .	78	34.5
Economist . . . . .	78	34.5
Official of an international labor union . . . . .	77	37
Railroad engineer . . . . .	76	39
Electrician . . . . .	76	39
County agricultural agent . . . . .	76	39
Owner-operator of a printing shop . . . . .	75	41.5
Trained machinist . . . . .	75	41.5
Farm owner and operator . . . . .	74	44
Undertaker . . . . .	74	44
Welfare worker for a city government . . . . .	74	44
Newspaper columnist. . . . .	73	46
Policeman . . . . .	72	47
Reporter on a daily newspaper . . . . .	71	48
Radio announcer . . . . .	70	49.5
Bookkeeper . . . . .	70	49.5
Tenant farmer--one who owns livestock and machinery and manages the farm . . . . .	69	51.5
Insurance agent . . . . .	69	51.5
Carpenter . . . . .	68	53
Manager of a small store in a city . . . . .	67	54.5
A local official of a labor union . . . . .	67	54.5
Mail carrier . . . . .	66	57
Railroad conductor . . . . .	66	57
Traveling salesman for a wholesale concern . . . . .	66	57
Plumber . . . . .	65	59
Automobile repairman . . . . .	64	60
Playground director . . . . .	63	62.5
Barber . . . . .	63	62.5
Machine operator in a factory . . . . .	63	62.5
Owner-operator of a lunch stand . . . . .	63	62.5
Corporal in the regular army . . . . .	62	65.5
Garage mechanic . . . . .	62	65.5
Truck driver . . . . .	59	67
Fisherman who owns his own boat . . . . .	58	68

TABLE 1--continued

OCCUPATION	NORC SCORE	RANK
Clerk in a store . . . . .	56	70
Milk route man . . . . .	56	70
Streetcar motorman . . . . .	56	70
Lumberjack . . . . .	55	72.5
Restaurant cook . . . . .	55	72.5
Singer in a nightclub . . . . .	54	74
Filling station attendant . . . . .	51	75
Dockworker . . . . .	50	77.5
Railroad section hand . . . . .	50	77.5
Night watchman . . . . .	50	77.5
Coal miner . . . . .	50	77.5
Restaurant waiter . . . . .	49	80.5
Taxi driver . . . . .	49	80.5
Farm hand . . . . .	48	83
Janitor . . . . .	48	83
Bartender . . . . .	48	83
Clothes presser in a laundry . . . . .	45	85
Soda fountain clerk . . . . .	44	86
Sharecropper--one who owns no livestock or equipment and does not manage farm . . . . .	42	87
Garbage collector . . . . .	39	88
Street sweeper . . . . .	36	89
Shoe shiner . . . . .	34	90
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>--</b>

The jobs pay so well . . . . .	18%
The service to humanity; they are essential jobs . . . . .	16
Preparation requires much education, hard work, money . . . . .	14
The jobs carry great social prestige . . . . .	14
They require high moral standards, honesty, responsibility . . . . .	9
The jobs require intelligence, ability . . . . .	9
All other answers . . . . .	<u>20</u>
	100%

Kahl says that these answers confirm the Lynds' material on Middletown: In our industrial culture, skill (ability plus education and training), authority, income, and prestige are a single, meaningful complex. People who use different criteria tended to rank occupations in the same way. He says that there is no point attempting to figure out which is the most important. "The significant fact is that the public sees them as fitting together."<sup>8</sup>

#### B. Theoretical Orientation

One approach to the basis of children's awareness of occupational stratification lies in concept formations. Generally, concepts formed out of past experiences are

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Kahl, op. cit., p. 75.



brought into play on present experiences. These have been learned primarily within the social context.

Vinacke has suggested several theoretical points in regard to concept formation in children.<sup>9</sup> Generally, his points are:

1. Increasing age (signifying accumulation of experience) is the single most important variable in concept formation. With increasing age, the child becomes more aware of his social environment.

2. Progress in learning concepts is continuous and cumulative. Accordingly, learning is to be understood as always being in process.

3. With respect to knowledge accumulation, the following takes place with increasing age.

- A. There is a progression from simple to complex concepts.

- B. There is a progression from diffuse to differentiated concepts. (Thus, concepts of the self change from generalized awareness of the body and of relations to others, to well-organized knowledge of roles, attitudes, traits, social relationships, and activities.)

4. Concept formations appear to correlate highly and positively with chronological age. (The higher the

chronological age, presumably, the larger the accumulation of experiences.)

5. Concept formations may be a product of explicit instruction, as given by teachers, parents, and others, or it may be a product of social experience which is more vicarious in nature.

As the grade school student progresses in school, he becomes more aware of occupational stratification. There is a difference in the learning of occupational stratification among the different socio-economic classes.<sup>10</sup> Middle-class children appear to be more aware of occupation stratification than do lower-class children. This can be explained somewhat by the fact that the middle class is more career oriented.<sup>11</sup> With this emphasis, the importance and unimportance of

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For further information concerning this point, the reader is referred to: Ronald G. Corwin, A Sociology of Education (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1965), pp. 115-89; Lois DeFleur, "Assessing Occupational Knowledge in Young Children," Sociological Inquiry, XXXVI, No. 1 (Winter, 1966), 98-115; Barbara Gunn, "Children's Concepts of Occupational Prestige," The Personnel and Guidance Journal, XLII (February, 1964), pp. 558-63; Celia Burns Stendler, Children of Brass-town (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1949), pp. 92-95; Eugene A. Weinstein, "Children's Concepts of Occupational Stratification," Sociology and Social Research, XLII (1958), pp. 278-84.

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Kahl, op. cit., p. 194.

various occupations is stressed to the middle-class youth. The lower-class students will not be as able to differentiate various occupations because of their position in the society. They attend schools which are dominated by teachers with middle-class backgrounds. They are discriminated against because of their class positions.<sup>12</sup> Apathy, which is characteristic of this class, is important as a resistance to their acquisition of occupational knowledge.

References in this literature are almost non-existent regarding the upper class and when its members learn about occupational stratification. It should be noted that there is some mention of parental pressure for children of the upper class to enter certain occupations.<sup>13</sup> The mention of this is, however, too limited to be relevant to this study.

### C. Hypotheses

In the hypotheses given below are presented the concepts which the author hopes to test.

1. Children become increasingly aware of job stratification as they progress from the third to the sixth

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For a very informative view of this, the reader may consult: W. Lloyd Warner and Associates, Democracy in Jonesville (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949).

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Ruth Cavan, The American Family (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1959), pp. 119-47.

grade. Students will be able to transmit this information through written and oral communications as they progress from the third to the sixth grade.

2. As children increase in age, their responses to concepts of job stratification come closer to those exhibited by adults. For example, those responses received from sixth graders will correlate more highly with adult responses than will those responses received from fifth graders. As children are tested from third grade through sixth grade, the higher the grade, the higher will be the correlation of children's responses to adult responses.

3. Children in sixth grade will correlate significantly with adult responses in regard to job stratification.

4. Children from families within the middle socio-economic class will learn concepts of job stratification earlier than children from the lower socio-economic class. The middle-class children in each grade will be more aware of occupational stratification than will the children of the lower class. The middle class children's responses in each grade will correlate more highly with adult responses than will the lower-class children's responses.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE METHOD OF THE STUDY

#### A. Method

This study was conducted in the school system of Cheney, Washington, during the winter of 1966-67. Responses were obtained from two schools in the Cheney system: the Campus Elementary School and Betz Elementary School.

Both questionnaires and interviews were employed. The questionnaires were administered to all members of the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth grades in both schools. The interviews were given to only six students from each of the grades. The number utilized in the sample was chosen because it was felt to be sufficiently large enough to be adequate. This size sample was also suggested by one of the members of the Department of Sociology at the University of Montana.

In each grade sixteen questionnaires were pre-marked and used for the study. None of the students were aware that there was any selective process in operation. All students were addressed by name and then given a questionnaire. This way it was possible to give out the

pre-marked questionnaires.

Eight students whose parents had jobs considered in the lower socio-economic class and eight students whose parents had jobs considered in the middle socio-economic class were among the sixteen selected for the study. All other responses except these sixteen were not used. The parent's occupational class was determined by the National Opinion Research Council Study (NORC) which is discussed in Chapter Three.

The testing was administered in the classrooms during school hours. The complete classes were given questionnaires and were asked to place them face down on their desks until all had been handed out. After each student had received a questionnaire, the class as a whole was asked to turn them over and listen to the oral instructions.

Instructions for filling out the questionnaires were given orally in class. These instructions were also written on the questionnaire. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in the Appendix on page           The instructions given were as follows:

There are no right or wrong answers in this survey. What is wanted is your opinion of the following questions. You are given below a list of occupations (jobs that people do). You are asked to rate (show a preference for) each of those which you recognize and know something

about. Rate each on the basis that you think that one is higher standing or lower standing than another. To help you do this, one occupation (job) is shown as being in the middle range. You can mark each job as on the same level, below that level, or above that level. You may make your decision for any reason you wish. A railroad conductor is marked as a middle job, as an example.

After the instructions were given, the class was asked if there were any further questions or any points that should be clarified. The only questions which presented themselves were either questions relating to the reason for the study or, as was verbalized in the higher grades, what criteria should be used to mark answers. To the former set of questions it was said that we would discuss the test after it was completed, and to the second set of questions the students were advised to use any criteria they wished.

When all questions were answered, the class was instructed to fill out the questionnaires. They were allowed ample time to complete the survey with the exception of one handicapped student who was not able to finish. His questionnaire was not one of those among the sixteen from his grade to be used.

The only variation from the above procedure was that which was used for the third grade. Because of a suggestion by one of the teachers, the students in the third grade had the occupations read to them. A teacher had

explained that a few of the third-graders were not able to read all of the occupations. Thus, it was decided that all of the third-graders should have the occupations read to them. (The problem of non-readers did not seem to present itself in those grades above the third.) The author read the occupations and attempted not to emit any subliminal feelings about any of the standings of the occupations.

After the questionnaires were completed, the class was invited to ask any questions regarding the survey. They were generally very interested in the survey and in the discussion which took place after it was completed.

The interviews were started one week after all the questionnaires had been answered. Two students from each of the socio-economic classes (as determined by their fathers' occupations according to NORC) from each grade were chosen for the interviews. The students were called from class and asked if they would volunteer to be interviewed over the questionnaire that they had been given. Although this was somewhat of a captive audience, all of the students agreed to participate in the interviews.

The Betz School provided a special room for the author to carry out the interviews. The Campus School provided an office for the interviews; however, some of the



interviews in this school were given in the teachers' offices which adjoin the classrooms. This was found to be more convenient for some teachers.

Each interview took from fifteen to twenty minutes. A list of the interview questions is found in the Appendix on page        Before the interview began, the students were asked if they remembered the questionnaire and they were given a copy of it. All of the students stated that they remembered the questionnaire.

The students interviewed were chosen at random from the eight in each class used for the study. As was stated above, two students were chosen from each social class.

It was found that the Betz School contained many students from the lower and middle socio-economic classes. There were very few students from the upper socio-economic classes. This can be explained by the fact that this school draws upon rural as well as a small urban area. Betz School takes all students in the general Cheney area.

The Campus School has students primarily from the city of Cheney. Since Cheney is the location of Eastern Washington State College, and the Campus School is run by the Education Department of the College, it can select students who enter it. The Campus School has only one class of each

grade. Most classes have twenty students per grade. It was found to be dominated primarily by faculty children, with a few children of other professionals in the city. When stratified, the school had most of its members from the upper socio-economic level with a few from the middle socio-economic level and relatively none from the lower level.

It is felt that a few words should be said regarding the approach to the actual study. When testing in the school system, a regular chain of command must be followed. In this case, the first to be contacted was the Superintendent of the Cheney School District. After his approval was granted, the next approval had to come from the school principals. After the principals agreed to a study, often individual teachers had to be contacted for their permission. Sometimes, however, the principals will contact the teachers and discuss the proposed study with them. This was the procedure followed in this study.

The individual school principals permitted the author to go through the school files so that the parents' occupations could be listed. The occupation of the father of each child was listed beside the child's name on a class roster. These occupations were then compared to those on the NORC

study and assigned to a lower and middle classification. These were determined by dividing the jobs in the NORC study into three classes. The upper thirty jobs were considered in the upper class, the middle thirty jobs were considered in the middle class, and the lower thirty jobs were in the lower class.

When a parent's job was not titled exactly the same as found in the NORC study, it was given an approximate position on the scale. However, very few jobs not found on the scale were used in the study. When the father was missing from the family due to death, divorce, desertion, or separation, the child was not used in the study. The only children used were those whose parents were living together and whose fathers were employed at least part of the time. It should be noted that in one case the father was engaged in seasonal work, and in another case the family was on relief. In the case of the father on relief, he was stratified according to his occupation when employed.

Some of the information on fathers' occupations obtained in the Betz School was gathered with the help of the school secretary. Some parents had merely listed their occupations as farm workers; it was found that certain of these were farm laborers, while others were owners and

managers. There is a great deal of difference between these two in relation to stratification on the NORC study.

It was found to be extremely helpful to have an individual such as the school secretary aid the author. She knew most of the students and a great many of their parents.

#### B. Limitations and Problems of the Study

In many school districts tests of this nature are frowned upon by the officials. Previous investigators have indulged in all types of research which school officials have felt were harmful to the students involved. All types of studies have been undertaken which have asked very personal questions and have sometimes emotionally upset the children involved. This study was carefully reviewed by the schools involved before it was allowed to progress. It was also stated by some of the school personnel that very few studies of any nature were allowed in adjoining school districts, the point being that this study might not be allowed in every school district. This may act somewhat in a selective nature. A further point is that since this school district allows studies of this nature, the children may play a different role for the examiner. This was especially felt in the Campus School.

The reactions of the Campus School students to the testing were definitely more mature. They were not as excited as the Betz School students; also, they did not ask as many questions. This can be explained by the very reason for the existence of the school. The Campus School, as was stated earlier, is run by the College through their Education Department. Each classroom has an observation room for college students to use, which is supplied with one-way glass. These classes are also subjected to practice teachers and various tests which the Education Department conducts. This constant observation and testing may account for the different reception the author received in his testing in this school.

The Betz School contained more of a cross-section of students to be found in the community. Members from all socio-economic classes were represented. The students in this school appeared to be more interested in the questionnaires and interviews. Much more enthusiasm from the children in the Betz School was indicated by the nature of questions and excitement about being able to take part in the test. This school would probably be considered to be more of an "average" school for the general area. It should be noted, in conclusion, that the content of the

student body for each school was very different.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE GENERAL FINDINGS

In discussing the general findings of this study, the results are divided into two broad categories. One deals with the information from the questionnaire, and the other deals with the knowledge gained from the interviews.

The author has attempted to present the relevant finds which this study has produced. As the reader will see, the general patterns and trends, which were stated in the hypotheses, did not emerge in the way that the author had anticipated.

#### A. THE QUESTIONNAIRE

##### The Children's Rankings

Presented in Table 2 are the rankings that the students of the third grade gave the thirty occupations. These rankings are given so that the reader can see how each social class (lower and middle) within the third grade rated the occupations. There also appears a category of all-class rankings which is the average ranking that the occupation received from the two social classes. In this

TABLE 2  
RANKING OF THIRTY OCCUPATIONS  
BY THIRD-GRADE CHILDREN

OCCUPATION	LOWER CLASS RANKING	MIDDLE CLASS RANKING	ALL CLASS RANKING	NORC RANKING CONDENSED TO 30
U.S. Supreme Court Justice	9	9	6.5	1
Physician (Medical Doctor)	3.5	2.5	1	2
Scientist	6	5	2.5	3
Government Scientist	1.5	13.5	6.5	4.5
State Governor	1.5	5	2.5	4.5
College Professor	10.5	2.5	6.5	6.5
U.S. Representative in Congress	3.5	13.5	10	6.5
Chemist	6	17	12	8.5
Lawyer	10.5	9	11	8.5
Dentist	12	7	9	10
Undertaker	28.5	27.5	28	11
Policeman	8	9	6.5	12
Reporter on a Daily Newspaper	18	11	15	13
Radio Announcer	14	5	13.5	14.5
Bookkeeper	26	20	22	14.5
Farmer <sup>a</sup>	21.5	20	19.5	16.5
Insurance Agent	6	1	4	16.5
Carpenter	14	13.5	16	18
Manager of a Small Store in a City	18	17	19.5	19
Mail Carrier	14	17	13.5	20
Coal Miner	21.5	13.5	17	21
Restaurant Waiter	18	24	21	22.5
Taxi Driver	18	24	18	22.5
Farmhand	26	24	24.5	25



TABLE 2--continued

OCCUPATION	LOWER CLASS RANKING	MIDDLE CLASS RANKING	ALL CLASS RANKING	NORC RANKING CONDENSED TO 30
Janitor	23.5	24	24.5	25
Bartender	30	20	26	25
Clothes Presser in a Laundrey	23.5	29.5	27	27
Soda Fountain Clerk	18	24	23	28
Garbage Collector	28.5	29.5	30	29
Street Sweeper	26	27.5	29	30

<sup>a</sup>Owns livestock and machinery but doesn't own the farm.

table, in the right-hand column, is the National Opinion  
Research Center's (NORC) ranking.<sup>1</sup>

In the all-class ranking column, the highest ranked  
occupation was the physician. The lowest rating was received  
by the garbage collector. The occupation of insurance  
agent received a number four ranking from the children; it  
was given a 16.5 ranking on the condensed NORC. The undertaker,  
which was rated at 28 by the students, had a condensed NORC  
rank of eleven. Many of the occupations received an all-class

<sup>1</sup>

The condensed NORC rankings appear in Table 6. The  
author has merely reassigned values to the thirty occupations  
used for the study. Under the column of condensed rankings  
appear each occupation's rating on a one to thirty scale.

ranking which was close to the condensed NORC ranking.

In Table 3 are found the rankings given the thirty occupations by the fourth-grade children. Under the all-class ranking column, the occupations of scientist and state governor were both given the highest rating. Bartender was given the lowest rating. Undertaker was also rated very low by this group of children; it received a twenty-nine from them. Its condensed NORC ranking was eleven. Many of the other occupations received rankings which were very close to the NORC rankings.

Table 4 presents the positions given the various occupations by the fifth-grade students. In the all-class ranking column, the occupation of state governor was placed first. The lowest rating for an occupation was received by both bartender and street sweeper. The position of coal miner was rated rather highly by the students. It received a 13 from them and it is located 21 on the condensed NORC ranking. Undertaker was rated more highly by this group than by either the third or fourth grades. It received a 22 from this group.

In Table 5 are found the ratings of the various occupations by the sixth-grade students. Under the all-class ranking column, the most highly ranked occupation was the

TABLE 3  
 RANKING OF THIRTY OCCUPATIONS  
 BY FOURTH-GRADE CHILDREN

OCCUPATION	LOWER CLASS RANKING	MIDDLE CLASS RANKING	ALL CLASS RANKING	NORC RANKING CONDENSED TO 30
U.S. Supreme Court Justice	4	3	3	1
Physician (Medical Doctor)	2	7	4	2
Scientist	2	3	1.5	3
Government Scientist	5	3	6	4.5
State Governor	2	3	1.5	4.5
College Professor	7.5	10	7	6.5
U.S. Representative in Congress	7.5	3	5	6.5
Chemist	10	6	10.5	8.5
Lawyer	12	8	9	8.5
Dentist	7.5	12	10.5	10
Undertaker	29	27.5	29	11
Policeman	12	10	12	12
Reporter on a Daily Newspaper	12	16	13	13
Radio Announcer	14.5	19	14	14.5
Bookkeeper	21	16	19.5	14.5
Farmer <sup>a</sup>	14.5	16	16	16.5
Insurance Agent	7.5	10	8	16.5
Carpenter	17	13	15	18
Manager of a Small Store in a City	24	14	19.5	19
Mail Carrier	17	19	17	20
Coal Miner	19.5	22.5	21.5	21
Restaurant Waiter	27	19	21.5	22.5
Taxi Driver	17	21	18	22.5
Farmhand	29	25.5	27.5	25

TABLE 3--continued

OCCUPATION	LOWER CLASS RANKING	MIDDLE CLASS RANKING	ALL CLASS RANKING	NORC RANKING CONDENSED TO 30
Janitor	24	25.5	25.5	25
Bartender	29	27.5	30	25
Clothes Presser in a Laundrey	19.5	24	24	27
Soda Fountain Clerk	24	22.5	23	28
Garbage Collector	24	29.5	27.5	29
Street Sweeper	24	29.5	25.5	30

<sup>a</sup> Owns livestock and machinery but doesn't own the farm.

TABLE 4

RANKING OF THIRTY OCCUPATIONS  
BY FIFTH-GRADE CHILDREN

OCCUPATION	LOWER CLASS RANKING	MIDDLE CLASS RANKING	ALL CLASS RANKING	NORC RANKING CONDENSED TO 30
U.S. Supreme Court Justice	4	10.5	8	1
Physician (Medical Doctor)	2	1.5	2.5	2
Scientist	5	5.5	4	3
Government Scientist	6.5	5.5	5	4.5
State Governor	2	1.5	1	4.5
College Professor	6.5	8	6.5	6.5
U.S. Representative in Congress	2	3.5	2.5	6.5
Chemist	9.5	8	10	8.5
Lawyer	9.5	8	9	8.5

TABLE 4--continued

OCCUPATION	LOWER CLASS RANKING	MIDDLE CLASS RANKING	ALL CLASS RANKING	NORC RANKING CONDENSED TO 30
Dentist	12.5	14.5	12	10
Undertaker	17.5	20.5	22	11
Policeman	14	3.5	6.5	12
Reporter on a Daily Newspaper	17.5	14.5	18	13
Radio Announcer	20.5	10.5	15	14.5
Bookkeeper	20.5	17	20.5	14.5
Farmer <sup>a</sup>	11	20.5	14	16.5
Insurance Agent	8	12.5	11	16.5
Carpenter	15.5	20.5	16.5	18
Manager of a Small Store in a City	20.5	20.5	19	19
Mail Carrier	15.5	17	16.5	20
Coal Miner	12.5	12.5	13	21
Restaurant Waiter	23.5	24.5	23	22.5
Taxi Driver	25.5	17	20.5	22.5
Farmhand	20.5	27	24	25
Janitor	28.5	24.5	27	25
Bartender	28.5	29.5	28.5	25
Clothes Presser in a Laundrey	23.5	29.5	25.5	27
Soda Fountain Clerk	25.5	23	25.5	28
Garbage Collector	28	27	20	29
Street Sweeper	28.5	27	28.5	30

<sup>a</sup> Owns livestock and machinery but doesn't own the farm.

TABLE 5  
RANKING OF THIRTY OCCUPATIONS  
BY SIXTH-GRADE CHILDREN

OCCUPATION	LOWER CLASS RANKING	MIDDLE CLASS RANKING	ALL CLASS RANKING	NORC RANKING CONDENSED TO 30
U.S. Supreme Court Justice	1	6	6.5	1
Physician (Medical Doctor)	5.5	5	2.5	2
Scientist	8	1.5	2.5	3
Government Scientist	5.5	7.5	6.5	4.5
State Governor	2.5	7.5	4.5	4.5
College Professor	5	1.5	1	6.5
U.S. Representative in Congress	2.5	3.5	4.5	6.5
Chemist	9.5	9	9	8.5
Lawyer	5.5	3.5	8	8.5
Dentist	12.5	11.5	12	10
Undertaker	14.5	28	22.5	11
Policeman	9.5	15	10.5	12
Reporter on a Daily Newspaper	12.5	11.5	13	13
Radio Announcer	22	14	15	14.5
Bookkeeper	16.5	19	14	14.5
Farmer <sup>a</sup>	19	17	17.5	16.5
Insurance Agent	11	11.5	10.5	16.5
Carpenter	14.5	17	16	18
Manager of a Small Store in a City	22	17	19	19
Mail Carrier	16.5	11.5	17.5	20
Coal Miner	22	20	21	21
Restaurant Waiter	19	21.5	20	22.5
Taxi Driver	19	24.5	22.5	22.5
Farmhand	25	24.5	25.5	25

TABLE 5--continued

OCCUPATION	LOWER CLASS RANKING	MIDDLE CLASS RANKING	ALL CLASS RANKING	NORC RANKING CONDENSED TO 30
Janitor	29	30	30	25
Bartender	29	28	29	25
Clothes Presser in a Laundry	25	24.5	25.5	27
Soda Fountain Clerk	25	21.5	24	28
Garbage Collector	29	24.5	27.5	29
Street Sweeper	27	28	27.5	30

<sup>a</sup> Owns machinery and livestock but doesn't own farm

college professor. The lowest ranked occupation was the janitor. The undertaker was given a 22.5 ranking. This is about the same ranking as was given undertakers by the fifth-grade students.

Correlation of the Study

Correlations of all grades with adults. Presented in Table 7 are the correlations of the various grades with adult responses. These correlations were derived by using the Kendall rank correlation coefficient tau.<sup>2</sup> The correlations obtained from this method of analysis approximate the power

<sup>2</sup> Sidney Siegel, Nonparametric Statistics (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1956), pp. 213-23.

TABLE 6  
ORIGINAL NORC RANKINGS WITH CONDENSATION  
INTO THIRTY RANKS

OCCUPATION	NORC RANK	CONDENSED RANK
U.S. Supreme Court Justice	1	1
Physician (Medical Doctor)	2	2
Scientist	3.5	3
Government Scientist	5.5	4.5
State Governor	5.5	4.5
College Professor	8	6.5
U.S. Representative in Congress	8	6.5
Chemist	11	8.5
Lawyer	11	8.5
Dentist	14	10
Undertaker	44	11
Policeman	47	12
Reporter on a Daily Newspaper	48	13
Radio Announcer	49.5	14.5
Bookkeeper	49.5	14.5
Farmer <sup>a</sup>	51.5	16.5
Insurance Agent	51.5	16.5
Carpenter	53	18
Manager of a Small Store in a City	54.5	19
Mail Carrier	57	20
Coal Miner	77.5	21
Restaurant Waiter	80.5	22.5
Taxi Driver	80.5	22.5
Farmhand	83	25
Janitor	83	25
Bartender	83	25
Clothes Presser in a Laundry	85	27
Soda Fountain Clerk	86	28
Garbage Collector	88	29
Street Sweeper	89	30

<sup>a</sup> Owns machinery and livestock but doesn't own farm.



TABLE 7

CORRELATIONS OF CHILDREN'S RESPONSES WITH ADULT NORC RATINGS  
(DEvised BY KENDALL CORRELATION TAU)

GRADE	CORRELATION
3rd Total	.799
4th Total	.748
5th Total	.746
6th Total	.799
3rd Lower	.632
3rd Middle	.589
4th Lower	.707
4th Middle	.763
5th Lower	.751
5th Middle	.706
6th Lower	.816
6th Middle	.710

of Pearsonian  $r$ . (The effect of Kendall's tau equals 91 per cent of Pearsonian  $r$ .)

As can be seen in Table 7, the third grade correlates well with adult responses with a correlation of +.799. The fourth grade had a correlation of +.748 with adult responses. The fifth grade had a +.746 correlation with adult responses, while the sixth grade had a +.799 correlation. All of these correlations are strong and a great deal of difference cannot be seen even between the +.799 and +.746. The author,

therefore, would conclude that there was a strong correlation between the students in all four grades tested and adult responses.

Correlations of social classes within each grade with adults. In the third grade it was found that the lower-class children had the most amount of correlation with adults, followed by the middle-class children.

Even the middle-class correlation, which was  $+0.589$ , is significant at the  $.02$  level of confidence.

The fourth-grade students showed a higher correlation between the middle-class students and adults. Next highest was the lower class.

In the fifth grade the highest correlation was between the lower-class fifth-grade students, then the middle-class students appeared.

With regard to the sixth-grade students, the highest correlation appeared between the lower-class students and adults, followed by the correlation of the middle-class students.

From the correlations which appear in Table 7, there is no relationship between the social class standing of the children and correlations between adults and children at the  $.02$  level of confidence and above with all social classes in all of the grades.

## B. THE INTERVIEW MATERIAL

### Question Relation

The question which may come to the minds of many readers is: What did the respondents think about when answering the job questions on the questionnaire? This question was explicitly asked the respondents in the following manner: "What did you think about when you answered the questions about the jobs? What did you think about when you placed people at the various positions of high, middle, or low?" Table 8 tallied the various responses from students in each of the grades interviewed.

Such varied answers were given to the above-stated questions that one may conclude that no one thing was thought about when answering the questions. The reader can observe, however, that the most popular response for all grades was "people known." This was explained by several of the interviewees to mean that they had answered various questions regarding the occupations while thinking of individuals that they had known in the occupations.

Most of the students were able to verbalize their thought process; however, one student in the third grade made no response to the question. Another in the fifth grade

TABLE 8

WHAT DID YOU THINK ABOUT WHEN ANSWERING  
THE QUESTIONS?

	Job Importance	Financial Rewards	People Known	People Read About	People on Television	People on Television and Heard About	Intuition	No Response
3rd Grade	1	1	3	-	-	-	-	1
4th Grade	-	1	2	1	1	1	-	-
5th Grade	2	1	2	-	-	-	1	-
6th Grade	-	-	3	1	-	2	-	-

explained that he just felt the answers he had given were correct. The author labeled this response as intuition.

Source of Knowledge Regarding the Occupations

In the interview, students were asked about nine representative occupations which were found in the questionnaire. These nine occupations were: college professor, newspaper reporter, farm hand, street sweeper, insurance salesman, scientist, policeman, doctor (medical), and janitor. Each student was asked where he had obtained his

information about the various nine occupations. The interviewees were requested to list more than one source if there were any question as to the exact source.

The results are found in Table 9. The types of vicarious contact of which each student was aware are listed in descending order. The three most popular sources are found under these categories: (1) "Books, Magazines, and Newspapers," (2) "Television," and (3) "Visual Contact."

#### Relation of Answers

All students who were interviewed (six students from each grade) were asked who they had thought about when they had answered the questions about the occupations. Had they answered them the way that their parents, teacher, their friend, etc. would have answered them? Who had they related to when answering these questions? The results of this line of interviewing are found in Table 10.

As seen in Table 10, numerous responses were given to the above questions. It should be noted, however, that parents were more often cited and frequently used in combination with teachers and/or friends. Parents were considered as an important source of reference for the group interviewed.

TABLE 9

WHERE DID YOU LEARN ABOUT THE OCCUPATIONS?  
(WHAT TYPES OF VICARIOUS CONTACT)

	Books, Magazines, and Newspapers	Television	Visual Contact	Parents	Teachers	Peers	Movies	Relatives
3rd Grade	7	9	10	5	3	-	1	1
4th Grade	4	8	7	5	2	2	-	-
5th Grade	11	7	7	4	-	-	-	-
6th Grade	<u>10</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	32	31	30	19	6	2	1	1

TABLE 10

WHAT PERSON DID YOU THINK OF WHEN YOU  
ANSWERED THE QUESTIONS?

GRADE	PARENTS and		OWN	TEACHERS and		PARENTS FRIENDS
	PARENTS	FRIENDS	OPINION	PARENTS	FRIENDS	TEACHERS
3rd Grade	1	2	-	1	2	1
4th Grade	3	-	2	-	1	-
5th Grade	-	2	2	1	-	1
6th Grade	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	6	5	5	4	3	2

### Acquisition of Awareness

Table 11 divides the nine selected occupations into three categories and further divides them by grades. The first category is labeled "P" or personal contact; this is contact which the child would have in his normal rounds of the community. The second category is labeled "V" or vicarious contact. This is contact which is substitute in nature. The child has been made aware of the occupation through watching television, reading books, and other sources. The third category, labeled "L," represents limited contact. Under this category was listed that contact which was very limited and/or consisted of no contact either personal or vicarious.

Personal contact increased in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades as compared to the third grade. The vicarious contact remains about the same (Mean = 21) for each of the four grades. When looking at the limited or no-contact category, fifth and sixth grades had a lower number of responses as compared to the fourth grade and especially the third grade.

All students had had personal contact with medical doctors. Most students knew what a scientist was; however, only two students had ever had personal contact with one.

TABLE 11

WHERE WAS THE AWARENESS OF THE NINE SELECTED OCCUPATIONS ACQUIRED?

OCCUPATION	3rd Grade			4th Grade			5th Grade			6th Grade		
	"P" <sup>a</sup>	"V" <sup>b</sup>	"L" <sup>c</sup>	"P"	"V"	"L"	"P"	"V"	"L"	"P"	"V"	"L"
College Professor	3	2	1	3	3	-	4	1	1	3	3	-
Newspaper Reporter	-	3	3	2	4	-	1	5	2	2	4	-
Farmhand	2	3	1	5	-	1	4	2	-	6	-	-
Street Sweeper	-	6	-	1	4	1	1	5	-	-	5	1
Insurance Salesman	2	2	2	3	1	2	4	1	1	4	2	-
Scientist	-	5	1	1	4	1	-	6	-	1	4	1
Policeman	4	2	-	6	-	-	5	1	-	4	2	-
Doctor	6	-	-	6	-	-	6	-	-	6	-	-
Janitor	5	1	-	4	2	-	5	1	-	6	-	-
TOTAL	22	24	8	31	18	5	30	22	2	32	20	2

<sup>a</sup>"P" is abbreviation for personal contact.

<sup>b</sup>"V" is abbreviation for vicarious contact.

<sup>c</sup>"L" is abbreviation for limited or no contact.



Nineteen respondents stated that they had had personal contact with policemen. Students had very little personal contact with street sweepers (two personal contact responses).

### Occupational Knowledge

The students were questioned as to their knowledge of the jobs. When answering the questionnaire, had they knowledge about all of the jobs listed? Table 12 answers the question on job knowledge.

It appears from the responses that not all of the students interviewed had knowledge about each of the thirty occupations. Even two of the sixth graders interviewed had no knowledge pertaining to certain jobs.

### Occupational Recognition

The last question asked on the interview was: "Had you heard about all of the jobs that you were asked about?" The results of this question can be found on Table 13. Not all of the students interviewed had heard about all the jobs they were asked to rate. On further questioning, they stated that they had not heard the names of some of the occupations which were listed.

TABLE 12

DID YOU KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT THE JOBS  
YOU WERE ASKED ABOUT?

GRADE	YES	NO
3rd Grade	3	3
4th Grade	3	3
5th Grade	2	4
6th Grade	4	2

TABLE 13

HAD YOU HEARD ABOUT THE JOBS  
YOU WERE ASKED ABOUT

GRADE	YES	NO
3rd Grade	4	2
4th Grade	4	2
5th Grade	3	3
6th Grade	5	1

## CHAPTER SIX

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### A. Results

In discussing the results, the author will review the hypotheses presented in Chapter Three and will then discuss each of them.

The first statement of the hypotheses was that children will become increasingly aware of job stratification as they progress from the third to the sixth grade. Students will be able to transmit this information through written and oral communications as they progress from the third to the sixth grade.

The overall grade correlations which appeared on Table 7 indicate that students did not increase their correlations with adult responses in the progression from lower to higher grades. The third-grade correlation was the same as the sixth-grade correlation.

The author feels that one explanation for the above results might be the size of the sample used. If a larger sample were used the results might have been different.

Another factor which should be taken into consideration is the physical location of the students. All of the

students tested lived in a college town or its immediate vicinity. This may be a more important variable than was originally considered. One might consider the effect the college has upon the learning of occupational stratification by children.

In examination of the children's background it was apparent that many of the children's parents were directly or indirectly associated with the college. This association may make the parents more aware of the importance of various occupations and they, in turn, may pass this information on to their children.

Also, since the children in the study lived either in Cheney or its immediate vicinity, most of them identified with the town. Since the college is located in the town, the children were very much aware of the college, and probably the occupational emphasis associated with it. Thus, the physical location of the college may play a large part in the children's acquisition of occupational knowledge.

The effect of the teachers may also have to be considered. In the Campus School all of the teachers held a master's degree, and many of them were working toward their Ed.D.'s. The principal of this school holds an Ed.D. With teachers which are as highly educated as these, it is possible

that this may have some effect upon the children's conception of occupational stratification. There may be more emphasis on occupational knowledge in the schools tested than is true in other schools. The teachers may be explicitly and implicitly relating a great deal of material to the students pertaining to jobs.

Teachers may perceive education as a mobility ladder. They may be more aware, when they have a master's degree, of a general increase in status with the increase in education. They may be more aware of this and thus transmit it to their students.

Furthermore, the teachers may believe in the concept that more education and an advance in status is a practical goal. They may conceive of this as an ideological goal. They may feel either consciously or unconsciously that this ideology must be transmitted to the student.

Thus, taking the above into consideration, one can possibly see why all of the students in each grade tested correlated very highly with the NORC ratings. The children did not react as was stated in the hypothesis. They did not appear, through written communications (the questionnaire), to increase their knowledge as they increased in grade.

As was determined by the interviews, as the children

increased in grade they had more actual contact with various people in occupations. As the interview progressed from the third through the sixth grades, personal contact generally increased while limited and vicarious contact decreased. The author interprets this to mean that the child has made more contact with society as his chronological age increases. In other words, he gets to know more people as he grows older.

The second statement of the hypotheses said that as children increase in age, their responses to concepts of job stratification will come closer to those exhibited by adults.

As was indicated in the results in the preceding chapter, all of the children's responses correlated highly with adult responses. There was no trend of progression as the groups in the various grades were tested.

Another factor which may be taken into account is the proximity of the college. The schools tested were located in a college town. With the emphasis on career which is often associated with a college, the grade school students may have received more indoctrination than is realized by observers. Thus, one could account for the relatively high correlation of all students (in each grade) with adult responses.

Various sources were cited concerning vicarious

contacts. As was noted in the Table 9, a great host of sources were responsible for the children's acquisition of information. The proximity of the college in Cheney and the three four-year colleges located within twenty miles of the grade schools might have affected the students' vicarious contacts.

In the third statement of the hypotheses, it was expressed that the sixth-grade students would correlate significantly with adult responses in regard to job stratification.

As the material in the preceding chapter shows, the correlation between the two was significant. The past studies which were cited in the review of the literature indicated that this would be the case.

The children at this age are, according to previous researchers, very aware of the adult world of job stratification. They perceive that various jobs have a higher prestige value than others. It was also stated that they are able to easily verbalize this to an observer. However, as Table 12 indicated, not all of the sixth graders interviewed had heard and knew something about all of the jobs they were asked about. If all of the students were aware of this information, the correlation would most likely have been greater.

The fourth statement of the hypotheses was concerning the social classes. It stated that children from families within the middle socio-economic class would learn concepts of job stratification earlier than children from the lower socio-economic class.

The above pattern was not the case, as is indicated in Table 7. The middle class students had a higher correlation than the lower-class students in only one of the grades. In the other three grades the lower-class students had a higher correlation than the middle-class students.

The author feels that this can be accounted for by the criterion used for the selection of the classes. If another method was utilized in the selection of the classes, the results would possibly have been different. If the students had been assigned to the various classes using Warner's Index of Status Characteristics, the complexion of the results might have assumed a different appearance.<sup>1</sup>

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Warner's Index of Status Characteristics was not utilized in this study because of the information which would be required for its application. School authorities are reluctant to give out information on their students. The author felt that a request for any more information from the authorities would have been turned down. Also, any widescale attempt to find out such things as parents' source of income, type of house, etc. could very well meet with a great deal of criticism. In fact, it could arouse parent indignation and jeopardize the study as a whole. One must consider that



With a more accurate assessment of class, it is felt by the author that the results would have shown that the middle class was more aware of occupational stratification than the lower class.

As was discussed in Chapter Two, there are various methods of determining an individual's social class standing. Rating social class by occupational prestige is only one of these methods.

The sample size might also be important. A larger sample, coupled with a different criterion for choosing the child's social class, might have influenced the results to show that the middle class is more aware than the lower class of occupational stratification. Studies which were cited in Chapter Two have indicated the above to be true.

#### B. Suggestions for Further Research

The author submits the following suggestions for those persons who wish to do further research in the area of children's conceptions of occupational prestige.

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the children are protected by the school while attending it. The school is also subject to community pressures and influences. Therefore, the school authorities must be careful in allowing the administration of surveys, tests, and questionnaires.

The reader is referred to Chapter Four for more information regarding this point.

1. A repeat study might use a larger sample of the population. After the results were compiled, the author felt that if a larger group were tested, the material might appear differently.

Using a larger sample would be much more time consuming. This is a factor which must, of course, thus be taken into account.

Also, the question may arise as to the availability of the students. The school officials may be somewhat reluctant to allow a larger study to take place. This will depend upon the individual school district.<sup>2</sup>

The variable of size of the sample might considerably influence the results. Some experimenters are highly critical regarding this variable.

2. A researcher might also use different criteria for assessing the children's social class.

An alternative method might be to utilize Warner's Index of Status Characteristics (ISC). This would require a great deal of time, and the researcher must take this into consideration from both his time and that allowed to

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See the preceding section and Chapter Four for additional information.

him by the school officials.

The student would be rated in the same social class as his parents. This seems to be a generally accepted method.

3. It was felt by the author that if the study were expanded into different geographical areas, the results might be different. It should be taken into consideration that the prestige of an occupation in one geographical area may change in another.

For example, an undertaker in a relatively small town may be a very important and influential citizen. He may be known by status reputation by many members of the community. He may have power and wealth. He may thus be rated higher by children in that community. A child living in a larger city does not know the undertaker and may thus feel that his job is not important. He may not know of his reputation personally and may know of him merely by his occupational title. He may be rated lower by children in this area.

Another factor which should be considered is that a large group of individuals in one occupation may be located in one area. These occupations may be considered important by the community and have a great amount of

prestige in that community. For example, the occupation of logger in a logging community may be perceived as an extremely important job. Since the economy of the community relies very heavily upon logging and loggers, it may be rated very highly by the children. Logging and loggers in another community may not be important in any way, and it may be rated very low by these children.

In certain areas, some occupations are well known by the children, whereas in other localities these are virtually unheard of. This variable should be taken into account when employing a similar study.

4. A further suggestion is to repeat the study in the same grades in the same schools over a period of time. A researcher could ascertain by this if the ratings given by the children were always consistent with the particular grade they were in.

### C. Summary

In summary, it was felt by the author that one or a combination of the following variables interacted strongly upon the results produced:

1. The size of the sample tested;
2. The method of determining the children's social class;

3. The location of a college in the town tested;
- and
4. The effect of implicit and explicit teacher training.

Only one of the hypotheses tested produced results which were expected. This was the correlation between the sixth-grade students and adult responses. The other three hypotheses did not present the results which were expected.

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**APPENDIX A**



SOCIOLOGY SURVEY OF OCCUPATIONS

Age \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sex \_\_\_\_\_  
 Class in School \_\_\_\_\_

There are no right or wrong answers in this survey. What is wanted is your opinion on the following questions.

You are given below a list of occupations (jobs that people do).

You are asked to rate (show a preference for) each of those which you recognize and know something about. Rate each on the basis that you think one is higher standing or lower standing than another. To help you do this, one occupation (job) is shown as being in the middle range. You can mark each job as one that same level, below that level, or above that level. You may make your decision for any reason you wish.

A railroad conductor is marked as a middle job, as an example.

JOB	HIGH JOB	MIDDLE JOB	LOW JOB
Railroad conductor			
Coal miner			
Chemist			
Radio announcer			
Bartender			
Insurance agent			
Scientist			
Lawyer			
Garbage collector			
Government scientist			
Soda fountain clerk			
Reporter on a daily newspaper			
Restaurant waiter			
U.S. representative in Congress			

JOB	HIGH JOB	MIDDLE JOB	LOW JOB
Bookkeeper			
Policeman			
Dentist			
Clothes presser in a laundrey			
College professor			
Carpenter			
Undertaker			
Janitor			
Physician (medical doctor)			
Mail carrier			
State governor			
Farmhand			
U.S. Supreme Court Justice			
Farmer--who owns livestock and machinery and manages the farm but doesn't own the farm			
Manager of a small store in a city			
Taxi driver			
Street sweeper			

**APPENDIX B**

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### I. PERSONAL CONTACT QUESTIONS

1. Do you know any people who are college professors?
2. Do you know any newspaper reporters?
3. Do you know any farm hands?
4. Have you ever met a street sweeper?
5. Do you know anyone who sells insurance?
6. Have you ever met a scientist?
7. Do you know a policeman?
8. Have you ever met a doctor?
9. Do you know a janitor?

### II. VICARIOUS CONTACT QUESTIONS

1. Did your parents ever tell you about \_\_\_\_\_?
2. Did your teacher ever tell you about \_\_\_\_\_?
3. Did you ever read books about \_\_\_\_\_?
4. Did you ever see these people on T.V. \_\_\_\_\_?
5. If not, from any of the above sources, then from whom?
  - A college professor
  - A newspaper reporter
  - A farm hand
  - A street sweeper
  - An insurance salesman
  - A scientist
  - A policeman
  - A doctor
  - A janitor

Each of the above five questions were asked about the nine occupations.

### III. LIMITED CONTACT QUESTIONS

1. Who did you think about when you answered the questions?
2. Did you answer the questions about the jobs the way that your teachers would have answered them?
3. Did you answer the questions about the jobs in the way that your parents would have answered them?
4. Did you answer the questions about the jobs the way your friends would have answered them?

5. Did you know about the jobs that you were asked about?
6. Had you heard about the jobs that you were asked about?