This is to certify that the

thesis entitled

The Role of Sports as a Social Status Determinant for Children

presented by

Melissa Ann Chase

has been accepted towards fulfillment of the requirements for

Masters degree in Curriculum

Gail M. Dunmeyer
Major professor

Date 6 May 1991

DATE DUE	DATE DUE	DATE DUE
641		
SEP 2 2 2005		
127		
DEC 04 2008 1999		
349		
DEC 05 2002		
JAN 06 2003		

THE ROLE OF SPORTS AS A SOCIAL STATUS DETERMINANT FOR CHILDREN

By

Melissa Ann Chase

A THESIS

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Physical Education and Exercise Science

1991

ABSTRACT

THE ROLE OF SPORTS AS A SOCIAL STATUS DETERMINANT FOR CHILDREN

By

Melissa Ann Chase

This study was designed to examine children's attitudes toward the role of sports in determining social status. A total of 227 girls and 251 boys in Grades 4, 5, and 6 completed a questionnaire to determine which criteria were most important in determining personal, female, and male popularity. Results revealed the most important criterion for determining male popularity was success in sports, while sports were of less importance in determining female popularity. The most important determinant for female popularity was appearance. Chi-square analyses revealed significant gender differences in the criteria used by girls and boys to determine personal, female, and male popularity. Significant grade-level differences were found in the criteria used by girls to determine personal popularity, female popularity, and male popularity. For boys, significant grade-level differences were found only in the criterion used to determine personal popularity.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Gail Dummer for her advice and exemplary organization not only with my Thesis but my entire Master's program. I truly appreciate her efforts.

I would like to thank Dr. Feltz and Dr. Smith for their guidance throughout this project. Thanks to Cathy Lirgg for sharing her expertise in statistics and her friendship. Thanks to my Mom and Dad for being excellent role models in the education field and always having positive words of encouragement.

To Rick, thanks for proof-reading all chapters of my Thesis and other research papers and being supportive through all the revisions. Most of all thanks for your wonderful sense of humor and making graduate life enjoyable.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables v

List of Figures vii

Chapter One: Introduction

Need for the Study 1
Statement of the Problem 2
Hypotheses 2
The Research Plan 4
Design 4
Subjects 4
Instrumentation 4
Data Collection 5
Data Analysis 5
Delimitations 5
Limitations 6
Assumptions 6
Pilot Study 7
Definitions 7

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

Peer Relationships and Social Development 8
Determinants of Social Status 9
Comparative Studies 10
Social Status Criteria Studies 14
Conclusion 23

Chapter Three: Method

Research Design 25
Subjects 25
Instrumentation 29
Procedures for Data Collection 33
Pilot Study 34
Data Analysis 34
Hypotheses 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, and 10 35
Hypotheses 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, and 12 35
Hypotheses 13, 14, 15, and 16 35
Hypotheses 17, 18, 19, and 20 35
Hypotheses 21, 22, 23, and 24 35

Chapter Four: Results

Determinants of Personal Popularity 36
Determinants of Male Popularity 42
Determinants of Female Popularity 46
Activities in Which Children Prefer to Participate at School 50
Activities in Which Children Prefer to Fail at School 54
Activities in Which Children Prefer Not to Fail at School 58

Chapter Five: Discussion

Determinants of Social Status 63
Determinants of Personal Popularity 63
Determinants of Male Popularity 67
Determinants of Female Popularity 67
Activities in Which Children Prefer to Participate and Succeed at School 68
Activities in Which Children Prefer to Participate at School 68
Activities in Which Children Prefer to Fail at School 71
Activities in Which Children Prefer Not to Fail at School 71

Conclusions 72

Recommendations 73

Appendices

Appendix A: Questionnaire 77

Appendix B: Letter to Parents 80

Appendix C: Parental Consent Form 81

Appendix D: Script for Questionnaire Administration 83

List of References 89

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Relationship Between Physical Ability and Social Status 13
Table 2: Determinants of Social Status From Previous Research Studies 22
Table 3: Description of the Age of the Subjects in the Sample 26
Table 4: Representation of Racial Backgrounds by Girls in the Sample 27
Table 5: Representation of Racial Backgrounds by Boys in the Sample 27
Table 6: Students' Ranking of Personal Grades Compared to Most Classmates .. 28
Table 7: Students' Ranking of Personal Sport Ability Compared to Most Classmates 28
Table 8: Students' Ranking of Personal Popularity Compared to Classmates of the Same Gender 30
Table 9: Average Number of Days per Week Students Play Some Kind of Sport 30
Table 10: Average Number of Sports Students Play More Than One Day per Week 31
Table 11: Characteristics of the School Districts and Communities in the Sample .. 32
Table 12: Summary of Results for Each Hypothesis 37
Table 13: Determinants of Personal Popularity 39
Table 14: Determinants of Male Popularity 43
Table 15: Determinants of Female Popularity 47
Table 16: Preferred School Activities of Boys and Girls 51
Table 17: Preferred School Activities of Boys in Grades 4, 5, and 6 53
Table 18: Preferred School Activities of Girls in Grades 4, 5, and 6 55
Table 19: School Activities in Which Children Prefer to Fail 55
Table 20: School Activities in Which Boys Prefer to Fail 57
Table 21: School Activities in Which Girls Prefer to Fail 57
Table 22: School Activities in Which Children Prefer Not to Fail 59

Table 23: School Activities in Which Boys Prefer Not to Fail 61
Table 24: School Activities in Which Girls Prefer Not to Fail 61
Table 25: Determinants of Personal Popularity as Reported by Buchanan, Blankenbaker, and Cotten (1976) and Chase (1991) 64
Table 26: Activities in Which Children Prefer to Participate at School as Reported by Buchanan, Blankenbaker, and Cotten (1976) and Chase (1991) 69
Table 27: Pilot Study Results for Determinants of Personal Popularity 85
Table 28: Pilot Study Results for Determinants of Female Popularity 85
Table 29: Pilot Study Results for Determinants of Male Popularity 86
Table 30: Pilot Study Results for Preferred School Activities of Boys and Girls . . . 86
Table 31: Pilot Study Results for School Activities in Which Children Prefer to Fail 86
Table 32: Pilot Study Results for School Activities in Which Children Prefer Not to Fail 88

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Determinants of Personal Popularity as Rated by Boys and Girls 40

Figure 2: Determinants of Personal Popularity as Rated by Boys 41

Figure 3: Determinants of Personal Popularity as Rated by Girls 42

Figure 4: Determinants of Male Popularity as Rated by Boys and Girls 44

Figure 5: Determinants of Male Popularity as Rated by Boys 45

Figure 6: Determinants of Male Popularity as Rated by Girls 46

Figure 7: Determinants of Female Popularity as Rated by Boys and Girls 48

Figure 8: Determinants of Female Popularity as Rated by Boys 49

Figure 9: Determinants of Female Popularity as Rated by Girls 50

Figure 10: Preferred School Activities of Boys and Girls 52

Figure 11: Preferred School Activities of Boys in Grades 4, 5, and 6 52

Figure 12: Preferred School Activities of Girls in Grades 4, 5, and 6 54

Figure 13: School Activities in Which Boys and Girls Prefer to Fail 56

Figure 14: School Activities in Which Boys Prefer to Fail 56

Figure 15: School Activities in Which Girls Prefer to Fail 58

Figure 16: School Activities in Which Boys and Girls Prefer Not to Fail 60

Figure 17: School Activities in Which Boys Prefer Not to Fail 62

Figure 18: School Activities in Which Girls Prefer Not to Fail 62

Chapter One
Introduction

Adolescence is a time in which being popular and accepted by peers is very important (Williams & White,1983). Social status and peer acceptance are often gained by being good at something that other children value (Asher, Oden & Gottman, 1977; Kay, Felker, & Varoz, 1972; Veroff, 1969). Coleman (1961) suggests that social status is earned in activities that are conspicuous and bring credit to the school, such as participation in athletics. Sport participation is often thought of as one of the dominant values in American society. However, the value of participation in sports as a determinant of social status may vary among females and males.

Previous research in the social status system of adolescents has shown that gender differences occur in the criteria used by children to determine social status (Coleman, 1961; Eitzen, 1975; Feltz, 1978; Goldberg & Chandler, 1989; Kane, 1988; Thirer & Wright, 1985; Williams & White, 1983). Studies with high school males found that "being a good athlete" was the most important criterion for determining male social status among peers (Coleman, 1961; Eitzen, 1975; Goldberg & Chandler, 1989; Kane, 1988; Thirer & Wright, 1985; Williams & White, 1983). Studies with high school females found that "being a leader in activities" was the most important criterion for determining female social status among peers (Coleman, 1961; Feltz, 1978; Kane, 1988; Thirer & Wright, 1985; Williams & White, 1983). "Being a good athlete" was not an important criterion for female social status.

Very few studies have been completed on the social status systems of middle and elementary school children. Buchanan, Blankenbaker, and Cotten (1976) examined the criteria used by children in Grades 4, 5, and 6 to determine social status. Their results were similar to those found for high school students. They found that "being a good athlete" was the most important criterion in determining social status for boys. "Getting good grades" was the most important criterion in determining social status for girls. "Being a good athlete" was the second most important criterion for females.

Need for the Study

Research to date has primarily examined the determinants of social status for high school students. The criteria used by elementary and middle school children to determine social status are unclear and inconclusive. The reason that this area of research is important

is two-fold. First, an investigation which examines the criteria used by children to determine social status would provide educators with more information about the developmental aspects of determining social status. To date educators can study the criteria used by high school students but do not have research evidence as to when social status criteria develop, or changes that may occur prior to high school. A current assessment of the criteria used by children in Grades 4, 5, and 6 to determine social status might help to explain the foundation from which older adolescents determine social status.

Secondly, a comparison between the current findings in 1991 and the findings from the Buchanan et. al study in 1976 would allow an evaluation of changes over time that might have occurred in the criteria used by children to determine social status. Given the results of the comparison, it may be possible that new areas of future research would be exposed that would contribute to the knowledge of the social status system of children. Also, it is important that the literature report an accurate, timely, assessment of the criteria used by children to determine social status.

Statement of the Problem

This study is a partial replication of the Buchanan et al. (1976) study. The purpose is to examine the role of sports and other determinants in the social status of children in Grades 4, 5, and 6. Specifically, this study investigates gender and grade level differences in the criteria used by children to determine social status, the activities in which children prefer to participate at school, and the activities in which they prefer or do not prefer to fail.

Hypotheses

Based on the results of the Buchanan et al. (1976) study, and other related social status studies with high school adolescents, the following hypotheses were made:
The determinants of social status will be different for boys and girls ("making good grades," "having lots of money," "being good at sports," or "being handsome or pretty"').

Personal popularity:

1. Boys determining personal popularity will choose "being good at sports."
2. Girls determining personal popularity will choose "being pretty."
3. Boys' responses about personal popularity will not differ in Grades 4, 5, and 6. All boys will choose "being good at sports."

4. Girls' responses about personal popularity will not differ in Grades 4, 5, and 6. All girls will choose "being pretty."

Male popularity:

5. Boys determining male popularity will choose "being good at sports."
6. Girls determining male popularity will choose "being good at sports."
7. Boys' responses about male popularity will not differ in Grades 4, 5, and 6. All boys will choose "being good at sports."
8. Girls' responses about male popularity will not differ in Grades 4, All girls will choose "being good at sports."

Female popularity:

9. Boys determining female popularity will choose "being pretty."
10. Girls determining female popularity will choose "being pretty."
11. Boys' responses about female popularity will not differ in Grades 4, 5, and 6. All boys will choose "being pretty."
12. Girls' responses about female popularity will not differ in Grades 4, 5, and 6. All girls will choose "being pretty."

There will be a gender difference in what boys and girls prefer to do at school ("make good grades," "be popular," or "be good at sports").

13. Boys will prefer to "be good at sports."
14. Girls will prefer to "make good grades."

There will not be a grade difference in what boys and girls prefer to do at school ("make good grades," "be popular," or "be good at sports").

15. Boys' responses about what they prefer to do at school will not differ in Grades 4, 5, and 6. All boys will prefer to "be good at sports."
16. Girls' responses about what they prefer to do at school will not differ in Grades 4, 5, and 6. All girls will prefer to "make good grades."

There will not be a gender difference in what boys and girls prefer to fail at in school ("make good grades," "be popular," or "be good at sports").

17. Boys will prefer to fail at "being popular."
18. Girls will prefer to fail at "being popular."

There will not be a grade difference in what boys and girls prefer to fail at in school ("make good grades," "be popular," or "be good at sports").

19. Boys' responses about what they prefer to fail at in school will not differ in Grades 4, 5, and 6. All boys will prefer to fail at "being popular."
20. Girls' responses about what they prefer to fail at in school will not differ in Grades 4, 5, and 6. All girls will prefer to fail at "being popular."

There will not be a gender difference in what boys and girls prefer not to fail at in school ("make good grades," "be popular," or "be good at sports").

21. Boys will prefer not to fail at "getting good grades."
22. Girls will prefer not to fail at "getting good grades."

There will not be a grade difference in what boys and girls prefer not to fail at in school ("make good grades," "be popular," or "be good at sports").

23. Boys' responses about what they prefer not to fail at in school will not differ in Grades 4, 5, and 6. All boys will prefer not to fail at "getting good grades."
24. Girls' responses about what they prefer not to fail at in school will not differ in Grades 4, 5, and 6. All girls will prefer not to fail at "getting good grades."

The Research Plan

Design. This study was conducted as survey research. The subjects completed a written questionnaire. The dependent variables are the scores obtained from the questionnaire investigating social status determinants, preference of activities, and preferences of activities in which subjects prefer and do not prefer to fail. The independent variables are the gender and grade level of the subjects.

Subjects. A total of 227 girls and 251 boys in Grades 4, 5, and 6 participated in this study. The children ranged in age from 8 to 13 years, and were from various racial backgrounds. All subjects who participated were from elementary and middle schools in the greater Lansing area. The school districts were in communities that varied in size, socioeconomic status, and location, rural or suburban settings.

Instrumentation. The instrument used to collect the data was an 11-item questionnaire designed by the investigator. The questionnaire was developed from

questions used in previous social status research (Buchanan et. al., 1976; Coleman, 1961; Feltz, 1978; Thirer & Wright, 1985; Williams & White, 1983). Prior to use in this study, the questionnaire was tested in two pilot studies.

Data Collection. All data collection procedures were conducted in the same manner for each subject. The questionnaire was administered to groups of students allowed to participate. Directions on how to complete the questionnaire and definitions of the terms "popularity" and "sport" were read to the classroom of students by the investigator. All students were encouraged to answer each question honestly and assured that their answers would be confidential. Each of the 11 questions were read to the students by the investigator and the students gave a written response. Upon completion of the questionnaire, the questionnaire was collected and a brief explanation of the study was given.

Data Analysis. The data analysis methods are similar to the methods used by Buchanan et al. (1976) and other social status research studies (Coleman, 1961; Eitzen, 1975; Feltz, 1978; Kane, 1988; Thirer and Wright, 1985; Williams and White, 1983). The criteria used by the subjects to determine personal, female, and male popularity was analyzed by gender and grade level by computing a mean ranking for each dependent variable ("make good grades," "be good at sports," "have lots of money," or "be handsome or pretty"). The criteria were ranked in ascending order according to importance, "one" being the most important and "four" being the least important for determining popularity. Chi-square analyses were conducted to determine if significant gender and grade level differences occurred in the criteria used by the subjects to determine personal, female, and male popularity.

The choices of activities in which the subjects preferred to participate at school ("make good grades," "be popular," or "be good at sports") and the activities in which they preferred to fail or not to fail ("make good grades," "be popular," or "be good at sports") were analyzed with frequency statistics. Chi-square analyses were computed for these three frequency measures to examine if gender and grade level differences were significant.

Delimitations

The generalizability of this study is limited due to the number of subjects and their characteristics. Due to limitations in the sample size and failure to obtain permission from

some selected school districts, a limited number of subjects with different racial and ethnic backgrounds participated in the study. Minority students were under represented in this study.

Limitations

Limitations in time and scope of this study did not permit all aspects of social status determinants to be investigated at this time. This study is a replication of the Buchanan et al. study (1976) except for one area. Buchanan et al. (1976) surveyed subjects to discover how students were classified by their classmates, as "athletes," "students," or "student-athletes." These three categories were compared with popularity ratings to determine who was more popular "good students," "good athletes," or "good student-athletes." This process of classifying students into three categories was not within the scope of this study. Therefore, the question of which students ("athletes," "students," or "student-athletes") from each class are more popular was not investigated.

Also acting as a limitation is the fact that this study does not investigate the influence of a "winning tradition" in athletics for each school district and the "sex-appropriateness" of participation by females in some sports and the "sex-inappropriateness" of participation in other sports. While these issues could be important influences, the scope of this study does allow them to be addressed.

The sampling procedures were also a limitation in this study. The recruitment of subjects allowed only those subjects to participate who had received permission from their parents and the superintendent of the school district. This selection process did not permit a stratified or random sampling of subjects. It is recognized that these subjects that volunteered may not be representative of the general population.

Assumptions

This study was predicated on some assumptions. First, it was assumed that the children in this study responded according to their true feelings and not how they thought their parents or society would like them to respond. Second, it was assumed that the questionnaire used to collect data was a reliable and valid instrument. Third, it was assumed that all children have the same understanding of what it means to "be good at" or "to achieve." Fourth, children in the sixth grade in this study attend middle school. Buchanan et al. (1976) did not specify whether children in Grade 6 attended elementary or

middle school in their study. Therefore, it was assumed that children in Grade 6 that were possibly from different schools, either elementary or middle school, would be comparable.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted in two parts to test the use of the questionnaire and data collection procedures. The first part of the pilot study was an interview project. Three girls and two boys, ages 8 to 13 years, were asked questions that examined the criteria used by girls and boys to determine popularity among their peers. The questions were similar to those used on the final questionnaire but they were not a forced choice response. The subjects were questioned about the definitions of various words used in the questionnaire to make sure that they had a clear understanding of these terms. The children had no difficulty answering each question.

The second part of the pilot study was a survey of 17 children, males and females, in Grades 4, 5, and 6. An 11-item questionnaire was read to the group and they gave a written response. Each subject was asked to define popularity. The definitions were used during the final study to describe the meaning of popularity. The children had no difficulty completing the questionnaire or following the administration procedures. From the results of both pilot studies, it was determined that the questionnaire and data collection procedures were appropriate for future use.

Definitions

Operational definitions of terms that were used during this study are given below. The definitions for the terms popularity and sport were explained to the students prior to completion of the questionnaire.

1. Popularity and social status are synonymous and are defined as, "to be well liked by a lot of people." This definition was derived from the pilot study.
2. Sport is traditionally defined as a competitive activity that involves physical exertion or the use of physical skill (Coakley, 1990). However, in this study sport was described to the children as "activities or games in which they participate during recess, during physical education class, or in after-school programs." This definition was used because most children of this age group will not be involved in competitive sports.

Chapter Two
Review of Literature

Physical competence on the school playground or playing field is a highly valued and powerful attribute for children (Evans & Roberts, 1987). Children with high levels of physical ability enjoy popularity and success in games. Physically competent children often are sought after by other children to join games. However, just the opposite can be true for children of low ability. These children are not encouraged and frequently not allowed to join play-ground games. They often are ridiculed and unpopular among their peers. Unfortunately, this pattern becomes a continuous cycle. Popular children with good physical abilities are the ones who have more opportunities to participate in games and continue to improve their skills. Children with poor skills have fewer opportunities to play in games, and therefore fewer opportunities to improve their skills. This situation can create problems of low self-esteem in children, high attrition rates in sport, and low social status for children among their peers.

This review examines the role of sports in the development of peer relationships and social status for children. Evidence is provided that illustrates the importance of the relationship between social status and physical ability. The results of previous social status research studies are presented.

Peer Relationships and Social Development

Peer relationships are important in many areas of a child's development. Peer relationships reflect the social status of a child among his/her peers. This section will illustrate the importance of successful peer relationships in the development of future social behavior in children.

Some children are popular among their peers, while others are rejected or neglected by their peers (Rubin, 1983). The causes of a child's popularity or unpopularity are not fully understood. However, peer popularity is recognized as being important to the personality development of children (McGraw & Tolbert, 1953). Peer relationships are important to early childhood development and social adjustment. Childhood social adjustment can be a predictor of later adulthood social adjustments (Coie & Dodge, 1983).

If a child lacks peer acceptance and popularity, problems may develop. Asher, Oden, and Gottman (1977) state that there are negative consequences associated with having few friends and low acceptance by peers. An unpopular child may be withdrawn, insecure,

lonely, possess low self-esteem, and demonstrate ineffective behavior. Asher (1983) points out that children who are considered unpopular by their peers may behave in ways that do not reflect their true abilities. Therefore, the relationship between interaction style and social status is bi-directional. Several studies have indicated that negative peer status during childhood predicts social adjustment problems during adolescence (Hartup, 1983; Rubin, 1983).

Successful peer relationships have a definite impact on a child's social development. As mentioned earlier, what causes children to be popular or unpopular is not clear. Asher (1983) states that it is difficult to determine if behavioral differences between high and low status children were the causes or consequences of status. Friendly behavior may or may not cause popularity, and popularity may or may not inspire children to be friendly. Since it is not possible to always identify the causes or consequences of a child's social status among peers, it may be helpful to examine the determinants of social status.

Determinants of Social Status

Status as defined by Faunce (1984) is a social honor resulting from the possession of anything that is valued and unequally distributed within some population. Social status may be determined by a number of activities or variables. It is possible that achievement in academics or athletics, appearance, or wealth may have an affect on determining a child's social status. This section of the review will be directed toward examining the various determinants and exploring two methods of research in this area of social status determinants.

Children gain peer acceptance by being good at something that other children value (Asher, Oden & Gottman, 1977; Kay, Felker, & Varoz, 1972; Veroff, 1969). Coleman (1961) states that social status is earned in activities that are conspicuous and bring credit to the school.

Social status may be improved by achievement in a number of activities. One activity that can improve social status is academic achievement. Faunce (1984) examined school achievement and social status of a high school senior class in the state of Michigan. He found that academic performance was an important criterion for social status, and a student's GPA affected his/her evaluation of oneself. He concluded that a significant relationship exists between self-concept, social status, and academic achievement. Studies

by Purkey (1970), Rogers, Smith, Coleman (1978), Asher (1983), and Parke and Asher (1983) also support this conclusion.

The literature reviewed provides evidence that academic achievement is related to social status for children. However, it is possible that other factors may be more important in determining social status for different children. As suggested by Faunce (1984), status results from being good at something that other children value. It is believed that while an education is important to children, academic achievement is not always valued as a determinant of social status.

Other variables that contribute to status and popularity must be considered. Popularity can be associated with characteristics such as ethnicity and social class, birth position, normalcy of a given name, gender, and physical attractiveness (Evans & Roberts, 1987). Physical attractiveness often correlates with a child's higher status in elementary school peer groups (Asher, 1983).

For high school students, participation in extracurricular activities (Spady, 1970), especially athletic participation (Coleman, 1961), is often valued by other students and contributes to social status. Coleman (1961) states that our high schools and colleges place an emphasis on athletics. Therefore, athletics become something that is valued by others and contributes to determining social status. This review will focus on the extent in which physical ability and sport participation influence the social status of children among their peers.

Previous research has investigated the role of physical ability and sport participation in determining social status with two methods of study. The first method of research typically involved the investigator rating the physical ability level of the subject and comparing that level with the social status of the subject among peers. This method of research will be called "comparative studies." The second method of research involved subjects ranking in order of importance the criteria which would determine social status among peers. Sports were included as one of the criterion. This method of research will be called "social status criteria studies."

Comparative Studies This type of research process commonly used in the 1950's through the 1970's compared the relationship between the level of physical/athletic ability of a child and his/her social status among peers. Several studies found a positive relationship between social status and physical/athletic ability. In a study of seventh,

eighth, and ninth grade boys (McGraw & Tolbert, 1953), a strong relationship was found between social status and athletic ability. Boys in this study who were selected as being the best-liked children had higher scores on athletic ability tests. One half of the "sociometric stars" also were excellent athletes, while three fourths of the "neglectees" were low in athletic ability. In other studies of high school boys, Biddulph (1954) and Gordon (1957) found significant relationships between athletic achievement and personal and social adjustment. A study of junior high boys (Brace, 1954) found the same positive relationship for boys in Grades 6 through 9. Marks (1954), in a study on leadership and social status, stated that high motor ability is related to elementary children's leadership and peer acceptance. Marks also suggested that boys who are higher in athletic ability were more sociable than boys with lower ability.

The studies just cited provide evidence that a relationship between physical ability and social status exists for boys, elementary school through high school. Unfortunately, none of these studies cited included girls in the sample. It wasn't until the 1960's that girls were the subjects of similar investigations, and that conclusions could be drawn for each gender. In three studies of elementary boys and girls (Cowell & Ismail, 1962; Cratty, 1967; Hagberg, 1963), the researchers found a positive relationship between athletic ability and peer acceptance. As in Mark's (1954) study, Cowell and Ismail (1962) and Cratty (1967) also found a significant relationship between athletic ability and leadership and status for girls and boys. Cratty (1967) stated that boys, more than girls, seemed to base their social status and prestige on their physical ability.

Research in the 1970's continued to support the relationship between physical ability and social status. Cowell (1970) explained that high motor skill ability, leadership and peer acceptance are related for elementary children. He believed that social interaction is often centered around physical skill. This implied that the child with high motor ability may be accepted to play and the child with low motor ability may not be accepted.

When studies were done in a game situation, physical ability was important to the development of peer relations (Eifermann, 1971; Glassner, 1976; Lever, 1976; Polgar, 1976). Martens (1974) was able to establish that athletic participation also helps to develop personality traits which may enhance popularity. In his study of ninth and tenth graders, athletes scored higher on sociability and self-acceptance than non-athletes. Smoll (1974)

found that children with above average physical ability tend to experience and acquire more social status than children of below average physical ability.

Within the last 10 years, the value our society places on sport and athletics has increased. Sport celebrities are so idolized that it only makes sense that athletic ability is socially desired (Lipsky, 1981). If a child shows knowledge or interest in sports, he and sometimes she may be more socially accepted. Marlowe (1980) demonstrated this relationship between social status and physical ability with a games intervention study. The study was done with fifth grade boys and girls considered to be isolated or unpopular children. Half of the students received games analysis instruction. They were taught problem-solving skills and game strategies. The other half of the students received the traditional physical education curriculum, with no games analysis instruction. After 5 weeks of instruction, the unpopular children who received the game analysis achieved greater peer acceptance than the children who did not receive game analysis. The author concluded that game analysis improves physical ability and this improvement increases the social status of unpopular children.

It has been suggested that social status is determined by various activities or variables. Generally, it is believed that social status is determined by being good at something that other children value. Therefore, social status may increase or decrease according to variables that children value, such as academic achievement, physical attractiveness, or physical ability. This review focuses and is based on the belief that children value physical ability and success in athletics most. Therefore, a positive relationship forms between physical ability and social status. "Comparative studies" that examined the correlations between physical ability and social status have been presented (see Table 1). These studies provide evidence that demonstrates the importance of physical ability to achieving social status. However, there are some weaknesses in the methods of these studies. First, too often the studies used male subjects only. Little is known about the role of physical ability in determining social status for females. More research is needed that involves females only or studies with both genders so comparisons can be made. Secondly, the methods that researchers used to define the social status or physical ability level of the children are rarely mentioned. Whether these measures or methods were reliable or valid must be questioned. The best method to report the determinants of social status may be to have children rank the criteria that best determines social status among

Table 1

Relationship Between Physical Ability and Social Status

AUTHOR	SUBJECTS	PHYSICAL ABILITY	SOCIAL STATUS
McGraw & Tolbert (1953)	7th, 8th, 9th Grade Boys N= 438	high	high
Biddulph (1954)	High School Boys N= 461	high	high
Brace (1954)	6th - 9th Grade Boys N= N/A	high	high
Marks (1954)	High School Boys N= 730	high	high
Gordon (1957)	High School Boys N= N/A	high	high
Cowell & Ismail (1962)	Elementary Boys N= 203	high	high
Cratty (1967)	Elementary Boys & Girls N= N/A	high	high
Cowell (1970)	Elementary Boys & Girls N= N/A	high	high
Martens (1974)	9th, 10th Grade Boys N= 161	high	high
Marlowe (1980)	5th Grade Boys & Girls N= 12	high	high

peers. This method called "social status criteria studies" was effectively used in several studies in the following section that examines athletics as a social status determinant for high school, junior high school, and elementary school students.

Social Status Criteria Studies Coleman (1961) first examined the social status system of high school students in the late 1950's. Coleman's study investigated the social status system for students from 10 midwestern high schools. Data was collected through the use of a questionnaire devised by Coleman. Results indicated that although the communities were diverse, the responses by the students were similar.

When the boys in the study were asked how they most wanted to be remembered, they chose "athletic star" first, "brilliant student" second, and "most popular" third. When asked to rank the criterion that best determines popularity for boys among other boys and girls, "being an athlete" was the first choice. The other criteria chosen, in descending order, were "being in the leading crowd," "leader in activities," "getting high grades/honor roll," or "coming from the right family." Coleman's study also examined the social status system for adolescent females. However, he did not examine athletics as a social status determinant for females, due largely to the nonexistent opportunities for females to participate in athletics. Coleman substituted "leader in activities" as a choice for how girls would like to be remembered instead of "athletic star."

Girls in this study wished to be remembered as a "leader in activities" first, "most popular" second, and "brilliant student" third. Then the girls were asked to rank six criteria that would make them more popular among their peers. They chose, in ascending order, "being in the leading crowd," "leader in activities," "come from the right family," "have nice clothes," "getting high grades/honor roll," and "be a cheerleader," as the order in which they would be more popular with other girls. The criteria to be popular with boys was slightly different. The girls chose, in ascending order, "be in the leading crowd," "leader in activities," "have nice clothes," "be a cheerleader," "come from the right family," and "getting high grades/honor roll." Overall, Coleman (1961) concluded that "being an athlete" ranked highest for boys in achieving high social status. For girls, "being in the leading crowd" was most important for achieving high social status.

Coleman's (1961) study of the social system of adolescents is recognized as a landmark study. In retrospect, it is easy to look back on the study and fault him for not including athletics as a choice for determining female social status. However, with the few

opportunities females had to participate in athletics, his actions were not discriminatory but practical. Coleman's (1961) study has since been replicated and extended many times.

Eitzen (1975) replicated and extended Coleman's work to determine if the results of 1961 study were still true in the mid-70's. He suggested that student activists, rock musicians, or scholars had replaced the athlete as a figure of high social status. Eitzen replicated Coleman's (1961) study using high school male adolescents only. He extended the study to include under what conditions was sport participation the most important criterion for determining male social status. Eitzen looked at individual factors that may cause boys to differ in their enthusiasm for sport, such as family social class, age, college prep or not, and placement in the school status hierarchy. The results were found to be similar to the results of the Coleman (1961) study.

Sixteen years later, sport participation was still as important for determining social status among adolescents males. When given the choice of how they would like to be remembered, males chose an "athletic star" first. Males in the study would rather be friends with and be like an "athlete but not scholar." When asked to rank the criteria which would determine popularity among their peers, the males chose to "be an athlete" first.

Individual factors that may affect results are the education level of the father, grade level of subject, and the individual's placement in the status hierarchy. Eitzen (1975) found that sons of under-educated fathers, sophomores, and males in the center of the status hierarchy were more likely to be involved in sports. School-related factors which influenced the findings were school size, success in sports, and authority structure. Small schools showed a higher enthusiasm for sports by a higher percentage of males wishing to be remembered as an "athletic star" than males from large schools. The school's success in sports was omitted from Coleman's study, but Eitzen found that students from "winning" schools preferred athletics more than students from schools with "average" or "poor" athletic success. Based on the rating of the authority structure of the school, students in a school with "tight" authority scored higher on preference toward athletics than students from "permissive" schools.

Eitzen agreed that the data he collected provides evidence that the trend continues for sports participation to be an important criterion for adolescent males to achieve social status. However, he speculated that this trend may be changing in the future due to

schools becoming larger and more suburban, generations being better educated, and schools becoming more permissive.

The extension of Coleman's (1961) study, which included individual factors and school related factors, provided more detailed information about the social status system of adolescents. With this additional information Eitzen was able to speculate about a trend in the criteria male adolescents will use to determine social status. Whether his prediction of a trend was correct will be examined shortly. One weakness of this study is that once again females were excluded from the sample. Given the extension of Coleman's study, it would have been interesting to be able to analyze the responses of females and/or compare these responses to the males. By the mid-70's adolescent females had begun participating in athletics, and Eitzen missed the opportunity to examine the impact of athletics as a determinant of female social status. The research opportunity was not overlooked by Feltz (1978).

Feltz (1978) replicated and extended Coleman's (1961) study but investigated the social status system of adolescent females. Feltz (1978) surveyed 258 high school girls from three western New York schools. The three schools were chosen on the basis of community size, family income, family occupation, school size, and athletic success. Athletic success was described by the principals of each school according to the win/loss record in the girls' volleyball and basketball programs over the last 3 years.

Feltz found that when the girls in this study were given three choices of how they wanted to be remembered "brilliant student," "most popular," or "leader in activities," the girls chose "leader in activities" first. When a fourth category, "athletic star," was added then the girls chose "most popular" as their first choice, "leader in activities" second, "brilliant student" third, and "athletic star" last. It seems that the girls who had chosen "leader in activities" switched to "athletic star" when that category was added (Feltz, 1978). When asked to rank activities in order of importance for achieving popularity among girls and boys, the girls in this study chose "in the leading crowd" first for both groups. "Being an athlete" was ranked fifth as the criterion used to determine female popularity among girls and boys. It was interesting that when given the choice of how they would like to spend some extra time in school the girls chose athletics first. Feltz (1978) suggests that girls enjoy athletic participation but are afraid of the negative labels that may be associated with sport participation.

When the "winning tradition" of the school was examined, no difference was found between schools that had successful teams and those with unsuccessful teams. Feltz suggested this may be due to a "winning tradition" not yet being well established in the girls' athletic programs. It may be possible that the principal's report of the "winning tradition" was unreliable. A more reliable report may have come from reviewing past win-loss records.

Feltz's (1978) study was the first in the social status research to look at athletics as determinant of popularity for females. The results, athletics being chosen last, were not encouraging. However, the fact that the girls in this study enjoyed participating in athletics and as Feltz noted, girls' athletic programs were not yet well established, did provide some evidence that these results may change with time.

Five years later, Williams and White (1983) investigated the social status systems for males and females at three different age levels. The three levels were junior high school, high school, and college adolescents. Males and females from the states of Arizona, Iowa, and New York were chosen for a total of 800-900 subjects. The subjects were given four choices on how they would like to be remembered, "brilliant student," "leader in activities," "athletic star," or "most popular." The junior high and high school males in this study chose "athletic star" as their first choice for how they would like to be remembered. "Brilliant student" was chosen second, "most popular" third, and "leader in activities" was the last choice. College males also chose "athletic star" first and "brilliant student" second, but their third choice was "leader in activities" and the fourth choice was "most popular." Females in this study differed at all age levels on how they wanted to be remembered. Junior high school females chose "most popular" first, "brilliant student" and "athletic star" tied for second, and "leader in activities" was fourth. High school females chose "leader in activities" first, "brilliant student" second, "athletic star" third, and "most popular" fourth. College females chose "leader in activities" first, "athletic star" second, "brilliant student" third, and "most popular" fourth.

The authors indicated that no change in the importance of athletics for males in the social status system seems to have occured from the 1970's until 1982. Direct comparisons to Coleman's (1961) and Eitzen's (1975) study could not be made since these subjects had four criterion from which to chose, with "leader in activities" added. Across all age levels, males viewed athletics as more important in determining social status than

did the females. The authors suggest this is due to socialization factors in the American culture. The status of females being a "leader in activites" increased with age levels while the status for females being "most popular" decreased. "Most popular" was probably more important for junior high adolescents because early adolescence is a time when being liked and accepted by peers is very important (Williams & White, 1983).

When the school had a successful athletic program the males' response for "athletic star" was higher. Female response for "athletic star" was also slightly higher when the school was successful in athletics, but not significantly. The authors found that 69.1% of the males and 62.8% of the females in this study had participated in athletics. This supports Feltz's (1978) conclusion that while more females are participating in athletics and may enjoy it, the majority of females may not pick "athletic star" as a social status determinant because of the negative labels associated with women's sports. The authors state that females may be better off than the males and more sensible to have diverse choices as criteria for social status rather than being limited to athletics.

This study was the first reviewed that examined an age group lower than high school. This was helpful in looking at any developmental trends. For instance, the authors report that only 22% of the female high school students chose "athletic star" and concluded no change had occured. They failed to note that in junior high school, the females' choice of "athletic star" was tied for second. It also seems significant that "athletic star" was not chosen last at any age level. This may indicate an improvement in females' opinion about athletics. A weakness of this study was that the authors did not inquire how the subjects in the three age levels would rank criteria to determine popularity. With just one question, how they wished to be remembered, it is hard to get a true indication of how the subjects would use the criteria to determine social status.

Thirer and Wright (1985) replicated Coleman's (1961) study and examined the social status criteria male and female adolescents used in the mid-1980's. Six hundred high school students, grades nine through twelve participated in the study.

The results showed that males and females chose "be an athlete" as the best criterion for determining male popularity. "Being in the leading crowd" was the second choice. Females and males chose "being in the leading crowd" as the best criterion for determining female popularity. The choice of "being an athlete" was ranked fifth out of six choices by females and fourth out of five choices by males for determining female popularity. When

asked how they would like to be remembered, the males chose "athletic star" first, "brilliant student" second, and "most popular" third. The females chose "brilliant student" first, "most popular" second, and "athletic star" third. The authors noted that although "athletic star" was ranked last, the freshmen and sophomore females tended to rank "athletic star" higher than the junior and senior females. They suggested this might indicate a trend toward greater acceptance of athletics for females.

Overall, the results of Thirer and Wright (1985) are similar to earlier studies by Coleman (1961), Eitzen (1975), and Feltz (1978). The authors suggest that changes in the value system of groups do not change quickly. Opportunities in athletics for women are still fairly new, and the role of athletics in the social status system may still be developing.

Kane (1988) extended the social status research to include an examination of the influence of the specific type of sport in which females participate and the sex-type of the sport. She sampled 232 students from a mid-western high school. When asked how they would like to be remembered, the results were similar to previous studies. The males chose "athletic star" first, "leader in activities" second, "brilliant student" third, and "most popular" fourth. The females chose "leader in activities" first, "brilliant student" second, "most popular" third, and "athletic star" fourth.

Using Metheny's (1967) sport typology, a second measure of status was done. Male subjects were asked which female athlete they would rather date and the female subjects were asked which female athlete they would rather be friends with, according to the female athlete's participation in five possible sports. Golf, tennis, and volleyball were typed as "sex-appropriate." Basketball and softball were typed as "sex-inappropriate." Kane found that the male subjects preferred to date female athletes involved in "sex-appropriate" sports. Females preferred to be friends with females that were involved in "sex-appropriate" sports.

Kane suggested in this study, that the status of the female athlete was dependent upon the type of sport in which she participated. She noted there may be a continuum of appropriate "feminine" sports at one end and inappropriate "masculine" sports at the other end. The influence of the sex-type of a sport was a new method with which to study social status. Kane's results show that there is a difference in status for females according to which sports they participate. It would be interesting to see if similar results would be found for males if sports were also sex-typed.

The most recent research in the social status system of high school students was completed by Goldberg and Chandler (1989). A total of 1,255 high school students were surveyed to assess their perceptions of the current determinants of social status. Unlike previous research, this study used a 5-point Likert scale to rate the importance of the criterion "being a star athlete," "being a leader in activities," "being a member of the leading group," "getting high grades," or "coming from the right family" in determining social status. This method allowed the students to select more than one criterion as important in determining social status.

The results indicated that male popularity was determined by "being a star athlete" first, "being a member of the leading group" second, "being a leader in activities" third, "getting high grades" fourth, and "coming from the right family" was the last choice. Female popularity was determined by "being a member of the leading group" first, "being a leader in activities" second, "getting high grades" third, "being a star athlete" fourth, and "coming from the right family" was the last choice.

Goldberg and Chandler's (1989) study also examined how students preferred to be remembered, as an "outstanding student," "leader in activities," "most popular," or "outstanding athlete." The students were asked to rate each selection on a 5-point Likert scale. The results indicated that most females (53.1%) preferred to be remembered as an "outstanding student." "Outstanding athlete" was the second choice (33.5%), followed by "most popular" (20.1%) and "leader in activities" (11.3%). The males in this study preferred to be remembered as an "outstanding student" (54.3%) and an "outstanding athlete" (52.9%), followed by "leader in activities" (37.4%) and "most popular" (28.2%). Because the scale of measurement was changed from ranking order to a 5-point Likert scale, comparisons between previous social status research and this study could not be made. The authors suggest that there are multiple role expectations placed on high school students as indicated by the increase in the importance of being an "outstanding student" for males and an increase in the importance of being an "outstanding athlete" for females.

The research reviewed to this point has been with junior high, high school, or college age subjects. Only one study was found which examined the criteria used by elementary school children to determine popularity among their peers (Buchanan et al. 1976). In 1976, Buchanan et al. studied 422 boys and 380 girls in Grades 4, 5, and 6. Children in the study were chosen using stratified sampling from five rural and two city schools.

When asked what they would most like to do at school, both the boys and girls in this study preferred to "make good grades" rather than "be good in sports." However, when a Chi-square test was run a significantly greater percentage of the boys than girls preferred to "be good at sports."

Students were classified by their peers as an "athlete," "student," or "student-athlete." When asked to name the most popular classmates, boys that were "athletes" were more popular among their peers and girls that were "student-athletes" were more popular among their peers.

The children were asked to rank in order of importance four criteria which they felt would contribute to making a student popular. The choices were "make good grades," "having lots of money," "being good at sports," or "being handsome or pretty." Boys in this study thought "being good at sports" was the most important criterion for achieving personal popularity. They ranked "making good grades" second, "being handsome or pretty" third, and "having lots of money" fourth. The girls in this study felt "making good grades" was the most important criterion for determining personal popularity. They ranked "being good at sports" second, "being handsome or pretty" third, and "having lots of money" fourth. The results were consistent across all three grades.

The criteria used by elementary children to determine popularity were somewhat similar to the criteria used by high school adolescents, although "being good at sports" received a higher rank than in previous research as a determinant of female social status. The authors noted that children may already use athletic participation as a determinant of popularity among peers before they reach high school, with boys favoring athletics more than girls. One of the hypothesis was rejected as a result of both boys and girls stating they would rather "make good grades" than "be good at sports." The authors explained this finding was possibly caused by parental or societal pressures to achieve good grades.

This method of research, "social status criteria studies," ranks in order of importance the criteria that adolescents use to determine social status among peers (see Table 2). The literature reviewed states that male adolescents want to be remember as an "athletic star" most often. Male popularity among male and female peers was determined by participation in athletics. These findings were consistent across diverse grade levels of subjects.

Research in the social status of female adolescents was not initiated until the late 1970's (Feltz, 1978). The literature concludes that female adolescents want to be

Table 2

Determinants of Social Status From Previous Research Studies

AUTHOR	SUBJECTS	MOST IMPORTANT CRITERIA BOYS	MOST IMPORTANT CRITERIA GIRLS
Coleman (1961)	High School Boys & Girls N = N/A	Athletics	Leader in Activities
Eitzen (1975)	High School Boys N = N/A	Athletics	
Buchanan Blankenbaker & Cotten (1976)	4th, 5th, 6th Grade Boys & Girls N = 802	Athletics	Grades
Feltz (1978)	High School Girls N=258		In Leading Crowd
Thirer & Wright (1985)	High School Boys & Girls N=600	Athletics	In Leading Crowd

remembered as a "leader in activities" (Feltz, 1978; Kane, 1988; Thirer & Wright, 1985; Williams and White, 1983) or "outstanding student" (Goldberg & Chandler, 1989). Female popularity among male and female peers was determined by "being in the leading crowd" (Goldberg & Chandler, 1989; Feltz, 1978; Kane, 1988; Thirer & Wright, 1985; Williams and White, 1983). "Being an athlete" was ranked last or near last in most of the studies.

Extensions of some studies have been made which included the "winning tradition" of the athletic programs, the sex-type of the sport, and the age of the subjects. The "winning tradition" was found to have some influence on the findings but not always significant (Feltz, 1978). Kane (1988) found that involvement in sports which were "sex-appropriate" created higher status for females than involvement in "sex-inappropriate" sports. Elementary children reported results similar to those of the high school adolescents for criteria which determines female and male popularity among peers (Buchanan et al., 1976).

Conclusion

The literature reviewed indicates there is a relationship between the social status of a child and her or his physical ability. It was suggested that social status is determined by being good at something that other children value. This review suggests that evidence exists which indicates that children value physical ability and success in sports most, although results may vary somewhat with gender and grade level.

The research in the social status system of adolescents has provided information regarding how females and males determine popularity. This review focused on the role of sports in determining social status. It appears that sports are the most important determinant of social status for males of all grade levels. However, sports was not chosen as an important determinant of female social status. The influence of sports on female social status was further examined to include the "winning tradition" of the school or "sex-type" of the sport. No significant differences were found in the importance of sports as a social status determinant between schools that had successful teams and those with unsuccessful teams (Feltz, 1978). Kane (1988) found that the male subjects preferred to date female athletes involved in "sex-appropriate" sports. Females preferred to be friends with females that were involved in "sex-appropriate" sports. This may indicate that

participation in some sports are considered "inappropriate" for females and therefore an "inappropriate" social status determinant (Feltz, 1978; Kane, 1988).

It is possible that the relationship between athletic ability and social status is developed during early adolescence. The literature states that this relationship is important to a child's development of peer relationships. At the present time, the role of sports in determining social status among peers, means different things to male and female adolescents (Kane, 1988; Williams & White, 1983). It is necessary for educators to be aware of this relationship so that programs could be developed that would meet the needs of all children. With this intervention, educators, especially physical educators, could possibly help to reverse this trend of social status determinants which does not support a diverse choice of activities for boys and discourages girls from participation in sports.

Chapter Three
Method

Research Design

In this survey design, subjects completed one 11-item written response questionnaire. The dependent variables were the scores obtained from the questionnaire investigating social status determinants, preference of activities, and preferences of activities in which subjects prefer and do not prefer to fail. The independent variables were the gender and grade level of the subjects.

Subjects

A total of 478 children in Grades 4, 5, and 6 participated in this study. The distribution of subjects by gender, grade, and age is given in Table 3. The number of subjects who participated were from a potential sample of 203 children in Grade 4, 242 children in Grade 5, and 520 children in Grade 6. It is believed that attrition was due to lack of parental permission to participate in the study, or failure of the subjects to deliver the permission forms to their parents and back to the teacher.

The subjects ranged in age from 8 to 13 years. The mean age for the children is given in Table 3. The children in this sample were from various racial backgrounds, although minority groups were not well represented in the sample. The percentage of the sample with different racial backgrounds was 92.5% white, 1.7% African-American, 0.6% American-Indian, 0.8% Oriental, 0.6% Hispanic, 1.0% Interracial, and 2.7% other racial backgrounds. The distribution of various racial backgrounds for girls are given in Table 4 and boys in Table 5.

Subjects' responses to items 1 through 5 from the questionnaire were used to help describe the sample. Subjects were asked to rate personal academic ability, athletic ability, and popularity among peers, the average number of days in which they participate in sports, and the number of sports in which they participate. MANOVA analyses were conducted to test for statistically significant gender and grade level differences. As shown in Table 6, the girls in this study ranked their grades higher in comparison to their classmates than the boys ($F(1) = 4.19$, $p < .05$). No significant grade level differences were found. The data in Table 7 revealed that the boys in this study ranked their sport ability compared to classmates significantly higher than the girls ($F(1) = 16.08$, $p < .001$). Significant grade level differences for boys and girls ($F(2) = 4.8$, $p < .01$) were found.

Table 3

Description of the Age of the Subjects in the Sample

Subjects	Number	Mean Age	Standard Deviation	Minimum Age	Maximum Age
4th Boys	54	9.26	0.48	9	11
4th Girls	65	9.09	0.42	8	10
5th Boys	86	10.38	0.56	9	12
5th Girls	90	10.31	0.53	9	12
6th Boys	87	11.46	0.57	11	13
6th Girls	96	11.18	0.41	11	13
Total Boys	227	10.53	1.01	9	13
Total Girls	251	10.33	0.94	8	13

Table 4

Representation of Racial Backgrounds of Girls in the Sample

Subjects	White	African American	Hispanic	Oriental	American Indian	Interracial	Other
4th Grade	93.8%	3.1%	-	-	-	1.5%	1.5%
5th Grade	93.3%	-	-	2.2%	-	2.2%	2.2%
6th Grade	91.7%	1.0%	1.0%	-	1.0%	-	5.2%
Total	92.8%	1.2%	0.4%	0.8%	0.4%	1.2%	3.2%

Table 5

Representation of Racial Backgrounds of Boys in the Sample

Subjects	White	African American	Hispanic	Oriental	American Indian	Interracial	Other
4th Grade	94.4%	1.9%	1.9%	-	-	-	1.9%
5th Grade	88.4%	3.5%	-	1.2%	2.3%	1.2%	3.5%
6th Grade	94.3%	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%	-	1.1%	1.1%
Total	92.1%	2.2%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%	2.2%

Table 6

Students' Ranking of Personal Grades Compared to Most Classmates

		Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Total
Girls	M	4.19	4.07	4.18	4.14
	SD	.68	.78	.63	.70
Boys	M	4.07	3.93	4.07	3.99
	SD	.75	.75	.92	.82

*Likert scale, 1 = "very poor" to 5 = "very good"

Table 7

Students' Ranking of Personal Sport Abilities Compared to Most Classmates

		Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Total
Girls	M	3.94	3.78	3.62	3.76
	SD	.86	1.05	.85	.93
Boys	M	4.29	4.15	3.94	4.11
	SD	.92	.94	.99	.96

*Likert scale, 1 = "very poor" to 5 = "very good"

Student's rankings of personal sport ability compared to classmates decreased with each higher grade level. Table 8 provides data on the way in which subjects ranked personal popularity compared to classmates of the same gender. No significant gender or grade level differences were found among the subjects.

The subjects were asked to report the average number of days in which they played some kind of sport (see Table 9). Boys reported playing some kind of sport more often, 5.2 days per week (SD = 1.92), than the girls, 4.4 days per week (SD = 2.03), ($F(1) = 17.78$, $p < .001$). Significant grade level differences were also reported ($F(2) = 7.28$, $p < .001$). Students reported playing sports fewer number of days per week as they increased grade levels. Subjects were asked to report the average number of sports in which they participate more than one day per week. As shown in Table 10, the boys reported playing more sports at least one day per week, 3.8 sports (SD = 2.02), more than girls, 3.4 sports (SD = 2.10), ($F(1) = 4.61$, $p < .05$). No significant grade level differences were found.

All subjects who participated were volunteers from elementary and middle schools in the greater Lansing area. Superintendents from three of the 12 school districts who were contacted agreed to participate in the study. These school districts were in communities that varied in size, socioeconomic status, and location, rural or suburban settings (see Table 11). School District A was the largest district in the sample. District A has approximately 4,009 students in Grades K-12, in 7 schools and draws from a community of 16,130 people. District A is the wealthiest in the sample with the mean family income of $40,867 and fewer than 4.9% of the students below poverty level. School District B is the second largest in the sample. It has approximately 3,183 students in Grades K-12, in 9 schools. The community has approximately 9,376 people within the school district. The average family income from school district B is $23,761, with 5.0%-24.9% of the students below poverty level. School District C is the smallest district in the sample. The district has approximately 1,510 students in Grades K-12, in 3 schools. Approximately 2,972 people live in school district C. The mean family income is $25,794, with 5.0%-24.9% of the students below poverty level. Information about family income was obtained from the 1980 Census report.

Instrumentation

The 11-item questionnaire was designed by the investigator (see Appendix A). It was based on questions used in the Buchanan et al. study (1976) and other social status

Table 8

Students' Ranking of Personal Popularity Compared to Classmates of the Same Gender

		Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Total
Girls	M	2.19	2.14	2.07	2.13
	SD	.63	.74	.55	.64
Boys	M	2.19	2.13	2.05	2.10
	SD	.63	.67	.63	.64

*Likert scale, 1 = "less popular" to 3 = "more popular"

Table 9

Average Number of Days per Week Students Play Some Kind of Sport

		Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Total
Girls	M	4.91	4.58	4.00	4.44
	SD	2.00	2.12	1.89	2.03
Boys	M	5.70	5.22	4.87	5.20
	SD	1.90	1.88	1.92	1.92

Table 10

Average Number of Sports Students Play More Than One Day per Week

		Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Total
Girls	M	3.52	3.59	3.17	3.41
	SD	2.06	2.25	1.97	2.10
Boys	M	3.98	3.91	3.63	3.82
	SD	1.89	2.28	1.82	2.02

Table 11

Characteristics of the School Districts and Communities in the Sample

School District	A	B	C
Community Size	16,130	9,376	2,972
Mean Family Income	$40,867	$23,761	$25,794
Percent of Students Below Poverty Level	0.0-4.9%	5.0-24.9%	5.0-24.9%
School Size	4,009	3,183	1,510
Number of Schools in District	7	9	3

Information from 1980 Census

research studies (Coleman, 1961; Feltz, 1978; Thirer & Wright, 1985; Williams & White, 1983). The subjects were asked to complete questions regarding their gender, grade level, age, race, and the school they attended. The first two questions addressed the academic achievement and athletic ability of the subject compared to most of the students in his/her class. A 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1, "very poor," to 5, "very good," was used. The third question involved a comparison of the popularity of the subject to the popularity of peers of the same gender. A 3-point Likert scale ranging from 1, "less popular than most," to 3, "more popular than most," was used. Questions 4 and 5 inquired about number of days the subject participated in some kind of sport and how many different sports he/she played more than one day per week. Questions 6, 7, and 8 asked the subjects to rank in order of importance four criterion ("making good grades," "being good at sports," "having lots of money," or "being handsome or pretty") which they believed would improve personal, female, and male popularity among peers. The remaining three questions addressed the preference for participation in activities at school, and activities in which they prefer to fail or not to fail. These questions required the selection of one answer from three choices ("make good grades," "be popular," or "be good at sports").

Procedures for Data Collection

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the superintendent or principal of the school district and the parents/guardians of the subjects. The initial contact was made by phone to the superintendent or principal explaining the purpose of the study, criteria for subject selection, and anticipated schedule of the study. Upon obtaining permission to conduct the study, the teachers from each school district were contacted and asked to distribute to each student a letter explaining the study (see Appendix B) and a parental consent form (see Appendix C) to be taken home to the parents/guardian. The teachers distributed and collected all parental consent forms. Each teacher then scheduled a time for the questionnaire to be administered to all students who had returned the parental consent form.

The procedures to complete the questionnaire were the same for each subject. The questionnaire was group administered, in a classroom or gymnasium to those students allowed to participate . Any student not allowed to participate was asked to leave the room with the teacher. Directions regarding completion of the questionnaire and the definition of the terms "popularity" and "sport" were read to the students by the investigator (see

Appendix D). All students were encouraged to answer each question honestly, and were assured that their answers would be confidential. Each of the eleven questions were read to the students by the investigator and students responded with written responses. Upon completion, the questionnaires were collected and a brief explanation of the study was given.

To control extraneous variables that may influence the outcome of the study, the following procedures were followed. The questionnaire was administered by the investigator only. The classroom or physical education teacher left the room while the subjects completed the questionnaire. This was done so that the subjects did not feel pressure to answer in a way the teacher might consider appropriate. Subjects were reminded that their names were not to be written on the questionnaire. This was to encourage the students to respond honestly to each question to control for any perceived parental or societal pressures. The terms "popularity" and "sport" were defined so that all subjects would operate with the same definition. All questions were read aloud to the subjects to account for differences in reading abilities among subjects. The questionnaire was not administered until late October or November of the school year to allow students to form judgments about personal popularity and peer popularity. Subjects were asked not to discuss the questionnaire with students from other classes so that no other subjects would be influenced by the response of another student. The administration of the questionnaire was completed within a four-week time frame so that threats to internal validity such as history, maturation, and instrumentation could be controlled.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted in two parts to test the use of the questionnaire and data collection procedures. The children had no difficulty completing the questionnaire or following the administration procedures. From the results of the pilot studies, it was determined that the questionnaire and data collection procedures were appropriate for use in this study (see Appendix E).

Data Analysis

The data analysis methods are similar to the methods used by Buchanan et al. (1976) and other social status research studies (Coleman, 1961; Eitzen, 1975; Feltz, 1978; Kane, 1988; Thirer and Wright, 1985; Williams and White, 1983). Analyses procedures for each hypothesis are outlined. All tests of statistical significance were conducted at the .05 level.

Hypothesis 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, and 10. Chi-square analyses examining gender differences in the determinants of personal, female, and male popularity revealed whether statistically significant differences occurred. The mean rankings of the four criterion used to determine popularity were used to list the choices in order of importance for determining personal, female, and male popularity, with the lowest rank being the most important choice.

Hypothesis 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, and 12. Chi-square analyses examining grade level differences by males and females in the determinants of personal, female and male popularity revealed whether statistically significant differences occurred. The mean ranking of the criteria was used to list the choices in order of importance for determining personal, female, and male popularity by grade level and gender.

Hypothesis 13, 14, 15, and 16. Chi-square analyses were used to test for statistically significant gender differences and for statistically significant grade level differences among males and females in the activities children prefer to participate at school.

Hypothesis 17, 18, 19, and 20. Chi-square analyses were used to tested for statistically significant gender differences and statistically significant grade level differences among males and females in the activities children prefer to fail at in school.

Hypothesis 21, 22, 23, and 24. Chi-square analyses were used to test for statistically significant gender differences and statistically significant grade level differences among males and females in the activities they prefer not to fail at in school.

Subjects responses to questions 1 through 5 were not used to test hypotheses, but were analyzed to help describe the sample. For each question descriptive statistics were conducted to compute a mean score. Then MANOVA analyses were conducted to test for statistically significant gender and grade level differences.

Chapter Four
Results

This study was designed as a partial replication of the Buchanan et al. (1976) study. The purpose was to examine the role of sports in determining the social status of children in Grades 4, 5, and 6. Specifically, this study investigated gender and grade level differences in the criteria used by children to determine social status, the activities in which children prefer to participate at school, and the activities in which they prefer or did not prefer to fail. These results are presented in the order of social status determinants for personal, female and male popularity, activities in which children prefer to participate at school, activities in which children prefer to fail, and activities in which children prefer not to fail. Table 12 provides a summary of results which indicates support or non-support for each Hypothesis.

Determinants of Personal Popularity

Subjects were asked to rank, in order of importance, four criteria ("make good grades," "being good at sports," "having lots of money," "being handsome or pretty") that may determine personal popularity. Table 13 gives the results related to determinant of personal popularity for males and females. Boys in this study chose "being good at sports" as the most important criterion, "being handsome" second, "getting good grades" third, and "having lots of money" fourth. The girls in this study chose "being pretty" first, "being good at sports" second, "getting good grades" third, and "having lots of money" fourth. Chi-square analyses revealed that significant gender differences occurred in the determinants of personal social status, χ^2 (3) =100.63, $p < .001$. Boys found sports the most important determinant. Girls found appearance the most important determinant (see Figure 1). These results support Hypothesis 1, "being good at sports" was the most important determinant of personal popularity for boys. Hypothesis 2 was also supported, girls chose "being pretty" as the most important determinant for personal popularity.

Table 12

Summary of Results for Each Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Results
Personal Popularity:	
1. Boys determining personal popularity will choose "being good at sports."	Supported
2. Girls determining personal popularity will choose "being pretty."	Supported
3. Boys' responses about personal popularity will not differ in Grades 4, 5, and 6. All boys will choose "being good at sports."	Supported
4. Girls' responses about personal popularity will not differ in Grades 4, 5, and 6. All girls will choose "being pretty."	Supported
Male Popularity:	
5. Boys determining male popularity will choose "being good at sports."	Supported
6. Girls determining male popularity will choose "being good at sports."	Not Supported
7. Boys' responses about male popularity will not differ in Grades 4, 5, and 6. All boys will choose "being good at sports."	Supported
8. Girls' responses about male popularity will not differ in Grades 4, 5, and 6. All girls will choose "being good at sports."	Not Supported
Female Popularity:	
9. Boys determining female popularity will choose "being pretty."	Supported
10. Girls determining female popularity will choose "being pretty."	Supported
11. Boys' responses about female popularity will not differ in Grades 4, 5, and 6. All boys will choose "being pretty."	Supported
12. Girls' responses about female popularity will not differ in Grades 4, 5, and 6. All girls will choose "being pretty."	Supported

Table 12, continued

Hypothesis	Results
School activities in which children prefer to particpate:	
13. Boys will prefer to "be good at sports."	Not Supported
14. Girls will prefer to "make good grades."	Supported
15. Boys' responses about what they prefer to do at school will not differ in Grades 4, 5, and 6. All boys will prefer to "be good at sports."	Not Supported
16. Girls' responses about what they prefer to do at school will not differ in Grades 4, 5, and 6. All girls will prefer to "make good grades."	Supported
School activities in which children prefer to fail:	
17. Boys will prefer to fail at "being popular."	Supported
18. Girls will prefer to fail at "being popular."	Not Supported
19. Boys' responses about what they prefer to fail at in school will not differ in Grades 4, 5, and 6. All boys will prefer to fail at "being popular."	Supported
20. Girls' responses about what they prefer to fail at in school will not differ in Grades 4, 5, and 6. All girls will prefer to fail at "being popular."	Not Supported
School activities in which children prefer not to fail:	
21. Boys will prefer not to fail at "getting good grades."	Supported
22. Girls will prefer not to fail at "getting good grades."	Supported
23. Boys' responses about what they prefer not to fail at in school will not differ in Grades 4, 5, and 6. All boys will prefer not to fail at "getting good grades."	Supported
24. Girls' responses about what they prefer not to fail at in school will not differ in Grades 4, 5, and 6. All girls will prefer not to fail at "getting good grades."	Supported

Table 13

Determinants of Personal Popularity

		Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6		Total	
		Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
Grades	M	2.26	2.46	2.34	2.48	3.03	2.94	2.59	2.65
	SD	1.11	1.04	1.03	1.01	1.04	1.04	1.11	1.05
Sports	M	2.54	1.94	2.50	1.63	2.41	1.51	2.47	1.66
	SD	0.92	1.00	0.97	0.88	0.89	0.70	0.93	0.86
Looks	M	1.91	2.70	1.86	2.60	1.50	2.29	1.73	2.51
	SD	0.98	1.08	1.03	1.07	0.88	0.96	0.96	1.04
Money	M	3.29	2.89	3.30	3.29	3.06	3.26	3.21	3.19
	SD	1.00	1.16	0.94	0.84	0.94	0.86	0.96	0.94

*Lowest mean ranking indicates first choice

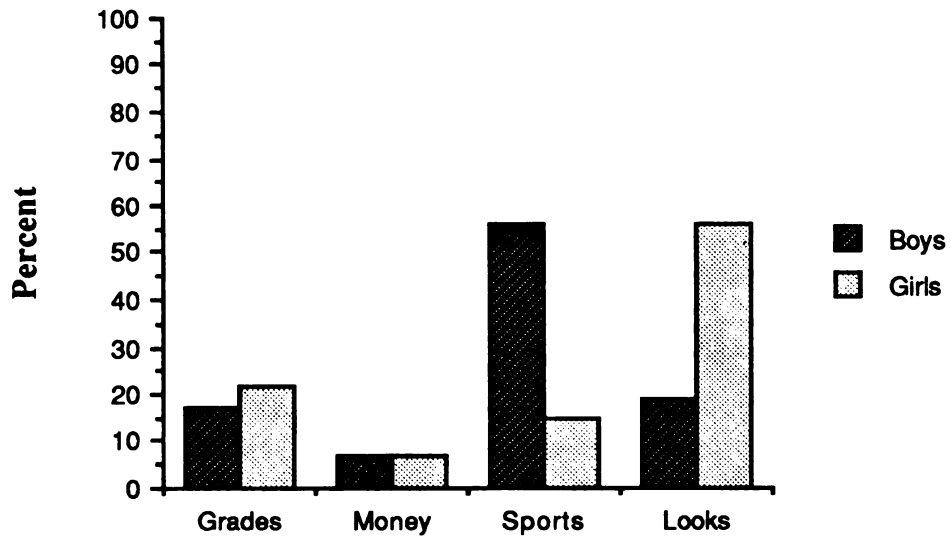

Figure 1. Determinants of Personal Popularity as Rated by Boys and Girls

Table 13 also gives the mean rankings of personal popularity determinants for boys and girls in different grade levels. Boys in Grade 4, 5, and 6 chose "being good at sports" first, "making good grades" second, "being handsome" third, and "having lots of money" fourth. Chi-square analyses revealed significant grade level differences in the determinants of personal social status for boys in Grades 4, 5, and 6, χ^2 (6) =16.14, $p < .02$. Sports and appearance become more important for boys at each increasing grade level (see Figure 2). Chi-square analyses computed between two grades found significant differences for boys in Grades 4 and 5, χ^2 (3) = 9.94, $p < .05$, and boys in Grades 4 and 6, χ^2 (3) = 10.90, $p < .05$. Although significant grade differences were found among boys, most boys chose the same criterion, "being good at sports" as the most important in determining personal popularity. These results support Hypothesis 3.

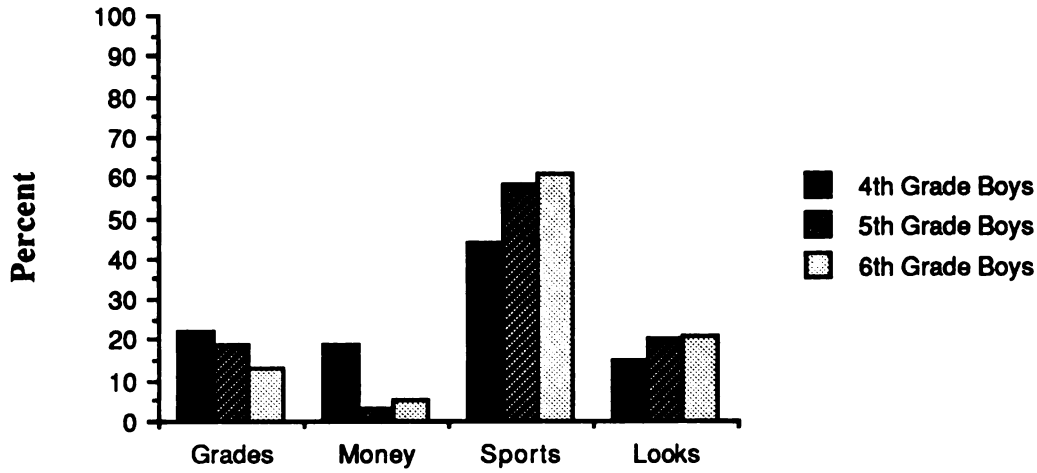

Figure 2. Determinants of Personal Popularity as Rated by Boys

For girls in Grades 4, 5, and 6 the mean ranking for each criterion is given in Table 13. Girls in Grade 4 and 5 chose "being pretty" first, "getting good grades" second, "being good at sports" third, and "having lots of money" fourth. Girls in Grade 6 chose "being pretty" first, "being good at sports" second, "getting good grades" third, and "having lots of money" fourth. These results support Hypothesis 4; all girls chose "being pretty" as the most important determinant of personal popularity. Chi-square analyses revealed significant grade level differences in the determinants of personal social status for girls in Grades 4, 5, and 6, χ^2 (6) =13.03, $p < .05$. Although most girls in this study chose appearance as the most important determinant, grade level differences occurred in the importance of the criteria. Appearance and sports seem to become more important in determining personal popularity as girls increase grade levels (see Figure 3). Chi-square analyses between two grade levels revealed significant differences between girls in Grades 4 and 6, χ^2 (3) = 11.95, $p < .05$.

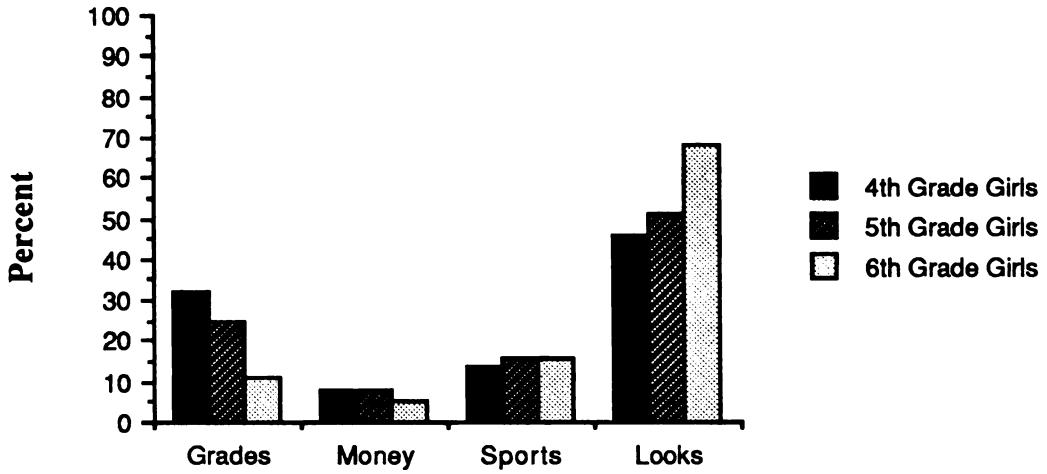

Figure 3. Determinants of Personal Popularity as Rated by Girls

Determinants of Male Popularity

Subjects were asked to rank in order of importance four criteria ("make good grades," "being good at sports," "having lots of money," "being handsome or pretty") which may determine male popularity. Boys in this study chose "being good at sports" as the most important criterion for determining male popularity, "being handsome" second, "getting good grades" third, and "having lots of money" fourth. The girls in this study chose "being handsome" first, "being good at sports" second, "getting good grades" third, and "having lots of money" fourth. These results for determinants of male popularity are given in Table 14. These results provide support for Hypothesis 5. All boys chose "being good at sports" as the most important determinant of male popularity. Hypothesis 6 was not supported. It was stated that all girls would chose "being good at sports" as the most important determinant of male popularity; however, girls in this study chose "being handsome." Chi-square analyses revealed that significant gender differences occurred in the determinants of male social status, χ^2 (3) = 32.32, $p < .001$. Boys found sports the most important determinant. Girls found appearance the most important determinant (see Figure 4).

Table 14

Determinants of Male Popularity

		Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6		Total	
		Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
Grades	M	2.75	2.59	2.89	2.70	3.31	3.15	3.02	2.85
	SD	0.88	0.92	0.94	1.01	0.81	0.90	0.91	0.97
Sports	M	1.97	1.59	1.71	1.55	1.99	1.52	1.88	1.55
	SD	1.02	0.84	0.77	0.79	0.85	0.70	0.88	0.77
Looks	M	2.00	2.74	2.02	2.47	1.48	2.00	1.81	2.35
	SD	1.08	1.15	1.03	1.08	0.73	0.90	0.97	1.07
Money	M	3.28	3.07	3.38	3.29	3.22	3.33	3.29	3.26
	SD	0.94	0.99	0.86	0.81	0.80	0.77	0.86	0.84

*Lowest mean ranking indicates first choice

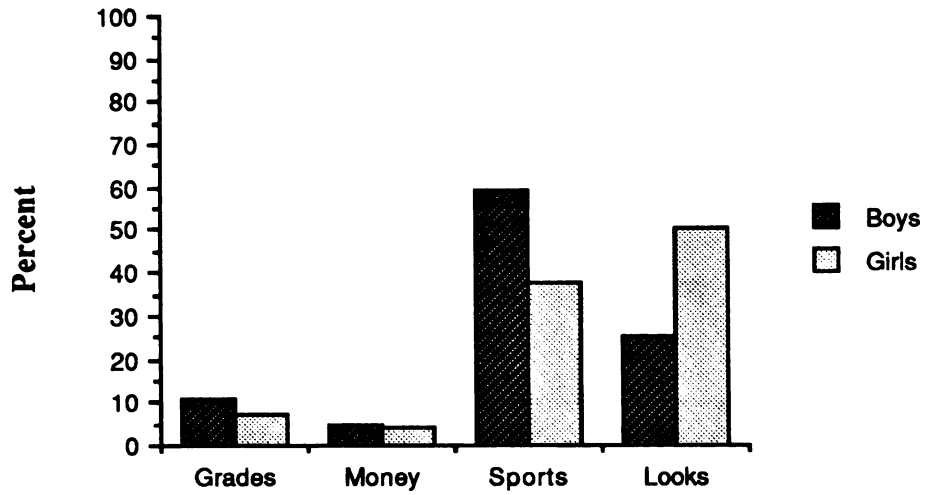

Figure 4. Determinants of Male Popularity as Rated by Boys and Girls

A mean score was computed for each criterion used to determine male popularity for each grade level for boys and girls. For boys in Grades 4, 5, and 6 the mean ranking of each criterion is given in Table 14. Boys in Grade 4 chose "being good at sports" first, "making good grades" second, "being handsome" third, and "having lots of money" fourth. Boys in Grade 5 and 6 chose "being good at sports" first, "being handsome" second, "making good grades" third, and "having lots of money" fourth. Chi-square analyses revealed no significant differences in the determinants of male social status for boys in Grades 4, 5, and 6 (see Figure 5). These results support Hypothesis 7. Boys in Grades 4, 5, and 6 chose "being good at sports" as the most important determinant of male popularity.

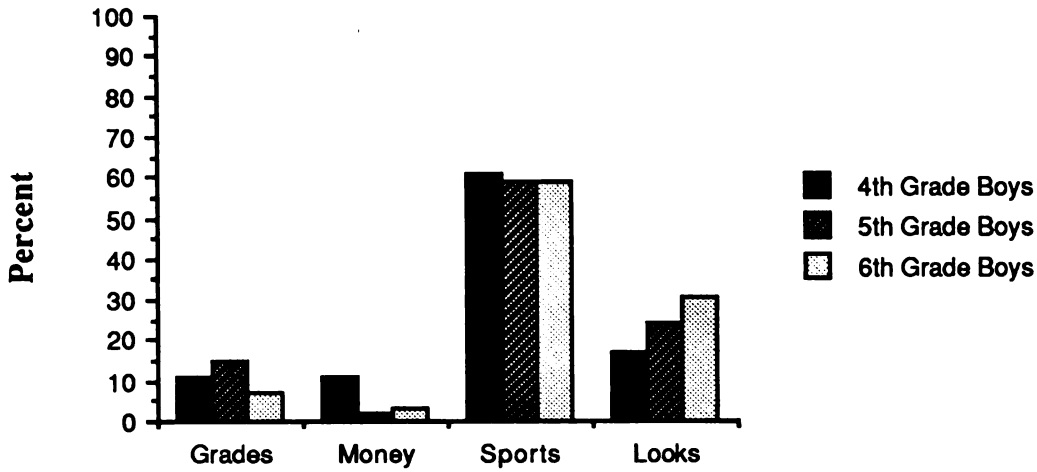

Figure 5. Determinants of Male Popularity as Rated by Boys

For girls in Grades 4, 5, and 6 the mean ranking of each criterion used to determine male popularity is given in Table 14. Girls in Grade 4 and 5 chose "being good at sports" first, "being handsome" second, "getting good grades" third, and "having lots of money" fourth. Girls in Grade 6 chose "being handsome" first, "being good at sports" second, "getting good grades" third, and "having lots of money" fourth. Chi-square analyses revealed significant differences in the determinants of male social status for girls in Grades 4, 5, and 6, χ^2 (6) = 15.63, $p < .02$. Appearance becomes more important in determining male popularity as girls increase grade levels (see Figure 6). Sports appear to become more important from Grade 4 to 5 and less important from Grade 5 to 6 (see figure 6). Chi-square analyses between two grade levels revealed significant differences between girls in Grades 5 and 6, χ^2 (3) = 13.69, $p < .05$. Hypothesis 8 was not supported by these results. Girls in Grades 4 and 5 chose "being good at sports" as the most important determinant of male popularity; however, girls in Grade 6 chose "being handsome."

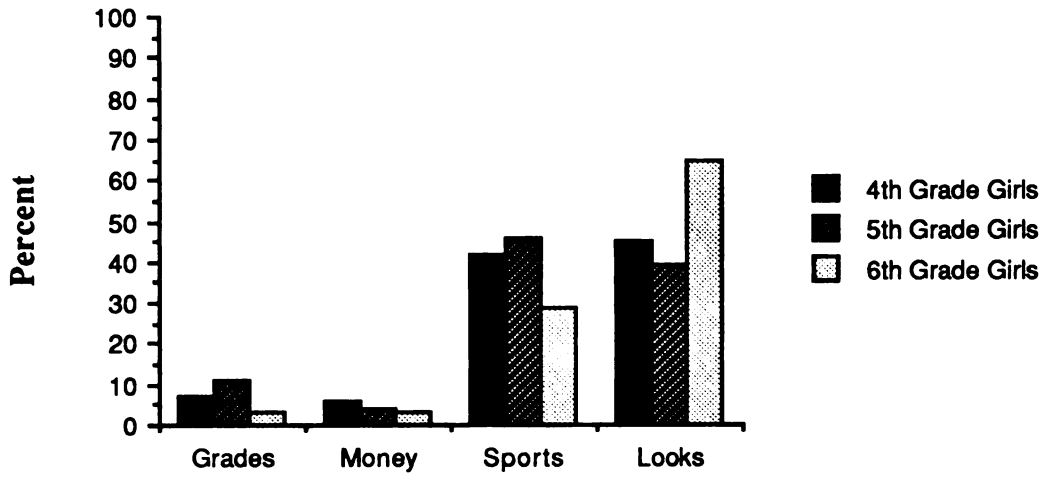

Figure 6. Determinants of Male Popularity as Rated by Girls

Determinants of Female Popularity

Subjects were asked to rank in order of importance four criteria ("make good grades," "being good at sports," "having lots of money," "being handsome or pretty") which would determine female popularity (see Table 15). Boys in this study chose "being pretty" as the most important criterion for determining female popularity, "getting good grades" second, "being good at sports" third, and "having lots of money" fourth. The girls in this study chose "being pretty" first, "being good at sports" and "getting good grades" second, and "having lots of money" fourth. These results provide support for Hypotheses 9 and 10. Boys and girls chose "being pretty" as the most important determinant of female popularity. Determinants of female popularity are given in Table 15. Chi-square analyses revealed significant gender differences in the determinants of female social status, χ^2 (3) = 11.33, $p < .05$. Boys and girls found appearance the most important determinant of female social status (see Figure 7). However, differences occurred in the importance of "having lots of money," girls chose this criterion more often than the boys (see Figure 7).

Table 15

Determinants of Female Popularity

		Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6		Total	
		Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
Grades	M	2.60	2.50	2.46	2.35	3.02	2.79	2.71	2.56
	SD	0.90	0.91	0.96	0.96	0.95	0.92	0.97	0.95
Sports	M	2.74	2.80	2.73	2.86	2.66	2.78	2.71	2.81
	SD	1.00	1.12	0.95	1.00	0.81	0.92	0.91	1.00
Looks	M	1.63	1.54	1.57	1.60	1.25	1.21	1.46	1.44
	SD	0.99	0.95	0.91	1.01	0.63	0.55	0.85	0.86
Money	M	3.03	3.17	3.24	3.19	3.07	3.22	3.12	3.19
	SD	1.07	0.80	0.95	0.83	0.94	0.83	0.98	0.82

*Lowest mean ranking indicates first choice

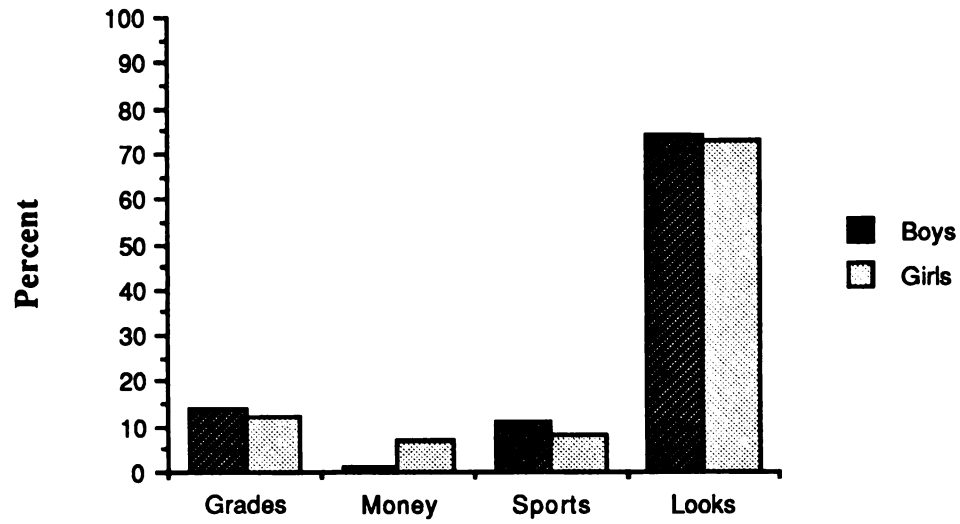

Figure 7. Determinants of Female Popularity as Rated by Boys and Girls

Table 15 also gives the mean rankings of personal popularity determinants for boys and girls in different grade levels. Boys in Grade 4, and 5 chose "being pretty" first, "making good grades" second, "being good at sports" third, and "having lots of money" fourth. Boys in Grade 6 chose "being pretty" first, "being good at sports" second, "making good grades" third, and "having lots of money" fourth. Chi-square analyses revealed no significant differences in the determinants of female social status for boys in Grades 4, 5, and 6, although appearance seems to become more important in determining female social status as boys increase grade level (see Figure 8). Boys chose "being pretty" as the most important determinant of female popularity, a finding which supports Hypothesis 11.

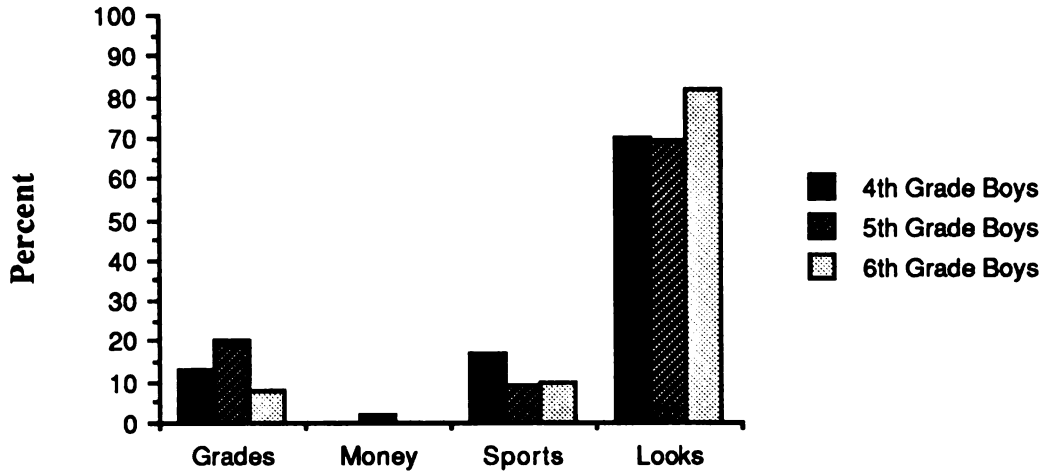

Figure 8. Determinants of Female Popularity as Rated by Boys

For girls in Grades 4, 5, and 6 the mean ranking of each criterion used to determine female social status is given in Table 15. Girls in Grade 4 and 5 chose "being pretty" first, "getting good grades" second, "being good at sports" third, and "having lots of money" fourth. Girls in Grade 6 chose "being pretty" first, "being good at sports" second, "getting good grades" third, and "having lots of money" fourth. Chi-square analyses revealed significant differences in the determinants of female social status for girls in Grades 4, 5, and 6, χ^2 (6) = 12.63, $p < .05$. Appearance becomes increasingly more important in determining female popularity as girls increase grade levels. Girls in Grade 6 indicated that "being good at sports" was more important in determining popularity than girls in Grades 4 and 5 (see Figure 9). Chi-square analyses between two grade levels revealed significant differences between girls in Grades 4 and 6, χ^2 (3) = 8.47, $p < .05$. Hypothesis 12 was supported by these results. Most girls chose "being pretty" as the most important determinant of female popularity.

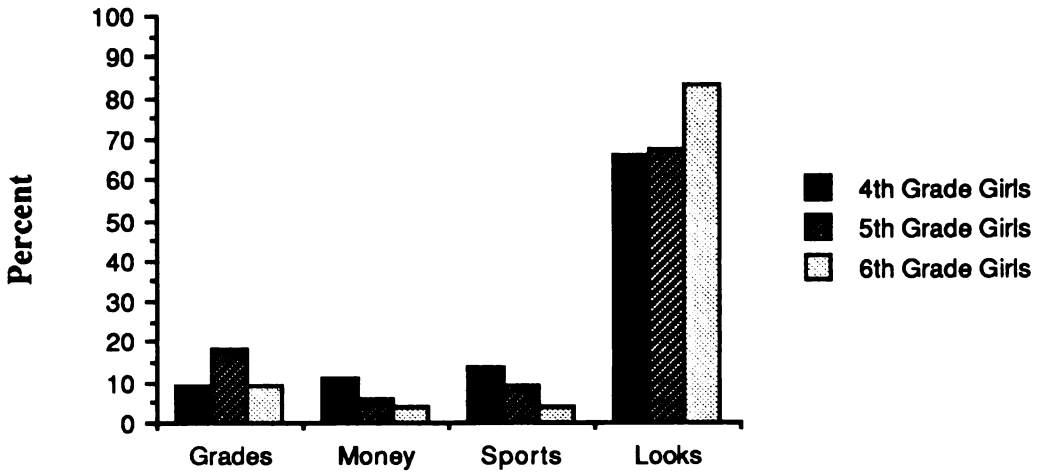

Figure 9. Determinants of Female Popularity as Rated by Girls

Activities in Which Children Prefer to Participate at School

Subjects were asked to select one activity in which they would prefer to participate at school from three selections ("make good grades," "be popular," "be good at sports"). Table 16 provides a frequency distribution of these data. Boys in this study chose "make good grades" as the first-ranked activity, "be good at sports" second, and "be popular" third. The girls chose "make good grades" first, "be popular" second, and "be good at sports" third. Chi-square analyses revealed significant gender differences for the activities in which boys and girls prefer to participate at school, χ^2 (2) = 21.45, p <.001. As illustrated in Figure 10, both boys and girls prefer to "make good grades," however, differences occurred in boys' and girls' selection of "be popular" and "be good at sports." These results indicate that Hypothesis 13 was not supported. It was hypothesized that boys would select "being good at sports" instead of "make good grades." Hypothesis 14 was supported. Girls indicated they would prefer to "make good grades."

Table 16

Preferred School Activities of Boys and Girls

	Make Good Grades		Be Popular		Be Good at Sports	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Girls	130	51.8	91	36.3	30	11.9
Boys	117	51.5	50	22.0	60	26.4

Figure 10. Preferred School Activities of Boys and Girls

Chi-square analyses revealed no significant grade level differences in the activities in which children would like to participate for boys in Grades 4, 5, and 6. As indicated in Table 17, boys in Grade 4 would rather "make good grades" first, "be popular" second, and "be good at sports" third. Boys in Grade 5 and 6 would rather "make good grades" first, "be good at sports" second, and "be popular" third (see Figure 11). The results indicate that Hypothesis 15 was not supported. It was hypothesized that all boys would prefer to "be good at sports."

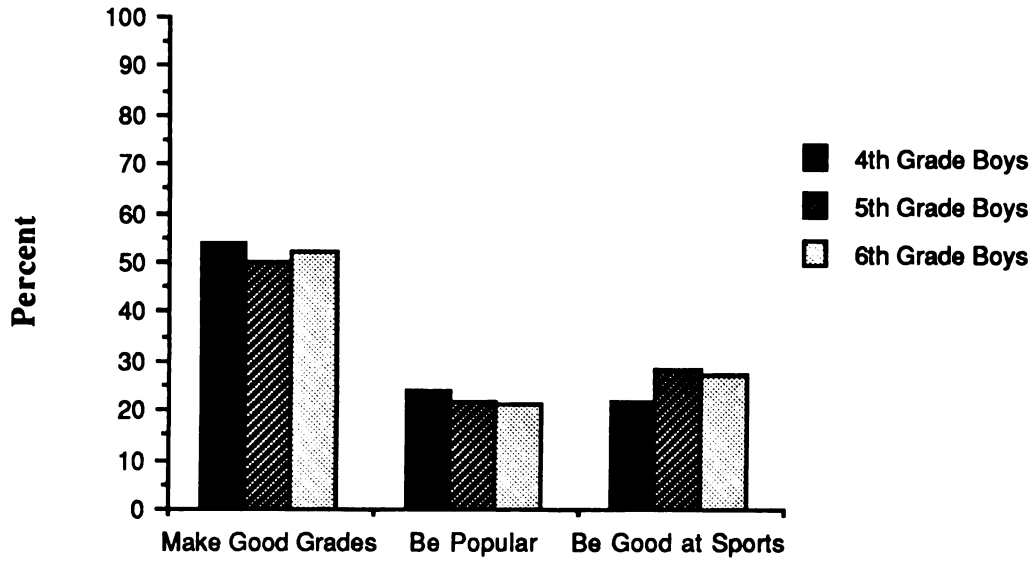

Figure 11. Preferred School Activities for Boys in Grades 4, 5, and 6

Table 17

Preferred School Activities of Boys in Grades 4, 5, and 6

Grade	Make Good Grades		Be Popular		Be Good at Sports	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
4th	29	53.7	13	24.1	12	22.2
5th	43	50.0	19	22.1	24	27.9
6th	45	51.7	18	20.7	24	27.6

Chi-square analyses revealed no significant differences in the activities in which children would like to participate for girls in Grades 4, 5, and 6 (see Figure 12). As indicated in Table 18, girls in Grade 4, 5, and 6 would rather "make good grades" first, "be popular" second, and "be good at sports" third. Hypothesis 16 was supported by these results. Most girls would prefer to "make good grades."

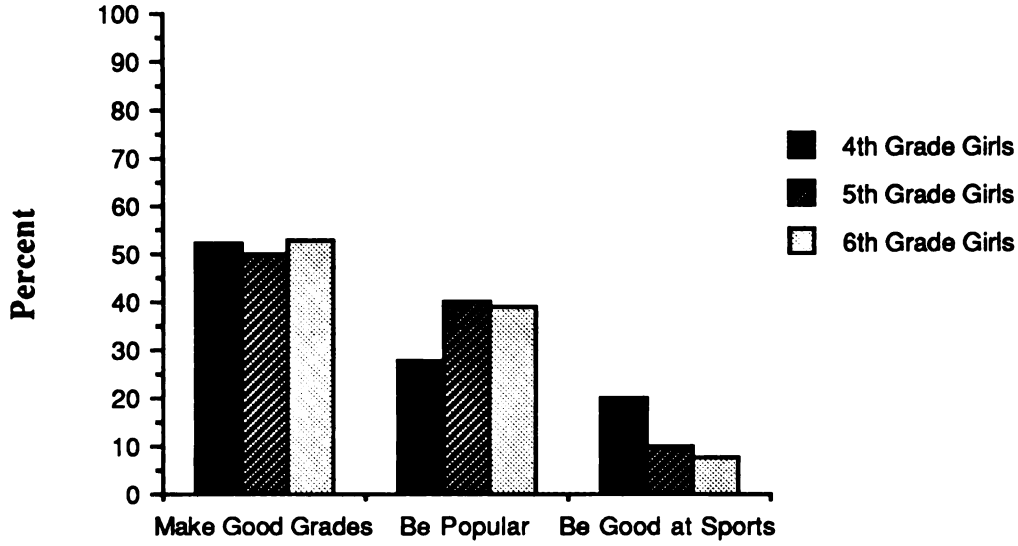

Figure 12. Preferred School Activites for Girls in Grades 4, 5, and 6

Activities in Which Children Prefer To Fail at School

Children were asked to select from three choices ("make good grades," "be popular," "be good at sports") one activity in which they would prefer to fail at school. Table 19 provides a summary of the responses of boys and girls. Boys in this study chose "be popular" as the activity in which they would prefer to fail, "be good at sports" second, and "make good grades" third. The girls chose "be good at sports" first, "be popular" second, and "make good grades" third. These results indicate that Hypothesis 17 was supported; boys did chose "be popular" most often. However Hypothesis 18 was not supported; girls chose "be good at sports" more often than "be popular" as the activity in which they would prefer to fail at school. Chi-square analyses revealed significant gender differences for the

Table 18

Preferred School Activities of Girls in Grades 4, 5, and 6

Grade	Make Good Grades		Be Popular		Be Good at Sports	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
4th	43	52.3	18	27.7	13	20.0
5th	45	50.0	36	40.0	9	10.0
6th	51	53.1	37	38.5	8	8.3

Table 19

School Activities in Which Children Prefer to Fail

	Make Good Grades		Be Popular		Be Good at Sports	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Girls	12	4.8	106	42.2	133	53.0
Boys	28	12.3	138	60.8	61	26.9

activities in which boys and girls prefer to fail at school, χ^2 (2) = 36.20, p <.001. Boys prefer to fail at being popular. Girls prefer to fail at being good at sports (see Figure 13).

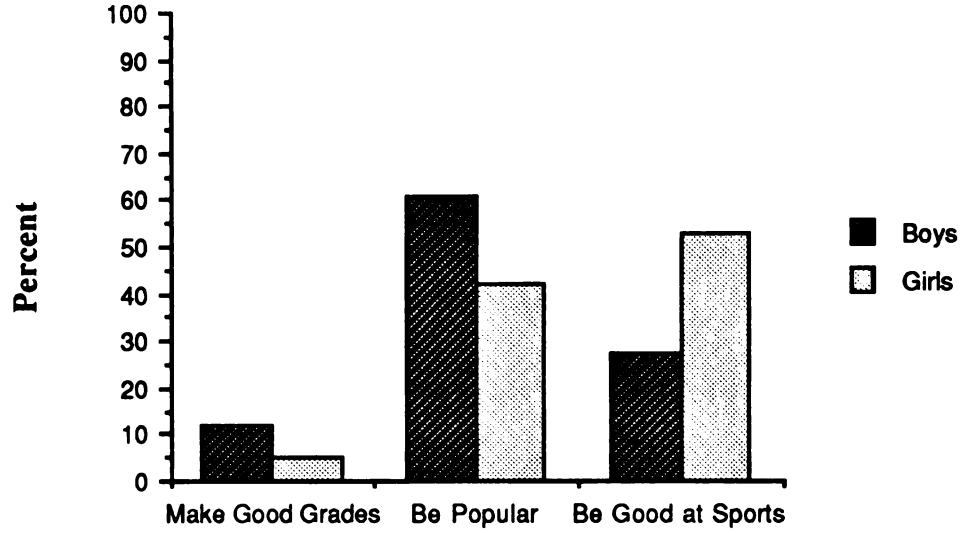

Figure 13. School Activities in Which Boys and Girls Prefer to Fail

Chi-square analyses revealed no significant differences in the activities in which children would prefer to fail for boys in Grades 4, 5, and 6 (see Figure 14). As indicated in Table 20, boys in Grade 4, 5, and 6 chose "be popular" first, "be good at sports" second, and "make good grades" third. These results support Hypothesis 19.

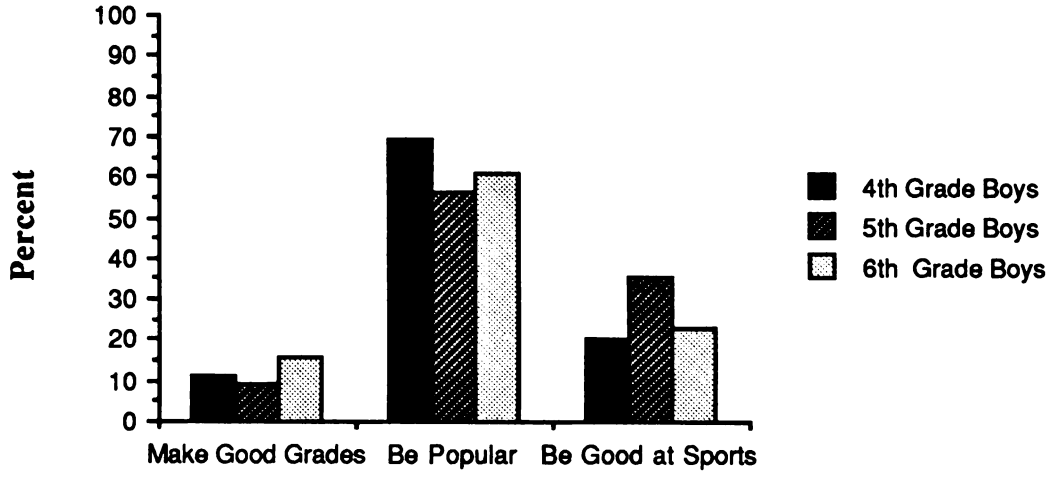

Figure 14. School Activities in Which Boys Prefer to Fail

Table 20

School Activities in Which Boys Prefer to Fail

Grade	Make Good Grades		Be Popular		Be Good at Sports	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
4th	6	11.1	37	68.5	11	20.4
5th	8	9.3	48	55.8	30	34.9
6th	14	16.1	53	60.9	20	23.0

Table 21

School Activities in Which Girls Prefer to Fail

Grade	Make Good Grades		Be Popular		Be Good at Sports	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
4th	4	6.2	35	53.9	26	40.0
5th	3	3.3	32	35.6	55	61.1
6th	5	5.2	39	40.6	52	54.2

Results for the activities in which girls would prefer to fail at school are given in Table 21. Girls in Grade 4 chose "be popular" first, "be good at sports" second, and "make good grades" third. Girls in Grade 5 and 6 chose "be good at sports" first, "be popular" second, and "make good grades" third. These results do not support Hypothesis 20. It was suggested that all girls would select "be popular" as the activity in which they would prefer to fail. However, girls in Grade 5 and 6 chose "be good at sports" most often. Chi-square analyses revealed significant differences in the choice "be good at sports" for girls in Grades 4, 5, and 6, X^2 (2) =6.84, $p < .03$. "Being good at sports" was selected more often as an activity in which girls preferred to fail at each increasing grade level (see Figure 15).

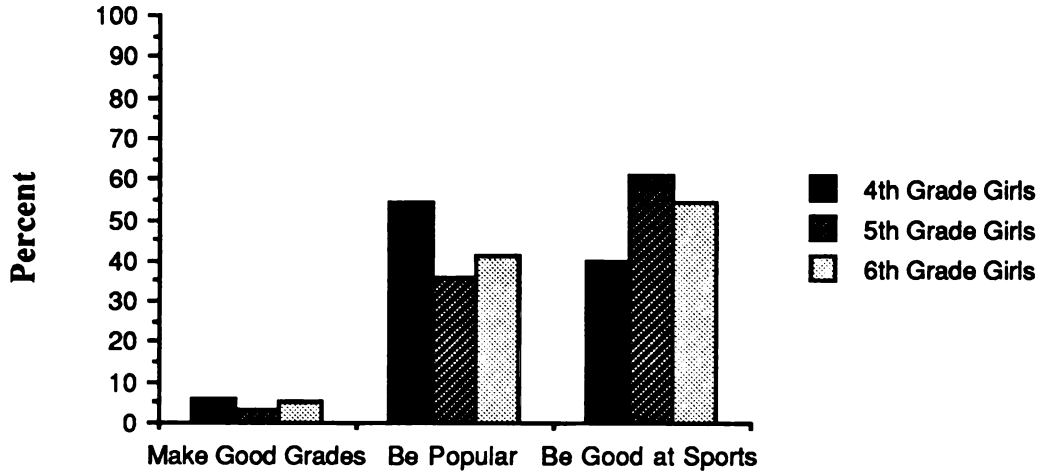

Figure 15. School Activities in Which Girls Prefer to Fail

Activities in Which Children Prefer Not To Fail at School

Children were asked to select from three choices ("make good grades," "be popular," "be good at sports") one activity in which they would prefer not to fail at school. Table 22 provides a summary of the responses of boys and girls. Boys in this study chose "make good grades" as the activity in which they would prefer not to fail, "be good at sports" second, and "be popular" third. The girls chose "make good grades" first, "be popular" second, and "be good at sports" third. These results indicate that Hypotheses 21 and 22 were supported; boys and girls preferred not to fail at "getting good grades." Chi-square

Table 22

School Activities in Which Children Prefer Not to Fail

	Make Good Grades		Be Popular		Be Good at Sports	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Girls	212	84.5	26	10.4	13	5.2
Boys	152	67.0	20	8.8	55	24.2

analyses revealed significant gender differences for some activities in which boys and girls prefer not to fail at school, X^2 (2) = 35.51, p <.001. Differences occurred in the boys and girls second and third choices (see Figure 16). Boys chose "be good at sports" and girls chose "be popular."

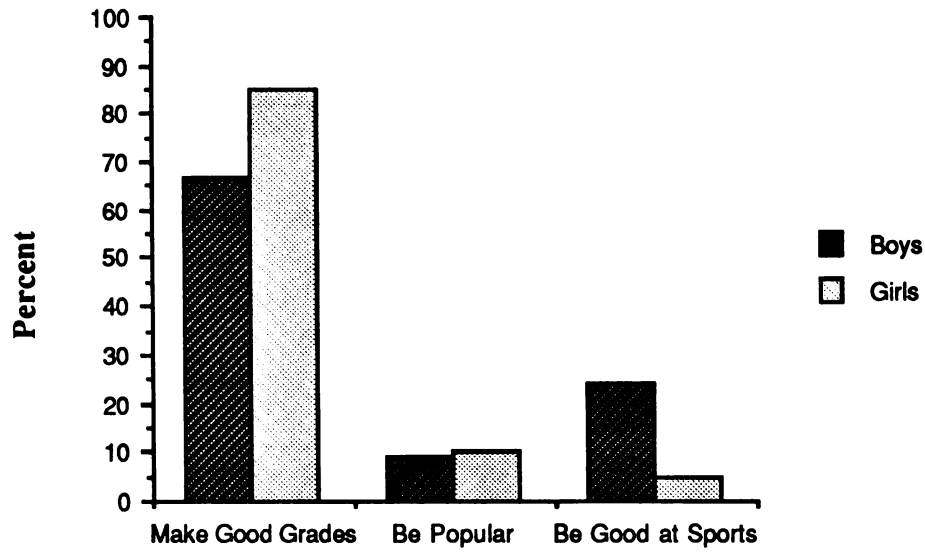

Figure 16. School Activities in Which Boys and Girls Prefer Not to Fail

Chi-square analyses revealed no significant grade differences in the activities in which children preferred not to fail. As indicated in Table 23, the boys in this study in Grade 4, 5, and 6 chose "make good grades" as the activity in which they would prefer not to fail, "be good at sports" second, and "be popular" third (see Figure 17). These results indicate that Hypothesis 23 was supported.

Table 23

School Activities in Which Boys Prefer Not to Fail

Grade	Make Good Grades		Be Popular		Be Good at Sports	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
4th	34	63.0	5	9.3	15	27.78
5th	58	67.4	9	10.5	19	35.2
6th	60	68.9	6	6.9	21	24.2

Table 24

School Activities in Which Girls Prefer Not to Fail

Grade	Make Good Grades		Be Popular		Be Good at Sports	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
4th	57	87.7	5	7.7	3	4.6
5th	75	83.3	10	11.1	5	5.5
6th	80	83.3	11	11.5	5	5.2

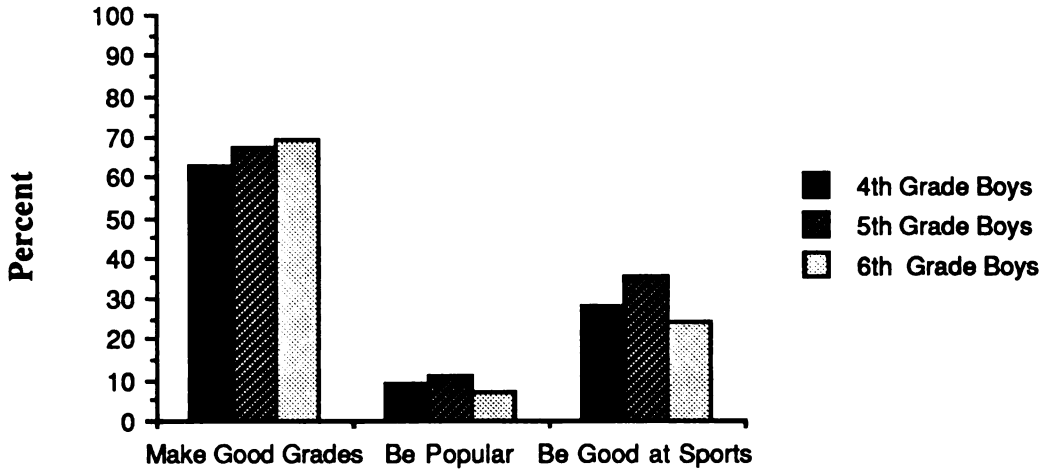

Figure 17. School Activities in Which Boys Prefer Not to Fail

Results for the activities in which girls would prefer to fail at school are given in Table 24. Girls in Grade 4, 5, and 6 chose "make good grades" first, "be popular" second, and "be good at sports" third. Hypothesis 24 was supported by these results. Chi-square analyses revealed no significant grade differences in the activities in which girls preferred not to fail (see Figure 18).

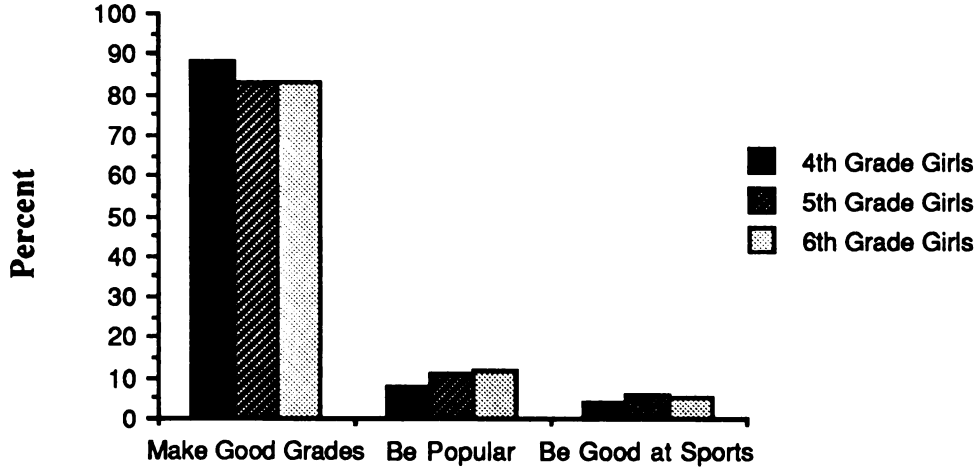

Figure 18. School Activities in Which Girls Prefer Not to Fail

Chapter Five
Discussion

One purpose of this study was to partially replicate the Buchanan et al. (1976) study which examined the criteria used by children to determine personal popularity and the activities in which children prefer to participate at school. A second purpose was to examine gender and grade level differences in the role of sports in determining the social status of children in Grades 4, 5, and 6 and provide a current assessment of which criteria are used by children to determine personal, male, and female popularity. The third purpose of this study was to examine gender and grade level differences in the activities in which children prefer to participate at school, and the activities in which they prefer to fail or not to fail. The results from this study are discussed in comparison to the Buchanan et al. (1976) results and other social status research. Recommendations for future research are outlined.

Determinants of Social Status

Determinants of Personal Popularity

Buchanan et al. (1976) did not conduct statistical tests examining gender or grade level differences for the determinants of personal popularity. They also failed to report the standard deviations in the results of the mean ranking. Without this information on variance, tests of statistical differences between the selection of popularity determinants from the Buchanan et al. (1976) study and the present study could not be conducted. Therefore, the comparisons that are reported are merely differences in the order of mean ranking.

A comparison of results from the Buchanan et al. (1976) and the present study indicate that there has been a shift in the importance of particular social status determinants in the last 15 years. As shown in Table 25, a comparison of the rank order of these results to those of the present study suggested that appearance has become more important and academic achievement less important in determining personal popularity for girls. The first choice for determining personal popularity has shifted from "getting good grades" to "being pretty," while the third choice has shifted from "being pretty" to "getting good grades," according to the comparison.

A similar conclusion can be made from the comparison of the results for the boys in each study. As indicated in Table 25, a comparison of the rank order of these results with

Table 25

Determinants of Personal Popularity as Reported by Buchanan, Blankenbaker, and Cotten (1976) and Chase (1991)

		Buchanan et al. (1976)		Chase (1991)		Differences in Results
		Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	
Grades	Girls	1.94	1st	2.59	3rd	Decrease in importance
	Boys	2.09	2nd	2.65	3rd	Decrease in importance
Sports	Girls	2.28	2nd	2.47	2nd	No difference in importance
	Boys	1.97	1st	1.66	1st	No difference in importance
Looks	Girls	2.57	3rd	1.73	1st	Increase in importance
	Boys	2.68	3rd	2.51	2nd	Increase in importance
Money	Girls	3.33	4th	3.21	4th	No difference in importance
	Boys	3.08	4th	3.19	4th	No difference in importance

those of the present study suggested that appearance has become more important and academic achievement less important in determining personal popularity for boys. "Being handsome" shifted from the third to the second most important determinant of personal popularity, while "getting good grades" dropped from the second to the third most important determinant.

These results suggested that in 15 years, appearance has become more important and academic achievement less important as determinants of social status for girls and boys. The finding that appearance has become more important to this age group was expected. Research by Asher (1983) found that physical attractiveness was highly correlated with a child's higher status in elementary school peer groups. Possibly, the differences were due to differences in the two samples. Buchanan et al. (1976) did not describe the sample in their study beyond the name of the school districts and the location.

An alternative explanation of the increased importance of appearance is an increase in the value of physical fitness and media influences. In recent years, people of all ages are getting more involved in physical fitness activities. The increased interest in physical activity could be motivated by a desire to improve appearance by losing weight and developing a more muscular body. Emphasis placed on improving the physical shape of the body may influence children to associate appearance with status. The media tends to emphasize the importance of appearance through advertisement and promotion of beautiful, well-built men and women.

The decrease in the importance of academic achievement as a social status determinant was unexpected. Buchanan et al. (1976) suggested that children were influenced by perceived parental or societal pressure to succeed academically, and results from their study indicated that "getting good grades" was chosen first among girls and second among boys as an important determinant of social status. Possibly negative labels associated with academic achievement have developed since 1976. Children may believe that the "popular" students are not the ones that only achieve in academics. This conclusion can be supported by the results of the Goldberg and Chandler (1989) study. These authors reported that multiple role expectations are placed upon the youths of today. Their research findings indicated that more emphasis was placed on being a student-athlete than on the single roles

of student or athlete. This suggests that academic achievement alone will not increase popularity among peers and that good students must also be good athletes.

Results indicated that the determinants of personal popularity differed between males and females. Boys choose "being good at sports" and girls choose "being pretty" as the most important determinants. These results were expected based on previous social status research and the perceived value placed on athletics for men and on appearance for women.

In the present study, significant grade-level differences were found which indicated that sports seem to become more important in determining social status as girls increase grade levels. This finding differs from previous social status research of high school girls which found that younger females rated being an athlete higher than did older females (Thirer & Wright, 1985). Why is there a difference in athletic participation as a social status determinant for girls in Grades 4, 5, and 6 and those in high school? One possibility may be that perceptions of athletics as a social status determinant change as girls begin competing on athletic teams in high school. The girls in Grades 4, 5, and 6 that were surveyed in this study probably had fewer athletic participation experiences than did high school girls. Therefore, the definition of "sports" may vary among the grades sampled.

Previous research suggests that negative labels are associated with participation in athletics by high school girls (Feltz, 1978; Kane, 1988), especially when rated by males. This study and others (Goldberg & Chandler, 1989; Kane, 1988; Thirer & Wright, 1985) have found that boys do not select athletics as an important criterion for female popularity. Kane (1988) found that some sports were labeled as "sex-inappropriate" for girls, and that boys preferred not to date girls involved in those sports. Perhaps girls are more influenced by the opinions of boys as they increase grade-levels.

Sports and appearance become more important as social status determinants for boys as they increase in grade-level. The increase in the importance of athletics is supported by results from other social status research of high school boys (Coleman, 1961; Eitzen, 1975; Goldberg & Chandler, 1989; Thirer & Wright, 1985). Previous findings indicated that athletics was the number one determinant of social status for boys in Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12. The rise in the importance of appearance as boys increase grade levels may be associated with an heightened awareness of such influences as attention from girls, and media promotions of men that are attractive and physically fit.

Determinants of Male Popularity. Eitzen (1975) speculated that a trend was developing toward less enthusiasm for sports which would diminish the importance of sport participation as a determinant of male social status. Eitzen's speculation has not been supported by the results of other research (Goldberg & Chandler, 1989; Thirer & Wright; Williams & White, 1983) or by this study, at least for males. As expected, when asked to choose the most important criterion for determining male popularity, most boys chose "being good at sports." One unexpected finding was the girls' selection of "being handsome" as the most important determinant of male popularity. Possibly, girls have less enthusiasm for sports, as Eitzen (1975) speculated. Or, girls place greater importance on appearance than boys as indicated by the girls' selection of the criterion "being handsome or pretty" as the most important determinant of personal, male, and female popularity. Analysis by grade level indicated that girls in Grades 4 and 5 chose "being good at sports" as the most important determinant of male popularity and "being handsome" second. Girls in Grade 6 chose "being good at sports" second and "being handsome" first. Perhaps as girls enter middle school, begin to date and have relationships with boys, they become more interested in appearance.

Determinants of Female Popularity. The most important determinant of female popularity as rated by both boys and girls, as hypothesized, was "being pretty." These selections are predictable considering that previous research indicated that boys do not select sports as an important criterion for female popularity (Goldberg & Chandler, 1989; Kane, 1988; Thirer & Wright, 1985) and that negative labels may be associated with high school girls' participation in athletics (Feltz, 1978; Kane, 1988). Girls' criteria for female popularity were the same as the girls' criteria for personal popularity. Significant grade-level differences indicated that appearance and sports seem to become more important as girls increase grade levels.

Changes in opportunities do not lead to immediate changes in value systems (Thirer & Wright, 1985). Previous research often cites Title IX (Riley, 1975) as a possible influence on the role of sports as a social status determinant for women (Feltz, 1978; Goldberg & Chandler, 1989; Kane, 1988; Thirer & Wright, 1985; Williams & White, 1983). These authors suggested that increased opportunities for girls to participate in athletics that occurred with the onset of Title IX in the mid 1970's may influence the

development of more positive attitudes toward women's participation in athletics. Previous social status research of high school students stated that athletics were viewed as "inappropriate" for females (Kane, 1988) and therefore not a positive determinant of popularity for females (Feltz, 1978; Goldberg & Chandler, 1989; Thirer & Wright, 1985). This study has shown that females tend to select "being good at sports" as the second most important determinant of social status, but that males tend to rank athletics as less important in determining female popularity. A possible explanation may be that, in many cases, Title IX still involves only one generation. The women who would have been affected by Title IX are just reaching the age at which they could be the parents of children in elementary school. As parents, these women could influence their children to have more favorable attitudes toward women's participation in athletics and then changes may occur. Previous research speculated that once adolescents were exposed to more opportunities for women to participate in sports, there would be a change in attitude (Feltz, 1978; Goldberg & Chandler, 1989; Thirer & Wright, 1985; Williams & White, 1983). This author contends that change will not occur until those who were exposed and/or experienced more opportunities to participate can socialize their children toward the acceptance of womens' participation in athletics.

Activities in Which Children Prefer to Participate and Succeed at School

Activities in Which Children Prefer to Participate at School. Subjects in the Buchanan et al. (1976) study and the present study were asked to select one activity in which they would like to participate at school from three choices ("make good grades," "be popular," "be good at sports"). As Table 26 indicates, girls in the Buchanan et al. (1976) study chose "make good grades" most often, "be popular" second, and "be good at sports" third. A comparison of results shows that the rank order of activities in which the girls from both studies preferred to participate at school were identical. Boys in the Buchanan et al. (1976) study chose "make good grades" first, "be good at sports" second, and "be popular" third. These results suggests that the rank order of activities in which boys preferred to participate are similar to the activities they preferred in 1991.

Chi-square analyses, using frequency distribution, instead of rank order, revealed significant differences between the activities in which girls from the Buchanan et al. (1976) study and the present study preferred to participate at school, $\underline{X}^2$ (2) = 59.74, $\underline{p} < .001$.

Table 26

Activities in Which Children Prefer to Participate at School as Reported by Buchanan, Blankenbaker, and Cotten (1976) and Chase (1991)

		Buchanan et al. (1976)			Chase (1991)			Differences in Results
		n	%	Rank	n	%	Rank	
Make Good Grades	Girls	295	77.6	1st	130	51.8	1st	Decrease in importance
	Boys	296	70.1	1st	117	51.5	1st	Decrease in importance
Be Popular	Girls	45	11.8	2nd	91	36.3	2nd	Increase in importance
	Boys	32	7.6	3rd	50	22.0	3rd	Increase in importance
Be Good at Sports	Girls	40	10.5	3rd	30	11.9	3rd	No difference in importance
	Boys	90	21.3	2nd	60	26.4	2nd	No difference in importance

There was a significant decrease in the importance of "make good grades" as an activity in which girls preferred to participate and an increase in the importance of "be popular." Significant differences were also found between the two studies in the activities in which boys preferred to participate, $\chi^2(2) = 33.95$, $p < .001$. There was a significant decrease in the importance of "make good grades" and an increase in the importance of "be popular." There was a slight increase in the percentage of children who selected "be good at sports" but not a statistically significant difference.

Perhaps these differences in the importance of academics and popularity as activities in which children prefer to participate are related to the shift in importance of criteria which determine popularity. "Make good grades" decreased in importance as a popularity determinant for boys and girls. Therefore, academics may not be an activity in which children prefer to participate because the "popular" students do not "make good grades." Children that chose not to select "make good grades" could be choosing "be popular" instead.

Based upon Chi-square analyses, Buchanan et al. (1976) reported that a significantly greater percentage of the boys preferred to "be good at sports" than did girls. Chi-square analyses in the present study also revealed significant gender differences for activities in which boys and girls preferred to participate at school, χ^2 (2) = 21.45, $p < .001$. Both boys and girls preferred to "make good grades," however, differences occurred in the selection of "be popular" and "be good at sports." More boys preferred to "be good at sports" then "be popular" and more girls preferred to "be popular" then "be good at sports." Because of the evidence from previous social status research which suggests the importance of sports participation for male social status (Coleman, 1961; Eitzen, 1975; Goldberg & Chandler, 1989; Thirer & Wright, 1985; Williams & White, 1983), it was hypothesized that males would select "being good at sports" as the activity in which they preferred to participate. Possibly the wording of the question, "participate at school," was misleading for boys in Grades 4, 5, and 6, who do not typically participate on school athletic teams.

Research by Feltz (1978) and Williams and White (1983) suggested that girls liked to participate in athletics, but that negative labels associated with female participation in athletics discouraged the selection of athletics as a social status determinant. In this study,

sport participation was the least favorite activity in which girls preferred to participate, and yet it was the second most important determinant of personal and female popularity. This ranking of sports as the second most important determinant could be misleading unless two factors are considered. First, being chosen the second most important determinant out of four criteria may not be all that important. If the list of criteria included a larger selection of determinants then the second chose could be considered more significant. Second, when the percentage of criteria selected is examined (Figure 1), sports rank third. The percentage of girls who chose appearance is much higher than those who chose sports. Appearance was chosen first close to 60% by the girls as the most important determinant of social status. The remaining 40% was split between the other three criterion, "make good grades," "be good at sports," and "have lot of money." Therefore, if the percentage is considered, rather than the ranking, it appears that sports may not be that important in determining social status. More research is needed to investigate why girls in Grades 4, 5, and 6 do not desire to participate in athletics.

Activities in Which Children Prefer to Fail at School. When asked to select one activity in which they preferred to fail at school, the boys chose "being popular" and the girls chose "be good at sports." The hypothesis suggested that boys would select "be popular" first because they would not want to fail at sports or academics. This was based on the belief that boys are greatly influenced by parental and societal pressure to succeed in athletics and academics. Most parents encourage their children to receive good grades in school. In addition, boys are socialized toward achievement in athletics to develop masculine characteristics (Williams & White, 1983).

The girls' selection of "be good at sports" as the activity in which they preferred to fail can be explained by a lack of parental and societal pressure for girls to succeed in athletics (Williams & White, 1983). Unfortunately, there still may exist the attitude that sports are "inappropriate" for girls (Kane, 1988). The selection of sport as an activity in which girls preferred to fail can be partially explained by the previous finding of activities in which girls preferred to participate. This finding seems logical. If girls prefer not to participate in sports then they won't care if they fail in sports.

Activities in Which Children Prefer Not to Fail at School. Boys were expected to prefer to participate in sports, therefore, athletics would be an activity in which boys would

prefer not to fail. However, the wording of the question, "prefer not to fail at school," might have influenced the selection of activities to be academically related. The selection by boys of "being good at sports" before "being popular" seems logical since athletic achievement is the most important criterion for determining male popularity.

The girls in this study also selected "make good grades" as the activity in which they preferred not to fail. Parental and societal pressure to succeed academically as well as the biased wording of the question could have influenced their selection. As mentioned earlier, the girls' selection of "be good at sports" last could be attributed to low expectations for girls to succeed in athletics (Williams & White, 1983) and the attitude that sports are "inappropriate" for girls (Kane, 1988).

Conclusions

When the overall results are examined, several conclusions can be drawn from the findings of this study. First, it appears that the role of sports for females has not changed much in the last 15 years. The girls in this study reported that they did not want to participate or succeed in sports. Only a small percentage of the girls, less than 15%, in this study chose sport as an important determinant of social status. The goal is not to have sports become the most important determinant of social status for girls but to reduce the negative status associated with female participation in sports. As Williams and White (1983) suggested, the fact that females exhibit more diverse choices as criteria for social status is more sensible than the narrower socialization toward social status determined mainly by sport as shown by males.

Second, sports appears to remain the most important determinant of social status for males. The overemphasis placed on sports as a social status determinant for males is unfortunate. First of all, young males may perceive a lot of pressure to achieve in sports. Athletic success is not always possible due to a child's lack of ability, late maturity, and limited number of opportunities to participate on school athletic teams. Secondly, the status enjoyed as a high school athlete is short-lived and does not always prepare male adolescents for social success after the athletic success is over. As Snyder (1985) stated, the athletic role has a short term payoff. So while females should be able to participate in sports without any negative labels associated, boys should also be afforded the opportunity not to participate in sports without losing popularity.

Third, results indicated that although children want to "make good grades," to achieve popularity among peers they must be attractive and good at sports. This suggests that the role of the student-athlete may become more desirable for children. This finding has important implications for educators. If children desire the role of the student-athlete, then why not use the interest in sports or other social status determinants to motivate children toward success in the classroom. For example, the importance of passing classes in order to be eligible to play. Teachers could use the activities that children value as a tool for learning. When learning to read, allow children to read about activities that they value.

The fourth conclusion is that the increaseing importance of appearance in determining social status should be examined more closely. This finding should cause some concern among parents and educators, because appearance is not an attribute that can be easily changed, if changed at all. Current problems with anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa provide an example of the dangers associated with too much emphasis placed on appearance. If appearance continues to be an important criterion for social status, then other criteria may become less important and less desirable. Appearance alone has very few long-term benefits that would prepare children for future careers and meaningful contributions to society.

Conclusions about the activities in which children preferred to participate, preferred to fail or preferred not to fail suggest that academic achievement was the most preferred activity children in Grades 4, 5, and 6. However, if academics continue to decrease in importance as a social status determinant, then academic achievement may become less desired as an activity to participate and/or succeed. Adolescence is a time when popularity among peers is very important (Williams & White, 1983). If academic achievement can become more important as a determinant of social status, and more multiple role expectations continue to develop (Goldberg & Chandler, 1989), then the education of young children could be greatly enhanced.

Recommendations

The findings in this study provide educators with a current assessment of the criteria used by children in Grades 4, 5, and 6 to determine social status. While this study helps to explain the status of the criteria used by young adolescents, it does not provide all the answers. Future research in several areas is recommended.

The first recommendation is to expand the generalizability of the study by sampling more subjects and improving the subject selection process. In this study, very few racial groups were represented. Future studies should include more adolescents from minority backgrounds. Also, this study helps to provide insights as to the criteria used by children in Grades 4, 5, and 6.

The next step is to investigate the criteria used by children in Grades 7, 8, and 9. This study provides a current assessment of the social status determinants used by children in Grades 4, 5, and 6 and the activities in which they prefer to participate and succeed. Previous research (Coleman, 1961; Eitzen, 1975; Felt, 1978; Goldberg & Chandler, 1989; Thirer & Wright, 1985; Williams & White, 1983) provides an evaluation of the social status determinants used by children in Grades 10, 11, and 12 and the activities in which they prefer to participate. Given this information on children in Grade 7, 8, and 9, developmental trends could be examined across Grades 4 through 12.

The process by which subjects were selected to participate could be improved. Participation in this study was dependent upon receiving permission from the superintendent of schools and the parents of the subjects. Of the 12 school districts that were contacted only three superintendents decided to participate. This percentage of participation seems low (25%). Some of the schools indicated that they would not allow research which involved social status to be conducted in their district. Other schools did not have any teachers who were interested in participating. It is unclear whether the schools that participated and those that did not differed, and if so, how they may have differed. The subjects who participated were those that volunteered, not a random selection. There were 478 children who participated of 965 children contacted (49%). By observation it is not known whether the students that participated differed from those that did not. A random sample would provide a more unbiased sample. However, this recommendation may be difficult to accomplish because parental permission is required.

A second recommendation involves the method used to collect the data. The questionnaire typically used in social status research is a closed response. The subjects are given a list of criteria from which to choose. Often the list of criteria was similar to those used by Coleman in 1961. Perhaps the criteria are out of date and no longer represent an accurate selection of popularity determinants. An open response format may identify

criterion that were not included but are of importance in determining the popularity of children. For example, the criterion "being a nice or friendly person" was not included but may be of importance in determining popularity. Also, with the increase in the importance of appearance, maybe "wear the right clothes" has become important.

A more qualitative approach to studying the social status system would also allow a more in-depth investigation into the role of sports in determining popularity. For example, the present method groups a variety of athletes into one category, "sports." It is possible that the popularity of football players compared to cross country runners and cheerleaders compared to softball players would differ. Kane (1988) has already demonstrated that "sex-appropriate" and "sex-inappropriate" sports exist for females. Her research did not investigate "sex-appropriate" and "sex-inappropriate" sports for males. Future research in this area would be interesting to examine.

Another method of data collection, such as that used by Goldberg and Chandler (1989), should be further tested. They used a 5-point Likert scale instead of a forced response. This allowed participants to identify more than one activity as important in determining social status and permitted the emergence of multiple role demands. This method of study may help to identify the value structure of children, which as mentioned earlier, would aid teachers in the education of children.

A third recommendation would be to conduct this study while controlling for variables such as grade point average and participation on athletic teams or in physical education. The procedures for this study did not control for past athletic experiences or present opportunities. Some school districts may have after-school, club, or weekend recreational programs that would allow subjects a better assessment of personal athletic ability in comparison to their peers. This may influence the students' perceptions of the role of sports in determining social status. These districts might also value sport participation more and, therefore, the children would rank sports as more important in determining social status than children with no recreational or after-school programs. Opportunities to participate would also influence the selection of preferred activities. Research in this area could examine if any of these variables correlate with criteria that determine popularity and/or with preferred activities.

A fourth recommendation would be to reword the questions that state "participate at school" and "fail or do not fail at school." "At school" should be excluded to test whether this wording creates any bias toward academic achievement.

The final recommendation would be to extend this study to include other variables. Previous research of high school students has included variables such as the "winning tradition" of the school's athletic teams (Eitzen, 1975; Feltz, 1978; Williams & White, 1983), "sex-appropriateness" of the sport (Kane, 1988), parent's education (Eitzen, 1975), and school size (Eitzen, 1975). These variables could be examined to provide more insight into the social status system of elementary and middle school children.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Questionnaire

This questionnaire is being used so that I can learn more about what makes children popular with their classmates. By answering each question honestly you will help me get a better understanding of what children in your grade are thinking.

None of your friends, parents or teachers will see your answers. This is not a test and will not count in any of your school grades. There are no right or wrong answers. If there are any words or questions you do not understand, please raise your hand and ask for help. You have the right not to participate at all or to stop answering questions at any time. Thank you for giving your best effort on all of the questions.

Place a check mark (√) by the response which best describes your answer.

Sex: Girl _____ Boy _____

Grade: 4th _____ 5th _____ 6th _____

Age : 8 years _____ 9 years _____ 10 years _____

11 years _____ 12 years _____ 13 years _____

Race: White ____ Black ____ Hispanic ____ Oriental _____

American Indian ___ Interracial ____ Other _____

CIRCLE THE NUMBER WHICH BEST ANSWERS EACH QUESTION.

1. Compared to most kids in your class, how good are your grades in school?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Poor	Poor	Same	Good	Very Good

2. Compared to most kids in your class, how good are you at sports?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Poor	Poor	Same	Good	Very Good

3. Compared to most of the kids in your class who are of the same sex, (if you are a girl, compare yourself to other girls, if you are a boy, compare yourself to other boys), you are:

1	2	3
Less Popular than most	About the Same in Popularity	More Popular than most

4. How many days during the week do you usually play some kind of sports?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
days	day	days	days	days	days	days	days

5. Place a check mark by each sport that you play a lot (more than 1 day per week). You may pick more than 1 sport. Or check none if you do not play any sports.

Basketball	_____	Baseball/Softball	_____
Football	_____	Swimming	_____
Volleyball	_____	Gymnastics	_____
Soccer	_____	Tennis	_____
Kick Ball	_____	Other	_____
		None	_____

6. What would make <u>YOU</u> more popular at your school with the kids in your class? Put a 1 by the most important thing, a 2 by your second choice, a 3 by your third choice, and a 4 by your fourth choice, for what would make you more popular?

A. Make Good Grades _____
B. Having Lots of Money _____
C. Being Good at Sports _____
D. Being Handsome or Pretty _____

7. What would make GIRLS more popular at your school with the kids in your class.? Put a 1 by the most important thing, a 2 by your second choice, a 3 by your third choice, and a 4 by your fourth choice, for what would make girls more popular?

   A. Make Good Grades _____
   B. Having Lots of Money _____
   C. Being Good at Sports _____
   D. Being Handsome or Pretty _____

8. What would make BOYS more popular at your school with the kids in your class. Put a 1 by the most important thing, a 2 by your second choice, a 3 by your third choice, and a 4 by your fourth choice, for what would make boys more popular?

   A. Make Good Grades _____
   B. Having Lots of Money _____
   C. Being Good at Sports _____
   D. Being Handsome or Pretty _____

9. What would you most like to do at school? Place a check mark by only 1 answer.

   A. Make Good Grades _____
   B. Be Popular _____
   C. Be Good at Sports _____

10. If you had to fail at something, which one would it be ok if you failed or were not good at? Place a check mark by only 1 answer.

    A. Getting Good Grades _____
    B. Being Popular _____
    C. Being Good at Sports _____

11. If you had to fail at something, which one would it NOT be ok if you failed or were not good at? Place a check mark by only 1 answer.

    A. Getting Good Grades _____
    B. Being Popular _____
    C. Being Good at Sports _____

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND EXERCISE SCIENCE
I M SPORTS CIRCLE
EAST LANSING • MICHIGAN • 48824-1034

APPENDIX B

Dear Parents,

I am a graduate student at Michigan State University pursuing a Master's degree in Physical Education. This letter is to request permission for your son or daughter to complete a 11-item questionnaire as part of a research project.

The purpose of this project is to survey children's opinions and attitudes about participation in sports and social status among peers. The questionnaire will require about 15-20 minutes and will be conducted during the school day, at your child's school. The questionnaire will be administered to your child's whole class at once. All of your child's answers will be confidential. Participation in the project is voluntary in that your child may withdraw at any time or decline to answer any of the questions if he/she chooses.

If you would like a copy of the general results or you would like any further information, you can call me at the IM Sports Circle building, Michigan State University, 336-1416.

Sincerely,

Melissa Chase

APPENDIX C

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

I, _____, hereby agree to allow my son/daughter _____ to participate as a volunteer in a scientific study as an authorized part of the research program in the Department of Physical Education at Michigan State University under the supervision of Dr. Gail Dummer (graduate advisor).

The purpose of this study is to assess the criterion children use to determine social status among their peers and the relationship between athletic participation and social status. The study will consist of an eleven item questionnaire. Directions and each question will be read out loud twice, by the investigator. Your child's answers will remain anonymous.

The study and my child's part in the study have been defined and fully explained to me and I understand this explanation. I have been given an opportunity to ask whatever questions and inquiries have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that my child's participation in this study does not guarantee any beneficial results to me. I understand that any data or answers to questions will remain confidential with regard to my child's identity. Within these restrictions, results of the study will be made available to me at my request. I FURTHER UNDERSTAND THAT I AM FREE TO WITHDRAW MY CONSENT AND DISCONTINUE MY CHILD'S PARTICIPATION AT ANY TIME.

_____ _____

Date Parent's Signature

APPENDIX D

Script for Administration Procedures of Questionnaire to Subjects

Hello, my name is Melissa. I am a graduate student at Michigan State University. I would like to thank you for helping me with this project. What I am going to have you do is fill out a questionnaire. A questionnaire is a sheet of paper with a few questions written down for you to answer. All of your answers will be anonymous. That means that no one will ever know how you answered each question.

If there are any questions you do not want to answer you may skip that question. You do not have to participate in this project if you do not want to. You may stop answering questions at any time or you can choose to stop participating at any time. If you have any questions please raise your hand and ask.

I will read the directions and each question out loud to the class. Please do not work ahead but stay with the class and read along with me. Some of the questions will ask you to rank four choices. Ranking means that you put a number by the choices in the order of importance. For example, if I asked you to rank which of these four foods you would like to have for lunch: pizza, tacos, hamburgers, or ice cream. You would put a 1 by your first choice, a 2 by your second choice, a 3 by your third choice, and a 4 by your last choice. Right now in your mind, rank which foods you would like to have for lunch. Does anyone have any questions about ranking?

Some of the questions will ask you about popularity. I would like you to think of popularity meaning "you are well liked by a lot of people." Other questions will ask you about sports. Think of sports as being "any games or activities that you do in physical education class, at recess, or during an after-school sports program."

You may turn over the questionnaire and begin reading silently along with me.

APPENDIX E

Pilot Study

Two pilot studies were conducted to test the questionnaire, the procedure to contact subjects, the procedures to administer the questionnaire, and the method to analyze the data. The first pilot study was completed Spring term of 1990, as an interview class project for HCP 831, Social Aspects of Sports Participation. The purpose of the interview project was to examine the criteria used by children to determine social status. Five children from a greater Lansing area swim team were interviewed. The children were in Grades 4 through 7.

The parents of the subjects were given a letter which explained the purpose of the interview and the time requirements. Parents were then called to arrange for an interview time. At the interview session, the child was assured that his/her answers would remain confidential. He/she was asked permission to tape record the session. All interviews lasted 35 to 40 minutes.

The subjects were asked some questions from the questionnaire that were used for the thesis project. Some questions in the interview did not pertain to the thesis topic but were based on topics discussed in the HCP 831 class.

The results of this project were somewhat similar to the results of previous social status research. Male popularity among males and females was determined by "being good at sports." All the subjects were in agreement that sports are the most important criterion for determining male popularity. Female popularity among males and females was not so easily determined. Some of the criteria mentioned were "attractiveness," "wearing the right clothes," and "hanging out with the popular kids." Two of the girls mentioned "being good in sports" was important, but this may have been due to the fact that these girls are highly involved in sports. None of the children mentioned that "getting good grades" was important for determining female or male popularity.

The second pilot study was very similar to the study that was completed for the thesis project. The subjects were boys and girls, in Grades 4, 5, and 6. A letter explaining the purpose of the pilot study and a consent form was mailed to 34 families. Seven girls and ten boys volunteered to participate in the pilot study.

The questionnaire administration procedures are outlined below. The children

listened as the investigator read from a script which explained the procedures they should follow, their rights as subjects, and how to answer a question which involved ranking choices. They were encouraged to ask questions at any time. Then a pencil and the questionnaire was handed out to each subject. They were asked to define popularity on the back of the questionnaire. After finishing the definition, they were asked to turn over the questionnaire and read along silently with the investigator. The directions and each question was read out loud. When the questionnaire was completed, the children were asked to examine each question and make suggestions about the clarity and wording of each one. Then the questionnaire was collected by the investigator. The process lasted 20 to 25 minutes.

The children did not have any difficulty completing the questionnaire. They stated that they understood the questions, the definition of words, and the reading level was not too difficult. The questions that involved ranking were not difficult to answer. They did suggest that the investigator should read faster.

A gender comparison of the criteria used by children to determine personal popularity found that the boys and girls ranked each criterion in the same order (see Table 27). "Being good at sports" was the most important criterion, "being handsome or pretty" was second, "making good grades" was third, and "having lots of money"was fourth. A gender comparison of the criteria used by children to determine female popularity found few differences (see Table 28). "Being handsome or pretty" was the first choice for determining female popularity. "Making good grades" was second, "being good at sports" was third, and "having lots of money" was the fourth choice for boys and girls. A gender comparison of the criteria used by children to determine male popularity found differences only in the second and third choices (see Table 29). "Being good at sports" was the first choice for determining male popularity. The girls chose "being handsome or pretty" second and "making good grades" third. The boys chose "making good grades" slightly ahead of "being handsome or pretty." Both boys and girls chose "having lots of money" last.

Table 30 indicates what children prefer to do while at school. The boys in this study chose "make good grades" more often than "be good in sports" or "be popular." The girls in the study prefer to "make good grades" or "be popular" rather than "be good at sports." The next question asked children if they had to fail at something what would they prefer to fail at in school. As shown in Table 31, all of the girls chose "be popular," while nine boys

Table 27

Pilot Study Results for Determinants of Personal Popularity

	Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6		Total	
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
Grades	1.67	2.00	2.00	2.67	3.67	3.30	2.45	2.66
Sports	1.33	0.66	1.00	1.33	2.33	1.20	1.55	1.06
Looks	3.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	1.00	2.80	2.33	2.60
Money	4.00	2.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.67	3.00

*lowest mean ranking indicates first choice

Table 28

Pilot Study Results for Determinants of Female Popularity

	Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6		Total	
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
Grades	2.30	2.50	1.00	1.67	3.00	3.67	2.10	2.61
Sports	2.67	3.00	2.00	2.00	2.33	3.67	2.30	2.89
Looks	1.33	1.00	3.00	3.00	1.00	3.67	1.78	2.56
Money	3.67	3.50	4.00	3.33	3.67	5.67	3.78	4.17

*lowest mean ranking indicates first choice

Table 29

Pilot Study Results for Determinants of Male Popularity

	Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6		Total	
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
Grades	3.00	2.00	2.00	2.67	3.33	3.00	2.78	2.56
Sports	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.80	1.33	1.27
Looks	3.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	1.00	2.80	2.33	2.60
Money	3.00	2.00	4.00	3.33	3.67	3.60	3.56	3.98

*lowest mean ranking indicates first choice

Table 30

Pilot Study Results for Preferred School Activities of Boys and Girls

	Make Good Grades	Be Popular	Be Good at Sports
Girls	3.00	3.00	1.00
Boys	7.00	1.00	2.00

Table 31

Pilot Study Results for School Activities in Which Children Prefer to Fail

	Make Good Grades	Be Popular	Be Good at Sports
Girls	0.00	7.00	0.00
Boys	1.00	9.00	0.00

chose "be popular" and one boy chose "make good grades." Table 32 shows that most of the boys and girls would prefer not to fail at "making good grades," while one boy and one girls would prefer not to fail at "being good at sports." A chi-square was not run on the results because of the small sample size.

Overall, the results of the pilot studies indicated that the questionnaire, the procedures to contact subjects, the procedures to administer the questionnaire, and the method to analyze the data were appropriate for future use in this study.

Table 32

Pilot Study Results for School Activities in Which Children Prefer Not to Fail

	Make Good Grades	Be Popular	Be Good at Sports
Girls	6.00	0.00	1.00
Boys	9.00	0.00	1.00

LIST OF REFERENCES

LIST OF REFERENCES

Asher, S. R. (1983). Social competence and peer status: Recent advances and future directions. Child Development, 54, 1427-1434.

Asher, S. R., Oden, S. L., & Gottman, J. M. (1977). Children's friendships in school settings. In L. G. Katz (Ed.), Current Topics in Early Childhood Education, Norwood, NJ: Ablex. (Vol. 1), 33-61.

Biddulph, L. G. (1954). Athletic achievement and the personal social adjustment of high school boys. Research Quarterly, 25, 1-7.

Brace, D. K. (1954). Sociometric evidence of the relationship between social status and athletic ability among junior high school boys. American Academy of Physical Education, 3. In H. S. Slusher and A. S. Lockhart (Eds.) Anthology of Contemporary Readings. Dubuque, IA: Wm. C. Brown. 134-156.

Buchanan, H. T., Blankenbaker, J. & Cotten, D. (1976). Academic and athletic ability as popularity factors in elementary school children. Research Quarterly, 47(3), 320-325.

Coakley, J. J. (1990). Sport in Society: Issues and Controversies. Times Mirror/Mosby College Publishing.

Coie, J. D. & Dodge, K. A. (1983). Continuities and changes in children's social status: A five year longitudinal study. Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 29, 261-281.

Coleman, J. S. (1961). The Adolescent Society: The Social Life of the Teenager and Its Impact on Education. New York: Free Press.

Cowell, C. (1970). The contributions of physical activity to social development. In H. S. Slusher and A. S. Lockhart (Eds.) Anthology of Contemporary Readings. Dubuque, IA: Wm. C. Brown. 134-156.

Cowell, C. C. & Ismail, A. H. (1962). Relationships between selected social and physical factors. Research Quarterly, 33(1), 40-43.

Cratty, B. J. (1967). Social Dimensions of Physical Activity. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Eifermann, R. (1971). Social play in childhood. In R. Herron & B. Sutton-Smith (Eds.), Child's Play. New York: Wiley.

Eitzen, D. S. (1975). Athletics in the status system of male adolescents: A replication of Coleman's the adolescent society. Adolescence, 38(10), 267-276.

Evans, J. & Roberts, G. C. (1987). Physical competence and the development of children's peer relations. Quest, 39, 23-35.

Faunce, W. A. (1984). School achievement, social status, and self-esteem. Social Psychology Quarterly, 47(1), 3-14.

Feltz, D. L. (1978). Athletics in the status system of female adolescents. Review of Sport and Leisure, 3, 98-108.

Glassner, B. (1976). Kid society. Urban Education, 11(1), 5-22.

Goldberg, A. D. & Chandler, T. J. (1989). The role of athletics: The social world of high school adolescents. Youth and Society, 21(2), 238-249.

Gordon, C. (1957). The Social System of the High School. New York: Glencoe Free Press.

Hagberg, S. J. (1963). A study of the relationship between social popularity and physical fitness of boys and girls grade 3 through 5, in a selected Illinois community. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Illinois.

Hartup, W. W. (1983). The peer system. In E. M. Hetherington (Ed.), Handbook of Child Psychology: Socialization, Personality, and Social Development. New York: Wiley.

Kane, M. J. (1988). The female athletic role as a status determinant within the social systems of high school adolescents. Adolescence, 23, 253-264.

Kay, R. S., Felker, D. W. & Varoz, R. O. (1972). Sports interests and abilities as contributors to self-concept in junior high school boys. Research Quarterly, 43(2), 208-215.

Lever, J. (1976). Sex differences in the games children play. Social Problems, 23, 478-487.

Lipsky, R. (1981). How We Play the Game. Boston: Beacon.

Marlowe, M. (1980). Games analysis intervention: A procedure to increase peer acceptance of socially isolated children. Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport, 51, 422-426.

Marks, J. B. (1954). Interest, leadership, and sociometric status among adolescents. Sociometry, 17, 340-349.

Martens, F. L. (1974). Personality, attitudes, and academic achievement of athletic and non-athletic junior high school boys. Perceptual and Motor Skills, 538.

McGraw, L. W. & Tolbert, J. W. (1953). Sociometric status and athletic ability of junior high school boys. Research Quarterly, 24, 72-80.

Metheny, E. (1967). Connotations of Movement in Sport and Dance. Dubuque, IA: William C. Brown Publishers.

Parke, R. D. & Asher, S. R. (1983). Social and personality development. Annual Review of Psychology, 34, 465-509.

Polgar, S. (1976). The social context of games: Or when play is not play. Sociology of Education, 49, 265-271.

Purkey, W. W. (1970). Self Concept and School Achievement. Englewood Cliffs New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Riley, M. (1975). Title IX: A proposal for a law to guarentee equal opportunity for non-athletes. Journal of Physical Education and Recreation. July.

Rogers, C. M., Smith, M. D. & Coleman, J. M. (1978). Social comparison in the classroom: The relationship between academic achievement and self-concept. Journal of Educational Psychology, 70(1), 50-57.

Rubin, K. H. (1983). Recent perspectives on social competence and peer status: Some introductory remarks. Child Development, 54, 1383-1385.

Smoll, F. L. (1974). Motor impairment and social development. American Corrective Therapy Journal, 28(1), 4-7.

Snyder, E. E. (1985). A theoretical analysis of academic and athletic roles. Sociology of Sport Journal, 3, 211-217.

Spady, W. G. (1970). Lament for the letter men: Effects of peer status and extracurricular activities on goals and achievement. American Journal of Sociology, 75, 680-702.

Thirer, J. & Wright, S. D. (1985). Sport and social status for adolescent males and females. Sociology of Sport Journal, 2, 164-171.

Veroff, J. (1969). Social comparison and the development of achievement motivation. In C. P. Smith (Ed.), Achievement-related Motives in Children. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Williams, J. M. & White, K. A. (1983). Adolescent status systems for males and females at three age levels. Adolescence, 70(18), 381- 389.