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The Role of Public Opinion in a Dynamic System of Public Secondary Education.

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THE ROLE OF PUBLIC OPINION IN A DYNAMIC SYSTEM OF PUBLIC SECONDARY EDUCATION

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in The Department of Vocational Agricultural Education

by Jared Y. Terry
B.S., Louisiana State University, 1941
M.S., Louisiana State University, 1952
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the proper role of public opinion in a dynamic system of public secondary education by comparing criticisms of education with teacher reactions and strengths of certain school activities in Louisiana secondary schools. The normative survey method was used to collect current local data on criticisms of education and teacher reactions to unfavorable publicity. The historical method of research was employed in determining the historical implications of the relation of the public to its schools. Questionnaires were sent to the 143 Louisiana news editors requesting their opinions on several aspects of Louisiana secondary education. A second questionnaire was sent at the same time to two teachers who taught in the vicinity of the cooperating news editors. A total of 285 classroom teachers were requested to express their reactions to recent criticisms of education and to indicate the status of certain activities in their schools. The responses to these questionnaires are presented in tabular form accompanied by numerous direct quotes and a brief analysis by the writer.
News editors were chosen to represent lay opinion because there is ample evidence that editorial comment exerts strong influence upon the formation of public opinion.

This research sought to obtain lay opinions in the area of school administration, salaries and finance, community responsibilities of school personnel, professional preparation and improvement of teachers and administrators, curricula, public relations, teacher welfare laws and the obligations of communities to their schools.

It was assumed for the purpose of this study that:
(1) news media exert a strong influence upon prevailing public opinion; (2) the public, though willing to support public education, is not satisfied with the present status of our school system; (3) teachers feel that their efforts are not appreciated in their communities and that they are expected to assume responsibilities of the home; (4) unfavorable publicity will continue until proper communication between the public and its schools has been established.

An analysis of the data and related studies revealed that, although the criticisms of education are myriad, they appear to have originated from relatively few aspects of America's democratic society. These are: (1)
the public's historical concept of schools and teachers; (2) America's philosophy of mass education; (3) the political aspects of a democracy; (4) the activity of pressure groups; (5) the influence of external educational forces; (6) the dogmatic attitude exhibited by some professional educators.

The data revealed that, although the editors and teachers differed on several important questions, they shared certain grievances in common. These were: (1) political machinations in school affairs; (2) parental indifference to children's school progress; (3) lack of disciplinary training in the home; (4) extra-curricular duties the teaching staff is expected to assume; (5) the evils resulting from the activities of pressure groups on school affairs.

The differences in opinion as revealed by an analysis of the data were concerned with: (1) the equitability of the teacher's salary scale; (2) the amount of community work teachers are expected to do; (3) the professional improvement status of school personnel; (4) the schools' lack of emphasis on fundamentals; (5) the desirability of teacher welfare laws.

Although 79.0 per cent of the editors who responded expressed dissatisfaction with Louisiana's second-
ary educational programs, it was concluded that the proper role of public opinion in a dynamic system of public secondary education is one of providing a reservoir of ideas, viewpoints, and basic philosophy by which our schools seek to translate our hopes and dreams for a better world into concrete reality.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Public schools in a true democracy belong to the people. They are symbols of man's noblest efforts to achieve lasting peace, happiness, economic security, and brotherhood of mankind. Man's abiding faith in the power of education to provide these things has developed in this country a system of public schools where every normal child can secure a secondary education at public expense.

Schools, as public institutions, owe their development to the will of the people who support them with money, children, and their faith in democratic principles. Public schools were established because the people of the various communities wanted them, not because professional educators saw a need for them. In fact, professional educators themselves owe their existence to the people they serve. Thoughtful citizens were aware early in the development of a public school system that trained personnel were necessary to successfully carry on the work of educating their children. Laymen who composed the various communities had neither the time nor skill to insure the steady growth and development of the newly established institutions. Often the teachers they selected were little
or no better prepared to teach than the parents were. Never-the-less, the profession was created by the people to serve their needs; that of teaching their children what they, the parents, thought they should have.

In those early, formative years of our educational system, teachers for the most part were transient workers, with little or no professional preparation. Indeed, they were hardly describable, if we rely on the records now available. To some, they were rogues, crude opportunists working out indenture, or near illiterates who were willing to accept the pittance offered as a salary. On the other hand, they have been described as hard working, God-fearing scholars dedicated to the task of teaching the young those things considered important by a busy, loosely associated nation of people. In either case, there was no accepted and proved body of professional knowledge to aid in the development of a sound educational system in the various localities. Aims of education were vague matters of local expediency. Under conditions such as these, it was necessary that administrative powers be vested in small, all-powerful groups of citizens who were financially able to spare the time to formulate and direct educational policy. The principal qualification of those directors were that they had accumulated sufficient wealth and leisure to involve themselves in pursuits other than earning a living. The
purposes of education were defined in terms of those men's ideas and their experiences in attaining a position of leadership in their community. The teachers lot under those conditions was anything but enviable. Social ostracism, financial destitution, and professional incompetence seemed to be the most obvious features of his existence in early America. As teaching acquired the aspects of a profession, we hear of teachers who complained of their social status and the severe restrictions placed upon them by communities in which they worked. For the most part, teachers have been recruited from the middle and lower middle class of our society. The American philosophy that wealth makes one socially acceptable and the antithesis, that a lack of it makes one less desirable in the upper strata, was a phenomenon that socially ambitious teachers found difficult to overcome in their fight for recognition. The notable gains made by teachers in attaining professional respectability over the years, in spite of a lack of social prestige, has been a fitting memorial to hard work, and dedication to a demanding task. School people apparently began to be accepted or rejected on an individual basis, depending upon their own personality and conduct. It would appear that those teachers who dedicated themselves to their profession and those whose ultimate goal was the improvement of their community soon found less
difficulty in attaining a satisfactory social life among the people they serve.

As a profession, education had little to offer in the way of an intellectual discipline until the latter part of the nineteenth century when American education really began to be studied scientifically. In 1884, G. Stanley Hall, in a newly established department of applied psychology at John Hopkins, began a study of mental development. The move received strong impetus from the work of Edward Lee Thorndike and Alfred Binet through their work in mental measurement. This body of knowledge has been increased by scientific studies to the extent that the current edition of the Encyclopedia of Educational Research contains 1,520 double-column pages of studies on educational topics. The editor notes that if the term research was given a liberal interpretation and the content of the volume expanded to include unpublished material, the total number of studies would approach 100,000. In view of this impressive body of scientific knowledge to draw from, teaching and teacher preparation are beginning to assume a professional mien. By virtue of their professional preparation teachers and administrators have come to feel that they have the right and competence to make decisions in matters of educational policy. This philosophy appears to
be a primary source of a large portion of the present conflict between school personnel and the public. Traditionally, society had determined what to teach, while leaving the "how" to the educators. This point of view seems to be a basic concept of a democracy. However, the problem is not so easily solved. If we agree that education is to serve society, that schools are to teach what the public considers important, we are immediately confronted with the task of defining the public.

Our American Communities are composed of heterogeneous groups of special interest, each with their own ideas of what is important to teach. Professional people have their views of what they want their children to learn. Business men have quite a different concept of what is important to our society. Laborers and farmers are equally sure that schools should devise curricula favorable to their way of life. Religious groups, patriotic and fraternal organizations, also have definite ideas of what is important for youth to learn. All of these groups, either deliberately or otherwise, exert pressure on the school administrators. It is not surprising that school people, confused and torn between conflicting demands by the public, have taken upon themselves the burden of policy making which rightfully belongs to society.

Thoughtful citizens who are disturbed by the accusations of frills and watered-down curricular, should
recognize these as symptoms of an attempt at the near impossible - that of giving the public what it wants in the way of education for its children.

In the beginning, we are told our schools were established to teach the children to read in order that they could become familiar with the Holy Bible. Later, writing and ciphering were included to enable the child to compete more favorably in a diverse society. Since this humble beginning the schools have been called upon to assume more and more the responsibilities of home, business, and family. Breaking up of family solidarity by industrialization and the increased employment of women away from home has increased the burden that educators are expected to deal with. In most any modern city with complete educational facilities a person can attend school for a lifetime without repeating a course. Schools provide services usually attributed to physicians, nurses, dentists, psychologist, psychiatrists, dieticians, common carriers, safety experts, and occupational counselors. Some of these have been assumed by educational people themselves, but many have been included as a result of outside pressures. The public must decide what it wants in the way of education, provide the means for it, and hold the schools responsible for providing it.

This course of action requires close cooperation
between school personnel and the supporting public. All channels of communication must remain open for a free interchange of ideas. Neither group has all the answers. Education, as a profession, is just coming into its own; it is not as yet prepared to define educational needs in all areas. Furthermore, schools are public institutions, supported by public funds and, as such, are subjected to public manipulation. On the other hand, the communities have not exercised their full right of involvement in educational matters for many years and have relied more and more upon the decisions of school administrators in matters of policy.

It is imperative that schools and patrons resolve their differences as quickly as possible. Due to the massive campaign of criticisms and the tremendous educational advances made by the Soviet Union, the Federal Government is beginning to concern itself more and more with educational matters. Legally, education is a function of the state and, as such, should remain under local control. Federal intervention, which implies Federal control, is viewed without enthusiasm in many areas.

Education as a social process varies according to how individuals are related to each other in society. Originally societies were formed voluntarily for the benefit and protection of its members. Of course, this liaison
resulted in the individual relinquishing some of his rights, privileges, and freedom in order to promote the welfare of the group. Power in this case was granted the government for efficiency of administration, with consent of the governed. Government served the society and was subject to its manipulation. Theoretically, each member was equally important as an individual and maintained an equal voice in the administration of the affairs of the society.

This form of government represented true democracy. It served the people with their consent. It placed high emphasis on freedom and equality of its members. The individual was important and must not be restrained in his activities, unless they infringed upon the rights of others.

Thomas Jefferson was an early advocate of education for all the people in this type of society, regardless of social position and ability to pay. He maintained that education was the business of the government and should properly be supported by the State. Government in this type of society was characterized by its encouragement of individualism, non-conformity and the exploitation of one's potentialities. It was pluralistic, atomistic, and strongly characterized by a sharing of ideas, effort, and responsibilities.

The home, church and schools reflected man's
independence and freedom from restrictions. A man could discipline, educate, and seek religious training for his children as he saw fit. Personal freedom was jealously guarded and power granted grudgingly to the central authority. Private and parochial schools flourished under the indulgent protection of a benevolent government. Everyone shared equitably in government and society in proportion to his effort and ability. Dissenting opinions received equal protection under the law; with no individual being sacrificed toward an end; the individual was considered an end in himself.

Under this system it was inevitable that some individuals, by virtue of intelligence, hard work, or good fortune, would accumulate more property, a better education, and more power. It seems natural that these individuals and their descendents were, in time, selected to be leaders and rulers of society. Their wealth gave them sufficient leisure to attend the duties of state. A superior academic preparation equipped them to govern wisely and prescribe certain reforms whereby society could be better served.

A trend of this type probably evolved into the system of government we know as autocracy. Rulers are born to their positions and are obligated to accept their responsibilities and to prepare for them. Rights and power belong to the State and are granted to the masses by concession.
This has given rise to a dualistic system of education. The ruler must be trained to lead, the ruled, to be led. Under this type of organization the individual must conform and bow to the will of the State. Schools are authoritarian where permissiveness is valued above individual initiative and criticisms. This concept invokes a leveling process which usually means a "leveling down" toward the minimum standards of egalitarianism. A premium is placed on conformity and tradition.

Rule by nobility and landed gentry undoubtably implies leadership by trained experts, but there is no guarantee that these persons shall always be one of superior or intellectual endowments. It has a further weakness of placing extreme powers in the hands of a few at the cost of the intellectual potential of the masses.

At the other extreme of political and educational philosophy we encounter the totalitarian states of Communism and Fascism. Here the state is all-important, monistic, and organismic. The individual is important in proportion to his contribution to the welfare of the state and his principal virtues are those of discipline, attention to duty, and self-sacrifice. Education is universal, narrow, and slanted to serve the ends of the central authority. Individual initiative is directed into the production of materials to accomplish the aims of the state. Society is conceived
as a classless mass of devoted citizens, dedicated to principles of "strength of the group" and conscious discipline. Schools are designed to train rather than educate. According to Lenin, the entire business of education of youth is that of the development of Communist morality.

The State represents the only common interest and provides all the needs and requirements of the people. The State provides for the training of educated specialists in accordance with its predicted needs. Private schools or classes are prohibited by law and only the education prescribed by the State is available. The curriculum, in every detail is prepared by central authority, in an effort to fit the pupil for his predestined place in society.

The curriculum is narrow, dogmatic, and intolerant, dedicated to producing citizens of unquestioning loyalty to the State. The individual is important only insofar as he contributes toward the ends of the State. Every step in the education of youth must be directed toward winning the desperate struggle with the bourgeois. This is the concept of education in Russia, where it is used as a weapon just as surely as the destructive missiles. This is quite different from our viewpoint of education in this country, where we prize the idea of developing every child to the extent of his potentialities.

If we are tempted to abandon our dream of individual
development and pattern our educational system after that of Russia, we must be willing to accept the fact that we would be moving toward an autocratic system of an educated elite.

On the other hand, it does not tax the imagination too severely to picture a system of secondary education operating under conditions which might be called too democratic. If society insists that all children receive an equal education regardless of aptitude, schools will probably soon be hopelessly over crowded. Curricular offerings would become so numerous and varied that an adequate teaching staff could hardly be maintained. It is estimated that by 1960 there will be ten million pupils enrolled in our high schools. The task of providing individualized programs of study for these multitudes would seem to be an administrative impossibility. Under these circumstances it would appear necessary that pupils adapt themselves to the school, rather than the school to the pupil. This point of view would receive strong endorsement from many laymen. Other problems, just as serious, are occupying the thoughts of many educators and parents.

Of all the factors which affect the efficiency of education, probably none has more influence or is more subtle in operation than the mores and customs in the society in which we live. In fact, some of these cultural aspects
may actually hinder the attainment of educational goals. Even though we may fail to recognize it, folkways and social customs must be given due consideration in setting up educational aims. One must also remember that the environment itself is undergoing a continuous change that must be taken into consideration if the educative process is to fulfill its purpose.

Each child is subjected to conflicting loyalties that compete for his attention. These conflicts are reflected in the school, which then shares in these tensions. There is a widely accepted viewpoint that the state should prescribe the school program and determine its purposes in order to produce happy and productive individuals loyal to that state. Therefore, it would seem proper that teachers express loyalty to the state and its political representatives, even though the methods and aims of the state do not always coincide with their own. This organismic view, which is openly subscribed to by totalitarian governments, sometimes finds a number of followers in the democracies as well. A dedicated teacher's responsibility should be truth, and the promotion of the general welfare through the use of truth in her teaching. There seems to be ample evidence that this viewpoint has not been widely accepted or understood, even in the democracies. The question now remains as to whether the prevailing concept of education should be
modified, or whether the schools should take the lead in promoting social change. Educators who label themselves "reconstructionist" subscribe to the latter view with enthusiasm.

The educative forces operating outside the school often exert an influence in direct opposition to the aims and goals of the school. The school teaches honesty and respect for the law; while the corrupt manipulation of machine politics may set an opposite example. The school teaches health and proper nutrition; while in many homes the nutritional level and eating habits leave much to be desired. The school teaches an appreciation for good literature and music; the outside environment bombards pupils from all directions with literary trash and music that would debase the soul of an ascetic. The school teaches democratic principles; local government often presents a different picture. Schools teach proper speech; local usage counteracts it with greater impact. Thus the schools are faced with the issue of fighting a continuous battle with outside influences. Because of man's innate love of pleasure and inadequate moral training, these influences often appear far more attractive to our youth than an overcrowded and poorly equipped classroom. It seems to be a logical conclusion that schools can turn out future citizens that are only a little improved over their adult contemporaries.
In many areas the operation of the schools depend upon the whims of a population whose education and experience has not prepared them to understand or to care particularly about the aims and purposes of the school. Public education, like all other public institutions, needs informed critics to orient and give it direction during periods of change.

One device that appears to offer promising results in compromising the differences in school-community relations is the citizens committees for schools that have multiplied rapidly since World War II. Lay participation in school affairs is as old as the schools themselves. Beginning with the lyceums of the early nineteenth century, citizen groups have concerned themselves with school affairs in varying degrees. However, there has never been anything to equal the phenomenal growth of citizen advisory organizations in the last decade. These committees for public schools now number about 12,000 and prompted the United States Commissioner of Education Lawrence Derthick to say, "That's where the control of education is in this country -- with the local people -- and that's where it belongs." ¹

Successful school-community relations involves mutual knowledge and understanding of the others desires and needs.

It consists of more than telling the public about its schools. It rightly consists of active participation by lay citizens in school affairs. People who participate in an enterprise can usually be depended upon to support and defend it.

Statement of the problem

Statement of the general problem. The purpose of this study was to determine the proper role of public opinion in a dynamic system of public secondary education. This was to be accomplished by comparing the grievances of Louisiana's teachers and the status of certain school activities with public criticism of education as expressed by Louisiana news editors and historical studies.

Statement of the specific problem. To implement this study, specific purposes or subproblems were set up to provide a more thorough treatment of the topic. The subproblems are as follows:

1. To determine specifically what the editors believe to be the major weakness of the schools in their community.

2. To determine the causes of the accelerated campaign of criticisms being experienced by public education.

3. To determine the public's true feeling toward teachers and school personnel in Louisiana, as interpreted by newsmen.
4. To determine what the editors and publishers think should be done to revitalize secondary education in terms of their aims of education.

5. To determine the reactions of secondary school teachers to the deluge of criticisms directed toward the schools and school people.

A final problem was developed to determine whether the public and school personnel shared certain problems in common and to suggest possible means for assisting them in understanding and appreciating the views of the other and in working together in order to arrive at a mutually satisfactory solution to the problems confronting their schools.

Delimitations

This study was limited to white secondary schools in Louisiana.

The poll of public opinion was limited to the white news editors and/or publishers of Louisiana newspapers as listed by the Louisiana Press Association, compiled June 1, 1958, and the news editors or station managers of the white, commercial radio, and television stations in Louisiana as listed in the Broadcasting Yearbook, 1959.

The poll of teachers was limited to the white, classroom teachers of the Louisiana Teachers Association as of November, 1958.
Hypothesis

It is assumed for the purpose of this study that:

1. News media exert a strong influence upon prevailing public opinion.

2. The public, though willing to support public education, is not satisfied with the present status of our school system.

3. Teachers feel that their efforts are not appreciated in their communities, and that they are expected to assume responsibilities of the home.

4. Unfavorable publicity will continue until the proper relations between the public and their schools have been established.

Importance of the study

Due to the tremendous increase in school population, the problems confronting parents and educators about "how" and "what" to teach their children becomes more acute.

To complicate matters even more, we must now begin to consider seriously "where" we are to teach them. In some metropolitan areas facilities are taxed to the extent that the pupils are attending school in shifts in order to relieve the congestion of inadequate classrooms. Analyses of education by experts have become so popular that it is not difficult to locate newspaper or magazine articles exposing the dreadful state of our schools. Current literature
would have us believe that parents are suspicious of the teacher; that teachers resent what they consider unfair criticisms and that both place the blame upon the administrators. Taxpayers feel that they are being cheated; politicians seem to be certain that subversive elements are competing for the children's minds, if we accept the opinions of contemporary writers. Pupils sense the uncertainty resulting from the conflict and respond with halfhearted effort and poor quality work. Experiments in educational methodology, classroom management, and forced racial integration have added their bit to the state of unrest that exists today in our entire educational system.

Differences in opinion often exist between parents and school personnel concerning the attitudes, work habits, and behavior of children. These differences may well stem from the fact that only rarely does either see the child in the other's environment. Persons experienced in the ways of children should recognize the fact that children often conduct themselves quite differently in different circumstances. Parents sometimes find it quite unbelievable when some action of their child is reported to them. A pupil's desire to conform and secure the approval of his peers prompt him to do things in school that would not occur to him in the familiar surroundings of his home. However, these facts do not adequately explain why we are often
reported as having near illiterates in junior and senior high school.

Almost everyone has an opinion about how our schools should be run. Right or wrong, these opinions should be considered by educators when seeking ways to improve their schools. Often these opinions express only ignorance of sound educational practices. Frequently they are sound. Even though they may appear foolish at times, they do express interest. They should remind the educator that he is under public scrutiny, and that it is his responsibility that his patrons be properly informed.

This study represents an attempt to review some of these points of differences between parents and teachers, to offer possible causes of conflict, and to suggest means by which these differences might be reconciled.

It is imperative that we do adjust these disagreements if we are to succeed in our assigned task: that of developing every child to the maximum of his capacity in a direction most useful to himself and society.

**Methodology employed in this study**

An attack on an educational problem dealing with public opinion invariably involves the selection of a data gathering device. For a study such as this, two popular methods of research are indicated; the historical method and
the normative survey. Although the historical method is valuable in ascertaining actions and trends of the past as a guide to present and future action, the purpose of this study was to determine present trends and opinions. Even so, an effort was made to relate these trends to past events. The historical method has not gained favor in recent years as a method of educational research because heretofore little effort has been made to relate the findings to the solution of current problems. The author believes that insight into present problems may be gained by a study of historical background. However, the primary task here was to canvass present ideas and opinions with the intention of evaluating data as a guide to future endeavor.

Research of the normative survey type is directed toward discovering current conditions, practices, and activities while that information can be used in formulating policies and developing plans for the immediate future. It attempts to answer the question, "What are the facts regarding existing conditions?"

Normative survey research does not in itself solve practical problems directly. It does however, assist materially in arriving at conclusions by providing the researcher with a clearer insight by a close study of data. The value of the normative survey is highly regarded as a
basis for making inferences that may be used in solving problems.

Though the normative survey is not particularly forward looking, it may reveal practices and thinking well in advance of the average. It may also reveal conditions that would otherwise go unobserved. This method might well call one's attention to current trends and aid in an evaluation of those tendencies. The normative survey method does not penetrate deeply into the analysis of causative phenomenon but stops with the disclosure of facts and a suggestion of the relationship between the facts and their apparent causes.

In this study the normative survey was used to explore special current interests and opinions in a definite area of school-community relations in an effort to confirm or refute a hypothesis. In this case the "opinion-poll" type of survey was employed. The questionnaire asked for opinions which were used to afford insight into the attitudes of a group.

The questionnaire procedure was used because the researcher could not readily see personally all the people from whom he wished responses. The respondents were distributed over the entire state and there was no particular advantage in seeing them personally.

The questionnaires were direct efforts to sample
Opinions and attitudes are facts in so far as the responses are typical of the individuals, but they are "facts of opinions" and represent the tendencies of the group and are normally reliable. The opinion poll as a research device has met opposition from several sources and for several different reasons. Probably the most common criticism is directed toward the methods employed by agencies polling very large areas. This criticism was largely voided here by the limited area and scope.

Procedures used in collection of data

A four page, seventeen item questionnaire was designed to obtain the reactions of news editors to certain problems that have been receiving extensive criticism in various publications for the past few years.

A pilot study was set up to evaluate the wording and appropriateness of the questionnaire by the Louisiana State University School of Journalism. The junior and senior students of Louisiana State University checked the questionnaires for errors and made suggestions for improving it.

The inquiry blank with a cover letter written by
Major Bruce R. McCoy, Secretary of the Louisiana Press Association and a self-addressed envelope was mailed to the 143 news editors and publishers in the State, requesting their cooperation in the study.

A four page, twelve item questionnaire was mailed at the same time to 285 classroom teachers in the vicinity of the news outlets in an effort to ascertain their reactions to the prevailing public opinion.

The respondents to represent teacher opinion were selected in a ratio of two teachers for each news outlet. Two teachers, one from the city system and one from the surrounding rural area, were polled in order to include a larger percentage of participation, thus providing greater validity.

In cities having more than one news outlet, the schools in that city were arranged alphabetically by name. Each even numbered school was selected from this list to provide a teacher for the study. The participating teacher was chosen by selecting each fifth name from an alphabetical roster of that school’s faculty until one teacher for each news outlet had been chosen. For a more diverse sampling, the rural schools of each system were arranged in the same manner and each fifth teacher from the even numbered school was likewise chosen until a number corresponding to the
number of news outlets had been obtained. In this manner two teachers were polled for each news editor. This method of selection was unbiased as to the selection of schools and teachers and should provide for a more valid sampling by including rural teachers as well as those from the city system.

Bias was avoided in the selection of news editors by including all the cases in Louisiana, except the news editors of educational television stations. It was assumed that their opinion might be slanted by the nature of their associations with the profession.

The multiple choice type of questionnaire was selected for use because the range of response is considerably wider than in the "yes" or "no" type and because the essay, oral interview and other forms of response are too difficult to classify and score.

The multiple choice offers the respondents a series of answers ranging from one extreme of opinion to the other. It also has the advantage of providing for different degrees of conviction not provided for in the "yes" or "no" type of inquiry.

A disadvantage of the multiple choice questionnaire which should be mentioned here is the marked reluctance of many people to express themselves in extremes. Experience has shown that the tendency is to gravitate toward safer,
middle positions. Also worthy of mention is the difficulty of the respondent in keeping all the alternatives in his mind as he ponders his reply. This deficiency was largely overcome because, in this case, questionnaires were mailed to the respondents where they had ample opportunity to study the various categories and select the item that most nearly expressed their true opinion.

**Treatment of the data**

The data are presented by means of informal tables in which each category of opinion is treated separately and descriptively for clarity and quick analysis.

Patterns of behavior were sought between the opinion of editors and the reactions of teachers in their community. This type of relation was considered necessary in order to determine where conflicts and agreements existed in the relationship of the schools to the people they serve. For example, the editors were asked to react to this statement: "The recent 'rash' of unfavorable publicity concerning the quality of our educational system:

- is unfair and grossly misrepresented.
- is caused by recent technical advances made by other countries.
- represents genuine concern about the quality of education our children are getting.
- is merited, as evidenced by recent graduates."
In order to correlate their opinion with teachers reaction to this phase of community relations, the teachers were asked to check one or more of the following responses. "The most obvious reactions of teachers in my community to recent unfavorable publicity has been:

_____ one of resentment.
_____ a determined effort to improve.
_____ disgust and lowered morale.
_____ anger at public opinion.
_____ a defensive attitude.
_____ to dismiss it as a sign of the times."

The responses to these patterned questions were expected to reveal cases where significant differences existed between the teachers and their patrons.

A second type of pattern sought to determine how well the editors were qualified to evaluate the school system for their public. For instance, they were asked, "Do you believe that high school pupils should receive credit toward graduation for so called 'frill courses' such as military science, physical education, music appreciation, driver education, and group singing?" These courses were chosen deliberately because they could be called borderline cases in curricular offerings. Although they are all not courses required in conservative programs, they are usually considered to be acceptable electives and do enjoy academic
respectibility. The editor's response to this type question was to be used as an indication of his ability to discriminate between frill and useful elective subjects and to evaluate sound educational principles. Even though this ability is extremely important and desirable in anyone who analyzes public issues, it is not always in evidence. However, the fact remains, whether they are qualified or not, news editors do exert strong influence upon their reader's opinions and indirectly upon school affairs.
CHAPTER II
A REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A comprehensive survey of literature was made in order to gain insight into the role of public opinion in education. Statements from many sources will be cited in an attempt to amass the most significant information related to the subject. This chapter will serve to orient and provide organization for the development of the study.

The role of news media in forming public opinion

Public schools and teachers have been charged by the public with doing less than a competent job in educating its children. A host of authors have flooded the country with countless articles critical of American education. Whether the blame is properly placed or not, Harold B. Dunkle makes a statement that deserves careful consideration by school people.

One might argue that it is useful for any group to know the worst that others are saying about it. But more important is the fact the best reform of any sort comes from within the group guilty of the alleged malfeasance. Its members can most quickly and effectively correct their errors.1

1Harold B. Dunkle, "Quackery in Education," The Education Digest, (April, 1956), 7.
If professional educators are to defend themselves effectively against the attacks on their profession, they must become familiar with the power of public opinion and the methods used in developing it for a purpose.

The newspaper is generally thought of as being one of the more effective molders of public opinion. Its function is discussed by George L. Bird.

The newspaper must perform a threefold function in the formation of public opinion: First, it must furnish the day's news in as complete and accurate a form as possible, because as President Woodrow Wilson once said, "the food of opinion is the news of the day," second, it must explain and interpret current news and current issues in order to aid readers to form intelligent opinions, after presenting impartially both sides of every issue, by pointing out to readers what measures seem to promise the greater good for the greater number.²

If, as Mr. Bird suggests, news outlets would always explain and interpret news impartially, there would be little or no cause for teachers' resentment toward unfavorable publicity. Actually, constructive criticism provides a strong motivation for continuous evaluation of programs by teachers and administrators. However, unjust or slanted analysis has an equally deleterious effect, as suggested by

this quotation.

Communities which beat their schools over the head do not possess strong, creative educational systems. But communities which appreciate their schools, discover their good points, and through warm praise encourage the teachers to greater efforts, possess powerful, dynamic systems which greatly benefit the fortunate children who live there.3

This clearly emphasises the importance of good working relations between educators and news people in promoting good schools for our youth. It is important that editors and analysts have a clear and accurate knowledge of all phases of school programs if their service to education and the public is to be of value.

The use of editorials for discussing school matters is controlled by the newspaper. Some editors believe that this is the only division of the newspaper which should carry propaganda for, or state opinions relative to, school matters. It is clear that the editorial carries great weight. The proper relations between the school system and the editor will make possible for education to secure that editorial discussion to which its importance entitles it.4

3Earl H. Hanson, "Don't Stop Criticizing us Teachers," Saturday Evening Post, (April 11, 1959), 68.

The recent massive attack on education has actually had the opposite effect. Many educators, feeling that the reports are of a discriminatory nature, have become more reluctant than ever to make any sort of statement to the press. One elder dean of boys in a Northern school recently told a newsmen; "If I had my way, I wouldn't allow a reporter to enter this school. I don't think you see the whole picture; and what's more, I don't think you want to see it." When a situation such as this exists, there is little that a newspaper can do but make a calculated estimate of the situation or resort to his own opinion. One can readily see the danger in this sort of inference. An error of opinion is many times more difficult to correct than it is to present a true portrayal of fact in the beginning. One author remarks:

The errors of public opinion are more damaging than they used to be, both because they effect government more decisively and because Society has become more complex. It is increasingly important, therefore, to understand the nature of the public mind: the disorders to which it is subject, the way in which political and journalistic demagogy affect it, the educational or moral deficiencies that need to be corrected.⁶


It is one of the major tragedies of our modern society that the public, though realizing the importance of our schools, has not the time, active interest, or knowledge to involve itself directly in its children's education. "What each man does is based not on direct and certain knowledge but on pictures made by himself or given to him." In view of these facts it becomes the educator's responsibility to be certain that the public gets the true facts through the news media.

Radio and television releases are perhaps even more effective than the newspaper in reaching certain members of our society.

Inasmuch as the radio reaches large audiences of the literate and the illiterate, of the learned and the ignorant, it may be an effective instrument of mass education or of propaganda to the millions.

It would be particularly dangerous for school people to shrug their shoulders and dismiss these attacks as "signs of the time" as did more than eleven per cent of the teachers the writer polled in the Louisiana survey. Walter Lippman says, "Widespread criticism has a significance


beyond its intellectual value. It is almost always a symptom on the surface that the rule is unstable."\(^9\)

We can hardly deny the logic of this statement. Whether school people are at fault or not, the fact remains that, as a profession, they cannot ignore the implications of the widespread demand for better schools. The school administrator and his faculty should make every effort to determine specifically the nature, validity, and source of unfavorable comment in their school area. In many cases, it will be discovered that these complaints are due to misunderstandings that can be readily corrected. In those instances where serious deficiencies are located, remedial action may be undertaken before estrangement becomes complete.

A careful study of public opinion defines the problem. It shows who are the friends and who are the opposition. It reflects the information and misinformation people have, and demonstrates the relation between information and misinformation and attitudes. It identifies the urges and desires that motivate people. It indicates the positive symbols to which people react.\(^10\)

Additional evidence of the importance of an awareness of


public opinion is noted in this statement by Jean Worth.

The greatest immediate need of American education today isn't money, teachers or buildings, but the key to all three - public understanding of the great opportunity facing the nation.11

Schools, as public institutions, flourish or decline by the will of the people who support them. Historically, American citizens have been eager to provide facilities and funds for the expending needs of their schools. However, the tremendous increase in secondary school population following World War II has created emergency situations in many areas. Large scale building programs and teacher recruitment has lagged behind population increase. To overcome these inadequacies the public was called upon to assume a substantial increase in school finance without proper preparation or sufficient information. As a result, increased resistance to school expansion has been noted in some areas.

School administrators, harassed by the myriad problems facing them, began to turn to their patrons for assistance in finding solutions.

Apathy, although still a foe, isn't the enemy it was two and one-half years ago. Thousands of people are now con-

vinced, after looking at their schools closely, that they cannot leave all the work to the administrators, that schools are, indeed everybody's business. Our business during the next years will be to see that citizens and educators, on the local level, are given the inspiration and the tools to do two jobs - to decide what is the best education for their children and to see that the boys and girls get it.12

This involvement of local citizens in school affairs is one of the most encouraging aspects of the current crisis in education. It represents a continuous source of first-hand contact with public thinking. Few people can deny the value of this aspect of successful school administration. Abraham Lincoln once said:

> Public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment nothing can fail, without it nothing can succeed. Consequently, he who molds public opinion goes deeper than he who enacts statutes or pronounces decisions. He makes statutes or decisions possible or impossible to execute.13

The high regard for the power of public opinion is

12Henry Toy, Jr., "Citizens Committees - A Report to the People from the Director of NCCPSY The Education Digest, (March, 1952), 43.

expressed by Walter Lippman who defines it as follows:

Public opinion, in theory, is a reserve of force brought into action during a crisis in public affairs. Though it is itself an irrational force, under favorable institution, sound leadership and decent training the power of public opinion might be placed at the disposal of those who stood for workable law as against brute assertion. 14

The role of public opinion in modern life is also cited by Edward Bernays who wrote:

Evidence of the power of public opinion prove to every man the necessity of understanding the public, of adjusting to it, of winning it over. The ability to do so is a test of leadership. 15

It is significant to note that Mr. Bernays refers to the necessity of "adjusting to" public opinion, as well as "winning it over." One of the more frequently noted complaints of citizen groups is the reluctance of school personnel to recognize their suggestions in school matters. "Both the words and deeds of every tyrant have revealed at least a grudging but respectful recognition of the importance of public opinion." Although he should be amenable

14 Lippman, op. cit., p. 69.
to sound public opinion, the conscientious educator is charged with the responsibility of providing the public with an accurate and continuous account of the current status of school affairs. It is upon such reports that favorable public reaction is based. "Public opinion is the social judgment reached upon a question of general or civic import after conscious, rational public discussion." Further importance of public opinion is cited by Graves in this statement:

Public opinion is at once an agency of social direction and of social control. As such no more important subject lies at the threshold of successful democracy.\(^\text{18}\)

The abundance of literature dealing with the importance of public opinion clearly suggests a course of action for school administrators who are seeking support for their programs. He must determine and analyze current trends of thought among his patrons in order to gain insight into the nature of their desires and expressions of opinion. William Albig remarked, "When expressions of opinions are made the subject of organized analysis is opinion testing; they remain significant indicators." \(^\text{19}\)

\(^{17}\)Graves, op. cit., p. xxiii.

\(^{18}\)Ibid., p. xxxiv.

\(^{19}\)Albig, op. cit., p. 206.
Almost everyone has opinions about how schools should be run. They have opinions about financing, teacher tenure, curricula, personnel discipline, and homework. Their opinions are often based on gossip, children’s reports, contact with school personnel, but more often upon what they read in the magazines and newspapers.

The common man of large publics, either lacking in adequate data on which to form opinion or intellectually incapable of doing so, nonetheless develops opinions on these issues.20

School people who ignore, or, are not interested in, these opinions are not facing reality. Administrators and teachers who refuse to cooperate in providing accurate information to the public are inviting slanted propaganda from pressure groups.

School people are many times their own worst enemy by closing the columns of the press to their activities. Theirs is the biggest enterprise in the wide, wide world and it can only develop and progress through the aid of the public. In fact, I venture to say that little short of one hundred per cent of the criticism of the public schools is due to ignorance on the part of the critic.21

20 Ibid., p. 60.

It would be foolish, however, to say that all criticism of school policy and management is due to ignorance. Many citizens are capable of making correct analyses of observable phenomena.

For generations our public schools have been one of our most valued institutions. No one worried about their soundness and dedication to fundamental American principles. Parents have been only too happy to take this long merited reputation for granted, few persons really enjoy controversy. Surely, no trivial nor superficial issues could so alarm our best and most thoughtful citizens, including a large segment of the teaching profession.22

Other interests, for one reason or other, have also taken an active part in circumventing the normal operation of our schools, as evidenced by this excerpt. "There is no school system of the country into which group pressure of some kind do not reach to some extent. These pressures are extensive, well planned, and tremendously costly." The most obvious and readily available media for disseminating school information is the local newspapers. "The modern newspaper is the most important medium of communication for the distribution of news and opinions to


23 Frank Buchanan, "Lobbying and Its Influence on the Public Schools," The Education Digest (November, 1951), 10.
large publics."\(^2^4\)

There is an abundance of published material concerning the reliability of editorials and news articles in influencing public opinion. Walter Lippman wrote:

That public opinion can be directed is proved by the fact that the party machines have survived every attack, and why should they not? If the voter cannot grasp the details of the problems of the day because he has not the time, the interest, or the knowledge, he will not have a better public opinion because he is asked to express his opinion more often. He will simply be more bewildered, more bored, and more ready to follow along.\(^2^5\)

Further evidence of the reliability of newspapers in influencing public opinion is offered by the following quote.

The newspaper as an agency of communication plays upon public opinion by disseminating news, opinions, and entertainment. An obvious connection exists between what the newspaper prints and public taste, morals and standards.\(^2^6\)

One of the more important aspects of publicity, as it relates to education, is this prevailing philosophy of newspeople.

\(^{2^4}\)Albig, op. Cit., p. 387.

\(^{2^5}\)Lippman, op. cit., p. 37.

\(^{2^6}\)Bird and Merwin, op. cit., p. 3.
Mere publication of the news carries with it an implied obligation to interpret it, to assist the reader in understanding the meaning and worth of the information given, to aid him in forming correct opinions about the current problems presented.\textsuperscript{27}

The importance attributed to the influence of newspaper editorials is further indicated by this statement.

The country editor has influence not only in his own community, but in the state and nation. The railroads, the big corporations, the political leaders watch him closely. More, they respect his opinion..... The smallest editorial paragraph tells the politician of the condition in that paper's community, for he knows it is put there because the editor has gathered the idea from someone whom he trusts as a leader.\textsuperscript{28}

If we are to accept the foregoing statement as true, we can readily see the importance of the editor having a clear understanding of the aims, purposes, and accomplishments of the local school systems. If this understanding and appreciation is not promoted by competent school personnel, it will certainly be formulated from less reliable sources. The editorial enjoys a time honored and respected position in the newspapers relation


\textsuperscript{28}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 257.
to the community and often exerts strong influence in controversial issues. Spencer had this to say about the editorial:

"An editorial is a presentation of facts and opinion in concise logical, pleasing order for the sake of entertaining, of influencing opinion, or of interpreting significant news in such a way that its importance to the average reader will be clear."  

According to Bird, "Public opinion is used to denote the aggregate of the view men hold regarding matters that affect or interests the community." To be useful in determining school policy these views must be known to school administrators.

Reliability of opinion polls

What do parents actually think of the schools? Are local business men really sold on the school curriculum? Do the members of the parent organizations actually understand the school financial structure? One of the best ways of securing this information with a minimum of exertion is by the use of an opinion poll. Opinion polls provide a reliable and inexpensive means of obtaining public reaction to a question, if the questioning and sampling technique is

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29Ibid., p. 16.

30Bird, op. cit., p. 12.
carefully planned. "The fact of the matter is that opinion measurement, as executed by polls, is one of the few sociological instruments we have that approaches a really scientific standard." Numerous city systems have successfully employed opinion poll techniques in exploring definite areas of community-school relations. High regard for the reliability of opinion polls is expressed by no less an authority than the famed pollster, George Gallup, who wrote:

Public opinion polls have uncovered many areas of ignorance. In performing this service they have brought out certain fundamental weaknesses of our educational system and have pointed to the shortcomings of the whole process of keeping the public well informed in vital issues of the day.

Although experienced pollsters agree that there is no such thing as a perfect question, they do concede the value of training in the construction of questionnaires. Multiple choice questions that provide for distinct graduations of opinions are considered to be more reliable. Another important phase of the polling technique is the adequacy of the sample. Theoretically, a completely accurate poll would have to deal with one hundred percent of the

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cases involved. However, it usually is not possible or desirable to contact all the cases from which you desire responses.

The most important requirement of any sample is that it be as representative as possible of the entire group or "universe" from which it is taken. "Universe" simply means the total area or group from which the sample is to be selected. 33

Additional confidence was expressed by Cantril, who wrote:

Although an adequate sample may be only a small part of the total group under consideration, the odds can be made very high that the results will be, within very restricted limits, the same as those which a complete census would have yielded. 34

Surveys do not go far wrong when a small number of individuals are questioned, if the sample is representative of the total population. ..... A Detroit professional polling agency guarantees a plus-or-minus four per cent accuracy of results, with a 1,200-contact polling of Detroit's 2,000,000 population. 35


An additional advantage claimed for opinion polls is that they sometimes assist in forming opinions. Generally, opinion polls enjoy a reputation of scientific respectability.

A perusal of the preceding pages concerning the role and potency of public opinion should provide insight into the importance of attaining the favorable reaction of this all-powerful social influence.

**The nature and probable causes of public criticism**

The criticisms of American education, although very extensive in number, seemed to center around less than a dozen specific charges. These charges have been compiled by Dr. Peter F. Oliva as follows:

**Criticism 1.** The schools are not teaching the fundamentals.

**Criticism 2.** Modern educators believe that schools should ignore the wishes of the parents. The schools are controlled by professional educators.

**Criticism 3.** The schools cost too much.

**Criticism 4.** The schools are anti-intellectual. They are coddling, uncooperative and unwilling students. They neglect basic areas of education. There are too many "snap" courses. There is not enough mental discipline. There are too many extra-curricular activities in the curriculum.

**Criticism 5.** There is no discipline in the
modern school.

Criticism 6. Modern marking, reporting and promotion practices are bad.

Criticism 7. The schools are not teaching moral and spiritual values.

Criticism 8. The schools, teachers, and textbooks are subversive.

Criticism 9. The schools have usurped the functions of the home.

Criticism 10. Teachers are overtrained in methods of teaching. Teachers are required to take advanced credits in education rather than in their subject field.

Criticism 11. The schools are promoting world government. 36

These are serious charges that deserve careful consideration by administrators and teachers concerned with improving school programs.

These criticisms seem to originate in part, from the confusion which apparently exists between parents and educators about the delegation of functions. Paul Woodring had this to say about it. "The public will be wise to delegate problems of methodology to the professional group best

able to decide them; determination of fundamental policy, however, cannot be so delegated."

Another area that seems to be a point of origin for much of the misunderstanding is the tremendous technical and scientific advances made in recent years, particularly by foreign countries. The schools are repeatedly criticized for lagging behind technological advances. This controversy is placed in proper perspective by Howard S. Patterson who said, "If it were possible for a person to learn all that the world demanded of him at a given moment, he would still not be educated for tomorrow's needs."

A still stronger influence operating in every community in competition with the formal educative process is the customs and mores of that community. According to Patterson:

The modern child is taught a number of do's and don't's in the school, but he learns far more outside of school in his own home and community. The actual contacts of life engrave on his individual character the accepted social pattern


of those attitudes and actions that his group approves.39

Many of the doubts concerning education originate
from the following view credited to Aristotle in 300 B.C.:

There are doubts concerning the business of education since all people do not agree in those things which they would have a child taught, both with respect to improvement in virtue and a happy life; nor is it clear whether the object of it should be to improve the reason or rectify the morals. From the present mode of education we cannot determine with certainty to which men incline, whether to instruct a child in what will be useful to him in life, or what tends to virtue, or what is excellent; for all these things have their separate defenders.40

Thus the controversy rages. Authors of books have discovered a profitable sale for their talents by censuring public education. The lists of publications continues to grow. The otherwise conservative newspapers flaunt headings that are hardly less than libelous. Under the heading "Wake Up! What has Happened to Our Schools?" Otto Tague wrote:

39Ibid., p. 514.

There are many thousands of young Americans of native intelligence who cannot spell the words of everyday conversation; to whom the multiplication table is as unfamiliar as the binomial theorem; high school and college graduates who can't write a simple business letter; who think that jobs, like schooling, are something to work at as little as possible. .... We have been asleep while our children have been turned over to the tender mercies of those who have subjected them to the influence of the one-worlders and communist-fronters. .... To those who have accepted the invitation of Lenin: "Give us the child for eight years and he will be a Bolshevik forever."41

More recently, under the heading "Red Activity of Teachers To Be Probed," The Shreveport Times carried this excerpt:

It (the investigation) will involve the character, extent and objects of Communist Party activities of persons entering the teaching profession who are subject to the directives and discipline of the Communist Party.42

It is hardly surprising, in view of this type of release, that schools are seeking ways to overcome a shortage of 227,000 vacancies in the profession. A somewhat milder, but typical, item contained this statement by Isabelle


42News Item in The Shreveport Times, June 6, 1959, p. 3a.
Buckley:

Over indulgent parents and progressive schools are turning out a generation of undisciplined illiterates. There has been too much spoon-feeding of children by today's parents, who are among the first products of progressive education.  

A realistic view is taken of these outbursts by Dr. Walton Manning, writing for the *State Times*:

Of far greater importance is the need for parents to face honestly and without shame, faults or deficiencies which exist or appear to exist in their children. Far too many parents seem determined to get more out of their child than God endowed him to produce.

This point of view is helpful in pointing up one result of the compulsory attendance law which requires everyone to attend school for a specified interval of time. Of course, it is only a partial answer. The "enriched curricula" must also share the blame of the charges of "under achievement."  

Dr. William G. Carr, executive secretary of the National Education Association, named specifically such organizations as the American Legion, The Association for the United Nations, the National Safety

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*44* Editorial in the *State Times*, Saturday, December 20, 1958.
Council, the Better Business Bureau, and the Daughters of the American Revolution as pressure groups who have demanded that their material be included in the secondary school curricula. "None of these groups wants to overload the curriculum," Dr. Carr said, "all any of them ask is that the nonessential be dropped in order that their material get in."

And so it goes. Of course, some school curricula contain "soft and silly" courses, but it is doubtful that they were included at the insistence of school people. Yet, every day the public is bombarded with statements such as this:

For longer than most Americans now care to think, we have been producing a happy horde of second rate brains. During the euphoric years that our nation has just enjoyed, our tolerance or mental slackness has spread until it permeates every facet of our lives.46

Rear Admiral H. G. Rickover, U. S. N., has more to say on this subject in the same publication:

Ours is a democracy. We cannot move forward faster than the majority of the people will permit us to go. Today the people are aroused because they sense that


something is fundamentally wrong with American education when a country - three-fourth illiterate a generation ago - can in twenty years catch up with us in so important a field of knowledge as science and engineering.47

There can be little doubt that something is fundamentally wrong with education. A quote from the same publication might suggest a possible clue:

Between 1940 and 1956, the purchasing power of teachers plummeted eight per cent while that of factory workers jumped from ten to sixty per cent. The teaching profession, the Carnegie Foundation asserts, is withering away.48

Even with the acute shortage of teachers, it is estimated that about 115,000 will leave the profession this year for higher paying and less restricting jobs with industry. The seriousness of this exodus is further emphasized by John W. Gardner:

In the fall of 1957 there were 1,937,000 pupils in excess of "normal classroom capacity." Some schools have found it impossible to hire well qualified teachers in such basic subjects as English and social sciences: some have even had to drop chemistry, physics and mathematics from their curriculum for lack of teachers. And the population bulge of the future

47Ibid., p. 43.

48Ibid., p. 70.
will press even more urgently on already overburdened facilities. 49

In view of these facts, it is easy to understand why 33.1 per cent of the Louisiana teachers polled by the writer complained of low salaries and 26.3 per cent indicated that heavy schedules were their chief complaint.

Clifton Fadiman, writing for *The Reader's Digest*, displays insight into this problem as evidenced by the following quotation:

> Each time, during the last twentyfive years, that we voted for a school bond issue to provide our children with a swimming pool instead of an acquaintance with the multiplication table, each time that we taxed ourselves to guarantee hot lunches for the kiddies and a continuance of starvation salaries for the teachers; each time that we failed to cry murder when a report card system was abolished or compulsory promotion introduced; at each of these moments we were making sure that our children would turn out to be - what they are. 50

Lest we become complacent and credit these statements to other geographical areas, let's take a look closer home. In a survey made by the author of Louisiana news editors, 69.1 per cent felt that the curricula of our


schools "is neglecting to place emphasis on vital subjects," and 20.9 per cent think that the curricula "is too broad in scope and is failing to provide basic information." One editor, commenting on our educational system, wrote, "Abolish the tenure law, crack down on the ability of teachers - then tighten up on the curriculum. The school system as it is in Louisiana is a farce." This would seem to indicate that this Louisiana editor is something less than pleased with our school system.

More evidence of dissatisfaction is revealed by this quotation from Wisdom:

Indeed, a formidable array of men whose names are listed in halls of fame owe their success to the fortunate circumstance of having been fired from school because of their laziness and aversion to work, before school had standardized them to a mold of mediocrity.51

Actually, public criticism of education has become so intense that it is difficult to find favorable references to the educative process. Theodore Brameld wrote:

At no period in American history, not even in the early decades of the nineteenth century, when public schools were first established as a permanent institution of our culture, has education stirred such heated public controversy as in the years of the mid

century. Never before, moreover, have magazines with vast circulation considered education to be a subject certain to arouse its readers and to attract countless new ones. In hundreds of articles and scores of issues, these magazines as well as others of smaller circulation, but of great influence, continue to feature the conflicting positions on a wide variety of educational problems.52

The present conflict over public education is not new, even though it has reached an acrimonious state of charge and countercharge without parallel in modern times. This controversy probably originated as a result of the rebellion against "progressive" education which captured the fancy of many educators early in this century. The principal philosophical support for the progressive movement came from Rousseau's conception of child nature and from John Dewey's pragmatic empiricism. In 1918 the Progressive Education Association was organized and was for twenty years or more a strong force in American education.

There have been many misconceptions as to the meaning and nature of Progressive education by both the public

and by educators.

In its beginning the movement was a protest against the deadening subordination of the individual to mass methods of education, the regimentation of minds by the traditional methods of teaching. The organization had a name which appealed to teachers. As hope for progress ran high after World War I, teachers felt that this progress could be facilitated through the progressivists movement.

Progressivism helped to change the school from an institution concerned with the learning of facts of a narrow curriculum and the development of a few basic skills to an institution devoted to the development of the whole child, both as an individual personality and as a social organism. This trend resulted in what became first known as "activity methods," and more recently as proposals of activity programs in education. The most recent development to be noted is called "life adjustment" education which is supposed to deal with the "whole" child. Regarding this trend, Irene Kuhn says:

The "Frontier thinkers," led by Professor Harold Rugg of Columbia University Teachers College, scrapped our conventional system of education that had served us well for many years. They substituted something which they called "life adjustment" which was
supposed to prepare a child to live happily in his social order. What it actually accomplished is described by the following quote - "Millions of victimized school children were not taught how to think. In far too many cases they were not even taught to read, to write legibly, or to express themselves with ease or clarity. They grew up without discipline or direction, so far as school training went."53

Much of the current confusion and criticism seems to stem from the people's conception of the aims of education. The progressive has no fixed aim of education, if we are to believe the highly respected educational historian and philosopher, John S. Brubacher who wrote, "The only way to train for changing times is to meet them with an education that is itself 'progressive', one that believes that the aim of education should be the constant reconstruction of experience." The progressive education theory thereby rests upon the notion of a dynamic world order. The progressive fixes no permanent aims or values. Educational aims are not to be projected into the future. They are, instead, to be held subject to revision as advances are made into the future. If there is any


general aim in the light of which these successive re-
visions can take place, it is only that of pupil growth.
However, pupil growth has no end beyond more growth, so
education becomes its own end. Much emphasis is placed on
pupil freedom, Brubacher said:

The child is encouraged not only to
exercise physical freedom but to do his
own independent thinking. Initiative and
self-reliance are cardinal virtues which
the progressively educated child is en-
couraged to develop. Freedom such as
this is predicated on an acceptance of the
fact of individual differences and a
disposition to capitalize upon them.55

These philosophical concepts of education have
definite basic value in the hands of a wise and experienced
teacher, skilled in the intricacies of dealing with chil-
dren. However, the principles involved here are beyond the
complete understanding or appreciation of many teachers.
The unhappy results of their attempts have undoubtedly been
a major factor in precipitating the present conflict, as
evidenced by a quotation from Rudd:

Disquieting as the ideological mistakes
of the new education may be, its most in-
excusable failure has turned out armies of
young men and young women who lack even a
working knowledge of their own language.56

55 Ibid., p. 9.
56 Rudd, op. cit., p. 277.
Further dissatisfaction is expressed by Sutherland:

Modern schools have been baffled in their attempt to perform the age-old function of transmitting to the next generation the traditional culture of the group by the fact that there now exists many different cultural traditions. They have also been baffled by the lack of integration between their work within the classroom and the other educative forces of society. Out of this confusion have arisen several movements, each of which is attempting to control the direction of educational change. The differences in their objectives are implied in the following questions. Should the schools perpetuate what remains of the traditional culture as their common task? Should they concentrate upon the dissemination of the new scientific knowledge: or should they train youth in the technology of the new vocations?57

This statement points out that there is also a strong sociological, as well as philosophical, difference of opinion as to what is important to teach.

The scientists' viewpoint expresses a more definite idea of what they believe that an education should rightfully consist of. Admiral Rickover wrote of his concept as follows:

For all children, the educational process must be one of collecting factual

knowledge to the limit of their absorptive capacity. Recreation, manual or clerical training, etiquette and similar know-how have little effect on the mind itself and it is with the mind that the school must solely concern itself.58

A comparison of this point of view with that of the progressive philosophy, previously discussed, will reveal the almost insurmountable differences that must be dealt with. Who, then, is to decide what we shall teach? The educators? Hardly! They are being given credit for the state of confusion that now exists. The public, then? Equally doubtful.

People have ideas about how reality actually is, or was, and they have ideas about how it ought to be, or ought to have been. The former we call "beliefs". The latter we call "valuations." Usually people do not distinguish between what they think they know and what they like or dislike.59

Where then, shall we seek enlightenment? One solution is offered by Fisk, who wrote:

The problem before us is simple to define but by no means simple to solve. It involves bringing the American public's


understanding of education up to and beyond the point already reached. Those citizens whose influence upon education is potentially greatest must be helped to regain the desire and the spirit to promote the development of the schools. Their identity with educational progress must be established. Education must move forward, not as a result of the frantic pleadings of a few professional leaders, but as the fruit of cooperation between the educators and the public.60

Additional confidence in citizen participation was expressed by Olsen:

> Whether we like it or not, the public school has no real alternative to working with the community and reflecting the will of the people. Local control of the schools is our established tradition and our democratic strength. This does not mean that schools should descend to the level of bowing to every community pressure group which comes along; quite the contrary, for only in enlightened public support won through widespread public participation is the school likely to find strength to resist those very groups.61

Hill had this to say about citizen participation in school affairs:

---


Lay participation brings together the community potential, improves the understanding of the people about education, increases the expectancy of people in regard to education, and sets patterns to meet this expectancy. Once these processes are effectively at work in American communities, the moral and financial support of the schools will improve.  

Whether lay participation in school affairs can allay the storm of public criticism now raging remains to be seen. However, at this time, citizen-sharing of responsibility seems to offer the most democratic solution of this vital problem. In the meantime, no less an authority than the famous William Kilpatrick summarized the situation with these words:

> We face as never before an unknown, shifting future. This demands that our children learn to adapt themselves to a situation which we, their teachers, can only partly foresee.  

**Summary**

This survey of literature dealt with three controversial points effecting the validity of this study.

1. The role of news media in forming public opinion.
2. The reliability of opinion polls.

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3. The nature and probable causes of criticisms of public schools.

The writer feels that sufficient evidence was offered by the works cited to establish the reliability of the methods and materials used in the development of this study.
CHAPTER III
ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The problem under consideration in this study dealt with determining current opinions of Louisiana’s system of public secondary education by polling news editors and certain teachers in the state.

In order that a representative sample of the prevailing opinions might be obtained, questionnaires were mailed to the 143 white news editors of newspapers, radio, and television stations in Louisiana. To determine teacher reaction to the expressed opinions in their communities, questionnaires were mailed to 285 classroom teachers in the vicinity of the news outlets. Eighty-three of the editors and 129 of the teachers responded by returning their questionnaire, all of which are represented in this study.

A distribution of responses is shown in Figure I, page 66. For clarity and quick analysis, the data will be presented in two sections by means of informal tables accompanied by brief comments. Section "A" deals with the data on opinions as expressed by the news editors.
OUTLINE MAP OF LOUISIANA DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES

- EDITOR RESPONSE
- TEACHER RESPONSE
Section "B" deals with reactions of teachers and the status of certain school activities as influenced by criticisms of education.

Section A. Aspects of News Editors' Opinions Relative to Public Secondary Education

The editors were asked to check one of four alternate responses to seventeen statements. The responses were arranged according to levels of satisfaction ranging from complete approval to complete disapproval.

In numerous cases the editors wrote in additional alternatives to enable them to answer "more completely than the form permits." The write-in statements indicated that, to some of the editors, the fundamentals consist of "the basics of English (grammar and literature), history, and science."

It is apparent from a study of Table I that many of the respondents felt that more emphasis should be placed on the traditional, basic subjects.

The category dealt with in Table II was designed to check for consistency with category five. An examination of number five will show a consistent pattern of response.

Generally, the responses correspond closely to those opinions expressed in the related literature. Almost one-half of the respondents felt that we "could do a better
TABLE I

THE RESPONDENTS WERE ASKED TO CHECK THE STATEMENT THAT MOST NEARLY EXPRESSED THEIR TRUE OPINION IN THE SEVENTEEN AREAS BEING INVESTIGATED

CATEGORY 1. THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL NEED OF OUR SECONDARY SCHOOL TODAY IS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A general enrichment of the curricula</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The inclusion of more science and mathematics only</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To spend more time on fundamentals</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>46.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The complete elimination of so called &quot;educational frills&quot;</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>99.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statements</td>
<td>Number Checking</td>
<td>Per Cent Checking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are making full use of educational opportunities</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are doing as well as can be expected</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could do a better job</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>49.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack initiative to do a professional job</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>99.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
job," but did not seem to feel that school administrators had the initiative to do so. The tone of the comments was definitely unfriendly.

One editor remarked, "They are ...... lazy. Not doing the job generally, and not keeping abreast of the times." Another comment said, "The grammar of some educators, principals and teachers, is atrocious. Each and every educator should be required to continually take courses." Another remarked that "As administrators are pretty much guided by higher authority, they should be considered as doing as well as can be expected."

The results here correspond very closely to specific criticism number two, listed in Chapter II, "The schools are controlled by professional educators." Three-fourths of the responses must be classed as unfavorable. Comments such as this were not uncommon. "Lack of initiative on the part of teachers to do a good job is a strong fault that can be remedied only by relaxing tenure laws. A little Hatch act should be placed on teachers."

Here again we must consider more than three-fourths of the responses as unfavorable and as coinciding closely with current literature on the criticism of education.

The tone of comments referring to Table III were more colorful as one editor remarked, "The recent rash - as you so admirably state, is understated, fair, and is
### TABLE III

**CATEGORY 3. THE RECENT "RASH" OF UNFAVORABLE PUBLICITY CONCERNING THE QUALITY OF OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is unfair and grossly misrepresented</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is caused by recent technical advances made in other countries</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Represents genuine concern about the quality of education our children are getting</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is merited, as evidenced by recent graduates</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>92</strong></td>
<td><strong>99.9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the typical outburst of a vigilant minority. The minority has more 'on guard guts' than the professionals, the pot-bellied smugs, and politico-educators with a lobby psychosis." Of course, remarks such as these are in the minority, but not uncommon, as evidenced by this quote. "This survey was compiled by a progressive educator it appears to me: and frankly, I don't think progressive educators are the ones to solve the educational problems."

One editor, who expressed keen interest in the study, remarked, "Whether this is a rash or a sleeping giant who occasionally wakes is the question. Education is everyone's concern and sometimes it is more in the open than at other times."

The material in Table IV was designed to check consistency of opinions by correlating with number two. The results show an acceptable degree of consistency; plus some of the most caustic remarks noted. One editor wrote, "This questionnaire is aimed and loaded; I've not the time nor interest to figure out just how. The school system as I know it, is weak on every thing; this stands out most on fundamentals such as English. Nowhere in the teacher pay hassel have the teachers said, 'Give us more money and we'll do a better job.'" — "Students are graded


TABLE IV

CATEGORY 4. MY IMPRESSION OF THE SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM IS ONE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Of a competent job, well done</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of making the best of a bad situation</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of definite deficiencies in certain areas</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>71.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bordering on complete failure</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>81</strong></td>
<td><strong>99.9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
every semester. Teachers should also be graded -- and flunked."

Another complains, "Teachers here no longer 'keep a child after school' when he is weak in a certain subject, where did the help go for those students? Must they lag along with D's year after year, and upon graduation -- still know nothing about that subject?"

Further dissatisfaction was expressed by these remarks. "No discipline - just as much fault of parents as teachers - in fact, parents must carry main burden of fault. Kids today are O. K., but need more inspired, dedicated leadership. Important emphasis on teacher income has destroyed traditional picture of that noble profession."

Another editor said, "There are many things which have caused a decline in the teaching quality as well as educational levels. The one which I believe to be the greatest cause is that better teachers cannot advance according to their ability, but must wait for tenure. A merit system is the answer to better teachers and better education."

A more vivid portrayal was submitted by this respondent, who wrote, "The difference between (a well known high school) and other high schools is the difference between consecration, minus 'frills' and quickie courses,
'new' courses, and progressive deviltry and education. By progressive education, I refer to that mania which swept the country, disregarded English-grammar and literature, and gave full sway to a bundle of immaturants to decide what they liked, etc., ad nauseam. A cow wants grass; a crook wants to steal; and a prostitute wants money paying clients. Children want nothing that smacks or smells of work. Parents abdicate their right to discipline and the schools have become specialists in passing the buck."

A somewhat milder reaction was expressed by this response. "The basic problem with schools in Louisiana is that they have been politicalized by leadership on the state level. Too many school officials desire to run the schools as if they were private property, this is particularly true on the state level. Neither state offices or local offices seek public help other than in terms of personal salary gains."

More discontent was expressed in this manner, "Frankly, the most basic problem of education today rests in the philosophy of 'education of the masses.' The quality, and consequently the value of high school diplomas has been vastly lowered in the effort, (prompted by politicians), to allow every child to hold a diploma."
Educators need a more realistic approach to what children need to learn. 'Education for living' may be a fine catch phrase; it may get a lot of votes, but it does not replace phonics, it does not replace practice; it does not replace mental discipline."

Further unfavorable opinion was revealed by this editor, "The main problem seems to be that we bring all students together in the classroom, regardless of capacity or ambition. The student with exceptional ability potential must be encouraged by a dedicated teacher and parents away from the classroom to develop as he should. Such a teacher and parents are not always there. The need for a guidance counselor or better, a department within our high schools that works with the exceptional students is advocated -- with suggested readings and projects for this type of student to prepare on his own time."

This editor described teachers with these words, "Too many mediocre teachers who are incapable of inspiring their pupils are under tenure and cannot be dislodged. Good teachers penalize themselves by demanding blanket raises. We favor no raises until the teachers clean their own ranks and then; raises only on merit. The colleges are suffering influxes of applicants devoid of English grammar and spelling with no penmanship ability."
This editor expressed his opinion thusly, "More know-how, horse sense, and the educating of teachers from a practical standpoint, and less idiotic theory, would do wonders in the field of education. We need more stress on the 'facts of life' and less stress on winning football teams and other distractors that lead to mass hysteria. Since the conception of a politically-controlled educational system, it has been the desire of the politicos to use the facilities of the institutions of learning to produce 'loyal subjects,' rather than an educated people."

A somewhat different opinion was expressed by this respondent. "Parental indifference, or downright ignorance of what goes on, is the root of the difficulty. Get the majority of the parents interested in improving the state of affairs, and we'll have improvement. The teachers and officials are doing as good a job as they can, considering the lethargy of parents who forget how immature are their teen-agers, and how much in need of wise guidance from responsible adults. Most of the school authorities and instructors are doing the very best they can - and receiving little but criticism for their efforts."

Another point of view was expressed in this manner, "It is generally observed that there is conflict between teachers and students. Both seem to be indifferent toward
reaching a goal of getting the student educated. Teacher's attitude, 'take it or leave it.' Student's 'I don't care whether I do or not.' Who and what is responsible for this?"

This editor responded thusly, "In my opinion, the most serious fault of the small schools in my area (I do not know about those elsewhere) is that they are not strict enough. They do not drill the students enough in the vital subjects of English, math, history, and science. As a consequence, many of their graduates, who were A and B students in high school, drop to the C and D level in college, and some have trouble even passing. The other most serious fault with our school is the teacher pay scale. In my community, a trapper, fisherman, farmer, or almost anyone can earn more money than the teachers do. No wonder the teachers do such a poor job -- if they have anything at all on the ball, they go elsewhere to get a job."

A somewhat more vicious opinion was expressed here, "Each day presents a detailed report of the actions of the miseducated products of the institutions of learning --- man is an animal of little thinking ability, a hypocrite, and a vicious liar."

Sometimes, even editors have mild opinions, as was
evidenced here, "It takes a lot of everything to run a good school and education can become lax like any other type concern."

Another suggestion in a similar vein is quoted here, "There are far too many small high schools with poorly qualified teachers. There must be more consolidation -- and better salaries for better teachers."

The nature of the responses quoted here plainly expressed the most obvious opinion. Here again, more than seventy-five per cent of the responses must be considered unfavorable.

The significance of the responses in Table V is the extremely low confidence in the adequacy of the curricula, displayed by the editors. One remarked, "Educators should 'crack the whip' because educator-student complacency especially, is a throw back from the 1930's, don't push the child philosophy. This is the big trouble with present day education."

Quoting directly, "None of your alternatives fit precisely. Vital subjects include the ability to read and write and speak English with a specie of fluidity. Society's norm is bubbly. The needs of youth should be viewed with the horizon of perpetuating the American way of life which means, inter alia, preparing youth for a greater life,
### TABLE V

**CATEGORY 5. THE CURRICULA OF OUR SCHOOLS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are providing for the needs of youth</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are neglecting to place emphasis on vital subjects</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>69.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are too broad in scope and fail to provide basic information</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fail completely in meeting the requirements of our society</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>81</strong></td>
<td><strong>99.6</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
not, i.e., giving youth what they need. How do they know what they need? As to being 'too broad' if you include the unfolding research, at least establish the vocabulary, so what is being done will not be the proverbial 'foreign' language to them."

In this category we must also concede dissatisfaction, though, to a somewhat lesser degree. However, less than four per cent express confidence in the curricula.

An examination of the data in Table VI seems to indicate a sympathetic attitude in regards to the teachers' efforts to force through a salary increase. This response was unexpected in view of the unfavorable comment noted in some of the papers at that time.

The writer feels that one editor displayed clear insight into the matter when he wrote, "Misdirected - if the parents were aroused - that would be different, if they had worked in concert with parents - that would have been different also."

Consider, for a moment, the terrific impact of community and parental support in the same proportion as the teachers were represented. This is a vital point.

Another worthy analysis was made by this editor, who wrote, "Lets face it, Gov. Long and his forces made a
TABLE VI


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Justified and correct</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provoked, but of questionable value</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>40.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unethical and due to poor leadership</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completely wrong</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>79</strong></td>
<td><strong>99.8</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
bungling mess of school legislation. Politics should not enter into education. Every dollar invested in education is an investment in the nation's future."

A less favorable opinion was expressed by this response, "A teacher's function is to teach; a minister's to minister; a doctor to doctor; a legislator's duty is to legislate. When one invades the field of the other, then nobody is doing the job they set out to do. A legislator, it is true, must be guided by *public opinion* but paid lobbying does not reflect public opinion any more than the sociological, ideological decisions of the Warren court reflect a true interpretation of the constitution. *'Special interest' pressure is no more indicative of public opinion than the 100,000 letters the communist conspiracy can command in a single day to flood the desks of our lawmakers in Washington.*"

Teachers can claim substantial support in this category. With some exceptions, it would seem that teachers are expected to help themselves. This section was designed to measure consistency by comparing closely with category fourteen, which it did satisfactorily.

"By their deeds shall ye know them" represents the minority response. The data in Table VII clearly show that the public should be informed about their schools.

One editor suggested, "Maybe not a public relations
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Should be maintained in each school</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>52.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would meet with public approval</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is not necessary because &quot;good works speak for themselves&quot;</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is a waste of valuable time and would serve no useful purpose</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>99.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
officer, but good relations, because most communities are built around their schools, all the news all the time would help many to understand."

Additional support was offered here, "We have found that when the public is informed, it is sympathetic; when the need has been shown, the need is met. 'Good works speak for themselves,' it is true; but a cannon's blast can be heard farther than a .22 rifle. It's sort of like the old saying, 'a fish lays thousands of eggs and who cares; a hen tells the world about her accomplishments and reaps the reward.'"

One editor said, "Given time, the good will always outweigh the bad and either No. 1 or No. 2 response will result - we probably will re-evaluate before we decide to improve."

The responses to the category dealt with in Table VIII indicate that the editors still have faith in the educators' ability and desire to improve the educational offerings in their community. The tremendous increase in lay citizen school committees in recent years provides evidence that they have discovered the proper way to bring about this needed improvement.

Table IX points up one of the more significant differences in teacher and public opinion. More than forty
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bring about a decided improvement in the quality of education</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produce a valuable re-evaluation of our educational system</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>72.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop dissatisfaction among teachers, pupils and patrons</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destroy teacher morale and cause a decline in educational standards</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accomplish nothing *</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>79</strong></td>
<td><strong>99.7</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Written In
### TABLE IX

**CATEGORY 9. THE PRESENT TEACHER SHORTAGE IS DUE TO:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The normal increase in school population</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>39.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The salary scale</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>37.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The numerous demands made on their time by community activities</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The second rate status of teachers in the community</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>97</strong></td>
<td><strong>99.8</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
per cent of the teachers indicated that "heavy schedules" and "too much community work" were their chief complaints with their profession. More than thirty-two per cent of the teachers expressed dissatisfaction concerning "lack of appreciation by patrons" and "lack of prestige in community," as compared to only seventeen and one-half per cent of the editors who considered this category important in maintaining an adequate teaching staff.

One editor wrote, "Our birth rate is increasing, therefore, we must increase the supply of teachers, likewise, we must increase the supply of doctors, merchants, businessmen, etc., to meet the growing population. In many cases No. 4, Table IX holds true - but not necessarily; where it does, it is very often the fault of the teacher and -- in this 'one man's' opinion -- teachers have used it, in many cases, to cover up their own deficiencies. Too, they have used this self-imposed bugaboo to depreciate their salaries, thus bringing about a hue and cry about the poor, underpaid teachers. It is amusing to me to see these 'poor', underpaid teachers riding around in air-conditioned Buicks and Chryslers while the rich, fat-cat bankers and businessmen in town drive Fords and Chevrolets. The present day brick mansions of some of our 'poor,' underpaid teachers are quite a contrast to the frame dwelling of fat-cat bankers, etc."
Almost complete dissatisfaction was expressed in the response of this editor, "The ratio of teachers to the population provides a constant. Teachers who are dedicated create a salary commensurate with cultural standards. I am not aware of numerous demands made upon teachers by their community. They are, generally, the least civic minded or culture minded. How many teachers do you know who have established Study Groups, or Book Review Units, or Art Development Clubs, or initiated adult education, or have done anything outside of their church, and bridge parties? Very, very few."

The following reflected another opinion, "Token salaries will never influence the youth of our nation into teaching - no matter what their convictions. This and the multifold expansion of the population has forced the quality of teaching down."

The responses to the category dealt with in Table X clearly indicate an area of teacher-community relations where much work needs to be done. There seems to be little appreciation of the others views.

Optimism is expressed by this quote, "They are striving to keep abreast as best they can, but if they are not providing leadership, who is, and where is it coming from?"
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providing leadership</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Striving to keep abreast of the times</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falling behind but attempting to adapt to changing conditions</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>45.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ignoring possibilities and lagging far behind</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>99.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Less confidence is exhibited by this respondent, "A flop, the results are evident. Creative scholarship, and its kindred, is rare. Creative thinking is penalized. A student, in Louisiana, must attend high school for four years - regardless. An ambitious student who wants to study summers, and get her high school diploma in three years, is prevented by the ruling of the State Board of Education. Scholarship, on a student level, is subordinated to the incompetencies of the teacher, who deprecates same, talks about it, is incapable of recognizing it, and fears the superiority of the student."

The writer feels that these opinions speak for themselves and will make no further comment.

An analysis of the data in Table XI reveals an almost even division of opinion as to how the improvement of educational offerings will be initiated. One of the more confident editors wrote, "Emergency action is never thought through enough to be adequate. Our schools will be there when the rest of the advancements get there."

A somewhat less confident attitude was expressed by this comment, "Whenever public officials become conscientious and leaders; when the professional people become aroused, unselfishly; when the churches stop being denominational, and ethical conduct ensues; when the 'wee voices'
of a minority becomes obnoxious, then perhaps, we will have changes. The educational evolution, pro or con, constructive or novel, has always been instituted by a minority. Those in 'authority' resent change. They know it all, the mending place is in the colleges and universities where teachers or teacher material is forged, fired, and inspired."

Another commented, "Again, choice No. 4, Table XI is the only valid selection. Certainly federal money is not the answer; federal money means federal control; federal control means (to the south) integration, but primarily, the worst fault of federal control is the establishment of another fat-cat bureau with a lot of surveys and investigations but not much action. Only at the ballot box, at the ward, parish and state level, can the citizenry make its wants and wishes known -- and can, if they will enforce those wants and wishes."

The results noted in Table XI are not conclusive, though slightly favorable to educators.

Although a majority of those responding to the area dealt with in Table XII expressed "growing concern" concerning education, few were enthusiastic over the possibilities of improvement, as evidenced by this remark, "Unfortunately, too many of our people are indifferent. We
**TABLE XI**

**CATEGORY 11. ANY SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THE CURRICULA AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY WILL BE INITIATED:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By educators in the normal process of development</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>46.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By school officials on an emergency basis</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By infusions of Federal money</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By the action of an irate public</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>41.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>80</strong></td>
<td><strong>99.8</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**TABLE XII**

**CATEGORY 12. THE MOST FREQUENTLY EXPRESSED OPINION CONCERNING SCHOOLS TO BE HEARD IN MY COMMUNITY IS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One of enthusiasm</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of growing concern</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>57.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of indifference</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>25.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete dissatisfaction</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>83</strong></td>
<td><strong>99.9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
exercise the American privilege of "griping" about this and that; but that's about as far as it goes -- most of the time."

Another editor had this to say, "The childless resent taxes (selfish); the parents are culturally illiterate (how many homes contain a reproduction of one good painting -- not to mention an original; how many homes have books? Count them -- I have and do, regularly). The only comments I hear from parents about school and their children, in the order of their frequency: athletics, athletics, athletics, made the team, he's a natural. Seldom, although occasionally: my --- made the honor roll, etc. I do not recall five parents, in discussing schools ever mention the school library, an inspired teacher or a wonderful faculty."

These remarks seem to sum up the situation quite accurately as the respondents see it.

A fairly accurate summation of Table XIII is expressed by the following quote, "No newspaperman would admit anything other than No. 3. News items may be favorable; they may be co-operative but cautious; at times they must be frankly critical -- but at all times, news items must be straight reporting."

Another editor had this to say, "Schools fail to give out to the news media, regularly, news of academic
TABLE XIII

CATEGORY 13. NEWS ITEMS ORIGINATING LOCALLY CONCERNING EDUCATION ARE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Favorable to school programs</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative but cautious</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Straight reporting</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>41.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frankly critical</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>99.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
clubs, such as Latin or Spanish or French, or history or science, etc. The school paper is a delusion although better than none. Teachers seldom receive publicity from the school or school board of those taking graduate or post-graduate courses. In short, there is no planned publicity from the school, hence, the publicity about the school is sporadic and only when 'something' happens."

Opinions in category fourteen, Table XIV, range from invective to apathy. One editor replies, "To claim any answer but No. 2 would be wishful thinking or opinionated criticism. Teachers are people. People come in all sizes. They are 'good citizens of the highest type'; they are 'meek and unaggressive'; they are 'aloof and difficult to approach.' But above all, they are ordinary people. They are church and civic workers - and they are stay-at-homes. They are 'good apples' and 'bad apples'."

Stronger emotion was expressed in this reply, "Mostly those who have stopped studying and growing inwardly, other than fat. Their popularity depends on athletics and family connections. Too many are political proteges by some bond or other. A great many are removed from life and the conflict they create by believing they are superior beings instead of living a life of dedication and inspiration. The exceptions - God bless them. They are beautiful
TABLE XIV

CATEGORY 14. TEACHERS IN MY COMMUNITY ARE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good citizens of the highest type</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>35.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordinary people</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>47.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too meek and unaggressive</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aloof and difficult to approach</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>85</strong></td>
<td><strong>99.8</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and wonderful. 'The meek shall inherit the earth'."

This usually mild editor became strongly antagonistic in commenting on this category. "Schools could accomplish a great deal more in dealing with the public were it not for the regrettable development of a 'holier than thou' attitude about knowing better than parents what is good for children. It seems that teachers invariably develop the complex of treating adults as though they were pupils and completely unable to have an intelligent opinion concerning education, (or anything else). This, I regard as an occupational disease of tremendous gravity."

The tone of these responses seems to support the remarks made by the writer previously, "Teachers appear to be accepted or rejected on an individual basic, rather than by profession." In the opinion of the author, much good could be accomplished for the profession if individual teachers would carefully examine the nature of their relations with their patrons and seek to improve those personal relations, where such improvement is indicated.

The teacher tenure law continues to receive considerable credit for many of the ills besetting our schools. Responses such as this were not uncommon, "There will be no real improvement in the schools in small towns where
public interest is almost nil - until the tenure law is either changed or abolished. This is very, very serious."

This respondent predicted local progress in this statement, "In ---- Parish the schools are improving rapidly because of good administration and school board. The State Superintendent's give away philosophy is no good."

A lesser degree of confidence was expressed by these words, "They have already declined and if they improve it will be because of a force exerted on them by a few dedicated, creative thinkers - who can plan ahead."

A note of optimism was noted in this editor's reply, "Schools are going forward and are gearing bit by bit to the needs of the day. They will improve as time passes. Rome wasn't built overnight."

In general, the data in Table XV must be considered decidedly unfavorable. Few respondents expressed hope for any real progress under existing conditions.

The trend of thought concerning additional federal funds was well expressed in this quote referring to Table XVI, "We do not want federal money coming into local schools. Already there is too much state control of school operations; with federal money will come federal control and the administration of school affairs will not only have the burden of state bureaucracy, but also federal bureaucracy."
TABLE XV

CATEGORY 15.  IN MY OPINION OUR SCHOOLS WILL:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exhibit marked improvement in the future</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue about as they are</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>32.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be forced to a significant improvement of standards</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>49.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steadily decline in standards</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>77</strong></td>
<td><strong>99.8</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE XVI

CATEGORY 16. SCHOOL FINANCE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Should be the responsibility of the local area</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should be shared equally by local and state revenues</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>51.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should be equalized between the richer and poorer parishes</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would be improved by additional Federal funds</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
<td><strong>99.6</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An advocate of local financing expressed his point of view like this, "This is hard, special state taxes can help poorer parishes and hurt bigger ones and vice versa. The bulk of the revenue should come from the parish or school district where it is to be spent."

This editor went rather far afield but has some definite opinions on educational policy. "Every teacher teaching the same subject, grade, should be paid the same salary. There should be no difference in pay for any teacher merely because of being in a 'poorer' or 'richer' parish. Every supervisor should first be a teacher. There should be compulsory sabbaticals. Every teacher should be required to have an undergraduate degree; within a definite period of time, a graduate degree; and within a subsequent definite period of time, a post-graduate degree. Further - every teacher to hold tenure, should be required to do research work - belong to a teaching association of her interest (or his interest) and produce original writings. Husband-wife teams could be permitted to collaborate. The supervision should be on a state-wide basis; salaries paid for on a parochial basis, augmented by funds from state, national and foundational sources. How can we have inspired students with a culturally illiterate teaching body?"
An examination of the data in Table XVI reveals that a majority of newsmen favor financing to be shared equally by local and state revenues.

The courses listed in category seventeen Table XVII, were chosen deliberately because they could be called borderline cases in curricular offerings. Although all of them are not courses which are required in conservative programs, they are usually considered to be acceptable electives and do enjoy academic respectability. The editors' response to this question was to be used as an indication of his ability to discriminate between frill and useful electives and to evaluate sound educational principles.

An examination of the data in Table XVII will reveal that a substantial majority favors no credit toward graduation for these courses, but that only a very small minority actually questioned the suggestion that these were "frill courses." Although this could be called a leading question, more dissension from the editors was expected.

In commenting on category seventeen, one editor submitted what the writer considers a fitting summary for this section. "Let us not forget our great American heritage and culture. Each day, music and recreation plays a large part in our daily lives. Some of these courses are not as frilly as some might wish to think. Man lives not by bread alone."
**TABLE XVII**

**CATEGORY 17.** DO YOU BELIEVE THAT HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS SHOULD RECEIVE CREDIT TOWARD GRADUATION FOR SO CALLED "FRILL COURSES," SUCH AS MILITARY SCIENCE, PHYSICAL EDUCATION, MUSIC APPRECIATION, DRIVER EDUCATION, AND GROUP SINGING?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>70.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Frills *</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>77</strong></td>
<td><strong>99.9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Written In
Section B. Reactions of Teachers and Status of Certain School Activities as Influenced by Criticism of Education

Certain teachers in the vicinity of each news editor polled were asked to check statements that most nearly expressed their opinion regarding certain phases of school-community relations. These opinions are dealt with in categories one and two, Table XVIII and XIX.

Other categories were included in the belief that responses to them would reveal the influence of public criticism on strengths or weaknesses of certain extra-curricular and professional activities. The status of these activities was analyzed in Tables XVIII through XXIX.

Although 19.7 per cent of those responding indicated resentment and 14.3 per cent anger as a result of unfavorable publicity, teachers displayed a commendable professional attitude by their determination to improve, as indicated by Table XVIII.

One of the potentially dangerous results of prolonged criticism is what sociologists term the "self-fulfilling prophecy." The self-fulfilling prophecy begins as a false definition of a situation from which a different behavior is evoked, making the first false impression come true. Robert K. Merton wrote:

Men respond not only to the objective
TABLE XVIII

THE RESPONDENTS WERE ASKED TO CHECK THE STATEMENT THAT MOST NEARLY EXPRESSED THEIR OPINION OF THE EXISTING PRACTICES OR CONDITIONS.

CATEGORY 1. THE MOST OBVIOUS REACTIONS OF TEACHERS IN MY COMMUNITY TO RECENT UNFAVORABLE PUBLICITY HAS BEEN:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One of resentment</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>19.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A determined effort to improve</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>25.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disgust and lowered morale</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger at public criticism</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A defensive attitude</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To dismiss it as a &quot;sign of the times&quot;</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 167 99.6
features of a situation, but also, and at times primarily, to the meaning this situation has for them. And once they have assigned some meaning to the situation, their consequent behavior and some of the consequences of that behavior are determined by the ascribed meaning.¹

The assumption here is that, if massive criticism of education continues indefinitely, some individual teachers may conceivably assign false definitions to the situation as it applies to them, accept inaccurate analyses as being true, and govern their actions accordingly. This would, in effect, become an accumulating phenomena of "bad creating worse."

It can be readily seen from an examination of the data in Table XIX that low salaries and community status shared almost equal attention in the teachers complaints. Low salaries were checked by 107 respondents as their chief complaint, which was to be expected in view of current legislation regarding teacher pay.

A combination of the first and fifth statements, which are closely related, gives a total of 104 who are dissatisfied with their community status. This comment was typical, "The teaching profession is subject to too close a censorship by the public at large. Too many people, especially those not in educational positions keep their

### TABLE XIX

**CATEGORY 2. THE MOST OFTEN HEARD COMPLAINT FROM TEACHERS OF MY ACQUAINTANCE HAS BEEN:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of appreciation by patrons</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low salaries</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted social life</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too much community work</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of prestige in community</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy schedules</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That we are expected to assume the responsibilities of the home*</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of materials to work with</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total** 323 99.8

*Written In*
fingers in the educational pie." This comment is particularly interesting in that it came from an area where editorial criticism was most severe.

In order to afford a clearer insight into the nature of these complaints, some of the most frequent will be cited directly. The wording will be that of the teachers.

"Community requirements of a teacher's time, abilities, and assets go far beyond that of other professional groups."

"I do not mind 'just' criticism, but I do resent that which only about 1% of the states teachers deserve being directed at the remaining 99%." 

"The constant unrest over the state as to teacher welfare and salary status. The social-economic status of the teachers, demands on teachers and their salary scale."

"I resent the general criticism directed at the profession by ignorant alarmists."

"The low prestige and lack of appreciation of education and of teachers by the public in general, also, by many administrators in education."

"The chief reaction I've noticed is one of resentment because publicity misrepresented facts or took isolated facts out of context so they would prove false ideas."
"We feel that it is not total, complete, real public opinion. Maybe there are some vested interests, axes to grind, politics, propaganda, etc., involved. We have never seen so many 'so called' experts, who have never taught school at all, some not even a day."

"Lack of professional status within the community."

"The idea that some parents have that their children can do no wrong."

"Teaching down to the lowest instead of the highest in intelligence."

"The unfavorable criticism by the public."

"The teaching profession does not command the respect of the public. I resent the unfavorable publicity that the profession gets from the press and the fact that we have had to resort to almost extreme measures to get the meager salaries that we get now."

"I am tired of politics in the teaching profession, both at local and state level. I feel that the teaching profession is being used as a political pawn."

"Lack of public support - by this I mean our departments' needs for equipment and teaching aids are not met as they should be. Lack of parent support, too many parents just send the children to school without caring whether they learn or not. Insufficient pay and prestige."

"For twenty-five years the teacher has been sup-
pressed by the public and by the government officials. They have kept us an occupational class when we should be in a profession."

"Cooperation of parents and politicians."

"Not enough understanding between parents and teachers on what is best for children in school. Parents too lax toward school."

"Lack of parental discipline which calls for more on the part of the teacher."

"People are so un-appreciative, as a whole of service given beyond the call of duty, of teachers."

The random responses cited indicate the nature of the teachers' reactions to public criticisms of education.

The point of view expressed by the teacher in the following statement is responsible, the writer suspects, for much of the unfavorable publicity the profession has received.

"Ignore public sentiment in relation to the school, both administratively and critically, and run the damn schools as officials and teachers who know the problems and procedures for schools. Be more demanding as a professional group and stop asking or begging, let them know you mean business."

Categories three through eleven were designed to reveal the influence of public criticisms, by indicating
TABLE XX

CATEGORY 3. MY SCHOOL RELEASES NEWS ITEMS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regularly</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>31.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermittently</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only for special accomplishments</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When bond issues are eminent</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Near important holidays</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>148</strong></td>
<td><strong>99.7</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the strengths or weaknesses of certain extra-curricular and professional activities. However, editor responses were so uniformly unfavorable that the value of an attempt to correlate lay criticisms and teacher performance by geographical area would be doubtful.

Approximately seventy five per cent of the editors responding indicated approval of an organized public relations program. An examination of the data in Table XX implies that less interest is shown by some school personnel.

Beginning February 1, 1957, and continuing for ninety days, all news clippings, pictures, and headlines arising from the East Baton Rouge Parish School System which appeared in the Morning Advocate were collected and later summarized as found in the attached chart.

The purpose of this bit of research was to get an idea of the type of articles making up the school news and the amount of space given these articles.

The figures in the chart indicate inches of column space. Only the main headlines on inside sheets was considered for the headline tabulations.

After the news items were collected and a study made of them, they were placed into the following groupings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Athletics</td>
<td>3,734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseball</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basketball, boys</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Basketball, girls
Football
Track
Athletics, general
Golf

Instruction ......................... 107
Science
Social Science
Speech

Administration ................. 434
General Information
Buildings
Bids

Teacher Organizations ....... 531
PTA
Classroom Teachers

Student Organizations ......... 133
FBLA
FFA
FHA
4-H
Key

Other ................................ 69
General School News
Faculty Meetings

Miscellaneous .................... 46

Total space given to the above is further summarized as follows.

Print .............................. 3,836
Headlines ......................... 398
Pictures ......................... 620
Grand Total ..................... 5,054

(Note: One side of a sheet of the Morning Advocate equals approximately 168 inches of column space. That is without considering the main headline).

---

2J. C. Floyd and Clarence E. Goleman, (Unpublished study, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, 1957).
One teacher remarked, "Sports news has precedence over academic affairs and teacher recognition. Agriculture has the finest propaganda organization. The odor(sic) of manure is evident in our academic grove. Viz Shelby M. Jackson." The words and spelling are the respondents.

It would seem that school people should do more planning in this important area.

Clubs and organizations referred to in Table XXI should be considered useful and desirable only when they contribute to the stated aims and purposes of the school. These activities are time consuming to both teachers and pupils, often expensive for parents, and certainly add to the overall load of busy teachers. If we accept the progressives definition of the curriculum as, "All the experiences of the learner that are under the control of the school," these activities cannot be called extra-curricular. However, this point of view is one of the principal criticisms made of school by Louisiana editors. Teachers and administrators would do well to evaluate these organizations in terms of their usefulness in the attainment of educational objectives.

Data in Table XXII do not indicate an interest commensurate with the value of an active parent organization.

---

### TABLE XXI

**CATEGORY 4. MY SCHOOL SPONSORS ACTIVE ORGANIZATIONS OF:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F.B.L.A.</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Aides</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.F.A.</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.T.A.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.H.A.</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatic Clubs</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (49 different clubs listed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>99.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE XXII

CATEGORY 5. THE PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATIONS IN MY COMMUNITY:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are encouraged by administrators</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>35.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are tolerated</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are non existent</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Function regularly</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are attended enthusiastically by parents and teachers</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are attended grudgingly by parents and teachers</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Much good will can be created for a school by encouraging and cooperating with these groups. The community centered school is characterized by its willingness to assist and to work effectively with organizations of this type.

Stearns lists seven advantages of lay organization participation in public school affairs. They are:

1. They promote greater stimulation of thinking.

2. They assist in spreading the load of the board of education work.

3. They afford an opportunity to test soundness of policy.

4. They are a source of fertile suggestions.

5. They assist with and promote desirable projects.

6. They are a means of gaining community support.

7. They tend to promote an understanding of the value of extensive sharing in community problems.

People take pride in the things they help to build. Lay committees, carefully organized and properly related to the board of education and to the administrative staff, help to build good will and general support of the school.\(^4\)

Units in excess of the minimum were intended to in-

dicate interest and effort beyond the ordinary. This would seem to imply motivation for greater achievement by interested teachers. If we can accept this assumption as a fact, school programs show negligible strength in this area, as evidenced by Table XXIII.

Too often we hear comments such as this teacher's response, "The minimum, we need the desks for the next class."

Category seven, Table XXIV was designed to discover "friendly" schools where student and teacher morale is important and fostered. The devices listed provide means for recognition of special accomplishments, assists new pupils and beginning teachers in becoming acquainted and established in the school, and provides specialized experience for interested pupils.

Special recognition should be provided and equitably distributed for pupils participating in these activities. In many cases these enterprises provide the only opportunity for certain pupils to receive special notice of any kind.

Responses from teachers such as this were not uncommon, "Yes, we have them on paper."

The activities polled in Table XXV are generally accepted as good public relations media. In view of the
TABLE XXIII

CATEGORY 6. MOST CHILDREN IN MY SCHOOL GRADUATE WITH:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The minimum units required</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>54.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With one extra unit</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more extra units</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total                           | 91              | 100.00           |
TABLE XXIV

CATEGORY 7. MY SCHOOL SPONSORS OR ENCOURAGES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A student handbook</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A newspaper</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An annual</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A functioning student council</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A buddy system for freshmen</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An orientation device for new teachers</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>238</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE XXV

CATEGORY S. SOME DEPARTMENT IN MY SCHOOL FREQUENTLY:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publishes news articles</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appears before civics clubs</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepares material for radio</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makes T. V. appearances</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsors a &quot;Youth Day&quot; with city officials</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erects an educational exhibit</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>26.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>235</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
massive criticisms directed toward public education, these media are not being used to the extent that they should.

One editor wrote, "We get a few notices from the pupils occasionally, the teachers are simply not interested."

Teachers are responsible for the public relations of their respective programs. In other words, they are charged with the promotion of themselves and their work. These two terms, promotion and public relations, are not synonymous but deal directly with the problems of familiarizing the public with our problems and accomplishments.

Promotion is usually thought of as a business term for moving a product, which is primarily what teachers should be concerned with, selling their program and pupil achievement. Public relations, on the other hand, connotes the correction of misunderstanding, the creation of a correct and favorable attitude toward their work.

The educational activities listed in category nine, Table XXVI, offer excellent opportunities for placing pupil achievement before the public in its proper perspective. Here again certain pupils will have their only opportunity for gaining special acknowledgement. Recognition for outstanding accomplishments results in happy, well adjusted pupils and appreciative parents.

The degree of participation revealed by these data appears too low in relation to the good that could be derived.
## TABLE XXVI

**CATEGORY 9. MY SCHOOL REGULARLY PARTICIPATES IN:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literary Rallies</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science Fairs</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Fairs and Shows</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Festivals (Peach, Forest, etc.)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Festivals</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-H Achievement Days</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>401</strong></td>
<td><strong>99.9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
from these educational activities.

The data presented in Table XXVII confirm one of the most frequent criticisms of school programs by editors and teachers, that of over emphasis on athletics and other extra-curricular activities. There seems to be no question of the value of organized recreation and physical education in school programs, but many respondents appear concerned over the status of athletics in secondary schools. One editor wrote, "Physical education is far more important than athletics. In physical education everyone participates. In athletics, everyone but a handful becomes a spectator. Intra-mural athletics are okay. Not beyond that."

Organized recreation is highly regarded as an aid to social and emotional adjustment. The same might be claimed for club work in that it provides for participation by a more diverse group. It is important, however, that these activities do not consume time at the expense of academic subjects.

The importance attributed to music and dramatics is indicated by this editor's comment, "Music appreciation is important, group singing has a definite educational value. Both of these are cultural insights."

Category eleven, Table XXVIII, was expected to measure professional attitudes of teachers. As was expected, a greater percentage had worked toward advance degrees than
## Table XXVII

**Category 10.** In the past two school sessions pupils representing my school have received recognition at, or beyond, district level in:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Number Checking</th>
<th>Per Cent Checking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership activities</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletics</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>25.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholastic achievement</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>22.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music and dramatics</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special appointments</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>267</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statements</td>
<td>Number Checking</td>
<td>Per Cent Checking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received advance degrees</td>
<td>77 (205 degrees)</td>
<td>29.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had professional articles published</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Been cited for outstanding civic work</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Been elected to an office or to an important professional committee at or above the district level</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received an award for professional achievement</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended national or regional education conference</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>265</strong></td>
<td><strong>99.8</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
in any other area. (Statement number six: "Attended national or regional educational conferences," was undoubtedly misinterpreted). It is hardly conceivable that thirty per cent of the teachers polled attended conferences at the national and regional levels. The same is true of area four (been elected to an office or to an important professional committee at or beyond the district level).

Although these errors destroy much of the validity of this category, it would seem that too little effort has been expended in professional writings and civic work. These, in the writer's opinion, are two of the more important areas where improved relations with the public can be achieved. It was noted in the editor responses that teachers did too little of this type of work. "Every teacher should be required to ......., and to produce original writings."

One editor wrote, "They (the teachers) are, generally, the least civic minded or culture minded. How many teachers do you know who have ......., or have done anything outside of their church, and bridge parties, very, very few."

This is one of the most critical areas of disagreement between teachers and editors. Fifty-six per cent of the teachers polled complained of too many responsibilities other than that of teaching. This contrasts sharply with
the six per cent of editors who thought the teacher shortage might be partially explained by "The numerous demands made on their time by community activities."

Teacher load would appear to be a priority area in which parent-teacher and citizen committee groups should concern themselves.

An analysis of the data presented in Table XXIX reveals the surprising fact that low salaries are not the chief general complaint of the individual teachers polled. The responses to category twelve were amazingly uniform. With some refinement of wording and a liberal interpretation, these complaints were grouped within six categories. "Responsibilities other than that of teaching" accounted for 40.7 per cent of the responses as compared to 22.6 per cent who complained of inadequate salaries, and of almost equal importance was "indifference of parents and the public toward the schools", which received the attention of 22.0 per cent of those responding.

These data reveal one area of significant agreement with the criticisms of the editors, that of parental and public indifference. One respondent wrote, "Parental indifference, or downright ignorance of what goes on, is the root of the difficulty." Such feeling could hardly exist in communities where active parent-teacher and lay citizen groups operate.
TABLE XXIX

CATEGORY 12-a. WILL YOU LIST IN A FEW WORDS YOUR CHIEF COMPLAINT WITH YOUR LIFE AS A TEACHER?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complaints</th>
<th>Number Listing</th>
<th>Per Cent Listing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate salaries</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too many responsibilities other than teaching</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>40.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfair criticism by public</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of prestige in the community</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indifference of parents and the public towards the school</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political machination in school affairs</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The most significant fact to be noted in category twelve B, Table XXX, is the uniformity of response. More than 95.0 per cent of the teachers reported that teaching children and youth and observing their progress and development into adulthood were their principal pleasures. This response indicates a requisite professional attitude of high order.

Summary

A review of the material presented in this chapter reveals that editors and teachers share a number of mutual complaints that could well serve as a starting point for resolving those questions on which they differ.

They agree on the following points:

1. Political machination has a deleterious effect upon educational progress.

2. Parental indifference to their children's school achievement reduces the school's effectiveness.

3. Lack of disciplinary training in the home adds to the problems the schools are expected to deal with.

4. Extra curricular activities consume much time that should be expended on basic subjects.

5. Athletics consume more time and attention than their intellectual value warrants.

6. Schools are subjected to strong pressures from external forces.
**TABLE XXX**

**CATEGORY 12-b. WILL YOU LIST IN A FEW WORDS THE CHIEF PLEASURE IN YOUR PROFESSION AS A TEACHER:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pleasures</th>
<th>Number Listing</th>
<th>Per Cent Listing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working with children and observing their development</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>86.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with parents</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serving the community</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three months vacation for professional improvement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No pleasure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>129</strong></td>
<td><strong>99.9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
They disagree on these points:

1. The adequacy of teachers' salaries.
   Disagreement is not complete on this point as most of the differences are concerned with "blanket" raises as opposed to "merit" increments.

2. The amount of community work teachers are expected to do.

3. The professional improvement status of teachers.

4. The school's emphasis on fundamentals.

5. The desirability of the teacher tenure law.

6. The teacher's prestige in the community.

7. The adequacy of high school graduate's preparation. The significant facts of these data appear to lie, not in the amount or degree of criticism directed towards education, but in the misunderstanding and the problems shared by newspeople and educators. This clearly indicates the desirability of closer working relations between the schools and their public.
Obligations of the public to their schools

The principle that public schools belong to the people is so obvious that it hardly seems worth repeating. However, lest school people through pride of accomplishment or by virtue of superior professional preparation lose sight of this fact, they are reminded again. The entire historical development of our school system reflects this principle. Schools have flourished or languished according to how well the teachers and administrators have understood and appreciated this basic concept.

It seems only natural that a person placed in a position of authority in an institution as important as a public school come to look upon it as his personal property. Pride in doing a job well is a prime requisite for a good teacher or administrator, but it is equally important that he not forget that he is a servant of his community; that the success or failure of his tenure in that community depends upon how well he executes the will of his constituents. Many people seek to influence the operation of the school by various means. One of the more common is that of influencing the principal or other administrators by pressures.
and idealistic suggestions expressing varying degrees of insight. Often these suggestions display such a slight understanding of sound educational practice that it becomes routine for the administrator or teacher to dismiss all suggestions from their public as being unsound. However, the public tends to seek leadership and usually inclines toward those who project themselves into positions of easy accessibility and who are sensitive to public needs and desires. The skilful educator can create worthy desires and responses in his public by appealing to the basic emotions. The desire of parents for a better life for their children, economic gain, and improved social status can be used successfully to promote better schools. It is an administrative responsibility to see that patrons are well informed on school matters. A continuous program of adult information will erect a strong bulwark of loyal patrons to protect the school from malcontents and pressure groups. People are usually against those things they don't understand, but can be expected to support worthy school programs with which they are familiar by virtue of organized information emanating from the administrators and teachers.

Extreme care must be taken not to alienate the public by a headstrong projection of personal ideas, however sound. Effective schools exist by the good will of the
people who support them. Successful administration of school affairs implies maintaining both good will and sound educational programs. If these appear to be contradictory, such is not the case. A mature and clever administrator or teacher, by virtue of training and experience, can exert strong influence upon public opinion by a skilful application of the principles of public relations and lay participation.

Perhaps the most important phase in establishing good community relationships is to identify the critics and determine specifically the nature of their criticisms. Then a planned program of public information, using all the media at hand to overcome these criticisms, is indicated. An erratic, uncoordinated reply to critics only invites further criticism. School personnel who are disdainful of public criticism and who withdraw from public debate are surrendering their positions of leadership to those promoting personal interests. However, it is not suggested that school people enter into acrimonious campaigns of charge and counter-charge with their critics. Change originates from the people through aggressive leadership. It is the function of school people to initiate this change through competent and dignified leadership, employing the techniques of good public relations. It is
often effective to invite critics to participate in school affairs at every opportunity. This may serve to enlighten them in cases of misunderstandings and inadequate information. It may even provide a source of constructive ideas. In either case, it provides an opportunity for administrators and teachers to pin-point critics and the nature of the criticisms.

In the opinion poll of Louisiana editors made by the writer, this area provided one of their more important complaints. School personnel were accused of developing an attitude of disdain and looking upon the adults of their community as "slightly backward children." This is a serious accusation made of a profession employed to execute the will of the people. It implies improper relations with the public, unhappy working conditions for the teachers, inadequate financial support, and ineffective school programs.

To provide effective educational leadership in their communities, school people must ascertain trends of thought, modify them if necessary or adapt to them if they prove to be best for the children who attend the schools.

Although the writer discovered several areas of agreement between news editors and teachers, he also located definite areas of disagreement. These will be dealt with in turn.
Salaries and finance. There is a charge by the public that schools cost too much and that teacher salaries are not equitably distributed. It is true that schools are expensive and that cost will continue to rise rapidly in the next few years. "At a minimum, costs will double. Inflation, rising enrollments, and the demand for improvements in public education may raise the costs as much as 150 per cent by the year 1968-69." This seems to be a staggering load on the individual states, and it is. Mr. Lambert suggests federal support as the most logical solution to the problem. However, as expensive as this seems, compare educational costs with some other rising costs. "For tobacco, alcoholic beverages, and cosmetics we've spent $151 billion since 1948. In these same ten years, we have spent $78 billion for public elementary and secondary schools." So it seems that it is a question of ideals; a question of what we want to pay for. For those who oppose federal intervention, the assumption of these added costs by the states would buy some assurance of local control.

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2Ibid., insert, page 32.
The other aspect of finance that drew sharp criticism was that of an equitable distribution of money for teacher's salaries. The editor's recommendations for a merit pay system would probably find little support from the teachers who already fear political interference. Although some dissatisfaction of pay scales was noted in the teacher responses, strong opposition from teachers could be expected to combat any major revision of the existing system. The feeling of many teachers is expressed by this statement, "When there is extra work to be done or a load to bear, the classroom teacher has to do it. But when recognition is made and an increase in salaries is handed out, who gets them? The principals."

This area of school finance will probably receive more attention from the public and legislators in the future. Faculties and individual teachers would do well to bring this question before the people of their respective communities in order that everyone fully understands the problems and implications accompanying legislation in this field.

There seems to be little doubt that the public favors the adoption of some system of merit pay, as evidenced by a recent Gallup Poll, which indicated that two out of every three adults feel that teachers should be paid according to ability rather than length of service.
Of those polled, sixty-eight per cent say that teaching ability should be the basis for pay raises, nineteen per cent favor length of service, and five per cent consider both factors important. Eight per cent have no opinion.3

Teachers can be expected to offer strong resistance to attempts at initiating merit pay. Already critical of political interference and suspicious of administrative intent, teachers, the writer feels, would react strongly to measures that would apparently provide greater opportunities for discriminations in the allocation of salaries. It would probably have an adverse effect upon teacher morale and recruitment.

Here again, it is an administrative function to insure that teachers and patrons thoroughly understand the implications of merit pay.

Community work. In the area of general complaints, more than forty per cent of the teachers polled listed "too many responsibilities other than teaching." Even though some of these charges were directed toward school duties other than teaching, a large number of teachers complained of the amount of community work they were expected to perform. Among those activities listed were

3 "Public for Merit," Scholastic Teacher, XXXIV (February 6, 1959), 3-T.
Civic responsibilities, church and Sunday school duties, fund raising campaigns, and responsible positions in youth organizations. Even though one might argue that teachers are often the best qualified persons available for such work, and that they should be honored by the confidence expressed in their ability, the fact remains that many teachers feel that they are expected to assume more than a fair share of this work. And indeed they should, if that is the case. Work of this nature is mentally and physically demanding and consumes much time that could be devoted to teaching and preparation. On the other hand, activities of this sort provide one of the best means of establishing favorable relations between school personnel and the public they serve. Criticism in this area of community-school relations by editors who contributed to this study seemed to be most prevalent in the larger centers of population. One editor wrote, "They are, generally, the least civic minded or culture minded." Although only six per cent of the respondents selected this area for special attention, they appeared to be a very voluble minority. In any case, teachers and patrons would do well to consider this problem carefully in their evaluations of their school programs. Even though there has been no outspoken complaints, a faculty's teaching effectiveness can be sharply curtailed by an overload of community activities.
Professional improvement. Although this specific area was not included in the poll of opinions, numerous references were made to it by Louisiana editors who criticized the practicability of teacher training, qualifications of teachers, professional attitude of faculties and administrators, and the professional growth of both. This response could not be called typical, but is representative of some of the responses. "They (the teachers) are mostly those who have stopped growing inwardly, other than fat."

It would seem that teachers in the area represented by this editor could expect little help from the press until a different attitude could be instilled by a presentation of facts. Twenty-nine per cent of the teachers responding reported that 205 advanced degrees had been earned by the teachers in their schools during the last two school sessions. The following information taken from the State Department of Education Annual Report for the School Session 1956-57 is interesting in view of those charges.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status of Professional Teaching Staff</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than one year of college preparation</td>
<td>.37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One year of college preparation</td>
<td>.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two years of college preparation</td>
<td>4.51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three years of college preparation</td>
<td>6.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four years of college preparation &amp; degree</td>
<td>70.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five years college preparation or more</td>
<td>17.89%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Totals with less than four years training 11.66%  
Totals with four or more years training 88.34%\textsuperscript{4}

By an analysis of these statistics, it would appear that much of the criticism directed toward professional growth results from a lack of information on the part of the respondents. This condition could hardly exist in a community with a well organized program of public relations. Principals and supervisors should be relieved of trivial "house keeping" duties in order that they may devote full time to activities designed to improve the professional proficiency of teachers.

\textit{Emphasis on fundamentals.} This area has probably received more attention from the general public than any other phase of school programs. Such books as Albert Lynd's \textit{Quackery in the Public School}, and Rudolph Flesch's \textit{Why Can't Johnny Read?}, have undoubtably been a contributing factor to the public's lack of faith in secondary education. Admitting that we do have "near illiterates" in our high schools, there are numerous studies that indicate that schools are doing a good job "educating the masses." When compulsory attendance laws compel all normal children to attend school for a minimum time, it should be expected

that incapable and disinterested pupils would produce a statistical decline in pupil achievement. It is useless and foolish to compare American secondary education with European systems where only about thirty per cent of the top ranking students stay in school past the junior high school level. "In 1900 only 11.4 per cent of our youth had ever enrolled in high school. By 1956 eighty-two per cent were enrolled." The most valid criticism that could be made under these circumstances is the less frequently heard one of "teaching down to the lower levels of achievement." This is probably a much more tenable criticism than the comprehensive assertion that schools are not teaching the fundamentals.

A study conducted in Evanston, Illinois, in 1953 showed that the achievement of 1,290 pupils in the third and fifth grades in reading, arithmetic, and spelling was higher than that of a comparable group made in 1934. In all comparisons in reading the pupils in 1953 made significantly higher scores than did pupils in 1934. The 1934 group was slightly superior in arithmetic problems tests, but the 1953 group scored significantly higher in arithmetic fundamentals. In all comparisons of arithmetic tests the 1953 group made significantly higher scores.

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5 Journal of Educational Research, XLVII (September, 1953), 19-33.
The third grade children in 1953 made significantly higher scores in spelling than the 1934 group. In composite achievement in the fundamentals tested, the 1953 group was higher than the 1934 group.6

Further evidence of attention to the teaching of fundamentals is provided by this study.

The number of public high school graduates who received Phi Beta Kappa Keys this year compared favorably — to put it modestly — with graduates of private schools, some of whom doubtless had the advantage of a year of preparatory school following high school. At Colgate, twenty-five out of twenty-nine were from public high schools; at Harvard, seventeen out of twenty-four, and at Yale, forty-five out of seventy-nine.7

Facts of this type could hardly fail to impress a critical newsman when presented in an orderly, professional manner. But first, we must have a functional school program. Good public relations cannot sustain a mediocre school. The charge that we are "teaching down to the lower levels of achievements" will bear closer scrutiny. When we understand that the mental age range of some classes will range from the second to the ninety-eighth percentile, or


7 Roma Gans, "Are the Schools Neglecting the Fundamentals?" Teachers College Record, LVI (October, 1954), 46.
from eight to ten years, we can see the necessity of ability grouping within a class.

Dr. Conant testified to the importance of grouping by his recommendations number seven, eight, nine, and ten.

Recommendation 7. Diversified Programs For the Development of Marketable Skills

Recommendation 8. Special Consideration For the Very Slow Readers

Recommendation 9. Elective Programs of the Academically Talented

Recommendation 10. Special Arrangements for Highly Gifted Pupils

For example, there might be as many as ten or fifteen per cent of the students (ninth graders) reading at the fourth-, fifth-, or sixth-grade level. 8

In schools where adequate testing materials are not available, grouping can be accomplished on an acceptable basis by chronological age and physical development. Physical development will probably be more reliable than chronological age. Regardless of the methods used, pupils should be grouped and instructed according to ability - and the public should know about it.

No effort should be spared to provide the top two per cent with opportunities for challenging study. From this group will

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come many of the young men and women who will reach the pinnacles of intellectual achievement and creativity in the years ahead.9

**Teacher tenure laws.** Although this item was not included in the opinion poll, it received strong criticism from "write in" comments. Many editors felt that incompetent teachers were being protected by tenure laws. Some respondents saw no hope for future improvement until the laws were modified. One newsman wrote, "Too many mediocre teachers who are incapable of inspiring their pupils are under tenure and cannot be dislodged." This theme, with certain modifications, was received from many areas. It would seem to indicate a lack of aggressive leadership at the local level where the establishment of desirable ideals should begin.

Even though the editors complained strongly of political interference with school affairs, they recommend that teachers destroy their strongest defense against unscrupulous politicians. These inconsistencies in philosophy would seem to invalidate much of the criticisms directed toward this section of the teacher welfare laws. Many of the older teachers can remember too well when they

dared not express a political opinion or choice for fear of reprisals. Conditions of that sort have no place in an enlightened, democratic society.

Even though there may be abuses of the intent of these laws, there would seem to be little doubt among teachers that the good far outweighs the bad. Those who seek to nullify or modify these laws can expect massive resistance from teacher groups. This is a tragic situation. Teachers fully occupied with their professional duties should not be placed in a situation of defending their welfare laws before every session of the Legislature. They are constantly being forced to adopt lobbying tactics to maintain the slight advantages gained over a period of years. As one editor stated, "A teachers job is to teach, a legislator's job is to legislate," and neither should be compelled to invade the field of the other. The fact that they are forced into this role, plus the fact that many newspapers treat these activities as headlines, places school people in an unfavorable position before their public. Citizen groups who are working for better schools would do well to devote much of their time to teacher welfare legislation. Ideally, teacher tenure laws should provide a feeling of security conducive to professional improvement and a broader participation in community affairs. An in-
vestment in teacher morale would pay large dividends in improved school programs. Shaffer says, "Fear of criticism is one of the most important factors in the creation of the attitude of inferiority, which is the predisposing cause of all sorts of defense mechanisms." Teachers can hardly be expected to perform at peak efficiency when they are exposed daily to criticisms of every sort; are expected to rally public support and locate sources of revenue for their own salaries. Lack of public participation in these activities could have far-reaching effects. Snugg and Combs wrote, "What a person does and how he behaves are determined by the concept he has of himself and his abilities." It would be a hardy individual, indeed, who would not be adversely affected by this constant war of nerves. Moral support of teachers and school programs would give teaching personnel a sense of confidence and achievement that would be reflected in superior performances in the classrooms. Snugg and Combs had this to say about behavior:

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Demands are imposed upon the individual by his family, his friends, his community, his nation; in short, by every life situation with which he is faced. It is the unceasing attempt of the individual to achieve needed satisfaction when confronted with the demands imposed upon him by external reality that produces the behavior we observe.\(^\text{12}\)

So it would seem that teacher behavior and school programs are, in a large measure, what the public makes them.

The writer feels that the remarks of Dr. James B. Conant describes the condition of Louisiana's system of public secondary schools quite well. He wrote:

I am convinced American secondary education can be made satisfactory without any radical changes in the basic pattern. This can only be done, however, if the citizens in many localities display sufficient interest in their schools and are willing to support them. The improvements must come school by school and be made with due regard for the nature of the community. Therefore, I conclude by addressing this final word to citizens who are concerned with public education: avoid generalizations, recognize the necessity of diversity, get the facts about your local situation, elect a good school board, and support the efforts of the board to improve the schools.\(^\text{13}\)

\(^\text{12}\) Ibid., p. 89.

\(^\text{13}\) Conant, op. cit., p. 96.
Obligations of the schools to the public

The first section of this chapter dealt mainly with the public obligations to the schools. This section will deal primarily with the schools' duty to the public, which is equally, if not more, important.

The principal duty of a school in a true democracy is to provide the citizens with an education that will enable them to compete successfully in society, in the manner most beneficial to them and that society. A school's failure to do this constitutes a breach of faith with the public to which they belong. However, it is virtually impossible for all schools to accomplish this with all pupils; hence the need for public relations. Good school public relations implies public participation in school affairs. How else can a school administrator or faculty be sure of what the community actually wants and needs? If schools are to provide the kind of education parents want for their children, the parents must come to some sort of agreement on what they want. It is at this point in curriculum planning that strong educational leadership is vital. It is an educator's duty to lead by pointing out to the lay citizen the importance of careful curricular selection, based on community needs. As Paul Woodring has pointed out:
The people have insisted upon the right of every youth to a high school education; but they have inconsistently blamed the teachers for the lowering of academic standards which inevitably resulted. They have asked the schools to eliminate fads and frills. At the same time they have formed themselves into very powerful pressure groups which insist that the local high school maintain a winning football team and a marching band.14

School patrons must understand these problems if they are to be of assistance in maintaining satisfactory schools. To gain and keep the public's confidence in school affairs calls for a continuous program of public information, using every media at hand. This information is not a gratuity to be dispensed by an indulgent administrator. Actually, it is a duty of school personnel to see that the public is well informed. It is the public's right to demand that information be provided. The manner in which school news is made available to the public may well be left to the school staff. However, in view of the considerable influence exerted on public opinion by news editors as noted in Chapter IX, it is important that they be well informed on school matters. It is equally important that friendly working relations be maintained with

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14Woodring, op. cit., p. 7.
those controlling the media of communication. A carelessly reported event can have many connotations, even when not purposely slanted. Although 41.7 per cent of the editors responding to the questionnaire reported that news items concerning schools in their area were "straight reporting," it must be remembered that newspeople are often parents and taxpayers. As such, they are interested in good schools at minimum cost to the public. If they are not convinced that they are getting the best school programs for the price, it is not too great a strain on the imagination to predict the tone of their reports to the public.

It is for this reason that any public relation activity be based on solid accomplishment and reported accurately. The intrinsic value of public relations is pointed out by John P. Syme, who wrote:

No public relations genius can convey for any great length of time to his audience a good impression of his company if there are not honesty and good deeds to be conveyed. Public relations stands in constant danger of being sabotaged by those who persist in looking at it as a cure-all for businesses which feel the hot breath of trouble on their necks. Its purpose is not to whitewash abuses,15

As applied to public education, the preceding statement implies that public relations has little value beyond the accurate reporting of events and achievements.

An often overlooked but extremely important public relations media is the teachers and staff of the school. School teachers are probably under closer scrutiny by the public than any other group in society. Oftentimes the entire profession is judged by a person's reaction to a single teacher. This fact points up the desirability of a planned program of parent-teacher conferences. Parents should know first hand what teachers are doing and why they are doing it. If they are left to rely upon local gossip, the distorted report of children, and slanted publications for their impressions of schools and school people, all sorts of undesirable reactions may be expected. A face-to-face conference between a personable teacher and parent is of inestimable value in resolving differences and establishing rapport.

The personal attributes and appearance of administrators and the non-teaching staff is also of great importance in establishing good community relations. The only contact many people have with the schools is their view of the buildings and grounds and their visits to the business office. Of the editors responding to the questionnaire, 17.6 per cent expressed dissatisfaction with their impression of school teachers. Although 35.2 per cent thought they were "good citizens of the highest type," 47.0 per cent checked
them as "ordinary people," which does not imply any special qualities that might better recommend them for their duties. Even though the public may not always understand the aims and objectives of the school programs, it does understand good manners and courteous treatment of its problems. Every member of the school staff should understand the relationship of their jobs to good public relations.

School personnel are obligated to provide accurate, factual information for their patrons. How this is to be done is a matter of local expediency. However, school public relations should be comprehensive, continuous, and adapted to the special problems and current needs of its community.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The summary of this research will consist of a brief review of the data from eighty-three questionnaires representing replies from Louisiana news editors and 129 questionnaires representing responses of Louisiana secondary school teachers.

The conclusions will (1) offer suggestions for attacking the five major problems under consideration, (2) serve as a guide to understanding, modifying, and using public opinion to strengthen school programs, and (3) suggest ways of adjusting school-community intercommunications in such a manner that improved relations and superior school programs will result.

In analyzing the responses of the eighty-three co-operating editors and the results of related studies, the following significant data regarding editor opinions of Louisiana's system of public secondary schools were noted.

Summary

Part I. Opinion of editors

A. This section of the summary deals with determining the opinions of editors in the general
area of school curricula. Data in this study reveal:

1. That in the opinion of 65.6 per cent of the respondents, schools should eliminate frill courses and spend more time on fundamentals.

2. That in the opinion of 90.0 per cent of the respondents, the curricula of our schools are too broad in scope and neglect placing emphasis on vital subjects.

3. That in the opinion of only 3.5 per cent of the respondents, the curricula are providing for the needs of youth.

4. That in the opinion of 41.2 per cent of the respondents, any significant changes in the curricula will be forced by the actions of an irate public.

5. That in the opinion of 46.2 per cent of the respondents, any significant changes in the curricula will be made by educators in the normal process of development.

6. That in the opinion of 70.1 per cent of the respondents, high school pupils should not be given credit towards graduation for
"frill" courses.

B. This section of the summary deals with determining the opinions of editors in the general area of school administration. Data in this study reveal:

1. That in the opinion of 49.3 per cent of the respondents, school administrators could do a better job of providing functional educational programs.

2. That in the opinion of 25.9 per cent of the respondents, our school administrators lack initiative to do a professional job with any degree of proficiency.

3. That in the opinion of only 4.9 per cent of the respondents, school administrators are making full use of educational opportunities.

4. That in the opinion of 49.3 per cent of the respondents, schools will be forced to a significant improvement of standards.

5. That in the opinion of 32.4 per cent of the respondents, schools will continue about as they are.

6. That in the opinion of only 14.3 per cent of the respondents, schools will exhibit
any marked improvement in the future.

C. This section of the summary deals with determining the opinions of editors regarding school teachers and their activities. Data in this study reveal:

1. That in the opinion of 47.0 per cent of the respondents, teachers are ordinary people.

2. That in the opinion of 35.2 per cent of the respondents, teachers are good citizens of the highest type.

3. That in the opinion of 39.1 per cent of the respondents, the present teacher shortage is due to the normal increase in school population.

4. That in the opinion of 37.1 per cent of the respondents, the present teacher shortage is due to the salary scale.

5. That in the opinion of 17.5 per cent of the respondents, the present teacher shortage is due to the second rate status of teachers in their community.

6. That in the opinion of 40.5 per cent of the respondents, teacher activity at the last
regular session of the legislature (1958) was provoked, but of questionable value.

7. That in the opinion of 30.3 per cent of the respondents, teacher activity at the last regular session of the legislature (1958) was unethical and due to poor leadership.

D. This section of the summary deals with determining the opinion of editors in the general area of criticisms of schools. Data in this study reveal:

1. That in the opinion of 50.0 per cent of the respondents, the recent "rash" of publicity concerning the quality of our educational system represents genuine concern about the quality of education our children are getting.

2. That in the opinion of 27.1 per cent of the respondents, the recent "rash" of publicity concerning the quality of our educational system is merited, as evidenced by recent graduates.

3. That in the opinion of 71.6 per cent of the respondents, their impression of the
secondary educational program is one of
definite deficiencies in certain areas.

4. That in the opinion of 16.0 per cent of
the respondents, their impression of the
secondary educational program is one of
making the best of a bad situation.

5. That in the opinion of 72.1 per cent of
the respondents, recent critical publicity
will probably produce a valuable re-evalu­
atation of our educational system.

6. That in the opinion of 17.7 per cent of
the respondents, recent critical publicity
will probably bring about a decided im­
provement in the quality of secondary edu­
cation.

7. That in the opinion of 45.6 per cent of the
respondents, educational progress, as com­
pared to sociological and technological
achievement, is falling behind but attempt­
ing to adapt to changing conditions.

8. That in the opinion of 25.9 per cent of the
respondents, educational progress, as com­
pared to sociological and technological
achievement, is ignoring possibilities and
lagging far behind.

9. That in the opinion of 20.9 per cent of the respondents, educational progress, as compared to sociological and technological achievement, is striving to keep abreast of the time.

10. That in the opinion of 57.9 per cent of the respondents, the most frequently expressed opinion concerning schools to be heard in their community is one of growing concern.

11. That in the opinion of 25.2 per cent of the responding editors, the most frequently expressed opinion concerning schools to be heard in their community is one of indifference.

E. This section of the summary deals with determining the opinion of editors in the general area of public relations. Data in this study reveal:

1. That in the opinion of 52.4 per cent of the respondents, an organized public relations program should be maintained in each school.

2. That in the opinion of 24.3 per cent of the respondents, an organized public relations
program would meet with public approval.

3. That in the opinion of 18.2 per cent of the respondents, an organized public relations program is not necessary because "good works speak for themselves."

4. That in the opinion of 41.7 per cent of the respondents, news items originating locally concerning education are straight reporting.

5. That in the opinion of 31.6 per cent of the respondents, news items originating locally concerning education are favorable to school programs.

6. That in the opinion of 20.3 per cent of the respondents, news items originating locally concerning education are cooperative but cautious.

F. This section of the summary deals with determining the opinion of editors regarding school finance. Data in this study reveal:

1. That in the opinion of 51.8 per cent of the respondents, school finance should be shared equally by local and state revenues.

2. That in the opinion of 28.1 per cent of the respondents, school finance should be
equalized between the richer and poorer parishes.

3. That in the opinion of only 4.9 per cent of the respondents, school finance would be improved by additional Federal funds.

Part II. **Opinion of Teachers**

I. This section of the summary deals with determining the opinion of teachers regarding certain teacher reactions and activities as affected by unfavorable publicity. Data in this study reveal:

1. That in the opinion of 25.1 per cent of the respondents, the most obvious reaction of the teachers in their communities to recent unfavorable publicity has been a determined effort to improve.

2. That in the opinion of 19.7 per cent of the respondents, the most obvious reaction of the teachers in their communities to recent unfavorable publicity has been one of resentment.

3. That in the opinion of 17.3 per cent of the respondents, the most obvious reaction of the teachers in their communities to
recent unfavorable publicity has been a defensive attitude.

4. That in the opinion of 14.3 per cent of the respondents, the most obvious reaction of teachers in their communities to recent unfavorable publicity has been disgust and lowered morale.

5. That in the opinion of 33.1 per cent of the respondents, the most often heard complaint from teachers of their acquaintance has been one of salaries.

6. That in the opinion of 26.3 per cent of the respondents, the most often heard complaint of teachers of their acquaintance has been heavy schedules.

7. That in the opinion of 32.1 per cent of the respondents, the most often heard complaint from teachers of their acquaintance has been a lack of prestige and appreciation from the patrons of their community.

II. This section of the summary deals with the status of certain school activities which may be influenced by criticisms of education.

A. These activities are acceptable school public relation devices. Data in this study reveal:
1. That 31.8 per cent of the respondents reported that their school releases news items regularly.

2. That 32.0 per cent of the respondents reported that their school releases news items intermittently.

3. That 21.0 per cent of the respondents reported that their school releases news items only for special accomplishments.

4. That 35.4 per cent of the respondents reported that the parent-teacher organizations in their communities are encouraged by administrators.

5. That 25.9 per cent of the respondents reported that parent-teacher organizations were non-existent in their communities.

6. That 17.1 per cent of the respondents reported that parent-teacher organizations were attended enthusiastically by parents and teachers.

B. These student organizations are closely related to courses of study and have worthy educational aims. Data in this study reveal:

1. That 26.6 per cent of the respondents reported that their schools sponsor active
Future Farmers of America chapters.

2. That 25.9 per cent of the respondents reported that their schools sponsor active Future Homemakers of America chapters.

3. That 17.3 per cent of the respondents reported that their school sponsor Library Aides.

4. That 14.2 per cent of the respondents reported that their schools sponsor Future Business Leaders of America clubs.

5. That 9.2 per cent of the respondents reported that their schools sponsor Dramatic Clubs.

6. That 6.5 per cent of the respondents reported that their schools sponsor active chapters of Future Teachers of America.

C. These data were expected to indicate student interest and motivation beyond the ordinary.

Data in this study reveal:

1. That 54.9 per cent of the respondents reported that pupils in their schools graduate with only the minimum units required.

2. That 30.8 per cent of the respondents reported that pupils in their schools graduate with only one extra unit.
3. That only 14.3 per cent of the respondents reported that pupils in their schools graduate with two or more extra units.

D. The activities in this category are morale factors that indicate "friendly" schools where students and teachers welfare is considered important. Data in this study reveal:

1. That 33.1 per cent of the respondents reported that their school sponsors or encourages a school annual.
2. That 27.3 per cent of the respondents reported that their school sponsors or encourages a school newspaper.
3. That 32.2 per cent of the respondents reported that their school sponsors or encourages a functioning student council.
4. That 10.1 per cent of the respondents reported that their school sponsors or encourages a student hand book.
5. That 5.5 per cent of the respondents reported that their school sponsors or encourages an orientation devise for new teachers.

E. These activities are acceptable public relation
media which were expected to show departmental interest in this area. Data in this study reveal:

1. That 26.8 per cent of the respondents reported that some department in their school frequently erected educational exhibits.

2. That 20.4 per cent of the respondents reported that some department in their school frequently published news articles.

3. That 17.9 per cent of the respondents reported that some department in their school frequently appeared before civic clubs.

4. That 13.2 per cent of the respondents reported that some department in their school frequently makes television appearances.

5. That 12.3 per cent of the respondents reported that some department in their school frequently prepares material for radio.

6. That 9.4 per cent of the respondents reported that some department in their
school frequently sponsors a "youth day" with city officials.

F. These are educational activities that provide opportunities for displaying student achievement. Data in this study reveal:

1. That 26.4 per cent of the respondents reported that their school participated regularly in 4-H Achievement days.

2. That 19.2 per cent of the respondents reported that their school participated regularly in agricultural fairs and shows.

3. That 17.2 per cent of the respondents reported that their school participated regularly in science fairs.

4. That 16.9 per cent of the respondents reported that their school participated regularly in music festivals.

5. That 12.5 per cent of the respondents reported that their school participated regularly in literary rallies.

6. That 7.7 per cent of the respondents reported that their school participated regularly in local festivals (Peach, Forest, etc.).
G. These activities were expected to indicate relative strength of school programs. Data in this study reveal:

1. That 25.1 per cent of the respondents reported that during the past two school sessions pupils from their school received recognition at, or beyond, the district level in athletics.

2. That 22.1 per cent of the respondents reported that during the past two school sessions pupils from their school received recognition at, or beyond, the district level in club work.

3. That 16.5 per cent of the respondents reported that during the past two school sessions pupils from their school received recognition at, or beyond, the district level in scholastic achievement.

4. That 16.1 per cent of the respondents reported that during the past two school sessions pupils from their school receive recognition at, or beyond, the district level in music and dramatics.

5. That 14.6 per cent of the respondents reported that during the past two school
sessions pupils from their school received recognition at, or beyond, the district level in Leadership activities.

6. That 5.6 per cent of the respondents reported that during the past two school sessions pupils from their school received recognition at, or beyond, the district level in special appointments.

H. This category was designed to reveal the professional attitude and improvement of teachers. Data in this study reveal:

1. That 29.1 per cent of the respondents reported that within the past two school sessions, teachers from their school received advanced degrees.

2. That 7.9 per cent of the respondents reported that within the past two school sessions, teachers from their school were cited for outstanding civic work.

3. That 6.0 per cent of the respondents reported that within the past two school sessions, teachers from their school had professional articles published.

4. That 3.4 per cent of the respondents re-
ported that within the past two school sessions, teachers from their school received an award for professional achievement.

I. In the area of general complaints with their life as a teacher, data in this study reveal:

1. That 40.7 per cent of the respondents reported that too many responsibilities other than teaching was their chief complaint.

2. That 22.6 per cent of the respondents reported that inadequate salaries were their chief complaint.

3. That 22.0 per cent of the respondents reported that indifference of parents and the public towards school affairs was their chief complaint.

4. That 6.2 per cent of the respondents reported that lack of prestige in the community was their chief complaint.

5. That 4.5 per cent of the respondents reported that political machination in school affairs was their chief complaint.

6. That 4.0 per cent of the respondents re-
ported that unfair criticism by the public was their chief complaint.

J. In the general area of the pleasures in their profession as a teacher, the data in this study reveal:

1. That 86.8 per cent of the respondents reported that working with children was their chief pleasure.

2. That 8.5 per cent of the respondents reported that teaching was their chief pleasure.

3. That 1.5 per cent of the respondents reported that working with parents was their chief pleasure.

4. That 1.5 per cent of the respondents reported that serving their community was their chief pleasure.

5. That .8 per cent of the respondents reported that their chief pleasure was the three months vacation for professional improvement.

6. That .8 per cent of the respondents reported that they had no pleasure from their profession.
Conclusions

This study dealt with determining the proper role of public opinion in a dynamic system of public secondary education. The research was concerned with making a comparison study of the complaints of Louisiana teachers and the status of certain school activities with public criticisms of education as expressed by Louisiana news editors.

Although it cannot be claimed that editorial opinions are completely valid expressions of general opinion, it must be conceded that they play an important role in influencing that opinion.

The conclusions will be in the form of suggestions to be used as a guide in establishing rapport between local schools and their public. These four hypotheses were advanced at the outset of the study: (1) news media exert a strong influence upon the prevailing public opinion, (2) the public, though willing to support education, is not satisfied with the present status of its schools, (3) teachers feel that they are not appreciated in their communities and that they are expected to assume responsibilities of the home in teaching children, (4) unfavorable publicity will continue until the proper relationships between the public and its schools have been established. Considerable
data have been presented to substantiate these hypotheses. Since they appear to be valid by virtue of data collected in Louisiana and supporting related studies, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Public schools in a true democracy belong to the people who support them and are rightfully subject to public decree.

The right of lay citizens to participate in school affairs is basic to American's concept of public education. Schools were established by local communities to perpetuate their culture and to teach the children what the parents considered important.

Since the latter part of the nineteenth century, when education really began to be studied scientifically, professional educators have acquired the duty of assisting their public in developing sound educational policy. School administrators and teachers are charged with the responsibility of leading their patrons to a clear understanding and appreciation of basic educational principles. However, they are reminded that public schools in a true democracy belong to the people who support them and are rightfully subject to public manipulation.

2. News editors exert a strong influence upon the formation of public opinion and any effort designed to improve relations between the public and the schools should include a complete and accurate coverage by the various news media.

Often, whether a person realizes it or not, his actions or opinions are not based upon factual knowledge but upon impressions.
gained from external forces. Through the media available to them, newsmen can reach millions of people and with consummate skill play upon their emotions to elicit desired responses. Business men and politicians have taken advantage of this fact much more readily than educators. Even though news editors represent a minority group in our society, their influence is tremendous. It is for this reason that any effort designed to improve school programs or ameliorate relations between the public and its schools should include an attempt to gain the support of, and accurate coverage by, the various news media.

3. The public, as represented by newsmen, believes that the major weakness of Louisiana's public secondary schools is the neglect of fundamentals and failure to place emphasis on basic materials.

Ninety per cent of Louisiana's cooperating news editors feel that the major weakness of our school is that the curricula are too broad in scope and fail to place emphasis on vital subjects. These vital subjects do not appear to be mathematics and science as much of the popular literature would have us believe, but consist of the more basic skills of reading, writing and speaking English. Forty-six per cent of the editors who cooperated in this study indicated that our secondary schools should spend more time on fundamentals, while 19.0 per cent recommended the complete elimination of "educational frill" courses.

Courses of study must be designed to challenge pupils of all levels of aptitude. High quality work and maximum achievement in all subjects should
become mandatory if the schools are to be effective in providing for the needs of youth. Ability grouping, with elective programs for the academically talented should be provided for those pupils capable of achievement beyond minimum requirements. Programs of this type would require early identification of talented pupils by a comprehensive testing and guidance service in order that these special programs might be initiated upon the pupils' entrance into high school.

4. The past and current campaign of criticisms directed toward public education represents genuine concern about the quality of education our children are getting.

Even though concern is expressed concerning the quality of public secondary educational programs, the writer feels that much of this anxiety would be allayed by a clearer understanding and appreciation of our school's contributions to society. It is believed that school personnel have little to fear from close public scrutiny. However, principals and supervisory personnel should be relieved of trivial duties in order that their efforts be devoted to activities designed to improve instruction and contribute to the professional growth of teachers.

5. The criticisms of education originate from a relatively few aspects of America's democratic society.

(a) The historical concept of teachers. Teaching, as a profession, had little to recommend it as a mental discipline until the latter part of the nineteenth century. Prior to that period there was no accepted and proved body of knowledge to aid in the training of prospective teachers. Salaries were
mere pittance, working conditions and the teacher's social life had little to recommend them as a satisfactory way of life. Teachers for the most part were recruited from the middle and lower middle class of society. Often they were transients who had little or no more preparation to teach than many of the parents. Aims of education, if they existed at all, consisted of perpetuating the status quo.

Although teaching has now achieved professional respectability, the ghost of the village schoolmaster has not been completely laid. It is the responsibility of each teacher to promote and maintain the respect and prestige due the profession by providing conditions under which each child can develop to the limit of his capacities.

(b) Mass education. Editors frequently complained of "education of the masses" as being a basic cause of educational deficiencies. The practice of bringing all children of an age group together in the same class, regardless of aptitude or ambition, has a depressing effect upon educational progress. It is an exceptional teacher who is not tempted to adjust her classroom activities to the progress of the slower average. Successful instruction of "ability groups" within the same classroom requires a skill relatively few teachers have mastered.

The inability of small high schools to cope with the problems of ability grouping received considerable attention from Dr. Conant in his survey of American high schools. This is a vital area in the evaluation of any educational program.

Compulsory attendance laws and welfare legislation have forced the schools to deal with large numbers of pupils who have little
aptitude, and even less interest, in obtaining a formal education. Consequently, the value of a high school diploma has been largely voided as a token of scholarly achievements. However, it is the duty of the school administrators and teachers to make every effort to provide each child with instruction commensurate with his abilities.

(c) Political interference. In a democratic society it is hardly possible or desirable to completely separate schools and politics. An educated electorate is extremely important to the welfare and defense of democratic nations where the individual himself is considered important. In most European countries only about thirty per cent of the children are educated beyond the junior high school. Those who graduate from secondary schools or go beyond represent the highest levels of mental aptitude. Although this system of academic selection is not recommended here, it does present aspects worthy of consideration. The references to political interference cited in this study have less comprehensive connotations. They deal primarily with political manipulations undertaken for gains of a more personal and local nature. Louisiana school teachers, with some justification, have permitted themselves to be placed in the position of lobbyist in an effort to maintain their salary schedules and teacher welfare laws. This unhappy situation has contributed considerably to the estrangement of the schools and their public.

Teacher organizations, as well as individuals, should devote considerable attention to developing within the public an appreciation and understanding of the proper role of politics in school affairs. Political expediency has no priority over educational excellence.
(d) **Pressure groups.** Almost everyone has ideas about how schools should be run and about what is important to teach. People bind themselves together in groups and exert strong pressures upon school administrators to introduce certain materials into the curricula. Often these subjects are worthy and desirable but could be handled more advantageously by other agencies. Often these same individuals are the most voluble in accusing the schools of watered down curricula.

This area provided material for the most severe complaints from both teachers and editors. Many of the so-called frill courses have not been placed in the curricula by school people, but at the insistence of pressure groups with a short sighted view of what a curriculum should rightly consist of. In many instances these suggestions display such a lack of understanding of the function of formal education as to appear ridiculous. Although profitable use of leisure time is important, these activities come under the realm of the home, clubs, and social organizations. As a part of school curricula they consume time, money, and teacher energy that could be spent more profitably on subjects promoting intellectual stimulation. Here again it is an administrative responsibility to lead the people of the various communities in the development of worthy educational ideals.

(e) **External educational forces.** The educative forces operating outside the school often exert influences in direct opposition to the school, and in many cases appear more attractive than school offerings. Of all the factors which tend to reduce the effectiveness of schools, none probably have more influence than the customs and traditions of the society in which we live.
Most children devote six or seven hours daily for five days out of the week to school work, while for the great majority of their time they are exposed to the influence of outside forces. Yet the schools are invariably given credit for the deficiencies of youth which they cannot hope to overcome alone.

The writer feels that much could be accomplished in this area by relaxing labor laws to the extent that youth could seek gainful employment in their free hours. Honest work has a stabilizing influence on youthful activity and creates a feeling of importance by virtue of its accomplishments. Free time ordinarily devoted to relief of boredom could be profitably spent in productive activity. Money earned from these pursuits would reduce the temptation to secure it by less acceptable means. It would have the twofold effect of contributing to family income while reducing expenses by eliminating much of the cost of entertainment. Youth should be encouraged to secure appropriate employment.

(f) Dogmatic attitude of educators. This area of school-community relations received considerable attention from newsmen. School personnel were accused of "talking down" to the patrons as though they were "slightly backward children" and assuming "holier than thou" attitudes in dealing with parents. This is a serious allegation, deserving careful consideration by school people.

The acquisition of a vocabulary of educational "double talk" does not insure that a person possesses clear insight into all the ramifications of sound educational and psychological principles. Teachers are ordinary people, who by virtue of training and experience are skilled in teaching children and devel-
oping their aptitudes. In many cases where objectionable teacher attitudes have been developed, parental indifference may be responsible. Teachers complained that parents have left the entire responsibility for educating their children in the schools hands. Under these conditions it is not surprising that teachers have become somewhat brusque in dealing with patrons. In some areas parent visitations to the schools, except in emergencies, are so infrequent that they are considered rarities.

Parent-teacher relations can be improved most satisfactorily by frequent visitations and frank discussions of problem issues on a sharing basis.

6. The public, as represented by news editors, feels that repeal of the teacher tenure laws and the establishment of a merit system for paying school personnel is essential to any significant improvement of secondary education in Louisiana.

In the opinion of the cooperating editors very little lasting improvement can be achieved in secondary education until the teacher tenure laws have been abolished or modified and a system of merit pay installed. They favor increased pay for those who deserve it and reduced increments for the less capable. Teachers are urged to "clean their own house" by demanding that incompetents be released. Many editors consider this to be a serious problem that must be solved before the public will support salary increases. Actually, if completely understood and appreciated
by all concerned, the teacher tenure law should provide ideal conditions for teacher growth. Under protection from vindictive forces, teachers could develop feelings of security and permanency highly conducive to professional improvement and community pride.

7. The editors who cooperated in this study do not feel that school personnel possess the qualifications necessary to establish worthy school programs.

Only 35.2 per cent of the respondents indicated that teachers are good citizens of the highest type. If these expressions of opinion represent conditions as they actually exist, it would appear that there is little hope for any significant improvement in our educational system. However, the writer feels that the majority of our teachers are good citizens of the highest type and that their estrangement from the public was due to poor leadership. Teacher organizations relied upon political power to "force through" legislation that should have been supported by popular demand. Teacher efforts to secure and maintain welfare benefits should begin with the people in their own communities through their local parent-teacher organizations. These efforts should be based upon achievement and sustained by the ideals and appreciation of their patrons.

8. The most evident reaction of teachers to the deluge of criticisms has been a determined effort to improve.
The data revealed that although 25.1 per cent of the teachers were determined to improve as a result of criticisms, 19.7 per cent expressed resentment and 17.3 per cent preferred a defensive attitude. However, these data must be interpreted as expressing a worthy professional attitude on the part of teachers.

9. Louisiana editors and secondary school teachers share a number of grievances in common.

Grievances common to editors and teachers:

(a) Political machinations in school affairs.

(b) Parental indifference to children's welfare and lack of disciplinary training in the home.

(c) Extra curricular duties teachers are expected to assume.

(d) Over emphasis on athletics in high schools.

(e) Activities of pressure groups in school affairs.

These aspects of school-community relations offer excellent discussion topics for lay citizen groups seeking ways to improve their school.

10. Louisiana editors and secondary school personnel disagree on a number of important questions vital to a successful school system.

Grievances on which they disagree:

(a) Distribution of money for salaries.

(b) The amount of community work teachers
are expected to perform.

The writer suspects that these conditions vary from community to community and that a much greater diversity of opinion exists in the cities than in the rural areas.

(c) Professional improvement of teachers.

(d) Teacher tenure law.

These grievances emphasize the fact that serious disagreements do exist between teachers and their patrons, and that these differences must be reconciled if superior school programs are to be developed.

11. Public secondary educational programs would benefit from more active lay participation in school affairs.

Properly organized and functioning lay advisory committees probably afford the most satisfactory means of maintaining the close harmony and understanding which ought to exist between a school and its public. If representative of the community, they serve as an excellent medium through which the public may be kept informed about the activities, accomplishments, strengths, and weaknesses of their school. Lay participation conforms to the democratic principles on which America was founded and from which our educational system has evolved.

12. The proper role of public opinion in a dynamic system of public secondary education is one of providing a reservoir of ideas, viewpoints, and basic philosophy by which schools seek to translate our hopes and dreams for a better world into concrete reality.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Books


B. Publications of the Government, Learned Societies and Other Organizations


C. Periodicals


Hanson, Earl H. "Don't Stop Criticizing Us Teachers," *Saturday Evening Post*, April 11, 1959, p. 68.


D. Unpublished Materials


E. Newspapers

__________, August 12, 1958.
The Shreveport Times, June 6, 1959.
__________, October 5, 1958.
State Times, December 20, 1958.
Dear Sir:

In spite of recent advances in means of communication, I feel that the newspaper is still the most powerful influence in the development of public opinion in our country today.

As you know the position of our schools is under a closer scrutiny by the public now than ever before. It is a situation that cannot be ignored if the schools are to accomplish the purpose for which they were established.

Through your numerous contacts and unquestionable influence on public opinion you are in an enviable position to assist us in determining what the public believes to be the strengths and weaknesses in our system of public secondary education. This information should enable us to make more intelligent estimates of curriculum needs from the viewpoint of the consumer - the public.

Your cooperation in completing and returning the enclosed questionnaire would provide valuable information for this study and would be deeply appreciated.

Yours very truly,

J. Y. Terry
The success of this study depends, in a large measure, upon a high percentage of responses. If you could spare a few moments to check the statement that most nearly expresses your true opinion in each case it would make this effort much more reliable. Your replies will be strictly confidential and reported only in statistical form.

1. The most fundamental need of our secondary schools today is:

- a general enrichment of the curriculum.
- The inclusion of more science and mathematics courses only.
- to spend more time on fundamentals.
- the complete elimination of so called "educational frills."

2. I feel that our present school administrators:

- are making full use of educational opportunities.
- are doing as well as can be expected.
- could do a better job.
- lack initiative to do a professional job.

3. The recent "rash" of unfavorable publicity concerning the quality of our educational system:

- is unfair and grossly misrepresented.
- is caused by recent technical advances made by other countries.
- represents genuine concern about the quality of education our children are getting.
- is merited, as evidenced by recent graduates.

4. My impression of the secondary educational program is one:
of a competent job, well done.
of making the best of a bad situation.
of definite deficiencies in certain areas.
bordering on complete failure.

5. The curriculum of our schools:

is providing for the needs of youth.
is neglecting to place emphasis on vital subjects.
is too broad in scope and fails to provide basic information.
fails completely in meeting the requirements of our society.

6. Teacher activity at the last regular session of the Louisiana Legislature was:

justified and correct.
provoked, but of questionable value.
unethical and due to poor leadership.
completely wrong.

7. An organized public relations program:

should be maintained in each school.
would meet with public approval.
is not necessary because "good works speak for themselves."
is a waste of valuable time and would serve no useful purpose.

8. Recent critical publicity will probably:

bring a decided improvement in the quality of education.
produce a valuable re-evaluation of our educational system.
develop dissatisfaction among teachers, pupils and patrons.
destroy teacher morale and cause a decline in educational standards.

9. The present teacher shortage is due to:
   the normal increase in school population.
   the salary scale.
   the numerous demands made on their time by community activities.

10. Educational progress, as compared to sociological and technological achievement is:
    providing leadership.
    striving to keep abreast of the times.
    falling behind but attempting to adapt to changing conditions.
    ignoring possibilities and lagging far behind.

11. Any significant change in the curriculum and educational policy will be initiated:
    by educators in the normal process of development.
    by school officials on an emergency basis.
    by infusions of Federal money.
    by the actions of an irate public.

12. The most frequently expressed opinion concerning schools to be heard in my community is:
one of enthusiasm.
one of growing concern.
one of indifference.
complete dissatisfaction.

13. News items originating locally concerning education are:
favorable to school programs.
cooperative but cautious.
straight reporting.
frankly critical.

14. Teachers in my community are:
good citizens of the highest type.
ordinary people.
too meek and unaggressive.
aloof and difficult to approach.

15. In my opinion our schools will:
exhibit marked improvement in the future.
continue about as they are.
be forced to a significant improvement of standards.
steadily decline in standards.

16. School finance:
should be the responsibility of the local area.
should be shared equally by local and state revenues.
should be equalized between the richer and poorer parishes.
would be improved by additional Federal funds.

17. Do you believe that high school pupils should receive credit toward graduation for so called "frill courses" such as Military Science, Physical Education, Music Appreciation, Driver Education and Group Singing?

   yes

   no

COMMENTS:
Dear Mr. Terry:

I enjoyed very much our discussion of your survey work in connection with the preparation of your dissertation for a doctorate at LSU. Your attempt to analyze current public attitudes towards the secondary schools and teachers of the state is timely and should be valuable for all concerned.

After careful checking of your project and my conference with you, I certainly will be very glad to assure any newspaper publishers and editors in the state that your survey questionnaires deserve frank replies, that no ulterior motives are involved in this study, and that any opinions by newspaper people which may be expressed will be used only as a part of a general statistical picture, without revealing any names.

Best wishes in your project, and remember that I'll look forward to learning the general results of the study when you have completed it.

Sincerely,

Bruce R. McCoy, Manager
La. Press Association
Dear:

As you know, schools and school people have been subjected to an unusual amount of unfavorable criticisms in recent years.

I am in the process of writing a dissertation in an attempt to determine the causes, extent and probable effects of this deluge of critical publicity.

If you could spare a few moments from your busy schedule to check the enclosed questionnaire, it would be greatly appreciate.

Your replies will remain confidential and reported only in statistical form.

Sincerely yours,

J. Y. Terry
Check the statement that most nearly expresses your opinion. Your reply will be confidential and reported only in statistical form.

1. The most obvious reactions of teachers in my community to recent unfavorable publicity has been:
   _____ one of resentment.
   _____ a determined effort to improve.
   _____ disgust and lowered morale.
   _____ anger at public criticism.
   _____ a defensive attitude.
   _____ to dismiss it as a "sign of the times."

2. The most often heard complaint from teachers of my acquaintance has been:
   _____ lack of appreciation by patrons.
   _____ low salaries.
   _____ restricted social life.
   _____ too much community work.
   _____ lack of prestige in community.
   _____ heavy schedules.
   List others: ____________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________

3. My school releases news items:
   _____ regularly.
   _____ intermittently.
   _____ only for special accomplishments.
when bond issues are eminent.
never.
near important holidays.

4. My school sponsors active organizations of:

- F.B.L.A.
- Library Aides
- F.F.A.
- F.T.A.
- F.H.A.
- Dramatic Clubs

Others: __________________________________________

5. The Parents - Teachers Association in my community:

- is encouraged by administrators & teachers.
- is tolerated.
- is none existant.
- functions irregularly.
- is attended enthusiastically by parents and teachers.
- is attended grudgingly by both parents and teachers.

6. Most children in my school graduate with:

- the minimum units required.
- with 1 extra unit.
- 2 or more extra units.
7. My school sponsors or encourages:
   ______ a student handbook.
   ______ a newspaper.
   ______ an annual.
   ______ a functioning student council.
   ______ a buddy system for freshmen.
   ______ an orientation device for new teachers.

8. Some department in my school frequently:
   ______ publishes new articles.
   ______ appears before civic clubs.
   ______ prepares material for radio.
   ______ makes TV appearances.
   ______ sponsors a "Youth day" with city officials.
   ______ erects an educational exhibit.

9. My school regularly participates in:
   ______ literary rallies.
   ______ science fairs.
   ______ agricultural fairs and shows.
   ______ local festivals (Peach, Forest, etc.).
   ______ music festivals
   ______ 4-H Achievement day.

10. In the past two sessions pupils representing my school have received recognition at, or beyond district level in:
     ______ leadership activities.
____ athletics.
____ scholastic achievement.
____ club work.
____ music and dramatics.
____ special appointments.

11. Within the past two sessions teachers from my school have:

   No.____ received advanced degrees.
   ____ had professional articles published.
   ____ been cited for outstanding civic work.
   ____ been elected to an office or to an important professional committee at or above the district level.
   ____ received an award for professional achievement.
   ____ attended national or regional educational conferences.

12. Will you indicate in a few words your chief complaint with your life as a teacher.

12. b. The chief pleasure in your profession as a teacher.
The writer, Jared Y. Terry; son of Robert L. Terry and Claudia Day Terry, was born near Downsville, Louisiana, March 1, 1918.

He moved with his family soon thereafter to Choudrant, Louisiana, where he received his secondary education, graduating from the Choudrant High School in 1936. He entered Louisiana State University in September 1937 where he received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Vocational Agricultural Education.

Immediately upon graduation he reported for active duty with the Ninth Infantry Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, as a Second Lieutenant. During his tour of duty at Fort Bragg the writer met and married Miss Esther Virginia Hines of Green Creek, North Carolina.

On November 8, 1942, he participated in the Allied invasion of North Africa. Upon completion of the desert campaign he served in Italy and Corsica, returning to the United States in July, 1944. He was retired from active service at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, in October, 1944.

He became Vocational Agricultural Teacher of the Dodson High School in February, 1945, the position he now
holds. He received his Master of Science Degree in Vocational Agricultural Education from Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in February, 1952.

He is the father of two children, Eavelyn Eloise Terry, born December 4, 1942, and Steven Craig Terry, born November 16, 1955.

At this writing the author is awaiting orders to proceed to Bangkok, Thailand, for duty with the International Cooperation Administration.
EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate: Jared Y. Terry

Major Field: Vocational Agricultural Education

Title of Thesis: The Role of Public Opinion In A Dynamic System of Public Secondary Education

Approved:

[Signatures]

Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signatures]

Date of Examination:

July 30, 1959