

THE EFFECTS OF TRACKING UPON
STUDENT BEHAVIOR

by

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ABSTRACT

Social scientists have indicated to us that behind almost any social phenomena there is a complex web of interconnected causes. There is no one direct cause. This is especially true of the outcomes in our educational process. Research makes clear that processes internal to the system have a far larger role than was attributed earlier in determining the effectiveness of organizations.

In the case of our educational system, it is becoming more evident that there are fundamental defects in policies, programs, and procedures that directly contribute to inequality of opportunity, deviancy and alienation of the students. It is very important to understand what these defects are and how they affect the student if we are to have an effective and progressive educational system.

In this particular study the component researched was the tracking system (ability grouping).

Many school systems use the tracking system as they assign their students to classes according to intelligence or achievement. These classes or tracks are composed of students with similar abilities. They may be placed in slow, regular or fast tracks. The students who are assigned to a slow track may be in the vocational program whereas students placed in fast tracks may be in the college-bound program.

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The track to which a student is assigned represents a social position. It carries status and value connotations, therefore possibly hindering social and educational outcomes. Evidence points out that tracking serves as an ineffective educational instrument for students assigned to non-college preparatory programs.

In reference to the tracking system and its relationship to behavior, a sample of senior high school students from a midwestern four-year high school was utilized for the study. During the summer of 1974, diverse data was collected from official school transcripts, court records, and police records. The data was collected on a sample from a class which had entered a midwestern four year high school in September of 1967.

The following two null hypothesis were tested:

1. There will be no statistically significant relationship between track positions and incidents of juvenile delinquency for those students who enrolled in 1967 as freshmen and graduated in 1971 at Warren Western Reserve High School in Warren, Ohio.

2. There will be no statistically significant relationship between track positions and incident of arrest for those students who enrolled in 1967 as freshmen and graduated in 1971 at Warren Western Reserve High School located in Warren, Ohio.

Both hypotheses were tested at the .05 level of significance.

Each null hypothesis of no significant difference was statistically rejected at the .05 significance level.

From the high school studied, non-college bound students experienced greater arrest and delinquency rates. The data from this study did identify some detrimental effects of tracking, but left unanswered other questions concerning tracking. More empirical data are needed before definite conclusions can be drawn.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Statement of the Problem

The idea that the school contributes to juvenile delinquency is not new. Over 100 years ago Pierce presented a controversial essay in which he stressed the lack of moral training in American schools and its relationship to crime.¹ Over a decade ago Clinard made the following statement: "It is a curious commentary on our modern world, which emphasizes education, that the school is a large contributing factor in juvenile delinquency."²

In research by Polk, Schafer, and Kveraceus it is suggested that the school program is responsible for much of the thwartings and frustrations which often show their aftermath in delinquent behavior. "In general, the school picture of the delinquent presents an unsatisfactory, unsuccessful, and unhappy and hence extremely frustrating situation which precedes or accompanies undesirable behavior."³

¹Herbert Quay, Juvenile Delinquency (Princeton, New Jersey: D. Van Nostrand Co. Inc., 1965), p. 306.

²Quay, Juvenile Delinquency, p. 306.

³James S. Coleman, Adolescents and the School (New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1965), p. 73.

The school frequently attempts to make the pupil satisfied with what the pupil perceives to be an unsatisfactory situation.

It has become increasingly evident that there are fundamental defects in educational policies, programs, and procedures that may directly or indirectly contribute to the problem of juvenile delinquency. Educators and social scientists recognize that the elements which contribute to any one case of delinquency are numerous and varied. Thus it is not a simple matter to pinpoint those factors within the school which might influence a youth toward deviant behavior. Nevertheless educators have attempted to uncover ways in which the schools themselves might contribute to the problem of juvenile delinquency.

Many contend that the unintended negative effects associated with the teaching-learning process is known as the tracking system. It has been suggested that the tracking system may inadvertently contribute to many of the problems the schools are seeking to avert.

Many schools assign their students to classes according to intelligence or achievement. These classes, usually called tracks or lanes, are composed of students with similar ability. A student may be placed in a slow, regular, or fast section according to intelligence and/or achievement. "Generally speaking the students within the slow sections are non-college bound and the students in the regular and fast sections

are college-bound."⁴ The students who are placed in slow sections, for example, may be in the vocational track or general educational track whereas students placed in fast sections may be in the academic program.

The track to which a student is assigned represents a social position or category carrying status. Furthermore it is believed that the track system itself helps determine the type of values, norms, and attitudes developed and shared by the students within each track.

Once assigned to a particular track the student has little chance of changing later. The student may then internalize the school's definition of him as "bright" or not so "bright" thus causing possible frustrations and undesirable behavior.

This study will focus on the relationship between tracking position and negative behavior. Specifically, it will concentrate on the relationships between the non-college track and incidents of juvenile delinquency as measured by incidents of arrests and incidents of court adjudications.

Null Hypothesis

This study investigated the relationship between the tracking system and incidents of juvenile delinquency and arrests by use of the following statistical hypotheses.

⁴Ibid., p. 73.

1. There is no statistically significant relationship between track position and incidents of juvenile delinquency as measured by official adjudication.

2. There is no statistically significant relationship between track positions and juvenile delinquency as measured by incidents of arrests.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Public Schools and Delinquency

Search for Causes

The effectiveness or ineffectiveness of an organization may be the result of many interconnected variables: the organization's social environment; and the program, and processes used to produce the desired out-comes. In trying to understand how schools fall short of their aims, responsibilities and potentialities, critics of education usually suggest many possible reasons. Many contend that there is a portion of the youth who are not very educable and thus do not belong in the regular school system. Others maintain that the social environment is at fault. In other words, the schools face outside barriers such as: parents who are indifferent; neighborhoods plagued with crime, poor housing, and economic deprivation; and voters who fail to support budgets. Still other critics claim that the problem lies in how schools organize the teaching-learning process. It is, however, increasingly evident that there are fundamental defects in educational policies, programs and procedures that may directly or indirectly relate to unsatisfying educational careers among youth. In efforts

to construct new programs and environments, it is vital to understand what these defects are and how they affect the individual student.

The Role of the School

In reference to the relationship of school and delinquency, the school occupies a key position in the communities program for the prevention and control of juvenile delinquency. Of all the institutions, the school carries perhaps the heaviest responsibility for its prevention and control.⁵

The school is one of the most influential social institutions in the lives of American children and youth.⁶ As one of the principle social agencies of the American culture, the school has the unique opportunity to influence the behavior and character of the children under its supervision. The school is universal and free; its use is compulsory. Therefore, it has the obligation to serve the varied and often unpredictable needs of all children.⁷ To do this it must have a program that is broad and rich and stimulating; a place that is safe and comfortable and conducive to varied learning activities; a staff that is

⁵Quay, 331.

⁶Henry Thomas Van Dyke, Juvenile Delinquency (Boston: Ginn & Co., 1970), p. 63.

⁷Quay, 294.

professionally prepared, interested, and wise in dealing with children, personally well and professionally secure. Such a school will have as its goal the best possible development of its students.

There is really no complete agreement as to what the school's role is, but most educators do recognize the strategic position of the school. Some educators tend to minimize the school's role. Bloch and Flynn indicate the function of the school is to provide education in a restricted sense. They firmly believe that the school imparts knowledge, intellectual, and reasoning skills which enable the children to make practical adjustments to the type of world and community which they will live in.⁸ Most educators would agree with this part, but they further indicate that readying a child for his place in the world goes beyond the task of imparting knowledge, intellectual, and reasoning skills. They would be more inclined to agree with Stullken who believes that the schools were established to help youth to realize their potentialities and to develop into wholesome personalities and useful citizens. Furthermore that education is a process by which the behavior of people is improved so that they may think, feel, and act differently than they ever did before. The schools must aim to develop young people physically, spiritually, and

⁸Quay, 299.

intellectually. Thus, schools are concerned with all problems of life including juvenile delinquency.⁹

John Dewey, one of the American philosophers of education, believed that the school is the chief means of social betterment and that a child in school is participating in life itself, not just being exposed to the learning process. This is a most meaningful and impressionable time in the life of a child, and never again will society have as excellent an opportunity to create a worthy citizen. Since Dewey's day educators have added the belief that next to the family, a good school is America's strongest deterrent to delinquency.¹⁰ The Glueks for example, believe the schools are in a position to reach children before maladjusted behavior expresses itself overtly or becomes too deeply rooted. They state, "The school is the second social institutional circle of influence to which a child is subjected."¹¹ The school affects the formation of personal controls insofar as its personnel represent acceptable models of authority and provide rational guides for behavior. The school must not be looked upon just as a building, but a major institution charged with specific duties and responsibilities for contributing cooperatively

⁹Quay, 300.

¹⁰Van Dyke, 68.

¹¹Quay, 300.

to the health, education and welfare of the children.¹²

Delinquent Behavior within the School Context

The school is composed of two subsystems: the formal system that is concerned with positive values, goals and norms of society and the informal system that incorporates the youth culture with its own set of values, goals and norms.

Gordon reports that a student's status within the school is a composite of academic achievement, participation in student organizations, and activities and position in the peer social life.¹³ Students who fail to achieve desired goals in either the academic system or the peer social system may experience frustrations, demoralations, and humiliation while at school. Students who fail in these areas tend to be shunned and excluded by other students, teachers, and by the school system in general.¹⁴ Failure may reinforce negative attitudes toward school and unsuccessful students may band together reinforcing this negative attitude.

¹²Fred I. Closson, "Delinquency: Its Prevention Rests Upon the Academic Community," *Clearing House*, 45, (January, 1971), p. 292.

¹³Wayne C. Gordon, The Social System of the High School. (Glencoe, Ill: Free Press, 1957), p. 87.

¹⁴Martin Gold, Status Forces in Delinquent Boys (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1963), p. 55.

Vinter and Sarri report that those who receive low grades are denied, as direct consequence, a wide variety of privileges and opportunities at school; they lose self-esteem among their classmates and are excluded from participation in extracurricular activities.¹⁵ As a result, the slow student is often the target of ridicule. Merton concludes that this failure and rejection exerts definite pressure upon some people to engage in non-conformist behavior.¹⁶

Tracking System and Delinquency

The question immediately confronting educators is, "What are the major factors contributing to a negative school experience and perhaps eventual delinquency?"

One of the major factors contributing to negative school experience and eventually to delinquency is the belief by school personnel that unreal expectations of students having limited intellectual capabilities leads to failure and eventually deviant behavior. The maximum development of potential talent requires the use of divergent populations. Educators have recognized that the approaches required for effective teaching of the slow learner are

¹⁵Vinter and Sarri, Social Work, p. 3-13.

¹⁶Robert Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1957), p. 46.

different from those used in the traditional room.

Another factor that may contribute to negative educational experiences is the tracking system. Tracking procedures may prematurely lock students into a particular educational and occupational career line. Once the student is grouped or assigned to a track, he has little opportunity for changing later. The students soon perceive themselves as either bright or not so bright, depending upon their track assignment. At this point, a self-fulfilling prophecy may be set into motion whereby students who, according to test performance, have low innate potential are grouped and instructed as though they were in fact slow or retarded in ability resulting in a further falling behind in their progress in development. Davidson and Lany observed this in their study and reported:

It is therefore likely that lower class child, especially if he is not doing well in school, will have a negative perception of his teacher's feeling toward him. These negative perceptions will in turn tend to lower his efforts to achieve in school and/or increase the probability that he will aggravate the negative attitude of his teachers toward him, which in turn will affect his self-confidence and so on.¹⁷

Tracking may then contribute to the lower track students not only being denied status but also frequently being denied objective opportunities to become engaged in socially

¹⁷Kenneth Polk and Walter Schafer, Schools and Delinquency (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972), p. 186.

approved goals. This may in turn lead to a rejection of the legitimate system and in their subsequent turn toward delinquency as an alternative.

Pros and Cons of the Tracking System

Various justifications have been given by schools for tracking systems. In addition to the assumptions that educational potential will be accurately measured and that students will be assigned appropriately, common to most is the assumption that learning can be more efficiently and effectively when all members of the instructional group are relatively homogeneous in level of ability and performance. Thus, college-bound students, who are assumed to be brighter and able to learn more rapidly, are set apart for most of the school day in order not to be "held back" by the non-college bound students. Tracking was devised as a method of reducing variability.¹⁸

Another element in the justification of the tracking system is that the subject matter needed differs for college-bound and non-college bound students. Whereas the college-bound are thought to need foreign languages, advanced science, and mathematics, the non-college bound are viewed as only needing basic science, mathematics, and no foreign languages,

¹⁸G. A. Veropson, "Critical Review of Grouping," The High School Journal, 43, (April, 1965), p. 431.

but shop and other various vocational courses. This philosophy is evident in the following quote:

We recommend that beginning with the ninth grade separate, fixed curricula--such as academic, commercial, general, and industrial arts--be established. Students should be held to one of these on the basis partly of achievement, partly of preference and interests, with the possibility of shifting from one curriculum to another according to achievement. Such a system would prevent able students from taking easy courses in order to make high grades with little effort; it would prevent students from wasting time with dubious or irrelevant electives; and by reducing programming to a simple routine easily handled by administrative clerks, it would relieve many teachers from counseling and return them to the more important work of teaching.¹⁹

Despite the lack of evidence of the positive educational effects of tracking, many high schools today have adopted this type of a system. While tracking has unquestionable administrative and management benefits, there is growing concern that these gains are outweighed by much greater costs to students. This growing concern has been expressed in a number of specific criticisms.

One particular criticism is the assignment of students to classes according to achievement to prevent excessive failure. These classes, called tracks are composed of students with similar ability, are established to prevent failure by setting lower standards for slower students. "Thus everyone can pass. Unfortunately, even though they nominally pass, students in the lower tracks are treated as failures by the school and they consider themselves to

¹⁹Carol Olexa and Walter Schafer, Tracking and Opportunity--The Locking-Out Process and Beyond (London: Chandler Publishing Co., 1971), p. 10.

be failures. The days of these students in school are dismal and many dropout. Tracking now only does not work in the way it was intended, it works in the opposite way by increasing the number of students who are failing.²⁰

Furthermore the assigning of students to a track at the beginning of high school intentionally or unintentionally discriminates against those from lower-income or minority-group families. The basis for this argument is that the tests on which track assignment is based are weighted in favor of middle-class students. The tests measure the verbal skills rather than the intellectual potential for acquiring those skills, and more white middle-class students than lower-income, minority-group students have acquired competence in those skills, partly because of differences in the quality of previous school.²¹

Educators further point out that regardless of ability and past performance, the white middle class student is more likely than the minority-group, lower-income student to be assigned to the college-prep track. This discrimination may be based on the projections of the student's college chances, or on race and class bias.²²

A second criticism of many educators is the premature locking-in process of the students into a particular

²⁰Dr. William Glasser, Schools Without Failure (New York, New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1969), p. 82.

²¹Olexa and Schafer, 11.

²²Ibid.

educational and occupational career. Once assigned to a particular track the student has little opportunity for changing later. The students internalize the school's definition of themselves as "bright" or "not so bright" and become either too intimidated to shift upward or too proud to move down. "In broad, humanistic terms, tracking is thought to represent an unfortunate restriction on the freedom of choice and option for the individual student."²³ An individual's conception of himself, his ability, his identity, his sense of worth and his behavior is partly determined by how other people define him.²⁴ With the stigma attached to the lower tracks, and the student's self-esteem damaged, these students probably will find themselves trapped in a negative self-fulfilling prophecy.

It has been suggested that the tracking system affects students partly through its influence on the expectations of the teachers. Another possible process relates to how the track system itself helps to generate tracked-linked student subcultures which tend to support or to oppose the official culture of the school and that these subcultures in turn affect the educational outcome of particular students.

²³Ibid., 12.

²⁴Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobsen, Pygmalion in the Classroom (New York, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968), pp. 3-8.

Coleman states that the tracking system itself helps determine the types of values, norms, and attitudes developed and shared by students.²⁵ Coleman contends that the individualistic, competitive structure of academics helps generate norms against high academic achievement, since one man's gain is another's loss when a limited supply of high grades is available. It is his contention that the track system gives rise both to educationally antagonistic subcultures (non-college prep students) and to educationally supportive subcultures (college-prep students).

Frease indicates that not only levels of self-esteem, attitudes toward school, and academic achievement were lower among non-college bound students but rates of delinquency and friendship with delinquent individuals were higher. The initiation of students into these subcultures may help explain the track-related differences in behavior.

"Finally, it is sometimes contended that, through tracking, the schools actually contribute to the problems they seek to prevent: rebelliousness, dropping-out and delinquency."²⁶ Critics argue that lower-track students are more likely to fail, become alienated and develop a negative self concept of themselves and their future, partly because of the track system itself. "Insofar as these factors

²⁵James S. Coleman, The Adolescent Society (New York, New York: Free Press, 1965), p. 39.

²⁶Olexa and Schafer, 13.

contribute to truancy, dropping out and delinquency, the school, through its track system, is said to help generate, rather than deter, youth problems."²⁷

These youth problems have generally been referred to as delinquency. Delinquency is viewed as a by-product of the unequal competition to school. Youth who are denied opportunities to achieve higher positions of educational attainment, financial and occupational success, because of their lower-class socialization are consequently provoked to engage in delinquent behavior. Thus, delinquent behavior can be a means to reach legitimate goals or to express their rejections for the middle-class goals which are not available to them.²⁸

Supporting Studies and Findings

The evidence most directly applicable to the present study comes from studies of tracking in American high schools. A landmark study of an American high school reported a relationship between track position and rebellion. Students in the college preparatory track skipped less often and were sent out of class for misbehaving less frequently than those non-college preparatory students.²⁹

²⁷Olexa and Schafer, 13.

²⁸Merton, 141.

²⁹Arthur Stinchcombe, Rebellion in a High School (Chicago, Illinois: Quadrangle, 1964), p. 47.

One of two studies of high school boys in the state of Oregon found that non-college bound students were more often delinquent and, once delinquent, were more often repeaters than were college bound students. The non-college bound students were also lower in academic achievement and more negative in their attitudes toward school. The other study found that non-college bound students had lower educational aspirations and expectations, lower levels of school involvement and performance, lower evaluations of their abilities, greater involvement in extraschool activities, and higher rates of dropout, misbehavior in school, and delinquency.³⁰

Both studies conclude that the system of stratification within the school whereby college bound and non-college bound students are differentiated either informally by friendship groups or formally by the track system partly accounts for these differences in educational and behavioral outcomes.

In another study directed by Kvaraceus, it was found that a significant falling off in the delinquency rates recurred each year during the June, July and August periods when schools were not in session. The students were more likely less frustrated when out of range of the school's influence.³¹

³⁰Schafer and Olexa, 17.

³¹William Kvaraceus, "Delinquency: A By-Product of the School," *School and Society*, LIX, (May, 1944), pp. 350-1.

In studies completed by Gold, Schort, Polk, Cooper and Kvaraceus, it has been reported that delinquents had lower grades, more academic failures, poorer grades, higher truancy rates, and more school dropouts than non-delinquents.³²

Dr. Kvaraceus feels that our present curriculum is not appropriate to the needs and interests of lower class youth. He believes that the courses of study in public schools today favor the academically talented middle class child and are highly prejudicial to both the non-academic and lower class youth. He believes that many of the problems of dropouts and delinquents take root in the curriculum.³³

If, and as research indicated, track systems are producing detrimental effects upon a substantial portion of our students, then alternative educational strategies should be developed and examined in greater detail. Here again, and as with respect to both the quality and paucity of information dealing with the negative impact of track systems, an effective model of evaluation needs to be built into any innovative method developed. To date, this has not been done with any vigor, and accordingly, much of the data on open classrooms and individualized teaching, for instance, remain highly impressionistic and most unconvincing.

³²Kvaraceus, 353.

³³Nelson S. Burke and Alfred E. Simmons, "Factors Which Precipitate Dropouts and Delinquency," Federal Probation Vol. XXIX, (March, 1965), p. 32.

CHAPTER III

MethodologySpecific Hypothesis and Major Concepts

The school picture as represented by the delinquent is frequently pictured as an unsatisfactory, unsuccessful, unhappy and frustrating experience that was generally accompanied by undesirable behavior.³⁴ Schools assume a tremendous responsibility for developing desirable behavior.³⁵ Yet there is evidence that the educational policies, programs, and curriculums are not meeting all students' needs.

From the many school factors studied it is suggested that the school program or curriculum is responsible for much of the thwartings and frustrations in delinquent behavior.³⁶ Consequently, this research investigated the relationship between the tracking system and delinquent behavior. Specifically, the two hypotheses researched are as follows:

1. There is no statistically significant relationship between track positions and incidents of juvenile delinquency as measured by court adjudication.

³⁴Kvaraceus, 165.

³⁵Polk and Schafer, 13.

³⁶Ibid., 54.

2. There is no statistically significant relationship between track positions and juvenile delinquency as measured by incidents of arrest.

The two above hypotheses will be tested at the .05 level of significance. Because of the non-direction of the hypotheses a two-tail test was used.

Design

Selection of Sample

A randomized sample of 120 high school students from Warren Western Reserve High School located in Warren, Ohio, was utilized for the study. A list of 1971 graduates was obtained and the table of random numbers was employed in the sample selection. Only those students who enrolled for the fall term of 1967 as freshmen were utilized.

Collection of Data

The incidents of court adjudication and police arrests were collected from the juvenile court dockets and records at the Trumble County Juvenile Court and the Warren City Police Department respectively. The months that data were not collected from were June, July and August. Only pre-graduation adjudications and arrests were accounted.

The permanent school records at Warren Western Reserve High School were utilized in obtaining track information. Though school records did not indicate track position officially, track position was decided by two judges

and the researcher. If the student took English in the college preparatory or the general section it was conceded that the student was enrolled in the college preparatory section. He invariably had other college preparatory courses in which nearly all enrollees were college bound. Besides using the specific English section as an indicator of track position, other courses such as foreign languages, advanced math and sciences were also used as an aid in determining track position of each student.

Reliability and Validity

The method of collection of data was accomplished through the use of documents. The gathering of information from such sources does not require cooperation of the individuals about whom information is being sought, as does the use of questionnaires, interviews, and observations, thus increasing the accuracy of the information sought. The researcher does acknowledge the funneling effect in respect to the reporting of incidents of juvenile delinquency. Thus, reliability in this study was based upon the assumption that documents accurately reflect incidents of juvenile delinquency.

Validity was established through the use of a team of judges in measuring track position.

Scoring

In reference to how delinquency was scored, a numerical value of one was assigned if the particular subject in

the sample was officially adjudicated delinquent according to the definition stated. A numerical value of zero was assigned to the subject who was not officially adjudicated delinquent. Hence, either the value of one or zero was assigned to each subject. After this assigning of values, the ones were counted. This score represented the juvenile delinquency rate for the college bound and non-college bound groups. Then all the zeros were counted. This score represented the non-delinquency rate for each group. This same procedure was employed for determining the arrest rate.

Incidents of Delinquency Adjudication

Juvenile delinquency was defined as those youth who were officially adjudicated delinquent by the Trumble County Juvenile Court for violating State, County, or Municipal statutes excluding traffic offenses of a minor nature. The researcher realizes that this definition of juvenile delinquency created a "funnel effect" in that not all juveniles who were committed or referred to the courts were adjudicated delinquent. In fact, only a very small proportion of these individuals are ever adjudicated delinquent. The use of official adjudication as the definition of delinquency should result in a conservative test of the dependent variable, delinquency.

"Over one million (1,112,500) juvenile delinquency cases, excluding the traffic offenses, were estimated as being handled by all juvenile courts in the United States in 1972. These children represented 2.9 percent of all children aged 10 through 17 in the country."³⁷

Authorities recognize that the above figures do not represent the actual volume of delinquent behavior. They underrepresent the total picture for there is a "funnelling effect" or a "sieve process" that removes many known law violators from the official books.³⁸ Recorded delinquency is what comes through this sieve with its multiple screens. For example, in a study made in Los Angeles a few years ago, it was shown that of 52,398 juvenile acts which had come to the attention of the police, only 8,615 juveniles were brought to the court, with only the small figure of 875 being incarcerated.³⁹

The effect of the "funnelling or sieve process" can be seen in the self-report studies of Porterfield, Short and Nye, which suggest that perhaps as many as ninety percent of all young people have committed at least one

³⁷Juvenile Court Statistics, 1972, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1972, p. 32.

³⁸Polk and Schafer, 6.

³⁹Joseph W. Eaton and Kenneth Polk, Measuring Delinquency (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1961), p. 5.

act for which they could have been brought to juvenile court.⁴⁰ These studies suggest that there is a great volume of hidden delinquency that does not come to the attention of the authorities. The official delinquency records, therefore, do not provide a representative sample of those who have difficulties in living up to social expectations.

Arrest

Arrest is defined as the arrest of a student during his/her high school career for the violation of State, County or Municipal statutes excluding traffic offenses of a minor nature.

Tracking

Many school systems assign their students to classes according to intelligence or achievement. These classes, usually called tracks, are composed of students with similar ability. They may be placed in slow, regular or fast sections. The students who are placed in slow or regular sections, for examples, may be in vocational or general educational tracks, whereas students placed in the fast sections may be in the college bound track.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Austin L. Porterfield, "Delinquency and Outcome in Court and College," American Journal of Sociology, 49 (November, 1943), p. 200.

⁴¹ James S. Coleman, Adolescent and the School, (New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1965), p. 154.

The Administrative Staff Bulletin from the Warren City Schools stated that the philosophy of the tracking system was to provide for the fullest possible development of all pupils in terms of their ascertainable potentialities, needs, and interests. This means the recognition of and the provision for the individual differences in pupils; differences not only among pupils but differences within each pupil as well. This tracking system was designed to meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students. This tracking program challenges the most capable learner without placing unrealistic demands upon the less able pupil. It is this philosophy of providing for all pupils that has led to the development of this system.⁴²

The Administrative Bulletin further stated that two factors have a very important bearing on the success of the tracking system. First, it must be recognized that what teachers do in adapting content and method to different educational programs determines largely how effective the provision will be in meeting the needs of pupils in terms of increased learning and attainment of goals.

Secondly, in any educational program there should be provision for the adjustment of individual pupils from one program to another. No pupil should feel that he is locked into a particular program. There must be

⁴²Administrative Staff Bulletin, N-4, July 1, 1965, p. 10.

flexibility. The able student must demonstrate his ability to stay in the track designed for faster learning pupils, while the slower learning pupil should always be made to feel that he can change his status by doing better work. Flexibility is a must.

The tracking system was divided into five tracks: Accelerated Science and Mathematics Program, Track I, Track II, Track III, and the Occupational Program.

The Accelerated Science and Mathematics Program was designed for the exceptional student who maintained a high standard of performance. The I.Q. of this student was 124 and above.

Track I was designed for the fast pupil who has superior ability, excellent work habits and attitudes, maintains a superior standard of performance on tests and attacks, organizes and completes new tasks with a high degree of independence. This track was also designed for the students who use references and materials on their own initiative and is able to apply findings to class work and consistently achieves above grade level standards.

Track II was designed for the pupil who has average to above average ability; satisfactory work habits and attitudes; maintains fair to good standards on performance on tests; completes daily assignments with fair to above average mastery of skills; attacks, organizes, and completes tasks with a fair to good degree of independence.

Track III was designed for the below average pupil who has below average ability, poor work habits, and whose achievement is below grade level standards.

The occupational program was designed to provide for slower learning pupils who could no longer profit from school instruction and who were unable to succeed in the Track III program.

Identification and Classification of Pupils

In order to place pupils in the appropriate track designed to meet their needs, it was necessary to have an array of facts about each pupil in order to distinguish him as an individual. These facts about the pupil included a wide variety of factors such as physical development, social background, mental characteristics, educational achievement, interests and specialities. Not all of these facts about the pupil could be reduced to objective measures; but there were four types of data that were reduced to objective measures. These data were used to make much better than chance appraisals of the pupil's ability to succeed in school work. These four types of data used were:

1. Scores on mental tests: This measure represented the potential ability of the pupil; the educational level he was expected to reach. It was given in terms of percentile rank, intelligence grade placement, and intelligence quotient.

2. Scores on standardized achievement tests: This measure represented the ability of the pupil. Therefore, it was important as an index to represent strengths and weaknesses of the pupil in his basic educational

tools. Scores were given in terms of percentile rank or grade level for reading, language and arithmetic.

3. Marks in School: This measures again represented abilities of the student and was important in guidance because it was more than a simple rating of achievement; it was a reflection of the pupil's personality as it affected others, vivaciousness, motivation, cooperativeness, talkativeness and the like. Grades contain elements related to success that are not measured by tests.

4. Estimation of pupil by teacher from classroom observation: This is a behavior observation on the teacher's part estimating the pupil's ability, attitude, and motivation. The teacher's knowledge of grade standards, how the pupil rates with regard to oral work, written work, group activities, manual activities, work habits, ability to verbalize and generalize, all resolved by the teacher to a common denominator in estimating the ability of the pupil in relation to classroom achievement. From this estimation the teacher makes a recommendation for the placement of the pupil in one of the five tracks.⁴³

The students within the Warren School System were not only tracked in high school but were tracked in junior. They were assigned to a track at the end of the sixth grade. This was considered the most critical time in the student's educational career.⁴⁴

Upon assignment into one of the five tracks, the student's entire elementary record was reviewed using the four types of data as a basis for placement:

1. The ability of the student,
2. His record on standardized tests,
3. His marks in school subjects, and

⁴³Ibid., 15.

⁴⁴Administrative Staff Bulletin, 0-1, July 29, 1965,

4. The estimation of the pupil from classroom observation.

Four criteria were considered in placing a student in a track. Two of the four criteria were scores made on group tests; the third was a grade point average in academic subjects and the fourth was the teachers' judgement. To be placed in one of the tracks, a student must have met at least three of the four criteria.

This data was to assure as valid a placement as possible in one of the five tracks in the junior high school. The elementary principal and the sixth grade teacher were to share the responsibility for the recommendation of the type of educational program for each student entering a junior high from his elementary school.

Once the students were assigned to one of the five tracks in grade seven, a continuous evaluation of their progress and adjustment was carried out. It was impossible to accurately predict at the end of grade six the aptitude the students displayed. For this reason, the teachers and counselors worked closely together to guide individuals from course to course as their needs and aptitude emerged.

Statistics

After the scores were counted for the sample, the researcher used the following statistics: Z test, t test and the Yules Q for association.

Limitations of the Study

One important limitation of the study is the sample. The sample consists of only 120 students from a particular section of the country during a specific period of time. Whether the findings would be the same with other students in other schools at different times cannot be known accurately. In drawing conclusive inferences from these data about schools generally, the reader must exercise caution.

Another limitation of the study is the influence of uncontrolled extraneous variables. For instance, the students' father's occupation and the student's intelligence quotients were not controlled and both of these variables may have contributed to the results.

Finally, a limitation was experienced which has confronted many behavioral-science studies related to the question of validity of measures. The court data must be viewed only as gross underapproximations of actual violations of the law and may well underrepresent the delinquent behavior since the definition of delinquency used requires that the illegal act be known officially and that some action be initiated against the offender. "When an official definition of delinquency is used any differences in rates of delinquency noted may be attributed to 1) differences in actual behavior, 2) differences in the knowledge of official agencies to the offender, or 3) both of these elements."⁴⁵

⁴⁵Delbert Elliot, "Delinquency, School Attendance and Dropout," Social Problem, No. 3 (Winter, 1966), p. 310.

The use of official adjudication and police arrest study should result in a conservative test of the hypothesis since the kinds of distortion or biases introduced by the knowledge and reaction of official agents would tend to work against the hypothesis. However, the researcher will assume that this possibility of differences in the knowledge or reaction of official agencies to the offender does not exist in this study. Fallacies in this assumption will be accepted as limitations of the study.

CHAPTER IV

Findings of the Study

During the summer of 1974, data were collected from official school transcripts, court records, and police records from a sample of the graduating class of 1971 from Warren Western Reserve High School. At the time of the data collection all members of the class had either graduated, dropped out, or transferred to another school.

Characteristics of the Sample

Characteristics of the graduating class of 1971 from Warren Western Reserve High School are presented in Table 1. The figures reveal that the graduating class of 1971 contained a small proportion of Black students. The sex ratio appears to be evenly distributed while the proportion of non-college bound student's is slightly higher than college bound. There was no record of social class, or father's occupation.

Table 2 presents the characteristics of the sample population that were selected from the graduating class of 1971. For the purpose of this study, comparison of these figures with those of the other graduating class revealed that they are very similar in nature. The Z test for differences between proportions was used to evaluate the

TABLE 1
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GRADUATING CLASS OF 1971^a

Race		Sex		Track	
White	79%	Male	51%	College Bound	42.2%
Black	21%	Female	49%	Non-college Bound	57.8%

^aThe total N is 438.

TABLE 2
RACE CHARACTERISTICS OF SAMPLE AND GRADUATING CLASS^a

	Sample ^b	Graduating Class ^c
White	81.7%	79%
Black	18.3%	21%

^aThere was no statistically significant difference between these groups; Z is .75.

^bThe total N is 120.

^cThe total N is 438.

observed differences between the two groups. The findings indicate no statistically significant difference between the graduating class and the sample as far as race, sex, and track are concerned. The level of significance utilized was the .05 level.

TABLE 3

SEX CHARACTERISTICS OF SAMPLE AND
GRADUATING CLASS^a

	Sample ^b	Graduating Class ^c
Male	51.0%	51.0%
Female	49.0%	49.0%

^aThere was no statistically significant difference between these groups; Z is .051.

^bThe total N is 120.

^cThe total N is 438.

TABLE 4

TRACK CHARACTERISTICS OF SAMPLE AND
GRADUATING CLASS^a

	Sample ^b	Graduating Class ^c
College Bound	39.0%	42.0%
Non College Bound	61.0%	58.0%

^aThere was no statistically significant difference between these groups; Z is .60.

^bThe total N is 120.

^cThe total N is 438.

Table 5 shows the distribution of track position by race for the sample. For purposes of this, the five tracks utilized by Warren Western Reserve High School for student placement were collapsed into the two inclusive tracks of college preparatory and non-college preparatory. Forty-four percent of White youth as compared to eighteen percent of Black youth were assigned to the college preparatory track.

TABLE 5
DISTRIBUTION BETWEEN TRACKS BY RACE^a

Race	College	Non-College	Total
White ^b	44%	56%	100%
Black ^c	18%	82%	100%

^a χ^2 is 2.71

^bThe total N is 98.

^cThe total N is 22.

The Chi-square test was used to determine the degree of significance of this distribution. A statistically significant difference at the .05 level was obtained.

The distribution of track position by sex is presented in Table 6. These figures indicate that girls were only somewhat more likely to be assigned to the college preparatory track than boys. Furthermore, no

significant difference was found to exist when the Z test for differences between proportions was used. Thus, sex does not appear to be an important factor in track assignment.

TABLE 6
DISTRIBUTION BETWEEN TRACKS BY SEX^a

Sex	College	Non-College	Total
Male ^b	39%	61%	100%
Female ^c	41%	59%	100%

^aZ is .071.

^bThe total N is 61.

^cThe total N is 59.

Table 7 presents the distribution between track positions by previous academic achievement. The Z test was used to examine the differences between the proportions. A Z test of 7.36 was obtained which is statistically significant beyond the .05 level. Thus, previous achievement appears to be definitely associated with track assignment.

TABLE 7
 DISTRIBUTION BETWEEN TRACKS BY PREVIOUS
 ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT^a

	College ^b	Non-College ^c
High Average	81%	25%
Low Average	19%	75%
Total	100%	100%

^aZ is 7.36.

^bThe total N is 47.

^cThe total N is 73.

The Effects of Track Position Upon Behavior

The figures in Table 8 indicate that when Juvenile Court adjudication was used as a measure of juvenile delinquency, thirteen percent of the non-college bound students were delinquent during High school, as compared to only two percent of the college bound students. Using the Z test for differences between proportions, the researcher found the difference to be statistically significant beyond the .05 level. Therefore, there appears to be a significant difference between track positions and juvenile delinquent rates.

TABLE 9
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TRACKS IN DELINQUENCY RATE^a

	College Bound	Non-College Bound
Non-Delinquent ^b	98%	87%
Delinquent ^c	2%	13%
Total	100%	100%

^a Z is 2.517; p .05.

^bThe total N is 47.

^cThe total N is 73.

Table 9 is an expansion of Table 8. The delinquent category in Table 8 has been sub-divided into "Delinquent before 9th Grade" and "Became Delinquent During High School." The rationale for this sub-division was to examine the possibility that the longer one is exposed to the track system, the greater the opportunity for the system to effect the student.

The t test was used as the test for significance of difference between two proportions for Table 9. The researcher found there to be no significant differences in delinquency rate by date of first court entry. The t test revealed a .135 which is not significant at the .05 level.

TABLE 9
 DELINQUENCY RATE BY DATE OF FIRST COURT ENTRY^a

	College Bound		Non-College Bound	
	Proportion	N	Proportion	N
Non Delinquent	98%	46	87%	64
Delinquent Before 9th grade	00%	0	2%	1
Became Delinquent During High School	2%	1	11%	8
Total	100%	47	100%	73

^at is .135; p .05.

Table 8 revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between tracks with respect to delinquency rate. The measure of association between these variables is indicated in Table 10. Using Yule's Q to measure the degree of association, it was found that a .73, a high degree of association existed between track position and delinquent rates.

TABLE 10
 MEASURE OF ASSOCIATION BETWEEN TRACK POSITION AND
 DELINQUENCY RATE^a

	Delinquent	Non Delinquent
College ^b	1	46
Non College ^c	9	64

^aQ is .73.

^bThe total N is 47.

^cThe total N is 73.

The figures in Table 11 reveal that when police arrest records were used as the juvenile delinquency rate, nineteen percent of the non-college bound students were arrested as compared with four percent of the college bound students. Using the Z test for differences between proportions, the test revealed the difference to be statistically significant beyond the .05 level. Thus, there is a significant difference between track positions in juvenile delinquency rates.

The figures in Table 12 indicate who had been arrested before high school and during high school. The category "Arrest" has been divided into "Arrested during High School" and "Arrested before 9th grade". This was done to examine the amount of time one was exposed to the system.

TABLE 11
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TRACKS IN ARREST RATE^a

	College Bound ^b	Non College Bound ^c
Non Arrest	96%	81%
Arrest	4%	19%
Total	100%	100%

^a Z is 2.79; p .05.

^bThe total N is 47.

^cThe total N is 73.

TABLE 12
ARREST RATE BY DATE OF FIRST ARREST^a

	College Bound		Non College Bound	
	Percent	N	Percent	N
Non Arrest	96%	45	81%	58
Arrested Before 9th Grade	0%	0	3%	2
Arrested During High School	4%	2	16%	13
Total	100%	47	100%	73

^a t is .127.

Using the t test as the measure for significant difference in arrest rate by date of first arrest, a value of .127 was revealed. This did not prove to be statistically significant different at .05 level.

The purpose of Table 13 is to determine the degree of association, if any, between track position and arrest rate. The rationale for this table is based upon the statistically significant difference found between track positions and arrest rates as shown in Table 11. Using Yules Q, the degree of association found between the variables was a .68, a moderately high degree of association.

TABLE 13
MEASURE OF ASSOCIATION BETWEEN TRACK POSITION
AND ARREST RATE^a

	Arrest	Non Arrest
College ^b	2	45
Non College ^c	14	59

^aQ is .68.

^bThe total N is 47.

^cThe total N is 73.

Summary

In the high school studied, non-college bound students experienced lower academic achievement. Students from Black families were disproportionately assigned to the non-college bound track. The non-college bound student experienced a greater number of arrests and delinquencies than the college-bound students.

CHAPTER V

Interpretation of Data and Conclusions

The preceding chapters have described the tracking system as used by ascertaining public high schools as an integral organizational component. A high school, Warren Western Reserve, was then selected. A study was conducted to examine the relationship between the track system and delinquency. The findings of this study have been reported in Chapter Four. It was found that the non-college bound track produced greater delinquency and arrest rates than did the college bound track. While the data presented in this study cannot provide definite answers, they do in combination with findings from other studies and behavioral theories provide a basis for possible explanation of the relationship between the tracking system and delinquent behavior.

Looking at Table 8, Difference Between Tracks in Delinquency Rate, and Table 11, Difference Between Tracks in Arrests Rate, the non-college bound student ranked higher in both arrests and delinquencies. A possibility exists that the non-college bound students were low in motivation, commitment to school, grades, involvement in school activities, and conformity to school rules because teachers, counselors and others expected them to behave that way.

When the analysis was further limited to those students who did not have a court record prior to entering high school, a greater percentage of non-college bound students became officially delinquent for the first time during high school as shown in Table 9. When the analysis is limited to those students who had no arrest record, excluding traffic arrest, prior to entering high school, a greater percentage of non-college bound students were arrested as shown in Table 12. Tables 9 and 12 indicated that the non-college bound student displayed negative behavior more so than the college bound students. Also, Tables 9 and 12 indicated that more negative behavior in the form of arrests and delinquencies was displayed during high school rather than junior high school. This may suggest that the longer the exposure to the system, the greater its effect, thus reinforcing the self-fulfilling prophecy and negative self-concept.

In short, it is suggested that these students were trapped in a negative self-fulfilling prophecy. This concept is rooted in the assumption that an individual's concept of himself; his abilities, his identity, his sense of worth, and his behavior is partly determined by how others define him and react towards him.⁴⁶

In the high school studied, the difference in achievement was great. Table 7 shows that a far greater percentage of college bound than non-college bound students placed high in previous academic achievement of their class (81 percent

⁴⁶Rosenthal and Lenore, 3-8.

versus 19 percent), while almost the same percentage of non-college bound students placed low in previous academic achievement (25 versus 75 percent). It may be that non-college bound students do not do as well in school work because of their family background. These students more often receive lower grades because they did not perform well in elementary school and thus have fallen behind in the accumulation of learning. Moreover, their family life and background are not conducive to a learning environment. Hence, upon placement into the non-college bound track, the student fulfills the expectations of that track. More simply, tracking may well generate self-fulfilling differences in teachers' expectations by the very nature of the categories and labels employed.

This researcher feels the self-fulfilling prophecy may have been partly formalized by a possible grade ceiling for non-college bound student's and grade floors for college bound students. By virtue of being assigned to a non-college track, the teachers expectations were fulfilled in that they may have felt that non-college bound student's do not deserve the same objective grade rewards as do college-bound students, since they are less bright and perform less well. This whole idea is based on the requirements used by the school studied of assigning a student to a particular track. Each track had criteria to be met before assignment to that track. For example the Accelerated Science and

Mathematics Track required a 121 I.Q. and above with standings of 8 and 9 for achievement tests plus a grade point average between 3.0 and 4.0 on a four point scale. The Occupational Track required an I.Q. of 80 or less with stanines of 1-2 for achievement tests and a grade point average of .5 and below. To the extent a grade ceiling did operate for non-college bound students, lower grades were further assured by the absence of available potential rewards for achievement, with resulting deterioration of motivation and commitment.

Immediately, the student may be perceived by the teacher as not so bright and, therefore, the teachers will have lower expectations of the student because of the track position of the student. These lower track students had two disadvantages: 1) their lower track status and 2) lower teacher expectations. In other words, the non-college bound track implies that the student is not so bright, the student is dull, uninteresting, and possibly a behavior problem. Therefore, the teachers will hold lower expectations of their students. These are the children who as seen by their teachers, are not likely to succeed in school and life.

Teachers in lower tracks do not set standards as high as those in middle and upper tracks. Diverging standards by teachers could be responsible to some degree for divergence between aspirations and achievement among the non-college bound student. In other words, variation

in teachers' expectations and standards may contribute to differences in pupil attainment and aspirations.

If teachers believe that their students are brighter than others, these students will probably be brighter. Perhaps, these teachers also treated their students in a more friendly, pleasant, and enthusiastic fashion when they had more favorable expectations for their intellectual development. It is these unintentional influences from the teacher that may effect the education outcome.

Brookover indicated in his research that high academic performance is associated with high esteem and individuals develop loyalty and commitment to a group or organization to the extent that the group generates in the person's positive feelings about himself.⁴⁷ Several social scientists have contended that the lower the expectations by teachers of students in low-ability group (non-college bound track) have a dampening effect on self-esteem. Sexton made the following observation:

The teacher learns that the student has a low IQ rating and puts him into a slow moving group where he is not expected to do much or be given much attention. He is bright enough, however, to catch on very quickly to the fact that he is not considered very bright. He comes to accept this very unflattering appraisal because, after all the school should know. He is in his pigeon hole. He can't get out, and what is more, he doesn't try; he accepts his fate. His parents accept it, since

⁴⁷Wilbur B. Brookover and David Gottlieb, A Sociology of Education. (New York, New York: American Book, 1964)

after all the schools should know. Intellectually, he is lost. He has accepted this low appraisal of himself; and both he and society must suffer the consequences.⁴⁸

Unfortunately, there are no systematic measures of teacher expectations for this study. However, evidence from other studies suggest that teachers of non-college bound students probably harbour lower expectations:

In a tracked school the teacher categorizes the students not only in terms of the influences he makes from the child's classroom behavior but also from the child's track position. The teacher has learned to expect certain kinds of behavior from members of different tracks.

Because a teacher has categorized a student, he may in his own behavior toward the student emit expectations to which the student will conform. It is, in short, an example of the self-fulfilling prophecy. The negative behavioral tendencies.⁴⁹

This is consistent with the labeling syndrome. That is, the assignment to a non-college bound track confers on students a stigmatizing label which in turn erodes self esteem and commitment to the goals and norms of school and society.

A student enters a social category not of his own volition. The label attached to that category attaches to him as a person. If the label carries with it a negative stigma, he becomes a stigmatized individual. His peer group and others view him not so much as John Doe,

⁴⁸ Patricia Cayo Sexton, Education and Income: Inequality of Opportunity in the Public Schools, (New York: Viking Press, 1961), p. 52.

⁴⁹ David Hargreaves, Social Relations in a Secondary School (New York: Humanities Press, 1967), pp. 105-106.

a unique individual, but as an occupant of that category, a type of person. They treat him accordingly, perhaps unintentionally. He in turn, finds himself coming to believe the label, accepting the stigma, viewing himself as a lesser person and not so bright. His self concept is negative. His level and quality of behavior may decline along the way as his expectations of himself gradually deteriorate. He may turn toward other, less humiliating activities, frequently seeking and finding others with a similar plight. Together they reinforce each other in their antagonism toward the system that stigmatized them, and together they pursue other more attainable and satisfying goals.

Labeling may then be considered an important process in producing the negative personal, educational and behavioral effects of assignment to the non-college bound track. Several researchers have noted the negative evaluation attached to the non-college bound track. In one particular interview, a high school student stated, "around here you are nothing if you're not college prep."⁵⁰

It was further evident that the self-fulfilling prophecy was partly formalized by the fact that race appeared to be an important factor in track assignment as indicated in Table 11. There were 44 percent of white

⁵⁰David Mallery, High School Students Speak Out (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1962), p. 55.

youth as compared to 18 percent of black youth assigned to the college preparatory track. Only 56 percent of white youth were assigned to the non-college bound track compared to 82 percent black youth. These figures indicated blacks were more likely to be assigned to the non-college bound track than whites. School officials may well have been influenced in subtle and unrecognized ways by direct knowledge of family background, thus, white students may have been judged to be better success risks than were students from black families.

In any case, minority students were disproportionately subjected to whatever negative effects are associated with the non-college bound track. This track became a repository for students who not only had been less successful in school, but also had been less capable and promising; thus, the formal structure itself was ready for the convergence of students with less than favorable self-images, attitudes and norms.

From the school studied, the non-college bound students experienced greater arrest and delinquency rates as indicated in Tables 11 and 8 respectively. Negative behavior here may be largely a rebellion against the school. At the least, being outside the mainstream of success in school may leave many students more open and susceptible to deviant influences. These findings suggest possibly an important factor into delinquency is having a non-college

bound status in the school's tracking system, with the low achievement, frustration and stigma that accompanies that track.

Summary

It is very possible that the relationships between track position and the educational outcomes may have been the result of extraneous influences rather than track position. The researcher certainly believes extraneous influences did contribute. But the real issue concerns itself with how much did track position affect the students. The lack of control over all possible influences made it impossible to assess fully the relative impact of track position.

This researcher believes that one possible mediating process is the self-fulfilling prophecy, in which teachers of the non-college track expect less and get less. This hypothesis is consistent with studies of the effects of teacher expectation on pupil performance, attitudes, and behavior.

The labeling process holds that the negative evaluations directed at non-college bound students by teachers and by peers tend to lead to a deterioration of self-esteem, aspirations and educational commitment. In essence, the non-college bound student falls behind and rebels.

The findings also probably resulted in part from differences between tracks in the level of interest, energy, motivation and instructional quality by teachers. Finally, it is possible the degree of personal commitment of students to school may have varied between the college-bound and the non-college bound students. If a student makes a decision to attend college, his attitudes, behavior, motivation, and performance are likely to be consistent and in accord with the school's norms and teacher expectations. The students who do not commit themselves to the goal of college are less likely to consider conformity to school norms very important. All of these processes probably combined and interacted with one another to produce the findings presented.

In short, track position may have affected academic achievement, involvement, conformity, and persistence in school, as well as delinquency, partly because of labeling and the negative expectations by teachers of non-college bound students in turn led to a deterioration of commitment, motivation, self-esteem, performance and misconduct. While further evidence is needed, the literature and arguments just cited support the validity of the argument that the self fulfilling process and the labeling syndrome was an important part of the overall social and educational process in the school studied.

The data for this study suggests a need for further research, based on a larger sample and a greater number of

variables. To the extent that the findings are valid and general, they suggest that, through tracking, the school is partly to blame for the many problems of non-conformity and failure. Therefore, there is a need to develop new environments of learning.

New and imaginative endeavors must be pursued. They must be humanistic and equalitarian. These environments must be carefully planned and evaluated so that they will be based on recent evidence so that new knowledge can be systematically developed about what models are most effective.

It is also vital that alternatives to public schools be planned and tested at the same time that efforts are made to effect reforms within the framework of public education. Yet these reforms and alternatives must also be measured, assessed, and compared to other types of learning environments if they are to avoid falling into the same situation as today's present system of education.

Education must afford a chance for every student to experience an individualized mind expanding, joy producing, educational process based on equality of opportunity. But it must do even more. "Education must address itself to the vital issues of man and his survival."⁵¹

⁵¹George B. Leonard, Education and Ecstasy (New York: Dell, 1968), p. 124.

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