

Permission to Copy

In presenting this professional paper in partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree at Montana State University, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for inspection. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this paper for scholarly purposes may be granted by my major professor, or, in his absence, by the Director of Libraries. It is understood that any copying or publication of this paper for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Signature

Carl W. McCullum

Date

May 7, 1971

A STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL PROMOTION ON
DROPOUT AND LOCK-INS

by

Carl William McCallum

A professional paper submitted to the Graduate Faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree

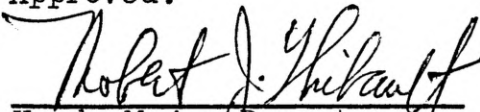
of

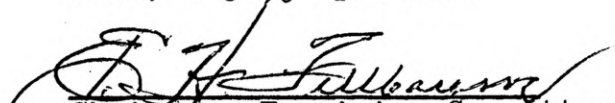
MASTER OF EDUCATION

with concentration in

ADMINISTRATION

Approved:


Head, Major Department


Chairman, Examining Committee


Graduate Dean

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
Bozeman, Montana

June, 1971

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
LIST OF TABLES	v
ABSTRACT	vi
CHAPTER	
I INTRODUCTION	1
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	2
NEED OR PURPOSE OF THE STUDY	3
GENERAL PROCEDURE	3
METHODS OF ORGANIZING DATA	5
LIMITATIONS	5
DEFINITION OF TERMS	6
SUMMARY	7
II REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	8
SOCIAL PROMOTION	9
DROPOUT	11
LOCK-IN	12
SUMMARY	13
III THE INTERVIEW	15
SUMMARY	21
IV SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	23

CHAPTER	PAGE
SUMMARY	23
CONCLUSIONS	25
RECOMMENDATIONS	29
BIBLIOGRAPHY	32
APPENDIX	33

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Charts positive and negative answers to question number 1	18
2. Charts positive and negative answers to question number 2	19
3. Charts positive and negative answers to question number 3	20
4. Charts positive and negative answers to question number 4	20
5. Charts positive and negative answers to question number 5	21

ABSTRACT

The average prison inmate claims a ninth grade education but achievement tests given to new inmates usually reveal a lower achievement level. This difference between grade level and achievement influenced the author in his decision to study the effects of "social promotion" on "dropouts" and "lock-in."

Relatively few authors have tried to establish a correlation between "social promotion" and "dropout" nor were there any articles confirming a correlation between "dropout" and "lock-in." The author, therefore, had to depend on his teaching experiences in Montana State Prison and a semi-structured interview with thirty-six inmates to establish a correlation between "dropout" and "lock-in."

Using the available literature coupled with face to face interviews the author was able to determine that "social promotion" is a degrading process compounding frustrations and destroying initiative. "Social promotion" starts in the lower grades and usually culminates in the ninth or tenth grade.

In answering the five key questions of the study, sixty-one percent of the inmates indicated they were discouraged by the work in the upper grades. Yet only fifty percent felt they would have benefited from retention. Fifty-eight percent believed they would have finished school if the work was measured to their speed and ability. Ninety-one percent stated that dropping out of school affected their adult lives. However, only sixty-one percent thought dropping out of school led them to prison.

The study logically leads the author to conclude there is a correlation between the three variables and "social promotion" is definitely a factor in "dropout" and "lock-in."

The author would recommend an ungraded primary to control "social promotion" and "dropout" and non-academically oriented continuing education program to reduce "lock-in." The author would also recommend more extensive research in this area of education.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Social promotion is a valuable tool, used by many elementary and secondary teachers and school officials. This tool is used to keep students up with their peer group when all other available methods have failed. However, many teachers and administrators are over-anxious to use this tool which makes it easy to eliminate problem students. The use of this tool is much easier than doing a case study; it is much easier than devising methods of reaching this child; it has become the tool of lazy, uninspired teaching. The indiscriminate use of this over-worked tool is indirectly the cause of many of our social ills.

This study will describe only one small segment of one direction those harmful effects can take, that of ending up in prison because of the inability to cope with the problems of a complex world. This inability to cope with the problems of the world reflects the permissive educational system that never demanded that a student solve problems or finish projects to win the greatest reward of education, "promotion." Youth who already lack self-esteem can be easily harmed if these low evaluations

2.

are reinforced by unflattering expectations.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The author served for two years as Director of Education at Montana State Prison. One of the duties of that position was interviewing all new prisoners, collecting data for prison records. Educational attainment was one of the data required. Many inmate school dropouts claimed ninth and tenth grade educations; however, their scores on achievement tests administered at a later date showed actual achievement to be at a much lower level.

The large proportion of inmates in the above category influenced the author in making his decision to study the relationship between "social promotion," "dropout," and "lock-in."

The problem then is, why should there be such a large span between inmates' actual achievement and their grade level? And does the reason for this difference contribute to their incarceration?

It is the author's contention that the difference between the inmates' actual achievement and grade level is due in part to "social promotion." "Dropout" is preceded by a series of frustrating experiences influenced by

3.

"social promotion" which in turn adds to the student's frustration when he approaches the world of labor. These disappointments develop into an anti-social attitude resulting in minor to major infractions of the law and culminates in "lock-in."

NEED OR PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The need for this study is an ever present one in education, the need to abolish poor educational practices and replace them with more efficient ones.

Social promotion served its initial purpose, that of removing the overaged and retarded from the school systems of the 1930s and early 1940s. Much better and more progressive systems of promotion are available, but unfortunately are not universally practiced.

The purpose of this study is to show that a connection does exist between "social promotion," "dropout," and "lock-in," and a further purpose is to make educators aware of this correlation.

GENERAL PROCEDURE

The investigator has reviewed the related literature to determine the extent to which this problem has been investigated by previous researchers. All such

4.

evidence uncovered by previous research has been put to good use in the present study. Articles that confirm the investigator's theory that "social promotion" is basically degrading were hard to find. The investigator did, however, find some articles that confirm his theory.

The second part of the study was planned to show a connection between "dropout" and "lock-in" by use of a semi-structured interview. The questionnaire for the interview contains five structured, six limited-response and six free-response questions. These questions are designed to answer the three key questions of this study. In addition to face to face interview with the inmates, the investigator was allowed to check the respondent's records to secure the information that would place the inmate within the limits of this study.

The questionnaire was submitted to the professor of criminology at Montana State University to determine that the level of the vocabulary used was appropriate.

The questionnaire was also checked for ego-deflating phrases after which it was re-written using the suggestions of the Sociology Department of Montana State University. The questionnaire was then submitted to five faculty members and twelve graduate students to confirm

5.

that the questions meant the same thing to all who read them.

METHODS OF ORGANIZING DATA

The review of literature has shown that there is a wide spread concern over the practice of "social promotion." It also confirms the fact that some authors see "social promotion" as a cause of "dropout."

The investigator had to depend on a semi-structured interview with inmates at the State Prison to establish a connection between "dropout" and "lock-in." The questionnaire was designed to answer the key questions raised by this study.

The answers of the inmates to the key questions were charted giving the percentage of positive and negative answers to each. Conclusions were drawn and recommendations made based upon the results of these interviews.

LIMITATIONS

This study was confined to thirty-six inmates presently serving time in Montana State Prison. Only those inmates between the ages of seventeen and twenty-

five with an average or below average IQ (below 100 IQ) will be used in this study. Further limitations will be imposed on this paper by lack of research in this area of education. The interviews were conducted over a three-month period from June, 1970 through August, 1970.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The terms used throughout this study are listed below:

1. Social promotion--promoted for the benefit of the school or promoted to keep students up with their age group or various reasons other than academic achievement.
2. Dropout--those students who leave school before completing requirements for a secondary diploma.
3. Lock-in--those people who have been incarcerated in a state correctional institution.
4. Social ills--situations that are injurious to the public welfare.
5. Disadvantaged child--a child who has a lower than normal IQ or has been denied some social experiences that normal children usually have.

SUMMARY

During the period since 1930 several factors have been influential in changing student promotional policies in the school systems. One of these innovations was the continuous-promotion or social promotion plan.

The term "social promotion," as used in many of our schools today is a method by which children are kept together in school on the basis of chronological age. It is contended by the author that those systems using only chronological ages as a method of grouping are harming more children than they are helping. The author further contends that the indiscriminate use of the tool is a contributing factor in school "dropout" which in turn may lead to "lock-in."

The author has reviewed many articles in the literature which support his theory that "social promotion" is a contributing factor in "dropout." To establish a connection between "dropout" and "lock-in" the author has conducted a semi-structured interview with thirty-six inmates at Montana State Prison. The conclusions drawn from this study are based on the results of these interviews.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In reviewing the available related literature the investigator has found many articles on "social promotion" and on "dropouts" but nothing on "lock-ins," nor have any of the articles tried to establish a relationship between these three variables. Two authors, reviewed, have attempted to show that the dropouts' inability to cope with the contingencies of school curriculum and social life is projected into his adult life. This inability to cope with the problems of life is especially true of the disadvantaged or slightly retarded child. It is this type of person, for whom limits were established in this study, that reaches a point, shortly after dropping out of school, that he realizes the only way he can exist is by accepting welfare for the basic necessities of life. He must, therefore, steal for any requirements beyond those basic necessities. This study will be concerned only with the latter. The investigator will chart a logical path by use of available literature from "social promotion" to "dropout" to "lock-in."

SOCIAL PROMOTION

The term social promotion as used in many of our schools today is a method by which children are kept together in school on the basis of chronological age.

Children of a given age enter school at the same time and are passed on from class to class in a group, with little, if any regard for their educational attainment.

Magnifico (1958:216-218)

The real harm, of course, is done in the lower grades, starting with the first social promotion, after which school becomes a lock-step-system culminating in dropout usually in the ninth or tenth grade. The reason more students dropout at this level is because secondary textbooks are designed for students who have met the minimum requirement. Students unable to meet those requirements are further bored and frustrated, dropping out as soon as age requirements are met.

Duboise (1960:18)

Those who advise the promotion of the dull child from one grade to the next regardless of his scholastic deficiencies contend that "it is unreasonable to punish him, since he cannot do the work."

We suffer because we are frustrated, because we find ourselves personally and socially inadequate to cope with contingencies that confront us. It is unfair to the students and to society to award grades indicating achievement if those standards have not been met. "Gift grades for students who do not meet standards established in the various grades are detrimental to self respect and future progress." Metcalf (1960:18)

The continuous promotion system has robbed the student of all initiative by taking the reward factor out of promotion and replacing it with a lock-step system based on chronological factors. Age does not make up a social grouping, and it should not make up a societal grouping. Magnifico (1968:53-58) says "an outstanding anomaly in a procedure that is allegedly based on democratic methods in that ranking the child according to age is just as much a form of segregation as if he were classified by his I. Q. except that segregation by age has far less validity." He further contends that "whatever the I. Q.'s limitation, at least, it is a factor that relates directly to the child's educatability, whereas his chronological age has as little to do with his scholastic aptitude as the length of his nose."

It is true, education does not aim simply at acquisition of subject matter; it must build character as well. However, emotional maladjustment does not build character and the systems of education that have spawned "social promotion" do not produce good adjustment, as has been indicated already. Obviously the slow child can develop a sense of adequacy only if the classroom teacher shows him a few things he can do instead of the many he can not do. If this type of teaching is not available to the disadvantaged child, then he will, most likely drop out of school.

DROPOUT

The expression "dropout" is synonymous with failure in our society. The farm and industrial labor markets that absorbed the "socially promoted" dropout in the thirties and forties no longer exist. More and better skills are demanded, but alas, the "socially promoted" product of the present school system cannot meet those demands.

Because of his low intelligence the slow learner is sometimes regarded as inferior and in some ways less worthy of education than the average bright child. The

slow learner is usually placed between the average and the mentally retarded in academic ability and achievement with an I. Q. between seventy-five and ninety and an intellectual growth rate of two-thirds to three-fourths that of a normal child. Saterlie (1967:37-41) states "that twenty percent of our total population are in the slow learner category." "It, therefore, behooves us to be more concerned with this substantial segment of our society before the burden of supporting them becomes unbearable." Carrothers (1946:29)

Evidence of the system's failure is to be found in excessive absenteeism, apathic and hostile attitudes and meager academic achievement. The potential dropout cannot do his homework nor can he participate in discussion--if the teacher does call on him. School work becomes hateful; and he becomes bored and apathetic or resentful and aggressive. Feeling rejected he withdraws from all school activities. Eventually he leaves school hoping the world will treat him better, but here too he may be doomed to failure.

LOCK-IN

In the connection between "dropout" and "lock-in"

the researcher has to rely on his experiences as Director of Education at Montana State Prison to hypothesize a relationship between the two.

It seems evident that the seeds of frustration sown at the time of the first "social promotion" turned into roots of bitterness, at the time of "dropout" eventually sprouting weeds of resentment against a society which holds him rigidly at the bottom of the social ladder. It is this built-up feeling of frustration and resentment that justifies the deviant act that leads to "lock-in."

SUMMARY

The researcher feels very fortunate, in that, his review of literature has revealed that some educators are equally alarmed about the use of the out-dated tool of early century education, "social promotion." The real harm is done in the lower grades, starting with the first "social promotion" after which school becomes a degrading progression from one grade to the next culminating in "dropout." The farm and industrial labor markets that absorbed the socially promoted dropout in the forties no longer exist. More and better skills are now demanded,

14.

but alas, the socially promoted product of our school system cannot meet these demands. He is quite likely, therefore, to take from society those necessities or luxuries which society will not allow him to earn.

CHAPTER III

THE INTERVIEW

As Director of Education at Montana State Prison the investigator was privileged to visit many prisons in various parts of the country. Naturally, he talked over problems held in common with other prison directors of education. One of those common problems was the incongruity of inmates' grade level and actual achievement. This gap between inmate grade level and actual achievement was a common factor among all of those who had dropped out of school, but more especially so with those inmates who had dropped out in the ninth and tenth grade. The achievement gap intrigued the investigator and led him to question many inmates over a two-year period as to why they found school distastful. What preceded dropping out of school? What effect dropping out of school had on their lives? Has this factor contributed to their incarceration? The answers received by the investigator to these questions were the prime reason for this study.

After a thorough search of the literature, the author of this study found that few educators supported his theory on "social promotion." Therefore the answers to the key questions raised by this study were answered,

mainly, by face to face interview with thirty-six inmates at Montana State Prison. The questionnaire used for these interviews contained the five structured key questions of the study and in addition had twelve supporting questions. The supporting questions were mostly free response and were used to check the validity of the structured key questions.

The questions will be included here for the convenience of the reader.

Key Questions

1. Did the work in the grades seven through ten discourage or frustrate you?
2. Would you have been happier if you had been allowed to remain in the same grade for an extra year?
3. Do you believe that you would have remained in school instead of dropping out if the teachers had allowed you more time to understand the various subjects?
4. Do you think the fact that you dropped out of school has affected your adult life?
5. Did dropping out of school contribute in any way to delinquency which in turn led you to prison?

Supporting Questions

1. How do you feel about your family?
2. What kind of work do you like, and how long did you work in that line?

17.

3. What kind of work do you dislike? Have you ever had a job in this field?
4. How many jobs have you had since leaving school?
5. Why did you quit school?
6. What grade were you in when you quit school?
7. Were you ever retained in a grade?
8. What grade or grades in school did you find the most difficult?
9. Why do you think you dropped out of school?
10. If you were retained did you feel?
(a) ashamed (b) relieved (c) angered
(d) indifferent
11. If retained, how did you accept your new classmates the following year?
12. Explain why you think dropping out of school contributed to your incarceration.

It was understood by the author that prison-inmates are difficult people to question. If an answer to any question is ego-deflating, the inmate will usually rationalize or lie. The self image of the inmate-such as it is-is all they have left after a short exposure to our un-enlightened and medieval rehabilitation system. The criminologist in the sociology department at Montana State University, Dr. McCannell, was very helpful in suggesting ways to rephrase the questions so as not to debase the inmate. The direct questions, "Was social

promotion a factor in your dropping out of school?" and "Were you ever socially promoted?" were discarded as being degrading to the person answering the questions. The author, therefore, designed three questions of a less degrading nature to obtain the answers to these questions. It was agreed by the sociology department that if these three questions were answered in the affirmative it would indicate that the person had been socially promoted and that social promotion was a factor in his dropping out of school. The answers to the five key questions of the study are charted below. The tables are numbered one through five and correspond in number to the key question being charted.

Table No. 1

Question No. 1. Did the work in the higher grades discourage or frustrate you?

Number of Inmates		Percentage
Yes	24	66.6%
No	12	33.3%

Two-thirds of the inmates answered "yes" to the first question as shown in chart one. Of the one-third that answered "no" to the first question, four stated that the work was challenging, but they had many and varied excuses as to why they could not meet that challenge.

One of the inmates who answered "yes" to the above question, stated that he felt frustration after the first "social promotion," boredom after the second, and complete indifference after the third.

Table No. 2

Question No. 2. Would you have been happier if you had been allowed to remain in the same grade for an extra year?

Number of Inmates		Percentage
Yes	18	50%
No	18	50%

Eighteen men or fifty percent answered the second question in the affirmative. Eighteen of the inmates said they would not have been happier if they had been allowed to remain in the same grade for an extra year. Most of those answering in the affirmative had had trouble in certain subjects especially math, and they felt that if they had understood the subject a little bit better before being shoved ahead it would have alleviated some of the trouble that inevitably followed. Those men answering in the negative for the most part had apathetic, indifferent attitudes and seemed to believe that holding them back would not have done much good because they would not have benefited from it anyway.

Table No. 3

Question No. 3. Do you believe you would have remained in school instead of dropping out if the teachers had allowed you more time to better understand the various subjects?

Number of Inmates		Percentage
Yes	21	58%
No	15	42%

Fifty-eight percent of the men questioned thought they would have remained in school if they had been able to cope with the situation. Forty-two percent had reasons other than academic inability for leaving school. The reasons were many and varied. Four of the inmates blamed themselves.

Table No. 4

Question No. 4. Do you think that the fact that you dropped out of school has affected your adult life?

Number of Inmates		Percentage
Yes	33	91%
No	3	9%

Ninety-one percent of the inmates answered yes to the fourth question of the study. Only three of the thirty-six men questioned failed to see that more education would have helped them. All of those answering in

the affirmative were quite well aware that being a dropout precluded any chance of advancement in a worthwhile occupation.

Table No. 5

Question No. 5. Did dropping out of school contribute in any way to delinquencies which led you to prison?

	Number of Inmates	Percentage
Yes	22	61%
No	14	39%

The last question of the study followed naturally after the fourth question and was answered in the affirmative by sixty-one percent of the inmates. Thirty-nine percent concluded they would have gotten into trouble anyway and the nature of their crime had nothing to do with their level of education.

SUMMARY

In his review of literature the investigator has found some writers that agree with his theory that "social promotion" is the seed which, when sown yields dropouts. No literature was found that would agree with the authors' contention that social promotion is actually the starting point of a chain reaction that culminates in "lock-in." In order to bridge the gap in the literature

between "drop-out" and "lock-in" the investigator had to depend on a personal interview with thirty-six inmates presently serving time in Montana State Prison.

Two-thirds of the inmates questioned said they were discouraged or frustrated by the work in the higher grades of the elementary and junior high school. Yet, only fifty percent said they would have been happier if retained an extra year. Fifty-eight percent believed that if the curriculum had been measured to their speed and ability they would have finished school. A large ninety-one percent agreed most definitely that dropping out of school had negatively affected their adult lives. While only sixty-one percent believed that dropping out of school contributed to their incarceration.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

SUMMARY

The investigator first became aware of the problem under study when, as Director of Education at Montana State Prison, he noticed a large negative difference between inmates actual educational achievement and grade level. The average inmate claimed a ninth grade education but achieved at a much lower level. The investigator was intrigued by this problem and his interest led him to extensively question many inmates over a two year period. The answers to the key questions influenced the author into making a study into the effects of "social promotion" on "dropout" and "lock-in."

The author, in his search of the literature, found relatively few educators who believed that "social promotion" was a factor in "dropout." He found no other author that had tried to correlate "lock-in" with "social promotion" or "dropout." The author, therefore, had to depend on a structured interview with thirty-six inmates at Montana State Prison for the connection between "dropout" and "lock-in."

Using the available literature coupled with face to face interviews the author was able to determine that "social promotion" is a degrading process compounding frustrations and destroying initiative. "Social promotion" usually starts in the primary grades after which school becomes a confusing series of steps culminating in "dropout", usually in the ninth or tenth grade.

After reviewing all the facts uncovered by this study, the author concluded that "social promotion" is a factor in "dropout." To rectify this situation the author would recommend ungraded primary schools with more and better trained guidance counselors.

In establishing a correlation between "dropout" and "lock-in" the investigator found that sixty-six percent of the inmates questioned were discouraged and frustrated by the work in the upper elementary grades. Yet, only fifty percent felt they would have benefited from retention. Fifty-eight percent believed they would have finished school if the work was measured to their speed and ability. Ninety-one percent stated that dropping out of school affected their adult lives. Sixty-one percent thought that dropping out of school led them to prison.

The fact that ninety-one percent of the inmates' adult lives were adversely affected by lack of education leads the investigator to conclude that dropping out of school is a big factor in "lock-in" and both "dropout" and "lock-in" are affected by the factor "social promotion."

Continuing education is recommended by the author, however, continuing education in an environment completely non-academic in appearance and with teachers trained in the peer-group approach.

CONCLUSIONS

That social promotion is a contributing factor in the rate of school dropouts is a recognized fact as is shown by writings of some leading educators. Duboise (1960-18) states "that socially promoted elementary students who are unable to cope with the level of high school text books are further bored and frustrated, dropping out of school as soon as age requirements are met." Metcalf (1960-18) says, "Gift grades for students who do not meet standards established in the various grades are detrimental to self-respect and future progress." That the above statement is true can be varified in many of our schools. Evidence of the

systems failure can be found in excessive absenteeism, apathetic and hostile attitudes and meager academic achievement. The potential dropout cannot do work on the level expected. He is seldom encouraged to participate in discussion and his contributions to class projects are mostly ignored. This degrading process usually starts for the slow student in the lower grades. He is unable to keep up with his class but is passed on to the next grade for want of a better solution. Having been unable to achieve satisfactorily in the lower grade the socially promoted student finds himself in an even more confusing situation--a situation where success is most unlikely. After many unsuccessful attempts to compete, the student becomes apathetic and disinterested. Further social promotions only serve to increase the frustration, and the apathy begins to turn to resentment by the time the student reaches the eighth grade.

The slow student is gradually isolated and the loneliness caused by isolation eventually turns to bitterness against the system,--that, on the one hand--does not recognize his need for and his right to success, and yet, on the other hand, denies him the right to fail. For the slow learner this type of school system is

antithetic, its goals are at opposite poles. The slow learner cannot succeed in this system; yet he cannot fail. What kind of a product, then, are we turning out? Our slow learners, twenty percent of our population, are trained to shun competition and accept, at best mediocracy. The disadvantaged are so fed up with our system of education by the time they reach high school that the lure of a high school diploma has lost all of its luster and they drop out as soon as age requirements are met. The author, in the light of this evidence must conclude that "social promotion" does produce dropouts.

Thirty-three inmates or ninety-one percent answered yes to the fourth key question of the study. "Do you think that the fact you dropped out of school has affected your adult life?" It did not take these men long to find out that the system beyond the classroom was just as rigid if not more so than that of the school system. Employment for dropouts was of the low-paying manual labor type, if available at all.

The stigma attached to the expression, "dropout" has proven to be an insurmountable barrier to the individual, so tagged, with respect to advancement in any

kind of worthwhile employment. It is the investigator's opinion that the stigma is misplaced and should be borne by the school system. The system is at fault to the extent that it does not provide the services and facilities to educate the slow learner to his maximum potential, and to that extent, it is creating school dropouts, or to put it more harshly "push outs." Schreiber (1964:74) The right to fail, denied them in the school system, was thrust upon them from all directions. Yet, though he may fail, he may not starve, our benevolent society has arranged a welfare program to feed him. The cost to the individual is among other things his dignity.

It is at this point the discouraged, disheartened school dropout turns to crime, check writing, drug peddling, petty theft or burglary to alleviate the austerity of his daily life. Sixty-one percent of the inmates questioned answered yes to the fifth key question of the study. Many reasons were given for believing that dropping out of school contributed to their incarceration, however, the reasons seemed to fall into three categories, (1) they needed money for various things, cars, furniture, etc., (2) they had too much time on their hands and no money, and (3) bad companions, who were fellow dropouts

who were also unemployed. Most of the twenty-two men who answered yes to the fifth key question started their life of crime by petty thievery, starting with little things they could not afford to buy, finally getting bolder, committing grand larceny, and eventually being apprehended. Most averred that if they could have maintained a standard of living that included some of the luxuries of life they would not have become criminals. The preceding statement is, of course, conjecture on the part of men who have fought the battle and lost. However, their living conditions preceding their loss are congruent with the conditions faced by many dropouts, lack of money, lack of any self-satisfying vocation, little chance for constructive use of time, bare sustenance wages, and lack of understanding by a technologically oriented society. These conditions breed desperation which in turn breeds crime. The author must, therefore, conclude that "dropout" is a factor in "lock-in."

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is the author's belief that the incidence of social promotion could be considerably lessened by providing for an ungraded primary in all of our elementary

schools. The first four to six grades could be divided into twenty or thirty blocks of work. The student would be encouraged to achieve at his greatest potential but would be allowed to proceed at his own speed. Each block of work would have to be completed successfully before going on to the next one.

The groups entering the graded part of the elementary program would not be the same chronological age grouping that started in the program. They would, however, be a more homogeneous group if maturity levels were considered.

In conjunction with the ungraded primary, the author would recommend more and better trained elementary guidance counselors. Guidance counselors are extremely important at the elementary level; yet very few schools employ them.

To decrease the number of "dropouts" turning to crime resulting in "lock-in" the author would propose a system of "continuing education" but not the type that is now being offered. The author would propose that continuing education classes and adult education classes be held in some building other than an established school building. He would further propose that the

chalk board, if any, be of the type that can be concealed when not in use and that a coffee pot be of high priority on the list of equipment for said school.

The author's reasons for these unusual requests are quite simple. The dropout returning to adult classes is again enclosed by the environment he has learned to distrust and to hate. The classroom with student desks, the chalkboards and the teachers desk facing those of the students is an environment that screams failure and frustration at him the minute he enters it. How much better it would be to enter a room equipped with comfortable chairs, and clipboard for taking notes, also with the ever ready coffee pot performing its task.

Teachers should start each new class on a social note, get acquainted first. Teachers should avoid overloading their students with work. Quality work rather than quantity should be encouraged. When the student loses his first fear of returning to school, then is the time to start challenging him with a greater work load.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Carrothers, G. E. "Why do High School Students Fail?" The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, 30:29, March, 1966.
- Duboise, Novella. "Does Piling up Repeaters in the Elementary Grades Affect the Academic Achievement of the Class?" National Education Association Journal, 49:16, May, 1960.
- Magnifico, L. X. "Social Promotion and Special Education." School and Society, 86:216-218, May 10, 1958.
- Metcalf, Harold H. "The Promotion Policies in our School." National Education Association Journal, 49:18, April, 1960.
- Saterlie, Mary Ellen. "Forty Who Tried." The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, 51:37-41, September, 1967.
- Schreiber, Daniel. "The Low Ability Group and the World of Automation." The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, 48:74, November, 1964.

NAME

OR NUMBER

AGE

MARITAL STATUS

EDUCATION

TEST DATE

1. How do you feel about your family?
2. What kind of work did you like, and how long did you work in that line?
3. What type of work do you dislike? Have you ever had a job in this field?
4. How many jobs have you held since leaving school?
5. Why did you quit school?
6. What grade were you in when you quit school?
7. What grade or grades in school did you find the most difficult?
8. Did the difficulty of the work in higher grades discourage or frustrate you? Yes No
9. Do you think you would have been happier if you were allowed to remain in the same grade for an extra year? Yes No
10. Why do you think you dropped out of school?
11. Do you think that the fact that you dropped out of school has affected your adult life? Yes No
12. If the teachers had slowed down somewhat, and made sure you understood all points before going on with a subject, do you think you would have finished school? Yes No
13. Were you ever retained in a grade? Yes No
14. If you were retained, did you feel? (a) ashamed; (b) relieved; (c) angered; (d) indifferent

34.

15. If retained, how did you accept your new classmates the following year?
16. Do you believe that dropping out of school contributed in any way to your going to prison? Yes No
17. Why?