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AUTHOR Vitullo-Martin, Thomas W.; Vitullo-Martin, Julia A.

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Despite the recent resurgence of academic interest in nonpublic schools, we continue to be relatively ignorant of the political and social composition of these schools. This study of the Chicago and Los Angeles Catholic school systems sought to redress this ignorance. The study first gathered and analyzed school data from central (diocesan) sources, then described and analyzed the internal policymaking structure of each local school, and lastly surveyed and analyzed parental motivation, with the following question as the basis of the survey: Why do parents initially send and ultimately maintain their children in nonpublic schools? The report concludes that the systems vary in their character, but are locally controlled; and that parents support schools despite differences with religious, racial, or pedagogical policy--with or without formal participation in policymaking institutions. The research points to the important role of local school vulnerability in drawing support and to the role of parental confidence in teachers, which may be aided by the character of the local school's educational bureaucracy. (Author)

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THE POLITICS OF ALTERNATIVE MODELS TO THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Thomas W. Vitullo-Martin & Julia A. Vitullo-Martin

University of California, Riverside

Riverside, California

November 1, 1973

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Thomas W. Vitullo-Martin & Julia A. Vitullo-Martin
Department of Education
University of California, Riverside
Riverside, California 92502

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

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ABSTRACT

Despite the recent resurgence of academic interest in non-public schools, we continue to be relatively ignorant of the political and social composition of these schools. This study of the Chicago and Los Angeles Catholic school systems sought to redress this ignorance.

The study was divided into three sections. The first section gathered and analyzed school data from central (diocesan) sources. The second section described and analyzed the internal policy-making structure of each local school. The third section surveyed and analyzed parental motivation with the following question as the basis of the survey: Why do parents initially send and ultimately maintain their children in non-public schools?

We conclude that the systems vary in their character, but are locally controlled; that parents support schools despite differences with religious, racial or pedagogical policy, and with or without formal participation in policy-making institutions. The research points to the important role of local school vulnerability in drawing support, and to the role of parental confidence in teachers, which may be aided by the character of the local school's educational bureaucracy.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Our study questions, in an uncommon setting, a commonly accepted program for building popular support for schools. The careful description and analysis of private education has generally been neglected in recent years, and the researcher has little information on which to construct his study. A few scholars are pioneering this field, and three of them have generously aided us in developing our hypotheses and designing our approach to the schools. Professor Donald Erickson, of the University of Chicago, has spent many hours with us discussing our study, helping us refine our ideas, and offering encouragement. Professor Erickson's forceful, probing investigation of proper place of religious education in American freedoms stimulated many of the questions we ask in this study. Professor Andrew Greeley generously shared with us his thorough understanding of the Chicago Catholic school system, and suggested an important revision of our classifications of the types of schools which should be included in our study. Mr. Edward Marciniak, at the time Commissioner of the City of Chicago's Department of Development and Planning and now director of the Urban Life Institute of Loyola University, shared with us his extensive knowledge of Chicago's parishes and their schools; his suggestions materially aided our study. Mr. James O'Brien, a former lay principal of St. Philip High School, and special assistant to Chicago's Superintendent of Catholic Schools, commented on our research plans and shared with us his intimate knowledge of the school system.

We are indebted to the superintendents of Catholic schools in Chicago and Los Angeles. Reverend H. Robert Clark, of Chicago, accommodated his busy schedule to the demands of our own travel schedule, spent many hours in interviews, made his entire staff available to us, and granted us unlimited access to his offices files. Bishop McManus, the Archdiocese's first superintendent of schools and now chairman of the National Council of Bishops Committee on Education, generously gave of his time and knowledge. Many of the remarkably energetic and independent diocesan staff gave us several hours of their time in exhausting interviews requiring detailed accounts and documentation, and we are grateful to them.

That our acknowledgments to Rev. John A. Mihan and his staff are shorter, merely reflects the extreme time pressure under which we worked in Los Angeles, and the great effort Superintendent Mihan made to speed our research along. Sr. Mary Jean Meier aided us beyond all that could be reasonably hoped. Our success with the Los Angeles phase of our study was directly aided by Sr. Mary Jean's suggestions and introductions.

Research into the politics of private institutions, into what is done, by whom, and why, is, of its nature, invasive. It is ironic that while it is necessary to have knowledge of the nature of private institutions if we are to wisely choose public policies which affect them, the very gathering of the information changes their nature and makes them less private. The more private the institution, the less it can be expected to willingly submit to an examination that would expose the most sensitive details of its life. Unlike the public schools, which ostensibly hold back nothing from the prying eyes of the public, because they are creatures

of the public, private schools are obligated to--in fact, have a kind of trust with--only their parents and supporters. Private schools cannot be forced to aid the researcher. They do so only voluntarily. And because no scholar would submit his analysis to the censorship of any groups, when a school permits itself to be studied, particularly by those asking sensitive questions about difficult matters over which there may be little agreement in the institution itself, the school accepts a great risk. Both the school systems and each of the local schools we approached in our study gave us access to all the information we requested. Only one school, at the direction of its local parents' council, decided against completing the study with us. In any number of instances, administrators and laymen went into careful, documented description of personally painful experiences at our request. It serves no useful scholarly purpose to identify by name any of the schools which helped us which would otherwise be anonymous. The same caution does not hold for the central offices of the schools in each city because these are much more public by their nature; it is relatively difficult to claim to be open to the two to four million Catholics in the respective archdiocese that the schools serve, and not be open to the other 60-75% of the population, some of whom also send their children to the Catholic schools. To protect the anonymity of the individual schools, we must offer only a general acknowledgment of the great time and effort given us by the principals, pastors, teachers, lay leaders and parents of the eleven schools included in this study. Without their generous contributions of time, often in the face of extreme deadline pressures, this study would not have been possible.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge our debt and offer our thanks to the University of California, Riverside, Faculty Senate, which supplemented our original project with needed additional research awards; to Dean Merle Borrowman of the University of California, Berkeley, for his early advice and support; and to Professor Irving R. Hendrick, Chairman of the Department of Education, University of California, Riverside, for his generosity in committing the department's scarce resources to our project, and especially for the gracious, personal and professional support he gave us during our 18 months work on this project.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Research Objectives

During the last few years, public schools have come under increasingly hostile attacks from individual parents and their organizations. Educators have attempted to respond to parental attacks by presenting a variety of reform alternatives, most of which fit into one of two categories: reforms which change policy or reforms which change governing structure. In our proposal to the Office of Education, we suggested that before reforms are implemented, it is necessary to understand why parents support or fail to support their children's schools and that this can best be discovered by examining those schools, i.e., private schools, in which every parent has made an active, voluntary choice to send his child to that school rather than to the universally available alternative, the public school.

This study pursued three principal questions: 1) Why do parents initially send and ultimately maintain, or fail to maintain, their children in non-public shcools. 2) What, if any, is the relationship between the policies and policy-making mechanisms of the local school and parental support, and 3) What are the ramifications on policy of the system's decentralized, locally controlled structure?

We will deal with the questions and our findings in the following order: 1) we will review the literature on non-public schools, discussing what significant work has already been done, and how our findings add to, or disagree with, this work; 2) we will discuss the question of decentralization, what it is, what it implies, and how the decentralized structure affects policy formation and substance; 3) we will present three Chicago schools as case studies of issue conflict and resolution, and of parental support for policy; and 4) and most importantly, we will analyze our data on why parents initially send and ultimately maintain their children in non-public shcools.

The Existing Literature: What Have We Built On?

Presumably non-public schools promise some perceptible educational difference from public schools and parents send their children to these schools because they anticipate a different outcome from what would result in a public school. The classic study of non-public educational outcome is the Greeley and Rossi, Education of Catholic Americans, which examined, 1) whether students who attended Catholic schools are better Catholics; 2) whether the value-oriented Catholic system was divisive within American society; and 3) whether Catholic schooling is a help or a hinderance to students in achieving eventual economic and occupational success.[1]

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[1] Andrew G. Greeley and Peter H. Rossi, The Education of Catholic Americans (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1966).

According to Greeley and Rossi, Catholic schools have been moderately successful in their attempt to make their students better Catholics. For those students who come from a very religious family, Catholic schooling reinforces their background and they emerge from school more conscientious Catholics. For those whose families are moderately religious or non-religious, Catholic schooling is only minimally influential. For those whose families are highly religious, but who do not attend Catholic schools, little difference seems to be visible.

Problem of Aggregation

But Greeley and Rossi's results may be confounded by the aggregate, statistical nature of their study. Unless schools are essentially similar, so that children in the schools receive comparable experiences, few significant conclusions can be drawn about the effectiveness of the schools, taken as a whole, from evidence taken from a random sample of students (and therefore a random sample of school experiences).[1] The Greeley and Rossi study was based on a carefully drawn national sample with an efficient, statistically significant N of 1,827. Few, if any, subjects attended the same schools, or even schools in the same areas. The authors were forced to assume that the educational experience of a single individual from a given Catholic elementary school and high school could be aggregated with that of others from different Catholic schools to provide valid conclusions about the effect of a Catholic educational program. Similar assumptions were made about the public schools. When they found only a very weak statistical difference between private and public schools, they concluded that Catholic schools did not have a demonstrable, unique effect upon their students. However, these results could be explained by the possibility that the assumption that the schools constituted two separate sets of similar religious experiences was invalid. Individual Catholic schools may have differed substantially from other Catholic schools: similarly for public schools. Some Catholic schools may have been programatically indistinguishable from public schools; some public schools may have been highly religious, despite Supreme Court rulings. If these individual school differences exist, the validity of the aggregation is suspect. Our study shows that common differences exist among local Catholic schools.

We have dealt with Greeley and Rossi at some length because we employed an opposite methodology. We found that no single policy was applied by all schools. We found schools frequently diametrically opposed in the policies they adopted. Education programs differed in these schools in concept, content and execution. One would not expect such different policies to have a common effect on students or on parental support.

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[1] The same criticism could be made of attempts to look at children in integrated schools and evaluate the impact of the integrated experience. In order to be validly aggregated together, the experience of children in integrated schools must at least be similar.

Our study turned the aggregate analysis approach on its head. We looked at policies at local schools selected for their diversity along dimensions (income, race, occupation) which we expected would result in differing demands from parents to see if these policies differed from those at other schools in the system. Through elite interviews, we recorded each school's position on selected policy issues (e.g., racial integration, curricular structure, moral education, etc.), and described the policy-making and governing structure of the school, paying particular attention to detailing the parental role. Lastly, we administered attitudinal questionnaires to teachers and parents to determine their perceptions of substantive school policies, implementation of policies, parental participation, curricular and educational effectiveness, and ethnic or racial compatibility. From this questionnaire we anticipated discovering, 1) the relationship between school policy and parental support; 2) the importance of specific policies to particular types of parents (e.g., working-class ethnic, black professional, etc.); 3) parental perception of the appropriateness of parental participation; and 4) the extent of policy variations among schools.

Egalitarian Effects of Ethnic Schools

If, in aggregate, Catholic schools do not have significant religious affects, why are they supported: The problem of aggregation only makes the question more central, since aggregation might simply obscure some schools with strong effects and others with minimal, or even negative, effects. We must look for non-religious reasons for parental support, and so are led to ask, howsuccessful have these schools been in their non-religious, educational functions? It has long been feared by Catholic school proponents, and argued by Catholic school opponents, that Catholic schools impede the educational and occupational success of their students. Catholic schools have been austere in their supply of such educational accoutrements as laboratories, audio-visual aids, library books, etc.; their classrooms have frequently been overcrowded; and only recently has the training of their teachers approached the quality (on paper at least) of public school teachers. Since it is reasonable to believe that parents who support schooling believe that it is efficacious for their children's future, these criticisms would seem to undercut support for Catholic schools. Do Catholic school hold back students? Are children in Catholic schools less successful? According to Greeley and Rossi, Catholic students do not underachieve, they overachieve. Clearly, this might be attributable to the selective admission and retention policies of Catholic schools, but Greeley and Rossi claim there is no proof for such a contention. Rather, there is evidence that success is dependent upon "emotional well-being," which is in turn reached by one of two routes One is to assimilate, to attend public schools and maintain few Catholic friends. The other is to remain in the religious ghetto of Catholic schools, Catholic neighborhood, and Catholic friends. Greeley tentatively suggeststhat far from isolating the Catholic immigrant and promoting rigidity and intolerance, Catholic schools have accelerated his acculturation, resulting indirectly in his occupational success.

On the other hand, historians of education have argued that the public schools have been the traditional vehicle of assimilation and upward mobility for America's immigrant population, that the public schools have been successful in educating immigrants despite the schools' hostility to immigrant culture. However, in a two-pronged attack upon the public school's ability to educate poor, immigrant children, Colin Greer argues, 1) that the primary purpose of the public school was to contain the immigrants and to protect society from the "moral cesspool" created in the cities by these un-American newcomers, and 2) that the public schools played a small role in educating and assimilating immigrants and a small role in giving them access to economic mobility and democratic cultural independence.[1] Greer's analysis supplements Greeley and Rossi's: insofar as the public school hostility to immigrant culture has been an impediment to immigrant assimilation, the Catholic ethnic school's sympathy for immigrant culture has been a stimulus to assimilation.

In his review essay of studies of parochial schooling, Erickson argues this conclusion is supported by a reanalysis of Johnstone's study of the effectiveness of Lutheran schools.[2] Johnstone himself does not draw this conclusion from his data, but Erickson's reanalysis of the data shows that it indicates that the most successful Lutherans are those most clearly integrated into the Lutheran religio-ethnic community, with those Lutherans most integrated into a non-Lutheran community a close second. The public policy implications are clear. If Catholic, Lutheran, Black Muslim, Amish, and other ethnic or sectarian schools are not only not divisive, but quite the contrary, assimilative, then we must rethink our push to integration and public school homogenization. If these schools inculcate their students with a sense of self-identity, security, and resultant tolerance, then they perform a crucial function in our divided soceity. Not all private schools are closely identified with a particular ethnic community, but those that are may be reinforced because they strengthen that community, and its base-unit, the family. How might this strengthening take place? Provisionally, we might identify at least two of the sources for the reinforcement: 1) the schools provide a sense of historical continuity, a common set of heroes and myths, and a cultural pride, and 2) the schools present a controllable institution of the communities' own creation. The school itself is a community project for which community members must work together. The school itself, as a community project, is a force helping make visible an articulate, active community. It would not be surprising that the privately supported, parochial school -- whose very existence is an achievement of the parents, is a model of success for the children. Poorer parents in particular see their schools as their achievement. The motto of a Chicago private, lower

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1 Colin Greer, The Great School Legend: A Revisionist Interpretation of American Public Education (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1972).

2 Donald A. Erickson, "Essay Review Contradictory Studies of Parochial Schooling," School Review, Winter, 1967, a review of Ronald L. Johnstone, The Effectiveness of Lutheran Elementary and Secondary Schools as Agencies of Christian Education, Graduate Study No. 8 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1966).

income, black school is "We got it together ourselves." Nor would it be surprising that a community would become more involved in managing the achievement of its children, once it had become committed to developing its own school. We cannot know how extensive the group is to which these observations might apply before we have looked at who attends non-public schools. Do all people support non-public schools for the same reasons?

Reasons Parents Choose Private Schools

By dividing Otto Kraushaar's discussion (American Nonpublic Schools)[1] into its several aspects, we can begin to answer this question. Kraushaar considers, first, who sends their children to non-public schools; second, are these parents able to make rational decisions regarding schools? And, third, why do they choose non-public schools?

First, who are the parents who send their children to non-public schools? Their incomes and educational backgrounds vary widely. Patrons of independent schools tend to be far better off economically than patrons of Lutheran or Catholic schools; among religiously affiliated schools, patrons of Episcopalian schools are wealthiest (almost one-half having incomes of $20,000 or more), and most closely approach in incomes the patrons of independent schools (three-fourths of whom have income over $20,000). Patrons of Catholic and Lutheran schools have far lower imcomes. Somewhat less than one-half of non-public schools enroll at least some poor students. In all elementary non-public schools, the proportion of the total student population which is poor is 4.3 percent; in secondary schools the proportion is 3.4 percent. The sub-group having the smallest percentage of poor is the midwest and western independent school with 0.4 percent poor; the sub-group with the highest percentage is that of Catholic northeastern schools with 5.2 percent.

However, Kraushaar's analysis is insufficient. These statistics might lead one to conclude that there is a relatively even distribution of poor students among those schools (one-half of the total) which enroll them. This would be an erroneous conclusion. For example, poor children are not and never have been evenly distributed throughout the neighborhood-based Catholic system. While rural, suburban and urban fringe schools will have few poor or black students, inner-city schools will be attended by large numbers of poor, black, non-Catholic students. Urbanization and migration have induced a change in mission for these schools whose original patrons were poor (although frequently upwardly mobile) immigrants and who were left behind as their original patrons moved to the suburbs. Unlike Protestant churches and Jewish synagogues who often moved with their patrons, the Catholic church pattern was to remain in the central city and turn its attention to its new, surrounding, non-Catholic population. Consequently, it is likely that the five percent of Catholic school children who are poor are concentrated in urban, central city schools. If Kraushaar had controlled for school location, our impression of the overall character and function of these schools would be quite different. Rather than describing an elitist, affluent, white Catholic system, we would find a substantial poor, black population, 38 percent of whom are non-Catholic.[2]

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[1] Otto F. Kraushaar, American Nonpublic Schools: Patterns of Diversity (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972).

[2] New York Times, April 7, 1971.

The educational background of patrons parallels their socio-economic status, with patrons of Episcopalian and independent schools far better educated (one-half of Episcopalian parents and two-thirds of independent school parents attended college), and Protestant and Catholic school patrons much less well educated (slightly less than one-fourth attended college). Few Catholic and Protestant school patrons are professionals; they do not hold occupations which require a college education. We know from other demographic profiles of the Catholic community that Catholics are more likely to be recent immigrants (second or third generation) and to be blue-collar or other unionized, semi-skilled and skilled workers. Income divisions are not sufficiently delicate measures of whether the schools are elitist. Occupational measures are better. But we can only infer an occupational difference from a difference in the highest educational degree attained by sets of parents. It appears that Catholic schools and some Protestant schools serve a heavily working class population.

Because Kraushaar fails to make these distinctions, he is led into a misleading argument about the fitness of non-public school patrons to choose schools for their children. In a frustratingly vague argument, Kraushaar argues that, statistically, non-public school patrons are wealthier and better informed about their schools, and therefore are better qualified to choose. Apart from the merits of the factors he identifies as qualifying these parents, his argument is not persuasive in suggesting that most non-public school parents possess them.

Kraushaar's figures on the educational background of non-public school parents indicate that parents are switching to private schools away from the public educational experience of their youth. The reasons for the switch might not be very complex for the high income parent choosing an independent school: these parents feel they are buying a better education. The Protestant religious schools might share two reasons: some appear to be elitist schools whose purpose is to offer a superior education; others may be offering a religious orientation once found in the public schools (before the Court's school prayer decision). The Catholic, Lutheran, Amish and Jewish day schools offer still another reason: these schools offer a cultural hospitality to the strong families who comprise these religious and ethnic groups. We hypothesize from our study that parents are switching to these more ethnically and religiously identified schools in an attempt to preserve the family in its religious and ethnic life in the face of the secularizing and assimilative pressures that come with upward economic mobility. Might these families be attempting to establish a limited assimilation, in which they are able to keep their deep-rooted and valued cultural differences even as they economically and politically assimilate into the society? Such reasons are explicitly stated as the purpose behind the recent creation and expansion of Jewish day schools. But still the question remains, is it legitimate for the parent to opt out of the public system? What good reasons could he have which require an education different from what is deemed good for everyone else? Might it not be simple ignorance or bigotry which motivates these parents? Kraushaar does not treat these problems with any depth. Rather, he seems to argue that parental good will combined with parental rationality would result in wise choices of schools.

Do parents make rational choices? How great a role does a desire to determine the religious life of their children have in their decisions? Kraushaar asked parents why they support private schools. There are several surprises in Kraushaar's findings which warrant attention. While ninety-five percent of Protestant school patrons endorse religious education as an important reason for non-public school attendance, thirty percent of Catholic school patrons do not. That is a substantial percentage -- particularly in view of the history and traditions of Catholic schooling. In terms of why parents choose the school they do, it would certainly be of interest to know more about this thirty percent. For instance, it is likely that if one stratified by urban-rural residence, one would find that the percentage of urban patrons indifferent to religious education jumped upward, that a high proportion of urban dwellers choose non-public schools for reasons having nothing to do with religion. If one further stratified by race, one would most likely find that black urban patrons are most indifferent of all. Why do those who are indifferent to religious education persist in sending their children to Catholic schools? Similarly, we would like to see other responses stratified by place of residence (urban-rural), by race and by class. Drawing on our own study (and anticipating some of our conclusions) we think the results would be the following. Poor urban blacks choose Catholic schools because they believe that Catholic schools provide an education superior to that provided by the available public schools. They believe that Catholic schools confine the children within an orderly, disciplined and safe classroom, and that Catholic school teachers are more dedicated teachers, evidenced by their low wages, austere private lives, and their living in the community. In addition, the parents believe Catholic schools to be selective in admissions (in fact, in our study, they were not), and believe that Catholic schools keep the "rabble" out. Most lower-class black parents are not Catholic themselves. Middle-class blacks -- more of whom are Catholics-- view Catholic schools as a channel of upward mobility. They see the public schools available to them as woefully inadequate academically, and unsafe physically and socially. The middle-class blacks tend to be more serious about religious training. In sum, for many urban blacks, Catholic schools are a refuge from what they view as their destructive environment. Incidentally, our study leads us to suspect that if those fourty-eight percent of Kraushaar's sample endorsing "better teachers" were stratified racially and by place of residence, the result would be that urban blacks had endorsed this reason in far greater numbers than urban fringe whites or suburban whites. Our findings suggest that upper-middle class whites are the most dissatisfied with Catholic schools and, as school closing data show, the most willing to choose public schools over parochial schools. Parochial schools cannot begin to compete with the lavish facilities of affluent white public schools and this is of concern to middle class white parents who fear their children are not receiving sound educations. Lastly, it should be noted that, on the whole, non-public school patrons are overwhelmingly satisfied with their schools. From eighty-one to one hundred percent (range among groups) stated that if they had the choice to make over again, they would enroll their child in his present school.

On Individual-School Policy Approach to Parental Support

This review of the literature indicates a central gap which we proposed to fill. Greeley and Rossi argue that Catholic schools do not have a discernable religious effect on their graduates. Though we quarrel with their methodology, we would agree that schools are not chosen on the basis of their religious effect. This is the object of our study -- why are non-public schools supported?

We moved from Greeley and Rossi to a discussion of Colin Greer's thesis on the assimilation of immigrants. We are not so interested in Greer's conclusion -- that public schools failed in their mission to assimilate immigrants — as in a corollary -- that Catholic schools may have succeeded. It is not our concern to argue this question directly, rather we are interested in parental perceptions of their racial or ethnic needs in realtion to the schooling of their children. Do parents send their children to Catholic schools because they perceive these schools as more conducive than public schools to the ethnic or racial development of their children? Are these perceptions accurate? Do policy differences exist between private and public schools?

Lastly, we treated Kraushaar's large survey of American non-public schools. We feel that while Kraushaar has provided a valuable service by gathering together a vast amount of disparate data, his analysis was too superficial to be relied upon. Particularly, his failure to stratify his respondents by residence (urban-rural) and by race or ethnic group, leaves us reluctant to base firm conclusions upon his study. Thus while we will surely use Kraushaar's data to draw a general description of non-public schools, we cannot build policy analysis upon Kraushaar's foundation.

Each of these works points to the need of a detailed, comparative policy study beginning at the local school level. We undertook this examination, focusing it on the reciprocal relation between policies as they affect parental support, and parental support as they affect policies. We used a cross-city comparative approach to isolate the policy contribution of parents and teachers from the policy influences of the school system organizational structure or the influence of particular system leaders. Further, the comparative base will permit us to increase the power of the resulting theoretic generalization.

Significance of Proposed Research

Our research will contribute to general theories of educational policies and politics, and will add to our specific knowledge of non-public institutions. It will provide significant information in the following areas:

1. It will provide a description and understanding of a little-understood, but most important component of the American education system: the non-public school.

2. An understanding of the nature of the non-public system will aid policy makers in establishing intelligent policy regarding the numerous proposals now being discussed.

3. In those areas in which Catholic schools have been more successful than public shcools (e.g., neighborhood relations) the findings from this study regarding the processes of success may be used as a basis of improving public schools.

4. This study will clarify the relationship between the constituencyof the policy-making body and school policies, the relationship between the system's political structure and local school policy, and the relationship between parental support and institutional arrangements for local control.

Contributions to Public School Theories of Reform

The third point, above, deserves elaboration. Within the last few years, the American public school system has faced an increasing number of critical problems, the more important ones including racial tensions, drug addiction, crime in the schools, censorship movements and a recognized inability to educate all groups of children with equal success. These problems among others have brought schools under parental and public attack in many communities. As problems in the schools have increased, parental supports have decreased, attacks on administrators have increased, challenges to school boards have increased, and perhaps most importantly for the schools, public support of school finances (tax and bond issues) has markedly decreased. The schools appear to be caught in a deadly cycle of more problem and less support.

Analysts and administrators have generally believed that support has been lost because the schools have lost contact with the people they serve and that this is an organizational problem, that the school institutions which established connections with the community in the past are now inefficient, outmoded or defunct because the character of the schools has changed (they have become overly centralized, overly bureaucratized, overly professionalized, overly unionized, or overly politicized) and because the character of the community has changed. Various institutional changes have been proposed and put into effect which would change the school-community governing structures. Some of these changes are offered as fundamental reforms which would radically change school structures.

Some reforms suggested would centralize the schools in an attempt to make them more responsive and responsible. For example, California's state mandated adoption of a PPB budgeting system, a management change, will have a centralizing effect even while it attempts to make the schools more accountable to local groups by providing a cost-effectiveness evaluation of each educational program objective. Other reforms would decentralize. For example, numerous analysts have argued that the monolithic New York City system should be decentralized so that parental concerns might better

be expressed and met.[1] For these analysts the problem is first one of simple communications--the city is too big and diverse for a few people to hear all the complaints and difficulties--and it is, second, one of making administrators vulnerable to parents--in the large city, administrators can deflect parental complaints into the bureaucracy and into impotency. Decentralization is offered as a general solution for the school institution's problems, and is being implemented elsewhere (e.g., Los Angeles). On the same continuum as decentralization, but perhaps more radical, are calls for community control. The difference is one of degree, community control advocates calling for almost complete determination of all policies by control boards in the local communities, and decentralization advocates usually suggesting that the local community be empowered with merely a formal advisory role.

The most radical decentralization plans of all have called for the establishment of a voucher system, whereby educational chits are given to parents to be spent at the schools of their choice. In some proposals, these chits could only be spent in schools in the public system. In others, the chits could be used in any non-public school meeting minimal requirements. By bringing the public schools into competition with non-public schools, even greater responsiveness for parental preferences will be forced upon the public schools. Short of the radical voucher plan, analysts have recommended supporting non-public schools in some aspects of their programs so as to aid their financial survival and increase their competitiveness with the public schools. In recent years, state legislatures have offered partial tax refunds to non-public school parents, school bus transportation, textbook funds, special programs in health and remedial reading and similar aids.

These public school reforms have attempted, by organizational change, to make the public schools more like private schools in two areas: 1) in the individual school's vulnerability to the market and 2) in the control mechanisms over the individual school. The reasoning behind these suggestions is sound to a point. The public economy is different from the private economy in that public institutions are not dependent on the dollars of its patrons. In the private economy, dollars are votes by which people indicate their support or rejection of what is offered. While many individuals paying tuition at a school may have many different reasons for supporting it, each expresses his support in the abstract, constant dollar vote. The need for supporters to reach agreement with one another in controversial issue-areas is minimized. When revenue falls, the institution responds with various changes in its policies and product until revenues return or the school fails. The school is not required to reach consensus among its supporters or issues about which there are broad disagreements. In the public institution, on the other hand, preferences must be expressed in political activity, not in dollar votes. But this

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[1]Marilyn Gittell, Participants and Participation: A Study of School Policy in New York City (New York: Praeger, 1967); David Roger, 110 Livingston Street: Politics and Bureaucracy in the New York City School System (New York: Random House, 1968); and Reconnection for Learning: A Community School System for New York City (New York: Mayor's Advisory Panel on Decentralization of the New York City Schools, 1967).

is complicated by the schools' attempts to isolate themselves from political activity for a host of good and bad reasons. The schools do not have good political mechanisms making them respond to parent demands. The voucher system attempts to re-establish within the schools an a-political vulnerability to parent demands, at the same time removing the most obnoxious objection to simple return to private education, the fact that only the wealthier can afford to invest in education. Through vouchers, parents can express their demands before mobilizing politically. This is particularly important when the parent demands are concerned with values on which we have no shared political agreement—values like religious beliefs, sexual mores, and political ideology.

The reliance on local community control mechanisms is also an attempt to approximate the kind of mechanisms which govern private schools. These too will have the effect of reducing the political disagreements over the schools, since small groups practically speaking, are much more homogeneous than larger ones. Presumably, with less conflict, school support will increase.

Even in this brief discussion of the reasoning behind the public school reform proposals, it is apparent that some assumptions are being made about why private schools (that is, schools essentially dependent on tuition) are supported. The most important assumptions include the belief that parents support a private school either because the school's governing mechanism wins their support or because the school's policies reflect their demands. If parental support comes from substantive policy reasons as opposed to reasons having to do with their sense of comfort with institutions more open to them, then one would expect there to be a greater variety of kinds of schools in a private system—or in a public system made more private. So a number of questions are raised about the reasons for and character of the changes that are proposed: Why do parents support private schools? What is the role of school policies in winning this support? What is the role of school governing mechanisms? On what matters do private schools most differ and what is the social import of these differences? We can expect that privatized public schools might begin to differ along the same lines as the private schools now differ. Will these differences be dangerous to our society?

Methodology

We chose to examine these questions by looking at non-public school systems. There are several different non-public school systems in the country and a vast number of independent, individual, non-public schools, A possible classification of these might include: (1) the Catholic school system; (2) independent Eastern prep schools; (3) Protestant affiliated midwestern prep schools; (4) Jewish day schools; (5) segregation academies. From these existing alternative models, the Catholic system was chosen as the subject of this study for the following reasons: (a) it is the only non-public system, (b) it is the most significant numerically, (c) it encompasses those two groups most involved in the racial integration process in the urban north: middle and lower class blacks and middle and lower class ethnic whites, (d) the ideology of the system supports integration, and (e) the structure of the system is metropolitan; that is, its authority includes both city and suburbs within the diocese.

Since the Catholic system is a decentralized one which includes a wide range of virtually unrelated subsystems, ranging from highly centralized to highly decentralized, the decision as to which subsystems (dioceses) to study is a crucial one. This study has confined itself to the two polar models of Chicago and Los Angeles. While it is highly desirable that a comprehensive study be made of the larger Catholic school system, as well as a study of non-Catholic, private school systems, we feel that this pilot study in itself produced a significant set of results.

We will proceed by describing the policies and policy-making structure at each of five schools in the Chicago area, and then turn to the seven schools in the Los Angeles area. We will then examine the reasons parents give for supporting these private schools, and see how these are related to the Catholic system's policies and their local school's policies and control structures. Our information is limited in certain respects which should be made clear from the outset. Our analysis is the first careful policy study of the differences between local schools in either public or private school systems. The private school system is far more decentralized than the public system. For example, the Chicago public school system employs 3,000 people in its central office, but the Chicago Catholic school system (the fourth largest school system, private or public in the country) employs fifteen administrators, and this has grown from a staff of two in the early 1960's. So there was much evidence to indicate that the Catholic schools were highly locally controlled and would differ greatly one from the other. A limited budget and even more limited knowledge of what we might find forced us to select schools that would be indicative of the diversity in the system. With the aid of informed observers of the system, we chose schools along two dimensions we believed would reveal the strongest differences, race and income.

We reasoned that by comparing the most extremely different schools we could find in the system, we might best be able to discover some general principle explaining parental support for these schools, if one exists. Furthermore, we reasoned that by searching for the most diverse schools, we might best be able to describe what is fundamentally similar about them, such that they deserve to be treated as schools belonging to a system. Consequently, our investigations led us to inquire simultaneously into the character of the private school system and the nature of its support.

The schools we studied were chosen to be typical of the range of types of people served by the Catholic system. The School X is wealthy and white, in an Irish, professional neighborhood.[1] School N is working-class-wealthy in a white, ethnic, steelworker neighborhood. School D is, for a black neighborhood, wealthy. School H is a working-class and poor black school in an area of public housing in Chicago's South Side Ghetto. School C is in a completely mixed parish, having welfare mothers, working-class blacks and professional and managerial whites. The parish, on Chicago's Gold Coast area, is the wealthiest in the City. Thus for Chicago, we chose schools which differed in their characteristics along two dimensions: race (black, white, and integrated) and income/occupation (wealthier/professional,

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[1]The names of all parishes and their pastor, principals and laymen have been disguised.

poorer/working class). We were not able to choose schools reflecting the full panoply of ethnic differences in Chicago in this modest project, and so were content with these differences; which we expect represent the extreme difference to be found within the system.

In Los Angeles we found it necessary to increase the dimensions according to which we selected schools. Because of the large Mexican-American population in the Los Angeles Archdiocese we chose schools representing wealthy and poor, black, white and Spanish populations. The Los Angeles research presented some difficulties. Although the Catholic schools in the archdiocese have only nine percent black students, we could not find a school which had no minority students, a fact which seems to reflect the population pattern of the city. And to get the full ranges of schools we desired it became necessary to travel over one hundred miles north of the city and forty miles south of the city, both points within the school district.

School L's parents are poor and working class Mexican immigrants and blacks living in an older, congested barrio. School I's assimilated parents are working class white and more assimulated Mexican-American living in an older working class neighborhood.[1] School M's parents are very wealthy, white professionals in one of the country's most exclusive neighborhoods. The church grounds include an early film star's Hollywood estate. School F's parents are poor and working class blacks, living in Watts and its outskirts. The church and school waste land a busy, industiral arterial highway. School S's parents are working class and middle class Mexican-American and whites, living almost one hundred miles north of Los Angeles in a suburbanized urban neighborhood. School B's parents, on the other hand, are wealthy, professional blacks in one of the cities' most attractive and desirable neighborhoods. School A's working class and middle class white parents live in a freeway community forty miles east of Los Angeles. Though its territory is thoroughly urbanized, School A's population is so defused as to cover more than one hundred square miles.

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[1] The use of white in opposition to Mexican-Americans is meant to indicate only that the whites are ethnically undifferentiated as opposed to the strongly ethnic Mexican-Americans.

CHAPTER II

RESEARCH FINDINGS: CENTRAL SYSTEMS AND REPRESENTATIVE SCHOOLS IN CHICAGO AND LOS ANGELES

Policy-Making Structure: Do Local Schools or Central Offices Make Policy?

The conventional wisdom is that Catholic schools are rigid, autocratic, monolithic schools which are directly controlled by the bishop, archbishop or the papacy. Historically, this view is not sound and in our investigation, we found that local Catholic schools differed substantially in their policies on important matters and could not accurately be called centralized. We reasoned that either the policy differences were a product of different policy-making controls at the local school level, or they were intended and instituted at the central Catholic School Board office, or that on investigation we would discover some other responsible mechanism.

Urban Catholic school systems are now, and historically have been decentralized systems. Catholic schools were developed, built, and staffed by Catholic groups - largely immigrants - in response to what Catholics viewed as the Protestant (and hostile) public schools. The largest Catholic immigrant group in mid-19th century America was the Irish, who dominated the Church and its hierarchy, and attempted, somewhat unsuccessfully to dominate the schools. German Catholics arrived contemporaneously to, but in far fewer numbers than, the Irish. The Germans were relatively affluent and well-educated, and wanted as remote as possible a connection with the peasant, uneducated Irish. The Germans wanted their own schools, to be administered independently of the Irish schools. The German-Irish cleavage was the first in a long series of cleavages in American Catholic education.[1]

The question of ethnic cleavages and their affect upon the political structure of the Church had arisen much earlier, although in a non-educational form. Ethnic groups lobbied within the Church for separate ethnic parishes, resenting and resisting the implementation of Bishop John Carroll's idea of one national Church to be organized on strict territorial boundaries. However, by 1865 it was clear that the reality of ethnic parishes was firmly entrenched. Of the thirty-two New York City parishes, eight were German language parishes, one was French, twenty-three were Irish. By 1866, there was an Italian parish, and by 1883, a black parish.[2]

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[1]There were, of course, bitter cleavages in the American Catholic Church before the mid-19th century. The 200,000 or so Anglo-American Catholics who settled here before the massive immigration of the Irish were hardly warm to their Church's new members.

[2]Jay P. Dolan, "A Critical Period in American Catholicism," Review of Politics Vol. 35, Oct., 1973, #4, pp. 523-536.

Prior to 1810 in Chicago, there were only the German and Irish in any numbers, but their quarrels were bitter and deep. By 1870, other ethnic groups were entering the city and exacerbating the schools' political conflict. As the historian Saunders wrote, "to the outsider ... the Catholic Church in the Chicago area may have seemed a close-knit unity. In reality, altho under the general jurisdiction of one bishop, it consisted of quite different Irish, German, French, Bohemian and Polish principalities."[1]

As the quarrel grew more intense, the Germans moved for resolution by an outside body. In 1887 the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith ruled that all national parishes were to enjoy independent status equal to that of the territorial parishes; but bishops would retain the right, as will all parishes, to appoint new pastors and approve the establishing of new national parishes.[2] In sum, the non-Irish ethnic groups won a limited victory: they could legally establish their own parishes, but the parishes would remain subject to the bishop, who was usually Irish. (At this time, incidentally, there were already eighteen German, six Polish, five Bohemian, and two French parishes and schools in Chicago.)

In 1916 the highly Americanized, third generation German, George Mundelein, became Archbishop of Chicago. He hoped to eliminate ethnic bases of power, but failed. While he insisted that English be the chief language of instruction in the schools, he permitted the use of native tongues in a "supplemental" fashion. He sensed that the eventual assimilation of these groups into American society would give him the ultimate, long-run victory. Nonetheless, Mundelein's twenty-four year reign saw the establishment of twenty-two new national parishes.

We cannot here go into further detail of the ethnic conflicts in Chicago. But we will note that 1) the decentralized Chicago system is a product of its decentralized beginnings, 2) political decentralization has gone hand in hand with ethnic cleavage and political conflict and 3) the hostility of black schools and parishes to the bishop and his diocesan staff is very much in the tradition of Catholic ethnic conflicts.

Policy-Localism in the Contemporary Systems: Decentralization in Chicago

We could find no significant and systematic central office influence in the Chicago Catholic school system. The Archbishop of Chicago has vested responsibility for the schools to his Superintendent of Schools and to the Catholic School Board. We found that the Superintendent's office has very tenuous influence in the local schools. While the Office establishes policy guidelines which it intends all schools to follow;

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[1]James W. Saunders, The Education of Chicago Catholics: An Urban History, unpublished PhD Dissertation. University of Chicago, 1970, p. 28. We are most indebted to this suberb dissertation for our discussion of historical decentralization in Chicago. No comparable work has been done on any other city... thus, our silence on the history of Los Angeles.

[2]Saunders, Op.Cit., p. 108.

1) all schools do not follow central policy, 2) the Office knows this, and 3) with the important exception of moral persuasion the Office has very few sanctions by which it can enforce its policies on a recalcitrant school.

Several policies can serve as examples of the decentralization of power within the system. First, consider the hiring of teachers: the central Catholic School Board has established policy that teachers will be Catholic, have maximum academic requirements, be hired on a uniform salary scale, and so on. It has established procedures for hiring the teacher. The candidate is to apply in the central offices, where he is interviewed and approved. If approved, he is given a list of schools seeking a teacher with his qualifications, to whom he can submit his name. Local schools clearly have great discretion over the hiring of their teachers. In fact, they have more authority than even the board policy admits. The schools frequently hire teachers and send them to the central office for "examination." Schools which have a reason to suspect the board will not approve their choices simply fail to send their candidates in for examination. The board list of approved teachers has, therefore, more the character of a service than a central controlling device. In no event does the central office actually hire a teacher or assign him to a school. Hiring faculty is strictly an individual school's responsibility, irrespective of board hiring policies.

Similarly, budgets are a strictly local matter. The central office has requested that schools separate the parish and the school books. Some parishes do, others do not. The central office contributes nothing to the budgets of any local schools,[1] and consequently has no control over their budgets. Local schools receive their income from either (or a combination of) tuition or the parish Sunday collection. On other important policies-- curriculum, programs, religious training, student admissions, tuition, textbooks— the board either makes policies or provides services (analogous to its hiring function), but the decisions (and therefore the operative policies) are made locally. Despite the central board's establishment of general and officially binding policy, the diversity within the school system is staggering.

School C

We went to each local school and studied the issues which were important to it, and the way in which it came to decisions on these issues. We attempted to discover who made policy in these schools. School C presented the most complicated instance of local independence and central control, since the Archbishop's home lies within the parish bounds. If the Archbishop's will is followed, in any school, it ought to be in School C.

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[1]Some poor, inner city schools are temporary exceptions: they have received some central board money ($2 million in 1972) to enable them to survive short-term crises. But the board will give aid and continue it only if the local school shows promise of becoming self-supporting.

For over one hundred years, Parish C has had a school operat ed by a teaching order, the Sinsinawa Dominicans. In the span of these years the parish has hosted a series of ethnic groups, beginning with Irish immigrants, then Italians, later Puerto Ricans and now blacks. The Sinsinawas have remained through each new wave, adapting their mission to the needs of their students.

The ethnic groups were followed by waves of economic groups. By the 1960's urban renewal had brought a new mixture of socio-economic groups into the area ranging from poor blacks in public housing high rises to young professionals in a new high-rise village to enormously wealthy residents of the legendary Gold Coast. The archbishop decided to build a new parish church resembling his chapel in Rome (to establish his close association with the parish) to replace the temporary structure the parish used in the school building. He selected a site adjoining the high-rise village of wealthy professionals. These professionals have few children, and those few attend elite private schools-- none attended School C. The Archbishop decided the school should be closed, the children sent to a nearby Catholic school, and the parish's resources concentrated on cuilding the new church.

This church would serve the Archdiocese well. Its central (near Loop) location would enable it to draw not only parishioners (residents of the parish) but non-parishioners--Catholics who worked in the area, but lived elsewhere. The church would be the archbishop's show-place, and would attract new revenues from these non-parishioners and from the parish's wealthy members. The archbishop has relatively few sources of unencumbered income, but income is essential if he is to meet the difficulties which confront the archdiocese. He must have funds to aid parish schools which are faced with sudden financial troubles; he must have funds to be able to undertake any of the charitable works of the church in the area; he must have funds to be able to finance the education of young priests and nuns; he must have funds for a host of other necessities. Parish C was an underutilized resource. A new church which he could use as a bishopric would allow the archbishop to speak directly to the archdiocese's wealthiest and largest contributors each Sunday, and would provide him with a portion of the financial support he needed. To implement his idea, the Archbishop brought to the parish a new pastor, Fr. Morris, who had been the most successful fund-raiser in the archdiocese.[1] Within three years of his arrival, Fr. Morris had established a building fund (banked with the Archdiocese) which exceeded $300,000. This $300,000 was raised from two sources: 1) contributions in excess of the parish maintenance budget (which was itself in excess of $100,000 per year), and 2) one half of the parish's contributions to the Archdiocesan building fund. It was anticipated that within three years of its erection, the proposed $800,000 church would be paid for.

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[1]Previously, he had served at a poor, black parish on Chicago's west side, where he had kept the school operating despite a most limited budget and a very small parish membership. At the end of his six year term the parish had $6.000 in savings.

Building the new church required the closing of the parish school. The children would be sent to a neighboring parish school which could accomodate them, integration would be furthered (Parish C was all black and the neighboring school was not), and money would be saved by the consolidation. Fr. Morris considered this approach even more desirable because he disagreed with the educational philosophy of his parish school. He believed the school did not serve the parishioners, and that it did not serve the Church. Only a few parishioners used the school; a substantial number of students were non-Catholic; and neither they, nor the Catholic students, were required to attend religion courses or religious services. School C was neither a parish school nor a mission school.

Fr. Morris' plan was vigorously opposed by the Sinsinawa Dominicans and by a portion of his parish, predominantly the young, liberal professionals. This coalition argued that the school was the first mission of the parish, that it was the only source of parish unity, and that its avant-guarde instructional program would be lost if the schools were forced to consolidate. The parish's two young assistant pastors led the Young Priest's Caucus to denounce the closing before TV cameras as an abdication of the Church's responsibility to the black and Puerto Rican poor, and to call for the pastor's removal. This alliance of young nuns, priests and parishioners argued that the building fund should be diverted to the school maintenance budget. Fifty thousand dollars a year would be taken from the building fund. The School's parents were poor and the school depended on the income from the building fund.

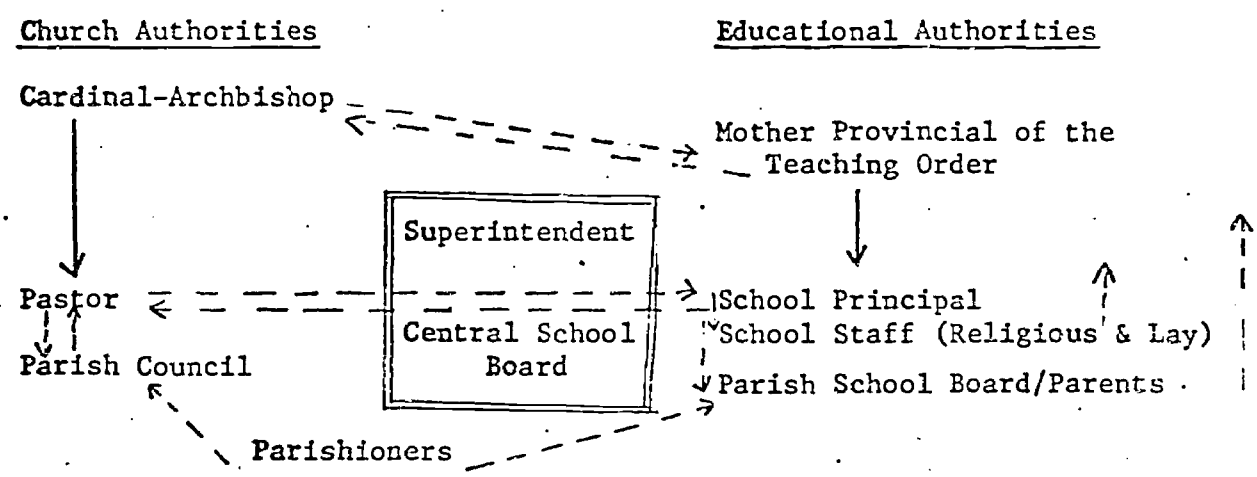
But against their position it was argued that much of the building fund was contributed by the wealthiest members of the parish, and that these members expected their money would be used for the new Church. The young parishioners would use the older parishioners' money to support the school in spite of the older parishioners' opposition. The ensuing battle had two fronts: the parish council and the public press. The youngprofessionals won control of the parish council away from the pastor, and decided to spend the building fund money on the school. The archbishop, meanwhile, abandoned his plans for a new church in the midst of the adverse publicity about the project in the press and on television.

The School C story is a striking one: 1) a small, ghetto parish school survived over the opposition of the parish's pastor and the archbishop of the dioceses; 2) a moderate-income, young professional alliance determined parish policy which overruled the purposes of those who had donated the funds. No one actor determined this outcome. No central bureaucracy or central authority held the strings of power.

Figure one presents the complicated policy-making process which operated in this one decision about the future of the school:

FIGURE 1: THE POLICY-MAKING AUTHORITIES

SCHOOL C
CHICAGO



Legend: _____ indicates clear, hierarchical lines of authority/obedience.

---------- indicates vague, negotiable lines of authority.

This battle had determined the future of the school and also established the patterns of policy-making influence which presently exists. School policies are officially made by the parish school board, with the cooperation of the parish council which supplies the school with most of its income. On the school board sit the young professionals, parents of students in the school, and the school principal, ex-officio. The school board is advised by one of the assistant pastors in the parish.

School policies are the result of what can best be described as a cooperative venture between the superintendent and the board. The board's main objective is to win support for the school from the parishioners. The principal makes most policy decisions, but in certain matters, particularly those concerning the difficult problem of school finance, the board takes the lead.

The school's composition describes many of its policies: it has 228 students and thirteen faculty members. Seventy-five percent of the students are black, twenty-two percent Puerto Rican and three percent are white (Appalachian). More than one-half of the school is non-Catholic. The school's children come predominantly from the neighborhood, but some children commute from as far away as fifteen miles south and six miles west. Tuition and books cost each family $167 a year, but arrangements are made to accomodate families who cannot pay. The school spends $60,000 a year: $11,000 from parents; $49,000 from the parish and no support from the archdiocese. The school's principal is a black, male, non-Catholic youth gang worker, Mr. McDouglas. The school does not require attendance at religious services, nor at religion class. Religion class is taught, emphasis on Catholic doctrine has been replaced by a discussion of Christian ethics.

From these policies it is clear that the school does not restrict admission to Catholics and does not require any religious practices. It charges tuition, but does not refuse families who cannot pay; the parish in fact pays the major portion of the costs of operation. The school does not require that teachers be Catholic and does not require any form of religious instruction. It is voluntarily integrated, and so clearly does not discriminate because of race. It imposes no residence requirements. The school has no admission tests, refuses to use IQ tests and does not expel its students. The school has adopted, by unanimous vote of its faculty, one of the most radical departures from traditional classroom structure in schools in the Chicago area, the Kettering Foundation's Individual Guided Instruction Program.

School H

The Catholic school system is typically seen as a rigid, authoritarian structure which maintains the loyalty of its constituents through harsh discipline and spiritual blackmail. Early Catholic immigrants were thrust into a school system whose stern rulers not only taught them what to believe and what to think, but forced them to pay for this priviledged coercion.

Implicit in the above view is the argument that Catholic schools are not and never have been truly voluntary. If a father believes that his eternal happiness is dependent on sending his children to the proper school, a few reservations about teaching methods are not going to stand in his way. Early immigrants sent their children to Catholic schools not because they believed in their educational superiority, but solely because these schools were the sine qua non of reward in the after life. If this view were true for any ethnic school today, it would be ture for the Polish Catholic schools. School H is just such a Polish Catholic school, except that it is black and its parents are non-Catholic.

While School C is located in the dynamic and changing neighborhood of the Near North Side, School H is located in the stagnant and poor mid-south side of Chicago. The parish is nearly one hundred years old both in its history and in its buildings. The school and church were erected by wealthy Irish Catholics who built lavish and spacious monuments to glorify and perpetuate their religious beliefs: the large buildings are now merely old and somewhat desolate. Forty thousand blacks reside within the parish boundaries, but the parish counts fewer than eight hundred members. When the church was Irish, the church dominated the neighborhood. Now the church is black and is in a constant struggle with its surroundings. For while this is a church of black pride and black militancy, it as also a church which fervently promotes the upward mobility of its members. While it takes much pride in the blackness of its members, it takes no pride in their poverty and lack of education, and struggles constantly against the crime and visciousness of the neighborhood. In this it continues in the tradition of the immigrant parish.

The pastor of School H, Fr. George, is a nationally prominent black priest, a renegade in the Archdiocese who "forced" (George's term) the Archbishop to assign him to this pastorate.[1]

The pastor hired a black priest from Louisiana (Reverend Paul James) to become principal of the school, which is not staffed by any particular order but rather by individuals from seven orders and several lay teachers. The school has recruited its faculty in national newspaperadvertisements. and thus has obtained faculty from across the country. There is no parish subsidy for the school, which is supported entirely by its tuition ($16.00 a month per child; $18.00 a nonth for two or more children). Rather, the opposite is true: in minor ways, the school subsidizes the parish.

School H has been spectacularly successful academically and communally. Its students average between one-half and one and a half years above the grade level (in reading and math scores) achieved in the neighborhing public schools. (This means they average slightly below national grade level.) This achievement is not due to selectivity and admissions tests, for there are none. School H accepts all who present themselves for enrollment, so long as there is room.[2]

By conventional standards, the school is badly overcrowded--the average number of children per teacher in a classroom is forty-five. School H has individualized its instruction only by the requirement that parents become involved in the education of their children. Parents must spend at least one hour each day helping their children with their homework. Further, parents are required to attend PTA meetings one day each month. Failure to attend results in a five dollar fine, levied on the next tuition payment. The PTA meetings are held on Sundays after Mass, so that all parents can attend. On alternate Sundays, parents are given instruction in their children's current subjects, so that they can give the children the aid they need.

School H defines itself as an authoritarian institution. It believes that parents desire this tone, that parents equate the presence of strongly enforced and extensive regulations with educational quality. This tone is evident, for example, in the school's rules regarding tuition payments and regarding student tardiness. Each month, the school collects tuition from all parents. If a child does not have his tuition he is suspended and is not permitted to attend classes. No excuses are accepted for the absence of tuition payments. School H explains that it is not competent to begin to judge the validity of excuses and does not have the time to spend in such judgments. The school's strong position in this matter is respected by the parents.

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[1]For depriving George of a pastorate at School D - the wealthiest black parish in Chicago - the Archbishop was labeled a racist in the Chicago press. The Archbishop then offered George a poor, small, troubled black parish on the west side, but the priest refused. George wanted a parish he could turn into a success.

[2]These claims have been made by the school principal, and reflect the belief of the parents in our survey. Despite classroom size and extreme poverty, this ghetto school is able to attract students from middle-class suburbs eight miles away. Detailed evaluation of achievement data should be carried out.

This example of tuition reflects a fact of life of the institution: it operates on a very tight, very restricted budget, and must have cash flow to sustain itself.

The school is authoritarian in its treatment of tardiness. The school found that children were chronically late for classes, and that of 1,300 children, at least 300 would be late each morning. Not only are there no buses for the children, but many parents must bring their children to school from distances as great as three miles. Children would come to school any time between eight and nine o'clock. Because these incoming children disrupted classes, the school ruled that all children must arrive at the starting time, and enforced its rule by imposing a penalty of twenty-five cents for tardiness. The princpal quickly realized that tardiness was not merely the child's problem. Parents were opting to pay the fine rather than struggle to get their children out on time. The school attempted to make all latecomers wait in the halls until 9:00, but the assembled children enjoyed "the punishment." The school make the children kneel for the hour, but sill no effect. They had as much fun on their knees as standing. Finally, the school realized that it had to devise a penalty which would affect both parents and children. The penalty was that all late children would be required to attend "jug" on Saturday mornings between 10:00 and 11:30 a.m. Jug was timed to coincide with the children's cartoon hour on TV, so that the children did not like having to bring their books to study hall and read them in silence for the hour. Similarly, parents did not like having to get their children up and out and take them to school and pick them up on Saturday mornings. If a child did not attend jug, however, the parent was subject to a five dollar fine, which would be assessed at the beginning of the next tuition period. The child would pay the fine or not be admitted, and still the child would have to serve his time in jug as the fine did not relieve him of this obligation.

School H defines itself as a Catholic school with the traditional ethnic emphasis on discipline. It requires all children to wear uniforms, and to attend Mass in groups on Sunday mornings under the supervision of their teachers. Even non-Catholic teachers are expected to take charge of their children on Sunday mornings. Similarly, all parents are expected to attend Mass. Because religious instruction of children is required in the school, the parents of non-Catholic children are required to attend religious instruction classes. The school argues that it is not its intention to convert the parents, but rather that the parents have an obligation to know what ethical and moral teaching their children are receiving in the school to be able to judge that teaching. The school emphasizes that the parents, first and always, are responsible for their children. But as would be expected, a by-product of this attendance at instruction classes is a relatively large adult baptismal class in the parish. The parish baptizes, on the average, ninety members a year, which is the largest number of conversions in any parish of the American Catholic church.

What are the indications of the academic and communal success of the school? First, the school's waiting list for new enrollments is 600 children long. Recall that this is in a neighborhood almost exclusively

populated by welfare families who must pay nearly $200 a year in tuition. Second, the evidence of the success of the graduating classes of the school is significant. The school places almost all male students in private high schools which are the best high schools in the city. Fifty percent of the male graduates attend college. A few graduates have successfully completed degrees at Yale and Harvard. In the past year, the parents of this poor school have donated sufficient money to buy two new school buses for use in their extensive summer program.

The school has become so successful, in fact, that it has decided to extend its program for a full twelve months, with a three-week vacation in the summer. Already the school has the longest class day in the city of Chicago beginning at 8:00 a.m. and ending at 3:30 p.m. From 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., the school maintains a monitored study hall. Working parents thus know the whereabouts of their children after school and before they come home. This school's long class day enables both parents to work. For this same reason, deleting the early starting hour-- in consideration of the working family-the school has rejected the idea that the nine-month school year should be staggered across a twelve-month operating year for the school building (thus permitting larger enrollments for the same building space). The school has argued that this would create problems for many poor families in which the older brothers and sisters take charge of the younger. Older children would be in school while younger children would be out of school for at least a portion of each school year.

Doubtless, one explanation for the success of this school lies in its black ideology. Although School H is officially Catholic, its lists of saints would be unfamiliar to most Catholics. In the school's front corridor, there is a mural in which are pictured the black saints: Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcom X. Fred Hampton, the Jackson State martyrs, and various other murdered black leaders.

When the Catholic School Superintendent's office ordered the mural be taken down, the parish refused and broke off all relations with the office.[1] The parish has adopted its own parish flag on which is emblazoned the parish motto, "We got it together ourselves." The parish is rapidly becoming a significant political force in its area. At its monthly PTA meetings, consultants are brought in from the city government to explain how the parents in the parish can obtain extra funds from the Welfare Department for the use of school uniforms or for other such purposes or how the parents can upgrade their educational background or benefit from any number of a host of other services available to residents of the ghetto areas. By becoming so important to the parents in so many phases of their lives, the school has become a strongorganizational unit in the community, an organizational unit with a potential for significant political action. If the school should develop a strong political strata within its neighborhood, it would only be following in the tradition of the white ethnic parishes in the city of Chicago.

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[1]This story may be appocryphal.

The school has become a leader in its community, but it has not yet developed leadership in its parents. The school's policies are made by the two priests. The twelve-man lay school board consumes much of its energy keeping itself in existence; it lacks direction and is split by squables. It is difficult to find parents willing to serve on the board. Organization for the school, and direction for the board, is provided by the principal.

School N

In contrast to School H, the most completely parent-directed school in the system is School N, representative of a host of ethnic parish schools whose apparent racial policies cause the archdiocese acute embarrassment. In educational philosophy and practice, School N is similar to School H. The only crucial difference between the two schools is that while School H is militantly black, School N is militantly white. On all other matters—religion requirements, tuition regulations, curricular structure, etc.—the two schools are a matched pair. Even on the racial issue they are in strange agreement: School H boasts that it is militantly black and School N is militantly white.[1] Indeed, on the question of admitting two black students, School N's parents ran head-on into not only its own staff of nuns, but the Superintendent's Office as well. As one would expect in a decentralized system, the parents won.

School N is an ordinary Catholic school. Its 493 children are from working class families of ethnic background. Some are first generation in this country, but most are second, and a few third generation American. Their fathers went to Catholic schools before them and these parents expect the same education for their children as they themselves received: disciplined, religious, traditional, even rigid. A generation ago, most big city Catholic schools were segregated by ethnic group—not because of specific church policy, but because immigrants lived together by nationality and expected to be educated together. One of the most common fights in that gereration was the struggle of newly-arrived ethnic groups to throw off Irish domination. Now these fights are past and Italian and Lithuanian children attend school beside the Irish. (If an "enemy within" remains for ethnics, it is the emerging Catholic intellectual who is destroying the elegant and mysterious Latin rituals along with the voluminous but simple rules for reaching heaven.)

Life for a white worker on the South side of Chicago is difficult. His income is meager, but his financial obligations are large. He typically must support three or more children, a non-working wife, and an elderly parent or aunt or other relative. He views the world as hostile and tenaciously defends his home, his neighborhood and his church from its dangers. So close are the ties between church and community, that he identifies his neighborhood with his parish. Indeed, so true is this of Chicago that parts of the city are best known by their parishes, not by their secular regional name. Unlike more liberal parishes, the ethnic parishes jealously guard their parish boundaries. To attend the church, and more importantly, the school, one must live within the parish boundaries. This is an old rule, and one of the many regulations which a

[1] In all justice, these schools would not necessarily deliberately discriminate racially. However, like the Italian child in the Irish school, "the foreigners" would be unhappy minorities.

local parish may choose to enforce or ignore, as it wishes. The archdiocesan central office is unable to interfere. The central office can advise, but not coerce. Thus, when two black children--who lived several miles outside the parish--tried to enrol at School N, the parish reacted sharply, on the grounds that overcrowding had recently forced the principal to turn away the children of parishioners; and in their place she was admitting non-parishioners. This issue brought to a head differences the parish had over the religious education policy in the schools, and within six months the parish forced the principal's resignation and replaced her with a lay principal of their own choosing. The school remains entirely white.

The Chicago newspapers briefly, but loudly, picked up the controversy and exposed the embarrassment of the Catholic school system to the city. (There is little doubt that Superintendent Clark's office was duly embarrassed.) Could Clark's office have prevented or in any way determined the outcome of the fight? The answer is no. Except for a certain moral persuasion-- which must not necessarily be discounted-Clark was powerless. Admissions policy is a local matter. What would have happened had the non-parishioner element not been present--or in other words, a black Catholic had moved into the parish and had been refused admittance? We suspect this has occurred in other parishes, and intend to investigate it further. We suspect the Superintendent would be equally powerless. For, in a truly decentralized system, "all the king's men"--(the central bureaucrats) cannot force the introduction of an admissions policy which parents oppose.

A difficulty we encountered in gathering our questionnaire responses from the school emphasizes the extreme degree of control exercised by the parents. We distributed our questionnaire, and collected them, in sealed envelopes, via the children and their classroom teacher. To do this, of course, we needed the co-operation of the school; our request was well received by the pastor and the principal. The questionnaire raised objections among several members of the parish, especially several on the parish school board at a public meeting which 200 attended, and the board threatened to fire the principal and overrode the defense made in the questionnaire's behalf by the pastor and the president of the Home and School Association. The board voted to destroy the returned questionnaires unopened. Needless to say, this indicates a high degree of parental autonomy and control.

Contemporary Policy Localism: Los Angeles

The high degree of local autonomy and responsibility found in the three Chicago schools is characteristic of the other two Chicago schools, and of the Los Angeles schools as well. We believe the repitition of other case studies, though perhaps revealing subtle differences on policy-controls among the local schools, would be tedious and unnecessary.

For the Los Angeles system, then, we will describe central board policies and prodedures concerning the local schools, and give simple measures of the central office's power. In our discussion of the schools in the following section, we will indicate evidence of the local school's agreement with (or autonomy from) the central board, and we will come to some general conclusions about whatever differences exist between the two systems with respect to central board power.

The Los Angeles diocese is both very old and very new. It was first organized by Pope Gregory XVI in 1840 as a portion of the California Diocese, including Baja California. Nearly 1600 miles long, it covered 214,000 square miles, and was administered by a Mexican bishop. From 1840 to 1896, the Catholic population of the Los Angeles diocese grew to 52,000 despite the territory's diminishment in size. Fifty years later the Catholic population had reached 625,000, although the diocese had once again been halved. In the last fifty years the Los Angeles diocese has built 300 churches and 300 schools; between 1948 and 1969 the population again rapidly expanded, reaching a total of 1.7 million Catholics.

Today the archdiocese serves 1,791,932 Catholics in 324 parishes scattered throughout Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura and Santa Barbara counties, an area of about 12,000 square miles. The system's 272 elementary schools enroll 103,076 students. Approximately 30% of the children are Mexican-American minorities, and 8% are black. 2,017 are non-Catholic. The non-Catholics are concentrated in a few schools, and 90% of them are black.

The archdiocese has separate superintendents of elementary and secondary schools, responsible to the archbishop, and under the direction of an Archdiocesan Advisory Board of education. Fifteen priests, including such high ranking officials as the Auxiliary Bishop, the Vicar General, the Vicar Delegate, the Chancellor, the editor of the Archdiocesan newspaper, the three superintendents and assistant superintendents and a former superintendent, serve on the 20-member board. One nun and one brother represent the teaching orders. Three layman serve on the board. Two of its members are women. This board has no formal authority, and the archbishop is reported to take an active hand in formulating the system's policies.

The archdiocese has codified its policies, and expects local schools to follow them. However, only two nuns co-ordinate the large number of schools and no real energy is given to ensuring that central policies are followed. The most drastic recent central policy gives us some insight into the relation between the central office and the local schools: the superintendent's analysis projected the necessity of closing several schools. At the same time, the California legislature was preparing to pass a state aid program for private schools, particularly aiding those schools in economically marginal neighborhoods. Since it was precisely these marginal schools which were in danger of closing before state aid arrived, the superintendent's office sought to devise a "holding" plan. This plan was to save money by eliminating dual-grade schools, that is those schools who supported more than one class at each grade level. Local schools resisted the decision, and 49 out of 100 dual-grade schools maintained the old system.

Similarly, the archdiocese keeps a calendar of school days and holidays, and has established the hours of school attendance and a schedule of administrative holidays. However, six schools called at random showed wide variation of observance of these times. The local school was, in fact, determined by the local principal or pastor.

The central office does maintain a list of approved textbooks for the schools' use, but adherence to the list appeared to be voluntary and unenforced.

The central office did not hire teachers, nor assign them, although local schools did sometimes call for lists of applicants. The office has been attempting some centralizing policies in recent times, especially in financial matters. The office has implemented a uniform salary scale; it has recommended that only certified teachers be hired by the system, although some parishes still rely on nuns who are finishing their undergraduate degrees; and, most importantly, the office has attempted to alter the local school's planning and budgeting procedures. In this last matter, the office acts as a service center more than a policy-maker. Although the board asks for certain information from the schools (so that it can apply for federal funding) is has no way of requiring the schools to follow its orders. Rather, it attempts to convince the principals and pastors that the new budgeting forms and planning excercises will aid their program and make running the school easier. In great part, the central office tries to anticipate the problems the local schools will meet, and to suggest solutions to them.

Parents and Local Schools: Differences in Policy Preferences Among Parents Serviced by Different Schools

In this section, we will discuss parents' responses to questionnaires which had been distributed to them via their children and returned the next day. For various reasons, the questionnaire returns of three schools were not usable, and have not been reported in this section. These schools are Chicago's School N, whose decision not to participate in this phase of the study we have previously noted, and Los Angeles's School B and School L, whose questionnaire returns did not provide a large enough sample. In School B's case, the questionnaire was administered at an unforeseeably difficult time, and in the case of School L a larger number of parents than anticipated could not repond to the English-language questionnaire. Each of the three cases of failure to get the response rate needed stemmed from a single cause: in an extremely decentralized system, we failed to properly account for the extent of idiosyncrasy of the schools. In the one case, procedure that netted us a 95% return in one black middle-class school (School D) resulted in an insignificant return from another. The distribution and collection procedures cannot be over-routinized in studying these schools. In general, we encountered a difficult methodological problem in designing a questionnaire suitable for both professional and workers. Our questionnaire has achieved this goal reasonably well, but it was not able to overcome the problem of language differences. Again, in the decentralized schools, diverse populations understand the questions differently. The parents may be answering different questions, so that questionnaires--to be comparable--must be talked to each group. Finally, only one school rejected the way we sought to win local willingness to participate in the project, but this too points to the policy-making difference among the schools. Our difficulties merely give further evidence of the high level of local autonomy and differentiation.

Introduction to the Questionnaire Data

The numerical importance of the Catholic schools in the United States is undeniable. In 1969-70, according to the Office Of Education, total public school enrollment was 45.6 million; Catholic school enrollment was 4.6 million, a number which comprises nine-tenths of all private education in the country. There were 15 states in which Catholic schools educated more than 10% of the school children last year.[1]

The Chicago Catholic school system is the largest Catholic system in the country, and the fifth or sixth largest of all systems, private or public. In Chicago, one of every three children attends a Catholic school. Of the 422 Catholic schools in Chicago, 33 are predominantly black; the non-Catholic population of these schools ranges from 20% to 75%. The system encompasses 350 local school boards, 410 pastors, 500 principals, and 11,829 teachers. In 1969-70, it educated 227,076 elementary school children and 71,968 high school children.

The Los Angeles school system is numerically smaller than Chicago, but observers say it is much wealthier.[2] The system encompasses 324 parishes, 69 higher schools, and 272 elementary schools. Last year it educated 103,736 elementary students and 36,562 high school students.

School H. Two Schools, School H and School C, have been described in the case studies above. Here we will only present a small amount of descriptive data derived from the questionnaires.

School H is poor, and black, with a militantly black ideology at its base. Only 8.2% of its families have incomes over $15,000, which makes it the school with the smallest number of wealthy patrons in our study; 19.9% of families have incomes under $3,000; 25.7% have incomes between $3,000 and $5,000; 34.5% between $5,000 and $10,000; and 11.7% have incomes between $10,000 and $15,000. However, its patrons are not poorly educated, 42.6% have graduated from high school; and additional 26% have had some college; and 4.6% have graduated from college. Only 19% of parents have themselves attended Catholic schools. An additional 40.5% of parents are Catholic, bringing the Catholic population to 59.5% of the total. (Note that, while this school's ideology is militantly Catholic as well as militantly black, 41.5% of the parents are non-Catholic). 72.5% of the families have 3 or fewer children; 27.5% have 4 or 5 children, and 8% have 6 or more.

School C. School C, also described above, is a small school on the near north side of Chicago. It is predominantly black and low income.

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[1]These five states are Conn., Del., Ill., La., Mass., Minn., Mo., Neb., N.H., N.J., N.Y., Ohio, Penn., R.I. and Wis., from Joan Hanauer, "Catholic Schools Face Growing Crisis of Funds," Los Angeles Times, March 21, 1971.

[2]The New York Times suggested that Los Angles was second only to New York diocese in wealth.

14% of its parents have had some grade school, another 16% some high school, 43% have graduated from high school, 17% have had some college, and 8% have graduated from college. Only 14% of the parents themselves attended Catholic elementary school, 11% Catholic high school, and 3% Catholic college. Total family income (including the income of both parents) is fairly evenly split: 14% under $3,000; 28% between $3,000 and $5,000; and 11% over $15,000, (with 20% missing observations). Families tended to be large: 11% had one child; 24% two children; 22% three children; 22% four children; 20% had five or more. Family size is evenly distributed over income range, with a slight tendency for smaller families to coincide with larger incomes. A majority of the parents are non-Catholic: 54.3%.

School D. School D is a black school located in a Chicago neighborhood which has for some years been black and middle class. It is a comfortable, pleasant neighborhood, with tree-lined streets, many single-family dwellings, and attrative low-rise apartment houses. However, the neighborhood is now declining and the wealthier blacks are moving out. The school is in transition, with as many as one-third of its pupils commuting in from outside the neighborhood.

School D's income range is the following: 4% of families have incomes under $3,000; 6.9% have incomes between $3,000 and $5,000; 29.4% between $5,000 and $10,000; 27.3% between $10,000 and $15,000; and 31.9% over $15,000. The parents are well-educated: 29.5% have graduated from high school; 41.5% have had some college; and 20.8% have graduated from college. Also, School D parents are unusual for black Catholic school parents: a large number, 25% attended Catholic schools themselves. Families are small: 91.5% of families have three children or fewer. An unusually large percentage (unusual for Chicago black schools) of parents are Catholic, that is 62.9%. Only 3% of the parents are non-black.

Several years ago, School D had a black pastor, and a white principal, today it has a white pastor and a black principal. (All teachers are white.) The pastor explained to us that while the parents would like to have a black pastor, they realize that there are very few black priests and they do not regard him as an intruder. Our interviews with parents bore this out.

The school has a powerful lay school board, which keeps a close, if respectful eye on the administration of the school. The school board, not the pastor, hires the principal. The principal, with the advice of the board hires the teachers.

Tuition is high: $385 per child plus a $35 fee for books; or $500 for two children. By decision of the school board, and over the opposition of the principal, all parents must pay tuition. In addition, the church subsidizes the school (to the amount of $32,000 last year). The subsidy of a largely non-Catholic school by a Catholic parish is unusual.

There are no examinations for admissions. However, there are priorities: first, preference to Catholics in the parish; second to Catholics outside the parish, and third to Christians within the parish.

Students do well on achievement tests; most are at grade level or better, which places them substantially ahead of students at the local public school.

School X. School X is a large, affluent school located in one of Chicago's most attractive neighborhoods. While the neighborhood has traditionally been upper-middle class, and substantially Irish, Chicago's planners have already assumed that it will fairly soon undergo racial transition and become black. In the meantime, the school is 100% Catholic, mostly Irish, with some German, some Italian, three Chinese, and no blacks or Puerto Ricans. Family incomes are high: 77.7% of families have incomes in excess of $15,000; 16.2% are between $10,000 and $15,000; and 6.2% are under $10,000. However, the education level of parents is somewhat lower than one might anticipate by income alone. While 40% have attended college, only 8% have graduated. Compatible with the Irish-Catholic character of the school is the large percentage of parents who themselves attended Catholic schools: 82%. Families are unusually large, given their high economic status: 27% have 6 or more children, 35% have 4 to 5 children, and 27.4% have 3 or less.

Unlike many Chicago schools, School X enforces its boundaries strictly. All students must live within the parish. There are no exceptions. Children are given an entrance exam, although it is unclear if this is used as a criteria for entrance.

The tuition, which does not cover the school's expenses, is $200 per child or $300 per family. While no student has been dropped for non-payment of tuition, all parents are expected to pay. Those who cannot afford to do so must submit confidential financial statements which are judged (anonymously) by a parent committee.

School N. School N has been dissolved in the case study above. No parent data is available.

School S. School S is a middle-class Mexican-American school. 83.1% of its families have incomes in excess of $1,000; 95.9% of its families are Catholic; 38% of its parents attended Catholic schools. From our interviews, and from the school's own self-evaluation study, we found that School S serves a conservative middle-class and upper-middle-class population. Its founders were immigrant and first generation Italians, and the parish still hosts an active Sons of Italy club. The school serves both professionals and blue-collar workers: 34% of the parents are in managerial positions, 23% in technical and engineering positions, 13% in professional, and 30% in manual, services and clerical occupations. More than 38% of the families have working mothers (whose occupations are not included in the breakdown, above.)

The school enrolls 532 students from an area ten miles long and two to three miles wide. It charges $250 a year tuition per child. Catholics from outside the parish pay another $45 a year and non-Catholics must pay $350. The school has just raised its tuition by $100, and received no complaints

from any parents nor suffered any perceptible decline in enrollment. The tuition increase will enable the school to balance its books without large parish funding. In the previous three years the school has progressively eliminated one of its two-classroom grades, cutting the school's deficit (the parish's contribution to the school) from $65,000 to $15,000. The total school budget included contributed services is about $140,000. Each parent is expected to contribute services to the school.

The school and its parish is conservative. The pastor, with the apparent support of his congregation, implemented the Vatican II reforms slowly, even for an archdiocese noted for its slow progress in change. Mothers who contribute their time in the school's cafeteria, or on other activities, occasionally have complained about music coming from the classrooms. The school requires both boys and girls to wear uniforms every day; students are rewarded with a uniform-free day once a month.

The children are more liberal in their religious practices than their parents, and the school allows each classroom in turn to write their own mass prayers and hymns and to assist the priest in celebrating the weekly children's mass. Recently, the children wrote and sung a guitar mass, in a banner festooned church, displeasing the retiring Irish pastor and many of his congregation. Girls still are required to wear veils in church. Teachers (female) are not permitted to wear pants-suits.

The school excercises no control over admissions, except that it will not enroll more than 45 students in any class (average size is 38). Non-Catholics are permitted to enroll, but at the higher tuition rate which makes up for the failure of non-Catholic parents to contribute to the parish. (The parish undertakes all building and maintenance expenses for the school.)

This middle-class, suburban ethnic parish, totally in control of its own school, might be expected to maintain a racially segregated institution, but it does not. One teacher is black. The school enrolls 78 minority students, including 3 Negroes and one American Indian. The decision was made by the school principal, and need not have been made since the Negro students are not Catholic (and thus could claim no right to admission). No person in the parish complained of the change.

Decisions on school matters are made by the principal, in consultation with the faculty. The faculty is hired by the principal, but interviewed by the pastor. The interview is regarded as a courtesy by both parties and as a formality. Major changes in program and curriculum (the adoption of an individually guided instruction program) were recently made by the faculty acting alone, with no involvement by parents or pastor. Nevertheless, the school continues to receive voluntary contributions of services from parents.

School L. School L represents a solidly working-class, minority school. The prinicpal estimates that 99% of the schools' 167 families are Mexican-Americans. About one-half of these are second generation American, but another indeterminable proportion - several hundred families from the parish's 2,000 - are recent immigrants, many without papers. The wealthiest families in the school are those in the higher pay scales of the building trades, or small business men. About 25% fall in this category; the rest are laborers, farm workers, semi-skilled factory workers, and their incomes are lower. Both parents work in 30% of the families. A substantial proportion of the parents speak only Spanish. Most of the children speak two languages, although some children speak halting English, and a few speak none. The school recommends that children with difficult language problems transfer to the dual-language public school.

The school is an example of an ethnic parish. It celebrates Spanish feast days with religious services and fiestas. The parish mothers take turns preparing Mexican foods for the children's cafeteria lunches. The priests are Spanish speaking Europeans. The chief school administrators comes from Mexico City and Ireland. All teachers are bilingual.

The parents are active in the school's support. The men literally built the school, and recently built a kitchen for the school to be operated by the mothers. Parents are informed of the school's finances and problems on Sundays. In addition, each parent had an interview with the teachers twice a year; a great deal of informal contact occurs in the course of the parent's working at the school.

The school is neat, but its grounds are not lavish. It operates on a stringent budget, relying on tuition, parish contributions, and a small subsidy from the Archdiocese. Tuition is $18 per month for a Catholic child, and $21 a month for a non-Catholic child; $23 a month for a Catholic family, and $25 a month for a non-Catholic family.

Admissions and tuition policies are characteristically loosely defined. Since the school does not want children to cross highways, it draws its attendance boundaries at the highways; however, if a child presents himself for admission from across the road, he is admitted. Tuition is required, but $2,000 went uncollected last year, and the school wrote it off, since the families were poor.

In matters of discipline, the school is strict but not severe. The school obeys central office policy which prohibits corporal punishment, although parents urge corporal punishment in some cases.

The school has no experiences involving fights, gang activities, drug usage, etc.

Because many parents could not read the English-language questionnaires, we have a statistically insignificant response from this school.

School M is a wealthy, white school located in one of Los Angeles' (and the country's) most prestigious areas. 91 % of its families have incomes in excess of $15,000. It is the only school in our study with any Jewish students, who comprise 3.5% of total student population (the school's neighborhood is predominantly Jewish and liberal; and as will be seen below, Catholic opinion at School M is in step with liberal, Jewish thought). Still, 89.5% of M's families are Catholic. Its ethnic composition is unusually segregated for Los Angeles: 91% are white, 2% Asian, and 7% Spanish. Its family size reflects the common Los Angeles distribution.

School's tuition is $300 per child, $500 for two, and $600 for three ore more. The parish contributes approximately $75,000 per year, which is over half the parish's yearly income.

The school is noted for its advanced educational program, which is the basis of its high-income attraction.

It has its own school board, which is very active. It is advisory to the principal, but in practice no serious policy decisions are made without its consultation and approval.

School B. School B is a predominantly black school, in a desirable section of Los Angeles, and its parents are wealthy. Due to a series of unforeseeable, and peculiar happenings, we did not gather data from this school.

School F. School F is a working class, black school, on the outskirts of Watts. It has the largest percentage of non-catholic parents of any of the Los Angeles schools studies: 80.7% of parents are Catholic. Its ethnic composition is mixed between black, Spanish, and Asian.

It is the least affluent of the Los Angeles schools. Only 20% of the parents themselves attended Catholic schools. Family distribution is normal.

Families who cannot afford tuition can work to pay. The Church subsidizes the school. The school has no admissions requirements but has been unhappy with several students admitted from the public school who could not read. Admissions tests may be instituted in the future.

Half the teaching staff is black, although the principal and pastor are white. The neighborhood is becoming increasingly black, and is suffering some racial tensions with the outgoing population.

School I is a white and Mexican working class school. Most of the families (45.9%) are in the $10,000 to $15,000 income range, with 17.3% making over $15,000, and 36.7% making under $10,000. 92.6% of parents are Catholic, and of these, 58.3% attended Catholic schools as children. Again, the ethnic composition is mixed: 35.1% are black; 13.9% Spanish; and 52.1% white. Families of three children or under comprise 57.7 % of the total; families of four to five children are 28.9%; and families of six or more are 13.4%

The principal has great autonomy. She sets tuition, in consultation with the lay board she established. She determines the admission of non-Catholics (three families).

The pastor thinks the idea of a school board is a good one, but has not established one as it has not been encouraged by the Archdiocese.

Every family is required to perform yard duty once every six weeks, and is expected to help in fund-raising and teacher-aid activities. The principal holds back the registration of families who are not helping; she has done this in the case of four families.

Tuition is collected by a lay tuition board. If a family cannot pay, it can contribute extra services to the school. Tuition is $25 per child per month or $32 per family. The school has 45 children per classroom, and a waiting list for half its grades.

In matters of discipline, the school works with the parents. If after three visits with the parent, there is no improvement, the child is expelled. No child has been expelled in recent times.

School A. School A is a working-class Spanish school in a Mexican neighborhood. 71.5% of its families make over $10,000 per year; 98.6% are Catholic, and its ethnic composition is mixed: 29% black (many may be Spanish); 15% Mexican; 55% white. 51.6% of parents graduated from Catholic elementary schools, 38% from Catholic high schools, and 5% from Catholic colleges. Family size follows the Los Angeles pattern.

The school tuition is low; the parish subsidizes the school modestly, and assumes financial responsibility for the physical plant.

The school has a traditional religious policy; the children attend mass together once a week, say the Stations of the Cross during Lent, and say prayers together before class.

School policy is in the hands of the principal, with consultation of the pastor.

The school enforces many minor rules which give it a disciplined tone. Children weak uniforms; grafitti is discussed and punished; chewing gum is fined.

The Questionaire Data: What the Study is Not.

Our study is not a study of achievement scores in reading or writing.

Year after year there is a press game in Chicago. There are several variations, but the most recent version was like this: the public school system published the reading and mathematical achievement scores of its pupils; the average score was substantially below the national average; the press denounced the public school system, demanding to know the basis of this weak performance; somewhat later, the Catholic school system announced its scores, which were substantially higher than the national average, and stated that this should not be regarded as any reflection on the city's public schools.[1]

There are several reasons why, indeed, the parochial school scores should not reflect on public school performance, (e.g., the parochial school is partially suburban as well as urban, parochial school students go through a self-selection process selecting for motivation, the payment of tuition is indicative of parental concern for the child, etc.). Whatever the merits of these arguments, they are not the concern of this study.

While we have occasionally mentioned achievement scores of individual schools, we have used the scores descriptively rather than analytically.

Our study is not an examination of constitutional questions of aid to non-public schools. While this question has dominated academic and journalistic discussions of private education, it is at most peripheral to our study.

Finally, our study is not a study of the financial status of these schools. Financial status enters as a serious policy matter for several of the schools, but again it is peripheral to the central focus of the study.

Questionnaire Data: Why Parents Support the Schools

Before setting forth a careful and specific exposition of what our data shows, we will outline the general conclusions.

First, despite the social, economic, ethnic, and political diversity of the population studied, responses tended to be similar; that is, parents of varying backgrounds are concerned about similar matters. Few general conclusions were modified when we stratified by religion, race, education, and income. There are several significant exceptions, and these will be noted.

Second, parental motivation for sending the child to the chosen school rested first with the parental perception of the school offering

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[1] see for example, Dave Canfield, "Catholic Pupils Test High Here," Chicago Daily News. Feb. 11, 1970, page 5.

the best education available; second, with the parental belief that personal attention was shown the child by teacher and staff; third, black parents show substantial apprehension of the local public school; and fourth, unlike black parents and upper class white parents, ethnic white parents, particularly the Irish, seek a specifically Catholic education for their children.

Third, the availability of the private school in the neighborhood influenced white parents to continue living there, but influenced black parents less strongly.

Fourth, while there was strong disagreement with the statement that it is best for children to attend school with other children of the same race, black parents felt considerably more strongly about this than white; and some white parents agreed racial segregation was best.

Fifth, the majority of parents disagreed with the statement that it is best for children to attend school with children of the same religion. At the same time most agreed that all children should attend religion classes.

Sixth, there was strong consensus that their schools were well run, orderly, with the correct amount of discipline and homework, and with few troublemakers.

Seventh, there was general consensus that teachers cared about the children, that teachers listened to parental suggestions, but that the running of the school should not be left to teachers, and that parents should participate.

[INSERT TABLE ONE]

Variable One. Virtually every major American city has been troubled by the exit of middle-class families to the suburbs. A variety of social science studies as well as common sense, indicate that one impetus for this exit is parental apprehension of urban schools. If parents feel their children are unsafe physically or emotionally, or if parents consider their children's schools to be academically inferior, they are motivated to search for another school, and all too frequently they find this school in the suburbs. If however, families wish to remain in the city, they may turn to private schools, of which the Catholic system is one choice. Our data indicates that for many white parents who send their children to Catholic schools, the school is a substantial attraction to their remaining in the neighborhood; for black parents, our data is less conclusive.

The data: in Chicago, at the Affluent School X, sixty-four percent of parents continue to live in the neighborhood because of the school; at black, middle-class School D, thirty-eight percent remain; at poor, black School H, forty-three percent, and at liberal, black school C, forty-six percent. In Los Angeles, the liberal counterpart to

TABLE ONE

Parental Response by School to Variable 1

Variable 1: I continue to live in this neighborhood so that I can send my child to this school.

Chicago Schools	Agree Strongly	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
H	15.8%	28.1%	8.9%	38.4%	8.9%
X	21.6	43.3	8.5	23.8	2.8
D	13.1	25.5	9.8	44.4	6.9
C	21.1	25.6	10.0	37.8	5.6
Los Angeles Schools					
I	16.8	47.5	5.9	27.7	2.0
A	18.9	41.9	3.4	31.8	4.1
S	27.3	40.7	2.7	26.7	2.7
M	17.9	25.7	3.6	41.1	1.8
F	16.7	34.9	7.9	30.2	10.3

School X, School M, fifty-two percent of the parents continue to live in the neighborhood because of the school; at white suburban School S, sixty-eight percent; at working-class Mexican School A, sixty-one percent; at School I, sixty-four percent; and at poor, black school F fifty-one percent. When we stratified by income, responses changed. Affluent parents were far more likely than less affluent parents to agree that they continue living in the neighborhood.

However, despite parental response on this question, responses for Variables Nineteen and Twenty (most important reason and second most important reason that parents send their child to this school) indicate that the neighborhood school concept is not primary with parents. Of those parents who remain in the neighborhood because of the school, very few gave the school's proximity to home as a major reason for sending their child there.

Methodological Problems. This question presents us with the methodological difficulty of controlling for where parents live. If a school admits only students who live within the parish boundaries (School X), or if the school discourages non-parishioners and admits very few of them (School H), we have no problem. But, if the school admits students from all over the city, then we must consider this in evaluating our data. We might have asked parents if they live within the parish, and discard answers from those who do not. We rejected this possibility, because parish districts have frequently been "gerrymandered" to fit ethnic groupings, and a family can live outside parish boundaries, but still be close to the school. When we seek this information in our next study, we will devise a proximity scale to control this response.

Further, the phrasing of the question presents some difficulty. The words"so that I can send my child" might imply to some parents that they should answer positively only if living in the neighborhood were a school requirement for admission. We know this affected some responses, but we do not know how many.

Also, this is a problem which may not have occurred to many parents who have lived in the neighborhood for several years, and have always sent their child to the school. In this instance responses may be mere conjectures of what they would be if the Catholic school were to close.

And, finally, while the responses of poor parents were more likely to be negative, this may be more a reflection of the geographical immobility of the poor, than of their regard for either school or neighborhood.

Variable Two. No scholarly footnote is required for us to state that the problem of racial segregation in the public school has plagued and traumatized American education. Catholic schools have played varying roles in this crisis. In some cities, such as St. Louis, the Catholic system integrated its schools smoothly and successfully before the

TABLE TWO

Parental Response by School to Variable 2

Variable 2: It is best for children to attend school with children of the same race as their own.

Chicago Schools	Agree Strongly	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
H	4.2%	6.0%	9.8%	55.3%	24.7%
X	14.2	28.5	22.4	29.9	5.0
D	1.1	3.9	7.4	58.3	29.3
C	1.1	2.2	5.5	47.3	44.0
Los Angeles Schools					
I	5.0	9.9	9.9	58.4	16.8
A	3.9	3.9	5.2	51.6	35.3
S	3.3	16.0	7.3	52.0	21.3
M	1.8	12.3	10.5	54.4	21.1
F	3.2	2.4	.8	42.9	50.8

public system integrated; in other cities, such as New Orleans, the system appeared to be either impotent or recalcitrant in effecting integration of current students, or of preventing individual schools from becoming havens for white children fleeing court-ordered desegregation of public schools. Los Angeles and Chicago had still other experiences. The peculiar geography of Los Angeles in combination with its lack of strong ethnic neighborhoods resulted in a natural dispersion of non-whites throughout the system. We had initially approached Los Angeles as a typical American (i.e. Eastern or midwestern) city. It is not. Its neighborhoods are not ethnically based, nor it it as racially segregated as Chicago. (This, despite the reputation given Los Angeles by the Watts riots).

The city of Chicago has the dubious honor of being one of the most segregated of American cities. The neighborhood based Catholic school system is superimposed upon residentally segregated neighborhoods. As one might anticipate, archdiocesan central authorities were unsuccessful in substantially reversing geographically based ethnic and racial segregation.

When we queried parents on racial attitudes, we found that black parents overwhelmingly oppose racial segregation in the schools, and that while the majority of white parents also oppose segregation, there is a substantial minority which still feels that it is best for children to attend school with other children of the same race.

Several comments are in order on this data. First, the affluent Chicago school X is considerably more segregation-minded than any other school. Second, majority-black school have overwhelmingly pro-integration responses; when we stratified these schools by race, and looked at the responses of white parents who send their child to black schools, we found that most of these white parents are strongly pro-integration. Third, the black militant school H scores slightly higher on a pro-segregation measure than other black schools, but not considerably higher. Fourth, poor black parents are more likely than middle-class blacks to see merit in the racial segregation of the schools.

Methodological Problems. Racial integration is a difficult problem for the Catholic school system. On the one hand, the Church is morally and ideologically committed to racial justice, on the other hand the system is decentralized, neighborhood-based, and resistant to change instituted by central authority. Neverthless, the central authorities have made impressive attempts at integration, and according to their figures, have been successful. Eighty percent of Catholic high school students attend racially integrated schools.[1] The moral pressure imposed by the Church may have skewed responses, even on this anonymous questionnaire. Some parents may prefer their children to attend segregated schools, while remaining reluctant to state such a preference so clearly as our questionnaire requires.

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[1]Helen Fleming, "Integration in Catholic Schools," Chicago Daily News. Oct. 18, 1967.

TABLE THREE

Parental Response by School to Variable 3

Variable 3: It is best for children to attend school with children of the same religion as their own.

Chicago Schools	Agree Strongly	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
H	8.8%	16.7%	11.2%	49.8%	13.0%
X	10.3	27.3	14.9	39.7	7.8
D	7.1	11.0	9.5	55.8	16.6
C	6.6	11.0	8.8	48.4	25.3
Los Angeles Schools					
I	12.9	36.6	17.8	30.7	2.0
A	12.4	30.7	13.1	33.3	10.5
S	19.5	36.9	13.4	26.8	3.4
M	1.8	35.1	10.5	47.4	5.3
F	13.6	25.6	6.4	39.2	15.2

[INSERT TABLE THREE]

Variable Three. Our data on parental views of religious education is potentially revealing of several attitudes. First, and most directly, it clarified parental attitudes on religious exclusivity. Nineteenth century Catholic immigrants had entered a country they perceived as hostile and Protestant; they founded their own schools as bulwarks of religious and ethnic solidarity. Mid-twentieth century America is a very different world both in terms of Protestant tolerance of (perhaps indifference to) Catholicism, and of Catholic assimilation into mainstream American society. Second, insofar as Catholic school parents are indifferent to the religious aspects of their children's education, they seem to be proportinately concerned about other educational matters. This question requires further explanation; our data can highlight but cannot confirm this relationship. Certainly our data does show that fewer and fewer parents send their children to Catholic schools for religious reasons. Third, while religious exclusivity is fading among Catholics, both Catholic and non-Catholic parents remain concerned about a value-centered education.

Variable three measured parental attitudes on religious segregation. With the exception of the affluent Irish School X, Chicago parents disagreed with religious segregation; Los Angeles parents were much more inclined to see merit in religous segregation. Of the black Chicago schools, militant school H parents scored somewhat higher on the segregation question than did their counterparts at more liberal schools. Also, note that middle-class, suburban School S in Los Angeles has the highest pro-religious segregation score. On several other indexes, we will note that School S comes as close as any Los Angeles school to approximating the ethnic pattern of Eastern cities, including ethnic religious conservatism.

[INSERT TABLE FOUR]

Variable Fourteen. Again, Los Angeles parents tend to score slightly higher on a religious segregation item than Chicago parents; and again, affluent Irish school X scores substantially higher than other Chicago schools; the affluent and liberal school M scores substantially lower (more pro-integration). However, also note that Catholic school parents are fairly overwhelmingly agreed that non-Catholics should be admitted to Catholic schools. This is a significant change in opinion from the days of the nineteenth century immigrant, ghetto Catholic school.

[INSERT TABLE FIVE]

Variable Thirteen. This variable presents some methodological difficulties which are discussed below. However, parents seem to be

TABLE FOUR

Parental Response by School to Variable 14

Variable 14: Only Catholics should be admitted to Catholic schools

Chicago Schools	Agree Strongly	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
H	2.3%	3.7%	5.6%	54.2%	34.3%
X	3.9	12.1	8.5	56.4	19.1
D	2.5	3.2	6.0	53.7	34.7
C	2.2	3.4	10.1	41.6	42.7
Los Angeles Schools					
I	9.9	14.9	8.9	52.5	13.9
A	5.9	9.9	9.2	61.2	13.8
S	6.6	6.6	11.3	61.6	13.9
M	1.8	3.6	5.4	60.7	28.6
F	8.8	5.6	12.0	48.8	24.8

TABLE FIVE

Parental Response by School to Variable 13

Variable 13: Every child in our school should attend religion class

Chicago Schools	Agree Strongly	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
H	26.8%	50.7%	8.5%	11.7%	2.3%
X	27.1	51.1	6.1	14.3	1.4
D	25.2	52.1	8.7	11.2	2.8
C	25.8	40.4	15.7	11.2	6.7
Los Angeles Schools					
I	35.6	49.5	7.9	6.9	0
A	31.1	52.3	5.3	9.9	1.3
S	31.1	56.3	2.0	9.9	.7
M	26.3	36.8	5.3	28.1	3.5
F	34.4	47.2	7.2	10.4	.8

fairly well agreed (again, with the exception of School M) that all children should attend religion class. Note that approximately one-half the schools do not have such a requirement.

When we stratified by religion we found that non-Catholic parents were almost as likely as Catholic parents to agree that every child should attend religion class.

Methodological Problems. Our questions on religious education have probably confounded the issue as much as clarified it. That is, we can safely state that Catholic school parents are becoming more assimilated religiously, that their religious education concerns have evolved in to other non-religious concerns, and that they no longer have a beseiged mental attitude towards non-Catholics. Unfortunately, we now suspect that religious education is not, and perhaps never was, the real issue. Instead the issue seems to be moral, or value-centered education. There is little else we can conclude from the high number of non-Catholic respondents who feel every child should attend religion classes.

[INSERT TABLE SIX]

Variable Four. Among educational theorists there are many competing views on the desirability of differing approaches to education. Those nineteenth century public schools which served an immigrant population tended to be rigid and authoritarian, bent on disciplining the children, and seeking to transform them into solid middle class citizens. Progressive educators, concerned about the stifling effects such education seemed to have on developing imaginative and thoughful minds, argued for a relaxation of discipline and an expansion of free, individual development. The debate between those educators who prefer an authoritarian system and those of the Progressive tradition has persisted until today, occasionally erupting in the political arena (e.g. Max Rafferty in California.) The telling political point which the authoritarians make is a simple one: children need order and discipline in order to learn. Or, as the principal of School H stated, in explanation of why parents send their children there, "Parents who send their children here know they are going to get a good, disciplined education -- the kind of education black kids need to meet white competition. You can't get that kind of education in the public schools here."[1]

We suspected from our on-site investigations of Catholic schools, some of which are highly authoritarian, while others are Progressive, that this debate is very much alive in the minds of parents, and that parents view the question from a different perspective from that of educators. Within the Catholic system, parents have a wide spectrum of educational approaches. Here we present parental opinion on these approaches.

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[1] Chicago Tribune, Aug. 16, 1970.

TABLE SIX

Parental Response by School to Variable 4

Variable 4: Too many children in this school are troublemakers

Chicago Schools	Agree Strongly	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
H	1.9%	5.7%	17.5%	49.3%	25.6%
X	2.1	6.4	11.7	56.4	25.5
D	2.8	3.5	15.1	58.9	19.6
C	6.6	11.0	23.1	44.0	15.4
Los Angeles Schools					
I	1.0	9.9	12.9	62.4	13.9
A	3.3	5.9	11.8	55.6	23.5
S	2.0	6.0	7.9	64.9	19.2
M	5.3	0	7.0	56.1	31.6
A	5.6	7.1	22.2	45.2	19.8

At least one means of maintaining order is by excluding the disorderly. The popular notion of private schools is that they do just this. In fact, very few Catholic schools exclude children for disciplinary reasons, unless the staff feels the child is emotionally disturbed and in need of pschyciatric facilities and professional help. Nonetheless, despite the lack of any direct exclusion of trouble-makers, we found in our pre-test that responses to variable four were an accurate reflection of parental views on the suitability of disciplinary procedure.

On this score, parents are very satisfied. At only one school, School I, do more than ten percent of parents feel there are too many troublemakers in the school. At two schools, Schools C and F, more than twenty percent of the parents are undecided on the matter. Otherwise there is overwhelming disagreement with the statement that there are too many troublemakers in the school.

[INSERT TABLE SEVEN]

Variable Eleven. On the matter of discipline, parents are less satisfied. (But see our discussion below for the difficulties of drawing conclusions regarding dissatisfaction on this measure.) Non-Catholics are slightly more likely than Catholics to be satisfied with disciplinary policy, blacks more likely than whites, and working-class parents more likely than middle-class parents. Finally when variable eleven is crosstabulated with variables nineteen and twenty, those who chose the Catholic school in reaction to the public school, are very likely to approve the discipline.

Methodological Problems. Variable eleven is an indirect measure of parental views on discipline, that is, agreement with the statement gives us important and specific information; disagreement does not. In our pre-test we found that parents who agreed with this statement were 1) more likely to be concerned about disciplinary policy than other policies and 2) frequently, although not universally, preferred strict discipline to liberal discipline.

Parental disagreement with the statement does not necessarily imply parental dissatisfaction with disciplinary policy; it is just as likely to imply a low order of concern with discipline as one of the best things about the school.

We should also note that agreement with variable eleven has a fairly high correlation with agreement with variable twelve, and that those parents who chose choice C in variable nineteen or twenty, are nearly unanimous in agreement with variable eleven. It is, thus, a measure of dissatisfaction with the local public school. When we further stratified by race and income, the relationship was intensified for working-class black parents.

TABLE SEVEN

Parental Response by School to Variable 11

Variable 11: One of the best things about our school is its discipline

Chicago Schools	Agree Strongly	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
H	37.6%	41.3%	7.5%	11.3%	2.3%
X	14.7	47.3	13.6	22.9	1.4
D	20.1	51.3	14.0	11.8	2.9
C	23.6	46.1	14.6	10.1	5.6
Los Angeles Schools					
I	26.3	48.5	4.0	17.2	4.0
A	27.0	53.3	5.3	11.2	3.3
S	31.1	57.6	6.0	4.6	.7
M	19.3	42.1	19.3	12.3	7.0
F	35.0	45.5	8.9	8.9	1.6

Parental Support Variable. Of all contenporary issues which divide parents and teachers - particularly in the public school - surely one of the most volatile policy arenas is that arena of parental control and teacher independence. The Catholic school tradition is somewhat different from the public school tradition, for the Church has always taught that the parent has primary responsibility for the education of his children. However, in this country, the ascendancy of the clergy in education is a conflicting tradition. Catholic schools reflect this conflict, with lay school boards ruling in varying realtionships with pastors and principals.

We asked several questions to reach this matter. First, we inquired about parental satisfaction with teachers' policies, specifically that of homework and discipline, as well as with the teachers' willingness to talk to the parent and to listen to parental suggesions: and lastly, we came at the question from the opposite direction of the desirability of parental participation.

[INSERT TABLE EIGHT]

Variable Seven. Every school principal received significant support levels from parents. School X indicated the highest support level, with parents at Schools H, I and M demonstrating more ambivalence and reluctance. These figures did not change when stratified by race or income. We have some tentative evidence that extremes in wealth (the poorest and the wealthiest) are less supportive of their principlas than those parents of middle income.

[INSERT TABLE NINE]

Variable Ten. Despite high levels of parental support for the principals, parents are not completely satisfied with their schools. The most striking figure is the substantial amount of ambivalence demonstrated by the large number of parents indicating "undecided" on this question. In addition over 20 percent of parents at four schools agreed or agreed strongly that they would make many changes. Yet when we crosstrabulated variable ten with variable seven, we found that the desire to make many changes was no predictor of parental support for the principal.

[INSERT TABLES TEN AND ELEVEN]

Variables Eight and Fifteen. While a clear majority of parents agree that the teacher listens to their suggestions, substantial ambivalence is indicated by the high "undecided" proportion at schools H,D,C,I,S, and A. Note the very low numbers of parents willing to disagree with the statement.

TABLE EIGHT

Parental Response by School to Variable 7

Variable 7: The principal has the school well organized and runs it smoothly

Chicago Schools	Agree Strongly	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
H	28.0	41.1	17.3	8.4	5.1
X	47.1	46.4	3.6	2.1	0.7
D	23.6	51.1	19.3	4.3	1.8
C	21.3	49.4	20.2	5.6	3.4
Los Angeles Schools					
I	28.3	45.5	15.2	9.1	2.0
A	28.1	54.9	9.2	5.2	2.6
S	35.3	58.7	2.7	2.7	.7
M	22.8	43.9	13.8	12.3	5.3
F	35.0	48.0	11.4	4.9	.8

TABLE NINE

Parental Response by School to Variable 10

Variable 10: If I were running our school, I would make many changes

Chicago Schools	Agree Strongly	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
H	7.0%	24.9%	27.2%	32.9%	8.0%
X	2.1	7.9	15.7	65.7	8.6
D	2.5	14.9	36.4	41.8	4.4
C	7.8	14.4	23.3	46.7	7.8
Los Angeles Schools					
I	3.0	18.2	25.3	47.5	6.1
A	2.7	12.0	16.0	61.3	8.0
S	3.3	11.3	22.0	54.0	9.3
M	5.3	15.8	17.5	54.4	7.0
F	3.3	10.8	24.2	50.0	11.7

TABLE TEN

Parental Response by School to Variable 8

Variable 8: My child's teacher listens to my suggestions.

Chicago Schools	Agree Strongly	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
H	15.0%	58.3%	19.9%	4.4%	2.4%
X	16.2	60.3	18.1	4.7	0.7
D	9.9	53.4	28.6	6.9	1.1
C	16.9	50.6	27.0	3.4	2.2
Los Angeles Schools					
I	13.2	57.6	24.2	3.0	0.0
A	13.0	58.2	21.9	6.2	0.7
S	11.5	54.7	27.0	6.1	0.7
M	25.9	51.9	14.8	5.6	1.9
F	11.6	66.1	16.5	4.1	1.7

TABLE ELEVEN

Parental Response by School to Variable 15

Variable 15: I can't find anyone at school willing to talk to me about my child

Chicago Schools	Agree Strongly	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
H	0.9%	3.3%	1.4%	51.2%	43.3%
X	0	.4	.7	49.6	49.3
D	1.8	2.5	2.5	49.5	43.9
C	2.2	0	2.2	46.1	49.4
Los Angeles Schools					
I	1.0	3.0	3.0	51.5	40.6
A	1.3	1.3	4.6	56.2	36.6
S	1.3	1.3	2.7	62.7	32.0
M	0	1.8	0	43.9	54.4
F	0	2.4	1.6	52.4	43.7

Whatever ambivalence parents might feel towards specific teachers, they clearly and overwhelmingly feel that someone at the school is willing to listen to them and talk about their child. Even when a parent is unenthusiastic about a particular teacher, he has recourse to someone else within the school.

[INSERT TABLES TWELVE, THIRTEEN, AND FOURTEEN]

Variables Nine, Sixteen and Seventeen. How interested are parents, and how interested should parents be, in the running of the school? Only at School A did ten percent of the parents feel that parents were not very interested in the school. However, at School D, sixteen percent of parents were undecided, and at school S, fourteen percent. Still, the vast majority of parents agree that other parents are very interested in the school.

Should parents participate in the running of the school? Los Angeles parents are more conservative on this question, and are inclined to feel that teachers should run the school; two exceptions are liberal, and affluent School M, and black, poor School F. In Chicago, School X deviated from the others in its usual pattern of deferring to school authorities. Still, the majority of parents responded affirmatively to variable seventeen. In some manner, parent feel the school would be improved if parents were more involved. Clearly, if this question were tested further and specific instances of involvement were given, responses might change substantially.

[INSERT TABLES FIFTEEN AND SIXTEEN]

Variables Five and Six. Homework is a tricky matter. The common perception within the field of education is that upwardly mobile parents are more concerned about homework than solidly middle-class parents; and that black parents are more concerned than white. In general, our data bears this out. Black parents are more likely than white parents to agree that children need a lot of homework; working class parents are more likely than middle class parents, and middle class parents more than upper class parents. There is however, little intensity of feeling reflected in our data: parents agree or disagree; they do not strongly agree or strongly disagree.

Methodological Problems. Variable Five presents an obvious definitional problem: what is "a lot of homework"? and how do we know if parents interpret this question in a roughly similar fashion? Two parents who seem to disagree in their responses may in fact be agreeing upon what amount is in fact the "right amount." Thus, we included variable six and cross tabulated it with variable five. We found that parents who were dissatisfied with the amount of homework recieved by the child, were rather evenly split across responses for variable five. Thus variable six is more a reflection of parental satisfaction or dissatisfaction than parental opinion specifically on homework.

TABLE TWELVE

Parental Response by School to Variable 9

Variable 9: Parents who send their children to this school are very interested in the school and what it is trying to do.

Chicago Schools	Agree Strongly	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
H	42.3%	43.7%	8.8%	2.8%	2.3%
X	34.3	54.6	6.1	4.3	.7
D	34.2	44.2	16.2	4.7	.7
C	25.6	54.4	7.8	6.7	5.6
					p
Los Angeles Schools					
I	27.0	55.0	9.0	7.0	2.0
A	28.8	50.3	9.8	9.8	1.3
S	26.7	53.3	14.0	4.7	1.3
M	35.1	50.9	12.3	1.8	0
F	32.8	42.6	9.8	13.1	1.6

TABLE THIRTEEN

Parental Response by School to Variable 16

Variable 16: Parents should leave the running of the school to the teachers.

Chicago Schools	Agree Strongly	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
H	11.7%	15.0%	10.3%	37.9%	25.2%
X	9.3	26.7	13.2	42.7	8.2
D	10.9	14.8	11.6	44.7	18.0
C	13.5	21.3	15.7	30.3	19.1
Los Angeles Schools					
I	13.9	31.7	8.9	33.7	11.9
A	13.2	34.9	11.2	30.9	9.9
S	10.7	30.7	14	39.3	5.3
M	5.4	17.9	7.1	62.5	7.1
F	12.8	19.2	6.4	48.8	12.8

TABLE FOURTEEN

Parental Response by School to Variable 17

Variable 17: The school would be a better school if the parents would become more involved in it.

Chicago Schools	Agree Strongly	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
H	50.5%	38.0%	8.8%	1.4%	1.4%
X	11.7	36.7	18.9	28.8	3.9
D	39.3	43.2	10.2	5.6	1.8
C	42.0	39.8	13.6	1.1	3.4
Los Angeles Schools					
I	38.0	36.0	12.0	13.0	1.0
A	24.5	41.7	12.6	19.2	2.0
S	21.9	45.0	17.2	13.2	2.6
M	19.6	51.8	10.7	16.1	1.8
F	44.0	41.6	8.0	4.0	2.4

TABLE FIFTEEN

Parental Response by School to Variable 5

Variable 5: Children need a lot of homeowrk every night.

Chicago Schools	Agree Strongly	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
H	12.0%	38.0%	10.2%	34.3%	5.6%
X	1.8	5.4	7.9	69.3	15.7
D	2.9	20.2	10.8	57.8	7.9
C	7.8	28.9	12.2	42.2	8.9
Los Angeles Schools					
I	10.0	26.0	4.0	51.0	9.0
A	5.3	17.8	8.6	58.6	9.9
S	5.3	15.9	11.3	66.3	7.3
M	0	14.0	12.3	56.1	17.5
F	4.1	31.7	13.8	48.8	1.6

TABLE SIXTEEN

Parental Response by School to Variable 6

Variable 6: My child gets the right amount of homework every night.

Chicago Schools	Agree Strongly	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
H	14.4%	56.7%	13.0%	14.9%	0.9%
X	7.2	58.8	13.3	19.0	1.8
D	4.7	40.1	26.7	25.3	3.2
C	5.7	31.0	19.5	34.5	9.2
Los Angeles Schools					
I	7.0	54.0	14.0	24.0	1.0
A	8.0	60.7	14.0	15.3	2.0
S	9.4	56.4	18.8	14.8	.7
M	8.8	61.4	14.0	14.0	1.8
F	17.1	52.8	16.3	12.2	1.6

What of teachers policies, specifically homework and discipline? We know from political conflicts in urban public schools that both these issues are of deep concern to parents, and to parents of varying races and socio-economic background.

In two schools, School D and School C less than half the parents agreed that their child received the right amount of homework; no school received really overwhelming support, that is the highest support level was 70.4 percent for School M; and every school had at least thirteen percent of its parents undecided (which could mean lack of an opinion, or confusion and ambivalence.)

Homework is a tricky matter. The common perception within the field of education is that upwardly mobile parents are more concerned about homework than solidly middle-class parents; and that black parents are more concerned than white. In general, our data bears this out. Black parents are more likely than white parents to agree that children need a lot of homework; working-class parents are more likely than middle-class parents, and middle-class parents more than upper-class parents. There is, however, little intensity of feeling reflected in our data: parents agreed or disagree; they do not strongly agree or strongly disagree.

Methodological Problems. Variable five presents an obvious definitional problem: what is "a lot of homework"? and how do we know if parents interpret this question in a roughly similar fashion? Two parents who seem to disagree in their responses may in fact be agreeing upon what amount is the "right amount." Thus, we included Variable Six and crosstabulated it with Variable Five. We found that parents who were dissatisfied with the amount of homeowrk received by the child, were rather evenly split across responses for Variable Five. Thus, Variable Six is more a reflection of parental satisfaction or dissatisfaction than parental opinion on the specific matter of homework.

[INSERT TABLES SEVENTEEN AND EIGHTEEN]

Variables Nineteen, and Twenty. Why do parents send their children to these private schools? Largely because they feel these schools offer the best education available; while best education is the most common reason, rejection of the local public school is the second most common in Chicago, and the third in Los Angeles (see the discussion of methodological problems below); and the attraction of a specifically Catholic education is important in Los Angeles, although much less so in Chicago. Secondary reasons (Variable Twenty) are more wide ranging. Again, best education available and rejection of the public school are popular in both Los Angeles and Chicago; a Catholic education remains important in Los Angeles; the personal interest in the child taken by the teacher emerges as important to about twenty per cent of the parents in both cities; and the physical safety of the child enters as a response at black schools. (When this response is stratified by race it emerges as more significant than Table Seventeen would indicate.)

TABLE SEVENTEEN

Parental Response by School to Variable 19

Variable 19: The most important reason that I send my child to this school is:

a. This is the best education available for my child
b. The school is close to home
c. My child is physically safer ther than he would be in the public school
d. I want my child to be a good Catholic
e. My child's teachers take a personal interest in him (or her).
f. Another reason (please describe).

Chicago Schools	1	2	3	4	5	6
H	50.7%	1.4%	1.9%	2.3%	4.7%	39.0%
X	59.1	1.1	.7	12.5	2.5	24.0
D	52.6	1.4	6.7	3.9	5.3	30.2
C	40.9	2.3	3.4	3.4	11.4	38.6
Los Angeles Schools						
I	51.0	0	3.0	15.2	4.0	27.0
A	39.9	.7	1.3	26.1	1.3	30.7
S	57.6	0	1.3	21.9	.7	18.5
M	42.9	0	0	17.9	5.4	33.9
F	50.8	2.4	5.6	8.7	2.5	30.2

TABLE EIGHTEEN

Parental Response by School to Variable 20

Variable 20: The second most important reason I send my child to this school is:

a. This is the best education available for my child
b. The school is close to home
c. My child is physically safer than he would be in public school
d. I want my child to be a good Catholic
e. My child's teachers take a personal interest in him (or her)
f. Another reason (please describe).

Chicago Schools	1	2	3	4	5	6
H	14.4%	5.7%	19.5%	10.3%	24.1%	25.9%
X	14.2	14.5	3.3	28.0	20.4	19.6
D	12.5	11.7	20.4	7.9	25.8	21.7
C	14.5	9.6	15.7	1.2	27.7	31.3
Los Angeles Schools						
I	18.9	4.2	6.3	37.9	11.6	21.1
A	24.1	1.4	8.3	31.7	13.8	20.7
S	17.9	1.4	5.0	35.7	21.4	18.6
M	8.0	8.0	4.0	34.0	26.0	20.0
F	17.0	8.0	17.0	19.6	17.0	21.4

[INSERT TABLE NINETEEN]

Methodological Problems, and Variable Twelve. The question of why parents send their children to private schools is the heart of the study. It is also a question which presented severe methodological difficulties. While we used an open-ended questionnaire in the pre-test stage, the scope of the study and our limited resources prevented its use on a large scale. The open-ended questionnaire gave us an introduction to parental concerns which seemed to be: 1) a sound education in reading and writing; 2) an orderly atmosphere; 3) some inculcation of moral and/or religious values; 4) the physical safety of the child; and 5) particularly in the case of black parents, apprehension about the local public school. As we developed and pre-tested our instrument, we found that if we included a choice such as "the local public school is unacceptable educationally," we received responses which seemed wildly skewed against the public school. Becuase we could not persist in elaborate pre-testing, we eliminated the possibility of a direct response on the educational merits of the public school, and substituted "other reason," which the parent would check and fill in, and which our coders later coded systematically. In another section of the questionnaire, we provided parents with the opportunity to respond to the statement, "some of the public school children would be a bad influence on my child if I sent him there." (Variable 12) Two results followed. First, despite the elimination of a direct response on the public school, we still received (under Other) a high proportion of responses indicating apprehension of the public school. The following percentages are of those respondents who wrote in an answer coded as rejection of the public school, as the most important reason for sending their child to the Catholic school: School H, 19%; School X, 1 %; School C, 30%; School M, 20%; School F, 18%; School I, 20%; School A, 16%; School S, 10%; approximately the same percentages held for Variable 20, the second most important reason.

Second, when we correlated this with Variable Twelve, we found additional concern among parents (largely black) who had not responded Other Reason to Variable Nineteen. Third, we then stratified Variable Twelve by income and found that apprehension of the public school was highest among low income parents.

Variables Twelve, Nineteen and Twenty: A Further Note. At least one principle on the parental choice of urban Catholic schools over urban public schools emerges from this study: while white middle-class parents tend to approve of the local public school, and to send their children to the Catholic school for reasons independent of the quality of the public school, a substantial number of black parents (both middle-class and working-class) are apprehensive of the local public school, and send their children to the Catholic school in reaction to their fear of the public school. This is not to denigrate black support of Catholic schools, for on attitudinal measures of support, black parents score very high, but it is to say that for many black parents the presumed universal alternative of the public school is not a true alternative. Clearly, this question is

TABLE NINETEEN

Parental Response by School to Variable 12

Variable 12: Some of the public school children would be a bad influence on my child if I sent him there.

Chicago Schools	Agree Strongly	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
H	28.8%	29.3%	15.8%	23.3%	2.8%
X	4.6	13.6	11.1	47.1	23.6
D	27.0	34.5	13.2	20.6	4.6
C	37.1	22.5	12.4	19.1	9.0
Los Angeles Schools					
I	15.2	26.3	19.2	30.3	9.1
A	27.5	28.1	12.4	24.2	7.8
S	20.0	31.3	12.7	32.0	4.0
M	26.3	33.3	17.5	14.0	8.8
F	36.6	33.3	13.0	13.0	3.3

worthy of further examination, an examination we intend to do thoroughly in our next study. But, for now it seems to us apparent that public-policy makers must take seriously current discussions of alternative schools, and means of financing them. Opponents of such schools argue that alternative schools will inevitably become elitist, aggravating the educational problems of the poor, particulalry the black poor. But from the persepctive of this study, it seems apparent that many black parents see little prospect for sound and physically safe education in the public school, and are even now searching for, and in the case of Catholic schools, finding, alternative schools. Unfortunately, trends within the Catholic Church, such as the decreasing number of religious vocations, and the turning away of many white, middle-class parents from Catholic schools to public schools have caused Catholic school systems severe financial shocks, which have reverberated down to the financially weak inner-city black schools. Inner city black schools have always tottered a bit financially, and the withdrawal of diocesan subsidies, combined with the necessity for hiring relatively expensive lay teachers, may well push them over the brink into closure. In Chicago, several excellent inner city schools have closed, and this bodes ill for the future of the others.

Incidentally, in much of the argument which has raged over the public financing of private schools, at least one argument has obscured the reality of financing these schools. That is, opponents have frequently pointed out that average tuition at Catholic schools is low, and that if parents truly supported these schools they would be willing to raise the tuition the small amount required for financial solvency. For example, Church and State data shows that 42.8% of Catholic children pay less than $50 per year tuition, 64.3% pay less than $100; and 95.7% less than $200.[1] These figures mask the plight of poor black parents, who tend to pay more than affluent white parents, since affluent white parishss can afford to subsidize their schools generously. Thus, the Church and State argument might hold for affluent white parishes, where tuition is low, and where some parents are turning away form the school But it does not hold for inner city black schools, where tuition is higher than at white schools, where parents are poor, and must sacrifice to pay tuition, and where waiting lists are long. In affluent areas, increasing numbers of parents view the public school as a preferable choice to the Catholic school, and they are free to make that choice without burdening themselves financially. But for black parents who view the Catholic schools as the preferable choice, their choice is becoming increasingly, perhaps impossibly, burdensome. As costs rise and schools close, they will have no choice. It seems to use that comparing the choice patterns of black parents with that of whites as if they were qequally free choices, is a false analogy. When parochial schools close, white parents have frequently chosen to let them close; black parents have not.

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1 This data can be obtained from Church and State, 8120 Fenton Street, Silver Spring, Maryland, 20910; also, see the data presented by the Fleischmann Report, Vol I (New York: Viking Press, Inc.)1973, pp. 387-462.