



THE EFFECTS OF SELECTED VARIABLES ON HONOR
CLASS MEMBERSHIP AT STARR COMMONWEALTH
FOR BOYS

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ABSTRACT

THE EFFECTS OF SELECTED VARIABLES ON HONOR CLASS MEMBERSHIP AT STARR COMMONWEALTH FOR BOYS

By Robert M. Tester

Statement of the Problem

To determine if athletic participation, IQ, academic grade average, and father's occupation effect honor class membership at Starr Commonwealth for Boys.

Methodology

The subjects of the study are the entire ninth and tenth grades at Starr Commonwealth for Boys. Starr Commonwealth is both a private school and social agency for the rehabilitation and education of boys with social and emotional problems. It is not a penal institution but a voluntary social agency for problem boys. The only requirements for admission are that the boy be normal mentally and physically, qualify for placement between the fifth and tenth grades, not require remedial teaching or intensive psychiatric treatment and agree to remain at the school until it feels he is ready to live successfully in society.

Many of the boys have had common problems. They have all broken the law and most have had problems in school. The emotional problem that is common to all of them, however, is not in the nature of psychoses but varying types of neuroses.

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Starr Commonwealth employs an honor system which is designed to recognize and evaluate the behavior of the boys. Each boy is in an honor class (A, B, C, or D) and his privileges are contingent on his honor class membership. A is the most desirable and D the least.

The data for the study was collected by interviews with each boy and from the school records. To facilitate collection and in order to have a composite record for each subject a form was designed on which to record all data.

In order to compare the various factors with position in the honor system it was necessary to group the boys into a limited number of classification on each variable. The chi square test was then used to determine the relationship between each of the variables and honor class membership with the level of confidence set at .05.

Results

When the χ^2 was completed the following values were obtained:

	χ^2	df	P
Athletic participation and honor class----	4.42	3	.20
IQ and honor class-----	1.03	2	.50
Grade average and honor class-----	1.20	2	.50
Father's occupation and honor class-----	.61	2	.70

Since all of the probabilities are well over the selected value of .05, we cannot reject the null hypothesis of no difference, for example, "varsity sports participa-

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tion does not effect honor class membership." As the discriminating abilities of at least three of the variables are well documented elsewhere we can feel justified in seeking an explanation.

If these factors do normally discriminate, and in fact they do, the reason that they do not at Starr Commonwealth must lie in a unique commonly shared characteristic of the population. And this might be the fact of emotional disturbance which is common to all the students at Starr Commonwealth. This is the one characteristic that is shared by the entire population of Starr and which is not significantly present in a normal high school population. What has happened is that a genuinely equalitarian society has been constructed, and this furthermore, is the key to the astonishing success of Starr in rehabilitating the boys. It has eliminated the causes for feelings of hostility and teaches the boys that the degree of success attained is commensurate with the amount of effort put forth.

THE EFFECTS OF SELECTED VARIABLES
ON HONOR CLASS MEMBERSHIP AT
STAR CAMPUS FOR BOYS

By

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Chapter I

Introduction

People in athletics have long made the claim, and in many cases have been justified in doing so, that the athletic program contributes to the character and personality development of their participants as well as to their physical health. At the same time, this is a notion which has been the subject of little research which could either support or refute that claim.

As a teacher and coach I am interested in what athletics can do to help a young boy develop into a mature, responsible adult. I also feel that this is an area in which physical education has not conducted adequate research and one in which research should be done. Coaches should be (and have been traditionally) as much concerned with what happens to a boy as an individual as he goes through a season of practices and games as what happens to him physically.

With this interest and need in mind, this study undertakes to determine what, if any, effect athletics have on the behavior of adolescent boys who have previously been in trouble. The study attempts to compare a group of varsity athletes and a group of non-athletes at Starr Commonwealth for Boys with respect to their rank within an honor system.¹ This system is in effect for all boys at the school and is designed to measure accepted and desirable behavior.

¹Complete honor system included in Chapter II.

Introduction

Athletes at Starr Commonwealth for Boys will rank higher within the honor system than the group of non-athletes.

Scope

The study compares ranking within the honor system of all the ninth and tenth graders at Starr Commonwealth, each being assigned to either the athlete's group or the non-athlete's group. It also attempts to determine how other variables that normally affect behavior at this age level affect a boy's position in this honor system at Starr Commonwealth. These additional factors are I.Q., academic grade average, and father's occupation.

Limitations

The study is limited by the nature of the population. That is, it includes only boys who have been in trouble and who have had the unique experience of being exposed to the Starr Commonwealth program. It is further limited since it was impossible to control the varying amounts of time each boy has been at Starr Commonwealth and exposed to the program. The seriousness and number of offenses likewise varies with each case and it was impossible to generalize in this area about either of the groups.

The study is further limited in that it only deals with ninth and tenth grade boys. This group is used since the varsity athletic teams are composed exclusively of ninth and tenth graders. The few boys who are at the junior and senior level reside at the Jackson branch and attend the Jackson Public schools.

The honor system itself imposes some limitations on the study. It is designed to reward only demonstrated desirable behavior and to penalize an act which would not be accepted or desirable in society. Therefore, it penalizes a boy for an act which might be the result of a psychiatric or emotional disturbance, and one which the desire to commit at a specific time overrides the desire for the rewards of the honor system. An example of this would be any type of sexual perversion. The honor system is the major device used to measure the behavior of all subjects and therefore any weaknesses in it will in turn weaken the study.

The study is also limited by the selection of variables. It can only arrive at conclusions concerning influence on the boy's behavior by participation in athletics, his I.Q., his grade average, his father's occupation. Any other factors which might affect his behavior and thus his position in an honor group are not considered. At the same time, these have been selected as conventionally the most significant independent variables.

Classification and Definition of Terms

In order to compare the various factors with position in the honor system it was necessary to group the boys into a limited number of classifications on each variable. The classifications and their requirements follow.

The entire population was divided into two groups, one of athletes and one of non-athletes. To be classified as an athlete a boy must have been out for, and competed on, a varsity team one full season. Starr has no teams below the junior varsity, and intramural participation was not included.

The classification for I.Q. was made by dividing the boys into three groups: 90-95; 96-110; and 111-+. The basis for this grouping is that it should divide the groups into dull normals, average, and bright or above. In comparing I.Q. with behavior it was felt that any finer classification would not be significant. This also kept the number of cases per cell within the requirements of the statistical test ().

The boys were divided according to grade average into three groups; A-B, C, D-E. The grade average was that calculated by the school for the past academic year.

Father's occupation was classified by dividing it into professional and white collar, skilled labor, and unskilled labor. The professional and white collar included all professional people, those whose job required college training and those in executive position. The skilled labor category included those jobs that are primarily manual labor but that require training or a license. Unskilled labor was considered to be that which required no specific training and was primarily manual labor.

The various positions within the honor system are designated A, B, C, and D. A. is the most desirable and D. the least. There was a group O which is for new students and is an orientation group. However, there were no O's in the test group.

The honor group used for each boy was the one in which he was classified at the specific time when all other information was recorded. The specific requirements for membership in each group and the rewards given each group are described specifically in the honor system which is included in the following chapter.

In order to meet the requirements of the χ^2 test it was necessary to group the subjects into two honor groups, A-B and C-D. This was required so that χ^2 could be computed for the father's occupation, IQ, and academic grade average. It was not necessary to group within the honor system to compare athletes and non-athletes as only 12.5 per cent of the case cells contained less than five cases. This grouping is justified as it puts those boys who have demonstrated desired and acceptable behavior in one group (A-B) and those who have not in the second (C-D).

Chapter II

Description of the Laboratory

Starr Commonwealth for Boys is both a private school and social agency for the rehabilitation and education of boys with social and emotional problems. It was founded by Floyd Starr in 1913 near Albion, Michigan. At that time Starr, who is still the President of the school and active in its program, had just graduated from Albion College and was interested in introducing a new method for the treatment and care of delinquent and underprivileged boys. He bought a farm near Albion and began with two boys and a barn. Since that time Starr Commonwealth has grown to a campus of three thousand acres, twenty buildings, and two hundred students. There are also divisions at Jackson, Michigan and Van Wert, Ohio.

Starr's philosophy is summarized in the first line of the Starr Commonwealth creed² which he wrote in 1913 and which has since become the motto of the school: "There is no such thing as a bad boy." All aspects of the Starr Commonwealth program are manifestations of this philosophy and are aimed at helping each boy to achieve a better understanding of himself and the world in which he lives. Mr. Starr hopes to do this by "showing them love, appealing to their pride, teaching them the dignity of work, teaching them to appreciate art and music and giving them an awareness

²For entire Creed see appendix C

of God."³ It should be emphasized that Starr Commonwealth is not a reform school or penal institution but a social agency for problem boys.

Admission to the school is completely voluntary although the boy and his parents must agree that he will remain there until the school feels he is ready to return to society. A boy may be referred to Starr by any parent, teacher, welfare agent, private or public social agency, or court. Most, however, are referred by the courts. Admissions are limited as there are approximately fifteen hundred applicants a year and usually less than one hundred openings. The admission requirements are quite simple in that they require only that the boy be normal mentally and physically, qualify for placement between fifth and tenth grades, and not require remedial teaching or intensive psychiatric treatment. Beyond these criteria, admission decisions are based on the judgment of an admissions committee who grant admission to those boys whose social history indicate they would benefit from the Starr program. There are no restrictions as to what type of trouble the boy has been in although there are no hard core delinquents.

Most of the boys do, however, have some common problems. They are all socially maladjusted and lack a commitment to the goals and values of society. They have all broken the law and

³Floyd Starr, A History of Home; Starr Commonwealth for Boys, Publication 1963.

although the range of offenses is unlimited the most common offenses are stealing and malicious destruction of property. Another common characteristic of the group is that they have had problems in school, often chronic truancy and low achievement academically.⁴ The fact that they are capable of academic achievement is validated by their IQ's in that the mean of the group is 104.0, the range 83 to 140, and the standard deviation 11.1. This range is well within the normal distribution of the population.

Eighty-three per cent of the boys are from broken homes and 13.2 per cent are adopted, most during early infancy. The average stay at Starr is eighteen months although variation about this average is extensive; ranging from four months to over four years in the test group.

The basis for dismissal is that the boy be judged to be rehabilitated for society, the home, and the school. This requires evidence that he is ready to function as a self-disciplined, emotionally stable individual. The decision is reached by the executive staff which is unique for each boy and is made up of his counselor, teachers, a psychologist, the dean of boys, the director of education, and the general manager. Dismissal is always preceded by extensive social service work

⁴The author finds it impossible to accurately define the causes for admission of the students as a group due to the individual nature of each case.

in the boy's home.

The professional staff and program is divided into two departments; social service and education. The social service unit is headed by a social service director who is a trained social worker. In this department the director heads a staff of counselors and house parents. Each boy is assigned a counselor who is a trained social worker. In addition to their counseling function, these people also serve as liaison between the school, the courts, and the parents. Each boy sees his counselor regularly although he is also available to the boy at almost any time. They also plan and co-ordinate all phases of the boy's program while he is at State Commonwealth. The social service department is further staffed with a resident psychologist, a nurse, and psychiatric consultation is provided when needed. Al Abdon physician and the Abdon hospital are also available when medical care is required.

The homelife branch of social service is comprised of the houseparents and two full-time homelife directors. The houseparents are generally older people whose children are grown and who are interested in this type of service. There is one set of houseparents in each cottage with twelve boys. Each of these cottages is a self-contained living unit where the boys eat, sleep, and live as a family unit. This situation places and maintains the boys in a consistent atmosphere and subjects them to the values of society that may not have been present in their home situations.

The two full-time houselife directors are responsible for hiring and training the housepatrons.

Discipline at Starr Commonwealth is firm but not dictatorial and does not involve strict regimentation. There are not fences, bars, or lock-up cottages. Discipline is carried out primarily through the use of an honor system that was designed at and for Starr Commonwealth. As it exemplifies the philosophy of the school and since it is the device by which the study measures behavior it is included here in its entirety.⁵

⁵Reprinted by permission of Starr Commonwealth for Boys.

HONOR SYSTEM

A system designed to recognize and evaluate the behavior of our boys in whatever for it may take; To reward, reinforce and encourage desirable behavior and to discourage undesirable behavior.

Desirable behavior shall be encouraged and rewarded by permitting each boy that degree of freedom and trust and privilege which he has demonstrated he is able to assume without abusing. Each boy shall also be required to fulfill responsibilities and duties commensurate with the trust, freedom and privilege which he enjoys.

The honor system shall recognize and reward only exhibited desirable behavior and shall not reward a boy for assumed but undemonstrated potential. The absence of undesirable behavior shall not be recognized as constituting a situation equal to the exhibition of constructive endeavor.

This system shall be so designed that it will be an everpresent and self-evident visual indicator of each boy's position on a continuum of responsibility and maturity.

- I It is the purpose of this honor system to help build a boy's character so that when he leaves Starr Commonwealth he will be behaving, on our campus, in such the same manner as we would want him to behave at his home and in the public school and community.
- II In order that the above situation shall take place, it is necessary that the system encompassing a boy's rights, freedom, trust, privilege and the related responsibilities and duties, bear a direct relationship to what would ordinarily be found in a healthy home and a well run school and community.
 - A. At any time during a boy's life, from infancy to high school graduation, his role as a child is defined by expectations and reward from three institutions: The home, the school, and the community.
 - B. In our culture, the home, the school, and the civil structure are separate but interrelated institutions. It is realistic to treat them as such in our program.
 - C. In our culture, a child of school age functions simultaneously in these separate but interrelated institutions, at a level appropriate to his age, ability, size and maturity.
- III This honor system shall consist of six levels of achievement. Each level shall be described by its duties, expectations, responsibilities, and the related privileges and trusts.
 - A. Each boy shall carry an identification card indicating the group to which he belongs. The card shall contain a description of that group's privileges. The two lower groups shall not carry cards.
 - B. Boys shall apply for advancement to the next higher group. The application shall be sent and acted upon by the Honor System Committee.

- C. Each time a boy is advanced to a higher group, the report slips which he received as a member of the lower group shall be disregarded.
- D. Day of application for advancement shall be as follows: Group "C", every Monday. Group "B", first and third Monday of each month. Group "A", second Monday of each month.
- E. Only department heads shall have the authority to take a boy's identification card from him. A department head may take a boy's I.D. card from him for a serious offense and keep it until the next HSC meeting.
- F. When a boy is demoted from any group to a lower group, the period of time necessary for promotion to the next higher group will be figured from the date of demotion.

IV Administration

- A. The Honor System Committee shall be composed of the following:
 1. Dean of Boys, permanent chairman.
 2. Director of Education
One member of education staff, rotated periodically.
 3. Director of Social Service
One member of Social Service Department, rotated periodically.
 4. Director of Home Life
One member of Home Life Department, rotated periodically.
 5. President of Student Council
One member of the council, rotated periodically.
 6. President of SCB.
 7. General Manager of SCB.
- B. All issues coming before the Honor System Committee shall be resolved

by a majority vote of those members present and voting.

- C. Each member of the committee will have one vote. Chairman on duty will vote only to break a tie.
- D. SCS staff members are privileged to present at HSC meetings information regarding any boy who may be under consideration by the HSC.
- E. Any SCS staff member is privileged without invitation to attend any or all meetings of the HSC.
- F. It is understood that any boy under question by the HSC has a right to be present and present his own case. However, on a motion by any member of the HSC, a boy may be excluded from certain deliberations of the committee.
- G. The committee's request for a boy's presence during a regular session will take precedence over all other school or workout activities.
- H. Misconduct reports will be used as the instrument for reporting all cases of discipline.
 - 1. Misconduct reports are to be made directly to the head of the department in which the offense took place.
 - 2. Department heads are to file misconduct reports with the Dean of Boys by Monday of each week.
 - 3. The Dean of Boys will keep a file of misconducts on each boy, to be used as reference material for the HSC.
- I. Vacation periods will be in spring, summer, and at Christmas.
- J. This honor system may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the total membership of the Honor System Committee.

V. Misconduct Offenses

A. Minor

1. Class or cottage disturbance
2. Throwing objects
3. Chewing gum
4. Sleeping in class
5. Tardy
6. Improper dress
7. Cursing or vulgar language
8. Failure to complete assigned task

B. Intermediary

1. Sacking
2. Talking back to staff member
3. Absent from assigned place without excuse (out of bounds)
4. Flirting
5. Wearing other boys' clothing
6. Lying

C. Major

1. Disrespect to staff member (i.e. threats, cursing, vulgar gestures.)
2. Willful destruction of property
3. Truancy and late returns
4. Sex play with another person
5. Stealing
6. Possession of dangerous weapons
7. Assault

- D. The Honor System Committee has the authority to raise or lower the stated offenses from one category to another, and to designate to a suitable category any offenses not stated or implied.
- E. Each department shall be responsible for discipline within that department. They may employ any disciplinary measure they see fit, provided it does not conflict with the provisions of this system, or policies of SCB. However, any disciplinary measure shall not eliminate the responsibility of reporting all offenses to the Dean of Boys, stating what disciplinary measure has been taken.

ORIENTATION GROUP

New boys shall remain in this group for a period of four weeks, at which time they shall automatically be advanced to Group D.

Activities and privileges shall be left to the discretion of the HSC.

GROUP D

Privileges:

A three day vacation at the discretion of HSC.

On campus Sunday passes at the discretion of the HSC.

No off campus activities other than with an athletic team or the band or choir.

Workout except messenger or food carrier.

GROUP C

Qualifications to be met:

No major offenses for a six week period of time.

No more than one intermediate offense for a six week period of time.

No more than three minor offenses for a six week period of time.

Privileges:

One Sunday pass per month.

Scheduled off campus activities with approval of department heads. These groups must have at least two staff supervisors.

Individual boys may be taken off campus with the permission of all of the following: Director of Home Life, Education Director, Director of Social Service.

Workout except messengers

Fifty percent of all scheduled vacations.

GRADE A

Qualifications to be met:

Satisfactory school work

No major offenses for a six month period of time.

No intermediate offenses for a six month period of time.

No more than two minor offenses for a six month period of time.

Privileges:

Week end passes with approval

100 per cent of all scheduled vacations

Off campus activities with staff members with supervisor's knowledge and permission of one department head.

Open activities-school facilities (library, gym, shop, picnic area, etc.) One scheduled night per week with passes

On campus sports events without individual supervision.

Workout messenger

Student Council members and officers

GROUP A

Qualifications to be met:

No major offenses in a five months period of time

No more than one intermediate offense in a five month period of time

No more than five minor offenses in a five months period of time

Satisfactory school work.

Privileges

75 percent of all scheduled vacations

Sunday passes once per month

Open activities-school facilities (library, gym, shop, picnic area, etc.) One scheduled night per week without individual supervision but with passes.

On campus sports events without individual supervision but with passes

Off campus privileges with staff members - with the supervisor's knowledge and permission of the department heads.

Workshop messenger

Student council members-not officers

GROUP B

The number of members shall be controlled by Department Heads and the members of the Society

Qualifications to be met:

All the qualifications of Group A

Must have been a member of Group A for two months.

Must maintain a B average with no grade less than a C

Must be elected by department heads and the members of the Honor Society

Privileges

All the privileges of Group A

100 per cent of all scheduled vacations plus a bonus.

Saturday afternoons once per month. When possible, members may hold paying positions on or off campus.

Freedom of the campus i.e. Those boys may come and go on the campus with the permission of their immediate supervisor-houseparent, teacher, etc.

May wear certain jewelry at the discretion of I.O.C

May get their haircuts in town if they can afford it

The education department is headed by a director of education who has a staff of fourteen teachers. Each teacher is trained in a specific subject area, certified by the State of Michigan, and has at least twenty-four hours of special education. The coaching staff is part of the regular physical-education faculty.

The academic program offers a full curriculum for grades five through ten. The courses that are available to grades nine and ten which are the research population, are English, history, algebra, geometry, civics, science, biology, drafting, physical education, music and German. These courses are taught at their respective grade levels during the regular academic year and not on a remedial basis. Boys who must have full-time remedial work are sent to the Van Wert branch and those who need some specific remedial work receive it in the summer. Most of the remedial problems are in reading which has in the past affected all their school work. This is indicated by the fact that academic improvement in poor students is usually first indicated in math which is not dependent on reading and language ability. Almost all other subjects are reliant upon verbal proficiency.

Those boys who are past the tenth grade level are sent to the Jackson branch of the school where they have a similar life to that on the Albion campus, but attend the Jackson Public Schools where it is possible for them to earn a high school diploma.

The athletic program is under the supervision of the director of education. Four Commonwealth competes in football, basketball, track and baseball at the varsity and junior varsity level. Their competition is drawn from the class B schools in the area and the junior varsity teams of some of the larger schools. They also compete inter-scholastically in basketball and track at the junior high level and have an intramural program at all levels. Practices are held every day for an hour and forty-five minutes with the games played on Friday and Saturdays. The coaches decide the roster winners. Eligibility is based on their academic record from the previous marking period and a boy must have passing grades in three of his four academic subjects in order to compete. The school teams are handicapped somewhat by having only ninth and tenth grade boys, but have nonetheless competed quite successfully in the past.

Collection of Data

The data for the study was collected by interviews with each boy, and from the school records. To facilitate collection and in order to have a composite data sheet for each boy a form was designed on which to record all data.⁶

The following information concerning each boy was recorded: name, current age, age when enrolled, grade, height, weight, race, home town, parents in the home, siblings, other people in the home, father's occupation, sports

⁶For sample data sheet see appendix B

participation, grade average, classes, IQ, and honor group. Although all this information was not used I felt it would give me and anyone who might want to refer to the data a better understanding of the subjects. Most of this information was taken from the school records. However, in some cases they were not complete concerning the home organization and father's occupation. This information was obtained in personal interviews with the boys. I also felt it was desirable to interview each subject as it gave me a better understanding of not only each boy, but also the group as a whole.

Statistical Analysis

The test of statistical significance used to analyze the data is Chi square. This test is designed for research projects in which the researcher is interested in the number of subjects which fall into specific categories.⁷

Siegel states that "the χ^2 test is suitable for analyzing goodness-of-fit type data in that it may be used to test whether a significant difference exists between an observed number of objects or responses falling in each category and an expected number based on the null hypothesis."⁸

⁷ Sidney Siegel, Non-Parametric Statistics, 1956, p.42.

⁸ Ibid., p.43.

The requirements that must be met for the results of the χ^2 test to be valid according to Siegel are:⁹

1. When $df=1$ each expected frequency should be at least 5.
2. When $df=1$ no more than 20 per cent of the expected frequencies should be smaller than 5 and none less than one.

When grouped according to the method described in the previous chapter the data meet these specifications.

The procedure used is as follows:¹⁰

1. Cast the observed frequencies in the k categories. The sum of the frequencies should be N , the number of independent observations.
2. From H_0 determine the expected frequencies (f_e) for each of the k cells. Where $k>2$, if more than 20 per cent of the f_e 's are smaller than five, combine adjacent categories, where this is reasonable, thereby reducing the value of k and increasing the values of some of the f_e 's. Where $k=2$, the χ^2 test for the one-sample case may be used appropriately only if each expected frequency is five or larger.

⁹Ibid., p. 46.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 47.

3. Using the formula $\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(f_o - f_e)^2}{f_e}$ compute the value of χ^2 .
4. Determine the value of df. $df = (k-1)(r-1)$
5. By reference to a χ^2 table, determine the probability associated with the occurrence under H_0 of a value as large as the observed value of χ^2 for the observed value of df. If that p is equal to or less than α reject H_0 . In this case the level of confidence was set at .05.

Chapter III

The data was classified according to IQ, grade average, sports participation, and father's occupation. Each of these was treated as an independent variable while honor class was the dependent variable. The cases were then cast into case cells and the Chi square value computed according to the procedure outlined in chapter two. It was impossible to hold one or more of the independent variables constant and compute χ^2 values as the frequencies in more than 50 per cent of the cells were less than five.

The level of confidence was set at .05.

When the χ^2 was computed the following values were obtained:¹¹

	χ^2	df	P
Athletic participation and honor class-----	4.42	3	<.20
IQ and honor class-----	1.03	2	<.50
Grade average and honor class-----	1.20	2	<.50
Father's occupation and honor class-----	.61	2	<.70

Since all χ^2 values are well over the selected value of .05, we may draw one of two conclusions: either all four independent variables have no significant effect on Honor Class Membership or all five variables are so operationalized that they lack discriminating ability. And while this might ordinarily be assumed for Honor Class Membership it is not true for at least three of the remainder,¹²

¹¹See appendix A

¹²IQ, grade average, father's occupation

whose discriminating abilities are documented elsewhere.¹³

On the other hand, we are technically allowed no more than the fact we cannot reject the null hypothesis of no difference, for example "varsity sports participation does not affect Honor Class Membership." This would appear to make an assertion about no effect tenuous indeed; but given the fact that all four independent variables are in the same boat, we can feel justified in seeking an explanation for no difference elsewhere.

Thus, these factors have some tendency to influence the normal individual of this age level to demonstrate accepted and desired behavior. For example, they are extremely important in the selection of friends and the formation of social groups.

¹³Among others:

C. E. Fowerman and G. H. Elder Jr., "Family Structure and Child Rearing Patterns: The Affect of Family Size and Sex Composition", American Sociological Review, Dec., 1963, p. 222.

Leonard Broom and Jack Gibbs, "Social Differentiation and Status Interrelations", American Sociological Review, Apr., 1964, p. 258.

James Coleman and Edward McDill, "High School Social Status, College Plans and Interest in Academic Achievement," American Sociological Review, Dec., 1963, p. 905.

James Coleman, The Adolescent Society, 1961.

Richard Dawey and W. J. Hunter, The Development of Human Behavior, 1951.

If these factors do normally descriminate, and in fact they do, the reason that they do not at Starr Commonwealth must lie in a unique, commonly shared characteristic of the population. And this might be the fact of emotional disturbance which is common to all the students at Starr Commonwealth. This is the one characteristic that is shared by the entire population of Starr and which is not significantly present in a normal high school population.

The nature of this emotional disturbance now becomes very significant since it appears as one powerful enough to override four factors which might otherwise operate in a group at this age level. Although it should be remembered that any emotional problem is individual and if considered in detail must be done so on an individual basis, the disturbances which affect each of the boys at Starr Commonwealth are of a similar nature and appear to have affected members of the group similarly. The general type of disturbance present at Starr Commonwealth is considered "moderate" since the boys are in need of counseling, guidance, and fairly constant supervision rather than psychiatric treatment. The disturbances are of the nature of severe neuroses rather than psychoses. Most of the problems are the result of an abnormal and defective environment early in the lives of the boys. As might be expected approximately 80 per cent of the students are from broken homes and have not had the benefits of a stable home and

and family life.

Another significant characteristic of the research group is that 13.2 per cent are adopted, most of these during infancy, and that they have all been informed of the adoption. This is compared with less than .5 per cent in the total population.¹⁴ This is certainly a contributing concomitant factor in many of the disturbances given the relationship known to exist between adoption and disturbances.¹⁵ This can result from several sources. There may have been severe psychological trauma experienced in infancy before or during adoption. This is a new theory and one which has gained considerable support recently. It has further been suggested that allergy, asthma, and some other hypersensitivities are the result of a severe psychological experience as early as that of birth. The disturbance resulting from adoption can also be the result of an unstable home life where one of the parents was hostile toward the other as a result of their desire but inability to have a child by natural conception. The child's adoption may also be used as an excuse for relatively minor mis-behavior or mischief. I was told during one interview that one boy's mother used to tell him, "You wouldn't act that way if you were really my son" and "you must have in-

¹⁴Branch County Probate Court, Branch County, Mich., 1964.

¹⁵H. E. Kool, M. D., 1964

E. J. Rannall, M. D., psychiatrist, 1964

herited that (trait) from your real parents". This type of episode magnifies itself and results in the child becoming more disturbed and hostile. There is, also, of course, the situation in which the parents wanted a child so badly that they overprotect him, and give him everything he desires, do not discipline him, and in effect "spoil" the child.

Generally then, most of the disturbances in the entire group have resulted from, or at least been contributed to by an unstable home life, most often the result of a broken home. This results in the child becoming hostile toward his family, authority, and other accepted institutions of the society. They have often been neglected and as a result have not been able to achieve any constructive successes of their own. This will often cause a boy to initiate friendship with anyone who will reciprocate and to attempt to succeed in whatever way his new acquaintances will accept or desire.

Another factor which often causes young boys to become hostile to the society is poverty. This is very often related to a broken home as both a cause and effect. If the child grows up never being equal to those around him materially or socially he becomes hostile to those with more than he has and to those in authority.

It is significant that almost universally within the Starr Commonwealth group this hostility has manifested itself in one of or a combination of four ways: stealing,

malicious destruction of property, truancy, and low academic achievement. All these are simply manifestations of the boy's deeper emotional problems.

Within the group, stealing was the result of two motives. Some wanted whatever they stole and could not afford it so stealing was a method by which to gain material equality or even superiority. This is generally the motivation behind car thefts. It is a way for them to gain immediate status. The other is a feeling of hostility and jealousy toward those who have ample or excessive material things. There is an underlying feeling on the part of the boys that those who have a great deal were "just lucky" and attained their position easily. This makes them jealous and they attempt to gain this material status easily also.

This is also the primary cause of the malicious destruction of property and vandalism in which nearly all have been involved. There is no material gain in this type of act, but rather only a mis-guided opportunity to vent their feelings of hostility and frustration. Vandalism is a particularly prevalent crime at this age and most often directed either at people with material things or school property.

These acts against the school are evidence of the extreme dislike for school which most of the group shares. This feeling is manifested in chronic truancy and by universal low achievement. The truancy is both a rebellion

against the school or any other institution that has authority over the boy and an expression of the frustration of never having a sense of legitimate achievement. Many of these boys have never experienced success of any kind, and living in an environment of continual and recurring failure both for them and their families has resulted in strong feelings of frustration and futility. These feelings have been with them as a part of their environment for so long that they feel it is hopeless to try to change and therefore they continue only to rebel. In the research group very few cases of academic failure can be attributed to low intelligence as the range of IQ's was 83 to 140 and the mean 104.8. Most of their academic problems apparently started very early in their school experience since a reading deficiency is common to practically all the low achievers. Once this reading difficulty appears it causes problems in almost all other areas as most subjects are very dependent on reading. This is further emphasized by the fact that the first academic achievement seen at Starr is usually in math which is not as dependent on verbal ability.

This pattern of failure often begins in the home during the pre-school years and early elementary years. The parents have not succeeded in socially recognized ways either during their school years or since, and so they offer no encouragement for the child to do well. Since their own experience is lacking they cannot offer the

child a background or atmosphere conducive to studying and learning. Also in poor or broken homes the child may not have had an adequate diet and his health may not have been good during the important early years in school.

Starr Commonwealth has been from 75 to 85 per cent successful in rehabilitating this type of boy, and motivating them to become citizens who can live in and contribute to the society.¹⁵ A major factor in this astonishing success may be the construction of a genuinely equalitarian society. Its construction is designed to cope with the factor of that generalized "disturbance" which all of the boys share and which has over-ridden the normal effect of our independent variables. Thus if IQ, grade average, sports participation, and father's occupation haven't any effect on this group the important fact in the boys rehabilitation must be the environment of Starr Commonwealth itself. And that environment is a result of several factors.

Most important is that feeling of equality, both social and material. This eliminates the cause for many of the feelings of jealousy and hostility. It gives each boy a feeling of personal worth. The home life, counseling, and educational program are all set up to give individual attention and show the boy that someone understands and cares about his problem. There is no coercion involved in making a boy study or work. This eliminates the

¹⁵Starr Commonwealth for Boys records, 1964.

the feeling that those in authority are forcing him to do something for their own personal gain without regard for the boy himself.

The boys are also equal to all others in their group materially. For many this is the first time they haven't been at one extreme or another. It is also the first time that most of them have had a stable living situation. They all live in similar buildings, have regular meals, and a family-type life with their houseparents and the other boys in the cottage. In their cottage the environment is orderly and clean, again this is the first time for many of the boys. It is quiet in the evening so that they may study effectively.

Another main objective of Starr is to give the boy a chance to succeed. A concentrated effort is made to encourage the boy to work at some project as soon as he can and any achievement is rewarded to give him additional motivation for success. The objective is to teach him that if he does make a sincere effort he will succeed but that there are no rewards for doing nothing.

Giving the boy the ability to read is also imperative if he is to be able to succeed after he leaves Starr Commonwealth. This is done in individual programs and in an intensive remedial course in the summer. It was observed during several interviews that gaining the ability to read gave new and considerable confidence to the boys involved.

The results of the Starr Commonwealth environment and of these boys living together are three-fold. First it overrides the emotional disturbances by eliminating the feelings of hostility and rebellion. Second it outlines and supports the means to "success" and teaches them they must work for rewards. Thirdly it gives them a commitment to the goals of the group and to those of society.

In addition to exposing some very interesting information the study suggested to me some areas in which further investigation might be useful. Among these is further investigation into the effect of adoption. This is an area which appears to need study and one in which the results might have very practical uses. Another area in which further study could be significant is that of being able to identify the first indications that a child might have these problems and to design steps that could be taken to correct it. Most of these boy's problems began in elementary school and so it is likely that a trained person could have seen indications of problems long before it became necessary to use a school like Starr Commonwealth.

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APPENDIX A

IQ and Honor Class

	A-B	C-D	Totals
0-95	8	10	18
96-110	12	20	32
111+	5	13	18
Totals	25	43	68 =N

df=2

$\chi^2=1.03$

P=.52

Grade Average and Honor Class

	A-B	C-D	Totals
A-B	9	12	21
C	10	13	23
D-E	5	14	19
Totals	24	44	68 =N

df=2

$\chi^2=1.20$

P=.51

Sports Participation and Honor Class

	A	B	C	D	Totals
Athletes	10	5	6	15	36
Non-Athletes	4	5	11	12	32
Totals	14	10	17	27	68 =N

df=3

$\chi^2=4.42$

P=.22

Father's Occupation and Honor Class

	A-B	C-D	Totals
Prof. & White Col.	6	13	19
Skilled	10	13	23
Unskilled	8	13	21
Totals	24	44	68

df=2

$\chi^2=.614$

P=.74

APPENDIX B

Name:

Age: _____ years _____ months

Age when enrolled _____ years _____ months

Grade _____

Hometown _____

Home Organization

Father _____ Brothers _____

Mother _____ Sisters _____

Father's Occupation:

professional _____

white collar _____

skilled _____

Unskilled _____

Sports Participation

Football _____ Baseball _____

Basketball _____ Track _____

Grade Average _____

Teachers:

Comments:

IQ:

Honor Class:

APPENDIX 6

STARR COMMONWEALTH

CREED

WE BELIEVE that there is no such thing as a bad boy.

WE BELIEVE that badness is not a normal condition but is the result of misdirected energy.

WE BELIEVE that every normal boy will be good if given an opportunity in an environment of love and activity.

WE BELIEVE in the dignity of labor. We believe that each child should be given some work suitable to childhood and that he should be taught that the value of labor is to be found, not alone in the completed task, but in the training of the mind and the hand, and in the joy of accomplishment.

WE BELIEVE also in play. Play is the child's normal means of self-expression.

WE BELIEVE that to attain the full stature of man, spiritual development should go hand in hand with physical, mental, and moral development.

WE BELIEVE that boys should be treated, not as a class, but as individuals, and that each boy in order that he may reach his highest development, must be understood. We hold that his ambition must be stimulated and developed, and that he must be encouraged and loved toward perfection.

WE BELIEVE that boys merit confidence and trust, and that the secret of the development of honor in a boy lies in appealing to his inherent goodness. In order that he may attain perfect manhood, we believe in placing a boy on his honor at all times and giving him the sympathy and encouragement necessary to enable him to maintain his integrity.

Written by Floyd Starr in 1913

STARR COMMONWEALTH FOR BOYS

Albion, Michigan

Van Wert, Ohio

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