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LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY

A SOCIOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF "THE SIMPSONS" WITH RESPECT TO THE INSTITUTION OF EDUCATION

BY

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ABSTRACT

Operating from the premise that episodic television comedy The Simpsons is perceived more as a living culture than as a symbolic artifact, this thesis uses a qualitative approach to examine the program's education system and compare it to those of contemporary western industrialized nations with respect to intents, means and outcomes. This is achieved by melding sociological theory and substantive pedagogical studies to explore two interweaving dualisms: organizational efficiency versus social variability and a functionalist perspective compared with a critical viewpoint.

The data suggest that the consumeristic individualism of the Simpsonian culture and the authoritarian mode of its education system are antagonistic to its socialization role. The educational bureaucracy does not fulfil its organizational mandate of service and accountability to the maximal benefit of society. As well, teachers do not fulfil their ethical responsibilities to students, independent of administrative goals. The equitable treatment of students is precluded by the existence of a hidden curriculum by which students are tacitly judged by their congruence with and acquiescence to the dominant cultural perspective.

Other than hope-inspiring indications that positive social change is occurring though the actualization of feminist ideas in the locus of the working class family, the data present a grim portrayal of a traditionalist culture, one in which the education system serves to rigidify class and gender relations into preexisting socioeconomic categories.

CONTENTS

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CHAPTER ONE: THE NATURE OF THE QUEST

Introduction

There is evidence of widespread interest in the television situation comedy The Simpsons. In both print media and Internet chat files it appears to be experienced more as a living culture than the artifact that it is. Although the life style of its main protagonists has been seen as representative of a Keynesian economic ethos of immediate satisfaction (The Economist, 1992), the programme is most frequently compared to contemporary society from the perspective of the values and attitudes of the nuclear family (Zoglin, 1990; Ehrenreich, 1994).

Just as television renditions of historical events compete in the public mind with actual events, with the former frequently winning due to the entertainment factor (Boorstin, 1961), so too is it with fictional representations. President Bush addressed the cultural ethos of The Simpsons by stating that he wanted an America that looks a lot more "like the Waltons and a lot less like the Simpsons" (Cited in Kakutani, 1992:C1). An immediate reply that "like the Waltons we're waiting for the Depression to end too" was later followed up by a representational evisceration of Bush, portraying him as inherently violent, with a bloated sense of self-importance ("Two Bad Neighbours").

When considering the market-driven nature of television, perhaps the comedic form of the programme is the only way that

serious concerns about society can be addressed. However, while the laughter it generates may serve as cathartic release from situational tensions, it still leaves the offending social premises unresolved. Given that the programme is a representation of contemporary America as seen through a glass darkly, a socio-cultural analysis of it is of value in order to understand the consequences of following certain seemingly preordained paths of social policy. This is especially true in the area of education in schools because of that institution's role as socialization agent and its inextricable connections to the political and economic spheres. Education has been a recurring theme in the programme and, much like families in western society, a significant amount of time and energy is spent by the Simpsons interacting, adapting and contending with this particular institution.

With these considerations as an impetus, it is the object of this thesis to answer the question "How does the education system represented by the Simpsonian culture compare to contemporary western culture with respect to intents, means and outcomes within the context of prevailing socioeconomic arrangements?" Towards this end the following hypotheses will be examined:

1. The educational bureaucracy fulfils its organizational mandate of service and accountability to the maximal benefit of society.
2. Teachers fulfil professional responsibilities to students as embodied in their own code of ethics, independent of administrative goals.
3. A "hidden curriculum" exists such that the social

characteristics of students predetermine their academic and post-educational work lives.

4. As a societal institution, the education system is an important force for positive social change.

A comparative perspective will be obtained by the predominant use of theoretical and statistical data from the contemporary United States, augmented by data from other, comparable, highly industrialized western nations.

Literature Review

Pedagogical theory lies along a continuum between the ideas of stasis and change, with functionalist literature occupying one extreme and radical the other (Davies, 1995; McFadden and Walker, 1994; Turner and Mitchell, 1994). This radical wing contains its own sub-spectrum of theory which can be more discretely characterized as reproductive, resistive and anarchist. The reproductive approach perceives schools as agents in cross-generational regeneration of socioeconomic class arrangements. The resistive school -- which includes "critical pedagogy" -- agrees, but feels the rebellion found in the classroom can be exploited to foster greater social change. Anarchists wish to deinstitutionalize formal education.

Functionalists contend that the schooling process is essentially meritocratic, that ability and effort count for more than the ascriptive qualities of privilege and inherited status.

Functionalism played a pivotal role in attempting to market the democratic ideals of universalism and fair play, particularly with the rapid expansion of the educational system after the Second World War. Burton Clark (1962) contends that the role of education is to provide both a general foundation of knowledge and the cognitive skills that will facilitate the acquisition of more specialized information. Given the ongoing process of rationalization (efficiency and bureaucratization) and the growth of specialized knowledge, this becomes increasingly necessary in what Clark termed "the expert society". With the modernization process, traditional ways of acquiring skills (ie. apprenticing) have declined and formal schooling fulfils society's changing needs, needs that are linked to rapid technological change.

Human capital theory stipulates that societies invest in educational resources with the hope of future returns in the form of cognitive skills and an increase in knowledge. Individuals endure short-term monetary loss -- in terms of lost income and cost of education -- with the hope of significantly better life-time earnings (Becker, 1975; Schultz, 1961). However, although later studies (Hurn, 1978:36) reinforced this positive correlation between education and earning power even after controlling for innate ability and family background, there is an assumption that people find employment as a result of the skill-enriching content of their education rather than for other reasons, such as level of cultural/institutional sophistication or social networking.

Collins (1979) argues that while credentials may be necessary

for an individual to get a job, from a societal perspective there are elements of irrationality to the process. The ongoing inflation of the certification ante is fuelled by the vested interests of corporate and educational institutions, excluding many who could more than adequately fulfil job requirements. This process is legitimized by the "myth of technocracy" (1979:1-21), the unquestioned belief that as technology becomes more complicated, requisite cognitive skills become more sophisticated. In reality, the market place in professional and highly skilled fields cannot absorb the increasing numbers of graduates, skill-level in non-technological jobs has changed little over time, and there is little evidence of any correlation between credentials and post-curricular productivity. While schooling may impart social skills, there is no evidence that it cultivates cognitive skills and much of what <u>is</u> taught in school is rapidly forgotten. School essentially attempts to propagate a middle-class way of seeing and being in the world. As such, formal education is also related to materialist culture: Illich (1970:34-35) argues that the level of certification defines the level at which graduates are both encouraged and allowed to consume.

Bowles and Gintis (1976) present a structuralist analysis of schooling and its outcomes with their "correspondence theory". Reproduction of status quo social arrangements is implemented by the sorting of students into academic strata based on socioeconomic class origins. A meritocratic patina of legitimacy is maintained by ostensibly objective, ability-based criteria such as grading and

IQ tests; in effect, the social relations of the workplace are being regenerated by the class-variegated form of the educational process. In the lower tracks, there is stress on overt control: students are under greater supervision by staff and given more frequent assignments, less discretional leeway as to how tasks are to be carried out, and more rule-following directions. Higher track students experience less supervision and are allowed to work more independently, thereby encouraging behavioural and cognitive qualities necessary for future professional/managerial roles. However, upper tracks are only superficially less repressive -- students still have to acquire an unquestioning acceptance of organizational aims.

The empirical studies of Anyon (1980; 1983) substantively reinforce the correspondence theory. Outcomes are found to be dependent upon the pre-existing dispositions of students towards physical and symbolic capital and by teachers' practices. Teachers tailor their pedagogical approaches according to the socioeconomic nature of a school's catchment area: rote learning for a working class neighbourhood, a bureaucratic approach for the middle class and a creative, independent style for the upper class. This agenda of class-regeneration is most manifest in schools with tracking programmes (Oakes, 1985).

French academician Pierre Bourdieu contends that the relationship of education with other societal institutions is not one of simple class determinism. The institution of education is relatively autonomous in that it is not specifically geared to

produce knowledge for the needs of the economic community, and teachers act as unintentional agents of this system (Bourdieu, 1977: 195-8).

Although class ethos is the major determinant of a child's scholastic success (Bourdieu and de Saint-Martin, 1974:35), there is some degree of agency, of self-selection, on the part of the child. However, such free will is constrained by curriculum content and style, both of which are heavily prejudicial towards the cultural capital -- and particularly the language capabilities -- of the upper classes. The most important manifestation of cultural ethos (habitus) is the use of language, with language training being the core of the family pedagogical work (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977:73). This facility with language, particularly in the early years, is critical in forming teacher judgements of student abilities. The disadvantages of class origin are translated into the educational practice of streaming with cultural capital being progressively translated into scholastic capital in the form of grades, prizes, scholarships (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977:106).

Resistance theory arose in the late 1970s to challenge the idea that social and cultural reproduction was a smooth process. Resistance theorists argue that reproductionists ignore classroom resistance to the schools, the culture and to greater society (McFadden and Walker, 1995:5057). Willis's study (1977) of a British inner-city, working-class school examined how the practices of a subcultural group of males were rooted in a rejection of the

ideology of meritocracy and its promises of upward mobility through education. However, in spurning the proffered academic avenue and opting for the lifestyles of their parents, they acted as agents in reproducing the existing class structure. The value system of their own subculture of rebellion was a negative reflection of the academic milieu: manual work was valorized and intellectual work was despised and labelled as feminine. As such, these values reflected and reproduced sexist attitudes found in the workplace.

McRobbie's study (1978)of British working class high school girls indicated that their resistance to school culture could produce similar sexist outcomes. This resistance was manifested by a rejection of passivity and femininity in favour of sexuality -- as evinced by a concern for popular culture, boys and appearance. Thus, as with Willis's "lads," the girls unwittingly regenerated patriarchal culture.

"Critical pedagogists" (Apple 1979, 1982, 1986;; Giroux, 1983; McLaren, 1989; Gaskell et al., 1989) appreciate the great potential for social change lying within these sites of classroom resistance. Schools are perceived as arenas wherein two sets of beliefs are in competition, with the dominant (bourgeois) group attempting to maintain hegemonic control over the ideas and actions of the working class by defining and shaping its content. It is within schools that there exists a process of active reconstruction of liberal-democratic mythology. Since education is a semi-autonomous institution a more wide-reaching form of social resistance is possible, one in which schools can act as agents of progressive

social change to overcome oppressions such as sexism, classism and racism. This can occur through a participatory process of critical reflection on lived experiences, a process that culminates in an awareness of social relations and of the possibilities for social change (praxis). To achieve this end, it is necessary to examine school processes in order to assess the extent to which they reproduce or contradict the ideologies and social relations of the surrounding society through their curricula, teaching techniques, texts and administrative philosophies and practises.

McLaren's (1989) ethnographic study of his experiences at a Canadian inner-city school attempts to discern the social construction of educational outcomes from a critical pedagogical perspective. His analysis uncovers a variety of educational problems including the ideological baggage of teachers, teacher-centred models, tracking, the stress on individualism and the use of a cultural deficit model of pedagogy (1989:232). Drawing on the works of Giroux (1983) and Paulo Freire (1970) for his conception of education as a vehicle of self and social empowerment, he perceives contemporary western schooling as operating primarily as a mode of social control. In contrast, classroom content should be contexualized with reference to the experiences and concerns of the students themselves. As such, the teacher is seen in a facilitator role, as an "agent of transformation" rather than a demagogue (McLaren 1989:241). In order for schools to achieve this central role, challenges by the business community for outcomes-accountability must be resisted and overcome; teachers have to be

free of the restrictions of market forces.

Since the early 1970s, a feminist critique has focussed on three aspects of education: curriculum materials, teacher student interaction and educational outcomes. Texts were identified as under-representing and stereotyping women (Women..., 1972; Weitzman and Rizzo, 1974) resulting in serious negative motivational effects on the attitudes and aspirations of students (Scott, 1986). Studies focusing on the frequency and nature of classroom interaction indicate that males receive more quantity and quality of the teacher's verbal attention (Sadker and Sadker, 1985). Such disproportionate feedback is positively related to academic success and may explain why male students tend to outperform girls as they progress through school.

Outcomes are frequently legitimized by the use of standardized tests which Jane Gaskell and others (1989:18) regard as inaccurate measurement devices that reflect a male rational-objective epistemological orientation. As such, at the heart of any remedial programmes lies the deficit model -- that women need extra help to be like men. This further fuels women's sense of inferiority. Women's experiences "have to count more by being used as a standpoint of knowledge" in terms of respect, dignity and equal monetary remuneration (Gaskell, 1989:98). This inferiority can be overcome by pursuing a feminist-socialist agenda which forwards organizational and curricular changes: equal representation in educational hierarchies and a classroom instructional content that reflects a philosophy of inclusiveness for all races, classes, ages

and genders.

As Gaskell and others (1989:25) point out, to truly understand the educational system one must examine its relationship to wage-work. There exist structural constraints, historically created by the variegated powers of a segmented work force in conflict with the interests of capital. However, the amount and kinds of work available for both women and men since the industrial revolution have changed dramatically. There has long been an awareness that the fit between education and employment would become increasingly uncertain (Mills, 1951:269; Collins, 1979). Jeremy Rifkin (1995) suggests that, whereas previous technological displacements of labour were ameliorated by trickle-down effects, the electronics era signals the end of work as traditionally conceptualized and organized. Work-for-pay positions in both the public and private sectors have to be shared, and voluntaristic, community-promotive activity must be monetarily recognized in codified governmental policy. Thus, the positive social goals of formal education can be realized in the creation of both material and social wealth, thereby somewhat resolving the "socially productive knowledge" debate.

However, in Deschooling Society (1970) Ivan Illich advances an anarchistic argument that calls for an end to bureaucratized education, for a rupture of the school-employment connection and for a new approach to both formal and informal education. Modern belief in the magical powers of schooling is equivalent to medieval faith in religion. The promotion of alpha-numeric literacy is not

counterbalanced by the sense of inferiority that is instilled in students who do poorly. Schools are essentially sites of confinement and not places where most of an individual's learning takes place. Hence, the goals of education -- acquisition of useful skill, cognitive growth and intellectual autonomy -- are not achieved by the practices of formal education. Rather, schools teach the unexamined techno-materialist values and attitudes of a quiescent middle-class (ie. unthinking patriotism, good work habits and good manners) and undermine the ability of students to think and act intelligently in their community environment. Successful students, then, are not necessarily more talented but merely better at playing by the rules of the game. As an alternative, Illich (1970:78) suggests the creation of convivial centres of learning would facilitate the linking of people to resources such as reference services, skills-exchange programmes, peer support or educators-at-large.

Meyer (1977) dryly contends that it matters little whether schools teach useful skills and values or if there is an association with economic growth, literacy, tolerance, self-actualization and so forth. What matters is people associate education with the modernization process. This interconnection is continually being reinforced by the ritualistic nature of graduation, conferring of honours, prizes, and by the charters schools receive from the state to confer credentials.

However, Postman (1995) argues that the rituals have lost meaning for a vast proportion of American youth because there no

longer exists an embracive, sustaining mythology. The god of science has failed and what's needed is a new narrative that we can serve and which, in turn, serves us. With the demise of the "melting pot" perspective and the increasing heterogeneity of diverse interest groups, the sense of society and, ergo, the making-sense of schooling, have been lost. Postman proposes a variety of socially revitalizing myths to counteract this balkanization of the public mind. Suggested curriculum content, such as a concurrent study of anthropology and prehistory, would promote an understanding of the social constructiveness of past and present history and engender a teleological faith in the positive potential of future history.

Conclusion

This chapter suggested that the Simpsonian culture is perceived as being real and separate from that in which people live. Working from this assumption, it was also suggested that a comparative analysis of the processes and outcomes of education of this distinct culture could be made by utilizing the pedagogical theory of western, highly industrialized nations -- as presented in the accompanying literature review. Towards this end, various thematic approaches -- bureaucracy, professionalism, the hidden curriculum and the extent that schools act as agents of positive social change -- were undertaken to uncover the dynamic interworking of this separate culture.

CHAPTER TWO: THE SPRINGFIELD SITE: DATA SAMPLING, ANALYSIS AND OVERVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the methodology utilized during the investigation and to give an overview of the Springfield site in terms of people and resources. Methodological considerations include the sampling and analysis of data, as well as the limitations imposed by the use of an essentially qualitative approach. In order to give a sense of the place and the people captured in the cinematic data, a snapshot of the physical, cultural and economic resources of the site area and of the main actors captured will be presented.

Research Design: Data Sampling, Analysis and Limitations

Cinematic and documentary data were collected from two sources: television and the Internet. The primary source was the former. Rerun episodes of The Simpsons were videotaped over a twelve month period. The range of these data is over a six year period, from its inception in a half-hour programme format on December 17, 1989, to the spring of 1996. Although these data represent a convenience sample in so far as data collection was dependent upon the seemingly random selection process of the television network, the final video library accounts for 130 (86%)

of the 152 episodes. From these, a subset was compiled which contained substantive material relevant to this thesis.

Document data, in the form of dialogue manuscripts, were also obtained from files found on the Internet (see Briere et al., 1997). Selection of manuscripts was based upon a comparison of the topic of interest to episode summaries found in the same source.

Analytic strategy closely parallels the literary ethnographic approach suggested by Poel-Knottnerus and Knottnerus (1994). Scope of interest is clearly delineated. Note-taking during preliminary viewing of cinematic data resulted in a core library of episodes as well as a secondary (epigrammatic) collection wherein plot did not revolve around the issues of education but did evince illuminating attitudinal stances. A similar approach was used with the manuscript forms of non-recorded episodes, although the non-visual format does hinder interpretation and somewhat limits their usefulness (Heap, 1984:169).

Patterns of action between the actors and their environment were noted, as well as counter-instances of those patterns. Formal classifications/typologies evolved dynamically with a thorough grounding of theory in the reality of the work itself. The final stage was a re-viewing of the body of material to ascertain the fitness of theoretical constructs. Appendix A provides some indication of the pivotal nature of some of 60 episodes utilized in generating subsequent analyses. Of this collection, only one episode -- "Lisa vs. Malibu Stacey" -- was not visually captured and relies on a written manuscript. Presentation of pertinent

visual data which accompanies the audio component is included, encased in square bracket notation.

The attitudinal stance and methodological approach of the investigator embodies C.W. Mills' conception of classical sociology (Mills, 1959:128). There was an ongoing collaboration between analytical and deductive forces, where theory was neither simply induced from the substantive material, nor was the material approached with an *a priori* intent to legitimize theory. Methodology, concepts and substantive problems were all intertwined such that the material itself suggested the areas of comparison between Simpsonian and western cultures (ie. deviance and resistance, social reproduction and social control, meritocracy and science; and so forth).

Although this investigation adopted a cultural orientation due to the artifactual nature of the data it must be conceded that, in the post-modern era, the traditional meanings and oppositions between the two concepts of "society" and "culture" have become somewhat ill-defined (de Castro, 1996:522). For the purposes of this paper, the concept of "culture" will concur with that of Clifford Geertz (1973:5) in that

> [it] is essentially a semiotic one. Believing, with Max Weber, that man (sic) is an animal suspended in webs of significance he has himself spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretative one in search of meaning.

There are many other methodological approaches that could be used to garner worthwhile results. It may be perceived that the

rejection of a quantitative approach makes the study less robust. It should be made clear that it was not my intent to utilize a methodology of carefully counting, quantifying and codifying all remarks and actions bearing on the matters analyzed herein. Rather, my selection of highlights of specific material from The Simpsons is meant to give the reader what I regard as a representative flavour of the series.

As well, since the artifact is symbolic in nature, nuances may be missed and some generalizations may prove to be premature or downright erroneous. The literary nature of The Simpsons may prove to be the most troublesome aspect in approaching the data in so far as the programme is comedic in form and content. Such a genre leaves itself open to many interpretations.

As an epistemological qualifier, it should be noted that this investigator has his own particular cultural baggage -- he is white, male, middle-aged, cross-generationally working class and a first generation Canadian of Nordic ancestry.

Finally, the collected data appear more often than not as forming a case study of one particular family interacting with greater society. As such, only hesitant conclusions can be made concerning the interconnections between educational processes and social characteristics.

Site Overview: Physical, Economic and Cultural Indicators

Springfield is a large semi-rural town that has been in existence at the very least since the Great Depression (Hall, 1994) and is situated somewhere in the western United States. The town has a mixed industrial base together with a relatively large number of cultural resources. Although minor manufacturing and service industries do exist -- examples of which include schools, a penitentiary and brewery, cracker and chocolate factories -- the town's major employer is its nuclear energy plant. A partial list of the many cultural resources located in, or near, Springfield includes libraries, a conservatory, an arts centre, a museum of natural history, a zoo, two television stations (one of which is a public broadcasting affiliate), two radio stations, taverns and Barney's Bowl-O-Rama. (For a more extensive listing of resources in and around Springfield, see Appendix B.) Educational facilities include one composite public school, one composite high school, a primary-grade special education facility, a parochial girls' school, a barber's college, two community colleges and two universities.

However, in spite of these quality-of-community-life indicators both the town and the Simpson family suffer from collective inferiority complexes. A national survey voted Springfield the "least popular city in America ... dead last in science ... [and] dead last in culture" ("A Star Is Burns"). Whether cause or effect, Springfield did have the lowest voter

turnout in the 1992 presidential elections ("Two Bad Neighbours") and, according to Newsweek is "America's crud-bucket" ("Summer of 4'2"). On a microsociological level, the town's sense of diminished self-worth is reflected in the Simpson family's pre-meal Thanksgiving prayer, when Homer blurts out "God. Are we the most pathetic family, or what?" ("Bart vs. Thanksgiving")

Site Overview: Family and School Environments

The standard of living of the Simpsons indicates that the family is somewhat representative of the blue-collar component of the population. Their habitation consists of a bungalow in a tract-housing subdivision, their two cars are early models and they appear to live from pay-cheque to pay-cheque. The family is comprised of the middle-aged husband and wife team of Homer (age 37) and his wife Marge (age 32) ("Jacques to Be Wild") and their three children, Bart (age 10), Lisa (age eight) and Maggie (age two). The family breadwinner, Homer, has a high school education and works as a technician at the local, non-unionized, nuclear plant. Marge's usual occupation is home-maker although she does make occasional forays into the wage-work world to meet household economic emergencies. Extended family on Marge Simpson's side consists of the Bouvier clan: her mother and her twin sisters Selma and Patty. The patriarch of the Simpsons, Abe, resides in an old folks home.

The eldest children attend Springfield Elementary School.

Bart is in Mrs. Edna Krabappel's grade four class. He is rambunctious, disrespectful, popular with his peers and thoroughly bored by school. His grades mirror this orientation. He tends towards hyperactivity and is thought by some staff to be the idealized embodiment of a vasectomy advertisement. In comparison, his sister Lisa excels academically in virtually all areas -- arts, sciences and fine arts -- but suffers from a diminished social life both at school and extra-curricularly. At school her home form is in Miss Hoover's grade two class.

Springfield Elementary School is under the stewardship of Principal Skinner, an unmarried middle-aged man who lives at home with his aged mother. Skinner entered the teaching profession after a military stint in Viet Nam as a non-commissioned officer. The army, he reminisces, is "the only thing besides school that has ever given my life meaning" ("Sweet Seymour's ...",17)[1]. Skinner tries continually to create a rigidly calm, ordered educational environment and lives in dread of impromptu visits by school board Superintendent Chalmers.

The school serves a community clientele whose socioeconomic mix reflects the predominantly blue-collar and service industry composition of the labour force. The Simpson children come from a working class background. Bart's cohort includes his best friend, Milhouse Van Houten, whose father is a manager at the local cracker factory and Martin Prince, whose father is a stockbroker. While Milhouse is Bart's intellectual peer, Martin is the class intellectual. At the bottom of the school's academic hierarchy of

students are the local "trouble-makers": Jimbo, Kearney and Nelson. Although the familial background of the first two is unclear, the latter does come from a broken family located in a desperately poor neighbourhood.

Conclusion

This chapter gave an overview of the site and of the sub-populations sampled as well as outlining the methodology utilized in the investigative approach to the Simpsonian culture. A cursory examination of the site's physical, cultural and economic resources suggested that the city of Springfield is resource-rich, while being viewed by its citizens, as well as by the nation, as culturally impoverished. In addition, the socioeconomic characteristics of the principle actors found in the cinematic data were briefly outlined in the context of a population predominantly composed of blue-collar and service sectors. Thus, it is hoped that the writer has imparted a sense of place and people that will flesh out the subsequent discussion of the investigative findings.

Methodologically, it was indicated that a qualitative and exploratory approach was being utilized. Fortunately, the "arms-length" nature of this study allows the investigator to supplement his perceptive capacities by the use of other, relevant, sociological grimoires. With this in mind, the following discussion can be regarded as being comprised of two parts: first, a professional-organizational perspective wherein the well-being of

the students is, at times, not thought of as the primary object of concern of schools; and, second, a "view from the bottom" which attempts to understand the underlying irrationality of the organizational constraints from the perspective of a socially varied student body.

While the first section (chapters three and four) integrates the investigative data, the second section commences with theoretical discussions (chapters five and seven) relevant to the actual findings gleaned from the data (chapters six and eight). Throughout, the educational system of the Simpsonian culture is continually being compared to those of western highly industrialized nations primarily by the ongoing interweaving of two dualisms: organizational efficiency versus social variability and a functionalist perspective as compared to a critical viewpoint.

CHAPTER THREE: EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the Springfield education system, as embedded historically and situationally in contemporary American culture and as a variant of Weber's ideal type of bureaucracy. Attention will be paid to the organizational hierarchy with respect to institutional and ethical constraints that occur in the form of school boards, accountability and the principle of universality in the American educational system. Within this hierarchy students have no real power and there is a tendency towards loss of accountability internally to its own organizational members and externally to the client base of the community. As such, the Springfield educational system appears to characterize a type of dysfunctional bureaucracy.

From an organizational perspective, there exists a variety of interest groups in the educational system whose authority is determined by their positions in the hierarchical structure. Of these groups -- which include the public, the administration, the teachers and the students -- only the first three have a voice in the creation and implementation of organizational policy. This is primarily due to students being viewed as products -- a consequence of the impersonal nature of bureaucracies in general and of the education system in particular. For the other three players, there exists a general agreement that the goals of education are twofold:

socialization and the inculcation of alpha-numeric literacy. "Socialization" means the internalization of the dominant norms and values of society or, as Durkheim phrased it, a process of acquiring a "moral discipline ... [a] wholesome self-control" (Thompson, 1985:177). "Alpha-numeric literacy" indicates the ability to be conversant to an acceptable degree in the arts and sciences as reflected by having an appropriate grasp of subject content, conceptually and substantively. In effect, all other educational directives -- such as mastery of a particular subject matter, the elusive goal of "creative thinking" or general emotional-cognitive development -- can be subsumed under these two general goals.

However, while there is a general agreement to the desired ends of education, specifics as to how the balance between the two goals is to be reflected in the form and the content of the educational process have changed over time and have been contested from all three perspectives, each of which has a differing amount of rational-legal authority within the school system. Goals of schools tend to be stated in nebulous terms, due to the variability of procedures, staff and student abilities and outcomes (Lortie, 1969:5; Bidwell, 1965). Although these goals are continuously constructed as part of an ongoing debate in public and educational arenas (due to changing nature of society and work), the non-tangible nature of desired ends leads to problems with organizational accountability.

While the education system has certain unique organizational

characteristics it also shares an affinity to Max Weber's ideal construct of bureaucracy. Weber characterized bureaucracy as being a formal body of "more or less stable, more or less exhaustive" (Gerth and Mills, 1946:198) rules with specified jurisdictional areas; a stable hierarchical chain of command; positions entailing regular duties, held because of technical competence and acquired by seniority; managerial reliance on written documentation; separation of public/corporate and private monies; and impersonal rule-bound internal relations between staff and externally between staff and the public (Ibid.:196-98). While the combination of these characteristics make bureaucracies the most rationally efficient means for the pursuit of organizational goals, the interplay between governmental and public involvement in the American education system has resulted in distinctive attributes.

The American Educational System

In the United States the public and the state wield differing degrees of fiscal and influential power over the educational process. This occurs because elementary and secondary schools are open to community involvement in the form of parent and other interest groups as well as being tied to various levels of government through federal, state and community funding structures. However, the federal share of funding has declined steadily since the 1920s such that, by the 1980s, it comprised less than 10% of the total (Kurian, 1988:1352). Since 1979, the state's share has

been greater than that of local communities and, as a result, is currently the primary source of public school funding. Although the basic level of school resources is guaranteed by government programmes (and thus, somewhat levelling the playing field for poorer neighbourhoods), the source of qualitative differences is the school's catchment area from which funds can be obtained formally, via property tax levees, or informally by such devices as Parent-Teacher Association (P.T.A.) initiated fund-drives.

Within the hierarchical structure of the education system, the school board plays a pivotal role in exerting external control on the bureaucracy. The bureaucracy, in turn, views school boards as powerful antagonists because of their legal and fiscal authority as well as their support within the community (Bidwell 1965:1017). In the United States nearly every school district is governed by a local school board which is answerable to the state commissioner/superintendent, the executive representative of the state board of education. Although state governments have consistently delegated many powers to local school boards in the past (Campbell et al., 1965:160), and there exist differences from state-to-state, the overall current trend is towards greater centralization (Murphy and Beck, 1995:4)[2]. Since there are no special qualifications to hold a position, membership constitutes a *pro bono* service. The size of board varies from five to fifteen members with a majority of local board members usually being elected while a minority are appointees.

In the American educational system policy creation formally

lies with the community through their representation on the board, with implementary powers being apportioned and delegated down through the internal bureaucracy. The board functions as a policy-making body, covering a broad range of activities including development of school budget, determination of the local portion of school taxes, hiring of teachers, purchasing of equipment, busing and so forth. Implementation of board policy and the overseeing of the district schools and their principals falls to the board's chosen CEO, which is usually the contractual position of superintendent. Although the superintendent legally acts only in an advisory capacity he is *de facto* delegated the authority to fulfil many of the Board's tasks (Lortie, 1969:4). At the bottom of the authority structure is the principal who is responsible for supervision of teachers, accurate record-keeping and maintenance of proper school discipline. Within the system's chain of authority, principals have very little power to affect policy through the formal network. Teachers, from an organizational perspective, are merely viewed as employees.

Although administration shares a common interest with teachers in limiting interference from an essentially unqualified public, its primary focus on creating a smoothly functioning, efficient operation tends to move it towards an authoritarian mode of interpersonal interaction. As such, administration views staff as more interested in their own professional/collegial affairs, and students as primarily interested in extra-academic life. Both have to be brought into line with organizational demands, thus pushing

schools towards a precariously balanced, punishment-centred bureaucracy that can be characterized as:

> ... a despotism in a state of perilous equilibrium. It is a despotism threatened within and exposed to regulation and interference from without. It is a despotism capable of being overturned in a moment, exposed to the instant loss of its stability and its prestige. (Waller, 1961:10)

Within the context of this highly-charged milieux, the system's ends-means rationality parallels that of a factory in so far as its purpose is to manipulate regularly-occurring batches of raw or unfinished material in order to produce a product acceptable to the client base of parents and public.

Evidence seems to indicate that the Springfield educational system adheres in a general sense to the ideal type of bureaucracy. From a Weberian perspective, rationality tends to weld the various organizational components into a unified whole which is coherent internally or externally such that, "for the needs of mass administration today, it is completely indispensable. The choice is only between bureaucracy and dilettantism in the field of administration" (Weber, 1964:337). This is demonstrated when Springfield Elementary hires Flanders, a small-businessman, to take on the role of school principal and who consequently changes the pedagogical focus of the school from being control-oriented to child-oriented. Operating on the basic philosophical tenet of putting "the 'pal' back into 'principal'" ("Sweet Seymour's ..."), Flanders, in the role of lower-management, subverts the hierarchical chain in two ways: he creates and implements policy on his own initiative and he redefines the authority inherent within

the positions of teacher and student.

Ensuing events prove disastrous for the realization of organizational goals. By eliminating detention and putting the whole school on the honour system the classrooms are in an uproar and "the teachers are afraid to leave the faculty lounge" (Ibid.). More primitive rules now govern the classroom environment and the strong prey upon the weak: Martin, an academically outstanding student, is suspended in a cage from the ceiling and forced to do menial tasks for his tormentors. One student states: "Not only am I not learning, I'm forgetting stuff I used to know" (Ibid.).

In comparison, a more controlled environment in the past had facilitated the learning process. During the extensive reign of chaos a young student approaches the former school administrator and tells him, "I learned to read because of you, Principal Skinner" (Ibid.). Thus, the data indicate that, while short-term relaxation of the normally authoritarian mode of school-student interaction resulted in calamitous consequences, the previous system of rigid control over the students did appear to be instrumental in generating at least some positive educational outcomes.

There are historical underpinnings in the United States for this disbelief in the effectiveness of non-traditional schooling practices. While the quality of student outcomes has been a continual concern in the arena of public education, the early 1980s saw a particularly vocal demand for qualitative improvements in educational results. Various measures of effort and achievement --

Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores[3], hours spent on homework assignments, grade point averages of valedictorians, absenteeism rates -- indicated a downward trend that conservative elements in society attributed to two decades of educational leadership under progressive or liberal educators (Hurn, 1993:43). A movement towards improving student outcomes was initiated with the 1983 National Commission on Excellence in Education (NCEE) publication of A Nation at Risk, an influential study which indicated that the United States had "squandered the gains in student achievement made in the wake of the Sputnik challenge ... [and] in effect, been committing an act of unthinking unilateral educational disarmament" (NCEE 1983:5).

Schools were perceived as neither fulfilling their goal of instilling alpha-numeric literacy nor acting as effective agents in the socialization process. The erosion of discipline and the devaluing of effort -- byproducts of the liberal ideal of pluralistic inclusiveness -- were viewed as central causes of education's current degenerative state (Hurn, 1993:8). Mediocrity in test scores and watered-down curricula could only be countervailed by a return to a testable, back-to-basics core curriculum that focused on math, science and English skills.

Administrative Accountability

Inherent within the holding of office is the idea of accountability, of being responsible for the quality and quantity

of output as demonstrated by objective data. It is via measurement procedures that administration's fulfilling of its mandate is "scientifically" validated to the public. This is done by an on-going process of examining curriculum expertise as well as by other intermittent forms of standardized testing (such as intelligence and vocational testing).

The rationale of curriculum testing is that it acts as both a quality control device and a feedback mechanism to the administrative system, which in turn adjusts the rate of information-flow in the classrooms or corrects blockages by interaction with individual students. Measurement devices such as grading, standardized testing and intelligence testing are used to sort children within the classroom as well as to educationally track or stream students into appropriate ability-level programmes. Thus students are categorized both horizontally and vertically into administratively convenient boxes, reducing the range of student variance in respective classrooms and allowing for a more standardized instructional approach. Despite the climate of efficiency produced by this rationalization of the learning process low student achievement still reflects negatively on management and necessitates systemic modifications.

However, in contrast to such administrative efforts to improve student outcomes, activity that is directed towards the glossing over of product-quality problems is symptomatic of organizational dysfunction. Standards are reconfigured downward to present a rosier picture, thus protecting the overall structural integrity of

the organization from external criticism and the threat of change. Original goals are manipulated to preserve the continuance of the bureaucratic organization or, as Waller (1961:33) more kindly phrased it, "institutionalism causes the school to forget its purpose". Centralization of authority away from local control exacerbates this process of detachment of educational organizations from client-based, community accountability.

The data suggest that this type of change has occurred in the Simpsonian culture. While the quality of school resources appears to be dependent upon the tax revenues of a school's catchment area, control of the curriculum has devolved away from local communities (with the dissolution of local school boards) to a central state organization. For example, when Principal Skinner is tipped off to a surprise assessment tour by the superintendent, he locks up the troublemakers in the basement. The following conversation ensues:

> Skinner: So what's the word down at One School Board Plaza?
> Chalmers: We're dropping the geography requirement. The children weren't testing very well. It's proving to be an embarrassment.
> Skinner: Very well. Back to the Three R's.
> Chalmers: Two R's, come October. ("Whacking Day")

Just as service to the public has diminished as an overall organizational goal, in practice if not in ideology, administrational accountability has similarly declined to the point of organizational dysfunctionalism. This is evinced by management's over-preoccupation with rules and their disconnectedness from the surrounding everyday realities. There is an unawareness of the interconnectedness of community with school, an administrative narrow-mindedness that lays down a perceptive

matrix whose parameters are dictated by the demands of an organizational ethos of efficiency. There exists a blindness to the elemental working of communal culture and its effects on cognition with the school environment. For example, as the bell rings to end recess on the children's common, Bart is threatened by the school bully. Bart's protestations are cut short by Principal Skinner:

> Oh, oh! There's your bell. C'mon, all of you -- no dawdling now... Oh, no, no, no, he'll get you after school, son. Now hurry up, it's time for class ... Scoot, young Simpson. There's learning to be done! ("Bart the General").

Such behaviour is a manifestation of organizational dysfunction which, as Merton (1952:365-67) points out, can occur when rule-obeyance takes on a ritualistic aspect that interferes with the realization of organizational goals.

The Principle of Impartial Universality

While impartiality is essential, and even desirable in that it promotes universality, its role in the pursuit of efficiency tends towards elements of social control. The primary technical advantage of bureaucracy lies in its machine-like maximization of efficiency -- aspects of which include precision, speed, continuity, and costs-reduction (Gerth and Mills, 1946:214). This, in turn, is positively correlated to its degree of impersonality, to its success in eradicating irrational human factors such as love or hate from its workings (Ibid.:216). As such, the major outcome

of bureaucracy is its predictability. Since its system of rules is accepted by people as being impartial and universalistic -- as distinct from systems that are guided by individual privilege -- it becomes a micro-system of social control that views standardization, routinization and the erasure of variants as necessary to expedite maximum efficiency.

To do so, the educational organization has to be perceived as impartial both internally by staff and externally by the client group of public and parents. As Weber's seniority-based method of career advancement demonstrates, there has to be a consistent, universally-accessible and impartial method of progressing up the hierarchical ladder in order to motivate employees to align their activities with organizational goals[4]. As such, impartiality should be substantively evident by a gendered administrative composition that proportionately mirrors that of the teaching staff. Historically, this has not been the case in the United States.

Although education was originally a man's job, a number of social changes and educational reforms since the Nineteenth Century resulted in greater numbers of women entering the profession (Stromberg, 1988:214)[5]. Men were able to find better paying jobs and the occupation of teaching was ideologically congruent to society's view of woman as care-giver and inculcator of morals to the young. The contemporary practice of grade-grouping was encouraged in the name of efficiency and succeeded in dividing the work into good- and poor-paying sectors, allegedly on the basis of

skill requirements (Prentice, 1977). Women were hired to teach the young for wages that were one-third to one-half that of the male contingent, who taught older youth and usually occupied administrative positions.

The numerical superiority of women as elementary school principals has been declining since after the First World War. In 1928 more women than men held this position; in the 1940s this figure declined to 41% and continued downward to 22% by the 1960s (Lovelady-Dawson, 1981:38). This administrative trend continued into the early 1980s. Of public elementary and secondary teachers, two-thirds were women (NCES, 1985, cited in Stromberg, 1988:215), with 84% of elementary school teachers as compared to only 17% of elementary principals being female (Shakeshaft, 1994). In comparison, 50% of secondary school teachers and only 3.5% of principals are women. Although attempts to address this inequality were made in 1980s (NCEE, 1983:31; CFEE, 1986:55) by suggesting an expansion of educational bureaucracy in the form of a separate hierarchy for teachers, it is questionable whether the motivating factor was one of egalitarianism, or even the advancement of teaching as a profession but rather that of constructing a more efficient administrative control system to generate more consistent results.

While current statistics tentatively suggest positive change with respect to more equitable gender representation in educational administration (see Table 1), a traditional form of gender inequity appears to exist in the hierarchical composition of Springfield

Elementary where males occupy the upper strata of the organizational ladder irrespective of educational credentials. The data suggest that this reproduction of status quo social arrangements is facilitated by an "old boys" network and not to differences in skill-level. The principle of impartial universality does not appear to be working very effectively in Springfield with respect to equal access to career promotion opportunities. As Mrs. Krabappel rather acerbically puts it:

> ... in spite of your Masters from Bryn Mawr, you might end up a glorified baby sitter to a bunch of dead-eyed fourth graders while your husband runs naked on a beach with your marriage counsellor! ("Separate Vocations")

The educational system also has to be perceived as objective by its client set, the parents of the students. This is done by wrapping its assessment procedures in the numeric patina of scientific testing procedures: grades are assigned based on meritocratic principles, where ability and effort count for more than the ascriptive qualities of the student. Familial background counts for naught; rather, native intelligence and hard work will translate into high grades. Since the system portrays itself as rational, scientific and neutral, there exists the logical corollary of attributing blame to the external environment -- the community culture and the family -- for low student scores.

Expansion of Organizational Control

To further its goals, the education system attempts to internally consolidate and externally expand the reach of its

authority. Internally, the day-to-day workings of schools together with the tendency of edu-bureaucracies to objectify their students do, in some ways, mirror total institutions like prisons and mental asylums (Goffman, 1957)[6]. Although day-school students are allowed to escape regularly back to their communities, schools tend to replicate the physical, temporal and cognitive boundaries of an internee's life. Physically, there exists row-seating in buildings which are architecturally patterned after the factory model (Shuttleworth, 1988). Cognition is controlled by the content of the curriculum (for example, an ethno-centric, 'hero'/individualist model of history). Temporal elements of students' lives are manipulated daily in ritualistic patterns of school-life, such as the ringing of bells to connote a change of pattern and to regulate movement to and from classrooms. That this type of regulation is experienced in the Springfield education system is indicated by one student's morose musings while sitting in the school cafeteria: "Every day at noon a bell rings and they herd us in here like cattle for feeding-time. And we sit around like cattle, chewing our cuds" ("Moaning Lisa").

External to the school proper, the system also attempts to appropriate greater amounts of time from the lives of today's youth in order to facilitate greater uniformity of product outcomes. Towards this end, it propagates the idea that the negative effects of socioeconomic background can be more readily overcome by initiating training in early childhood education programmes. In promoting its own cause, the institution of education is, back-

handedly, vilifying the lower class family as an inadequate modern social form for the purpose of instilling proper (middle-class) values in the young. School has appropriated child-rearing responsibilities away from the realm of the family in direct proportion to a society's modernization (as indicated by such factors as the types and uses of technology, the division of labour, the growth of professionalism and so forth). Education that was once informally conducted in the home, as apprenticeships or, up to the 1920s as industrial skills-training (Karrier, 1976:26)) is now the responsibility of schools.

Time is also appropriated from youth by taking control of unorganized extra-curricular activities and bringing them under the aegis of the educational organization. Grading practices and the "extra-curriculum" are two control mechanisms that Waller (1961:11, 355) identified as institutional techniques to disrupt student subculture. Grading procedures function to make students more compliant to teacher demands and expectations by eliciting fears of failure, of ridicule, of being held back from one's advancing cohort or of incurring familial displeasure. The hidden curriculum operates by appropriating students' leisure time and activities. These activities need not necessarily be supervised by school staff, but must somehow reflect the general spirit of educational goals in form or content by acting as an "early form of the sifting and sorting agencies of adult society" (Ibid.:117).

In Springfield an example of this expanding umbrella of school authority (and subversion of youth culture)is the Young Campers,

a quasi-militaristic school-based organization that resembles the Scouts with respect to its rules, body of literature and ability-based grading system of merit badges signifying areas of knowledge expertise. However, unlike school, this is a voluntaristic organization which attempts to attract and recruit youth by virtue of a flexible formal curriculum that contains courses of interest to the youth clientele, such as archery, debt collecting, embalming, tv trivia and patch forgery. Similar to the school, subject content is not as important an organizational goal as that of socialization. With the Young Campers, the informal agenda of subordination to authority is more overt, symbolized by the wearing of uniforms. Although the Campers attempts to create an impression of altruistic intent by increasing the opportunity for life experiences (ie. field trips), it also appears more concerned with prestige, self-perpetuation and a pre-determined, ordered involvement of its participants than with its ostensible humanistic mandate. For example, the Campers' father-son outing is bounded by their normative definition of appropriate family:

> Head-Scout: Warren, I know your dad is in prison, but don't you fret! A special celebrity dad has been arranged for you.
> Warren: But -- my older brother would like --
> Head-Scout: Sorry, but I'm afraid [this arrangement] has already been confirmed. ("Boy Scoutz N the Hood")

Although there exists a methodological and ideological fit between this extra-curricular organization and that of the school, since the latter is non-voluntaristic and deals with a captive audience, responses tend to be more extreme to instances of non-normative behaviour. Such is the case in Springfield when Bart

wears a florid pink T-shirt to class bearing the inflammatory slogan "Down with Homework" ("Team Homer")[7]. This proves to be the catalyst for a violent riot in which children throw their books out the window, attempt to suffocate the teacher with chaulk dust and set fire to her desk.

Premised on the idea that modification of physical environment, particularly the repression of an individual's ability to express his personality, promotes the institutional goals of efficiency, rationality and productivity, management falls upon the idea of mandatory school uniforms "to ensure that this frenzied dance of destruction is never repeated" ("Team Homer"). To further promote social stability and compliance to authority this idea is marketed to the student body in the form of a fashion show, with the underlying assumptions that this new apparel will be status-elevating and that there is some element of democratic choice involved:

> Say hello to our little genius, Martin, who looks even smarter in this vest and short-pant combination from Mr. Boy of Main Street.
> Or, how about little Lisa Simpson? She'll have no reason to play the blues in this snappy ensemble topped off with a saucy French beret that seems to scream "Silence!" ("Team Homer")

Administration as Buffer to Teachers

While the edu-bureaucracy mirrors for the greater part the characteristics of a Weberian 'ideal' type, there exists an important point of divergence. As Bidwell (1965:1012) phrased it, there exists a "structural looseness" ultimately deriving from the

existence of two client-sets: the public and the students. From a managerial perspective, the public is the client (in that it holds the purse-strings) and the student is the 'product'. As such, schools are environments to be controlled for maximization of standardized outcomes. To this end, Bidwell suggests that school systems have two major functional problems: the articulation of individual teachers' classroom activities to ensure reasonably uniform outcomes and the maintenance of administrative and teacher autonomy from community interference in deciding the means and ends of the educational process.

Although administration tends to view the teacher as employee, teachers place themselves higher on the educational hierarchy, as managers in their own right. Each classroom is driven by its own organizational itinerary and timetable (curriculum and syllabus) where the student enjoys the dual role of organizational product and client-worker. To facilitate the latter, teachers generally value the role of administration as one of defensive bulwark against a meddling public, maintainer of resource supplies and as a last resort in classroom control problems. Although from both teacher and administration viewpoints students are seen as imperfect vessels in need of molding and filling, there exists a definitive area of dissention concerning the weighting of the two general goals of education in the forming of the final outcome. However, despite this increased weight placed on the importance of education's socialization function, students are at times utilized as pawns in the advancement of such teacher professionalization

issues as increased autonomy, wages and curriculum control.

Conclusion

From an organization perspective we can see that the edu-bureaucracy in Simpsonian culture darkly mirrors that of contemporary America in that the actions of the organization and the reactions of clients are at the fringe end of normality. The Simpsonian education system appears to operate as an imperfect cybernetic system that requires methods of heavy-handed control to achieve homeostasis. However, on a positive note, this overall picture of an organization living on the edge of anarchy dispels the Weberian fear of an erasure of qualitative differences -- and the consequent disappearance of life's zest with the onset of a "polar night of icy darkness and hardness" (Gerth and Mills, 1958:128) wrought by an inexorable process of bureaucratic rationalization.

Administrative behaviours observed at Springfield Elementary are similar to characteristics spawned by dysfunctional bureaucracies (Merton, 1952:365-67). Rule-obeyance by management has taken on a ritualistic aspect that interferes with realizing organizational goals, a behaviour that may be aggravated by successful career paths being dependent on normative behaviour and traditionalist prerequisites. Similarly, specialization of function has fostered a narrow outlook which delimits problem-solving capabilities. Finally, informal social organization -- an

esprit de corps of male administrators -- has resulted in the prioritization of departmental welfare over the organizational goals. In sum, client satisfaction plays little part in the operationalization of an efficiency principle that dictates the slotting of individual, unique problems into prescribed categories.

As well, there appear to be several trends that, as a body, suggest the movement of the Simpsonian educational system towards a centralization of authority -- an aggrandizement of power and control at the expense of teachers, students and the community. This decline in community control of the elementary school system is occurring concurrent with a decrease in state funding and necessitating increased amounts of money from local areas. The system seeks to survive accountability by further centralizing bureaucratic control (curriculum, etc.) to the state level while pushing educational costs down to the local level, thus exporting blame to the community. In addition, the progressive wave of pedagogical thought is considered as detrimental to the efficient functioning of the educational system and responsible for the continuing degradation of student test scores. Finally, the management's view of teachers as employees and not as "partners" in education is evident in, and reproduced by, a traditional, inequitable gender composition in the organizational hierarchy.

CHAPTER FOUR: TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM

Introduction

This chapter discusses professions by comparing teachers generally and Springfield teachers specifically with the theoretical constructs of Weber and later contributors within the context of the American education system. Evidence suggests that Springfield teachers adhere marginally to the ethical ideal of altruism and, although they have skills not found in the general adult population, their claim to specialized knowledge is not unequivocally accepted by the client base of students. These factors, together with a professional self-interest in the expansion of hegemonic control over wider areas of social activity, contribute to an alliance between teachers and administration. Although this partnership perpetuates an authoritarian control model, objectifies students and acts as a force of de-professionalization, the observed teacher value orientation is not out of line with that of the local community.

An organization's primary goal is to synchronize the goals and align the activities of its staff to its own model. Ideally, there is a perfect fit between organizational and professional objectives and means of attainment. The Weberian model envisages the holding of office as a vocation -- a skill or theoretical knowledge that must be acquired via formal educational training process that is based on examinations. It is a life's work, to

which the bureaucrat, with his life and his work thoroughly routinized, is welded by personal desire despite its content being comprised of "impersonal and functional purposes" (Gerth and Mills, 1946: 199).

In comparison, the occupation of teaching has guild-like characteristics that may not reflect the goals or values of employer organizations. Similar to guild members, teachers have undergone a specialized training process to absorb a body of theoretical knowledge, have a common body of literature, and have their own voluntaristic, self-regulating and self-disciplined associations. Their authority is derived from specialization and limited by competence in "a particular technically defined sphere" (Parsons, 1949:189). However, this umbrella of authority, together with professional goals and ethics, may conflict with those of employer organizations. Professional goals arise from their own association's codes and tend to take on a patina of moral legitimacy during a process of professional training that engenders "a set of professional attitudes and controls, a professional conscience and solidarity [whereby] the professional claims and aims to become a moral unit" (Hughes, 1928:762). As such, this code of conduct circumscribes professional activities as being socially altruistic and may place it in a contestational relationship with the goals of management.

Similarly, differing sources of accountability result in an underlying disagreement between administration and teachers in the American education system. Although both groups are ultimately

responsible to the public, administrative accountability is tied more closely to the local community via the school board. In comparison, the professional ethos of teaching connects accountability to a wider society while simultaneously viewing students as its immediate client set.

A variety of social factors conspire to continuously reinforce teachers' belief in the elite status of their occupation: the protective role of administration, the reflective attitudes of the surrounding community, their working environment, and the nature of their clientele. As Bidwell (1970) points out, although teachers are effectively responsible to the parent-teacher set, the administrative organization acts as a buffer to parental involvement. A value orientation wider in scope than that of the community may result in a localized perception of teachers as cosmopolitan outsiders or as agents of modernization (Waller, 1961:49). The occupational setting tends to reinforce the belief that clients are not qualified to evaluate the services they need and it is up to the professional, on the basis of his expertise and his organization's code of ethics to distinguish between a client's wishes and a client's needs. Since students, by virtue of their age, lack of experience and receptive captivity, could be considered as an ideal "lay public" this, by virtue of elimination, leaves teachers accountable only to their own professional organization. Despite claims of altruistic intent, the cabalistic nature of professional associations leaves them open to the criticism that they tend to resolve disputes in their own favour

(Johnson, 1972).

Despite environmental variables tending to reinforce teachers' sense of their professional standing, the status of teaching as a professional occupation has long been in dispute (Lortie, 1969). Although educators prefer to think of themselves as having professional-client relationships with their students, analogous to those of doctors and patients, or lawyers and their clients (Goodlad, 1983), this comparison falls short in several areas. First, teachers are not involved in a voluntaristic association. Rather, students are compelled by law to be under the control of teachers. Second, the practice of teaching is more an art form that a science (Lortie, 1975:79-80): it has neither a set of agreed-upon or valid principles, nor does it utilize one set of techniques that is always more effective than another. Third, of the two roles the teacher has to fulfil -- that of educator and disciplinarian (Waller, 1961:8) -- the former lends itself to ties of affection and therefore to a particularist approach antithetical to the neutral stance of other professions.

Finally, Bruce Kimball (1988:7-8) feels that teaching fails to qualify due to an underdeveloped authority structure where "the final authority and responsibility for teaching are invested instead in school boards, whose local control is enshrined in American ideology and history." He points out that the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District 1969, found it questionable whether the views of teachers -- because of their professional training --should be

given as much weight as those of the common citizen, let alone more, on issues such as curriculum content and development.

Expansion of Education Since the 1960s

Professional organizations, somewhat analogous to biological organisms, have to adjust to the exigencies of social change or face extinction. Historical forces -- such as shifting demographics or a growing libertarian agenda of economic conservatism -- may result in heightened competition for scarce resources. In this Darwinistic economic climate of survival, professional organizations may attempt to appropriate increasingly larger areas of human activity. Evidence of this general pattern of necessary expansion can be found in the actions and behaviour of American educators since the 1960s.

Conspicuous concern over teacher-student ratios came to the fore when there was a threat to teacher employment primarily due to a combination of two factors: a demographic sag of students and an abundance of teachers[8]. Although an oversupply of teachers had occurred since the 1920s, encouraged by state government policies that were more generous in investing tax dollars in teacher training than in wage increases (Lortie, 1975:18), after 1960 employment possibilities drastically declined. A drop in student enrollment between 1973-1982 contributed to a 25% decrease in teacher demand (Kurian, 1988:1380). These variables put acute pressure on the profession and encouraged it to appropriate the

semi-professional areas of day-care and nursery school as part of their educational purview.

An opportunity for expansion occurred in the 1960s with the commencement of Head Start, a federally-funded programme which took youngsters from disadvantaged neighbourhoods and gave them a wide range of pre-school learning experiences. A product of President Johnson's War on Poverty, this programme was intended to level the playing field for the children of the nation's poor. However, it also succeeded in convincing the parents of other classes of the advantages of early childhood education for their children (Gelb and Bishop, 1992:508), thus helping to stabilize declining teacher employment. As well, with the programme's intent to "interrupt the cycle of poverty, the nearly inevitable sequence of poor parenting" (Cooke, 1979:xxiii)[9], there existed a moral subtext that legitimized incursions into a social arena whose inhabitants, limited by a dearth of social, cultural and economic resources, were hard pressed to defend.

Concurrent with the inception of this programme, the teaching profession also had to confront an image problem with the public. In 1966 the assumed correlation between quality of teaching and student outcomes was called into question by the publication of James Coleman's report, Equality of Educational Opportunity, a large-scale landmark study of schools which examined structural barriers to student opportunities. Evidence indicated that variations in resources -- such as class size, per-pupil expenditure and teacher experience -- did not account for

variations in student outcomes. The weak explanatory powers of teachers to account for results boded ill for the future of the profession, were it not for the study also suggesting that both familial and peer group factors exerted strong influences, a conclusion confirmed by later studies (Jencks, 1972; Hurn, 1993:135). Ironically then, Coleman's study lent scientific legitimacy to the expansion of education into the home sphere to compensate for the ineffectuality of teachers and school resources in fulfilling the goals of education with the children of the lower socioeconomic classes. At the same time, it also evoked partisan cries for the curative powers of improved classroom resources and of a growth in the professionalization of teaching (via increases in training, wages and autonomy)[10].

The demands for greater inclusiveness for the socially and economically marginalized of American society (blacks, women, ethnics) in the wealth of the country was addressed by loosening the rigid curriculum pathway to graduation. By the mid-1970s, equality of educational opportunity had become equated to proportional equality of outcomes for all groups such that many schools changed their curricula, and abandoned objective testing and tracking procedures (Hurn, 1993:105-06). A reversion to a more conservative approach to education occurred in the 1980s with various measures being advocated in the pursuit of academic excellence: a return to the basics, a common core curriculum, and an increase in the frequency of testing to improve systemic feedback. Within the context of this new edu-ideology, the focus

on the individual, as promoted by the pedagogical progressivism of Thomas Dewey, lost favour with educational system (as well as with some of the public).

Pedagogical Traditionalism in Springfield

The attitudinal stance of administration at Springfield Elementary appears to be a reaction against the previous liberal trend. It has a dim assessment of the quality of student graduates produced by this pedagogical orientation, viewing the decline in the measures of student outcomes as the logical entopic ends of the current direction of public education. Part of the blame derives from the philosophical tenets of the progressive school of pedagogical thought that were loosely based (Nikiforuk, 1993:22-25) on the writings of Thomas Dewey, an American pragmatist and educator who wrote at the turn of this century. This school of thought rose to the fore in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and resulted in a greater focus on individual instruction, a "learning by doing" technique and flexible curricula. Concurrent legal changes also occurred that codified greater student rights, thus de-emphasizing student responsibilities and putting the schools into a position of having to negotiate student cooperation, rather than authoritatively demanding it (Hurn, 1993:253). As Springfield's Superintendent Chambers states,

> It's just a damn popularity contest with you kids ... Besides, the way America's public schools are sliding, they'll all be this way in a few months. I say, lay back and enjoy it. It's a hell of a toboggan ride. ("Sweet Seymour's ...")

Just such an archetypical progressive style of instructor appears as a substitute teacher for Lisa Simpson's grade two class ("Lisa's Substitute"). Mr. Bergstrom has an attention-grabbing emotive method of teaching that motivates children to be involved in teacher-directed activity by incorporating the interests and concerns of the student group into the lesson content. For example, he dresses as a cowboy to initiate a lively history lesson on the American West and encourages creative thinking by asking the children what aspects of his apparel are historically inaccurate. His continuous movement about the room serves to destabilize the normal hierarchy of knowledge-access that is reinforced by the seating pattern, thus allowing students who previously felt spatially excluded by virtue of the physical distance from the teacher to actively participate. In effect, his teaching technique disrupts the subcultural milieux, particularly the "dead zone" at the back of the classroom.

Bergstrom's teaching technique is similar to the pedagogical methods of the Free School[11] movement of the 1960s in that he cultivates a familiar/human, rather than an authoritarian relationship with the students. He sings and plays guitar, cries at the ending of a classic children's book, Charlotte's Web, and suggests ways that the kids can make fun of his name: "Two suggestions are Mr. Nerd-strom and Mr. Booger-strom" ("Lisa's Substitute"). Although he does impart factual knowledge through both classroom and field-trip activities (he conducts an oratorical tour of the local museum of natural history), the teaching staff

dubs him an organizational pariah because of his disregard for preestablished lesson plans.

Such criticism is indicative of teachers who accept the dominant (authoritarian) organizational model. Bergstrom's personalized teaching style is not impartial but rather it is particularistic. This type of nurturing student-teacher relationship existing in conjunction with a non-organizationally approved curriculum content could be described as "forces of de-bureaucratization" (Bidwell, 1965:1012), where teacher autonomy interferes with prescribed organizational goals. Nevertheless, he did splendidly fulfil the socialization mandate of his profession by impressing upon his young audience the possibilities of education as an interesting and joyful group experience. For some, he effectively inculcated positive values, that "life is worth living" ("Lisa's Substitute"). Although those of his ilk are viewed by Springfield's traditionalist educators as being primarily entertainers and not teachers, Mr. Bergstrom's success with students would be viewed by critical pedagogists as an example of the current system's failure -- in terms of both the authoritarian form and the non-negotiated, non-relevant content of the curriculum -- to cultivate the learning and motivational capacities of students (Apple, 1982; McLaren, 1989; Giroux, 1983).

As a professional, this substitute teacher sees himself as an agent of wider society, as a force of modernization and cosmopolitanism. His perceived role is akin to that of the mythologized professional gunfighter-lawman: with his special

skills, he enters an area rife with pedagogical chaos and, because he does not possess the particularist values of the local community but rather a more universalistic cognitive orientation, he is able to spread the seeds of modernization before he is forced, by the very nature of his professional ethos, to go elsewhere where his talents are needed. As Mr. Bergstrom states, "That's the problem with being middle-class. Anybody who really cares will abandon you for those who need it more" ("Lisa's Substitute"). Waller (1961:40) would subsume such behaviour under a general role definition where "teachers are paid agents of cultural diffusion ... hired to carry light into dark places". In a wider sense the moral legitimacy of the progressive pedagogist is inherent within the social form of teacher-as-"Stranger" (Simmel, 1971).

Teacher Professionalism: Knowledge and Accountability

Altruism, of a qualified sort, does appear to play a minor role in the attitudes and actions of the teachers at Springfield Elementary. Generally, viewing professionals as selfless altruists is a functionalist perspective which Eric Hoyle (1980:46) challenges on a number of levels. The welfare of society is not enhanced by the professionalization of an occupation, nor are any profession's values less self-interested than other occupations. Moreover, a profession's body of knowledge and skills have been aggrandized by its proponents and its insistence on self-regulating autonomy is merely a way of avoiding accountability to both its

client group and society. As C. Wright Mills (1951:138) succinctly phrased it, professionals "are organized, in a guild-like system, so as to best promote long term self-interest".

The teachers of Springfield fall aggressively into this category, having a decidedly short-term, immediate gratification concept of self-interest that not only belies their professional code of accountability to the student clients but, with its narrowness of purpose, has an orientation similar to administration's irrational pursuit of rationalization. When a teachers' strike is called, all sense of responsibility stops immediately: children are deserted in their classrooms while, in the gym, a little girl is left dangling from the rings, calling out plaintively "Hello? Mrs. Pommelhorst? I'd like to get down now!" ("PTA Disbands"). During the strike they refuse to give any directional aid to students interested in continuing their education with self-directed home study. A picket-line query of "So, if we were in school this week, what do you think we'd be learning?" prompts one teacher to hiss "Get away from me" (Ibid.). Similarly, the commencement of summer vacation signals the end of knowledge-transmission contract:

> Teacher: And so, as Abraham Lincoln sat in Ford's theatre that night, John Wilkes Booth entered, drew his gun and... [the bell rings] Well that's it. Have a nice summer everyone.
> Student: But what happened in Ford's theatre? Was President Lincoln okay?
> Teacher: He was fine ... Go home (sic). ("Summer of 4'2")

As well, with increased public pressure for positive educational outcomes, the teachers of Springfield actively seek to communicate their professional position of diminished

accountability. An indication of this is the welcoming sign at the school's parent-teacher night which reads "Let's Share the Blame" ("Itchy and Scratchy: The Movie"). Furthermore, teachers seek to protect themselves by means of a contractual agreement against any legal actions by the parental community for failure to fulfil their custodial obligations. This codification of relationships is pointed out to one of the school's recalcitrant students: "Page six of the school charter says that no teacher shall be held accountable if Bart Simpson dies. Or if Milhouse gets swallowed by the school snake" ("Moaning Lisa").

The irrationality of the magnitude of teachers' self-interest is manifested by its destruction of the client-professional base of trust. There exists for most students a faith, or at least a suspension of disbelief, that the instructor is promoting their best interests. If this faith is ruptured, disgruntled clientele may attempt to dismember the professional structure by exposing the credibility of its organizational claims to competence. Although Dreeben (1968:33-37) argues that elementary grade students are not generally competent to judge teacher performance (being moved primarily by "goodwill", analogous to "the affective climate of a family"), the poverty of the teachers' special body of knowledge at Springfield Elementary does become exposed when a student loses faith in the education system and steals all of the teachers' editions of the curriculum texts. Since the teacher-student bond is based in part on an exchange of services, student cooperation is dependent upon a belief that the teachers have something

(knowledge) that is desirable. With the destruction of this belief, the legitimacy of teacher authority[12] is dissolved and the thin membrane of control shattered, reducing the school to a Hobbesian state of conflict and hostility. The ensuing staff-room conversation indicates the instructors' frantic desperation:

> Teacher: What'll we do?
> Mrs. Krabappel: Declare a snow day!
> Teacher: Does anyone know the multiplication table?
> Skinner: No, please, don't panic. They can smell fear -- make no sudden moves. ("Separate Vocations")

The attitudinal stance of Springfield teachers with respect to lay-public knowledge is consistent with professional norms and grounded in community reality. The epistemological orientation of professionals dichotomizes knowledge such that any cognitive skills or information possessed by those outside a profession is viewed as valueless without the attendant training/certification process. This perspective is somewhat validated when there is a teachers' strike at the public school. Community members who take over classroom duties as instructors fail in their attempts to teach due to a lack of requisite skills; they have neither the psychological armour to deal with situational control aspects, nor do they have the demagogic training to involve the students in uninteresting subject matter. This lack of pedagogical experience results in an impoverished educational experience for both instructors and students. One volunteer assessed her teaching experience as: "Exhausting. It took the children twenty minutes to locate Canada on the map" ("PTA Disbands"). The children's perspectives of this experiment were similarly negative, ranging from "horrifying" to

"pointless" (Ibid.).

However, this cognitive bifurcation of knowledge by educators is only accepted to differing degrees when actualized into subordinate-superordinate behavioural patterns in the public sphere. Such behaviourial patterns, as well as the lack of unanimous affirmation, are demonstrated by the Springfield teachers during parent-teachers night. Although there is an attempt to infantize adults by having them sit in the dimensionally-inadequate desks, total acceptance of a professional definition of the social situation does not occur. While Marge Simpson accepts a punitive assignment of writing lines on the blackboard -- "I will try to raise a better son" -- because of Bart's misbehaviour ("Itchy and Scratchy: The Movie"), Homer resists the dominative arrangement by making armpit farts in the classroom.

Constraints against Universalistic Norms

Although objectivity is an espoused ideal of teachers, interactions with students in the work-a-day classroom indicate particularistic rather than universalistic behavioural patterns. A commonplace manifestation of this is the utilization of spatial boundaries, such as student groupings around tables or the linearity of classroom seating patterns, to affect the quality and quantity of student-teacher interaction. A longitudinal study by Ray Rist (1970) of elementary students moving through kindergarten to grade two indicated how teachers sift and sort students into

groups by means of number, letter or name designations -- such as "tigers ... cardinals ... [and] clowns" (Ibid.:433) -- that signify their place in the classroom hierarchy. As well, teachers also acted as agents in maintaining the original placement patterns from grade to grade, such that there occurred little movement of students out of the positions in which they were initially slotted.

Similarly, teacher-student interaction at Springfield Elementary indicates particularist nurturant behaviour in the form of seating and verbal patterns. Visual data indicate a hierarchical seating pattern with relatively fixed upper and lower limits and a fluid middle. For example, in the grade four class, the academic losers (ie. Jimbo, Kearny and Nelson) are always in the back half, while mediocre students (ie. Bart and Milhouse) have desks usually located in the centre area and bright students, such as Martin Prince, occupy the front of the class. Hierarchical placement by physical positioning is repeatedly reinforced by the quality of verbal interaction. Mrs. Krabappel is continuously effusive over the work of Martin, with comments such as "Absolutely brilliant [etc.]" ("Bart Gets an F"). In contrast, not only are the efforts of one of the class's lesser lights belittled with derogatory comments, but his attempts to change are also open to ridicule:

> Bart: I'll do better, I promise.
> Mrs. Krabappel: Ha! That'll be the day! ("Bart Gets an F")

This tiered seating arrangement, with the promising students at the front and the "less gifted" at the back, is indicative of a power structure continually reinforced by classroom interaction.

In exchange for getting privileged access to teacher-resources, the students at the front act as collaborators in the maintenance of the status quo authority structure, and provide psychological sustenance to the instructor by physically forming a primary line of defense against the forces of chaos arrayed at the back of the class. Although Bidwell (1965:982) suggests the existence of a reflexive authority structure where the isolation of the teacher in the classroom lends itself to a process of negotiation with the students, the data from the Simpsonian culture indicate an ontological orientation which echoes the views of Waller (1961:196: that relations between students and school staff centre on conflict and mutual hostility.

This being said, there do exist bonds of affection between teachers and students that are evident in the differing attitudinal stances of staff and administration. It is the impingement of the economic sphere on school resources, the monetary limitations that occur in the form of budget cuts, that helps define the arena of conflict between teachers and administration. Since declining resources affect student outcomes, this reflects negatively on organizational accountability to the public. This is Principal Skinner's perspective when he laments,

> "they just cut the school's budget. If I had the money, I'd fix the exhaust leak in the back [of the bus]. Actually, I think it's causing some of our low test scores" ("PTA Disbands").

In comparison, demands by staff for improved material resources spring more from altruistic motives, although said requests do fail to move mid-management:

> Mrs Krabappel: "Our demands are very reasonable. By ignoring them you are selling these children's future.
> Skinner: "Oh, come on, Edna: we both know these children have no future! ("PTA Disbands")

The economic duress facing Springfield Elementary is a common occupance in the post-industrial economy of the United States. A shrinking tax base has affected other publicly financed cultural institutions and public-private institutional relationships have mutated. Attempts by education to level the socioeconomic playing field by enlarging the life experiences of disadvantaged students via culture-expanding field trips have been subverted by a neo-libertarian economic trend towards the privatization of cultural institutions (with attendant agendas of profit-maximization). The sign at the entrance of the local civil war site is an illustrative example of a change in management and in pecuniary purpose: "Diz-Nee Historical Park. *Sorry, but there's profit to be had*" ("PTA Disbands"). Only schools with high-income catchment areas will be able to "make sure the children get a little extra education" (Ibid.).

Adapting to the current rhetorical tenor of the business community, Springfield Elementary attempts to compensate for its diminished resources by being functionally flexible with its labour force while simultaneously expanding the purview of education into areas traditionally controlled by other institutions and occupations. The state of decline in school resources is indicated by its decrepit school bus, its outdated curricular material, its minuscule library comprised of books discarded by other schools[13] and by the school's questionable cafeteria offerings -- which

include a milk substitute, shredded newspaper pasta, gym-mat meat loaf and iron-enriched horse testicle soup ("PTA Disbands"; "Sweet Seymour's ..."). To cut costs, administration has unqualified personnel performing in professional capacities, with Lunch-Lady Doris as acting school nurse and Grounds-Keeper Willie teaching French ("PTA Disbands").

Although both administration and teachers are active agents in a newly struck accord, the end result is indicative of an administrative definition of "teacher professionalism" which implies an increased teacher workload rather than greater autonomy and pay (Covaleski and Howley, 1994:60). Both parties agree to a plan to raise money for their cash-strapped budget by renting out the cloakroom to the over-crowded prison system. Consequently, this agreement acts as a force of de-professionalization with Springfield teachers experiencing a further loss of control over classroom conditions.

However, this new arrangement does serve to reinforce the social control function of the teacher-role and, as such, is positively appraised by one instructor who evinces hope that "some of our more troublesome students might be scared straight" ("PTA Disbands"). Further, modification of classroom environment is so slight as to detract little from an atmosphere considered ideally suited to fulfilment of the knowledge-transmission function. The new tier of slow learners that is added to the back of the classroom will be impartially treated according to their hierarchical placement. The student body, with the help of the

teacher, will learn to adapt to this social change interceding from outside the classroom system: "It's all right, children. Just ignore the murderer" ("PTA Disbands").

Rather than superimpose a foreign/ideal value system on the Simpsonian culture, the self-interest of the teachers has to be considered in relation to the values of the community. From this comparative perspective, teacher behaviour appears to be normative. When the community is challenged with resolving the central issue of a teachers' strike it reaches an impasse over balancing the children's future (as measured by the quality of educational resources) against the unpopular expedient of raising taxes[14]. The PTA meeting is ambivalent, swaying alternately from concern for the children's futures to fear of personal loss of purchasing power:

> Edna: ... Our demands are simple: a small cost-of-living increase and some better equipment and supplies for your children.
> Audience: Yeah! Give it to them! [etc.]
> Skinner: Yeah, in a dream world. We have a very tight budget; to do what she's asking, we'd have to raise taxes.
> Audience: Raise taxes? They're too high as they are. Taxes are bad. [etc.]
> Edna: It's your children's future.
> Audience: That's right. Children are important. [etc.]
> Skinner: It'll cost you.
> Audience: No to taxes. My God, they're going to raise taxes. [etc.]
> Edna: C'mon!
> Audience: She makes a good case. Good point. [etc.] ("PTA Disbands")

Conclusion

An examination of pedagogical and professional literature suggests that the teachers of Springfield Elementary only

circumspectly fall under the category of "professionals". Although their training and survival skills make them more effective as educators than the general public, their client set of students remains less convinced of their claims to specialized knowledge. This ownership of esoteric knowledge is viewed by the teachers as a trading "chip", to be exchanged only if rewards are forthcoming. Thus, although there is evidence of altruism, it is of a limited sort and subsumable under the mantle of professional self-interest. Although this can be viewed as morally reprehensible, within the context of the Springfield community setting the prioritizing of self-interest concerns can be seen as normative.

The data also suggest that internal and external forces are pushing the teachers in the direction of de-professionalism and authoritarianism. Internally, authority is weakened by a failure to convince students of teachers' wisdom. Externally, pressures appear to be defined by market forces such as a declining tax base, a catchment area that does not rank high quality public education over personal material acquisitiveness, and an overarching business ethos that suggests flexible labour practices as a post-industrial necessity. These factors conspire to create a situation that is commonplace in contemporary America: teachers who have little control over their working conditions or the nature of the work they perform (Covaleski and Howley, 1994:61).

Dissension between administration and teachers as to definition of goals does not appear to be an issue. Data agree with Waller's (1961:10-11) analysis, that administration and staff

are united by common adversaries and, thus, teachers' ideological stance with respect to the professionalism issues of internal control and external expansion is somewhat subsumed by the hegemonic aspirations of administration. The interplay of these variables combine to push teachers to accept an administrative model of authoritarian control in which students are objectified and not seen as positive agents in the construction of social reality in the school and in the classroom.

Thus far we have examined some of the problems entailed in the educational process (focusing on a captive audience) from an organizational point of view with respect to structural and environmental impediments to achieving desired goals. There is an assumption that such goals are desirable, are somehow for the betterment of society and that the organization has the morally higher ground in its attempts to manipulate students to attain these goals. However, data from the Simpsonian culture clearly indicate that resistance to the form and content of the educational experience exists. This resistance decries the veracity of both the overarching meritocratic ideology and the underlying ideology of science that supports it.

CHAPTER FIVE: MERITOCRACY, SCIENCE AND THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM

Introduction

The educational bureaucracy that dictates the form and content of a student's educational experience is wrapped in an ideology of merit that is ostensibly legitimated by the scientistic value-neutrality of standardized testing devices. The use of such measurement devices results in the slotting of students into academic streams, thus generating winners and losers as defined by academic excellence, final level of certification achieved and future economic status.

However, students are not competing on a level playing field. Standardized testing for intelligence and vocational aptitude is neither ideologically nor methodologically sound. Tests are constructed to value only the knowledge that the dominant sector of society deems valuable thus precluding other epistemological orientations on the basis of social characteristics. As such, tests contradict the principle of universal inclusiveness that underlies the ideology of meritocracy. Despite this, testing is accepted as a legitimate tool because of its historical embeddedness in the education system and because of a general public belief in science and in its physical embodiment, technology.

The Hidden Curriculum: Its Ranking Function

Whereas the formal curriculum is comprised of subject material and course-load, the hidden curriculum contains informal messages received in day-to-day experience about school rules and procedures, authority structures and interpersonal relationships (Wotherspoon, 1996:336) which serve to tacitly construct knowledge and behaviour. The physical environment, school rituals, particularist types of teacher-student interaction, expectations and grading procedures, and course material that is uni-dimensional in its cultural perspective convey and concretize the realities of greater society: that all people are not equally treated. Although functionalists maintain that this internalization of learned behaviour is necessary to maintain social stability (Parsons, 1959), conflict theorists of various stripes maintain that the ranking process of both the formal and hidden curricula reinforces established patterns of inequity in the form of unequal distribution of material and social resources.

The hidden curriculum restricts opportunity to those who are white, male and (at least) middle-class. It essentially reproduces class relations intergenerationally (Bowles and Gintis, 1976) as well as denying the experiences and constricting the opportunities of women (Gaskell et al., 1989) and ethnic minorities (Hurn, 1993; Mazurek, 1987). With respect to the latter, some modes of deportment -- such as the Native cultural prohibition against asking questions can lead to teacher misinterpretation as

disinterest, bias and attenuated learning. As McLaren (1989:184-85) points out, students experience a tacit construction of knowledge on an ongoing basis, one in which non-subject-related sets of behaviours that may limit educational outcomes are being produced and assessed.

Just as grading becomes a social indicator of a student's place in a classroom, practices exist by which students internalize their rank in society and reproduce status quo social conditions. For example, although all students learn to be individualistic and competitive, males are expected to be more so than girls. Over time, this translates into lower educational outcomes and life chances for females in the form of lower SAT scores and diminished career paths, particularly in the maths and natural sciences (NSF, 1994)[15]. As a consequence, females tend to congregate in less mathematically demanding fields of study, leading to greater competition for jobs by graduates, a downward pressure on wages and greater job insecurity.

The gendered nature of classroom teacher-student dynamics and the sex-role stereotyping in out-dated curricular material cultivate a learned helplessness in females which tends to make them feel that they have little control over educational outcomes. Educational research (Sadker and Sadker, 1994) indicates that males tend to believe that success is due to ability while females tend to attribute it to luck. On the other hand, males are more likely to believe that failure is due to lack of effort while females ascribe failure to lack of ability. The classroom environment

conspires to maintain a belief in females that the locus of control exists external to them, thus reinforcing passive behaviour[16].

Such being the case, critics maintain that the hidden curriculum doles out lessons in passivity and competitiveness, of super-ordination and subordination, not only with respect to the bureaucratic social structure of education, but also along the lines of social characteristics. The salient lesson learned is that white, heterosexual, financially secure males deserve to feed the most at the trough of knowledge. However, the educational bureaucracy maintains that a level playing field does exist, that the system is fair in so far as test scores are accurate measures of ability and effort. Schools operate on the principle of merit, and consider it as an important tool in the motivation of students.

Meritocracy and Streaming

Meritocracy is an ideology historically derived from the Eighteenth Century revolutionary populist notions of egalitarianism and democracy and is currently legitimated by popular belief in science and its methodological tools. It claims that everyone --- irrespective of socioeconomic background -- has equal access to resources and that success is a function of inherent ability combined with sustained effort. The dominant perspective is that this set of beliefs accurately reflects the reality of the educational system and, as such, has an underlying functionalist rationale, grounded in that curious amalgam of cooperative

pluralism and competitive individualism that is rooted within the American constitution[17].

As major proponent and theorizer of the functionalist school, Talcott Parsons argued that society was comprised of social systems which regulated change equitably. Briefly, his systems approach assumes the existence of (an empirically unsubstantiated) value consensus in society and, while overall grounded in an organic analogy, uses a more contemporary metaphor of cybernetics to describe the interdependence of parts and the tendency towards homeostasis/equilibrium after effected change. Within this framework the frequent and varied use of testing would be a logical systems' correcting tool in that it would expedite appropriate responses such as modified lesson plans, increased homework or relegating a student to an academic stream more commensurate with his interest and abilities.

In contrast to the functionalist perspective the conflict perspective asserts that the ideology of meritocracy is a collection of beliefs created by and serving the interests of a small privileged sector (Apple, 1979; McLaren, 1989; Nelsen, 1991). As such, it simultaneously legitimates the existing hierarchical social system and sows "false consciousness" among subordinate classes, thereby securing acceptance and conformity. Rather than meritocracy being a universalistic and value-neutral tool, it is one that operates with a hidden curriculum, one that favours existing socioeconomic arrangements, dis-empowers large segments of the population and utilizes the theory and methodology of science

to promote social control in the practices of schooling. This is most clearly evident in the commonly-occurring practice of academic steaming.

Research has indicated that once children are tracked in early grades, they become further limited by the amount and quality of resources with serious negative outcomes over the long term. Since resources are highly dependent upon the tax base of the catchment area, minority and lower socioeconomic class students are more likely to end up in the lower streams (Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Oakes, 1985). Similarly, economic resources affect factors such as quality of teachers, student-teacher ratios, school libraries, and educational field-trips all of which play important roles in the educational climate of schools. As well, studies (Contenta, 1993:76-77; Nelsen, 1985:308) indicate that, while parental involvement increases student outcomes, low-income single and dual parent families are too busy making ends meet to spare the time[18]. A lack of educational opportunity at the primary and secondary levels has a longitudinal effect that is reflected in the type and level of education experienced beyond high school. Females and minorities are less likely to attend four-year colleges, be enrolled in science programmes or obtain advanced degrees (NSF, 1994; Gaskell et al., 1989; Trent and Braddock, 1987).

Studies (Barr and Dreeben 1983:151; Dreeben and Gamoran 1986; Oakes, 1985) have also indicated that tracking has a significant impact on educational outcomes independent of student social characteristics. Barr and Dreeben (1983, 148) observed that, other

than language skills, socioeconomic variables had no effect on educational outcomes. As well, although the individual student affected the group learning environment, the group itself exerted a more substantial impact on the quality of the learning experience. Dreeben and Gamoran (1986:667-69) found that teaching to the norm in the lower tracks resulted in students with high aptitudes learning less than students with lower aptitudes taught in a higher stream. Further, this finding was found to be independent of racial characteristics, having more to do with teaching styles and with the allocation of educational resources from district or school levels. Finally, Oakes (1985) cites an American study indicating that students' IQ measures decreased after being placed in a lower educational stream.

Although streaming occurs through the formal practices of schools (such as grading), a process of informal tracking occurs in the primary grades whereby students are categorized according to their perceived abilities by means of hierarchical seating arrangements and by image-evocative nomenclature. Those deemed the brightest are situated at the front of the class, often with nicknames (like Bears and Tigers) to further sort the better students from the slower ones (Contenta, 1993:97). In a longitudinal study of elementary school students Rist (1970) noted that teachers used the non-ability characteristics of cleanliness and non-aggressiveness for in-class ability grouping. As well, this slotting reoccurred from year-to-year, via informal channels of inter-teacher communication, resulting in diminished chances for

a student to transcend his/her original designation. Thus, a student who is quiet in demeanour for personal or cultural reasons has heightened chances of being misjudged and caught in an educationally stifling environment.

Both formal and informal modes of streaming rely on some sort of assessment of the type and form of knowledge that the education system regards as valuable, a work-product which lends itself to a particular world-view in which the children of the lower classes are at a disadvantage. Middle and upper-class children enjoy a home environment in which the form of symbolic interaction parallels that experienced in school. The creators of tests embrace a particular epistemological orientation, with both the subject matter and the language used tending to be prejudicial against socially subordinate subgroups.

Basil Bernstein (1970) points out that because of the way middle class children are socialized at home with respect to the contextual use of language, they have a head-start in the education system. Some sub-cultural groups -- such as the working class -- tend to use a "restricted code" (Ibid.:345) in their speech that communicates context-bound particularistic meanings whereas the middle-class uses language that is more universally accessible. Evidence to this effect was demonstrated in a speech content analysis of middle class and working class five year old children conducted by Peter Hawkins (Cited in Bernstein, 1970:346). Descriptions of events depicted in a series of pictures indicated that the middle class group used far more nouns and far fewer

pronouns rendering a more explicit and universally accessible narrative for someone who had not seen the pictures. In contrast, the working class narratives were particularist, with the meanings being implicit and difficult to understand for one who had not shared the experience.

Similarly, universalistic general principles concerning physical and social relationships are more likely to be taught by middle-class than by working-class parents to their offspring (Bernstein, 1970:346). Whereas the former tend to elaborate on rules, reasons and consequences when issuing prohibitive instructions, working class parents are more likely to deal only with the particular act and not discuss the general principles which transcend the particular context. Thus, there exists a fit between the middle-class child's acquaintance with universalistic orders of meaning and the social relationships which generate them and the symbolic orders of the school with respect to the teaching of general principles concerning objects (the sciences) and persons (the arts).

As a consequence, educational institutions tend to perpetuate or exacerbate initial differences. Working class students suffer from organizational use of "deficit evaluation" -- the comparing of children who do not have attributes favourable to the school environment with those children who do. The labelling of students as "culturally deprived" results in a cycle of low teacher expectations, low interventional activity, low student motivation and low outcomes. Such observable class differences merely confirm

the status quo of the organization, transmission and evaluation of knowledge. Furthermore, since working class children are awash in a strange social and semiotic sea where there exist different structures of meaning, whether this be in the form of reading books, language use and dialect or patterns of social relationships, a child must adopt a new identity, adapting to new symbolic representations and ways of life such that "a wedge is progressively driven between the child as a member of a family and community, and the child as a member of the school" (Bernstein, 1970:344).

The Science of Testing

The underlying assumptions of the meritocratic systems' attempts to legitimize inequitable educational outcomes by means of the value-neutral use of standardized testing can be challenged on methodological and ethical grounds. Testing only discovers that which it wishes to discover and serves to recreate society in a form that is advantageous to dominant interests. Statistical measurement instruments such as IQ and vocational tests are unsound both methodologically and ideologically in that they tend to generate particularist results wherein all races, genders and classes do not have equal chances for success.

The inherent cultural bias of testing is exemplified by the most commonly used test for intelligence, the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, Revised (WISC-R). IQ testing has been clearly

identified by various studies as being biased against lower-class groups, and especially blacks (Block and Dworkin, 1976:460, 529). Similarly, intelligence is a social construct in that other cultures conceive of it differently. For example, rather than understanding intelligence as occurring on a broad spectrum, the Japanese conception is similar to our idea of health or patriotism, with everyone having more-or-less the same amount (Fallows, 1989:155).

Methodological inconsistencies are also apparent. Since questions are selected from a representative ethnic sample there exists an inherent predisposition of bias in favour of dominant culture. Furthermore, the 15% proportion of non-white children in this sample group of 2,200 children (Contenta, 1993:83) is not representative of the ethnic diversity found in the United States. Contemporary census statistics indicate that about 17% of America's population consists of visible minority ethnic groups (United States, 1995:36). If one includes Hispanic Americans -- whose progeny currently suffer the poorest educational outcomes of any ethnic group (Jencks, 1993) -- the discrepancy is even greater: about 28% of Americans are either visible minorities or Hispanics (United States, 1995:37). Finally, discounting other ethnic groups, black and Hispanic school age children together comprise 30% of the 5-19 age group (Ibid.:22).

Similarly, both the reliability and the validity of the IQ test as a measure of intelligence can be challenged. Methodologically, there exists a certain degree of circuity in

defining intelligence in that it is frequently (Hanson, 1993:255; Herrnstein, 1973:107)) defined operationally in terms of procedural outcomes. As well, popular misconceptions of intelligence as an ability to learn that is fixed throughout one's life and is a single attribute do not stand close analysis. In actuality IQ is not a constant over time since many individuals experience changes of 20 points or more between childhood and adulthood.

Common beliefs about the efficacy of IQ testing are due to a general societal faith in science that is further reinforced by the use of arithmetic notation to express intelligence (Hanson, 1993:255). Individuals are assigned a single number from a hierarchical scale that is immovably fixed between upper and lower neighbours. There is also the inherent assumption that if the number represents what has been learned, it has predictive abilities. As such, it discounts variables such as motivation and opportunity, both of which are contingent upon the material conditions, social milieu and symbolic orientation of an individual's background. Therefore, IQ tests do not measure intelligence *per se*, but rather the degree to which a subject has successfully absorbed the dominant cultural perspective. As such, they are effective tools in selecting candidates who will regenerate society along existing norms.

Belief in testing despite biases and methodological weaknesses is due to its historical entrenchment in the educational system. The potential for sorting was recognized by the American

educational system during the 1920s and dovetailed with their embracement of the mass production model of industry as worthy of emulation. By utilizing the scientific management techniques that Frederick Taylor (1911) derived from time-and-motion studies, control of the decision-making process could be reserved for management and all other variables modeled as interchangeable parts in a large, efficient system. Tools (teachers, texts), processes (curricula) and products (students) could all be standardized. Similar to factories, raw materials could be assessed for their inherent future utility and thereby tracked into different streams to create qualitatively different product lines. Intelligence testing was ideally suited to this sorting purpose.

IQ test scores are belled on a curve and subdivided into three portions with those on the upper end selected as having the most likelihood of continuing onto post-secondary education. Each subsection is again belled to determine the intellectual norm and thereby trilaterally standardize teaching methods, texts and curriculum. In theory, streaming would decrease the variance of group aptitude and consequently heighten the chances for student interest in classroom material. However, boredom would still be experienced by those on the margins of each stream's bell curve. As such, the marketing of the system's efficacy to the student body demanded increasing human intervention, particularly as more students were spending more time in the education system.

The expansion of the educational system in the United States after the Second World War necessitated an increase in the number

of agents of social control to facilitate the streaming of students. The system accommodated more students who were staying longer, as indicated by the rate of 17 year olds graduating from high school in 1950 being twice that found two decades earlier. Increased numbers stimulated increased intervention in the sorting process in the form of a burgeoning growth of guidance counsellors with the proportion of high schools utilizing them increasing four-fold from 17% in 1951 to 65% in 1966 (Wallace and Graves, 1995:80-81)[19].

Hence, the use of vocational testing also became commonplace as a method to stream students into programmes that ostensibly reflected their abilities and aptitudes. Personality and inventory tests such as the Iowa Tests of Educational Development (ITED) and the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) were designed to indicate a range of aptitudes, traits or personality characteristics while vocational assessment tests such as the General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB) and the Ohio Vocational Interest Survey (OVIS) have been routinely utilized to find a fit between student characteristics and the adult world of work (Tuckman, 1975:417-18)[20]. F. Allen Hanson (1993:1-6) argues that aptitude (and ability) tests act as vehicles of social control, can be damaging to the subject and lead to a decrease in social diversification. Tests lend themselves to institutional efficiency and therefore do not so much describe individuals as socially construct them with respect to ensuing ramifications. Motivated to comply by the hope for future rewards, testing acts as a method of surveillance and

dominance, a procedure which enlists people as willing accomplices. While testing literature stresses individual factors such as motivation, ability and industrious work habits as necessary for success, it studiously avoids addressing the effects of external restrictions, most notably the denial of equal opportunity.

Similar to the IQ test, the non-neutral construction of vocational tests generates longitudinal effects in which rewards are not dispensed meritocratically but rather according to social characteristics (Ibid.:235-37). Gender and racial biases that are built into testing methodology perpetuate existing social arrangements. For example, reference groups for prestigious occupations tend to be white and male, with their interests supplying the norm to which those of a subject are compared. Given that the views, knowledge and attributes of any form of work-life are to a large extent socially constructed, this lends itself to the reproduction of work cultures along pre-established lines of class, gender and race. Further, a student's failure to achieve high placement on the hierarchy of vocations -- which is more likely to occur for minorities -- may result in self-blame and thus quash achievement possibilities.

Thus, the continued use of vocational testing is logically contestable on the grounds of their apparent predictive value and in terms of the school's espoused role as agent of democracy and egalitarianism. The accuracy of test results is dependent upon the age as well as educational and cultural experiences of the student both within and without the school. The reliability of career-

predictive tests is questionable given that a child's perception of a particular vocation's desirability from day-to-day is susceptible to such variance that any rationale for temporal extrapolations appears dubious, especially with younger students. The vocational maturity of the subject can vary between individuals and does change with age, with testing not recommended for students below high school age where interests have not crystallized (Brown, 1983:386). As well, rather than acting as a liberating force of change and aiding a child to transcend environmental constraints (such as stereotypical ethnic, class or gender reinforcements), such tests merely act to replicate status quo social arrangements.

Conclusion

While proponents of educational organization maintain that the system functions in a neutral fashion, with success dependent upon the meritocratic equation of ability and effort, critics contend that a hidden curriculum which values ascriptive characteristics is in effect. Students are sorted and ranked by means of both formal and informal organizational practices. In either case, the backgrounds of students not belonging to (or aligned with) the dominant perspective are perceived as being culturally, socially and linguistically deprived.

IQ and vocational testing, while promoted as tools to maximize the learning and future employment opportunities of students also serve to legitimize and perpetuate inequities within both the

educational system and wider society. Historically, the sorting function of such standardized testing was recognized early in this century, and the expansion of the American educational system after World War Two also dictated an increase in use of professional intervention in the streaming process. Although methodologically contestable, testing reinforces the legitimacy of streaming and, as such, is part of a hidden curriculum, the most salient outcome of which is the continuance of social relations as defined by existing social characteristics.

There is one dimension of the hidden curriculum that remains to be explored and deserves special attention: the reproduction of society's socioeconomic class composition in the post-educational, wage-work world by means of educational practices.

CHAPTER SIX: MERITOCRACY DENIED: REPRODUCTION, RESISTANCE AND DEVIATION

Introduction

While the work students do generally has an alienated form, a differentiated analysis indicates that there exists a strong relationship between pedagogical practices, the social characteristics of students, and the type of post-educational work that the student is being conditioned to expect. Traditional organizational tactics to induce compliance to normative behaviour in this production process by means of a temporally graduated reward system are appealing to a progressively smaller portion of the student body. Contributing factors to this phenomenon include the incremental increasing of the certification ante over time to control entry into the better-paying, shrinking sectors of the job market and to the discriminatory dispensation of such opportunities.

For youth, particularly those who lack cultural capital, the functionalist argument of education as an investment in marketable human capital is losing its salience and resulting in an increase of institutionally-defined deviant behaviour that is transgressing lower class boundaries. This may be a generational response to the proletarianization of the middle-class, the logical outcome of post-industrial capitalism's utilization of labour-erosive sophisticated technology. Critical pedagogists reinterpret such

acts of rebellion as forms of resistance to both the authoritarian mode of institutional instruction and to the educational outcomes that tend to replicate socioeconomic arrangements. Student responses to power relationships, as experienced in the hierarchical structure of school, are somewhat analogous to prisoners incarcerated in a totally-controlled institution.

The Alienation of Work and Failure of the Reward System

Although the cold process of schooling is suitable to generating the bureaucratic goals of efficiency and calculability, it does little to win the hearts and minds of most students. Within administration's own logic framework, those who do not fulfil their responsibilities are labelled as under-achievers, "challenged" or deviants and are consequently sifted and sorted into lower academic streams that virtually predetermine their future socioeconomic status. Student resistance is directed against the overt and covert forms of social control which attempt to induce passivity and regimentation of thought and of physical movement: bureaucracy and its agents, curriculum content, and the work process. The focus of this resistance centres on the alienating nature of the work process and demonstrates both a disenchantment with the reward system and an awareness of the essential unfairness of the meritocratic process.

Similar to a great portion of adults, students experience little control over either the means or the ends of the production

process. As Nelsen (1991:18) points out, the school is the first bureaucracy that children experience first-hand, encountering an organization in which it is not so much the content of the curriculum, but rather the coercive form in which it is taught that is emphasized. The form of subject matter is usually cerebral in nature involving individual projects where the student is spatially isolated from peers, with desks and walls creating an atmosphere of competitive learning that is frequently contradistinct from her/his extra-institutional experiences of negotiated rules and ends. As well, there exists an organizational preference for the teaching of the maths and sciences, not only because of the dominant cultural cant that graduates -- and America -- need these skills to be competitive in a global economy, but also because their form is suitable for social control.

The sciences are rule-bound, generate patterns of linear thinking and have a methodology that is repetitive and monotonous. These characteristics tend to generate organizationally desirable forms of personal and group behaviour by regulating thought and motor activity. While individual competitiveness is encouraged, group passivity is the overall desired behavioural and cognitive norm, with students being herded from class to class, chained to an itinerary of time-slotted subject divisions which stop independent of level of productivity or of student interest. Within this scenario, the non-stop accumulation of knowledge is unlike conditions found in adult work which usually entail the use of repetitive knowledge. Student work, with its lack of control over

the pace, choice of assignments and high degree of monitoring is closely akin to that found in low-status occupations (ie. servants, secretaries) that are associated in studies of work satisfaction with low morale and resentment (Hurn, 1993:235).

The rewards of work are comprised of immediate, intermediate and future-oriented components where grades are used as a currency-equivalent incentive to motivate students (Becker et al., 1968). Within the immediate time-frame, higher grades translate into higher status within the student cohort and, frequently, more attention from the teacher -- with the latter being the most desirable commodity within the classroom, particularly for younger children. The intermediate lure of potential prizes, awards or even trustee-type positions (such as hall monitors) are intended to motivate students to higher academic achievement from term to term.

The final reward is evinced by the oft-stated positive correlation between level of academic certification and life-time earnings. Acceptance of this orientation towards the future tends to increase with age, as does the potential alienation of the student from the work process and the work product. A contributing factor is the increasing awareness of social trends indicative of the non-meritocratic variability of post-school rewards dispensation along the lines of social characteristics such as race, gender and age.

Although current statistics suggest a strong correlation between level of educational achievement and income (United States, 1995:158), blacks earn substantially less than whites, and women

less than males. In the lowest educational category ("not a high school graduate"), the average income for blacks is 75% that received by whites while women received only 56% of male income. On the upper level of educational achievement, black professionals received 60% and black doctorates 85% of the income of white peers. Women's versus men's income within these latter two groups reflected a similar disparity: 56% and 91% respectively.

The motivational effectiveness of the reward system is further eroded by the increased amount of time demanded for the deferment of satisfaction into the future. Due to technological innovations, particularly computers and their applications (ie. office software, robotics), the relative size of the skilled sector of the workforce has been decreasing, with the best-paying positions being held by aging baby-boomers with work experience and/or union contracts. As such, even well-educated working youth is being locked out of good-paying positions and stuck in either entry-level positions or poor-paying service industry jobs.

Comparative statistics from Canada indicate the post-industrial trend towards ever greater postponement of educational rewards is independent of economic climate. Although the labour market opportunities for youth (age 15-24) are highly recession sensitive, irrespective of improved economic conditions the unemployment rate for these young adults has been roughly twice that of the adult population for the last twenty years (Statistics Canada, 1997:10-11). The increased requirements for higher levels of educational attainment has meant that youth is staying in school

longer, with the average length of time for the transition from school to working having increased by two years since 1984 (Ibid.:27). Between 1990 and 1996 the percentage of this age group with community college diplomas increased from 11-15% while those with university degrees increased from 5-6% (Ibid.:29)[21].

Although there is a positive correlation between level of certification and employment rates, the job quality for non-student youth has steadily deteriorated over time[22]. Since the late 1970s the percentage of part-time jobs has more than tripled from 6% to 21%. In 1976 the rate for youth was 39% below that for adults; by 1996 the rate was 37% higher (Ibid.:30). Similarly, non-student youth is not only earning progressively less as compared to adults, but their average income also decreased from $11,000 in 1990 to $9,400 in 1995. The most significant factor in this decline was the lower hourly wages of youth as compared to those of adults.

This decreasing correlation between the quality of post-educational work and the level of institutional certification over time has been previously noted by other social observers (Mills, 1951:269; Collins, 1979). Collins indicates that the process of raising the certification ante is fuelled by the vested interests of corporate and education institutions and legitimized by a "myth of technocracy" (Collins, 1979:1-21) which stipulates that cognitive skills need to become more sophisticated to accommodate increasingly complicated technology. In reality, the market place cannot absorb the increasing numbers of graduands, the skill level of non-technical jobs has changed little over time, there is no

evidence that schooling cultivates cognitive skills and there is little evidence of any correlation between credentials and post-certification productivity.

Thus, the rewards system of school may no longer induce mass compliance. It may no longer be true that it is only for students who do poorly that grades "have little value as an incentive" (Metz, 1978:98). They fail as a universalistic tactic to induce academic participation and must be augmented by particularistic strategies such as praise, cajoling, threatening, guilt and so forth that inadvertently serve to reinforce student disenchantment with the meritocratic process and to engender modes of resistance to combat the experience of stultifying boredom.

Rewards: Structural Constraints

Given that youth is experiencing the effects of post-industrial capitalism on wages, occupational opportunities and educational certification, there exists some level of awareness of the overbearing structural forces that are inhibiting their economic well-being. Although social analysts such as Bourdieu and Passeron (1977), Bowles and Gintis (1976) and Anyon (1980) point out the class-based reproductive nature of education, this issue is frequently glossed over in functionalist literature where, instead, there is a focus on individual effort and motivation.

While acknowledging the existence of environmental constraints, human capital theory (Becker, 1975) views education as

an individualized capital investment process whereby the amount of monetary and personal resources invested is positively correlated to lifetime economic returns[23]. Differences in investment are environmentally determined, with some individuals having greater opportunities to invest due to luck, family wealth, financial aid and so forth (Ibid.:106). As such, even for those who continue on to post-secondary facilities, the quality of the educational institution attended is determined by economic restraints and will affect the marketable value of the human capital acquired.

While Becker downplays the nature and extent of structural forces affecting outcomes, Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) maintain that these forces act to inhibit egalitarianism to the extent of reproducing class relationships intergenerationally. Rather than the body of the specific knowledge acquired, it is the cultural capital component of education that has commercial value. Cultural capital is an agglomeration of other, differentiated forms of capital which together comprise a collection of those values, beliefs, attitudes and forms of knowledge that are defined by the dominant social sector as being legitimate. Simplistically, it can be thought of as creating and being created by varying amounts of material, social, symbolic and educational capital, all of which are not discrete elements but rather interwoven in a plexus that exists historically across time, ingrained in societal institutions and recreated by daily interactions. With the amount of each variable affecting the amount of every other variable, the additive whole is only apparent through the manifestation of the parts in

observable forms such as wealth, occupation, social connections and level of educational certification.

It is via the education system, with its control of symbolic content (language, ideas) and of the certification process that the status quo is preserved and continued, often in the form of intergenerational reproduction of class power relations. This occurs because of habitus, "systems of durable, transposable dispositions[24]" (Bourdieu, 1977:72) wherein the family functions as the primary locus in reproducing conditions favourable to the continuance of pre-established structures and where language training forms the core of the family's pedagogical work (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977:73). This facility with language, particularly in the early years, is critical in forming teacher judgement of student abilities (Bourdieu, 1974:33).

Thus, concurring with Bernstein (1970), Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) stipulate that school reproduces the cultural relations of society through the use of symbolic mechanisms -- such as language and text -- that both reflect the cultural capital of the dominant social class and disregard that of the working class. Such action is orchestrated by a set of acquired patterns of thought, behaviour and taste which, while historically and socially situated, can and will adapt to change, but only to a limited extent. However, while schools do act to replicate class arrangements and intergenerational membership, Bourdieu does not see a total fit between the two -- the institution of education is attributed as having an element of social autonomy (Swartz, 1977)[25].

In comparison, Americans Bowles and Gintis (1976:125-148) postulate a very close relationship between education and other institutions, particularly in the economic sphere, such that a set of mechanisms exists -- subsumed by an overarching correspondence principle -- which functions to recreate the social relations of production. The structuring of the educational experience mirrors that of the workplace in that variegated forms of information are conveyed concerning one's place, responsibilities and deportment within a hierarchical division of labour. Attitudes concerning relationships of power, authority and the innate value of one's labour are inculcated such that class structure is reproduced in the consciousness of students. In short, the education system, as a mechanism which provides skills, legitimates inequalities and patterns personal development is geared to the class-based requirements of labour in the workplace. As such, the student becomes acclimatized to accommodating a production process over which he has no control, spurred by external rewards (such as grades, scholarships, etc.) that de-emphasize intrinsic enjoyment of the work process itself.

Schools attempt to ingrain both a basic pattern of attitudinal attributes and class-variated differentiations. On a general level, studies (Bowles and Gintis, 1976:136-38) indicate a close fit between personality traits deemed desirable in school and in the workplace. While qualities such as submissiveness, perseverance, dependability, consistency, empathy with orders and the ability to defer gratification are viewed positively, those of

creativity and independence weigh negatively in both school and the work-place. More specifically, while working class schools emphasize overt behavioural regulation with their reliance on narrow rules, a habitual use of commands and so forth, middle class schools frequently stress the internalization of control by the use of verbal admonishments such as "Use your time wisely" or "Make up your own mind" (Carnoy and Levin, 1985:120).

Jean Anyon (1980) empirically substantiated the existence of this correspondence between students' socioeconomic backgrounds and the type and quality of education received. Her study observed the outcomes of schooling on grade five students attending schools that predominantly catered to one of four socioeconomic classes: working, middle, upper-middle and "executive". A preponderance of the time, space and behaviour of the children attending the working class school was heavily controlled, with much of the curricular material being rote, unconnected, and involving little decision-making on the part of the students.

Work for the children at the middle-class school entailed some decision-making capabilities and being able to follow directions. In comparison, the children attending the upper-middle class school worked independently and negotiated proposed projects with the teacher, thus "acquiring symbolic capital ... being given the opportunity to develop skills of linguistic, artistic and scientific expression and creative elaboration of ideas into concrete form" (1980:88). Finally, the school attended by children of top corporate executives -- the only one studied that did not

use bells to control behaviour -- stressed the development of analytical and intellectual capabilities, grooming them for their future elite positions in the corporate world. Comparison of the four pedagogical modes indicated that each educational technique reflected unique class beliefs with respect to valued sets of character traits, work values and technical or interpersonal skills.

Deviancy cum Resistance

Enactments by students that underscore their disillusionment with the educational system tend to be narrowly (and negatively) interpreted by the logic constructs of the educational organization. The operationalization of a meritocracy into a system of ranking that sorts people into "winners" and "losers" involves the invoking of negative sanctions of varying degrees, the most serious of which is the labelling of a student as a deviant. From a traditionalist perspective deviancy, in its fullest sense, may be thought of as circumscribing a wide range of non-normative behaviour from criminal acts to non-subscription to a middle class valuing of time and work. However, it also has a "shadow-meaning", tacit within the literature of critical/conflict theorists, that conformity to dominant ideology promotes the growth of the socially-antagonistic qualities of individualism and competitiveness. As such, true deviants exist in the form of self-centred egoists with non-holistic thinking patterns that fail to

incorporate the consequences of personal actions on the social fabric. The difference between the two theoretical approaches lies with accountability: whereas the dominant perspective views deviancy as a problem of individual psychology or as genetic predisposition, critical literature perceives deviancy as being a by-product of the social control function of institutional organizations which, in turn, reflects the desires of the dominant social sector.

Since deviance is a relativistic concept dependent upon social situations and particularistic sets of rules, its manifestations can be thought of as falling on a spectrum of severity and incorporating varying degrees of agency. For example, jaywalking and murder represent polar extremes of criminal acts while watching a crime and participating entail differing degrees of human agency. Similarly, with respect to schools, the range of institutionally-defined deviant behaviour can be viewed as occurring along a passive-active continuum. Passive deviance may manifest itself in the failure to actualize a middle-class work ethic either by noncompletion of assignment responsibilities or by "disappearing" into daydreams -- by being physically rather than cognitively or emotionally present.

The active form of deviation likewise has its own range of expression, both within and without the classroom. Within the classroom deviant behaviour may manifest itself as authority-invoking rebellion in forms that range from creating verbally disruptive roadblocks that impede the continuous flow of lesson

plans to disruptive behaviour that necessitates the intervention of the principal. External to the school, anti-social behaviour may be mildly expressed in the form of skipping classes or by dropping out of school while more energetic manifestations may present themselves in the form of fighting or school vandalism. These active forms of deviance can be understood as symbolic interactionist responses to organizational sanctioning, the most overt form of which occurs in the labelling process.

Lemert (1972) conceptualizes the effects of the labelling process as consisting of two phases, with the secondary stage embodying the unintended consequences of reinforcing non-approved behavioural patterns. Primary deviation can be thought of as a momentary lapse and leads to no changes in self-concept or in social roles. In contrast, secondary deviance describes a process of increased aberrational activity that is produced or amplified by the social act of labelling: the individual accepts the label and negatively adapts to the "disapproving, degradational and isolating reactions of society" (Ibid.:48) by seeking out like-minded peers similarly branded by society.

Within the context of the classroom teachers, as agents of social control, can act as facilitators to the affixing of labels on students (Hargreaves et al., 1975:145-48). Driven by a work itinerary, it becomes organizationally efficacious to categorize students according to their affinity to normative behaviour. Pupils are typed by teachers over time along the dimensions of appearance, conformity to academic and behavioural expectations,

modes of self-presentation ("likeability") and student-peer relations. Teacher assessment of deviance becomes stabilized to the point of concretization such that any signs of improvement are distrusted and negative reactions to misbehaviour are focused on the person rather than on the act. This shifting of teacher perspective to the person being deviant rather than the acts creates an interactionist dialogue from which the student cannot escape.

While concurring, Cohen (1955) views the variable of social class as having sizable import in the creation of a counter-cultural code of values. In the subculture of deviance, there exists a polar shift from the middle-class values placed on ambition, individual responsibility, the cultivation and possession of skills, good manners, deferred gratification, rationality, wholesome recreation, and respect for property (Ibid.: 88-91). The social code is reversed for the deviant; she/he pursues short-run hedonistic goals with little planning and forethought and does not cultivate socially approved skills in her/his spare time. Whereas a working class youth who ascribes to middle class values may suffer feelings of inferiority, one who joins the subculture of deviance sees himself as better than his educated, well-behaved, and aspiring mirror opposite (Ibid.:130-31).

Although Cohen (1955) ascribes acts of deviancy as being causally interlinked to an individual's expectations and his lack of material resources, this explanation may not be sufficiently robust in that there is also an underlying assumption of a positive

correlation between low intelligence (or lack of valued symbolic capital) and deviant behaviour. This latter assumption is open to dispute. For example, a Canadian study on early school leavers indicated that over 30% had grade averages of B or better (Globe and Mail, 17 Dec., 1991:A10). As well, assessment of students with behavioural problems relies to a great extent on the personal judgement of the professional to differentiate between a problem student and a talented student. A review of the literature on personality characteristics of the gifted person (Janos and Robinson, 1985:182) indicates that intellectually talented children share many of the same attributes as do those deemed deviant by the educational system. Gifted children of all ages are described as autonomous, self-sufficient, dominant, individualistic, self-directed and non-conforming. Further, people who are highly creative in verbal and arts subjects are high risks for conflict, disruption, impulsiveness and attention seeking -- behaviour that runs counter to organizational demands for conformity and is consequently in danger of being labelled as deviant.

Deviancy, then, may have more to do with the effective internalization of middle-class values in the context of changing economic conditions than with either intelligence or socioeconomic class itself. While Cohen (1955) attributed a sense of inadequacy as the primary driving force, in that subcultures attract individuals who feel that they lack the resources to live up to expectations, Contenta (1993:48-52) infers that youth gang activity has more to do with the unsuccessful inculcation of middle-class

values than with social class itself. Although the media and agencies of social control (police, childcare professionals) attempt to perpetuate the myth that such activity is isolated to the economically deprived, middle-class youth gangs exist in large urban centres like Toronto. As such, this phenomenon may have more to do with changes in the economic sphere of society where an increasingly rationalized, technologized and globalized economy has resulted in a poorer middle-class.

Longitudinal trends in the shifting demographics of families generally and middle-income families specifically suggest the vulnerability of the middle-class[26] in post-industrial society. From 1980-94, the proportion of American families whose earnings fell in the neighbourhood of the nation's median income (about $40,000 per year, pro-rated in constant 1993 dollars) has decreased significantly (United States, 1995:48). Compared to 1980, the percentage of families occupying the $35,000-$50,000 bracket had decreased by 11.3% by 1994, while the percentage of families who earned less than $35,000 had increased by 16%[27].

Given the downward economic pressure on the middle class, subscription to traditional values no longer translates into material well-being. As such, middle-class gang activity can be viewed as a sign of class entropy, a symptom of which is the failure of schools to effectively socialize respect for authority. For children of the middle class, pressures to succeed have increased the regulation of their lives as well as the potential for rebellion. No longer are their homes places of refuge from the

professional agents of social control, for the milk-and-cookies *pied-a-terre* era has lapsed with the disappearance of the post-World War Two Fordist economic era of high employment[28]. Contenta (1993:99-109) contends that the children of the middle class have internalized the long-term fears of their parents: fears of the future and of failure. Economic deregulation has acerbated parental efforts to pass on their class status to their kids to the extent of over-regulating their lives with activities whose purpose is to give them a good head-start in school and life. Children are being enrolled in programmes such as dancing, computer training and cooking, sometimes starting at the age of three (Contenta, 1993:103). It can be inferred, then, that the arena for youth resistance has been enlarging over time, that it is no longer isolated to members of the lower classes and that the root cause lies within the economic system.

Authority and School: The Metaphor of the "Total Institution"

A trans-class youth rebellion against the over-regulation of their lives has as its roots the common experiencing of authority and power relationships of schools. As such, analysis of total institutions such as prisons and mental asylums (Goffman, 1957:312-38) is useful as a metaphor -- albeit hyperbolic -- to envisage how students experience and react to the authoritarian structures and practices of schools on both a day-to-day and long term basis. Although day-schools do not have physical barriers[29] continuously

inhibiting communication with the outside, similarities include a dominative bureaucratic structure which coerces obedience, the predominance of super- and subordinate social roles, and the defensive adaptations of the internees. Comparison with other analyses (Willis, 1977; Hargreaves, 1975; Nelsen, 1991) that centre on the educational experience also indicate some commonalities, particularly with respect to ultimate outcomes. Acts of student resistance within schools merely impede the educational process while acts of resistance outside the educational arena have little effect on institutional functions. In either case the status quo relationship between students and school authorities remains unchanged.

All aspects of life in a total institution are under a single authority with a rigorous rule-bound scheduling of activities imposed from above and designed to fulfil an organizational plan in which the internees experience enforced behaviour in batches rather than on an individual basis. Authority is all-encompassing, such that misbehaviour in one sphere of activity will influence an inmate's qualitative experiencing of other activities. To facilitate institutionalization, a systematic stripping, or depersonalization, process occurs where apparel, behaviour and attitudes which are not conducive to realization of institutional goals are proscribed and the inmate is subjected to standardized patterns of defacement such as verbal criticisms. The "totalness" of institutionalized life is enhanced by the severe restriction of communication with the outside, including the regulation of any

"fantasy material" that encourages the visualization of alternate social realities.

There are two classes of individuals spawned by the institution, each with unique attitudinal attributes corresponding to their super- and sub-ordinate relationships of power. Staff act in a morally superior manner while inmates are infested with feelings of inferiority, such as guilt or self-blame. The role of staff is not one of guidance, but of surveillance and obedience to rules is encouraged by a clearly defined reward and punishment system. As such, the motivation for internees to work is not for money but for some other incentive, including fear of punishment.

Although adaptation by inmates to the daily abuses of institutional requirements occurs in the form of a general or normative response, four attitudinal tendencies predominate (Goffman, 1957:324-28). Generally, the interned population just wants to "mark good time" -- to live through the experience with minimal psychological and physical damage. However, overly passive forms of adaption may also occur in the form of either situational withdrawal or of "colonization". One may escape the situation by withdrawing psychologically or, as it is known in prisons, manifest symptoms of "stir simpleness" (Ibid.:325). Similarly, one may view life inside the institution as more desirable than life in the external society. In contrast, active adaptive processes may take polar forms of expression. Whereas rebelliousness comprises an attitude of flagrant non-cooperation with institutional goals, "conversion" signifies an inmate's vocal and behavioural

identification with institutional aims and methods.

In the face of an over-whelming authority structure, the general inmate population has historically evolved distinct patterns of association, language and a code of ethics. The enforced egalitarianism of the general population has engendered a fraternization process whereby people of varying social backgrounds share a common set of "counter-mores" (Ibid.:324). Self-reflecting values of inmates are historically embedded in a code of behaviour which prohibits an inmate from informing to the authorities over internecine problems. Those who do squeal are labelled according to the subcultural language as "finks" or "stoolies" and shunned.

Other than being bonded by a universal taboo against "finking" to those with formal power, only modest parallels can be found between Goffman's analysis and Willis's (1977) depiction of youth rebellion at a British working class secondary school. Internees are divided into two attitudinal categories, the authority-resisting "lads" and the status-quo conforming "earoles". Whereas the former value a type of shop-floor hands-on knowledge wherein texts and formal education over-complicate the real-world work situation, the earoles accept the precepts of educational meritocracy and the organizational requirement of passive obedience.

Ironically, it is the conformists who exhibit less belief in a natural order of power than do the lads (Ibid.:109-110). Whereas the former accept a non-ascriptive hierarchical division of authority on the basis of merit, the working-class culture of the

lads, even with their day-to-day acts of opposition, leaves them more amenable to recognize and accommodate the school's stratified division of power and authority.

Similarly, the views of the two groups differ on the value of professional instruction, of certification and of the intrinsic enjoyment of labour. At career sessions, instructional content becomes filtered out of the consciousness of the lads. As one member states, "After a while you tek no notice of him, he sez the same thing over and over again, you know?" (Ibid.:92). For them, being in school is merely a legal requirement because "qualifications and everything, you don't [need them], you just ask for a job and they give you a job" (Ibid.:93). Unlike the conformists who are more likely to enter into trade apprenticeship programmes, the lads do not believe that work is an expression of inner self but rather an unenjoyable means to achieve pleasurable ends.

As such, their time-frame orientation is not towards the future (Ibid.:98). Instead, theirs is an immediate-gratification, consumeristic culture of money, fun and things to do. It is a counter-cultural ethos that celebrates a rough-house masculinity and derides the cerebral orientation of the conformists: "They'm clever in some ways, they're clever with the maths and the sciences and the English, but they ain't clever in life. They'm underdogs to me" (Ibid.:95). With this "mystified celebration of menial work" (Ibid.:185), the penetration of a working class ethos surrounding work and knowledge into the classroom unintentionally

aids the process of social reproduction.

While Willis's study has limited applicability to Goffman's analysis of the social relationships that persist in total institutions, a closer mirroring of forms is suggested by expanding the scope of the schools examined. British educator David Hargreaves (1982:101-02) utilizes a four-fold typology of ideal types to describe student behaviour and identification with school values in educational situations that are more class-variated than that found in Willis's study. Two of these groups, *conformists* and *instrumentalists*, can be described as "winners". *Conformists* subscribe wholeheartedly to the school's value system, unaware of negative effects of the ethos of meritocracy. They are academically inclined, blissfully unaware of the inequities within the system and intent on continuing through university, followed by higher-status occupations. In contrast, *instrumentalists* have no illusions about the inherent values of the education process itself, but rather play the game mechanically to maximize grades and credentials. The *indifferent* and the *oppositionals* are the losers of the system. Whereas the former shuffle their way through school-days, are resigned to their lot and seek respite in daydreams, the *oppositionals* actively resist the rules of the game. They see it as their moral duty to maintain a defiant stance and are consequently viewed as having attitudinal or behavioural problems.

Whereas Hargreaves describes a situation wherein a large majority of students are perceived as docilely accepting status quo power and work relationships, other pedagogists have adopted an

antipodal interpretation of the nature and extent of resistance in the classroom. Critical pedagogists (Apple 1986, Giroux 1983, McLaren 1989) view classrooms as sites of potential change where the more overt forms of rebellion are merely the tip of the iceberg. As such, daydreaming in school or not doing homework may also be seen as acts of resistance since choosing not to act is in itself an act which will trigger consequences. Thus, the passive negation of classroom activity can be described as "ludic activity" (Grahame and Jardine, 1990:286) in that, while not having the dramatic effect of throwing a spanner into the works to halt production, does inhibit the rate of group progress.

However, active expressions of resistance may also imply greater degrees of consciousness and variability of outcomes. Whereas passive expressions allow for the realization of the hidden curriculum, overt disruptions -- such as "having a laff" in class (Willis, 1977) -- are a conscious process of affirmation of working class sensibilities surrounding work and education. As well, Nelsen (1991:24) points out extra-institutional acts such as skipping and dropping out may be regarded as both responsible and reasonable in that students are "voting with their feet" against the boredom of the school's curriculum and rule-boundedness. Similarly, the underlying assumption that school-leavers have nothing better to do with their time must be viewed within a historical context, in that the act of dropping out would not have been considered deviant in the 1950s and 1960s, when there was an abundance of well-paying jobs that required only low levels of

certification (Nelsen, 1991:17). However, the end results of either passive or active forms of resistances can be a deeper entrenchment of academic status quo. Since only involved students are likely to experience positive informational feedback from the teacher attention there is, then, a sense of how discontented students inadvertently act as agents in perpetuating the conditions of their oppression. As Crespo (1974:138) indicates, skippers may become caught up in a student-teacher interactionist process whereby, even if they are interested in catching up, they keep a low profile in class to avoid open censure by the teacher.

The organizational responses to student resistances can be viewed as forms of deviance in their own right in that they are indicative of a system that is more intent on maintaining social control than in generating outcomes that reflect the greatest possible good for society. There exists an underlying current within the discourse of critical pedagogy that deviance is more accurately manifested in the behaviour of the true believers, the conformists, whether they be students, teachers or bureaucrats. However, similar to capitalists in a Marxian analysis, this is through no fault of their own: they too are captives of a dominant ideology that dehumanizes all participants and would be best served by a dramatic restructuring of the social system.

Conclusion

Schools act as consciousness-conditioning agencies,

replicating class membership inter-generationally. Similarly, the type and quality of post-educational employment is not tied to merit, but rather is intimately interconnected with the type and quality of work experienced in the classroom. In terms of formal sociology, there is a correspondence between the power structure and the super- subordinate relationships found in schools and those found in the workplace.

Resistance by students is grounded in a rejection of the ideology of meritocracy together with a disbelief in its systemic inducements for obedience and compliance. The reward system of grades and future employment is not sufficient to successfully internalize organizationally desirable modes of behaviour. While the negative sanctioning of misbehaviour via labelling of deviancy is organizationally coherent, such misbehaving may be considered as logical responses to how students experience schools as total institutions. However, active or passive forms of such resistances do little to change the basic structure of the educational system in that it is intimately interlocked with other societal institutions, particularly the economic sphere.

The increasing failure of the education system to induce compliance is tied to changes in the economic sphere: to its increased use of sophisticated technology, its de-skilling of the labour force and its downward pressure on incomes. The successful internalization of middle-class values has been greatly set back by the shrinking membership of the class itself, a casualty of advanced capitalism.

CHAPTER SEVEN: SPRINGFIELD DATA: MERITOCRACY'S FAILINGS

Introduction

The Springfield data indicate that the ideology of meritocracy derives from a weak substantive basis and that the school system is more concerned with utilizing techniques of social control than with promoting the welfare of its students. There are only isolated instances of the inclusiveness of meritocracy. Nor do the system's "winners" get expected rewards of status elevation within their cohort. Quite the reverse, negative effects are observed, more so affecting members of the non-dominant social sectors. As well, the data indicated a wide range of behaviour resistant to modes of social control, behaviour which was accordingly defined as deviant from an administrative paradigmatic perspective.

As a function of the education system, social control is manifested by an internalized fear of failure, curriculum control, repression of motor activity, streaming, standardized testing and by the labelling of students. The fear of failure arises from a belief in the education system's temporally enduring power to affect one's well-being in both the present and the future. Control of curriculum content generates overt and covert forms of organizationally desired behaviour. Since the liberal arts lend themselves to lateral thinking, content was restricted to material promotive of dominant perspectives. In comparison, both the form and content of the sciences were promoted by organizational

authorities as embodying the desired epistemological orientation of the educational process.

Streaming was found to occur in both formal and informal modes, with standardized testing being a favoured tool of the former. Administrative faith in the scientistic powers of testing was not shaken by erroneous results despite the consequent labelling process suggesting that it is the standardized form of systemic education which does not allow students to reach their full potential.

Meritocracy

While some data from the Springfield sample appear to validate meritocracy's premise of inclusiveness they are dwarfed by examples to the contrary. Social control is manifested in an overt form in arts subjects and latently in science subjects whose closed paradigms and operationalizations tacitly support cognitive and behavioural passivity. Types of youth resistances to the education system and society are inter-connected by a cluster of variables including class, environment (educational, community and home), prior academic success and subscription to dominant middle class values. The faith of professionals in standardized testing exacerbates the negative consequences of labelling and streaming students. Overall, the data indicate that the social characteristics of class and gender appear to exert a major impact in a system where even the "winners" suffer negative systemic

consequences.

A portion of the data suggests that the student body at Springfield elementary school is ethnically diverse and has some degree of equal access to educational resources. The surnames of students indicates a culturally heterogeneous population ("Bart the General") while visual inspection of the student population in special education classes and in the elementary school's academically elite club, the Super Friends ("Bart's Comet") suggests a merit-based system that embraces both females and ethnics ("Bart the Genius")[30]. Universal inclusiveness is also displayed on a national level as evinced by the non-homogeneous social composition of state finalists in a speech-writing contest for school-children. Indeed, the winner -- Tron Van Damme -- is a recent Vietnamese immigrant who readily attests to his faith in America as a melting pot of equal opportunity, with success coming to those who work hard:

> When my family arrived in this country four months ago, we spoke no English and had no money in our pockets. Today we own a nation-wide chain of wheel-balancing centres. Where else but in America, or possibly Canada, could our family find such opportunity? ("Mr. Lisa ...")

However, evidence of the downside of the meritocratic culture of competitiveness is more dramatically manifested by both the winners and losers. For example, when a classmate dethrones Lisa Simpson from her previously unchallenged position as top student, she resorts to acts that would be classified as deviant in terms of a middle-class value orientation, but would be acceptable in the context of the hidden curriculum's -- and greater society's --

approbation of a winner. Her self-doubt is transparent: "I've got to stop being so petty. I should be Alison's friend, not her competitor. I mean ... she is a wonderful person" ("Lisa's Rival"). Although her will to act arguably demonstrates a transcendence of the traditional female role of passivity, she is further ensconcing herself in the dominant patriarchal system of values and rules by conforming to its norm of predatorial competitiveness.

In comparison, pursuing the path of conformity creates another of meritocracy's negative consequences in the form of overly passive behaviour, a phenomenon that is observable across the boundaries of age, class and gender. The Springfield data indicate a vertical homogeneity of submissiveness among all age groups of students who are successful in the school system. When Homer takes upgrading at the community college he is overwhelmed by the spiritual lethargy of its students, contending that "Someone's squeezed all the life out of them" ("Homer Goes to College").

A similar phenomenon exists at the grade four level. Subscription to the middle-class ethos of meaningful activity and deferment of pleasure is inculcated at an early age such that the ability to conceptualize commonplace youthful activity as fun shrivels, as do the possibilities of finding peer-group behavioural reinforcement. The qualitative contrast in life-styles can be drawn from the experience of Martin, a top-drawer student, who enjoys a brief hiatus from being a social pariah when he discovers the zestful joy of school yard horseplay. After a process of

familiarization with the cultural resources of youth (ie. slingshots, spray-paint cans) he realizes the superior properties inherent in self-actualizing activity:

> Who would have ever thought that pushing a boy into the girl's lavatory could be such a thrill? The screams! The humiliation! the fact that it wasn't me! ... Life's too short for tests! ("Bart the Genius")

For the winners, meritocracy's promise of elevated peer-group status is empty, with a greater pressure felt by those from lower-class backgrounds due to a loss of grounding in home and community life. Although both Martin and Lisa are abused physically (pushing, hitting) and verbally, by derogatory epitaphs such as brainiac, nerd and geekazoid ("Lisa's Rival"), Lisa is more highly stressed because of the disparity between her subscription to the middle-class belief system of school and the accepted norms within her family life. As well, her prioritization of success at school has the unintended consequence of sacrificing any popularity within her cohort, placing her in the school's subculture of merit that sets her apart from the mass of youth.

Both students share the same youthful naivete concerning their lack of friends, given that they live in a society where success is admired. Lisa bemoans: "I don't get it. Straight A's, perfect attendance, bathroom timer. I should be the most popular girl in school" ("Summer of 4'2"). Similarly, Martin is nonplussed over his own lack of popularity among his peers: "But...but my speed with numbers...my years of service as a hall monitor, my prize-winning dioramas? These things mean nothing to them?" ("Bart Gets

an F").

The type and quality of their conscious actions indicate the effective internalization of the hidden curriculum's function of reproducing society with respect to gender and class, irrespective of equality in terms of measured intelligence. Although subscribing to the same ethos of merit as Lisa, Martin is environmentally advantaged in that there is a close fit between the middle-class form and content of symbolic interaction at both home and school (his father is a stock-broker). However, differences between the two students lie in the degree of identification with the dominant ideology as manifested by conscious action. Martin identifies with the status quo so completely that, from a "total institution" perspective (Goffman, 1957), he takes on the role of the "stoolie" or "fink". After tattling on a schoolmate painting graffiti he seeks out the culprit in order to explain the logic of his actions, with no awareness of his victim's moral schema:

Martin: I was merely preventing the defacement of school property.
Bart: Eat my shorts.
Martin: Pardon!? ("Bart the Genius")

Similarly, when a child attempts to make an escape from the class room, he is quickly subdued and returned thanks to prior information from "someone on the inside" ("Summer of 4'2").

In comparison, Lisa experiences more drastic outcomes in the form of a fear of a life that is inadequately bounded by rules. Her anxiety over the vertiginous possibilities of too much freedom is demonstrated by her seeming addiction to education's rituals of power and passivity. She experiences a great psychological

discomfort when a teacher's strike disrupts her patterned life. Although a "strike preparedness kit" -- consisting of cafeteria style fish sticks, math book and a tape recording of normal school sounds such as a commencement bell and authoritarian commands such as "Sit up straight. Is that gum?" ("PTA Disbands") -- sustains her briefly, it lacks the rigid authoritarianism that has become an integral part of her life and she beseeches her mother with requests to "Evaluate me! Grade me!".

Fear as Mode of Social Control

This fear of freedom, together with a fear of failure and a fear of the future, is used by schools and by greater society to elicit approved patterns of behaviour. When considered in conjunction with the dimension of time, these three non-discrete components of a general state of being also indicate the close connections between the institutions of school and work. As such, the data suggest that the motivational component of fear is used as an instrument of social control to compel students to comply with organizational demands, and that this utilization of fear exists across the dimensions of time, class, gender and talent. When Bart is berated by school personnel over the impending probability of his failing grade four, he lashes back verbally:

> Ok, ok. Why are we dancing around the obvious. I know it, you know it. I am dumb, okay? Dumb as a post -- [you] think I'm happy about it? Look in my eyes! See the sincerity? See the conviction? See the fear? ("Bart Gets an F")

To study harder, he slaps himself repeatedly across the face,

saying "Do you want to be held back a grade" ("Bart Gets an F").

This fear of failure leads to the ascription of far-reaching powers to the institution of education and, consequently, to the belief by the individual in his powerlessness. Bart, on failing an oral book report on Treasure Island, visualizes himself in the future, still attempting to graduate from grade four (at the same time as his son) and still unable to absorb the required knowledge due to extra-curricular distractions. He attempts to explain as much to the teacher: "Look, lady. I got a peptic ulcer, my wife's hocking me for a new car, and I need a root canal. Will ya quit buggin' me about the stupid pirate? " ("Bart Gets an F").

The data also indicates that this fear of the future exists across gender and age categories and is interlocked with the practices in the economic sphere. In addition to Lisa's fear of freedom, her desire for the blanketing comfort of solid social boundaries, she also exhibits a fear of the future. She fantasizes about being stripped of her future U.S. presidency because of failing Grade two physical-education course ("Lisa on Ice"). For her as well, the powers of school exist across time. Her school grades together with teachers' comments form a body of literature that represents her life and can, at any time, rise up out of the past to pluck status and occupational attainment from her grasp. There is substance in her concern: her father found himself in a kindred situation, where the ongoing process of certification-inflation made him no longer qualified for the job he has held for ten years. He was reminded by his boss that "your job and the

future of your family hinges on your successful completion of Nuclear Physics 101" ("Homer Goes to College").

Anxiety is an ever-present condition in school, sustained by an awareness that status and privilege within the education system are ephemeral and based on incessant competition. There exists an ever-present undercurrent of concern that not only will future privileges be denied but past accomplishments will also be stripped away. When a bright, middle-class female student presents an unacceptable display for a diorama competition, the principal states "I'm beginning to regret skipping you ahead a grade" ("Lisa's Rival").

Curriculum as Mode of Social Control

The education system exerts a concerted effort to despoil student resources of creativity through the mediating effect of the curriculum's form and content in both the arts and sciences. Whereas passivity is promoted in the sciences by means of both the theory and the operational components of its methodology, compliant behavioural and cognitive patterns in the arts are usually brought about by controlling the body of curricular material. These strategies are expedited to decrease the possibility of students realizing the inherent contradiction between meritocracy and the democratic ideal of pluralistic universalism.

In terms of curriculum content, it is the maths and sciences

which best promote bureaucratic desires for measurable results. The rule-bound theory, together with the behaviour-delineating procedural nature of science, epitomizes the traditionalist desire for an ethos of order and punctuality. In a reflective moment Principal Skinner expresses these sentiments: "Ah, there's nothing more exciting than science. You get all the fun of sitting still, being quiet, writing down numbers, paying attention ... Science has it all" ("Bart's Comet"). As part of this paradigm, there exists a systemic valuing of any hum-drum, repetitive activity as being efficient, productive and hence enjoyable. However, his beliefs fail to convince a reluctant student:

> Skinner: Oh, licking envelopes can be fun. All you have to do is make a game of it ... for example, you can see how many you can lick in an hour, then try to break that record.
> Bart: Sounds like a pretty crappy game to me. ("Bart the Murderer")

The data also suggest that this belief in the ideology of science and its handmaiden, technology, exists in greater society. This is indicated by the regarding of computer aficionados as knowledgeable, powerful and moral agents. Homer iterates dominant societal beliefs in the innate superiority of these agents of technological growth: "They're geniuses. They'll solve all our problems. They'll elevate us to the status of kings on earth" ("Homer Goes to College").

In reality, the ideology of science is underpinned by a morally dubious infrastructure in that its value-neutrality can be used to justify anti-social or egoist behaviour. Homer's idealization of technocrats becomes deconstructed when three teen-

aged computer buffs move into the Simpson home and their computer fanaticism results in the appropriation of electricity from other household appliances. These actions in the familial setting indicate a lack of social skills and an egoistic self-centredness -- an unawareness of the negative impact that their monopolization of resources has on other people's lives. Similarly, in the larger social sphere of the community, they demonstrate the extent to which their belief system lacks grounding in the practices of modern life when they fall easy prey to a mugger posing as the unlikely authority figure of a "wallet inspector".

A comparable moral ambiguity surrounds the teaching of science at Springfield Elementary in that the school condones ethically dubious experimentation by students. Projects for a school science fair indicate the pervasive organizational acceptance of the scientific imperative. Any experiment is permissible as long as its methodology is correct, whether it be watching a potato sprout ("Dead Putting Society"), attempting to prove that a sibling is dumber than a hamster (by the creative usage of electrical current) or "wasting squirrels with BB guns" ("Duffless").

In comparison to the sciences, the arts are not dominated by a ruling paradigm or methodology. As such, possibilities are more likely to exist for awareness of the essential contradictions between the control mechanisms of education and the nominal ideal of universal inclusiveness. Lisa experiences the irresolvable nature of these two sets of beliefs on a personal level and on a day-to-day basis in her music class. When she breaks out into a

jazz improvisation her instructor, Mr. Largo, voices censure: "...I hope we don't have another outbreak of creativity" ("Moaning Lisa"). Believing this to be a misunderstanding, in that this artistically narrow and authoritarian stance debases the democratic ideal, she feels compelled to explain the interconnections between her music and her belief system: "That's what my country's all about ... I'm wailing for the homeless family living out of a car. The idle farmer whose land has been taken away by the uncaring bureaucrat. The West Virginia coal-miner caught ... (sic)". However, this musical representation of the experiences of sub-cultural groups in America is denigrated by Largo as "those unpleasant people". As gatekeeper to dominant culture, he sees it as his role to keep other musical expressions at bay, whether it be the non-linearity of jazz or the buoyant tunes of childhood, such as "Pop Goes the Weasel" ("PTA Disbands").

It appears that this lesson of the hidden curriculum, that non-dominant cultural forms of expression are not valued in the education system is being effectively internalized into students' consciousnesses. As well, this "knowledge" is percolating down to the microsocial level of the family and, at least in the Simpson's family, is achieving a materially and temporally durable form. This can be surmised from Lisa's explanation of her contribution to the family's memory quilt, where each generation embroiders a scene depicting a memorable event of dramatic personal importance:

> Look Mom, I've finished my patch. It depicts the two greatest musical influences in my life. On the left is Mr. Largo, my music teacher at school? He taught me that even the noblest concerto can be drained of its beauty and soul.

> And on the right is Bleeding Gums Murphy. He taught me that music is a fire in your belly that comes out of your mouth, so you better stick an instrument in front of it. ("Bart's Dog Gets an F")

In contrast to Largo, her informal teacher has shown her that individual action, when mediated through a suitable instrument can create a beautiful cultural form that is not dependent on historically established, stereotypical modes of thought or expression. Given that both of these instructors are important enough to be included in the family tapestry suggests that there is a certain acceptance by this young working class girl of the essentially unreconcilable nature of the two cultural visions and that the dominant perspective will not gain absolute hegemonic control of all subcultural expressions. As such, in contrast to other data indicating her acquiescence to organizational modes of thought and behaviour, within this area of Lisa's life there exists an attitude of acknowledgement, not compliance.

However, the continued use of overt techniques by teachers is reinforced daily by the mass of students passively submitting to the commands of control. For example, students readily comply when a teacher, lacking instructional material, directs students to "lay down their pencils and stare at the front of the classroom" for the last ten minutes of class. Obedience is reinforced by the continual use of administrative stratagems such as having the entire student body marching in military lockstep ("Team Homer"), checking to see if there is "a trace of urine" in the playground sandbox ("Whacking Day") or patrolling the school yard issuing directives such as "You there! Tuck in your shirt" ("Crepes of Wrath").

Resistance and Deviation

The data suggest that the school system generates varieties of student resistances and that males and lower-class students are more likely to participate in this behaviour. Rebellion/deviance exists along an active-passive continuum and may be directed against the school itself or incorporate other social arenas as well. With subcultural groups tending to adhere to a value system antipodal to the middle-class mores of the educational system, institutional stratagems to motivate the actively rebellious or the bored and disinterested students are ineffectual.

Teachers, rather than address the issue of boredom and discontent in the classroom, attempt to modify student behaviour in more overt ways. One oft-used negative sanction for student behaviour is that of verbal haranguing which, although its content may assume an additive tendency over time, is ineffective against one who does not subscribe to schooling's merit-based belief system. As such, these diatribes may be perceived as merely background noise to the student. An illustrative example is as follows:

> Mrs. Krabappel: Your grades have gotten steadily worse since the beginning of the term. Are you aware of that?
> Bart: Yes ma'am.
> Mrs. K.: Are you aware that there is a major exam tomorrow on colonial America?
> Bart: Yes ma'am.
> Mrs. K.: Blah blah, blah-blah. Blah blah blah blah?
> Bart: Yes ma'am.
> Mrs. K.: Blah blah. Blah-blah, blah blah blah.
> Bart: Yes ma'am.
> Mrs. K.: Bart! You haven't been paying attention to a word I've been saying to you.

Bart: Yes ma'am.
Mrs. K.: Well then, what did I say?
Bart: Uhhhh...straighten up and fly right?
Mrs. K.: Pah! Just a lucky guess. ("Bart's Dog Gets an F")

Resistance against cognitive and behavioural control mechanisms as well as their corollary, boredom, is evident within and without the school in both passive and active forms. Examples of modes of passive resistance include incomplete homework assignments, non-preparedness for tests or by daydreaming in class about building giant mechanical ants that will destroy the building ("Marge vs. the Monorail"), burning down the school (with special attention on putting "a torch to these permanent records" ("Kamp Krusty")) or that the teacher's face is merely a latex facade covering the visage of an alien ("Separate Vocations").

Active resistors can be divided into two sets of students: those who focus on the school itself as the source of pain, and those whose rebellion is more diffuse and directed against society in general. School-focused resistance includes activity such as school vandalism, cheating on tests and skipping classes. Action, for some, springs from a conscious ideological base; after spearheading the demoralization of a succession of supply teachers one hellion opines: "In my weaker moments I almost pity them. Then I remind myself, they're trying to teach" ("PTA Disbands). Similarly, the administrative valuing of passivity is challenged by a rejection of scientists as role models in preference to a more vibrant pantheon: "Those do-gooders are all a bunch of pitiful losers...every last one of them. For the real heros you have to go to the Schwarzeneggers, the Stallonnes and, to a lesser extent, the

Van Dammes" ("Radioactive Man").

A more generalized anti-social resistance exists in the form of uni-gendered youth gangs[31]. These groups of boys and girls appear to be comprised of the lowest academic achievers and indulge in a more traditionally termed form of deviance directed at both the school and at greater society by acts such as smoking in the washroom, bullying, school vandalism ("Separate Vocations") and shop-lifting ("Tell-Tale Head"). The group norms are polar to those of larger society and anyone buying into its middle-class system of values is considered a fool. When a student voices pride for having been editor of the school yearbook, one gang member pipes up: "If you wouldn't have, some other loser would, so stop milking it" ("Summer of 4'2"). In contrast, gang values indicate pride in anti-socially approved behaviour: one member brags about the number of movie theatres from which he has been ejected ("Tell-Tale Head").

However, limited conclusions can be drawn concerning the social characteristics of deviants as defined by dominant societal norms. Although the data are relatively limited, they suggest that there exists some gender difference in that males are more physically abusive and extort lunch money from the weaker students ("Homer vs. Patty..."; "Separate Vocations"). As well, gangs cannot be categorized as being comprised of one economic class. Although the male leader lives in shanty-like conditions ("Bart On the Road"), one of his followers owns his own motor-scooter ("New Kid ...") -- which may be an indication of high family income or

merely a classless phenomenon of part-time work common to cash-strapped students.

Although class and gender differences do exist with respect to the school-focused form of deviance, they do so only to the degree of individual identification with the schooling process. Bart and his middle-class friend exhibit different degrees of internalization of school norms, as shown by their separate reactions to the possibility of skipping school:

> Milhouse: Do you hear that, Bart? That was the tardy bell. Truant! Truant! Truant, they'll all say! [runs off screaming]
> Bart: Aw, who needs him? I can have fun all by myself. ("Homer vs. Patty and Selma")

In comparison, Bart's sister views non-attendance as an abomination which, although indicative of school's generally greater success instilling passivity in females, is also due to her success in the system. When she comes down with the mumps she prevails upon her mother to let her attend class: "I'll make it mom. Just tape the lunch box to my hand", and asks her brother to bring her homework. A nonplussed Bart replies "Lisa, you wasted chicken pox. Don't waste the mumps!" ("Bart's Dog Gets an F").

Lisa's over-dependence on school can be interpreted as a form of deviance in its own right, not so much due to any psychological predisposition, but rather as the desired outcomes of the educational system. Concomitant with her success in the culture of merit, she has succumbed to accepting authority and regulated behaviour as normal and necessary. However, both her own and Bart's behaviour and educational experience change dramatically

when they fall victim to errant ability-testing (and professional credulity) and become re-labelled and re-streamed.

Streaming

Evidence suggests that both the informal and formal types of streaming exist in Springfield. Numerous examples demonstrate that students are seated in a hierarchical arrangement with the more academically inclined situated at the front of the class, a phenomenon that one student quaintly describes as "only geeks sit in the front seat" ("Bart Gets an F"). However, only one example from the data hesitantly suggests that ability nomenclature is also used as a grouping technique. One of the less-academically-inclined grade two students proudly proclaims his aptitude in one area of classroom activity: "Oh boy, sleep. That's where I'm a Viking" ("Lisa the Vegetarian").

Formal streaming occurs via standardized ability-measurement tools such as the IQ test and the occupationally predictive Career Aptitude Normalization Test (CANT). Administration's faith in the accuracy of such testing devices generally is evident by Skinner's comment when he recognizes a former student working in a restaurant: "Nearly 30, and still working as a busboy. Standardized testing never lies" ("Principal Charming"). This faith in the causal interlinking of measured intelligence, schooling and financial success is succinctly stated by one Springfield teacher: "These tests merely determine your future

status and social success, if any" ("Bart the Genius"). Evidence of the historical embeddedness of the CANT test in educational assessment is demonstrated by the sign outside the national processing agency: "Iowa Testing Centre. Controlling Your Destiny Since 1925" ("Separate Vocations").

The reliability of these vocational tests appears questionable in that sometimes their accuracy appears random due to either test design[32] or technical problems. With respect to the former, although the future of a top academic is convincingly predicted to be a computer systems analyst, the test also forecasts a career of military strongman for a mild-mannered classmate. Technical flaws, in the form of a computer error, result in both Lisa and Bart being misdiagnosed as to future careers, commencing a process that underscores the possible negative effects of testing on students.

Lisa's case is a prime example of how consequent labelling could set up a chain of events that not only crush the aspirations and talents of a child but may also lead to socially-defined deviant behaviour. Pronounced to have a future career as a low-status "homemaker"[33], she rapidly devolves through the stages of labelling theory outlined by Lemert (1972). Initial denial and depression is replaced by anger, acts of rebellion, social disapproval and the seeking out of like-minded peers. She rejects her old friends and activities (such as spelling bees and playing in the school orchestra), becomes surly and rude in class, cultivates relations with the school's "bad girl" clique and finally participates in acts of petty vandalism and theft. The

interconnection between test results and her new anti-authoritarian stance escapes the awareness of school authorities. When queried by the principal as to "what are you rebelling against", her succinct reply is "Whaddya got?" ("Separate Vocations").

Professionals act as catalytic agents in her downward spiral both because of their faith in testing and because of a societal belief in their superior knowledge. School principal Skinner readily accepts the test results despite her prior outstanding performance. Her avocational aspirations, already under siege by her school's music teacher, are decimated by the pronouncements of a professional musician that her lack of innate ability (stubby fingers) disqualifies her from ever becoming a world-class saxophone player. Her youthful optimism is replaced by a cloud of gloom:

> I'll be unappreciated in my own country, but my gutsy blues stylings will electrify the French. I'll avoid the horrors of drug abuse, but I do plan to have several torrid love affairs, and I may or may not die young. I haven't decided yet. ("Separate Vocations")

As she explains in her diary, "This may be my last entry, for you were a journal of hopes and dreams. And now, I have none" (Ibid.).

In contrast, her brother's experiences with the errant CANT test indicate the beneficial effects of affixing a positive label to a student. For Bart, there occurs a regenerative transformation from his previous "bad boy" label to one closer to the organizational ideal. Authority figures begin to relate positively towards him, his grades improve and he accepts a position of responsibility at the school as hall monitor.

Similarly, environmental factors play a prominent role when an errant IQ test result indicates that Bart is intellectually gifted. When Bart receives an exceptional score authorities are quick to deny a filing-cabinet drawer full of contradictory evidence of his past misdeeds rather than faulting the measurement device. Reinforcement of the IQ tests's validity are further supplied by the authoritatively acceptable technique of measuring Bart's head with calipers. Further, a professionally-administered oral quiz concerning his attitudes and aspirations ascertains that previous behavioural irregularities had been misdiagnosed as evidence of deviance. Bart's boredom, frustration and desire to "leave class to pursue [his] own intellectual development on an independent basis" ("Bart the Genius") indicated high intelligence rather than deviancy. The rule-bound form and non-interesting content of the mass-education programme are now assessed as being the causes of his poor outcomes. Ironically, this assessment may be true despite the seemingly contradictory evidence of subsequent events.

When sent to a school for gifted children, Bart fails to live up to estimated abilities. He becomes deeply unhappy, not only because of estrangement from his peers but also because of an unfamiliarity with the school's forms of symbolic manipulation, forms that are irrelevant to his experiencing of daily life. For example, some students choose to speak in palindromes and backwards phonetics, the teacher conveys humour by arithmetic notation, and classroom interaction demanded versatility with both physical (ie. scientific) and metaphysical (ie. "free will") concepts.

Therefore, Bart's poor performance in an environment that is not compatible with his accustomed modes of expression and patterns of thought does not necessarily indicate a lack of intelligence.

Indeed, other data indicate that the lad has high analytical and creative abilities in both the arts and the sciences if allowed to follow his own informal agenda of education. During a period of peer-isolated convalescence, he invents his own games, begins writing a play and berates Lisa for not informing him about an optics festival ("Bart of Darkness"). This evidence of inquisitive intelligence suggests that his non-usage of informational resources available in the community may, in part, be a reaction to being labelled as an academic loser. For example, his unfamiliarity with the workings of the public library is evident when he visits it with his sister:

> Bart: Lisa, we can't afford all these books!
> Lisa: Bart, we're just gonna borrow them.
> Bart: Oh... heh,... gotcha![wink] ("Dead Putting Society")

However, once exposed to the library, he uses it for independent research in an altruistic attempt to save the town from making a decision detrimental to community well-being ("Whacking Day"). Similarly, he shows his ability to apply school knowledge in both the arts and the sciences to novel situations. His metaphorical comparison of a famous occurrence with a present situation allows him to squeak a passing grade in a history test ("Bart Gets an F") while his practical use of scientific knowledge is demonstrated by spelling his name in bold letters on the school lawn with carbon tetrachloride ("Principal Charming").

Conclusion

The data suggest various conclusions. Negative consequences of subscription to meritocratic ideology are apparent across time, class and gender, with data supporting a process of reproduction of class and gender relations being the most in evidence. The institution of education attempts to introduce an element of social stability by open disapproval of non-dominant forms of cultural expression, Although this knowledge appears to be internalized into the knowledge base of the family, the data also suggest irreconcilable differences that may be connected to subcultural social beliefs.

The system also promotes social stability through its practices of testing, streaming and labelling students as winners and losers, or as gifted and deviant. Some of those who are organizationally defined as losers and who resist a system perceived as weighted to favour those privileged with symbolic and material resources, are also defined as deviating from social norms -- a range of behaviour encompassing a rejection of middle-class norms of thought and behaviour to physical acts against persons or property. In contrast, the winners betrayed a form of humanistically-defined deviance as indicated by their narrow perspectives and diminished peer groups.

As well, an institutionalized labelling process, legitimized by the professional attitudes and the science of standardized testing, was found to affect student outcomes. While the effects

of negative labelling were aggravated by streaming and standardized testing, the beneficial effects of positive labelling were dependent on reinforcing environmental variables.

CHAPTER EIGHT: SPRINGFIELD DATA: SOCIAL REPRODUCTION

Introduction

The data indicate that, overall, the social characteristics of class and gender tend to be reproduced intergenerationally in a highly traditionalist fashion. With respect to gender roles, women appear to be active agents in the transformation of society, principally from the locus of the family. On a larger scale, although the feminist movement is historically embedded, its ideals do not appear to be lived out on structural or day-to-day levels. In comparison, the male segment of the population is found to occupy a position of power and privilege, a situation that it seeks to perpetuate through media bias, the enforcement of laws and the dynamics of the family. While there exists an incredible force of conservatism displayed by the words and actions of the Simpsons' male members, its female component gives evidence of sustained longitudinal change across generations. This is possible, in part, due to the family's non-reliance on religious orthodoxy to justify normative gender relations, thus creating a social environment that is more disputatious and conducive to change than is found in other sectors of society.

Similar to gender, there is evidence of an omnipresent force of social stasis that reinforces the perpetuation of class membership longitudinally across generations. On the familial level, as represented by the Simpsons, this is manifested in two

diverse forms. For the males, it is represented by a rudimentary class analysis that is defiant of authority, views work as a commodity that should be withheld from those in positions of control, and values both hands-on work and on-the-job training over cerebral forms of knowledge assimilation. As such, the attitudinal stance is contradistinct to the female Simpsons' sense of class shame and their subscription to middle class beliefs surrounding work, the value of education and the neutrality of the meritocratic system. However, there also exists contradictory evidence that suggests a similar confidence in authority and a desire for class mobility on the part of Homer Simpson. Thus said, there are generally two gender-based elements which tend to unintentionally reproduce working class membership: the active resistance to authority by males and the passive acceptance by females.

The data also displayed evidence that middle-class parents place more emphasis and expend more effort on education in order to enhance the future status of their children. In so far as the home is the primary locus in the acquisition of forms of symbolic capital that are institutionally valued their offspring gain a head start in life. As well, there were indications of a correspondence between the means and ends of the educational system and other social institutions (ie. business, leisure and penal), thus suggesting an overarching ideology which is mirrored in all aspects of personal and institutional life.

Reproduction in Gender Roles

Although the data indicate the existence of a feminist movement, social change towards greater gender egalitarianism is only somewhat evident on the micro and macro levels of society. Indeed, there is an abundance of data indicating that adherence to the repressive norm of male dominance continues, with females being institutionally subverted by the schools, the media and the family. Above all, the historically repressive nature of society against women finds its regenerative force within the family structure. Herein, women act as agents of their own suppression by subscribing to the dominant ideologies.

Evidence of a societal acknowledgement and a historical embeddedness of the women's rights movement is demonstrated by the existence of a memorial statue in the nation's capital commemorating the 1910 Floor Mop Rebellion of early feminist Winnifred Beecher Howe. Its inscription reads: "I will iron your sheets when you iron out the inequities in your labour laws" ("Mr. Lisa ..."). However, the lack of visitors to the statue suggests that beliefs of feminism are not realized in the day-to-day practices of men and women.

This is most evident on the micro-social level of the Simpson household where the data strongly suggest that the male breadwinner acts to maintain a division of work and power that furthers male ends. Much of Homer's proclaimed affection for his wife appears to be dependent upon her fulfilment of household duties that

incorporate the subservient roles of compánion, nanny and domestic. Although he professes he loves her, "and not just because of the sex and the food preparation" ("Marge in Chains"), he is neither at ease with the idea of his wife working outside of the home, nor can he accept her success in her occasional forays into the work-for-wage world ("Marge Gets a Job"), at one point even publicly ridiculing her ("The Springfield Connection"). When he loses his job, Homer falls upon the only solution that his narrow male-provider outlook can envisage as coherent: "Here's the plan. You and the kids move in with your sisters and I'll die in the gutter. It's practical and within our means" ("Blood Feud"). Since his male role in the social arena exterior to the home is delineated by a stand-alone ethos of individualism, it excludes helping with domestic chores. As such, the home front suffers generally because he does not aid in his wife's time-consuming multiple roles. Since his patterned behaviour precludes the development of domestic skills, the household experiences rapid environmental decay during Marge's brief excursions into the larger economic sphere. During one of these fiscal emergencies Homer laments to her that: "... not that long ago you were so much more to me: you were a cleaner of pots, a sewer of buttons, an unclogger of hairy clogs" ("Springfield Connection"). Even during times of relative economic stasis he cannot comprehend that a women's domestic work may not be sufficiently rewarding: "But Marge, you do get to express yourself in the lovely home you keep and the food that you prepare" ("Two Cars ...").

Although the data indicate that Marge plays an active part in the perpetuation of her submissive role, it also suggests that the seeds of active change lie within her. There is a sense of developmental struggle against the effects of a socialization process that emphasized a passive, home-oriented role for women. Her childhood ambition to be an astronaut was crushed by the ridicule of her siblings ("Separate Vocations") and, although she excelled academically, she terminated her formal education after high school to get married and devote her full energies to raising a family. Her continuous subordination of self to the will of others generates outcomes that are the opposite of her original altruistic intent. As such, her admission of being "fearful of the unfamiliar" ("Moaning lisa") is perhaps a product of being house-bound twenty-three hours a day ("Marge Be Not Proud").

In a similar fashion, she attempts to replicate the conditions of her own subjugation in her daughter. Her own familial upbringing stressed the importance of repression as a positive social function "because people know how good a mommy you have by the size of your smile" ("Moaning Lisa"). She advises her daughter that "it doesn't matter how you feel inside ... it's what shows up on the surface that counts. That's what my mother taught me. Take all your bad feelings and push them down ... and you'll fit in, and you'll be invited to parties, and boys will like you, and happiness will follow" (Ibid.).

While acknowledging the coercive influences of past history (and the potentiality of their continuous rebirth in daily

practices), the locus of progressive change also lies in the female component of the family unit and appears to be additive over time. Marge senses that she is trapped under the weight of familial (and societal) history and is merely mouthing male patriarchal madness. She acknowledges that there are unacceptable levels of feminine passivity and recants to her daughter, "I was wrong, I take it all back. Always be yourself" (Ibid.).

For her part, Lisa can be viewed as a child of the feminist movement as experienced from within her family as well as within the context of greater society. As such, despite her conservative beliefs surrounding the institution of education she acts in both spheres to realize liberatory ideals. In terms of larger society, she lobbies for a change in the vocal messages of a popular talking doll and is successful in replacing their sexist content with material more appropriate for the egalitarian socialization of females in the 1990s ("Lisa vs. Malibu Stacey"). This process of actualizing emancipatory goals is further demonstrated by her creation of a Thanksgiving centrepiece which is "a tribute to the trailblazing women who made our country great," ("Bart vs. Thanksgiving"), by her visit to Winnifred Howe's memorial, and by the literature that she reads -- which includes the anti-establishment Utne Reader ("King-Size Homer") as well as the role-modelling "Bonnie Brown, Girl Lawyer" ("Bart's Friend Falls in Love"). Lisa's efforts to be an active agent of change also include pre-school instructional lessons with her baby sister, attempting to raise her cultural capital prior to enrolment in

kindergarten:

> Lisa:[showing Maggie flash cards] Maggie, look! What's that? Lemur. [slowly] Le-mur. [next card] Zebu. [slowly] Ze-bu.
> Marge: [watching Lisa show Maggie flash cards] What's a zebu?
> Lisa: It's like an ox, only it has a hump and a dewlap. [indicating to Maggie] [sweetly] Hump, and a dewlap! Hump and dewlap! ("Blood Feud")

However, a word of caution must be voiced in this optimistic portrayal of Lisa as the embodiment of future feminism. The young woman faces onerous incentives to conform to the expectations of a male-dominated society. At the age of eight, she has already been induced -- by her father -- to enter a beauty pageant ("Lisa the Beauty Queen"). That she resorted to tactics such as rubbing Vaseline on her teeth to create a gleaming smile is indicative of her desire for social approbation for her physical beauty. As well, during a summer vacation she tried on a new persona of stereotypical youth (complete with the subcultural semiotics of dress and speech) with a group of newly-found friends, denying intimate acquaintance with anything hinting of scholarship (such as the public library) and citing only approved cultural forms (such as television programmes) as the source of her abundant knowledge ("Summer of 4'2"). Given that there is a tendency for post-pubescent females to become more concerned with their looks and popularity and less with academic achievement, this may bode ill for Lisa's future, especially since the only font of feminism that appears to exist in the data is in the academic milieu of higher education.

Limited conclusions can be drawn from our data on the

effectiveness of a campus-centred feminist movement generating greater social change. Although there is wide-spread disapproval of female assault ("Homer Bad Man"), sexual harassment at the job site still appears to be an accepted norm ("The Springfield Connection"; "Marge Gets a Job"). However, that the campus is a rare enclave wherein the issues of liberation are actively discussed suggests its importance as a possible source of change in gender relations . As such, the removal of educational roadblocks that hinder females from reaching their full educational potential appears to be a positive social objective. Unfortunately, the data suggest that schools are neither generating equal opportunities within their own (relatively) closed systems nor affecting positive change in greater society. Within the Springfield education system there is a dearth of role models, with none of the female staff working in an administrative position, there is no evidence of curricular material that focuses on the "heroines" of history and the gender composition of those who excel in the sciences is decidedly male, by a ratio of five to one ("Bart's Comet").

In comparison to the sense of incipient potentiality betrayed by the female Simpsons, the male component actively attempts to recreate traditional gender roles and relations. In a heart-to-heart talk with his son, Homer reproduces the consciousness of domination when passing on his consumeristic views of women as chattel:

> Son, a woman is a lot like a ... a beer. They smell good, they look good, you'd step over your own mother just to get one! [downs the beer] But you can't stop at one. You wanna drink another woman! ("New Kid on the Block")

Homer's actions, independent of his wife's ameliorating influence, are the embodiment of an individualistic, self-serving, and all-consuming capitalism[34]. Homer Simpson will, if given the chance, exploit all the resources under his power. He misuses his friends, his neighbours and his family: he capitalizes on the affections of his wife daily, he is flexible enough to draw on the mathematical abilities and intelligence of his daughter to gamble successfully ("Lisa the Greek)"; he indiscriminately ravages household products (prepared food, beer, scented toilet soaps); and he despoils household finances to feed his own unending ravenous appetites. As an example of the latter, to keep up appearances with his neighbour, Homer splurges $125 on a pair of sneakers which he then attempts to rationalize to his wife:

> Marge: I thought we agreed to consult each other before any major purchases.
> Homer: Well, you bought all those smoke alarms, and we haven't had a single fire. ("Bart's Dog Gets an F")

The continuance of established male-female power relations is abetted by both the form and the content of popular media. While its uni-directional communicative form does not lend itself to participatory inclusiveness, the content betrays a biased perspective not only generally in its traditionalist gender portrayals, but also specifically in its antagonistic depiction of women who rebel against patriarchal authority. Data suggest that the advertising and programming available on television are indicative of this media's utility as an instrument of social control. As such, Homer's use of beer as a metaphor for women is appropriate in that this beverage is depicted in advertising as a

suppressant of feminism. For example, one commercial shows a group of co-ed demonstrators being transformed into party-hungry bikini-clad beach bunnies after being sprayed with beer by construction workers ("Duffless").

Similarly, the gendered perspective that the news media adopt on a breaking story illustrates its role as an agent of social control targeting women. When Marge aids a neighbour, irate at her ex-husband's non-payment of child-support, in stealing his car, social approbation and denouncement are clearly distinguished along the lines of gender and power. Although her daughter approves, her son does not:

> Lisa: I always knew mom would violently rise up and cast off the shackles of her male oppressors"
> Bart: Aw, shut your yap. ("Marge on the Lam")

Kindred values of a male-dominated society are reiterated in the commentary from the local news anchorman, complete with reference to a higher authority that traditionally supersedes the rational-legal:

> At the risk of editorializing, these women are guilty, and must be dealt with in a harsh and brutal fashion. Otherwise, their behaviour could incite other women leading to anarchy of biblical proportions. [Pause] It's in "Revelations", people! ("Marge on the Lam")

The overall sense of women's powerlessness in a society where ostensibly fair and neutral systems are subordinated to the will of a dominant male sector can be gleaned from the pithy summarization of one bedraggled victim: "I give up. A single woman can't win in a man's world" ("Marge on the Lam").

With the exception of the Flanders, the Simpsons' middle-

class, self-employed neighbours, data concerning the internal dynamics of other families are sketchy but suggest a local society in which traditional gender roles appear to be the societal norm[35]. Compared to the Flanders, the adult Simpsons have at least the spirit of negotiation, whereas the lives of the former are more strictly ruled by the proscriptions of Christianity. Thus, while the Simpsons' home is often an open arena of dissension over major and minor issues (such as vacation plans and child-rearing), the daily lives and actions of the Flanders are docilely guided by the Final Authority as embodied in the Unquestionable Tract of a mean-spirited patriarchal god.

In sum, although wider society does appear to acknowledge some of the concerns of women's liberation, traditional gender roles appear to be the societal norm overall. With respect to the working class family of the Simpsons, only the actions of its feminine component indicate progressive change is afoot. The male portion is a bastion of conservatism, comfortable in the daily rewards it reaps from the female quarter. This suggests that social constraints weigh heavily against the futures of young women isolated in traditionalist families. However, the data also tentatively indicate that hope for positive progressive change exists in the form of university level education, with its concurrent exposure to a progressive social and epistemological milieu.

Reproduction in Class and Work

The data indicated that each class tends to reproduce its members intergenerationally especially with respect to gender roles. Homer Simpson communicates a rudimentary class analysis which valorizes working class values, rejects the cerebral orientation of schooling and maintains a contentious stance against any authoritarian control. In contrast, his wife evinces a belief in the ethos of meritocracy and in the neutral machinations of the educational bureaucracy. There is a correspondence between the practices and outcomes of organizational forms which (hesitantly) indicate the existence of an all-encompassing social ideology in which the ideologies of meritocracy and science are but subsets.

Whereas both the adult Simpsons are active agents in fostering the concept of class differences in their progeny, it is Homer who views it as a contentious arrangement, with class membership being defined over time and in part by the educational system. Homer's comprehension of class relations is rooted in his own educational experiences and is intellectually formulated as being comprised of a rudimentary us-and-them binary oppositiveness[36]. In the elementary grades the in-group entails all students, while the bureaucratic controllers form the out-group. At some point in high school, students are sorted into groups either allied or opposed to ruling interests and typologized as either "jocks" or "nerds". Whereas the former value living viscerally in current time (ie. dating, cars, parties), the latter are future-oriented in their

drab, scholastic pursuits. As such, there exists a natural antipathy between the two groups that extends into the experiencing of post-secondary education. In Homer's own words: "There are two kinds of college students: jocks and nerds. As a jock, it is my duty to give nerds a hard time" ("Homer Goes to College")]. As indicated from the semiotic composition of his terminology, his analysis, with its interplay between bonding and physical activity, is wrapped in an ethos of masculinity. It is also embryonically embedded in the mores of male youth in the form of a school yard code which prohibits informing bureaucratic authorities about in-group tensions. When Bart incurs the wrath of the school bully, parental responses indicate both the longitudinal and the gendered nature of this phenomenon:

> Marge: Well, Bart, I hope you're going straight to the principal about this.
> Bart: I... guess I could do that.
> Homer: What!? And violate the code of the school yard!? I'd rather Bart die!
> Marge: What on earth are you talking about, Homer!?
> Homer: The code of the school yard, Marge! The rules that teach a boy to be a man ... Don't tattle. ("Bart the General")

In contrast to her husband, Marge acts as a force that unintentionally creates conditions conducive to intergenerational class stasis. Marge's response to her daughter's observation about the life style of the local upper class is indicative of both her effective internalization of middle-class values as well as her coexisting attitudes of humility and class-shame:

> Lisa: The rich are different from you and me.
> Marge: Yes, they're better. ("Scenes from a Class Struggle")

At the heart of her invidious submissiveness is an underlying

belief in existing social structural arrangements and a disbelief in the teleological assumption that disputatious human agency changes the structure of society for the better: "I guess one person can make a difference, but most of the time, they probably shouldn't" ("Itchy and Scratchy and Marge").

This passive orientation is further demonstrated by an implicit faith in the espoused meritocratic fairness and neutrality of the educational bureaucracy in its assessment procedures of students' abilities, a faith that exists in conjunction with a lack of working class awareness of how personal influence can affect results in an administrative arena. When queried by her daughter as to why a middle-class classmate skipped a grade and she didn't, the following conversation ensued:

> Lisa: Why am I still rotting away in the second grade instead of being skipped ahead?
> Marge: I dunno honey, I guess that's the school's decision to make.
> Lisa: Well, did you ever talk to anyone at the school? Make a few calls on my behalf? Maybe you could have been "nicer" to Principal Skinner, if ya know what I mean.
> Marge: Lisa! ...I <u>am</u> <u>nice</u>. ("Lisa's Rival")

Marge's underlying belief in the virtues of middle-class values is demonstrated by the wise investment of her leisure time even in high school. As she explains to an old classmate, the limitations of material and social capital prevented her from interacting with people of higher social calibre: "We ran with different crowds. You had your debutante balls and...skinny-dipping, and I had my...home shoe repair course [sic]" ("Scenes from a Class Struggle").

While the role of education may well ameliorate the class

conditions for at least one of the Simpson progeny, material capital will still remain a limiting force. Although Lisa has a college fund, familial economic crises repeatedly deplete it even before it reaches the $100 mark ("There's No Disgrace ..."; "Lisa the Greek"). As a consequence, the quality of her post-educational experience will be affected. At one point she tersely states, "There go my young girl dreams of Vassar" ("There's No Disgrace ..."). For Bart, there is little likelihood that he will ever rise above his class background, nor is he in the least unhappy about this eventuality.

Homer Simpson's sense of class struggle encompasses the institutions of work and school and is perpetuated inter-generationally through his son by the informal learning process experienced in the home. Homer passes on a sense of the working class's alienation from wage-work, that labour is a commodity that should be withheld from the controllers of production and that non-physical labour is effete. On the job site, he places a positive value on the production slow-downs: "if you don't like your job, you don't go on strike: you just go in every day and do it really half-assed. That's the American way" ("PTA Disbands"). Since his own job has a cognitive orientation, he devalues it as well: "I'm a technical supervisor. I've never done anything worthwhile in my life" ("Homer's Odyssey"). It is understandable, then, that he is amazed when Lisa wins a trip to the nation's capitol in an essay contest: "Who could believe reading and writing could pay off?" ("Mr. Lisa ..."). Similarly, his working

class valuing of tactile knowledge over cerebral is evident during his brief exposure to post-secondary education. During a lecture on nuclear physics, he interrupts the professor to advance the heightened reliability of his form of knowledge:

> Prof: This proton accelerator destabilizes the atom in this chamber here, then propels it --
> Homer: Uh, excuse me, Professor Brainiac, but I worked in a nuclear power plant for ten years, and, uh, I think I know how a proton accelerator works. ("Homer Goes to College")

Having established evidence of Homer's ideological rootedness in the values of the working class, it should be pointed out that there exist contradictory data indicative of beliefs in authority and desires for class mobility. When Bart is identified as a genius, the secret hopes and aspirations of his father to transcend the familial class status come to light by his words of encouragement:

> Now go on, boy, and pay attention. Because if you do, someday, you may achieve something that we Simpsons have dreamed about for generations: You may outsmart someone! ("Bart the Genius")

His belief in the efficacy of strict authority in generating positive educational outcomes is one-dimensional compared to his wife's balanced view that Bart affective encouragement as well as "boundaries and structure" ("PTA Disbands"):

> Marge: He's a good boy now, and he's getting better. And sometimes even the best sheep stray from the flock and need to be hugged extra hard.
> Homer: That's exactly the kind of crapola that's lousing him up! ("Bart the Genius")

Similarly, when Bart decides to follow up on the career projections of his CANT test by accompanying police officers on a tour of duty,

his father opines "Maybe this'll straighten the boy out" ("Separate Vocations").

However, it is apparent from Bart's intense dislike of the physical immobility and the focus on cerebral labour experienced in the classroom environment that Homer's son has internalized his father's more overt values. If there exists a seamless transition from school to the work-place then, for him, "work is for jerks" ("Three Men ..."). Similarly, he finds nothing wrong with his father's subverting management's attempts to maximize production. When Homer is criticized during a plant tour by the foreman's offspring, Bart perceives the situation as positive:

> Sherry: Hey Bart! Our dad says your dad is incompetent.
> Bart: [irate] What does incompetent mean?
> Terry: It means he spends more time yacking and scarfing down donuts than doing his job.
> Bart: Oh, okay. I thought you where putting me down. ("Homer's Odyssey")

The value placed on work and effort evinced by this plant manager's children are an extension of a middle-class work ethic that is fostered in the home and the school. Here, as well, there is an intergenerational passing of the torch, with the data suggesting that the middle class are active in the maintenance of class status by pursuing success in the educational arena. When the teachers go on strike Milhouse's parents, afraid of their son losing educational momentum, hasten to hire a tutor in order to ingrain appropriate values concerning time usage and leisure, to maximize the acquisition of symbolic capital and to erect a barrier between Milhouse and the working class elements of his cohort:

Tutor: Fifteen minute recess, Milhouse. The recess assignment is chapter three through seven.
Milhouse: Yay! Recess! [tears outside]
Bart: Milhouse! I found a hive of killer bees. You wanna go throw rocks at it?
Milhouse: Sorry, Bart, I'm deeply immersed in the Teapot Dome scandal.
Bart: Huh?
Milhouse: However, it might be feasible in a fortnight.
Bart: Wha?
Milhouse: I can play in two weeks. ("PTA Disbands")

The middle-class perception of the limited aptitudes of the working class has, as its corollary, the fear that their own children's education will be sullied by extended contact. Nor is this fear of environmental contamination entirely baseless. Prior to private tutoring, Milhouse did almost as poorly on exams as his best friend Bart ("Bart Gets an F").

The longitudinal nature of class status can be seen in the present material conditions of Springfield's older generation. Whereas Milhouse's grand-father has a new wife, lives in a recreational vehicle, and tours the country "looking for adventure", Bart's grand-dad lives in an old folks home with his "slippers and an oatmeal spoon" ("Raging Abe ...").

As well, the data suggest that the home acts both as a primary resource in the acquisition of symbolic capital and as a source of perpetuating middle class attitudes concerning the cognitive capabilities of the working class. In the Simpson household, a family game of Scrabble elicits only one syllable words, unaided by the dictionary which functions as a surrogate sofa leg. In contrast, a more complex form of language manipulation occurs in a middle-class environment, as demonstrated during Lisa's visit to

the home of her academic peer, Alison Taylor:

> Prof. Taylor: Hi, Lisa, I'm Alison's father, Professor Taylor. I've heard great things about you.
> Lisa: Oh, really? I --
> Prof. Taylor: Oh, don't be modest. I'm glad we have someone who can join us in our anagram game.
> Alison: We take proper names and rearrange the letters to form a description of that person.
> Prof. Taylor: Like, er...oh, I don't know, uh...Alec Guinness.
> Alison: [thinks] Genuine class.
> Prof. Taylor: Ho ho, very good. All right, Lisa, um...Jeremy Irons. Lisa: [looks with consternation] Jeremy's...iron.
> Prof. Taylor: Mm hmm, well that's...very good...for a first try. You know what? I have a ball. [pulls one from his pocket] Perhaps you'd like to bounce it? ("Lisa's Rival")

Correspondence Principle

Data indicate a correspondence between the practices and outcomes of schooling and those found in other social/institutional forms, such that the cumulative effect appears to be the generation of a homogeneity of belief in the durability of these structures in all facets of life. In terms of the connections between schooling and work, Homer has had twelve years of educational experience suitable for adapting to his wage-work environment -- he is spatially isolated in a cubicle, watched incessantly by cameras monitored by remote management, and is kept constantly aware of his powerlessness by a sign over his desk that reads, "You're here forever" ("And Maggie Makes Three").

The bureaucratic drive for efficiency in the form of controllable outcomes is also apparent in the area of leisure activity -- the most salient example of which involves the institutionalized training of pets[37]. Springfield obedience schools

seek to create a product whose behaviour is congruent with that desired in the human spheres of work and education. As well, there is a disturbing congruity between the two institutions' pedagogical philosophies, practices and disdain for the misguided, ineffectual knowledge of non-professionals. In a demonstrative lecture the owner of Emily Winthrop's Canine College explains that the most efficacious technique for educating dogs is one of affectively-neutral authority:

> Most of you already know that, with a little love and compassion, any puppy will grow up to be a cuddly bundle of joy. [This is] nonsense taught by charlatans and learned by bloody twits! Let me tell you the two most important words that you will ever hear in your life: choke chain. You will raise the dog as you would raise a child -- with fitful, authoritative commands ... followed with immediate correction. [Yanks chain] ("Bart's Dog Gets an F")

There also appears to be a similar correspondence in terms of desired post-educational ends: "The world does not need another college graduate who does not know how to sit" (Ibid.). As such, there is a close mirroring of those qualities cultivated by the bureaucracies found in the schools and those desired in the workplaces: the creation of isolated, subservient appendages to external forces, be they human or technological. A private conversation between the district superintendent and Principal Skinner concerning the innate characteristics of school uniforms as psychological choke chains attests to this work-school relationship:

> Well, I've got to hand it to you, Seymour: these drab student coverings have created the perfect distraction-free environment, thus preparing the children for permanent positions in tomorrow's mills and processing facilities. --

("Team Homer")

Similarly, there exists a correspondence in the procedures for avoiding the machinery of public accountability in both educational and business organizations. At Springfield Elementary, management hides its worst "inefficiencies" -- the academic losers -- in the basement in anticipation of a School Board assessment tour ("Whacking Day"). Corporate actions parallel those found in the school system: prior to a governmental inspection the "less gifted employees" of the local nuclear plant are rounded up and secretively sequestered in the basement ("Homer Goes to College"). While the spirit of non-accountability to the public's welfare is remarkably similar in both organizations, it is arguable that the potential for negative consequences are much greater in the business arena. Although there exist state-sanctioned control mechanisms (such as the Nuclear Regulatory Commission) to guard against the excesses of profit-oriented organizations, business finds it more cost-efficient to circumvent the law and pay fines if caught ("Marge vs. the Monorail") or to delay the upgrading of facilities and staff skills for as long as possible ("Homer Goes to College").

However, in terms of authority-enforced compliance perhaps the most fitting example of institutional correspondence is between that of schools and prisons. Although the data are replete with instances of day-to-day student experiences which demonstrate the aptness of applying the "total institution" metaphor, perhaps the most evocative example of a fit between the expected behaviours and

the power brokerage of the two institutions occurs when the cash-strapped elementary school rents out its cloakroom as a prison cell-block.

Conclusion

The data suggested that there exist micro- and macro-forces that tend to reproduce status quo class and gender relationships longitudinally across time. On a societal level, the continued suppression of women is due to subscription to dominant ideologies of patriarchy and meritocracy. Although the feminist movement is embedded historically, it is a weak social force and its ideals do not translate into practices on either structural or interpersonal levels.

It is only on the micro-level of the family that women appear to be active agents for advancing positive change -- despite the severe coercive force of the privileged male contingent. While family history and day-to-day practices act as inhibiting forces, the women of Simpson clan exhibit remarkable capabilities for growth in spite of each generation's having to struggle with the conflicting desires for social approbation and egalitarian social practices. The foe of such change appears immediately in the form of familial male dominance that is passed on from father to son and reinforced by the cancerous propaganda of television programming and by religious dogma.

Attitudes towards work, leisure, social class and the valuing

of formal education are also passed on from parent to progeny. Data indicate that working class males tend to devalue formal education and academic knowledge, a perspective that is symbiotically interconnected with their class analysis and with the lived experiences of their own educational and work-lives. In contrast, working class females subscribe to a middle-class system of values, complete with a belief in meritocracy and in education as a viable vehicle for upward mobility.

However, despite a male working class stance of defiance, there is some evidence of an underlying belief in the validity of existing social arrangements and in the mechanisms that reinforce them. The genders, then, share to differing degrees a sense of class worthlessness. The lack of unanimity in value orientation in the working class home (together with a dearth of material resources) acts as an inhibiting force in the acquisition of forms of symbolic capital valued by the education system and by the dominant social sector. Thus, the reproduction of the working class is facilitated across generations on a variety of levels.

The data also indicated a correspondence between a number of social institutions with respect to similar values and practices. This (hesitantly) suggests the existence of an overarching ideology that encompasses all spheres of human activity, including those of work, leisure and education.

CHAPTER NINE: CONCLUSION

Introduction

Data analysis, used in conjunction with pedagogical theory, has generated responses to the hypotheses posited in the introduction which, *in toto*, suggest that the form and function of the educational system in the Simpsonian culture tend to darkly mirror those found in highly industrialized western nations, particularly the United States. The data also indicated that the educational administration and staff were functionalist in theoretical orientation, focused on an authoritarian mode of social control and tended to reproduce class composition and gender relations. Although the student body contained an active resistive element, the deeply entrenched anti-educational attitudes of this sub-population may prove a daunting challenge for critical pedagogists as a source of positive social change. On the spectrum of critical thought the analyses of reproduction theorists received the most support from the data. Concluding remarks suggest future avenues of sociological research.

Responses to Hypotheses

The hypothesis "The educational bureaucracy fulfils its organizational mandate of service and accountability to the maximal benefit of society" was not supported. Data from the Simpsonian

culture have indicated that its educational bureaucracy is overwhelmingly concerned with perpetuation and aggrandizement rather than with accountability to the client-set of the public. Students are depersonalized in order to heighten the efficiency of operations and the calculability of outcomes. Rather than closely adhering to a Weberian ideal-type where interdependent parts, each with their own spheres of responsibility and authority, function smoothly to realize organizational goals the data suggest a bureaucratic form verging on dysfunctionalism, with personnel fanatically concerned with rules and regulations.

The quality of educational product currently delivered by the system is negatively affected by staff-student relations and may deteriorate further in the future. Despotism appears to be the prevailing mode of interaction between the different hierarchical tiers, and is especially evident in staff-student relations. As well, there appears to be two trends that negatively affect the future quality of education: a greater centralization of decision-making and a decreasing amount of state funding. While the first extracts control over the form and content of education away from the local level, the latter places the onus on individual schools to augment resources by drawing upon other sources.

The hypothesis "Teachers fulfil professional responsibilities to students as embodied in their own code of ethics, independent of administrative goals" was not supported either. A preeminent focus on concerns of self-interest also appears to be the norm of the teaching staff such that there exists only a marginal sense of

accountability to either the public or the students. Teachers' claims to professional status are weak in so far as there is little autonomy from administration; their claims to specialized knowledge are, at times, found wanting by the students; and their moral vision lacks the espoused quality of altruism. Teachers are found to be, on the whole, ideologically allied with administration in that both consider students and public as adversaries. Similarly, both groups also consider any novel form of teaching, such as a student-focused progressivism, as detrimental to professional or bureaucratic stability. From their combined perspective, such pedagogical experimentation is held to blame for the decline of measurable student outcomes in the nation during the past decades.

The third hypothesis, "A 'hidden curriculum' exists such that the social characteristics of students pre-determine their academic and post-educational work lives", found considerable support. The existence of a hidden curriculum was manifested by phenomena such as standardized testing, streaming, and labelling as well as the formal and informal practices of both administration and teachers. Standardized testing procedures to measure intelligence and vocational aptitudes were found to be biased towards reproducing the social characteristics of existing social structures in the areas of education, work and family. Educational testing was found to be historically embedded in the Simpsonian culture and its acceptance appears to be the result of a general belief in the methodology of science, rooted in an abiding faith in the beneficial effects of technological growth.

Although the outcomes of testing lent a legitimizing rationale to the implementation of ability streaming, its primary function appears to be organizational in nature. This ordered slotting process best satisfies administrative demands for efficiency and calculability more so than the interests of students or of a diversified society. As such, streaming -- together with curriculum content, and rituals of behaviour -- was found to reflect the social control function of education. As previously indicated, administration's over-riding concern for the rigid following of rules, regulations and procedures places it into a highly authoritarian mode that generates passive and obedient forms of behaviour. Desires for motor and cognitive control can be surmised from administrative attitudes concerning the positive regulatory aspects of science subjects and the wearing of school uniforms. Data on the adult segment of the population sample suggested that this aspect of social control extends well beyond school due to the inter-connections between testing, streaming, level of certification and life-time earnings.

By the use of formal and informal procedures teachers were found to be active agents in this sorting process and more allied with the interests of administration than with those of their students. Informally, teachers discussed students in the staff-room and arranged seating into hierarchical patterns according to perceived student abilities. Test results were found to play a role in the weighing of student's abilities and attitudes as well as being a source of legitimation for the labelling of students.

Labelling by school personnel was found to be a catalyst in a symbolic-interactionist chain of events that affected student outcomes independent of social characteristics other than socioeconomic class. Positive labelling was seen to improve the academic outcomes of a male working class student previously perceived as a behavioural problem while negative labelling produced calamitous results with a younger, female, high-calibre working class student.

Observations gleaned from the Simpsonian culture have parallels in the history and practices of contemporary western education. Although the measurement of student abilities and aptitudes is the operationalization of the educational system's sorting function, it is found to be wanting both ideologically and methodologically, serving to legitimize inequitable access to, and rewards from the schooling process. Standardized tests, such as those designed for the measurement of intelligence or vocational aptitude, have weak methodological underpinnings in that the referential sample groups are often not representative of the class, gender or ethnic composition of the larger population. Similarly, biases exist with respect to a middle-class symbolic orientation and to the prioritization of a specific body of information that is deemed valuable by test designers. The exclusion of socially subordinate groups, marginalized through a lack of political, economic or social power, contradicts the ideal of universal inclusiveness that is inherent within the concept of meritocracy.

Within the Simpsonian culture, the data clearly indicated that

testing was historically and socially embedded through the public's belief in science, especially as realized through its physical form of technology. This acceptance of the validity of test methods mirrors that found in the United States which, with respect to ability streaming, has been in effect since the education system's appropriation of Frederick Taylor's scientific management techniques at the end of the First World War.

The responses to the first three hypotheses logically indicate that the final assertion, "As a societal institution, the education system is an important force for positive social change", was not supported. The data indicated that, whereas the education system tended to rigidify class and gender relations into pre-existing socioeconomic slots, portrayals of the working class family suggested a potential for initiating change within larger society. A propensity towards dynamic change was noted in this family arena only because of the active antithetical opposition exhibited by the female members.

The experiencing of the authoritarian power structure of schooling by male students appeared to regenerate class relations. Whereas middle class children tended to be fearful of the consequences of rebellion, working and lower class kids were seen to be openly proud of their contestational relationship with the authority structure. As such, schools foster a bifurcated class analysis in the minds of the working class that carries over into their work-for-wages lives. However, the long-term experiencing of school's subordinate-superordinate relationships as normative was

found to influence the reproduction of male-female power relations on personal and institutional levels.

Connections to Pedagogical Theory

Although there are certain variances, the data tend to substantiate sociological theory on the educational systems of western industrial nations. Diverse elements of the Simpsonian educational system appeared to lend themselves to the paradigmatic perspectives of the functionalist, reproductive, resistive and anarchist schools of pedagogical thought.

The educational administration operates under a conservative functionalist philosophy, rationalizing outcomes on the basis of meritocratic fairness and human capital theory (Clark, 1962). Those students who do not succeed academically do so due to lack of effort or ability rather than to any ascriptive characteristics. Fulfilment of the twin bureaucratic goals of alpha-numeric literacy and internalization of desirable values and attitudes was achieved by formal and informal practices that were augmented by an "extra-curriculum" of after-school activities (Bidwell, 1965). Although our data did support the view that schooling acts to enrich knowledge and skills that may prove marketable in the wage-work world, there is a preponderance of evidence indicating that mobility-by-merit occurs only sporadically.

The data tended to support the contentions of the reproduction pedagogists more so than with any other school of thought.

Students are not competing on a level playing field because schools tend to recreate class and gender relations intergenerationally (Bourdieu, 1977; Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Anyon, 1980). This process is facilitated by formal and informal assessment procedures which are preinclined to favour the symbolic capital deemed valuable by the dominant culture (Bernstein, 1970; Bourdieu, 1977). These assessment procedures, together with familial resources of cultural capital, tended to pre-determine the qualitative nature of a student's educational experience. The microsociological connections between familial economic well-being and a student's chances of academic success were also reflected on a macro level in the form of a correspondence between the practices and policies of the educational system and those of business.

The data from this study also supported the contentions of resistance theorists in that there were active and passive forms of dissension with the educational process. Akin to the findings of Willis (1977), this was predominantly located in the low-skilled, male sector of the working class which did not subscribe to the ethos of meritocracy. The middle-class values and attitudes concerning work and education propagated in the classroom were poles apart from the working class valuing of hands-on knowledge and its instrumentalist view of wage-work as necessarily alienating. As such, the outcomes of such resistances appear to be a reproduction of parental class status. Similar to McRobbie's study (1978), the data also suggested that working class girls are under threat of losing any chance for class mobility after

pubescence due to a prioritization of popular appeal over educational achievement.

However, despite an abundance of rebellious activity, it is extremely unlikely that the seeds of critical pedagogy will sprout and bloom, causing wide-spread social change in the arid social and academic soil of Springfield. The administration and staff blame the ongoing decline in measured student outcomes on the academic laxness of a prior progressive approach to education. Similarly, its authoritarian mode of social control has so polarized the resistive element of the student population that any attempt to expand the educational process to include the knowledge base of community members will be futile. Finally, judging by the community's distaste for tax hikes, it seems more intent on achieving short-term goals of self-interest rather than the long term social goal of improved educational resources.

Analyses generated by the feminist component of the critical school found some support in the data in terms of the constraints imposed by a patriarchal power structure of the greater society. In terms of role models, although there were no data on texts or textual representation of women, there was evidence of a glass ceiling preventing women from ascending the administrative ladder, irrespective of credentials. As well, data did suggest gender bias in the form of preferential access to educational resources, in so far as few females reached the elite status of academic achievement. The data also indicated that males tended to monopolize teacher resources, primarily by means of disruptive

behaviour. External to the education system the extent of male power was more evident, with its pervasiveness demonstrated by denigrating portrayals of women in the media, the conservative tenets of the Christian religion and by the nuances of daily interpersonal interactions, particularly those occurring within the family setting.

The criticisms of formal schooling by the anarchist school of pedagogy found support with respect to the system's promotion of outcomes that do a disservice to both students and society. The hidden curriculum prioritizes the inculcation of passivity over the fostering of creative independence (Illich, 1970) and tends to reduce social diversity, thus undermining the future well-being of students and communities. Our data indicated how students who would be thought of as "winners" were, in fact, examples of deviancy in a wider, humanistic sense of the word.

Closing Remarks, Future Considerations

For some, who have gone to the trouble of reading this paper closely, my conclusions may seem too brief and fall short of the analyses generated within the text itself, particularly with regard to how the linkages between popular values and the ideologies of merit and science indicate the existence of a larger, all-encompassing ethos. However, while the substantive findings do suggest the existence of a pervasive ideological force within the Simpsonian culture, the limitations of the data -- with their

primarily focus on one working-class family -- also suggest caution in this regard.

Thus said, this study of one particular cultural artifact -- a syndicated, episodic television comedy -- may prove of use in conjunction with other similar data to address the function of popular artifacts in perpetuating cultural hegemony by the creators' framing of oppositional issues into a form and content compatible with dominant systems of meaning. Towards this end, several avenues of approach may be undertaken, such as an analysis of the cathartic function of humour in generating social stability, particularly with respect to the portrayals of class and gender in the popular media; the distinctions between authorial control over content and control over the means of production and distribution of popular cultural artifacts; or, the role that these symbolic products play in promoting social change. From a libertarian perspective social change occurs via the mediating effect of the marketplace, in contrast to a critical view that only some aspects of socially conflictive issues are chosen to be legitimized and amplified.

NOTES

CHAPTER TWO

1. Although Skinner has had prior experience in a lower management role, his fitness as overseer of children's educational destinies is questionable. Akin to most Americans who served in Viet Nam, Skinner came back with his own share of psychological trauma. On one occasion, he was shot in the back by his men. On another, he was captured by the Viet Cong, from which he still suffers devastating psychological after-effects. As he recounts:

> ... our momentary lapse of concentration allowed Charlie to get the drop on us. I spent the next three years in a POW camp, forced to subsist on a thin stew of fish, vegetables, prawns, coconut milk and four kinds of rice. I came close to madness trying to find it here in the States, but they just can't get the spices right ("Team Homer").

CHAPTER THREE

2. In comparison, a recent opinion poll on attitudes towards public schools indicated that the current climate of public opinion in the United States favours greater decentralization of authority from federal to state to local-and-school level, even if this means a decline in federal funding (Elam and Rose, 1995:45-46).

Crosby (1991) indicates that the move towards decentralization is animated at different historical times by different purposes. For example, whereas the decentralization policies of the 1960s and 1970s were motivated by a broader ranged desire to give *political* power to local communities, the intent of today's school-based

management movement (s-b-m) -- where school affairs are run by a catchment-area council -- has a more functionally narrow mandate: "school-improvement and organizational change" (Ibid.:2-3).

This latest trend (s-b-m) may have less to do with school achievement than "it does with the divesture of responsibility for intractable problems" (Murphy and Beck, 1995:162). Systemic failure can be attributed to local level incompetence and the focus taken off the central organization's design, delivery and financing of educational services (Levine and Eubanks, 1992:75)

3. Contradistinct to the socialization and alpha-numeric functions of education, in the minds of the public and of educational administrators there is frequently an association between qualitative and quantitative outcomes. For evidence of test score declines, see Statistical Abstracts of the U.S. 1991, page 154.

4. Weber (Henderson and Parsons, 1964:58-59) points out the potential for conflict in ideal rational-legal bureaucracies. For example, where authority is vested in an office that is accessible not so much by technical competence, but rather by the routinized nature of career paths (ie. seniority placements). Thus, internal conflict may arise over whom one should obey: the most competent (rational choice) or the legally named authority.

5. Similarly, in Canada women first entered the teaching profession in the Nineteenth Century because: few occupations were open to women, they were skilled in working with children and they would work more cheaply than men (Gaskell et al., 1989:64). Female teachers outnumber male counterparts in the elementary grades (70%

vs 30% respectively), whereas in high schools there are about twice as many male as female teachers. In public school administration for 1986-87, over 3/4 of principals and 2/3 of vice-principals were male. In high schools about 90% of administration was comprised of men while in central administration only 6% of superintendents were female (Statistics Canada, 1987:Table 1, cited in Gaskell et al., 1989:65).

6. In comparison, Foucault (1977) would argue that effective socialization brings about an incarceration of the mind, where the spirit is bounded and defined by the authoritarian rules of society: an institution's control system becomes internalized and ever-present, irrespective of change of physical environ.

7. His father encounters a corresponding situation at work: his pink shirt draws unwanted attention from management who semiotically interpret his appearance as a dangerous non-conformism ("Stark Raving Dad").

CHAPTER FOUR

8. In passing, a factor contributing to the increase in numbers of teachers was an ongoing feminization of the work force (Collins, 1979). This, in turn, is related to post-industrial capitalism, technological change, and the dissolution of traditional gender, familial and wage-work roles.

9. This expansionistic thrust is ongoing, self-serving and multi-national. Daniel Keating, head of the Department of Human Development and Applied Psychology at the Ontario Institute for

Studies in Education recently stated that, "We haven't entirely got the message of how critical the early years are ... Where we should be focusing our energy is to a large extent on increasing our investment in early-childhood education to give a maximum number of children going to school the opportunity to take advantage of what the schools have to offer" (Cited in Philp, 1997:A14).

10. Later studies (Rutter, 1979; Coleman and Hoffer, 1987; Chubb and Moe, 1990) did validate the views that schools and teachers make a difference to outcomes. Coleman and Hoffer's 1987 three year study suggested that parochial schools were more effective than their public counterparts. With Catholic schools, they argue, the key lies with a teacher-community commitment to the importance of education and to an inflexible curriculum that resisted the "watering down that occurred in American high schools in the 1970s" (Coleman and Hoffer, 1987:94).

Using supplemental data to Coleman and Hoffer's study, Chubb and Moe (1990) conclude that certain organizational characteristics promote effective schools -- such as the motivation of principals, the level teacher professionalism, and the impartiality of rules-enforcement. Although the authors suggest that these results support the privatization of schools, Hurn (1993:210) points out that organizational effectiveness may be the result of student characteristics rather than the cause of better outcomes.

11. The Free School movement was a conscious attempt to de-bureaucratize schools, shed the authoritarian/control features of the teacher-role, and allow students to become active participants

in choosing the form and content of their education (Hurn, 1993:238-39).

12. Authority as experienced by children would be an amalgam of Weber's three types: rational-legal, traditional and charismatic.

13. The lack of current curricular material is a source of complaint by Principal Skinner, who voices a desire for "history books that know how the Korean War came out [and] math books that don't have that base six crap in them!" ("Dog of Death").

The Springfield Elementary School library actually consists of books castoff by other schools: Theory of Evolution, Steal this Book, Hop on Pop, Satanic Verses, Tek Wars, Sexus and 40 Years of Playboy ("PTA Disbands"). In comparison, schools that have greater access to educational resources have libraries that reflect as much. For example, The Enriched Learning Centre for Gifted Children has, as part of its collection: Plato, Pushkin, Balzac, Life of Leonardo, Crime and Punishment, Emile Zola's Nana, Shakespeare I-XV, Dante's Inferno, Babylonian Myths, Design of Computers, Moby Dick, Paradise Lost, Homer's Iliad and Odyssey, Candide, and Astrophysics ("Bart the Genius").

14. Similar dilemmas occur in other societies. Recently in Ontario, school boards eliminated junior-kindergarten prefatory to huge cuts in educational spending (Philp, 1997:A14). The alternative was to raise school taxes.

CHAPTER FIVE

15. Since 1973, there has been virtually no difference in math

scores for males and females ages 9-13 years. A gap occurs and deepens between the ages of 13-17, primarily in the area of science proficiency. However, college entrance SAT tests for mathematics in 1993 indicate that the average female score of 457 lags significantly behind the male score of 502 (NSF, 1994).

16. Controlling for measured intelligence, some research strongly suggests a positive correlation between an internal locus of control and grades (Slavin, 1994:355).

17. See Neil Postman's unconvincing argument in The End of Education (1996) for promoting the study of the American constitution in the classroom as a suggested cure for the entopic direction in which the educational system -- and indeed the United States as an inclusive democracy-- is heading.

18. However, this phenomenon is not isolated to one class. Technological innovation, increased global competition and an incessant rationalization of work-places has resulted in a decreasing number of well-paying jobs, downward pressure on wages and an increase in dual-earner families.

19. Concurrent with increases in social control within schools, there occurred rationalization from without. The Sputnik launch of 1957, and a Carnegie Foundation Study of high schools by Harvard academic James Conant greatly influenced structural changes in the form of radical decreases in the number of school boards from over 100,000 to 15,000 in the next three decades (Swanson, 1993:797). As well, students became more concentrated into large impersonal composite schools, with more that 1/4 of high schools currently

serving 1,500 students or more.

20. Both the ITED and its companion ITBS are a series of tests assessing various subject areas and have versions that are utilized at various grade levels. While the GATB with its 22 vocation grouping was widely used, the OVIS was developed in 1964 by high school vocational guidance counsellors to determine occupational aptitude, and therefore to stream students into suitable educational programmes. Using the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT) as a referential base, it divided its 21,741 occupations into three main groupings based on whether the work mostly involved data, people or things. These sets of occupations were also sorted into 114 homogeneous worker groups with student responses being measured along the 24 interest scales.

CHAPTER SIX

21. Post-secondary statistics are incomplete, since some of the students are still in the system.

22. Jobs held by non-students between May-September were excluded from statistical analysis.

23. In human capital theory education and income are not linearly inter-related. After a certain point increased investments of time and money will bring increasingly less returns when considering lost opportunities for lower-wage employment(Becker, 1975:99)

24. Bourdieu (1977:214) points out that "disposition" is a semantic cluster comprised (in part) of predisposition, tendency, propensity, inclination, as well as "a way of being, a habitual

state (especially of the body".

25. This may be due to the traditionally classist, exclusionary nature of European educational systems where cultural elites maintained control over access to education and curriculum (see Collins, 1979:Ch. 5).

26. Although middle-class is narrowly defined herein as representing families that are situated in the income group in which the national median family income falls, other approaches generated similar conclusions. Barlett and Steele (1992:4) identified the declining fortunes of the middle-class as represented by the declining proportion of salaried income earners submitting income-tax returns between the years 1980 and 1989 (39% and 35% respectively).

27. As well, the number of families living under the poverty line increased by half-again between these two years.

28. This is not to say that this halcyon era was actually a pervasive middle-class reality -- only that there is a myth of its existence that is positively reinforced by media (ie. reruns of Leave it to Beaver) and negatively reinforced by systemic economic pressures.

29. However, the physical structures of schools are imposing because they house an educational bureaucracy whose language and logic constructs minorities and lower socio-economic classes find difficulty in negotiating.

CHAPTER SEVEN

30. Despite evidence of the apparent equal treatment of students in schools, there is a trend in the community towards scapegoating immigrants for the declining outcomes of the educational system. Homer Simpson complains that "there's so many immigrants that students like Bart have lost the will to learn" ("Anti-Immigrant Song"). A fellow citizen concurs, adding "What really bothers me ... is they haven't even bother to learn themselves the language (sic)" (Ibid.).

31. There also exists a mixed gender pro-establishment group of youth, comprising an informal club -- the Super Friends -- in which the common denominator appears to be techo-scientific or meritocratic interests ("Bart's Comet"). This is indicated by the self-selection of nicknames by members: E-Mail, Cosine, Report Card and Database.

32. The vocational questionnaire exemplifies the correlation between class-attitudes and future occupational status. Two of these questions are: "If I could be any animal, I would be (a) a carpenter ant, (b) a nurse shark, or (c) a lawyer bird" and "I prefer the smell of (a) gasoline, (b) French fries, or (c) bank customers" ("Separate Vocations").

33. A generalized negative social attitude towards this domestic work role is indicated by a local census questionnaire: "homemaker" does not qualify as a real occupation since it does not entail

"real work, that's why you don't get paid for it " ("Bart on the Road").

CHAPTER EIGHT

34. For a more complete picture of Homer's individualistic orientation, see "The War of the Simpsons", in which Marge recounts a litany of her husband's failings as experienced on a day-to-day basis.

35. There are no data on non-heterosexual couples and only two examples of gay males, both stereotypically employed as secretaries ("Simpson and Delilah"; "Homer the Smithers").

36. Homer's class analysis stops short of accepting a more sophisticated socioeconomic perspective. He only begrudgingly admits that "maybe ... the machinery of capitalism is oiled by the blood of the workers" ("Crepes of Wrath").

37. Other forms of leisure activity in Springfield are depicted along traditional class lines. In the Simpson home the entire family watches television incessantly and there is little educational or recreational reading material in the house. The breadwinner bowls, plays cards with his cronies or routinely socializes at the neighbourhood tavern. In comparison, the middle and upper classes of Springfield recreate by playing golf or by taking in cultural events at the local arts centre.

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TABLE 1. GENDER COMPOSITION OF EDUCATIONAL HIERARCHY IN THE U.S., 1982-1992 (PERCENT)

	1982		1992	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Administrative Officials	75	25	61	39
Principals and Vice-Principals	80	21*	60	40
Elementary Teachers	16	84	13	87
Secondary Teachers	51	49	45	55

*Rounding error

Adapted from Statistical Abstract of the United States 1995 (United States, 1995: 166).

APPENDIX A: CITATIONS OF "THE SIMPSONS": INDIVIDUAL EPISODES

Rank	Episode	Citations
1	The PTA Disbands	21
2	Separate Vocations	12
3	Bart Gets an F	8
3	Bart the Genius	8
5	Homer Goes to College	7
5	Sweet Seymour Skinner's Baadassss Song	7
5	Moaning Lisa	7
8	Summer of 4'2	6
8	Bart's Dog Gets an F	6
10	Bart's Comet	5
10	Lisa's Rival	5
12	Lisa's Substitute	4
12	Mr. Lisa Goes to Washington	4
14	Whacking Day	4
14	Bart the General	3
14	Marge on the Lam	3
17	The Anti-Immigrant Song	2
17	Bart on the Road	2
17	Bart vs. Thanksgiving	2
17	Blood Feud	2
17	The Crepes of Wrath	2
17	Dead Putting Society	2
17	Duffless	2
17	Homer's Odyssey	2
17	Homer vs. Patty and Selma	2
17	Itchy and Scratchy: The Movie	2
17	Lisa the Greek	2
17	Marge Gets a Job	2
17	Marge vs. the Monorail	2
17	New Kid on the Block	2
17	Principal Charming	2
17	Scenes from the Class Struggle in Springfield	2
17	The Tell-Tale Head	2
17	There's No Disgrace Like Home	2
17	Two Bad Neighbours	2
36	And Maggie Makes Three	1
36	Bart of Darkness	1
36	Bart the Murderer	1
36	Bart's Friend Falls in Love	1
36	Boy Scoutz N the Hood	1
36	Dog of Death	1
36	Homer Bad Man	1
36	Homer the Smithers	1
36	Itchy and Scratchy and Marge	1
36	Jacques to be Wild	1

APPENDIX A (Continued)

Rank	Episode	Citations
36	Kamp Krusty	1
36	King-Size Homer	1
36	Lisa on Ice	1
36	Lisa the Beauty Queen	1
36	Lisa the Vegetarian	1
36	Lisa vs. Malibu Stacey	1
36	Marge Be Not Proud	1
36	Marge in Chains	1
36	Radioactive Man	1
36	Raging Abe Simpson and The Curse of the Flying Hellfish	1
36	Simpson and Delilah	1
36	A Star Is Burns	1
36	Stark Raving Dad	1
36	Three Men and a Comic	1
36	Two Cars in Every Garage, Three Eyes on Every Fish	1
36	The War of the Simpsons	1

APPENDIX B: CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC RESOURCES IN SPRINGFIELD AND SURROUNDING AREA

1. The following constitutes a list of the resources in Springfield together with the episode codes (see Hall, 1994):

Christian Fundamentalist School	9F18
The Enriched Learning Centre for Gifted Children	7G02
First Church of Springfield	7G07
Fort Springfield	8F13,9F02
Michael Jackson Expressway	7F24,8F17
Mount Springfield	8F12
Old Springfield Library	8F05, 8F15
Olde Springfield Towne	8F10,9F18
Popsicle Stick Skyscraper	9F10
Saint Sebastian's School for Wicked Girls	8F22
Springfield A&M University	1F02
Springfield Animal Hospital	8F17
Springfield Arboretum	1F15
Springfield Art Museum (Burns Wing)	7F18
Springfield Arts	7G06
Springfield Barber College	8F17,9F03
Springfield Centre for the Performing Arts	7F06
Springfield Civic Centre	8F23,9F16
Springfield Coliseum (hockey rink)	8F21
Springfield Collection Agency	7F23
Springfield College	1F02
Springfield Community College	7F18
Springfield Community Centre	2F02
Springfield County Courthouse	8F03
Springfield Department of Motor Vehicles	7F15,8F21
Springfield Dog Pound	8F17
Springfield Downs	7G08
Springfield Elementary School	title sequence
Springfield Escalator to Nowhere	9F10
Springfield's forbidding Widow's Peak	9F07
Springfield General Hospital	7F06,9F09,1F02
Springfield Googolplex Theatres	8F19,8F22
Springfield Gorge	7F06,9F12
Springfield Grapplarium	9F15
Springfield Hall of Records	2F02
Springfield Harbor	9F01,9F19
Springfield Hardware	9F17
Springfield Heights	8F13
Springfield High School	7F12,9F16
Springfield International Airport	7G13
Springfield Kozy Kourt Motel	7F05
Springfield Lake	1F14
Springfield Lower East Side	8F05
Springfield Mall	7G11,8F12,8F14
Springfield Medical Library	9F09
Springfield Memorial Stadium	8F13
Springfield Men's Shelter	1F05
Springfield Museum of Natural History	7G06,7F19

APPENDIX B (Continued)

Springfield Museum	7F19,1F09
Springfield Mystery Spot	7F17,8F13
Springfield National Forest	8F01
Springfield Nuclear Power Plant	title sequence
Springfield Palace Hotel	1F19
Springfield Plasma Centre	7F07
Springfield Post Office	7F22
Springfield Primate Institute	7G09
Springfield Public Library	8F12
Springfield Retirement Home (Castle)	7F07
Springfield Revolving Restaurant	7F15
Springfield River	8F17
Springfield Savings	7F05
Springfield Skating Rink	2F05
Springfield Speedway	7F06
Springfield Sperm Bank	9F11
Springfield State Prison	title sequence
Springfield Tar Pits	1F15
Springfield Tire Yard	8F21
Springfield Tire Yard	title sequence
Springfield Tower	7F15
Springfield Trade Centre	8F13
Springfield University	7F15,2F06
Springfield War Memorial Stadium (home of the Springfield Isotopes minor league baseball team)	7F05,8F08
Springfield Wax Museum	9F02
Springfield Women's Prison	9F20
Springfield-X theatre	9F13
Springfield Youth Centre	2F05
Veterans of Popular Wars building	8F01

2. The following constitutes a list of the resources in nearby towns together with the episode codes (see Hall, 1994):

Duff Gardens	9F11
Mount Splashmore	7F18
New Bedlam Rest Home for the Emotionally Interesting [7F24]	
North Haverbrook Elementary	1F11
Shelbyville Nuclear Power Plant	8F04
Shelbyville Elementary	1F11
Shelbyville Orphanage	7F16
Spittle County Elementary	1F11
Spittle County	8F19
Swartzwelder County	8F17

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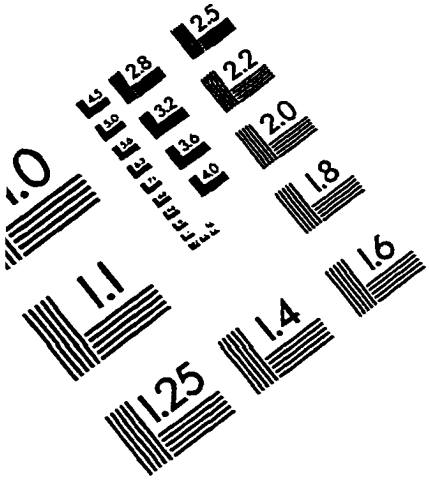

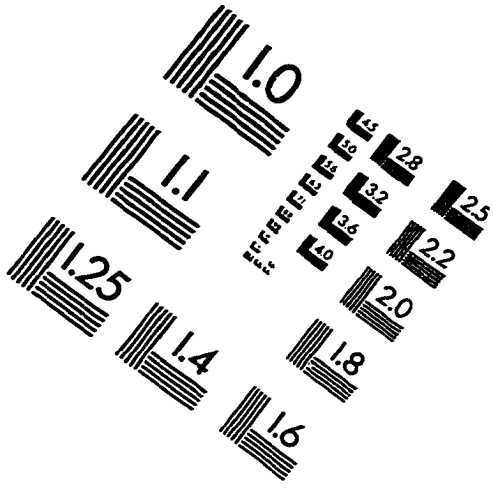

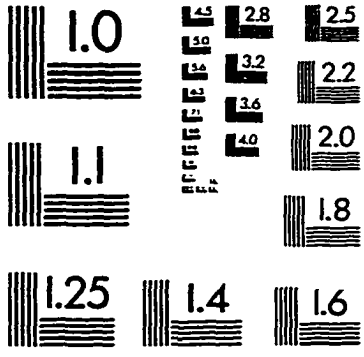

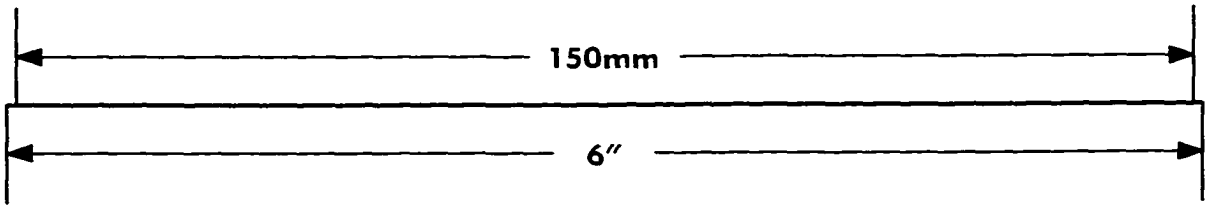

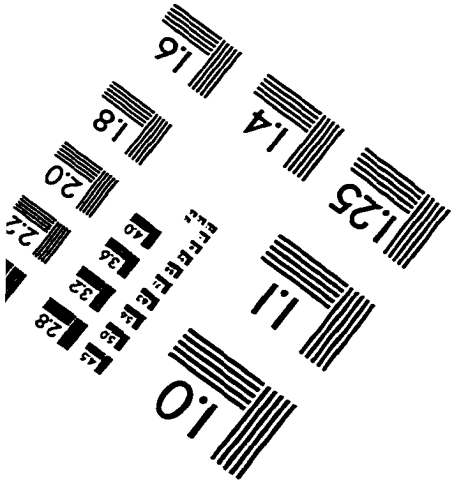

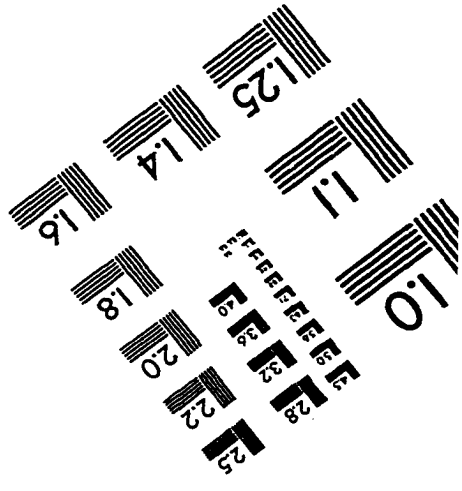

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