



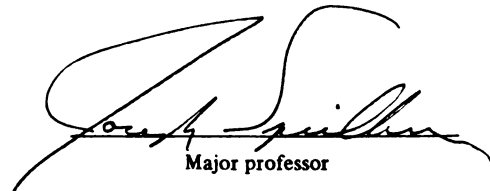
28397175

This is to certify that the
thesis entitled
TEACHER PERSPECTIVES ON WHY STUDENTS DROP
OUT OF SCHOOL AND THE CONNECTION TO POLITICS:
A STUDY INVESTIGATING THE LINKAGE BETWEEN
TYPES OF TEACHERS, THEIR POLITICAL VIEWS AND
WHY THEY THINK STUDENTS DROP OUT OF SCHOOL
presented by

DONALD L. TUSKI

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

MA degree in ANP



Major professor

Date 4 Aug 1989

0-7639

MSU is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Institution

LIBRARY
Michigan State
University

**PLACE IN RETURN BOX to remove this checkout from your record.
TO AVOID FINES return on or before date due.**

DATE DUE	DATE DUE	DATE DUE
JUN 13 1994 JUN 13 1994	_____	_____
FEB 06 1995 FEB 06 1995	_____	_____
NOV 02 1994 NOV 02 1994	_____	_____
JUN 12 2003 JUN 12 2003	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

MSU is An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Institution

c:\circ\datedue.pm3-p.1

TEACHER PERSPECTIVES ON WHY STUDENTS DROP OUT OF SCHOOL
AND THE CONNECTION TO POLITICS: A STUDY INVESTIGATING THE
LINKAGE BETWEEN TYPES OF TEACHERS, THEIR POLITICAL VIEWS
AND WHY THEY THINK STUDENTS DROP OUT OF SCHOOL

BY

Donald L. Tuski

A THESIS

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

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Anthropology

1989

ABSTRACT

TEACHER PERSPECTIVES ON WHY STUDENTS DROP OUT OF SCHOOL
AND THE CONNECTION TO POLITICS: A STUDY INVESTIGATING THE
LINKAGE BETWEEN TYPES OF TEACHERS, THEIR POLITICAL VIEWS
AND WHY THEY THINK STUDENTS DROP OUT OF SCHOOL

BY

DONALD L. TUSKI

This study investigates the relationship between specific types of teachers, their political views and their view on why students drop out of school. The latter will then be used as a mechanism to show 1) the connection between politics and education 2) how teachers construct their view on why students drop out of school from conscious teaching experience and unconscious or covert political views and 3) how teachers must begin to consciously realize and accept the fact that politics is very much involved in school.

The study will limit itself to a theoretical overview of the new sociology of education and teacher-based data collected from eight rural high schools in south-central Michigan. The findings suggest that teachers base their conscious and overt opinions mostly on their teaching experience. It is also shown that certain curriculum areas tend to have teachers that have certain political views that can be predicted.

Copyright by
DONALD L. TUSKI
1989

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to sincerley thank all the teachers who took the time out of their busy schedules to answer the lengthy questionnaire thrust upon them. I would also like to thank Tammy Wright and Tammy Brakora for their kind help. Dr. Scott Whiteford is to be thanked for all of his advice and time he gave me while researching this thesis. He has shown me the spirit of anthropology that makes it such a great discipline. My advisor, Dr. Joseph Spielberg is appreciated immensely for his insight into anthropology and all of the social sciences as well as for his patience during the thesis process. He has also helped me elevate my research and writing skills. Finally, I express a personal thank you to my wife, Louise, who assisted and supported me in many aspects of my graduate work.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I:

Introduction.....	1
Overt and Covert Relations of Education.....	1
Objectives of the Study.....	2
Limitations of the Study.....	3
Central Hypotheses Before Data.....	3
Methodology and Types of Data.....	5
Preliminary Data Analysis.....	8

CHAPTER II:

Theoretical Overview.....	13
Contemporary Debates and Reform Movements	
Linking Politics to Education.....	13
Conservative Educational Philosophy.....	14
Liberal Educational Philosophy.....	28
Radical Educational Philosophy.....	34

CHAPTER III:

Data Analysis.....	44
Determining Political Perspective	
of Teacher.....	44
Political Socialization of Teacher.....	47
Teacher Types.....	59
Teacher Perspectives on Why Students	
Drop Out of School.....	64
Factors According to the Teacher that	
Influence their Perspectives on Dropouts.....	70
Teacher Perspectives and the Connection	
to Politics.....	73
Conclusion and Discussion.....	77

Appendix.....	90
---------------	----

References.....	99
-----------------	----

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER III:

Responses To Policy Questions In Questionnaire And Their Political References.....	46
Percentages Of Politically Labeled Teachers.....	47
Political Socialization Of Teachers.....	50
Teacher Types And Linkage To Politics.....	61
Teacher Perspectives On Why Students Drop Out Of School.....	65
Factors According To The Teacher That Influence Their Perspectives On Dropouts.....	71

INTRODUCTION

EDUCATION AND ITS OVERT AND COVERT RELATIONSHIPS

The problems and purposes of public education have been intensely debated many times and through many cycles of American history, but until recently it was not getting the full attention of the public. Now, "after nearly two decades of benign neglect, schools are once more the subject of an intense national debate" (Aronowitz and Giroux 1985:1). Consequently, like many domestic issues, education gets more attention during election years. The Presidential Election of 1988 was no exception. Conservative and liberal politicians interested in education were busy debating the "problems" and functions of education. In order to critically look at education it must be placed in a much larger construct, which according to Michael Apple, means situating "it within the class, race and gender dynamics that exist in our society" (Shor 1986:ix). This framework also includes politics and economics. Until educators and administrators are willing to overtly place education in the larger society- connecting it directly with the politics, economics and other aspects of American Culture- it will still be thought of as external to other institutions of American life. In the semi-overt and certainly covert debate over schooling, there are three main

ideological views. These views contain many subviews and range from a conservative view on the far right, to a liberal view slightly on the left and to a radical view which is on the far left of the political spectrum. A critical explanation and discussion on the three main viewpoints is forthcoming in Chapter Two.

This study will then be an attempt to show that teachers along with education as a whole, must be analyzed in terms of its relation to the larger society in which it is intertwined. One type of educational problem (student dropout) will be analyzed from the teachers' point of view. Identifying the factors that help to formulate the teacher's own perception on the problems of education will then be one of the main objectives of this investigation.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

In more specific terms, this study deals with how different types of teachers view the reasons why students drop out of school and how those reasons are connected to politics. Student dropout will then be a medium for 1)analyzing how politics covertly and even unconsciously interacts with our educational institutions, without the teacher realizing it or admitting it, 2)discovering what has influenced the teachers views, and 3)suggesting how teachers can become more aware of the problems of dropouts and how they can become more politically aware of what is happening to public education,

which will assist them in regaining and keeping control over their professions. With this, there will be ideas presented on what teachers can actually do to offset the latest conservative reformation.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

In this examination, approximately 65 teachers from eight different high schools in south-central Michigan participated in the study. All the schools were from rural areas and all had about the same expenditure per student. From a governmental and statistical point of view, all the schools were about the same. In a theoretical sense, the study limits itself to an analysis of the new sociology of education which takes a critical political economy approach to the state of education. Obviously this includes exhibiting how politics and economics are related to public education.

CENTRAL HYPOTHESES BEFORE DATA

With this in mind, it will be shown that there are a number of factors that influence what a teacher perceives as the causes of student dropout. Within these factors influencing teachers, there will be one factor that will emerge as the most influential according to the teachers themselves. This agent is actual "teaching experience" and will be defined as any experience related to the teaching profession. This includes classroom teaching, conferences with

students or parents outside of the classroom, in-service training concerning dropouts and conversations with fellow teachers or administrators concerning reasons why students drop out of school. Classroom teaching in particular will be important because teachers in different curriculum areas will be involved with vastly different types of information from vastly different perspectives which have political influences.

Along with showing the importance of experience as a strong force in terms of how it influences our perceptions of social phenomena, there will be an attempt to show how different types of teachers have different political views but still have the same perspective on why students drop out of school. This same perspective will then be shown to be supporting a conservative political view.

Thus, this study will give an example of how education is tied into other aspects of our culture, particularly politics. In turn, I hope to uphold, using original data and relevant contemporary research literature, Apple's (1979), Freire's (1985, 1987), Aronowitz's (1985), Carnoy and Levin's (1985), Giroux's (1985, 1988a) and Shor's (1986, 1987) claim that education and educators are not politically neutral. "No matter what a teacher's politics, each course points in a certain direction, towards some convictions about society and knowledge. The selection of materials, the organization of study, the relations of discourse, are all shaped around the

teacher's convictions" (Freire 1987:33).

Many teachers, to varying degrees, believe that politics is still separate from education. This includes many politically aware and active teachers as well as apolitical and independent teachers. Thus, the politics of teachers will be viewed from two levels. One level deals with teachers who are overtly committed to one view or another. The other level includes teachers who are not politically aware or are in the middle of the political spectrum. It will be shown that both groups of teachers are forwarding a political message when they teach and express their views on why students drop out of school.

METHODOLOGY AND TYPES OF DATA

The data used in this study was supplied from questionnaires sent out to 265 teachers in eight different high schools in rural south-central Michigan. In order to control for selection effects, all 265 teachers were given a chance to answer the questionnaire. Of the 265 teachers, 65 responded by answering the questionnaire and sending it back with the envelope and stamp provided. Even though this was not a strict random sampling, I did not solicit any particular type of teacher. Any teacher including librarians, special education teachers and counselors had the opportunity to participate in the study. In order to control for some variables, I chose rural high schools with close to equal expenditures per student.

Before constructing the final questionnaire this researcher interviewed six teachers from a local class "C" high school. However, many of the questions in the final questionnaire were formulated before the interviews. The interviews helped in clarifying questions and also added background information crucial to this researcher. Thus, this exploratory research plus a literature review of the topic and advisor input led to the creation of the questionnaire used in the study (see Appendix).

Continuing, this questionnaire asked a variety of questions about the teacher's background (educational and family) and their past and present teaching experiences. Because I was obtaining some quantified data, I developed a standardized questionnaire which was used for all the teachers. This ensured that the data was reliable and would enable me to use this method another time if I should want to do an expanded study. I was also able to construct some statistical information on the teachers that supported some of my initial hypotheses.

The type of questionnaire I used was semi-standardized. All the respondents recieved the same questions but they were able to supply their own answers in their own words for some of the questions. Thus, some questions were open-ended such as 13 A., 13 B, 14 B, 14 C. and 15 (see Appendix). The questions that were not open-ended were ones that provided more

factual information like class status and type of school. Open-ended questions were ones that provided information on how teachers have developed their particular views concerning student dropout. Also, the open-ended questions included information on their classroom experiences and even their political influences (see question 22 C.).

It is apparent that questionnaires that are not strictly standardized are very difficult to analyze and there is a certain amount of subjectivity on the researcher's part. However, I felt it was important to give teachers as much room as possible to express their own views in their own words without sacrificing relevancy. Finally, the last reason I used as many open-ended questions as possible was because I wanted to find out how the teacher formulated their own views. With all closed questions it would have made it difficult if not impossible to obtain this. Open questions provided me with some motivations and opinions concerning the teacher's perceptions of why students drop out of school.

Qualitative data was also gathered and used to help support my central propositions. Through "open-ended" questions, teachers had a chance to describe, in their own words, how they felt and what they thought about certain topics concerning school dropouts. Included in this were questions that enabled the teacher to list and explain the most important factors that influence their views on why any student dropped out of school,

as well as why low-income students drop out of school.

Even though interviews could provide the same type of information as questionnaires, I only used questionnaires in the main study because I could collect a much larger number of responses on the topic in a shorter period of time, and for a study of this size, I believe this to be the most efficient method. The time factor is also one reason why I did not use observational methods along with the fact that I was not investigating teacher-teacher or teacher-student interaction.

In order to have an acceptable level of validity, I tested out the final questionnaire on several teachers that did not participate in the actual study. In other words, I pretested the questions in order to work out any problems. There were many questions that were not relevant or clear and I revised the questionnaire.

PRELIMINARY DATA ANALYSIS

The questions in the survey covered a broad spectrum of topics. Questions 1-5 gave this researcher an idea of what high school environment the teacher came from. This enabled me to collect possible political and educational influences which may carry over into their professions. For example, the time era they went to school (Question 2 in Appendix) became an important influence in their political views as well as what type of students they "hung" around with in school.

Questions 5-9 gave me their college background. Question 6

was especially helpful because it gave me the major and minor areas of study which the teacher eventually taught in high school. In Chapter Three a connection is made between curriculum taught and national political views. Questions 7-9 did not provide as helpful information. In Question 7 I was trying to see if a B.A. was more liberal than a B.S.. However, I discovered that I needed more information on the individual colleges before I could make any comments on this question. Many teachers were not able to answer Question 8 because they did not remember any educational philosophy. Here I was trying to see if some educational philosophy (i.e. John Dewey) made its way into the teacher's present perceptions on dropouts. Question 9 also did not provide much information because many teachers did graduate work in their area and that is all that was said. For this question to provide any relevant information for this topic I would have to ask follow-up questions much like Question 7.

In Question 10 I was concerned with other schools the teacher had taught at, but because I was not comparing schools or school districts, this was not an important question. Question 11 was an attempt to see what work level and intellectual level students were at. This question was not very profitable because many teachers wanted the question operationalized more. This question and the following one were developed in order to gain information on the type of students a teacher

taught. However, because I had decided to study the views of teachers and because many teachers needed more definition of the question, I decided to not use it as a factor. I also justified this decision because all the schools used in the study came from the same socioeconomic area with about the same expenditure per student. This area would be a subject I would concentrate on more heavily in a future study.

In Question 13 A. I tried to establish where and when teachers discussed educational problems. This was in order to see if teachers were influenced by their colleagues. The question provided some insight as to how teachers' build their views on dropouts, but it was not an important factor. The following part of the question established whether low-income students had any special problems. Here I was trying to evaluate how this group of teachers perceive the problems of low-income students. The data analysis in Chapter Three provides some very shocking results. Question 14 B. produced some very good information on where teachers place the blame as to why students drop out of school. In the questionnaire they could list five in-school or out-of-school reasons that cause students to drop out of school. This permits the 20 liberal teachers (one liberal teacher did not answer this question) to have 100 possible areas to blame. Of course, this was not the case, and many teachers blamed the same agent several times as will be seen. After each teacher was asked to provide five reasons why students

drop out of school (Question 14 B.in Appendix), they were then asked to label them one through five, starting with one as the most important or most influential. The teacher was given ample room to write in their own words what they thought were the five most crucial reasons why a student drops out of school. This data was then used to test one of the main questions- where teachers place the blame as to why students drop out of school. This was then a crucial question for the study. Question 14 C. did not really uncover any new information because almost all teachers relied on their "teaching experience" to answer Question 14 B.. Question 15 provided space for the teacher to explain where they received their information as to why students drop out. This was then another important question. I was looking for influences the teachers consciously used.

Questions 16-20 were used to obtain information on family background. Question 16 and 17 uncovered some information on parental occupations, but without follow-up questions on how certain occupations may influence children, I was not able to do an adequate analysis of them. Question 18 did inform me that some teachers' parents had differing degrees of education, but I was not able to see a link between that and the teachers' views on politics or education. Ethnicity (Question 20) certainly could be a major factor in a study such as this, but a great majority of the teachers were white and middle-class.

Question 21 and 22 were very important questions which gave me an indication of where each teacher stood on the political spectrum. This was important because the study dealt with politics and how it may or may not effect other aspects of our lives. By using political questions about certain issues and by asking outright the political beliefs of parents, I was able, I believe, to label all the teachers correctly as to which area of the political spectrum they belonged. The beginning of Chapter Three has a more comprehensive description of how the political perspectives of the teachers were arrived at.

The final four questions were developed in order to get a broad view of how teachers view the role of politics in solving educational problems and if teachers should be active participants in it. Because I believe, as stated earlier, that many teachers think they are apolitical when it comes to educational problems, I feel that it is necessary to find out how much they think politics is involved in schools and how much it should be involved in schools.

THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

CONTEMPORARY DEBATES AND REFORM MOVEMENTS LINKING POLITICS
TO EDUCATION

First, it needs to be established that schooling is political, semi-overtly and covertly at the societal level. In this case, the ruling classes, at a national level through conservative scholars and politicians, devise reform paths which are on the surface apolitical, but below the surface are hegemonic. These conservative restoration programs are housed in teaching methods and content which carry the overt message of quality while also carrying a secret message of control over the curriculum, students and even teachers. The covert aggressive politics of education will be shown by critically defining and discussing from a new sociology of education perspective, an overview of the three main views, which again are conservative, liberal and radical. I will also show, through the literature, that at the school and at the classroom level, there is a political message. Finally, it will be demonstrated, using original data, that all teachers are not apolitical when they give their views on why students drop out of school. And when teachers believe that they are politically neutral, in the classroom, they are actually supporting a political view.

CONSERVATIVE EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Conservative restoration of any type requires a carefully worded campaign that appeals to mass society. With the help of conservative journalists, university, college and public school officials, fundamental religious leaders, Republican politicians, and even private ultra-conservative citizens, the New Right and its conservative academic ideologues have developed a restoration filled with mechanisms for keeping and regaining hegemony. This new hegemonic push by the conservative reformers uses seemingly nonpolitical terms such as "quality" and "excellence" to weave a strong public case for reforms such as "back-to-the-basics", "careerism" and "authoritarian" teaching methods, which are actually mechanisms for consolidating power and for strengthening existing class status. These ideas added to a link between schools and the business world, make for a very popular (to the public) educational program. This "practical" education which supposedly leads to a "solid job" gives many people a false sense of security. Because conservative reformers work diligently at keeping their hierarchical control over the lower classes and developing a public campaign that sells their views as "everyones", it will take several radical educational theorists in several areas to uncover the conservative ideology of the New Right.

Of course some conservative reformers would like to keep the myth alive that education is indeed totally out of politics

and economics and there are still others that overtly connect business needs to school programs. Most would like to keep education overtly apolitical. Covertly however, in recent history a conservative restoration, starting in the late 1960s attempted to offset the liberalism so prominent during that time. Education was and is an important part of the total conservative restoration beginning with the Nixon Administration and continuing through the Reagan era (Shor 1986) and into the Bush Administration. Using education as a covert political tool has always been a key to keeping the status quo and recent work by Ira Shor in Culture Wars; School and Society in the Conservative Restoration 1969-1984 exposes how education is part of the political agenda of the New Right.

In education, as in any other part of society subjected to restoration, there is a conservative ideology underlying the reversal of the 1960s: that ideology intervenes against the democratic distribution of wealth and power. Policy-making power and money are redistributed upward in a restoration. The conservative language for this reversal pits 'quality' against 'equality'. Restoration policy promotes itself as the defender of 'excellence' and 'high standards'. Such a political vocabulary dominates discussion in a conservative period. It helps authority disguise the real intention of strengthening hierarchy. To restore the domination of the old order, the results of the egalitarian era are judged from the top down and found to be dismally inferior to the quality of learning before the changes were made. However, the debate never allows the words 'hierarchy,' 'domination,' 'power', to enter the discussion. The standards of the elite are posed as undebatable, the only language in which to judge the situation, a universal rather than a class-specific evaluation (1986:7).

These universal terms of discussion which are held to be

objective and absolute, entice the public and the teachers to buy into the conservative movement. "Quality" and "Excellence" are very strong concepts and many people are not able to see that they are just a shield which the dominant order uses to keep and regain power. Thus, many educators, administrators, parents and students must begin to take more notice of the covert intentions of the New Right as it relates to education. That is a very difficult task, especially when our society demands attention to other areas. Teachers for example, must spend large amounts of time preparing lesson plans and grading student papers, administrators must spend a great deal of time developing budgets and parents have their jobs and income to worry about. This leaves very little time to uncover the true ideological message in the conservative movement as it relates to education.

All involved in education should be aware of certain anthropological concepts. Conservative restorers seem to understand them and use them to their benefit. Because education is related in many, often confusing ways, to other aspects of culture, it is an example which demonstrates one of the basic contributions anthropology has made to Western Culture, which is the idea that everything is related to everything. In more anthropological terms, the concept of integration is "the tendency for all aspects of a culture to function as an interrelated whole" (Haviland 1987:37). Conservative ideologues

have grasped this idea and do not leave many aspects of the culture untouched in their crusade to rid the United States of liberal and radical influences. The explosion of conservatism on university campuses (i.e. University of Michigan) and the mere fact that the Republican party is courting the young citizen is evidence that conservatism has become very popular, much like the liberalism of the 1960s. It is also obvious that former President Reagan cemented and made popular, a conservative feeling and idea that "personal success at all costs" was an acceptable American characteristic. Teachers need to be aware of this and think critically about how politics is involved in education.

The reason teachers must be aware of this is because part of the conservative restoration includes making the teaching profession less independent. The New Right is interested not so much in government intervention, but in stronger relationships between private business needs and school curriculum. Because of this, teachers must become knowledgeable of the many influences outside of the actual school (i.e. corporate America). They must do this if they are going to keep their autonomy in and around the classroom. Conservative government along with business and religious fundamentalism via politics, are three influences which are trying to take away the teaching profession and make it into an occupation that just passes on the dominant culture without any critical evaluation (Shor 1986, Giroux 1988a).

What will be taught in schools and how it will be taught will come under even more conservative control if educators are not willing to verse themselves in the political ideology of the 1980s and 1990s.

The above problem is clearly related to another basic concept in anthropology. This term deals with the idea that social phenomena and everyday interaction must be "viewed in the broadest possible context, in order to understand their interconnections and interdependence" (Haviland 1987:15). As stated earlier, many teachers, administrators and parents believe that schools operate in some kind of political vacuum and that schooling is a narrow preparation for life. Conservative reformers already see that it can be an important institution for socializing youth for the business world, and they want to keep it as overtly apolitical as possible. It must be shown to more teachers that schools are not apolitical and that teaching methods and type of curriculum taught has some amount of political bias. And so the analysis of education must include a broad perspective, especially if students of today are going to understand the complex issues of a global society. If it were up to conservative administrators, politicians, school board members, families and the business community, the teachers would have to follow a narrow educational path containing strictly dominant culture materials along with technical and managerial skills, while also using pre-packaged

lesson plans bought from educational business services.

Aronowitz and Giroux summarize well a more overt business role some conservatives have for education.

In the first place, conservatives contend that the traditional arms length relationship between schools and business must be ended. Educators, so the argument goes, must climb down from their ivory towers and work out a new era of collaboration with employers. By merging school and corporate interests explicitly, school administrators and teachers can learn what outcomes will meet employer needs. Rather than producing a new generation of credentialized workers possessing "irrelevant" skills to the actual labor market, conservatives want the curriculum to fit into short range and long term business prospects and interests. If schools have been training institutions masked as purveyors of the western intellectual tradition, better to take off the mask and get down to the business of American education--namely, business (1985:186).

To this researcher the above statement is true, but very discomfoting. Aronowitz and Giroux indicate how conservatives first try to justify "practical education" and secondly, overtly defend the connection between school and business needs. By doing this, education can keep a constant flow of obedient, trained workers for the service sector of post-industrial capitalism. And, as mentioned before, the situation is made worse because many educators and parents welcome a change from teaching "impractical knowledge". They prefer a path (even though misguided) towards applicable education which leads to a secure job and which pays well. This scenario is being fulfilled at this moment in many public schools and institutions of higher education, especially where

"careerism" and "back-to-the-basics" propaganda have been implemented.

Carnoy and Levin (1985) term "careerism" and "back-to-the-basics" as macrotechnical reforms of the conservative type. "These reforms are direct attempts to make the educational system more responsive to the immediate needs of the workplace" (1985:223). These are some of the reforms Aronowitz and Giroux are pointing to and are crucial to the conservative restoration. Carnoy and Levin go on to clarify what these reforms actually do.

Each emerged in the 1970's with the aim of tightening the link between schools and the requirements of work organizations. Career education refers to a diverse set of traditional reforms for more closely integrating the worlds of education and work...and the "back-to-the-basics" movement refers to the attempt to return the schools to a traditional learning environment with substantial structure and tightened discipline (1985:223).

Unlike Aronowitz and Giroux's one view of the explicit link between between business and education, Carnoy and Levin see a camouflaged attempt by conservative reformers to link schools to the workplace.

Obviously, there is a need to have enough skilled workers, but that does not mean they have to be schooled only in a narrow occupational field or have their occupation termed as a "career," when in fact there is no chance for advancement or intellectual development. Also, in many careers there is very little decision making left to the worker. The hierarchical arrange-

ment, which the conservatives argue has dissolved in schools, is present in schools much like in the workplace (Bowles and Gintis 1976). Students and teachers do not have much of a choice over content. Certainly students do not have a choice over classroom organization or teaching styles of the teacher.

Thus, there would be no feminist studies, Marxist studies, minority studies or religion education outside of Christianity. There would be no studies of societies outside of Western Culture and the study of true democratic ideals would also not be taught. Teachers again would just be agents which transfer the dominant culture which narrowly includes skills and discipline needed for the changing business climate (Giroux 1988a:75).

This type of conservative ideology thus challenges the concept of a liberal and progressive education, whether it be in high school or post-secondary institutions. Added to the curriculum challenge comes the unequal distribution of funds to public schools. School districts with little money and poor facilities results in a poor education for many students. There are many more obstacles to "success" for a low-income minority student in a poorly funded school as opposed to a middle-class white student from the suburbs. The "better" schools and better job opportunities are more accessible to white middle-class students.

In addition to reforming schools around business needs, the conservatives also argue that the school hierarchy, mentioned

above, has lost its sense of authority- giving the students and teachers too much choice, thus sacraficing "quality" and even "morality". Even though liberals and radicals argue that there is not enough democratic education, the New Right openly argues the opposite, there is too much "choice" and "freedom" in the schools. Students need discipline and teachers need to use their position of authority to the fullest. Giroux thus states:

...the new conservatives have seized the initiative and argued that the current crisis in public education is due to loss of authority. The call for a reconstituted authority along conservative lines is coupled with the charge that the crisis in schooling is in part due to a crisis in the wider culture, which is presented as a "spiritual-moral" crisis (Giroux 1988a:71).

Again, conservatives have borrowed the anthropological concept of intergration and used it to their benefit by relating the "crisis in education" to a "crisis in the wider culture".

Henry A. Giroux goes on to explain what also disturbs the right and their popularizers such as Diane Ravitch and Chester E. Finn Jr. (1984) and Alan Bloom (1987). The "loss of authority" comes from:

...confused ideas, irresolute standards, and cultural relativism. As a form of legitimation, this view of authority appeals to an established cultural tradition, whose practices and values appear beyond criticism. Authority, in this case, represents an idealized version of the American Dream reminiscent of nineteenth-century dominant culture in which "the tradition" becomes synonymous with hard work, industrial discipline, and cheerful obedience. It is a short leap between this view of the past and the new conservative vision of schools as crucibles in which to forge industrial soldiers fueled by the imperatives of excellence, competition, and down-home character. In effect for

the new conservatives, learning approximates a practice mediated by strong teacher authority and a student willingness to learn the basics, adjust to the imperatives of the social and economic order, and what Edward A. Wynne calls the traditional moral aims of "promptness, truthfulness, courtesy, and obedience" (Giroux 1988a:71).

Giroux is able to deliver the conservative message from a critical perspective, showing how it is again steeped in apolitical terms such as "honesty", "punctuality", "obedience", "quality", "excellence" and so forth. The use of those types of adjectives makes for a very convincing argument that parents and even educators find legitimate. Many parents and most teachers work very hard to have "good" children and "excellent" students, and what defines those terms is not what concerns them. Conservative ideology conceals itself very well in words that are concrete, obvious and seemingly apolitical. Media events linking terms like "crisis" to education also help the conservative cause.

The media rhetoric that supported the birth of the "back-to-the-basics" and "careerism" movement can also be found in 'the Literacy Crisis' starting in 1975 and popularized by an article of the same name in Newsweek (Shor 1986:10-11). Newsweek and its claim to the so-called "educational crisis" certainly increased their sales at the newstand even though according to some authors and scholars, it was a fabricated crisis, including its claim of falling S.A.T. scores (Ohmann 1976, Shor 1986:59-78). This same sensationalism can be seen during the 1982

'excellence' crisis which enticed the public to believe in the remedies the conservative movement proposed. "Without a Literacy Crisis there would have been no cause for launching a traditionalist crusade for the basics. Without back-to-the-basics, business culture, religious fundamentalism, authoritarianism would not have regained such predominance in the restoration" (Shor 1986:64).

To continue with Giroux, he also critiques some of the more subtle conservative intellectuals such as Adler (1982), Bloom, (1987) and Hirsch (1987), and maintains that:

The educational theories of Bloom, Hirsch, and Adler all advocate a pedagogy that is consistent with their view of culture as an artifact, a pedagogy that Paulo Freire once called banking education. That is, a pedagogy that is profoundly reactionary and which can be summed up in the terms "transmission" and "imposition". These authors refuse to analyze how pedagogy, a deliberate attempt to influence how and what knowledge and identities are produced within and among particular sets of social relations, might address the reconstruction of social imagination in the service of human freedom...Instead, there is a current of political urgency rooted in the rhetoric of nostalgia and decline; pedagogy in these approaches becomes a memory machine anchored in a celebration and fabrication of history that sidesteps the disquieting, disrupting, interrupting legacies of racism, sexism, exploitation, and class subordination that now bear down so heavily on the present. This is the discourse of pedagogues afraid of the future, strangled by the past, and unaware of or refusing the complexity, terror, and possibilities in the present. This is the pedagogy of hegemonic intellectuals cloaked in the mantle of academic enlightenment and literacy (Giroux 1988a:120).

So far I have dealt with the business, authority, career, back-to-the-basics, excellence and quality aspects of the conservative restoration. Now I would like to touch on a

couple of terms which the far right has come out against in their criticism of schools; cultural relativism and secular humanism.

Individual conservative reformers come in a wide variety, with many following some type of religious fundamentalism. The Gablers of Texas are a husband and wife team which have made it their business to find and get removed, textbooks that undermine patriotism, the free enterprise system, religion, and parental authority (New York Times, 14 July 1981). These reformers go on to state their views and goals which are:

... to cleanse the nation's schools of all materials that they consider anti-family, anti-American, and Anti-God. The trouble with most textbooks...is that they are written from the perspective of people who do not believe in God or an absolute value system. This perspective...is a religion called secular humanism, which permeates every aspect of contemporary society and teaches youngsters to lie, cheat and steal (14 July 1981).

This ideology is well grounded in conservative politics and is also found in the views of the Moral Majority (Wexler 1987:67-68). "They [also] attack current curricula in public schooling as immoral, asserting that public schools teach a religion that they call 'secular humanism'"(1987:67-68). It is worth quoting Shor, who is directly referring to the Gablers and anyone who puts education into such narrow terms.

To them, secular humanism opens the door to cultural relativism, which in turn encourages dissent and non-traditional values. Instead of monogamy, heterosexuality, religious faith, patriotism, and obedience, school breeds opposition politics and alternate life-styles. Their effort on behalf of tradition was the most conservative version of the core

curriculum. The bible was the universal standard for learning (1986:23).

In the New York Times article on the Gablers, the author, Dena Kleiman, ends the article by quoting Mr. Gabler as saying that "we feel safe with older books" (14 July 1981). This same thinking is certainly similar to many other "conservative dreams of a Golden Age before the 1960s" (Shor 1986:12).

To finish the discussion on conservative educational philosophy and its linkage to politics on a general level, it is useful to use Giroux (1988a) again. First, the conservatives called for a "restructuring of a mythical 'golden age' in order to legitimate the teaching of specific values" (1988a:42). Secondly, right wing reformers attacked "the 1960s and the discourse of equity" (1988a:42). And thirdly, they criticized the "existing liberal moral education programs in the public schools" (1988a:42).

On a specific level, conservative reform movements such as "back-to-the-basics", "careerism" and authoritarian teaching were implimented. Business needs and wants were then tied to schooling. Because conservative politics are so closely tied to business needs, small and corporate, the analysis of the linkage between politics and education must include the discussion of business. Then, according to a conservative view, if you do not succeed in school or in the business world, you are not working hard enough and if the person is working hard enough but still not succeeding they may lack the intelligence needed

to perform well in society. If this is the case then you settle for a low-paying job with little security and room for advancement. To a conservative reformer, this is a fact of life. All the blame for failure is rested on the individual student or the family. Because the New Right is concerned with conserving the present socioeconomic system along with restoring pre-1960 educational ideology (with all the narrow curriculum and authority) plus implementing new training programs for the needs of the business world, they blame the student for not wanting to participate in their unequal society. School dropouts can blame themselves and sometimes their families for their failures in the educational system. The educational system can only be blamed (from a neo-conservative view) when white middle-class students graduate from high school and perform poorly on S.A.T. tests. This is especially true during the early 1980s when black S.A.T. test scores rose, alarming official commissions (Shor 1986:144-145). Thus, when the system does not show superiority of white students in school, something must be wrong. Also, to a neo-conservative reformer, there is a problem when the educational system does not provide enough skilled obedient workers for the labor force. These are certainly the two major covert reasons why the conservative forces have united to regain any hegemony they may have lost since the 1960s.

Consequently, blaming the minority or low-income student

for dropping out of school is the conservative's view used in Chapter II to discuss teacher perspectives. Because students other than the dominant white middle-class students have started to perform better in the dominant culture, controlled by the middle-class, the rules must be changed. That, along with the several other covert goals is what the conservative restoration is really attempting to do. And through much diligent scholarly research, the new sociology of education is able to uncover these latent objectives.

Now, because math, science, computer and business teachers teach skills and information that coincides with the needs and wants of corporate America, they will tend to have a more conservative view on politics and consequently on student dropout. This connection will be discussed further in the next chapter.

LIBERAL EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Scholars abhor the obvious. Perhaps for this reason it is often difficult to find a complete written statement of a viewpoint which is widely accepted. Such is the case with modern liberal educational theory (Bowles and Gintis 1976:20).

It is 1989 and liberal discourse has developed an even longer convoluted history. Educational academics such as Henry A. Giroux also find the literature on the liberal view difficult to analyze in one chapter with "all the theoretical twists and turns this movement has taken" (1988a:126). "Liberal discourse in educational theory and practice [also] has a long association

with various tenets of what has been loosely called progressive education in the United States"(1988a:125). To alleviate this problem to a certain extent, I will concentrate on two main paths of liberal theory which Bowles and Gintis (1976) provide. They give a clear view of the two roads and to these I will add some new contemporary thoughts. The first is common to anyone involved in traditional liberal education and has the philosophy of John Dewey as central to its argument. The second liberal school of thought is represented by "functional sociology and neoclassical economics- the "technocratic-meritocratic school"(Bowles and Gintis 1976:20).

Beginning with the former view, Bowles and Gintis organize their overview by listing three functions the educational system must fulfill and while doing this they use John Dewey extensively. The three main functions of education in this liberal view contain "integrative", "egalitarian", and "developmental" functions (1976:21). Integrative refers to the ways schools help students to assimilate "into the various occupational, political, familial, and other adult roles required by an expanding economy and stable polity"(1976:21). This role of "education as a social function", as John Dewey describes it, enables the young to develop "the attitudes and dispositions necessary to the continuous and progressive life of a society [which] cannot take place by direct conveyance of beliefs, emotions, and knowledge. It takes place through the interme-

diary of the environment" (1976:26). Dewey is referring to the social environment, in this case school and all the socialization that takes place there.

The second crucial function of education in this first type of liberal reform is the notion of "egalitarianism". Social and economic inequality is a given for many liberals, however, education then enables each individual to better themselves. "Schooling, some have proposed, cannot only assure fair competition, but also reduce the economic gap between winners and losers" (Bowles and Gintis 1976:21). This equalizing function of school is probably the best known aspect of this tenet of liberal discourse and which is still held by many educators as absolutely true today.

The developmental function, Bowles and Gintis' last main faculty, deals with how education nurtures "the psychic and moral development of the individual. Personal fulfillment depends, in large part, on the extent, direction, and vigor of development of our physical, cognitive, emotional, aesthetic, and other potentials" (Bowles and Gintis 1976:21).

These three functions then must be compatible. And if placed in a capitalist society like the United States, individuals are then able to have occupations that take advantage of their "highest possible levels of personal development" (1976:22). Dewey, then "assumed that a free and universal school system can render the opportunities for self-development

independent of race, ethnic origins, class background, and sex. Hence the integrative, egalitarian, and developmental functions of schooling are not only compatible, they are mutually supportive"(1976:22).

In the second main track of liberal educational theory the notion of technical skills is stressed because of the type of country we live in, an industrial-capitalist one. "Inequality of income, power, and status, according to this technocratic-meritocratic view, is basically a reflection of an unequal distribution of mental, physical and other skills" (1976:22). This line of thinking became very popular during the 1960s when many people in the United States, including politicians were awakened to poverty and mass inequality again. "Unequal opportunity in acquiring skills was quickly isolated as the source of the problem" (Schultz 1966, Bowles and Gintis 1976:23). "Head Start" programs and other enrichment programs were solutions which in this theory, would make getting an education and consequently a "good" job, more assessable to the lower classes and minorities. All that was needed was some extra preparation to enable these oppressed groups to "catch up" and obtain more control over their economic lives. This, the liberals of the 1960s and 1970s suggested, was done through more aggressive educational programs directed towards the "disadvantaged". As can be seen today in the United States, many liberal educational programs have not succeeded in making a more equal society. One

could even argue that it has become more unequal.

Bowles and Gintis from their perspective certainly have many reservations about the equalizing effects of education. They express the inequalities in many ways when they state:

Not only do less well-off children go to school for fewer years, they are treated with less attention (or more precisely, less benevolent attention) when they are there. These broad inequalities are not easily measured. Some show up in statistics on the different levels of expenditure for the education of children of different socioeconomic backgrounds (1976:33).

Jenk's (1972) statistics supports Bowles and Gintis' claim by explaining that "America spends about twice as much on the children of the rich as on the children of the poor" (1972:27). This means "that the least educated fifth received 54 percent as much resources as the national average, while the most educated fifth received 175 percent, ignoring annual expenditure differences between schools" (1972:48). This rift in equality can also be seen during the 1980s. In Michigan this year, the "School Reform Act" which does not have a good chance of passing, tries to equalize the distribution of funds between rich and poor school districts.

Radical Left educational theorists such as Aronowitz and Giroux (1985) criticize part of the Dewey view of liberal education because it avoids any analysis of what schools actually are. Liberal educators of this breed today as well as Dewey had a "clear idea of what schools ought to be" (1985:9), they should be areas of communication, cooperation and intel-

lectual growth which can be directly applied to their situation in the society. However, there is no discussion by Dewey or his contemporary theorists on the hegemonic structures which stop the "enlightened, democratic and critical learning modes" (1985:9). Hence, any real improvement for lower classes and minorities is stopped mid-stream by the dominant culture and their control over what constitutes knowledge and how it is passed on.

Even though radical reformers find fault with several aspects of the liberal view, some teachers in the study still believe in this perspective for their own personal educational philosophy. They also believe in the present socioeconomic system. Any problems that arise with dropouts are attributed to poor educational programs, the family and even the students themselves. Major changes in the educational system are not called for by the liberal teachers of the sample used in the study. The liberal teachers and their viewpoints will be treated in more detail in the next chapter.

The case for liberal education is further depleted by Jay Macleod's study of youths in a low-income neighborhood near Boston.

Liberal thought and ideology during the last two centuries has affirmed above all the quest for a society in which all individuals are capable of fulfilling their potential as citizens. In the United States, at least, this ideal is far short of being realized, as both the Brothers [low-income blacks] and the Hallway Hangers [low-income whites] attest. Furthermore, those Americans who call

themselves liberals [Goldthorpe 1980:21] seem none too concerned about it. Perhaps the true custodians of liberal principles in the United States are those who advocate more fundamental change in the class structure (Macleod 1987:157-158).

Ending the liberal overview with Macleod's statement shows explicitly how the liberal view, while noble in cause and explanation does not call for fundamental change in the structure of society as do the more radical views of education, which I will turn to now.

RADICAL EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Like the liberal discourse of education, there are many views which are considered a radical discourse of education. Michael Apple (1987) broadly demonstrates what this area of educational debate contains.

Over the past two decades, radical traditions in both the sociology of education and curriculum studies have drawn upon each other to build a critical analysis of education. They have focused increasingly on the complicated relationship between curriculum, teaching, and evaluation in schools and the structures of inequality in the larger society. What has come to be called the 'new sociology of education'- a term that serves as an umbrella for a wide array of political, conceptual, and research tendencies - has made considerable progress in moving primarily from an emphasis on the connections between schooling and the reproduction of such inequalities to a recognition of the contradictory roles education plays in a social formation (Wexler 1987:ix).

The key emphasis is placed on two areas. One being how school reproduces the labor force in a capitalist relationship. And the second is primarily concerned with the opposing roles schools produce in socialization. It is obvious that this is

a much different perspective on what schools do than the liberal view which sees schools as equalizing institutions. In actuality, some conservative views try to legitimate schools as reproducers of the workplace. Within their discussion they also argue that it is up to the individual to use school as an equalizing mechanism. If they are "industrious, they will rise up in the workplace to become a manager or owner", if they are lazy and uproductive they will stay as a worker or even get fired." Thus, many conservative reformers make the school-business connection very obvious, while also justifying the unequalness through the lack of initiative on the part of the individual. It is important to realize now that this is where radical left ideology takes off from. After showing that school is indeed tied to the reproduction of the capitalist hierarchy (i.e. Bowles and Gintis 1976), they have also shown that there are many contradictions in education which can be uncovered in the curriculum, counseling, classroom organization, in the lack of autonomy, "tracking" and in the control of what is considered acceptable knowledge. Giroux (1981, 1988a) and Aronowitz and Giroux (1985) are just a few examples of this tenet and below they summarize the movement they are involved with.

In the most general sense, the "new" sociology of education provided a discourse for reexamining the relationship among knowledge, culture, and power, on the one hand, and schooling and the issue of social control on the other. That is, the alternative perspectives that emerged out of this tradition played a significant role in undermining mainstream assumptions about the political and social neutrality

of the school curriculum; in addition, they made clear that all knowledge claims are forms of intelligibility rooted in specific normative and political interests,...Furthermore, they made a strong case for the significance of honoring forms of life and language that characterized the cultures of subordinated groups, whether they be the excluded majorities of women, ethnics, or members of the working classes (1985:144).

In order to keep this survey of the theoretical view ordered, I will keep within the terms and concepts found within the new sociology of education. Because this is a view, in which all involved, critically evaluate the conservative and the liberal view of education, many of the authors' critiques were presented above. What I would like to do here is categorize the main tenets in order to contrast and show the wide variety of ideas. This again is not an easy task. However, by using Philip Wexler's (1987) critique of the new sociology of education, and his organization of it, I will be able to present a coherent overview. Wexler begins with:

...work in both the educational and social science fields that gravitates toward the label new sociology of education aims to analyze social knowledge in schooling and social knowledge about schooling as relative, socially determined and ideological. (For examples, see: Young, 1971; Brown, 1974; Bernstein, 1975; Young and Whitty, 1977; Wexler, 1976; Karabel and Halsey, 1977; Apple, 1979a, 1982a, 1982b; Sharp, 1980; Giroux, 1981, 1983). Against the study of school as the channel of individual mobility that validates a permeable, meritocratic social order, new 'sociologists' in economics (Bowles and Gintis, 1976), history (Spring, 1972), education (Olsen, 1981), and sociology (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977) redefined the social function of schooling as the social and cultural reproduction of regimes of inequality. Against the view of schooling as morally consensual and socially integrative, new sociology sees conflict, opposition,

and resistance (Willis, 1977; Giroux, 1983; Apple, 1982a; Wexler, 1985a) (1987:36-37).

This vast list of scholars and views were broken down into three major areas of emphasis. The first analyzes social knowledge in schooling as relative, socially determined and ideological (Wexler 1987). Basil Bernstein's theory of "language codification" is a good example of this area and is best understood "in the context of Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital" (Macloed 1987:15) where certain ways of speaking are socially determined, which are then reflective of a certain social class.

Bourdieu argues that schools require cultural resources with which only specific students are endowed; Bernstein looks specifically at the educational ramifications of divergent linguistic patterns among children of different social strata...he contends that class membership generates distinctive forms of speech patterns through family socialization. Working-class children are oriented to "restricted" linguistic codes, while middle-class children use "elaborated" codes (1987:15).

The outcome of this is the idea that class systems limit access to elaborated codes (Bernstein 1975) and "because schools operate in accordance with the symbolic order of elaborated codes, working-class children are at a significant disadvantage" (Macloed 1987:16).

The second area of emphasis of new sociology of education analyzes the myth that school is the channel of individual mobility that allows for the movement of the individual in the class structure through merit (Wexler 1987). The school is also redefined as an area that reproduces, socially and cultur-

ally, inequality. Bowles and Gintis (1976) present one of the most explicit and powerful models of this area of emphasis.

Their model contains five major tenets which they elaborate on in their book Schooling in Capitalist America:

First, we find that prevailing degrees of economic inequality and types of personal development are defined primarily by the market, property, and power relationships which define the capitalist system...Second, the educational system does not add to or subtract from the overall degrees of inequality and repressive personal development. Rather, it is best understood as an institution which serves to perpetuate the social relationships of economic life through which these patterns are set, by facilitating a smooth integration of youth into the labor force...Third, the educational system operates in this manner not so much through the conscious intentions of teachers and administrators in their day-to-day activities, but through a close correspondence between the social relationships which govern personal interaction in the work place and the social relationships of the educational system...Power is organized along vertical lines of authority from administration to faculty to student body; students have a degree of control over their curriculum comparable to that of the worker over the content of his job...Fourth, though the school system has effectively served the interests of profit and political stability, it has hardly been a finely tuned instrument of manipulation in the hands of socially dominant groups. Schools and colleges do indeed help to justify inequality, but they also have become arenas in which a highly politicized egalitarian consciousness has developed among some parents, teachers, and students...Lastly, the organization of education--in particular the correspondence between school structure and job structure--has taken distinct and characteristic forms in different periods of U.S. history, and has evolved in response to political and economic struggles associated with the process of capital accumulation, the extension of the wage-labor system, and the transition from an entrepreneurial to a corporate economy (1976:11-13).

Bowles and Gintis insist that the contemporary educational reform movements mirror the above dynamics of the larger society.

Consequently all the opposition movements such as free-school and youth culture are protracted reactions to the "reduced states and personal control of white-collar labor and its expression in repressive schooling" (1976:13).

The last major area of emphasis in the new sociology of education critically examines the conflicts, oppositions and resistance in schooling as opposed to the view that education is "morally consensual and socially integrative" (Wexler 1987:37). Paul Willis in Learning To Labor; How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs argues that the the working-class youth culture is a form of resistance to the dominant culture which controls the schools. The working class youths by rejecting the educational path to a job are able to work side by side with family and friends of their own culture and thus feel that they have retained some control over their lives.

Since Wexler has published this exhaustive list of new sociologists of education , there have been new works by the same authors. For example, Giroux (1988a) has published more ideas on the contradictions of education, but has moved forward in giving a positive path towards student-teacher liberation. Involved in this idea of education is the concept of critical pedagogy, which enables both students and teachers to critically evaluate both the educational process and the society and culture in which they live (1988). Ira Shor and Paulo Freire (1987)

also critically look at what education has been and still is, but they give an alternative approach much like Giroux. If education is going to be part of the mechanism it can be and should be for social equality and egalitarian values, then the quality and quantity of democracy has to improve in the United States (1987). Egalitarian values and social equality has its roots in the writings of John Dewey and his view of what education should be. But many scholars like Jenks (1972) feel that education can never be the mechanism for social change. Jenks claims that "equalizing educational opportunity would do very little to make adults more equal" (1972:255). Jenks is correct to a certain extent, even to many Left and radical scholars. Equal educational opportunity does not guarantee a more equal society. Even though I agree with Jenks up to a point, I also tend to think that there must also be a discourse for change. Again Freire along with Shor offer one avenue for change in their work A Pedagogy For Liberation; Dialogues On Transforming Education (1987). Here Freire also states very bluntly that "it is society which shapes education according to the interests of those in power" (1987:35) and consequently, "teaching is not the lever for changing or transforming society" (1987:46). This is certainly true for Jenks and many other educational theorists and philosophers. But, Freire goes on to explain that "social transformation is made by lots of small and great and big and humble tasks" (1987:46). The only way

this will happen is if teachers, on a large scale, realize that "education is politics" (1987:46) and education today cannot be kept overtly tied to business needs, overtly apolitical and covertly political by conservative reformers. Teachers can and should have a say in what will be taught and how. Teachers must also appreciate the fact that an education cannot be just a transfer of the dominant culture's definition of knowledge to a group of young people.

In order to empower both students and teachers, there should be more critical pedagogy in the schools. This will enable both teachers and students to have more autonomy in the educational process along with the traditional transfer of knowledge. After the social movements of the 1960's exposed many contradictions of the establishment, there were a few oppositional strategies applied to schools that made them somewhat more equal. However, most of these programs like "Head Start" and bilingual education to name only a few, came from the liberal side of the spectrum and the problem is still, in the late 1980's, very serious. National news programs have been stating statistics that show very explicitly that American Society is becoming even more unequal.

The connections between politics and economics is a given, but to many teachers, the school is still an institution which is still outside of conservative-liberal debate over the purposes of school. They either do not see the connection

between politics and school or they do not realize that they are directly involved in politics in their own classroom.

Conservative educational reform obviously is trying to restore education back to more "traditional forms" with authoritarian discipline and basic skills training so that there is an ample supply of obedient workers for the capitalist labor process and still keep the status quo. Liberal educational reform on the other hand, does not call into question the contradictions of capitalism and believes that improvements need to be made in the educational process so that schooling is "a broad preparation for life, as an effective means to reproduce the kind of society and individual consistent with western humanist traditions" (Aronowitz and Giroux 1985:5). Education can be one avenue to social change, but only through a radical pedagogy. Reverting back to the total authoritarian education under the auspices of "quality" or the "golden age" will lead to even less hope for minorities and the lower classes. If change is kept to only liberal modes of thinking, education will be continually checked by conservative ideology and the myths that go along with it. Public education can begin to transform part of society if critical pedagogy is made an important aspect of it.

Nevertheless, in order to impliment liberatory education, schools, including teachers, must begin to think of schools as an important part of the political and economic culture of the

United States. The processes by which teachers build their views concerning why students drop out of school can be a starting point for understanding how much influence politics and economics have in our views on a seemingly apolitical institution such as school. Teaching experience at one level explains why teachers have certain views concerning why students drop out of school, but at a deeper level of understanding, politics and economics must be brought into the analysis in order to fully understand how teachers view dropouts and what causes students to drop out of school. Schools are ever changing institutions which reflect many of the contradictions of the larger society. By exposing the forces that influence teacher perspectives on dropouts, we can begin to understand how schools and their agents interact with themselves and the larger society. For this reason I believe that by studying how teachers are influenced by events and experiences in their life, I can show how it is related to politics in the United States.

DATA ANALYSIS

In this final chapter the data will be used to show how teachers formulate their perspectives on dropouts and how they may or may not use their political beliefs when they discuss the problems of dropouts. This section will first provide the method for determining the political perspective of the teacher. Then a discussion will follow on how the teacher developed their particular political perspective. Once this is done the certain types of teachers can be correlated with certain political views.

After the political views and the type of teacher are linked, the study will present their perspectives on why they think students drop out of school and discuss if there is a connection between the types of teachers, their political views and their perspectives on dropouts.

DETERMINING POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE OF TEACHERS

Before moving on, an important process must be outlined. This process is the method used to determine a teacher's political view. Question 21 (A.-L.) enabled this researcher to get a perspective on where the teachers stood with regards to contemporary domestic and foreign policy issues. With the 12 questions, the teachers who were obviously more liberal or more conservative were labeled as such based on their agreement or

disagreement with the questions. Because labeling a person liberal or conservative involves some amount of subjectivity, I took the precautions below to aid and safeguard the labeling of the teachers. They were asked in question 22 A. and 22 B. to label their parents as "conservative", "ultraconservative", "liberal", "radical" or other. Then they were asked to circle what political party their parents identified with more--Republican, Democrat or other. Finally, question 22 C. asked the teachers to compare their political view to their parents and give their influences. The 12 policy questions and the three questions regarding their parents political beliefs as compared to their own, gave a good indication as to where they stood on the political spectrum. Teachers that were apolitical or in the middle of the political spectrum were labeled as such. In other words, the teachers that answered 5-5, 6-4 or 4-6 on the policy questions were termed "middle of the political spectrum". Teachers who had more than three "not sure" answers were considered "apolitical". There were also teachers who did answer many of the political questions but were not labeled either conservative or liberal. They were labeled slightly liberal or slightly conservative. This controlled for any errors in labeling because it restricted this researcher from placing a distinct political label on a teacher who does not consciously adhere to one of the three main political tenets (conservative, liberal or left radical)

used in this study. The political labeling was done before any other part of the questionnaire was analyzed.

The examples below will give an indication of what questions were considered "liberal", "conservative" or "apolitical". All the answers were developed so that the responses were fundamentally liberal or conservative. For example, a liberal response on Question 21 A. (in Appendix) would be "1) Agree" and "2) Disagree" would be a conservative response. A liberal response on 21 B. would be "1) Agree" and "2) Disagree" would be a conservative response. I will now only provide the "Agree" answer for the rest of the political questions to show what it indicates on the political spectrum. Table 3.1 below gives a complete view of what answers were labeled "liberal", "conservative". An answer of not sure can mean that a teacher is "apolitical" or in the middle of the political spectrum as described above.

Table 3.1
RESPONSES TO POLICY QUESTIONS IN QUESTIONNAIRE AND THEIR
POLITICAL REFERENCES

21.A.	1)Agree-Liberal	2)Disagree-Conservative
21.B.	1)Agree-Liberal	2)Disagree-Conservative
21.C.	1)Agree-Conservative	2)Disagree-Liberal
21.D.	1)Agree-Liberal	2)Disagree-Conservative
21.E.	1)Agree-Conservative	2)Disagree-Liberal
21.F.	1)Agree-Conservative	2)Disagree-Liberal
21.G.	1)Agree-Liberal	2)Disagree-Conservative
21.H.	1)Agree-Conservative	2)Disagree-Liberal
21.I.	1)Agree-Conservative	2)Disagree-Liberal
21.J.	1)Agree-Conservative	2)Disagree-Liberal
21.K.	1)Agree-Liberal	2)Disagree-Conservative
21.L.	1)Agree-Conservative	2)Disagree-Liberal

As one can see from Table 3.2 below, the percentages of teachers actually politically labeled is relatively low, although still an acceptable number.

Table 3.2

PERCENTAGES OF POLITICALLY LABELED TEACHERS

Type	Total	%
Liberal Teachers-----	21	32
Conservative Teachers-----	15	23
Slightly Liberal Teachers-----	2	3
Slightly Conservative Teachers-----	2	3
Politically "Not Sure" Teachers-----	4	6
Teachers in the "Middle of Political Spectrum"-----	3	5
Teachers who did not answer political questions----	18	28

There were 21 liberal teachers and 15 conservative teachers. A total of 65 teachers chose to participate in the study, however, as mentioned before, only a certain number of teachers could be identified as liberal or conservative.

POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION OF TEACHERS

The 1960s and the early 1970s were times when a liberal view on any subject was more popular than now. There were also more progressive educational programs implemented. For example, "evidence from a [1972] survey of state social studies specialists indicates that pre-collegiate anthropology has become part of the social studies curriculum in most states" (Dynneson 1981:304). Prior to the 1960's, anthropology was "an unrecognized or hidden component of the social studies curriculum for both elementary and secondary schools (Dynneson 1972:66-72, 1981:304). In 1978, another study was done dupli-

cating the 1972 survey, but in more detail. One of the results of this more recent study suggested that there is a decline in the teaching of anthropology in pre-college schools (Kennedy 1978, Dynneson 1981). This decline was attributed to the lack of instructional material and teacher preparation. Also, "most state and local school officials are not interested in the teaching of anthropology" (Dynneson 1981:304). I would suggest also that with the conservative atmosphere reforming in the late 1970's and certainly 1980's, anthropology, with its critical view of American ethnocentrism, did not have a chance of survival in public schools.

With this in mind, it was hypothesized that liberal teachers who went to high school or college between 1960 and 1975' would be more liberal in their political views and on how they view the problems of drop outs. I chose the 1960s as a starting point for the latest cycle of liberalism.

As the decade passed [1950s], Americans felt once more the need to get the country moving again. As the private interest of the 1920s had led to the public action of the 1930s, the 1950s now led into the 1960s and a new rush of commitment: Kennedy and the New Frontier; Johnson and the Great Society; the racial revolution, the war on poverty (Schlesinger, Jr. 1986:32).

I continued the effect of the liberal era to 1975 because there would still be a carry over of liberal views and programs, especially in education, even though Nixon was set on reversing all the progressive ideas of the country.

The data from this study shows that 67% of the liberal

teachers went to high school or college during the liberal era stated above. Thirty-three percent of the liberal teachers mentioned that education was a factor that influenced their political perspective (Table 3.3 on page 50 gives a data summary of this section). Going to school during this era certainly can have an effect on your political views as some teachers stated when asked what influenced their political views. "I'm much more liberal, [than my parents] my social studies, college education [and] reading [influenced me]". This teacher went to high school between 1962 and 1966, then went to college between 1967 and 1971. The other teachers just stated "education" as a factor that influenced their political view. Teachers from the same era (went to high school between 1962-1966 and college 1967-1971) also explain, "I'm more...Probably because I was raised in the 60's and 70's".

The above answer can mean many different things, including how education was liberalized to a certain extent during that era. Other teachers use specific examples from the 1960s. One such teacher said that "the assassination of JFK, RFK, and MLK" the Vietnam War [and] Watergate" influenced them. "Growing up in a multi-racial school system" was another reason a teacher from this era gave. Finally, one teacher said they were more liberal because they had worked and lived in Peru and China.

With the previous statements of teachers it is clear that there is some internalization going on with the events and

Table 3.3

POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION OF TEACHERS

- 67% of liberal teachers attended school during liberal era
 - 33% of liberal teachers mention that school was an important political influence
 - 71% of liberal teachers had politically conservative parents
 - 43% of liberal teachers' parents identified with the Republican Party
 - 29% of liberal teachers had politically liberal parents
 - 57% of liberal teachers' parents identified with the Democratic Party
 - 24% of liberal teachers had conservative Democratic parents
 - 73% of liberal teachers "hung" around with "student-athletes" in high school
-
- 60% of conservative teachers attended school during conservative era
 - 20% of conservative teachers mention that school was an important political influence
 - 80% of conservative teachers had politically conservative parents
 - 80% of conservative teachers' parents identified with the Republican Party
 - 10% of conservative teachers had politically liberal parents
 - 10% of conservative teachers' parents identified with the Democratic Parents
 - 0% of conservative teachers had conservative Democratic parents
 - 76% of conservative teachers "hung" around with "student-athletes" in high school

atmosphere of the 1960s and early 1970s. Still other teachers, when asked to compare their political view to their parents said that their own political view was quite different. Of all the liberal teachers, 86% had conservative parents and 43% of the parents of liberal teachers identified more with the Republican party. Only 33% of the parents were termed liberal by their liberal teacher offspring and 57% identified more with the Democratic party. However, some parents were termed both conservative and identifying more with the Democrats, making them conservative Democrats (24%). What these data point to is the fact that many liberal teachers (86%) come from conservative households and were able, through their education (formal and informal), work experience, national political events and the atmosphere of the 1960s, to develop a politically liberal view.

When moving to the conservative teachers and their parents, the following picture emerges. First, 60% (9/15) of the conservative teachers went to high school and college from the early 1970s to the late 1980s, with one teacher attending high school between 1951-1955 and college between 1955 and 1964. It is already clear that the 1950s were a time of vast conservatism, but there were events that laid the groundwork for another swing towards another era of narrow ideas and private gain. Again, it is worth quoting Schlesinger, Jr. at length, who is able to present a picture of what the "average" American

is feeling. He does not judge whether the swings in feelings are good or bad. He just captures, quite well, some crucial public views and feelings about the country and what is happening.

This time [1960s] desperate events gave the cyclical swing an ominous turn, an edge of hysteria- first the assassination at Dallas, then the war in Vietnam. Objectives embraced with fervent hope- racial integration, community action, urban renewal, environmental protection- caused unanticipated disruptions. Energies released turned destructive- riots in the cities, turmoil on the campuses, two more terrible assassinations, drugs and violence, Watergate and the fall of a President- until the social fabric itself seemed to be unraveling. So much trauma compressed in so short a time produced national disillusion and exhaustion in less than the customary two decades. By the later 1970s Americans were once more, as they had been in the 1950s and 1920s, fed up with public action and disenchanted by its consequences. The compass needle now swung toward private interest and the fulfillment of self. The time received its appropriate names- the 'me' decade; the 'culture of narcissism'. The reaction reached its culmination in the age of Reagan in the 1980s (1986:32).

Although there are several points which can be discussed in more detail, the overall view is fairly accurate when looked at from a mass societal view. There are also many comments one can make on some of the mechanisms in Schlesinger's cycles, but for the purpose of this study, eras of liberalism and conservatism were all that was needed. It cannot be debated that it was Reagan who ushered in the strongest level of conservatism in this cycle, and now it is not just "up to big business and the ultra-conservative churches to divert the tide away from protest

culture and towards a Golden Age of restoration (Shor 1986:6). Reagan, in his eight years of office, worked very well with the fundamental religious groups and corporations to solidify the conservative movement. With their solidarity and financial support, their right wing ideologues were able to devise a public campaign of deception and oppression.

The conservative teacher data suggests that a little over half of the conservative teachers went to school during a more conservative era. In this case all but one conservative teacher went to school during the mid to late 1970s and early 1980s. The conservative reform was not felt until Nixon was in the White House for at least one term. "The 1960s was a tough medium limiting the advance of conservative policies in Nixon's first term" (Shor 1986:5). The reforms of the 1960s carried through to the early 1970s, but Nixon was able to start a conservative reform, as discussed earlier, which both Carter, even though a Democrat, and Reagan (a Republican) carried on. "Both Presidents [Carter and Reagan] responded with ardor to a perceived conservative surge in the nation" (Schlesinger, Jr. 1986:33) and continued many of Nixon's ideas and characteristics, like illegal activities by cabinet members and staffers. Because it took several years for Nixon to turn the tide of liberalism and reduce progressive educational programs, the early 1970s were designated as a liberal time.

Of 15 conservative teachers, 80% (24/30 total parents) had

conservative parents. The same is true when they state what party their parents identify with more, 80% identify more with the Republican Party. There are no conservative Democratic parents with conservative teachers. There were only four liberal parents and four Democratic parents. These numbers indicate that the conservative teachers did not deviate from their parents, which is to be expected. However, there were some teachers who became more conservative for some interesting reasons as seen below.

When the conservative teachers discussed their political influences, some factors that were different from the liberal factors surfaced. Only three out of the 15 (20%) conservative teachers said that their education influenced their political views as compared to the percentage of liberal teachers. Of those three teachers, one said that their "...political views are a little more liberal than [their] parents. Probably because of [their] exposure to more liberal education." The above teacher is a social studies teacher who, on Question 21 D., E., H., (see questionnaire in Appendix) disagreed with the statement: "too much money is spent on the military in this country and we should spend more on domestic programs". They also support the idea that the present standard of living and the way our country has been governed by the Reagan Administration is generally acceptable to you as a teacher along with military aid to the Contras. Even though these

teachers describe themselves as "more liberal" than their parents, they are obviously very conservative. A conservative chemistry and physics teacher who said their education influenced them also said that their political view is very similar to their conservative Republican parents and their parents are on the top of their list of political influences. Education and experience are next. The last conservative teacher who said that education influenced their political view also included their religion as an influence. But, even though they said they are more liberal than their parents, they are certainly conservative based on the 12 policy issues.

One math and computer conservative teacher who went to high school (1976-1980) and college (1980-1984) during one of the conservative eras described above, states that their political view was influenced not by their parents or the "times", but by their "Biblical principles" and "sense of justice". Another conservative math teacher also feels that "Christian Faith influenced [their] political view".

The other six conservative teachers went to high school and college during various times in the liberal era (1960-1975). These six conservative teachers did most of their secondary, college and graduate school in the liberal era, and their influences are much like their fellow conservative teachers who went to school in more conservative times. Two of the six teachers said that their political view is similar or the same

as their conservative parents. These teachers suprisingly are English teachers. One of them went to high school from 1958 to 1961 and college from 1961 to 1964, while the other attended high school between 1964 and 1967 and college between 1967 and 1971, with graduate work between 1974 and 1975.

Because both teachers had conservative Republican parents, they were probably influenced enough by their parents not to be affected by the liberalism of their young adult years. The first English teacher who went to high school in the late 1950s may have also been influenced by the lingering conservatism of the 1950s. Many people in the United States certainly did not buy into the liberal movement of the 1960s. This is especially true if you were white and middle class and the 1950s treated you well financially.

Besides the era in which these teachers went to school, there is yet another factor that may politically socialize these teachers as they grew up. This influence can be explained in terms of what type of students these teachers "hung" around with in high school. According to Question 4 in the questionnaire, 73% of the conservative teachers "hung" around with "smart kids" or athletes. Of this 73% (11 teachers), 27% said they "hung out" with student-athletes and 36% said they associated with just athletes and finally another 36% said they "hung" around only "smart" or college bound students. From the data, "smart" students were average to excellent students, honor roll students,

students taking college prep courses, scholars, and "serious" students according to the teachers. To explain further, some teachers also explained that the students who were scholars were also ones that were "probably more liked by the teachers and administration".

Consequently, a total of 11 teachers out of the fifteen conservative teachers associated with other students who were active and positive participants in the academic and athletic culture of their schools. This student-athlete is also typical of the dominant culture in most of the schools. This then means that this group of conservative teachers accept, promote and participate in the dominant culture in which schools operate. Therefore, I would argue that the factor described above has some influence on how a teacher will feel towards dropouts. Because these teachers were successful in the educational system, they will feel that almost anyone can be, and if you are not successful, you are to blame. This is then a politically conservative perspective on why students drop out of school. Many conservatives would argue that the student dropout does not want to participate in the accepted "norms and values" of our school.

With reference to the same Question 4, the liberal teachers were also made up of mostly student-athletes. Seventy-six percent (16/21) of all liberal teachers "hung" around with mainly "intelligent" students or athletes or both. Of these 16

teachers, nine (56%) stated they "hung" around only college bound or "smart" students. The same definition of "smart" student which applied to the conservative teacher also applies here. Five or 31% of the liberal teachers fell into the student-athlete category. And finally, two liberal teachers expressed the fact that they associated only with athletes in high school. The remaining five liberal teachers felt they were either "atypical", non-college bound or "artsy".

Again, with the percentages presented above for the liberal teachers, the majority of them felt that they were the type of student who fell into one of two or both categories which represents an acceptance of the "status quo" in schools. Good grades and being an athlete are two titles that the dominant culture recognizes as acceptable and desirable. Failure to be an athlete in one of the school sports or failure to be a good student (which means learning the designated college prep information) results in less acceptance by teachers, administrators and fellow students. These two popular areas of achievement then control a students vision of success. School paraphernalia (i.e. new and style-conscious clothing and new or expensive cars to drive to school) will also be a factor of a students measure of "success". Because both groups of teachers fall heavily into the two main categories of success in school and thus have been successful in it, they do not see it with a critical eye.

TEACHER TYPES

The political socialization of teachers will now be followed with an analysis of how certain politically committed teachers will generally be a certain type of teacher in terms of the courses they teach. In a general sense, there are two main types of teachers: on the one hand there are science, math, computer and business teachers; and, on the other, social studies, language and art teachers. It was then hypothesized that each main type generally had distinctive political views. This was described above along with the method for determining their political view.

Preliminary studies brought me to conclude that there are three basic influences within teaching experience: 1) academic discipline taught 2) type of student taught 3) type of school. The type of student taught and the type of school are factors that were controlled for by selecting all rural high schools with about the same expenditure per student. By doing this I was able to concentrate on the type of teacher (academic discipline they teach in). Curriculum taught can be looked upon as what type of classes the teacher instructs the most. For example, many teachers consider themselves science teachers or math teachers. Included in science is physics, biology, chemistry and earth science. Math would include algebra, trigonometry, geometry and calculus. Math and science, plus computer science and business are grouped together. Teachers

of these disciplines were hypothesized to be much more conservative politically and this would then surface in their view as to why students drop out of school. They were viewed to be more conservative overall because, as the literature review in Chapter Two displayed, math, science, computers, and business are important subject areas to many people who believe that business and industrial education should be the mainstay of public education. These people then tend to be politically conservative. On the other hand, humanities, language arts and social studies teachers tend to be more politically liberal. Language arts includes English, Spanish and French and other languages. Social studies includes government and history. Language arts and social studies, plus visual arts, special education and counselors are grouped together. These teachers were also predicted to have certain political views that carried over into their views on why students drop out of school. Because liberal arts and social studies tend to include more pluralistic ideas, this exposes teachers of these subject areas to more progressive concepts. This should then be reflected in liberal political views.

Table 3.4 below summarizes the percentages of liberal and conservative teachers that teach in the two main groups of curriculum.

Table 3.4
TEACHER TYPES AND LINKAGE TO POLITICS

- 76% of liberal teachers taught social studies, language, art and special education
- 67% of conservative teachers taught math, science, computers and business

Within the 21 liberal teachers identified, 16 or 76% of them taught in the areas of language, social studies, art or special education. Eight were language arts teachers, two were social studies teachers, four were special education teachers and two were art teachers. In the liberal group, the remaining teachers were four science and math teachers and one library/audio visual teacher. The library/audio teacher could be more liberal because of their exposure to a wide range of literature and information found in a library.

The 76% of liberal teachers who taught in these areas upholds the first linkage proposed earlier. The hypothesis predicted that teachers who are teaching languages, social studies and art (plus I will now include special education) will have a decidedly more liberal viewpoint concerning politics. The next question to address is why they have a liberal perspective and to this I will now turn.

I would argue that because these academic areas are very liberal and broad, as well as critical of the establishment and the status quo, they are by their very nature on the left side of the political spectrum. Language studies includes not only the study of grammar and syntax, but also the writers and

culture where that language is found. Many times these authors are very critical and cynical of the government and people in power along with other forms of hegemony (i.e. multinational corporations). When a student learns English they often read English and American literature which includes many criticisms both subtle and obvious of people who abuse power and are racist (a good example is Mark Twain).

Social studies is a very liberal area because it uncovers many of the reasons for social conflicts, both here and abroad. Anthropology in particular has been an influential discipline in uncovering how people are controlled in various ways. Its critical inquiry into poverty, abuse by multinational corporations on developing nations and brutal covert and overt military interventions in these same developing countries sponsored by the United States and other world powers, makes it a very radical discipline along with other social sciences. Finally, art, because it is on the leading edge of human expression and criticism of the times, is certainly found on the left side of the political spectrum. It is also interesting to note that all these curriculums were strengthened during the 1960s. Thus it makes sense that 67% of the liberal teachers went to school during this time. Thus, I would argue that the curriculum taught reflects a certain political view which is intertwined with a certain era in American history as described earlier.

To carry the analysis to the conservative side, a similar picture arises. Of the 15 identified conservative teachers, 67% were in the math, science and computer curriculum. Four were math and computer teachers, five were science teachers such as biology, physics, and chemistry. One teacher was a physical education teacher who also taught some science. The remaining conservative teachers deviated from the proposed hypothesis. They consisted of two English teachers, one social studies teacher, one special education teacher and one home economics teacher.

Because math by its very nature is precise and because it is crucial in a capitalist society, it is thus very important to the business and corporate culture of the United States. A person skilled in mathematics often becomes involved with white collar professions such as accounting, finance, banking, stocks, bonds, and executive positions to name only a few. As was shown in Chapter Two, business and conservative politics are very closely linked and want very little regulation or intervention from the government. In this way business is free to pursue profits at any expense. Liberal politics however, supports entities such as unions and government regulations on the environment and on plant closings. This view is unpopular with conservative politicians and corporate America, which they serve. If the mathematician/accountant wants to be middle class or higher and have material wealth, they have to abide

by the conservative rules of business and many of them do.

This same argument also applies for science, computer and obviously business teachers. Science and computers, much like math is very important to the business world. Chemistry, physics and engineering (which is actually a combination of math and science) are professions where people find employment very easy and at good wages. They then can expect to be middle class or higher. The status quo system has worked for them, so why criticize it? They probably worked hard, came from a white middle class family with college educated parents, never had to worry about money and were told (if they wondered) that poor people are poor because they are "lazy" or that God must be punishing them.

TEACHER PERSPECTIVES ON WHY STUDENTS DROP OUT OF SCHOOL

Using the political ideology from Chapter Two as a guide, the conservative teachers were hypothesized to blame the "victim" more than any other factor for their failure to complete school. In this case, they would blame the student and their family. Liberal teachers were hypothesized to blame the "victim" less and society and schools more for students dropping out of school. Table 3.5 below shows a somewhat different pattern.

Of the twenty liberal teachers isolated, ten of them felt that the family is the number one cause of why students dropped out of school. Fifty percent of the liberal teachers felt that

Table 3.5

TEACHER PERSPECTIVES ON WHY STUDENTS DROP OUT OF SCHOOL

- 50% of liberal teachers blame the family as the number one reason why students drop out of school
- 53% of conservative teachers blame the family as the number one reason why students drop out of school
- 26% of the time the family was blamed by the liberal teacher for students dropping out of school
- 24% of the time the family was blamed by the conservative teacher for students dropping out of school
- 35% of liberal teachers blame the student as the number one reason why they drop out of school
- 46% of conservative teachers blame the student as the number one reason why students drop out of school
- 49% of the time the student was blamed by the liberal teacher for dropping out of school
- 61% of the time the student was blamed by the conservative teacher for dropping out of school

the family was to blame in one way or another. Many of them said that the family did not believe in education and they did not encourage their children. One teacher stated that there was a "lack of respect for 'education' at home or from family background." One liberal teacher went as far as to blame a "single family home". And another teacher stated that there is a "lack of personal care by the parents [they] escape the parents by dropping out of school and home."

Just over half, 53% or eight out of 15 of the conservative teachers blamed the home life and have it as their number one cause as to why students drop out of school. The conservative teachers, because there were 15 of them, had a chance to blame the home life 75 times, but only blamed it a total of 18 times. This is about the same percentage of times the liberal teachers

blamed the home, that number being 26 times out of 100 possible chances. The conservative teachers, much like their liberal colleagues, blame the family in very basic ways. "Lack of family encouragement to continue school", "no parental support (or little) from birth onward", "family disinterested in education", "lack of love shown at home" and "lousy home life [with] bad parents". And also in very creative ways such as the following two teachers: "Drop outs are more related to value system rather than income...because the low-income blame the 'system' and therefore reject society's values". And one conservative teacher blames the parents for passing down a low I.Q. to their offspring, "most low-income students [are] children with low I.Q.s and they have parents with low I.Q.s".

To summarize this information, it can be stated that both liberal and conservative teachers tend to put the number one blame for dropouts under home life about the same amount of time, 50% and 53% respectively. When looking at the total number of times home life could have been blamed in the questionnaire the numbers again are very similar. The liberal teachers could blame the home life a total of 100 times. They blamed it 26 times (26%). The conservative teachers blamed it 18 times out of 75 times (24%). By permitting each teacher to supply five causes as to why students drop out of school, another major area for blame surfaces. This other area for blame is the student. Before conducting this investigation I hypothesized that liberal

teachers would blame the student less than conservative teachers. Conservative teachers, with their outright acceptance of the present socioeconomic system, certainly blame the student if they do not succeed in school. This whole tenet is directly related to the entire conservative ideology of blaming the victim for their inequality and poverty.

These assumptions were only true to a certain extent. Both types of teachers were able to develop a large number of reasons that were directly the individual student's fault. Liberal teachers blamed the student as the number one cause as to why they drop out of school 35% of the time. Seven out of the 20 liberal teachers (again one liberal teacher did not answer this question) felt that it was the students' fault more than anything else. In total answers the student was blamed 49 times out of 100. This represents a large portion of the possible answers. The reasons were listed as "drug use", "lack of success in school environment", "low self-esteem", "lack of respect for education", "low motivation", "pregnancy", "student boredom", "peer pressure to drop out of school", "absent too much", and "discipline" among others. This data refutes to a certain degree one of my original assumptions that liberal teachers would be much more sympathetic to the students and families and not blame them a great deal for dropping out of school.¹

The conservative teachers blame the student first slightly more than the liberal teacher. They believe that the student

is the number one cause seven out of 15 times or 46% of the time. In total answers, the conservative teacher also slightly blames the student more than the liberal teacher, 46 out of 75 times or 61% of the time. This is an important figure because as mentioned above, it disputes to a certain extent, my hypothesis that conservative teachers blame the student for dropping out of school more than the liberal teacher. The conservative teacher still blames the student more, but slightly. When blaming the student, the conservative teacher is as creative as the liberal teacher when listing causes. They provided reasons such as "drugs and alcohol", "getting into the 'wrong crowd' of peers in school", "boredom", "lack of success in early grades", "failure to see a need for education", "desire to have a job and earn money now instead of getting an education to be qualified for a better job" and "poor behavior". One teacher also states that "most low-income students [are] children with low I.Q.s and they have parents with low I.Q.s". Finally the welfare system was blamed by a teacher who says, "as long as there are social programs to provide for people- why get an education? Why work?" None of the conservative teachers blamed emotional or learning problems. There were five answers that blamed the teacher and four answers that blamed a "fast changing society". Even though a few conservative teachers mentioned that they could be part of the problem, they were willing to put the majority of the blame on the family or the student. A fast

changing society was mentioned in the context of students who are not willing to do what it takes to succeed in today's society. Because both of these areas are mentioned cautiously and are few in number, I would argue that they are not areas for blame for the majority of conservative teachers. In addition, when the conservative teachers mentioned a "fast changing society" as a reason for student dropout, they did not criticize or question the present capitalist system- again keeping the vast majority of blame on the family or student.

Conservative teachers do blame the student more than liberal teachers, but as mentioned above, neither group of teachers took their analysis beyond the student or their family in a critical fashion. In other words, both sets of teachers did not look judiciously at the larger socioeconomic system in which schools operate. None of the teachers surveyed challenged the present capitalist system in which we live. Education, to this group of liberal and conservative teachers is still a panacea to "success" and social mobility. The only real obstacles to this group of liberal and conservative teachers is the family and their lack of support for their child's education and the student themselves. This is a very conservative viewpoint which matches up well with the conservative teachers and their curriculum. However, this perspective does not match up well with liberal political ideology. Also, another important idea operating here is the fact that the teachers used in this part

of the study were convincingly liberal or conservative. Even with their political awareness or strong political belief, they did not take their discussion of why students drop out of school past the two agents of family and students. Their view of the problem is at a very superficial level. They did not bring politics into the picture at all.

In concluding this section, the low percentages of blame put on society and school by the liberal teachers does not uphold some my initial statements. Even though the liberal teachers blame the student less than the conservative teacher in both categories and also blame the family less in one category as predicted in the initial hypotheses, the liberals in this sample still put the bulk of the blame on the "victim" (student and family). This is obviously contrary to what I had expected. The liberal teachers turned out to be much more conservative on this issue than I had expected.

FACTORS ACCORDING TO THE TEACHER THAT INFLUENCE THEIR PERSPECTIVES ON DROPOUTS

With the above viewpoints on how teachers view the reasons why students drop out of school, I can now present the teachers' influences. Starting again with liberal teachers, there is evidence to suggest that actual teaching experience is the most influential factor. Out of the 21 teachers who are considered liberal, only 13 of them answered this question. However, all 13 stated that teaching experience was a very important factor.

Teaching experience is also important to the conservative teachers as seen in Table 3.6 below.

Table 3.6
FACTORS ACCORDING TO THE TEACHER THAT INFLUENCE THEIR
PERSPECTIVES ON DROPOUTS

- 62% of liberal teachers stated that "teaching experience" is a very influential factor in their development of reasons why students drop out of school
- 93% of conservative teachers stated that "teaching experience" is a very influential factor in their development of reasons why students drop out of school

Along with teaching experience, some liberal teachers expressed that they were also influenced by: reading on their own (2 teachers), community work (1 teacher), their upbringing (2 teachers), education (1 teacher), friends (1 teacher), television/media (1 teacher), and other work experience such as social work (2 teachers). None of the liberal teachers, on this question, mentioned anything about their political views influencing their reasons.

Besides teaching experience, conservative teachers also felt that reading on their own (1 teacher), upbringing (1 teacher), and education (1 teacher) were also responsible to a certain extent for influencing them.

Within the number of both liberal and conservative teachers answering this question, then, 96% specified that teaching experience is a strong influential factor. Within the entire sample group however, not one teacher stated that their political view influenced their perceptions on the reasons students

dropped out of school.

As proposed in the Introduction, I was looking for data that would show that these certain types of teachers with their certain political views could be predicted to have certain views on why students drop out of school. However, by taking the type of teacher, there can be a prediction on their political view but not their response as to why students drop out of school. This model shows that there is some covert or unconscious reasoning on the part of the teacher when they explain why students drop out of school. In other words, this unconscious or covert reasoning and opinion forming is being internalized by the teacher in a variety of environments with certain political views also being internalized. Thus, when the teacher is asked about certain problems about school, in this case why students drop out of school, they formulate their views based on conscious interaction with the students and other information they have learned. Because certain political views have distinct perspectives on the fairness of this society (see Theoretical Overview), their respective followers will be influenced by these perspectives. However, this is not the case with politically aware and active teachers in this study. Factors that influenced the teachers' views on dropouts were kept overtly apolitical by all the teachers.

With the earlier distinction presented above concerning how two groups of teachers, language arts/social studies vs. science/

mathematics, have different political views, I can now move into a discussion of how both groups either consciously or unconsciously used conservative ideology to help them formulate their reasons as to why students drop out of school.

TEACHER PERSPECTIVES AND THE CONNECTION TO POLITICS

Because the conservative teachers, in which the majority are science/math/business teachers, blame the student the most, they are in fact placing the blame where the conservative politicians and reformers place the blame. As the literature review showed, the student is to blame when they do not do well in school and consequently drop out. Also, because the connection between the business world and school has been explicitly shown earlier in the paper, another area of linkage is uncovered. Corporatism and the conservatives "call for a free market has a long cultural history in the United States, where it has been associated with Social Darwinism" (Wexler 1987:62). This is not a new idea, but with the New Right having control of the terminology (i.e. "quality", "excellence" "crisis" and "careerism") of the latest "education crisis", they are able to institute this type of thinking. If you do not succeed in any aspect of this society, the New Right would propose that you are not industrious enough.²

Also, it is important to realize that conservatives, on a whole, do not like to support education, either at the state level or at the federal level (e.g. Reagan cuts in education).

This view of keeping the federal government out of public education is also seen in how conservative teachers view the role of it in solving the drop out problem. Sixty percent or 9/15 conservative teachers feel that the federal government should stay completely out of education. "The schools are a local obligation. When the federal government gets involved in a problem, things tend to get worse", one conservative math and computer teacher stated. Five of the 15 teachers (30%) feel that the federal government should get involved, but only in funding.

The correlation between conservative teachers, the curriculum they teach and the reasons they think students drop out of school is very explicit. However, when connecting the liberal teacher, and the curriculum they teach to a certain view on why students drop out of school, the linkage is connected more to conservative ideology. As stated earlier, the liberal teacher matches up well with a particular academic area (social studies, language and art), but they view the reasons why students drop out of school in a much more conservative manner. They still blame the student less than the conservative teacher, but they still put heavy emphasis on the student along with the family. As mentioned previously, they do not go beyond the student or family agent in an aggressive manner in their analysis of why students drop out of school. It was very suprising that there were not any radical teachers

found in the sample group. None of the teachers felt that the schools were reproducing unequal class relations nor did any feel that there were any contradictions in the American educational system like the radical reformers presented earlier. Consequently, there were no calls for a major restructuring of the socioeconomic system in which schools operate. Even the very liberal teachers felt that the present educational system and socioeconomic system was sound, it just needed adjustment or added programs for some students, plus funding. While there were some liberal teachers calling for federal aid (38% or 8/21), another 38% of the liberal teachers felt that the federal government should not get involved with student dropouts. The other 24% of liberal teachers had no opinion on this matter. Unlike the conservative teachers, the liberal teachers were split on whether to involve the federal government more in the attempt to curve the dropout rates. With only half the teachers voicing a need for federal assistance, the other 38% reflects a politically conservative overt idea of "hands off" politics. The reason for this may have been the last eight years of Republican rule plus the conservative restoration as charted by Shor (1986). This control of the executive branch for 16 of the last 20 years may have made many liberal teachers very pessimistic about the ability and the desire of the federal government to actually take a role in the improvement of public schools.

Back to the idea of where liberal and conservative teachers place the blame, there may be a demographic reason for keeping the causes of student drop out tied only to the student and the family. One of these reasons may be because all the teachers participating in the study come from rural high schools in communities perhaps politically conservative.³

The teachers in which I was not able to categorize as liberal or conservative (slightly liberal, slightly conservative, apolitical and middle of the political spectrum) blamed the same areas as conservative and liberal teachers. Parents were blamed here also because these teachers felt that education to parents of dropouts was not important. This group of teachers also mention that parents often "give up on their children", thus not supporting them in school. The students were also blamed in similar ways by these teachers. Behavior problems and the lack of seeing education as something important were two areas where these teachers put the blame.

Like the two main groups of teachers, these apolitical and politically neutral teachers did not offer any criticisms of the larger society in which schools operate. They are content to just blame the family and the student. Thus, they are forwarding a political message that upholds a belief that the present socioeconomic system is acceptable and thus are adhering to at least one broad political belief that the real problem of education is in the students or the parents. The

dominant ideology and culture are supported automatically if the teacher does not take a political stand (Shor and Freire 1987). Such is the case with these teachers.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

One of the main objectives of this study was to show the linkage between education and politics at a general level through a theoretical overview (Ch.2) and at a more specific level through original data collected from teachers (Ch.3). Consequently, the second objective provided a view on how teachers actually construct their perspectives on dropouts. The teachers themselves stated that they used their "teaching experience" to help them answer why students drop out of school. It was also shown that many conservative teachers have conservative views on dropouts. However, none of the conservative teachers stated that their political view influenced their views on dropouts. The linkage between liberal teachers, curriculum they teach and their views on dropouts is unexpected. As shown, liberal teachers tend to be social studies, language and art teachers, however, their views on dropouts are also politically conservative in nature.

The third objective was completed by showing where both groups of teachers place the blame as to why students drop out of school. Both groups blame the "victim" (family and students) very heavily with the conservative teachers blaming the "victim" slightly more than the liberal teachers.

Math, science, computer and business teachers will tend to be more politically conservative (67% in this study) because they teach many concepts and forms of information crucial to the business atmosphere of this country. This relationship between business needs and the conservative restoration was presented in the Theoretical Overview. Below is a summary of the percentages where the blame is placed by conservative teachers when students drop out of school.

Blame the family first.....	53%
Blame the student first.....	46%
Total times the family is blamed.....	24%
Total times the student is blamed.....	61%

As stated in the data analysis earlier in this chapter, the family is blamed first slightly more than the individual student by conservative teachers, but both agents are considered "victims". The individual student is still blamed heavily. The reason the family is blamed first by the conservative teacher may be because it is easy to blame an outside institution for problems and it has been shown that children are influenced the most by their family situation. However, there were no responses by conservative teachers challenging the socio-economic system in which families and schools operate. This is certainly not a suprising discovery because as with many social problems, conservative ideology blames the "victim" for their failures and shortcomings in this "free society".

Only a few percentage points behind the family agent as the

number one cause for student drop out is the individual student. Conservative teachers put much emphasis on the student in both categories of blame. One reason for this may be the fact that teachers are exposed to students everyday of the week for at least five hours per day. This gives them ample time to formulate ideas on why students fail. Another reason, which I believe to be especially true for conservative teachers is the fact that they believe heavily in individual choice where the student decides if they want to succeed in school. Thus, according to this line of reasoning, students fail and drop out because they decide themselves not to make it through school. In conservative ideology, blaming the "victim" is a "catch all" answer which takes the dominant culture "off the hook" for the inequalities in society. It does not matter if there is still racism, unequal economic chances, unequal schools, and unequal tax and school reform- as long as the blame can be put on the family or the student, society will keep the status quo and conserve the hegemony.

In total times the family is blamed much less than the student. The reason for this may be, as mentioned above, the teacher has more exposure to students and less exposure to the parents. They would then be able to give many more reasons relating to the individual student rather than the parents.

Social studies, language and art teachers will tend to be more politically liberal (76% in this study) because they teach

many concepts and forms of information that are not directly applicable to the business community and may often be critical of the dominant culture. These liberal teachers will then blame the student less for dropping out of school than their conservative counterparts. Below is a summary of the areas of blame of the liberal teacher.

Blame the family first.....	50%
Blame the student first.....	35%
Total times the family is blamed.....	26%
Total times the student is blamed.....	49%

As seen above and earlier in the chapter the family is blamed first much like the conservatives. However, the student is blamed first by the liberal teachers much less than the family and less than the conservative teachers, upholding the original assumption that conservative teachers will blame the student more than the liberal teacher. The reason the liberal teachers also blame the family first more than any other agent may be due to the same reason the conservative teachers do- it is easy to blame an outside institution for the problems of students. And as mentioned above there is research to support this contention. Again, similar to the conservative teachers, there was no criticism of the present socioeconomic system. Only a few responses went beyond the family. Before the study I had predicted that there should be some liberal or radical teachers who would challenge this country's version of

economic freedom or democracy, but there was only a few comments on how some low-income students may have to drop out of school in order to work and earn money for the family. By not challenging the unequal opportunities that exist in this society this group of liberal teachers are actually supporting a conservative view of society. In addition they are also using a conservative argument to answer why students drop out of school.

While more radical teachers would blame the present socio-economic system, the study did not uncover any radical teachers. This may be due to the fact that all the schools that participated in the study came from rural areas in south-central Michigan which tend to be more conservative. I believe that if urban schools were used, radical teachers would surface with much more critical comments about society. They would tend to be very critical of the present society because they see how it has failed to provide equal chances for social mobility or economic stability for a wide range of students.

Even though the liberal teacher blames the individual first very few times compared to the family or the conservative teacher in general, they do blame them a significant amount in total times for dropping out of school. As with the conservative teachers it might be due to the exposure they have with students on a daily basis. It may also be due to the fact that the liberal teachers have some conservative tendencies which lead them to believe that a large portion of the blame may

still be put on the student.

Teachers may also put "professional blinders" on- meaning that if they criticized themselves heavily or the school or system they work in, they may feel they are undermining their profession so they keep the blame away from that. This however does not answer why teachers still do not overtly relate drop-outs to political ideology or why liberal teachers have conservative views on the problem. One reason for this may be the fact that administrators and parents frown on teachers who offer political views, especially on economic matters. With the insulation of the business climate from heavy criticism in our culture, this may be a reason that teachers do not want to be critical of it and its effect on students.

Because teachers have made it through the educational system they may feel that for the most part it is fair and readily accept the dominant culture. Many teachers in the sample blame the student for not wanting to participate in school. The teachers say that the student or the family is "not interested in education". If it is something they do not agree with or something they want no part of (i.e. dominant culture) and the teacher caters to the major players in the educational game (white middle class athletes and honor roll students), some students may feel that there is no place for them.

Teachers could also be too busy with everyday teaching of

students to verse themselves in political ideology and rhetoric. During the school year teachers are asked and forced to be involved in many different activities. This added to the general heavy work load leaves very little time for political enrichment.

Finally, many of the teachers in this study may have fallen prey to the seemingly apolitical terms such as "quality" and "excellence" and the educational crises promoted by the right. High test scores for white middle class students can erase a great deal of sins on the part of national educational. Shor (1986) has already shown that fallacy of the education crises and dropping test scores.

It is obvious that the New Right controls the language of discourse over the debate of education. This also includes the distinct problem of dropouts and the causes. However, in this study it was shown that both liberal and conservative teachers felt that the problem of dropouts is apolitical. They did not link the problems of dropouts to larger societal problems which are controlled by politics. The conservative ideology that all individuals in the United States have economic freedom and the freedom to determine their own lives (this includes dropping out of school) makes a conservative argument (although not realized by both groups of teachers) very appealing. With this argument of individual choice and adhering to the new campaign of "excellence in education" the teachers

support the status quo on this issue and thus protect themselves from criticism of "mediocrity". This viewpoint has far reaching implications. With the rising dropout rate and the unequal distribution of wealth growing, this society is becoming an ever increasing two class system. Until educators, administrators, politicians and parents are willing to take a radical, democratic look at the educational system and society, the problems of dropouts will continue.

This leads to the last objective that needs to be treated. Teachers, on a large scale, must begin to take critical notice of the linkage between politics and education. They need to become aware of how corporations and the New Right are influencing schools through financing, curriculum and media propaganda. Schools are moving towards standardized curriculums which teach students to follow directions and become competent in technical skills while also taking autonomy away from the teacher. Many teachers see prepackaged programs as a way to cut down on work, but they also take away much of the creativity that teachers use in the classroom.

Radical educational theory has analyzed this relationship between the New Right, business needs and education very thoroughly. The new sociology of education has also criticized liberal educational theory because, among other things, it fails to see the connection between politics, economics and education. By taking to task both the conservative and liberal view of

education, it has exposed many areas for improvement which were briefly touched on in Chapter Two. One of these areas for improvement is in the equalness of education. Public schools should provide every student with equal educational opportunities. Obviously this is not the case and it is one being debated in Michigan currently, with no solution in the near future.

The lack of democracy in schools will not be changed unless there are improvements in the entire society. This is another area for improvement, especially for theorists such as Christopher Jenks (1972) and Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis (1976). To these researchers, schools cannot become more equal or a place for teaching egalitarian values until society at large changes. Schools will stay unequal until the dominant culture changes and education will not transform society into a more just place until society decides it will.

Although this next area for improvement appreciates the fact that society must change in order for schools to be an effective means towards equalizing society, it insists that education can be an important medium for helping this transformation to come about. Authors such as Paulo Friere (1985,1987), Ira Shor (1980, 1986,1987), Stanely Aronowitz (1985) and Henry Giroux (1981,1985, 1988a,1988b) among others, call for teachers to be; politically aware and active, to offer their opinion in the classroom and to teach critical thinking skills in any type of classroom.

Included in this view is the concept of liberatory education where students and teachers learn together to uncover the hegemonic structures put in place by the dominant culture. This is done through a democratic dialogue in the classroom between the teacher and the student. Teachers in this type of pedagogy do not use authoritarian procedures or arrangements in the traditional sense. They keep order by treating the students like people who are capable of making decisions for themselves. Education is thus much more democratic.

In this pedagogy, content is still very crucial. In order to become economically secure in this society the student must learn certain skills, but in this educational process the skills, information, and procedures are all looked at critically to find fault and room for improvement.

In this view, education is not the lone panacea for the lower classes and minorities. However, by making education more political in the eyes of teachers and students, changes can be made in society. Critical thinking skills can be applied to all situations in society. And it is this type of education that truly intimidates the dominant ideology.

NOTES

1. The remaining 25 possible reasons as to why students drop out of school are causes such as the need for low-income students to work instead of going to school. Twelve percent of the answers were in this category. This was then considered a societal factor, even though I believe that the teachers giving this answer did not put it in the context of challenging the socioeconomic system. It was a factor in itself. When the teacher blamed the educational institution they either blamed emotional or learning problems of the student which the school could not address (7% of the total answers). Another school related factor was the teachers themselves. Eleven percent of the teachers put the blame on teachers who did not recognize students who were "at risk" of dropping out. One liberal teacher went as far as to blame the welfare system to a certain extent because it gave the student an "easy out".

2. Some ultraconservative reformers would fall back on a "genetic answer" as to why students drop out of school. A conservative math teacher above has already stated his feelings on why students drop out of school, especially, low-income students. "I see most low-income students as children with low I.Q.s and they have parents with low I.Q.s" (Conservative Math Teacher 1988). This math teacher believes he has enough experience to use this as a main reason why low-income students

drop out of school. I believe he does not, however, there is research that tries to support a genetic explanation for poor performance in schools. "Proponents of this position maintain that certain groups have low status because they are genetically inferior. The assumption is made that social mobility is open to anyone with the requisite [as dictated by the ruling class] talents and that natural endowment is reflected in privilege" (Bond 1981:239). Researchers such as Jensen 1969, Herrnstein 1973 and Eysenck 1971 adhere to one version or another of the genetic argument (1981:240). Many conservative professionals (i.e. politicians, business people, and even some teachers) believe that this is a "fact of life" and just accept it and go on with their narcissistic lives. This researcher certainly does not uphold this type of thinking. However, it would be simplistic not to appreciate the idea that there are some students with lower I.Q.s, but to generalize in the manner of the above teacher is unacceptable, especially because he is an educator.

3. I would also suggest that this is the reason that none of the teachers challenged the present socioeconomic system schools operate in. This may also help explain why the sample group did not present any radical teachers. However, the fact that the sample area (rural community schools) tended to be more conservative overall, even with liberal teachers, does not mean that there are no radical teachers. There may be radical teachers in each one of the school districts surveyed, but they may have

chosen not to respond to the questionnaire. As the data already has shown, there were actually more liberal teachers than either conservative or radical teachers. This again does not mean that there are more liberal teachers in the school districts surveyed. If all the teachers in all the districts chose to participate in the study, I could then discuss in more detail why some schools have more liberal teachers than others. However, that topic is beyond the scope of this study.

APPENDIXTEACHER SURVEY ON FACTORS THAT CAUSE STUDENTS
TO DROP OUT OF SCHOOL

NAME-

AGE-

TEACHING AREA-

GRADES TAUGHT-

1. What type and class of high school did you attend?
(please circle appropriate answer)

TYPE- a.public b.private c.both d.other, explain_____

CLASS- A. B. C. D.

2. What dates did you attend the high school?

____-____-____ to ____-____-____

3. What was the location of your high school?

a. Rural Community b.Inner City c.Suburban

4. Could you explain what type of students you "hung" around with, if any, in high school. Were they typical of the school and what percent of the student body were they?

5. What college did you attend for your teacher education and what type was it? What dates did you attend the college?
(please circle letter and supply name)

a.public state university or college

b.private college

c.religious college

NAME & LOCATION

DATES ATTENDED

6. What was your major(s) and minor(s) in college?
(please list)

MAJOR(S)- _____

MINOR(S)- _____

7. What type of undergraduate degree did you receive? (circle)

a. Bachelor of Arts

b. Bachelor of Science

b. Other _____

8. Can you remember any specific type of educational philosophy or theory that was stressed to you during your undergraduate education? If so please explain/list in the space below.

9. Please list any graduate work you have done along with the college or university where you have taken graduate courses. Please include any graduate degrees (M.A. or M.S.) received along with the major and minors.

10. Please list all the schools you have taught at along with location, size, type and curriculum taught.

Name of School	Private or Public	Size A.,B., C.,D.	Rural, Inner City, Suburban	Curriculum Taught	Number of Yrs. There
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

11. How would you categorize the bulk of your students in terms of the following categories?
(please circle and explain if necessary)

a. Work Efficiency

(1) average (2) below average (3) above average

b. Level of Work (intellectual level)

(1) low (2) high (3) average (4) other, explain

12. Is student dropout a problem at your high school?
(please circle and explain if necessary)

a. no b. yes c. do not know

13. A. Do you discuss school problems with your fellow teachers?
If yes, please explain in what context you have these discussions (i.e. in-school conversations or are they discussed at social gatherings) and what type of school problems you discuss.

13. B. Do you discuss specific problems of low-income students with your fellow teachers and if so, do these discussions influence your views on the problems of these types of students? Low-income students are defined as students whose parent(s) do not make a combined average yearly income of \$12,000.00.

14. A. In your opinion, what types of students in terms of income tend to drop out of school the most across the country? (please circle appropriate answer)

1) Low income 2) Lower middle income 3) Middle income

4) Upper middle income 5) Upper income 6) Other, explain

14. B. List the five most important in-school and out-of-school factors you can that lead to or cause students to drop out of school. Number the factors in order of importance starting with the most important factor as number one. Please be clear and explain if necessary.

14. C.Out of the factors you listed in question 14.B which factors have you personally experienced in your teaching career? Please be as specific as possible.

15. After answering question number 14, can you list or explain where you developed your certain views as to why students drop out of school? For example, you might mention your classroom experience as an important influential factor or if you have not come in contact with many in your school, you might base your assumptions on your education, upbringing, political beliefs, and volunteer work you're involved with, etc.

16. What are the current occupations of your parents or if deceased, their last occupation?

Father

Mother

17. Are these the same occupations your parents had during your childhood? If not please list all the occupations both your parents have had?

Father

Mother

18. Please list the amount of education each of your parents had.

19. What was the combined average salary of your parents during your childhood? (please circle)

a.Low-income b.Lower-middle c.Middle d.Upper-middle e.Upper

20. What is your ethnic background and what region of the country did you and your parents originate from?

21. What are your views concerning the following issues:
(please circle the appropriate number for each category)

A.Abortion should not be considered illegal and the woman should have the right to make the decision on whether to have an abortion or not.

1)Agree

2)Disagree

3)Not Sure

B.Welfare is generally a postive program for children and adults who are not able to support themselves.

1)Agree

2)Disagree

3)Not Sure

C.Unions in the United States and their demands are a major cause of the economic decline of the country and are detrimental to the business climate.

1)Agree 2)Disagree 3)Not Sure

D.Too much money is spent on the military in this country and we should spend more on domestic programs.

1)Agree 2)Disagree 3)Not Sure

E.The United States should continuously protect its economic interests through military means while spreading its values and beliefs through economic means.

1)Agree 2)Disagree 3)Not Sure

F.The present standard of living and the way our country has been governed by the Reagan Administration is generally acceptable to you as a teacher.

1)Agree 2)Disagree 3)Not Sure

G.The United States should **not** have the death penalty under any circumstances.

1)Agree 2)Disagree 3)Not Sure

H.Employers in the United States should **not** be required by law to provide health insurance for its employees.

1)Agree 2)Disagree 3)Not Sure

I.The United States should supply arms to the Contras in Nicaragua.

1)Agree 2)Disagree 3)Not Sure

J.The Reagan Adminstration was correct in cutting social programs such as the lunch and immunization programs in public schools to save federal money.

1)Agree 2)Disagree 3)Not Sure

K.The Federal Government should support bilingual education.

1)Agree 2)Disagree 3)Not Sure

L.The Federal Government should devote as much money as possible to the "Star Wars" program.

1)Agree

2)Disagree

3)Not Sure

22. A.How would you describe your parents political view?
(please circle and note if spouses differ)

1)"Conservative" 2)"Ultra-conservative" 3)"Liberal"

4)"Radical" 5)Other, please explain

22. B.What political party do they identify with more?

1)Republican

2)Democrat

3)Other, please explain

22. C.How would you characterize your political view as compared to your parents? What factors have influenced your political view?

23. Should the federal government get more involved in the problem of school dropouts? If so, how should they proceed with involving themselves? If you have no opinion on this subject please indicate that here.

24. Do you think that teachers, including yourself, are politically aware?

25. Do you think that teachers should be politically active?

26. If you have any additional comments on why low-income students drop out of school, please add them here along with any factors that might have brought you to these conclusions. (Use back if necessary)

Note: If you do not wish to participate in this study please return blank questionnaire in the envelope provided.

LIST OF REFERENCES

- Adler, Mortimer J.
1982 The Paideia Proposal. New York: Macmillan.
- Apple, Michael W.
1979 Ideology and Curriculum. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- 1982a Cultural and Economic Reproduction in Education. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- 1982b Education and Power. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Apple, Michael W. and L. Weiss (eds.)
1983 Ideology and Practice in Schooling. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Aronowitz, Stanley and Henry A. Giroux
1985 Education Under Siege; The Conservative, Liberal and Radical Debate Over Schooling. Critical Studies in Education Series. Massachusetts: Bergin & Garvey Publishers, Inc.
- Bernstein, Basil
1975 Class, Codes and Control. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Bloom, Alan
1987 The Closing of the American Mind. Chicago: University of Chicago.
- Bourdieu, P. and J.C. Passerson
1977 Reproduction: In Education, Society and Culture. London: Sage.
- Bond, George Clement
1981 "Social Economic Status and Educational Achievement: A Review Article. Anthropology and Education Vol.XII, No.4:227-257. Council on Anthropology and Education.

- Bowles, Samuel and Herbert Gintis
 1976 Schooling in Capitalist America; Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life. New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers.
- 1987 Democracy & Capitalism; Property, Community, and the Contradictions of Modern Social Thought. New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers.
- Brown, T.M.
 1974 "From Mechanism to Vitalism in Eighteenth-Century English Physiology". Journal of the History of Biology Vol.7, No.2:179-216.
- Carnoy, Martin and Henry M. Levin
 1985 Schooling and Work in the Democratic State. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Dynneson, Thomas L.
Anthropology for the Schools: An Analysis of Selected Anthropology Curriculum Projects and Units with Content Ratings by Professional Anthropologists. Boulder, Colorado: ERIC/ChESS, 50 004 027.
- 1981 "The Status of Pre-Collegiate Anthropology: Progress or Peril". Anthropology and Education Vol.XII, No.4:304-311. Council on Anthropology and Education.
- Eysenck, H.J.
 1971 Race, Intelligence and Education. London: Temple Smith.
- Freire, Paulo
 1985 The Politics of Education; Culture, Power and Liberation. Massachusetts: Bergin & Garvey Publishers, Inc.
- Giroux, Henry
 1981 Ideology, Culture, and the Process of Schooling. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- 1983 Theory And Resistance In Education; A Pedagogy for the Opposition. Massachusetts: Bergin & Garvey Publishers, Inc.
- 1988a Schooling and the Struggle for Public Life; Critical Pedagogy in the Modern Age. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- 1988b Teachers As Intellectuals; Toward a Critical Pedagogy of Learning. Critical Studies in Education Series. Massachusetts: Bergin & Garvey Publishers, Inc.

Goldthorpe, John H.

- 1980 Social Mobility and Class Structure in Modern Britain.
Oxford: Clarendon Books.

Herrnstein, R.

- 1973 I.Q. in the Meritocracy. Little, Brown.

Hirsch Jr., E.D.

- 1987 Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Jensen, A.

- 1969 "How Much Can We Boost I.Q. and Scholastic Achievement?"
Harvard Educational Review Reprint Series No.2:
1-123.

Karabel, J. and A.H. Halsey

- 1977 Power and Ideology in Education. New York: Oxford
University Press.

Kennedy, Margaret Jones

- 1973 "A National Survey of Pre-Collegiate Anthropology
Programs--1977-78". Unpublished manuscript. The
University of Texas of the Permian Basin.

Macleod, Jay

- 1988 Ain't No Makin' It; Leveled Aspirations in a Low-Income
Neighborhood. Boulder: Westview Press.

Olsen, P.

- 1981 "Theme Issue: Rethinking Social Reproduction".
Interchange Vol.12, No.'s 2-3.

Ohmann, Richard

- 1976 "The Literacy Crisis is a Fiction, if Not A Hoax".
The Chronicle of Higher Education 25 October.

Ravitch, Diane and Chester E. Finn, Jr.

- 1984 "High Expectations and Disciplined Effort".
Against Mediocrity, ed. Robert Fancher and
Diane Ravitch. New York: Holmes and Meier.

Schlesinger, Arthur M. Jr.

- 1986 The Cycles Of American History. Boston: Houghton
Mifflin Company.

Schultz, Theodore W.

- 1966 "Investment in Poor People". Seminar on Manpower
Policy and Programs. Office of Manpower Policy
Evaluation Research, Washington: Department of Labor.

- Selltiz, Claire, Marie Jahoda, Morton Deutsch and Stuart W. Cook
1959 Research Methods In Social Relations. Revised
One-Volume ed. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston
- Sharp, R.
1980 Knowledge, Ideology and the Politics of Schooling:
Towards a Marxist Analysis of Education. Boston:
Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Sheils, Merrill
1975 "Why Johnny Can't Write". Newsweek, 8 December,
p.9.
- Shor, Ira
1980 Critical Teaching & Everyday Life (2nd ed.). Chicago:
The University of Chicago Press
- 1986 Culture Wars; School and Society in the Conservative
Restoration 1969-1984. New York: Routledge & Kegan
Paul.
- Shor, Ira and Paulo Freire
1987 A Pedagogy For Liberation; Dialogues On Transforming
Education. Massachusetts: Bergin & Garvey Publishers,
Inc.
- Spring, J.H.
1972 Education and the Rise of the Corporate State.
Boston: Beacon.
- Wexler, Philip
1976 The Sociology of Education: Beyond Equality.
Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill.
- 1985a "Social Change and Practice of Social Education".
Social Education Vol.49, No.5:390-394.
- 1987 Social Analysis of Education; After the New Sociology.
New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Young, M.F.D. (ed.)
1971 Knowledge and Control: New Directions for the
Sociology of Education. London: Collier-Macmillan.
- Young, M. and G. Whitty
1977 Society, State and Schooling. Sussex, England:
Falmer Press.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIV. LIBRARIES



31293007863784