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## **A survey of high school students' opinions in regard to factors important in moral development and conduct**

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A SURVEY OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' OPINIONS  
IN REGARD TO FACTORS IMPORTANT IN MORAL  
DEVELOPMENT AND CONDUCT

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Faculty of the School of Education  
Indiana State Teachers College

INDIANA STATE  
TEACHERS COLLEGE  
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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Science in Education

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by  
Hubert Chipman McHargue  
June 1948

The thesis of Hubert Chipman McHargue,  
Contribution of the Graduate School, Indiana State  
Teachers College, Number 598, under the title \_\_\_\_\_  
A SURVEY OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' OPINIONS  
IN REGARD TO FACTORS IMPORTANT IN MORAL  
DEVELOPMENT AND CONDUCT

is hereby approved as counting toward the completion  
of the Master's degree in the amount of 8 hours'  
credit.

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## CHAPTER I

### PRESENTATION OF THE PROBLEM

Since the beginning of civilization any method employed for the education of people has been for a two-fold purpose: (1) the immediate usefulness of that education to the person exposed to it; and (2) the ultimate usefulness to that person. Assuming that the latter is by far the greater purpose of the two, this study is a survey of the students' opinions regarding social and moral development, and is to be used in helping set up the curricula and the extracurricula to achieve those ultimate values necessary for useful democratic living.

#### I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It is an assumption that students of the Junior and Senior classes of the Indiana high schools are mature enough to have formed definite opinions regarding problems of social and moral conduct in particular, and character building in general. With this in mind, this study will (1) present student attitudes in regard to items concerning rules of conduct; (2) give student suggestions for the improvement of high school curricula to meet their needs; (3) bring to light items needing careful consideration by school officials, particularly administrators and high school teachers; (4) attempt to

find where sex and religious problems rank among the problems causing our high school students great concern; and (5) reveal the immediate needs of the particular schools in this study for a better understanding of their problems and a more efficient solution to them.

Importance of the study. Moral and social development for character education are matters of first magnitude in any school system, and are so recognized by schoolmen, but the initiation of a definite system based upon a definite need in any school has not become a reality. The "hit or miss" method has been employed in the greater number of schools throughout Indiana because there has been no adequate study made of the particular school needs, no definite method of instruction to meet those needs, no definite change made in the curriculum, no definite change or addition made to the extracurriculum, no definite procedure in matters of student guidance, and no great stress placed on teacher training for instruction in taking care of those needs of the pupils. If education is to serve its objectives fully it must look far into the future for its students of today, and realize that the ultimate results striven for today will determine the character of those people around us tomorrow.

Review of the following chapters. The following

chapters will give a brief history of the study and research on the topic of moral and social development and character building. There will be a discussion of the questionnaire employed in this study, the group used for the study, and the technique in the administration of the survey. The data will be analyzed, the results summarized, and recommendations listed that may prove to be beneficial to school administrators.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON MORAL DEVELOPMENT

There is a babel of confusing and contradictory ideas concerning the problems of youth. Generally these ideas originate among the older generation, and are often based on mere guess. Nothing constructive can be done to alleviate the problems of youth unless there is an understanding of those problems. The best source for this information is the youth themselves.

One of the recent studies on the youth problem was that made by Bell<sup>1</sup> for the American Youth Commission. Bell does not assume that the group he questioned in Maryland is representative of American youth, but rather suggests that, within reasonable limits, it does have the same characteristics as the national youth population. This study reveals that guidance is one of youth's most pressing necessities. Under present conditions only a small minority of youth are receiving anything that could be called adequate guidance. It revealed that the youth wanted and needed health education, including social and personal hygiene. Out of every twenty youth interviewed,

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<sup>1</sup> Howard M. Bell, "Youth Tell Their Story", American Youth Commission, (Washington, D. C: American Council on Education, 1938), pp. 9-13.

fifteen wanted sex education in the schools, four did not, and one had no opinion. Sixty percent preferred to see it taught in high school. These studies also reflect the need for community planning for youth. There are hundreds of agencies but no well integrated program for the handling of community problems. There must be a comprehensive program which must develop a sociological approach to the problems and find ways of focusing all the efforts which society can make upon the individual youth and his needs. The community must determine to develop leisure-time programs for its youth that will not only absorb energies that often lead to delinquent behavior, but which will add something valuable to the spiritual stature of those who participate in them.

Life begins at home for nearly all of us. To a large extent, we are what our homes have made us. Since the parents are the principal representatives of the home, they control the adolescent's comings and goings, and since they are his chief refuge in moods of insecurity, it is to them that he is likely to direct most of his efforts toward greater freedom. If the parents do not respect the individuality of their child, the child will understand parental concern to be a serious threat to the attainment of independence. On the other hand the adolescent who has understanding parents usually is able to establish a degree of independence without revolt.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Caroline B. Zachry and Margaret Lighty, Emotion and Conduct in Adolescence (New York: D. Appleton-Century, 1940), pp. 301-305.

Next to the home the school stands as a great auxiliary in character training. In cases where the morals of the home are exceedingly low, the school stands first as an aid to moral development. Many times it is in the school that a child sees for the first time examples of some of the higher character traits. He may for the first time see courtesy exemplified, or may first see what love and affection mean. He will learn to know people who are strictly honest. In the schools he should come in contact with teachers and pupils of good character so that he may make advancement in morals. The teacher is the key to the significance of character in the schools.<sup>3</sup>

Religion itself is one of the great inspirers of good morals. Church membership assumes or infers a moral life. Membership builds character traits of sincerity and consistency in the building up of the church and in giving it power and influence.<sup>4</sup> Religion attempts to establish a type of self-realization which is called true social function. Most of the church work is still on lower levels, and as such it tends to stunt or distort personality development among our high school pupils. Our young people are not satisfied with

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<sup>3</sup> Robert S. McElhinney and Henry L. Smith, Personality and Character Building (Winona Lake, Indiana: Light and Life Press, 1942), p. 117.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp. 118-119.

this situation; they tend to organize themselves, not purely for the sake of religion, but to give solution to the problem of their churches not meeting their demand.<sup>5</sup>

Any appraisal of moral growth consists primarily in the measurement of attitudes, beliefs, or opinions, and only to a small extent in the measurement of overt behavior. However, a few investigations have been made of what pupils actually do instead of what they think. The subjects on any appraisal are varied and quite diverse in character. Some are social, some are ethical or moral, some are religious, some deal with attitudes toward school and school subjects, and some deal with honesty, cooperation, ideals, and adolescent religious beliefs. The purpose of any survey of pupils' opinions is to discover their ideas concerning a "philosophy of life". From a high school pupil's standpoint this can not be a full-grown philosophy, but fundamentally a beginning that can be allowed to grow wholesomely, or corrected and forced into the right channel where patterns of behavior become most useful to the individual.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Hugh Hartshorne, Character in Human Relations (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932), pp. 245-247.

<sup>6</sup> Luella Cole, Psychology of Adolescence (New York: Rinehart and Company, 1946), pp. 357-381.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE TECHNIQUE USED IN THE SURVEY

The questionnaire used. Before going into detail in the consideration of the results of the survey, it is desirable to explain the type of questionnaire used. A common procedure in preparing questionnaires is to present to the pupils a series of statements representing a wide range of opinions on some matter; the pupils are to check those statements which best represent their attitude. The questionnaire used in this study did not take into consideration such a wide range of opinions, but rather the negative or positiveness of those opinions. Therefore, the questions used could only be answered "Yes", "No", or omitted entirely. This questionnaire also contained ten items dealing with moral conduct. The pupils were to select five of those items causing them the most concern. Through this method and employing a great number of cases it was possible to evaluate the results in terms of problems of youth and school problems.

There arises some suspicion as to the reliability of opinions gained in this manner. It was to be noted that chance "errors" due to flippancy, nervousness, mischievousness, or simple misunderstanding, etc., tended to cancel themselves out where enough opinions were collected and averaged. A double check would have to be made when results were unbelievable or did not make sense. Errors were also minimized

by the fact that the student was only required to give class, age, and sex for identification purposes. There seemed to be little reason for giving any other than an honest answer or opinion.

The general question section. There are 23 questions listed in such a manner that various comparisons can be made. The first nine questions are arranged in such a manner that the use of tobacco and alcohol, church attendance, and opinions concerning matters of sex. Questions 10, 11, and 12 ask for student opinions concerning racial tolerance. Questions 13, 14 and 15 concern the importance of courtesy and respect, particularly in the home, since that would likely show to what degree the parents and their children were cooperative in family relationships. Questions 16, 17 and 18 deal with cheating, particularly in the school. Questions 19, 20 and 21 deal with the problem of gambling. Since school athletic contest lend themselves to student gambling, mention is made of gambling on basketball games, as that is the principal sport of the schools considered in this survey. Questions 22 and 23 deal primarily with character and sex education. These last two questions ask the students if the school has been adequate in its instruction on rules of conduct and family relationships.

The specific item section. Ten items dealing with moral conduct are listed in this section. The pupils

answering the questionnaire are to make a check before five of those items causing them the most concern. With a great number of cases, it is probable that items coming to the top with the greatest number of frequencies are those problems that need to cause our schools the greatest concern, since we can reach those people with greater ease and efficiency through the educational system. It is the job of the schools to see that those problems of the students are solved by some definite method of instruction.

The group used in the survey. Although the questionnaire is not a precise instrument for the measurement of attitudes and opinions, its use with a large number of people does give reliable results that are indicative of current opinion. With this in mind, the survey group was made up of all the juniors and seniors of all the high schools of Parke County, Indiana. A number of the returns were thrown out because of incompleteness in answering which made it impossible to list them in any class, sex or age group. The number of returns thrown out from any one school was not great enough to affect the over-all picture of that school, or the significance of the composite result. There were 334 cases used for tabulation. Table I shows the distribution of the survey group according to school, class, and sex.

TABLE I

DISTRIBUTION OF THE SURVEY GROUP ACCORDING TO  
SCHOOL, CLASS AND SEX

SCHOOL	GRADE 11		GRADE 12		Total
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	
Greene Township	3	5	11	5	24
Rosedale	8	12	7	5	32
Union Township	5	6	4	4	19
Marshall	16	10	6	15	47
Tangier	4	5	3	7	19
Bloomington	10	8	6	7	31
Rockville	20	17	12	14	63
Bridgeton	9	7	7	9	32
Mecca	8	12	9	6	35
Montezuma	10	8	7	7	32
Total	93	90	72	79	334



Administration of the questionnaire. Upon approval by Mr. Paul Myers, Superintendent of Schools of Parke County, the questionnaire was presented to the county high school principals who studied the form carefully and gave their approval to its use in their schools. Either the principal or a teacher appointed by him gave the questionnaire to the students after reminding them that the results would not be used in the school records in any way, and that they were to give an honest answer to each question. In most cases no sex segregation was made.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

General question section. The first nine questions of the questionnaire dealt with comparisons of the youth and his parents concerning the use of tobacco and alcohol, church attendance, and matters of sex and sex education. Table II, showing the total frequencies on the questionnaire according to sex and total, points out that of the 334 cases, 67 boys and 10 girls used tobacco, making a total of 77. The parents of 67 of this group knew they used tobacco, but the parents of 10 did not know it.

Thirty-one students admitted drinking alcoholic beverages out of a total number of 333 reporting. Table III, showing percentage based on total frequencies according to sex and total, points out that 12.6 per cent of the boys drink intoxicating liquors, whereas 6 per cent of the girls admitted that they drank, which substantiates the statement that boys are more likely to drink than girls. Approximately 9 per cent of the whole group admitted that they drank. The group reported on 214 parents. Thirty-five per cent of the parents drank, which is nearly four times as great as the number of students who drank.

One hundred fifty-four students stated that they attended church or Sunday School, and 178 stated they did

TABLE II

TOTAL FREQUENCIES ON QUESTIONNAIRE  
ACCORDING TO SEX AND TOTAL

	FREQUENCIES					
	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1. Do you use tobacco?	67	98	10	159	77	257
2. If you use tobacco, do your parents know it?	59	8	8	2	67	10
3. Do you drink alcoholic beverages?	21	146	10	156	31	302
4. Do your parents drink alcoholic beverages?	36	120	39	119	75	139
5. Do you attend church service or Sunday School regularly?	58	109	96	69	154	178
6. Do your parents attend church or Sunday School regularly?	53	108	68	98	121	206
7. Do you consult your parents freely concerning matters of sex?	57	108	104	59	161	167
8. Do you think sex education should be taught as a separate course in school?	144	22	140	22	284	44
9. Do you "neck" on your dates? (Hugging, kissing)	135	27	126	41	261	68
10. Do you believe in equal rights for all men?	152	11	145	17	297	28
11. Would you vote for a person of another race for your class president if he was best qualified?	143	25	154	12	297	37
12. Do you think that colored and white boys should participate on the same athletic team?	151	16	149	15	300	31
13. Do you feel any responsibility for the welfare of your family	146	15	150	17	296	32
14. Do you practice good manners and courtesy at home?	115	51	139	27	254	78
15. Do you feel that courtesy is beneficial?	160	5	167	2	327	7
16. Would you allow someone to copy answers from your test papers?	103	63	109	59	212	122
17. Have you ever copied from another person's paper?	139	27	127	36	266	63
18. Do you think it is right to copy from another's paper?	15	149	14	155	29	304
19. Have you ever bet on athletic contests?	104	60	71	97	175	157
20. Do you believe betting on basketball games does more harm than good?	99	64	96	72	195	136
21. Have you ever gambled for money?	110	58	43	123	153	181
22. Have you received adequate instruction in your school on rules of conduct?	115	40	123	44	238	84
23. Do you think that both sexes should receive instruction about the family and family relationships?	164	3	166	1	330	4



TABLE III

PERCENTAGE BASED ON TOTAL FREQUENCIES ON QUESTIONNAIRE  
ACCORDING TO SEX AND TOTAL

QUESTIONS	PERCENTAGES					
	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1. Do you use tobacco?	40.6	59.4	5.9	94.1	23.1	76.9
2. If you use tobacco, do your parents know it?	88.1	11.9	80.0	20.0	87.0	13.0
3. Do you drink alcoholic beverages?	12.6	87.4	6.0	94.0	9.3	90.7
4. Do your parents drink alcoholic beverages?	23.1	76.9	24.7	75.3	35.0	65.0
5. Do you attend church or Sunday School regularly?	34.8	65.2	58.2	41.8	46.7	53.3
6. Do your parents attend church or Sunday School regularly?	32.9	67.1	41.0	59.0	37.0	63.0
7. Do you consult your parents freely concerning matters of sex?	34.6	65.4	63.8	36.2	49.1	50.9
8. Do you think sex education should be taught as a separate course in school?	86.7	13.3	86.4	13.6	86.6	13.4
9. Do you "neck" on your dates? (Hugging, kissing)	83.3	16.7	75.5	24.5	79.3	21.7
10. Do you believe in equal rights for all men?	93.3	6.7	89.5	10.5	91.4	8.6
11. Would you vote for a person of another race for your class president if he was best qualified?	85.1	14.9	92.7	7.3	88.9	11.1
12. Do you think that colored and white boys should participate on the same athletic team?	90.4	9.6	90.9	9.1	90.6	9.4
13. Do you feel any responsibility for the welfare of your family?	90.7	9.3	90.0	10.0	90.2	9.8
14. Do you practice good manners and courtesy at home?	69.3	30.7	83.7	16.3	76.5	23.5
15. Do you feel that courtesy is beneficial?	96.9	3.1	98.8	1.2	97.9	2.1
16. Would you allow someone to copy answers from your test papers?	62.1	37.9	64.9	35.1	63.5	36.5
17. Have you ever copied from another person's paper?	83.7	16.3	77.9	22.1	80.9	19.1
18. Do you think it is right to copy from another's paper?	9.2	90.8	8.3	91.7	8.7	91.3
19. Have you ever bet on athletic contests?	63.4	36.6	42.3	57.7	52.1	47.9
20. Do you believe betting on basketball games does more harm than good?	60.7	39.3	57.1	42.9	58.9	41.1
21. Have you ever gambled for money?	65.5	34.5	25.9	74.1	45.8	54.2
22. Have you received adequate instruction in your school on rules of conduct?	74.2	25.8	73.6	26.4	73.9	26.1
23. Do you think that both sexes should receive instruction about the family and family relationships?	98.2	1.8	99.4	0.6	98.8	1.2

TABLE IV

QUESTIONS RANKED ACCORDING TO PERCENTAGES  
ON TOTAL FREQUENCIES

	PERCENTAGES	
	POS.	NEG.
1. Do you think that both sexes should receive instructions about family and family relationships?	98.8	1.2
2. Do you feel that courtesy is beneficial?	97.9	2.1
3. Do you believe in equal rights for all men?	91.4	8.6
4. Do you think that colored and white boys should participate on the same athletic team?	90.6	9.4
5. Do you feel any responsibility for the welfare of your family?	90.2	9.8
6. Would you vote for a person of another race for your class president if he was best qualified?	88.9	11.1
7. If you use tobacco, do your parents know it?	87.0	13.0
8. Do you think sex education should be taught as a separate course in school?	86.6	13.4
9. Have you ever copied from another person's paper?	80.9	19.1
10. Do you "neck" on your dates?	79.3	21.7
11. Do you practice good manners and courtesy at home?	76.5	23.5
12. Have you received adequate instruction in your school on rules of conduct?	73.9	26.1
13. Would you allow someone to copy answers from your test papers?	63.5	26.5
14. Do you believe betting on basketball games does more harm than good?	58.9	41.1
15. Have you ever bet on athletic contests?	52.1	47.9
16. Do you consult your parents freely concerning matters of sex?	49.1	50.9
17. Do you attend church or Sunday School regularly?	46.7	53.3
18. Have you ever gambled for money?	45.8	54.2
19. Do your parents attend church or Sunday School regularly?	37.0	63.0
20. Do your parents drink alcoholic beverages?	35.0	65.0
21. Do you use tobacco?	23.1	76.9
22. Do you drink alcoholic beverages?	9.3	90.7
23. Do you think it is right to copy from another person's paper?	8.7	91.3

not attend either. One hundred twenty-one parents attended and 206 did not. These figures show 46.7 per cent of the youth going to the church, and 36.0 per cent of the parents. This question on church attendance was stated so that the word "regularly" meant at least once a week. Mathias<sup>7</sup> has stated that attendance at church is more important than "professed membership". If that is true, the students reporting in this survey are deriving more good from their churches than their parents. It is not the purpose of this study to prove that the church, as a teacher of ethics, has lost ground in the last two decades; however, as a stimulator of social development and social contacts, it is reaching only 34.8 per cent of the boys of this group, 58.2 per cent of the girls, and 37 per cent of the parents.

The parents are consulted freely on matters of sex by 63.8 per cent of the girls and 34.6 per cent of the boys. Most people feel that such education is best given by parents, but since it is not reaching 65.4 per cent of the boys and 36.2 per cent of the girls, it would appear that the school must take over its share of the responsibility of this matter--otherwise, these people would be getting unreliable information from age-mates. Sex is

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<sup>7</sup> Willis D. Mathias, Ideas of God and Conduct (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943), pp. 102.

important to adolescents, as shown by the fact that 86.6 per cent of the group would like to have sex education taught as a separate course in school. Kirkendall<sup>8</sup> has come to the conclusion that if improper attitudes and misconceptions toward sex are to be avoided, sex education planned to meet the child's needs and levels of maturity must be initiated in the school curriculum. He states that the youth need sex education in self-defense to evolve a sane and safe attitude toward sex implications in mental hygiene, and physical hygiene. Of the group questioned 79.3 per cent "necked" on their dates. About 83 per cent of the boys and 75.5 per cent of the girls "necked". Eighty-six and six-tenths per cent admit they want and need sex education.

Questions 10, 11 and 12 on the questionnaire asked the opinions of the group concerning racial tolerance. The school is the one institution most likely to succeed in breaking down unjustified racial antagonisms, especially through extracurricular activities. In the group that was questioned 91.4 per cent believed in equal rights for all men, 88.9 per cent would vote for a person of another race for their class president if he was best qualified, and 90.6 per cent believed that colored and white boys should

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<sup>8</sup> Lester A. Kirkendall, "Sex Education, Facts and Figures," Hygeia, 26:322, May, 1948.

should participate on the same athletic team. These percentages may have been different had there been other races in the schools. All students reporting were white.

Of this group 90.2 per cent stated that they felt a responsibility for the welfare of their family; 9.4 per cent did not feel responsible. There was very little sex differentiation on this question, although the burden would normally be more apt to fall on the boy than on the girl.

Questions 14 and 15 deal with courtesy and good manners. Of the group questioned 97.9 per cent reported that they believed courtesy to be beneficial, yet only 76.5 per cent practiced good manners and courtesy at home. The girls were more courteous at home than the boys--83.7 per cent of the girls to 69.3 per cent of the boys.

The questions on honesty on this questionnaire deal primarily with school situations. Of the 334 pupils reporting 212 stated that they would allow another person to copy answers from their test papers. In this same group 266 admitted that they had copied from another person's paper. However, 304 stated they did not think it was right to do so. Since 91.3 per cent reported that they did not think it was right to copy from another's paper, yet 80.9 per cent did so, and 63.5 per cent would allow it, it would seem that some kind of educational maladjustment was leading to this dishonesty. Emotional instability and suggestibility, or



lack of proper supervision, may determine whether a student is dishonest because he wants to be or can get by with it. The figures show that the boys were more dishonest than the girls--83.7 per cent of the boys having cheated to 77.9 per cent of the girls having cheated. Only 62.1 per cent of the boys would allow someone to copy from their papers, but 64.9 per cent of the girls would allow copying.

Questions 19, 20 and 21 deal with gambling, particularly on basketball, since that is the major sport of the county in which the questionnaire was used. One hundred-four boys and 71 girls for a total of 175 had gambled on basketball games. Whether this is constant betting or not is not known, but the figure as given proves that betting between schools does exist and that it is a problem to contend with, and as such, it tends to undermine the values to be derived from interscholastic sports. A total of 195 pupils, or 58.9 per cent of the group, believed that betting on basketball games did more harm than good, yet 63.4 per cent of the boys and 42.3 per cent of the girls bet on games. One hundred-ten boys and 43 girls, or 45.8 per cent of the total group, reported they had gambled for money.

The last two questions on the questionnaire asked for students' opinions on the instruction they received in school on rules of conduct and the family and family relationships. The survey showed that 74.2 per cent of the boys and 73.6

per cent of the girls, or 73.9 per cent of the total group, stated they had received adequate instruction on rules of conduct. These figures would also show that 26.1 per cent of the total group had not received adequate instruction. This figure is significant enough to justify the presentation of some understandable set of rules, some guiding principles, and some consistent guidance by all teachers and counselors.

Ninety-eight and two-tenths per cent of the boys and 99.4 per cent of the girls, or 98.8 per cent of the total group, reported that both sexes should receive instruction about the family and family relationships. These figures are significant because it emphasizes the point that both boys and girls are in need of and want some constructive instruction on the family and family relationships.

Table IV, page 16, shows how the questions rank according to the percentages on the total frequencies. This table is significant in that it lists the questions according to rank by percentage of positiveness, and would give reverse rank on the negative side. The twenty-third question of the questionnaire thus ranks first with 98.8 per cent positive returns, and would in turn rank twenty-third on the negative side with a 1.2 per cent negative returns. Question 18 of the survey ranks twenty-third with a 8.7 per cent positive returns, but ranks first on the negative side with a 91.3 per cent negative returns.

The specific item section. This section was employed with a great number of cases so that specific items could be brought to light as the problems confronting our high school population in this particular county. It can not be claimed that it is representative of all the counties of Indiana; however, it is probable that there would be a close correlation to other counties such as Parke.

Table V shows the actual frequencies on the ten items as checked by the juniors and seniors of the ten high schools of Parke County. The greater number of frequencies on any item means that that item is causing our high school people a great amount of concern. Table VI is based on the frequencies listed in Table V ranking that item with the most frequencies as first in importance and on down until all ten items are ranked. This procedure is used for each school, then the ranks of all the schools on each item are averaged, and the average is ranked giving the absolute rank of the ten items.

Table VI gives the absolute rank of the ten items. Of the items listed respect ranks first in importance among the Parke County juniors and seniors although only Bridgeton and Mecca ranked it first. Sex and religion ranked second and third, respectively, in the over-all picture, although each item had three schools ranking it first in importance. Sex ranked first as an item of concern in Rosedale, Rockville,

TABLE V

FREQUENCIES ON THE TEN ITEMS DEALING WITH MORAL CONDUCT  
SHOWING THE ACTUAL CHECK MADE BY EACH SCHOOL

	Bloomingtondale	Tangier	Greene Township	Rosedale	Rockville	Bridgeton	Marshall	Bellmore	Mecca	Montezuma
Respect	12	8	17	15	24	24	33	12	22	25
Sex	15	5	15	24	46	21	34	15	14	17
Religion	11	12	19	15	26	22	23	7	20	33
Cheating	24	3	10	16	35	13	34	10	15	12
Lying	24	2	10	14	34	12	27	16	15	15
Tolerance	11	7	13	13	29	16	23	9	19	12
Drinking	21	7	8	12	37	9	22	6	12	24
Gambling	23	9	7	12	41	10	13	3	10	22
Smoking	8	7	10	9	39	7	14	3	14	8
Narcotics	10	1	5	10	23	5	8	1	4	24

TABLE VI

FREQUENCIES RANKED ACCORDING TO SCHOOL  
WITH THE AVERAGE AND ABSOLUTE RANK

	Bloomingtondale	Tangier	Greene Township	Rosedale	Rockville	Bridgeton	Marshall	Bellmore	Mecca	Montezuma	Average	Rank
1. Respect	6	3	2	3	10	1	3	3	1	2	3.4	1
2. Sex	5	7	3	1	1	3	1	2	6	6	3.5	2
3. Religion	7	1	1	3	8	2	5	6	2	1	3.6	3
4. Cheating	1	8	5	2	5	5	1	4	4	8	4.3	4
5. Lying	1	9	5	5	6	6	4	1	4	7	4.8	5
6. Tolerance	7	4	4	6	7	4	5	5	3	8	5.3	6
7. Drinking	4	4	8	7	4	8	7	7	8	3	6.0	7
8. Gambling	3	2	9	7	2	7	9	8	9	5	6.1	8
9. Smoking	10	4	5	10	3	9	8	8	6	10	7.3	9
10. Narcotics	9	10	10	9	9	10	10	10	10	3	9.0	10

and Marshall. Religion ranked first in Tangier, Greene Township, and Montezuma. Cheating was ranked first in Bloomingdale and Marshall. Marshall had the same number of frequencies listed for sex and cheating, and since these two items had the greatest number of checks they were each ranked first. Bloomingdale was the only other school to rank two items first in importance. Lying was ranked first in importance by Bloomingdale and Bellmore. Cheating and lying had the same number of checks for each in the Bloomingdale school. The students have thus listed the items that cause them the most concern in the following order of importance: respect, sex, religion, cheating, and lying.

The other five items do have individual schools ranking them as a matter of great concern to that particular school. The following facts may prove to be enlightening to the school concerned. Gambling was ranked second in importance in Tangier and Rockville. Tolerance ranked third in Mecca. Drinking ranked third in Montezuma. Smoking ranked third in Rockville. Narcotics also ranked third in the Montezuma school, and either ninth or tenth in all the other schools of Parke County. This fact upon first glance seemed to be out of proportion with the ranks given by the 9 schools. The checking of narcotics as a problem by the Montezuma students does not imply that they are users of narcotics,

but rather that recent studying and thinking about the use of narcotics may have influenced their checking this item.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary and conclusions. The general question section has shown that there is a great degree of lack of confidence between parents and children. Of the 334 students reporting on the questionnaire 77 used tobacco. Of the 77 who stated that they used tobacco 10 had not informed their parents that they were users. This attitude on the part of the student of not confiding in his parents is not a wholesome one.

Although it is illegal for minors to buy intoxicating liquors, 12.6 per cent of the boys and 6 per cent of the girls drank. Either the students had gotten the liquor illegally, or older people had gotten it for them and encouraged drinking, or the home has allowed it. However, the percentages given above are not as alarming as the fact that 35 per cent of the parents drank alcoholic beverages. It is probable that the youth has a confused idea as to what is right. In many cases parents inform their children as to what is right concerning certain habits, but they themselves do not conform.

The survey showed that 58.2 per cent of the girls and 34.8 per cent of the boys went to church or Sunday School regularly, but only 37 per cent of the parents went



regularly. These figures also strengthen the point brought out in the preceding paragraph.

The parents were consulted freely on matters of sex by 63.8 per cent of the girls and only 34.6 per cent of the boys. Sex education is a matter for both sexes, but the percentages given indicate that 65.4 per cent of the boys and 36.2 per cent of the girls are getting their sex information from age-mates. These percentages are close to those given by Bell<sup>9</sup>, who reported that 66 per cent of the boys and 40 per cent of the girls got their sex information from contemporaries or some other unreliable source. Sex education is wanted and needed by adolescents, for 86.6 per cent of the group would like to have it taught as a separate course in school. If so great a percentage of our high school juniors and seniors need sex education, the home, the school, and the church have failed miserably in educating the young people concerning a perfectly normal, biological fact. There is nothing so un-American about sex education as the lack of recognizing its importance.

Racial intolerance was not a great problem in the Parke County schools. Ninety-one and four-tenths per cent believed in equal rights for all men, 88.9 per cent would vote for a person of another race for their class president if he was best qualified, and 90.6 per cent believed that colored and white boys should participate on the same

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<sup>9</sup> Bell, op. cit., p. 40.

athletic team.

Courtesy and good manners was a problem of some importance. Of this group of students 97.9 per cent reported that they believed courtesy to be beneficial, yet only 76.5 per cent practiced good manners and courtesy at home. This indicates that disrespect arises from the lack of influence which the parents and family relationships have on the youth.

Of the group reporting on the questionnaire 91.3 per cent they did not think it was right to copy from another person's test paper, yet 80.9 per cent did it, and 63.5 per cent would allow it. The problem of dishonesty is probably greater than most teachers and administrators realize. It is debatable as to whether the technique in teaching encourages or permits dishonesty, or whether lack of supervision allows the student to become dishonest. In either case the situation is not wholesome and should be amended.

It is time that school officials realize the great problem created by the students, even more by the public, in betting on and the commercializing of interscholastic sports. This survey dealt primarily with basketball, and it was found that 52.1 per cent of the group questioned had bet on basketball games. When participants realize what is being done in the way of betting by the student body and the fans,

the game immediately loses its value as an interscholastic sport, and becomes a gambling proposition, and a game to win at all costs.

Of the total group 26.1 per cent stated that they had not received adequate instruction on rules of conduct. This figure justifies some consideration by school officials. Approximately 98.8 per cent of the total group wanted instruction about the family and family relationships. Administrators must recognize this need.

The specific item section brought to light five items that were significant. These items caused the group great concern. It is probable that the items are those least understood, where instruction has failed, where the student needs enlightenment, and where the confidence of the student is placed in the school for reliable information. Those items are listed in the following order of importance: respect, sex, religion, cheating, and lying.

Recommendations. Although sex education and religion have not been taught as separate courses in the schools, it is fast becoming a problem to the students as to what source to choose for the information they want. Is it to be an extensive education by contemporaries, or shall the school, home, and church perform their rightful duties of giving out accurate information where the emphasis

on attitudes, habits, and ethical considerations may counterbalance the influence of the contemporaries? The sane recommendation is that the school perform its duty. The school must take the lead in a cooperative attempt by school, home, and church to satisfy the needs of the youth. In order for the school to perform its duties properly it is necessary to orient its teaching staff on the problem and the procedure used for a solution of the problem. Every teacher must be properly qualified, and every one must give frank counseling whenever it is needed. The curriculum must meet the problem by gradually eliminating the barriers which society has placed on certain subjects. Psychology in the high school curriculum should become a reality as a required course---to fill in until the parents, schools, and churches realize that sex education must be a reality too. Without undue emphasis on sex education, the relationship of sex and sex behavior to wholesome, emotional well-being, social development, and individual happiness can not be overlooked, for there lies the most efficient educational approach.

Where balance, perspective, and reliability can be attained, young people will respond.

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