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A documentary analysis of the popular view of public education

Carl Edwin Wilsey
University of the Pacific

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A DOCUMENTARY ANALYSIS OF THE POPULAR 3
VIEW OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the School of Education

The College of the Pacific

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Education

1956

THE COLLEGE OF THE PACIFIC

by

Carl Edwin Wilsey

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE PROBLEM AND ITS DELIMITATION	1
The Problem	1
Statement of the problem	1
Importance of the study	3
Delimitation	3
Delimitation of the study	3
Organization of the thesis	4
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	6
Literature on the Popular View of Public Education	6
Literature on Criticisms of Public Education . .	17
Literature Defending Public Education	21
Limitations of Previous Studies	24
III. THE METHOD OF INVESTIGATION AND DOCUMENTS SURVEYED	25
The Method of Investigation	25
The Documents Surveyed	28
IV. RESULTS OF THE STUDY	29
Statistical Presentation of Data	29
The topics of reference	29
References to public education in <u>Collier's</u> .	35
References to public education in <u>Life</u>	36

CHAPTER	PAGE
References to public education in <u>Saturday</u>	111
<u>Evening Post</u>	41
References to public education in <u>Time</u>	44
Analysis of the Data	52
The popular view of public education in the year 1934	52
The popular view of public education in the year 1944	55
The popular view of public education in the year 1954	59
V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	77
Summary	77
Conclusions	80
BIBLIOGRAPHY	84

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
I. Classified List of Major Topics of Reference to Public Education Found in Four Non- Professional Magazines	30
II. Numbers, Column-inches and Percentages of References to Public Education in <u>Collier's</u> Magazine for the Year 1944	34
III. Numbers, Column-inches and Percentages of References to Public Education in <u>Collier's</u> Magazine for the Year 1954	35
IV. Numbers, Column-inches and Percentages of References to Public Education in <u>Life</u> Magazine for the Period from November, 1936, to October, 1937	37
V. Numbers, Column-inches and Percentages of References to Public Education in <u>Life</u> Magazine for the Year 1944	39
VI. Numbers, Column-inches and Percentages of References to Public Education in <u>Life</u> Magazine for the Year 1954	40
VII. Numbers, Column-inches and Percentages of References to Public Education in <u>Saturday</u> <u>Evening Post</u> Magazine for the Year 1954	42

TABLE	PAGE
VIII. Numbers, Column-inches and Percentages of References to Public Education in <u>Saturday</u> <u>Evening Post Magazine</u> for the Year 1944 . . .	43
IX. Numbers, Column-inches and Percentages of References to Public Education in <u>Saturday</u> <u>Evening Post Magazine</u> for the Year 1954 . . .	45
X. Numbers, Column-inches and Percentages of References to Public Education in <u>Time</u> <u>Magazine</u> for the Year 1934	46
XI. Numbers, Column-inches and Percentages of References to Public Education in <u>Time</u> <u>Magazine</u> for the Year 1944	49
XII. Numbers, Column-inches and Percentages of References to Public Education in <u>Time</u> <u>Magazine</u> for the Year 1954	50
XIII. Combined Numbers, Column-inches and Percentages of References to Public Education in <u>Collier's</u> , <u>Life</u> , <u>Saturday Evening Post</u> , and <u>Time</u> for the Year 1934	53
XIV. Combined Numbers, Column-inches and Percentages of References to Public Education in <u>Collier's</u> , <u>Life</u> , <u>Saturday Evening Post</u> , and <u>Time</u> for the Year 1944	56

TABLE

XV.	Combined Numbers, Column-inches and Percentages of References to Public Education in <u>Collier's</u> , <u>Life</u> , <u>Saturday Evening Post</u> and <u>Time</u> for the Year 1954	61
XVI.	Total Numbers of References to Public Education in <u>Collier's</u> , <u>Life</u> , <u>Saturday Evening Post</u> and <u>Time</u> for the Years 1934, 1944 and 1954	65
XVII.	Total Column-inches of Print Devoted to Public Education in <u>Collier's</u> , <u>Life</u> , <u>Saturday Evening Post</u> and <u>Time</u> for the Years 1934, 1944 and 1954	67
XVIII.	Total Column-inches of Print Devoted to Public Education in <u>Collier's</u> , <u>Life</u> , <u>Saturday Evening Post</u> and <u>Time</u> for the Years 1934, 1944 and 1954, Expressed in Percentages of Each Year's Total Column-inches of Print. . .	69

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	PAGE
1. Number of References to Public Education in <u>Collier's</u> , <u>Life</u> , <u>Saturday Evening Post</u> and <u>Time</u> for the Years 1934, 1944 and 1954	75
2. Column-inches of Print Devoted to Public Education in <u>Collier's</u> , <u>Life</u> , <u>Saturday Evening Post</u> and <u>Time</u> for the Years 1934, 1944 and 1954	76

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND ITS DELIMITATION

The several decades immediately preceding the writing of this study have seen increasing interest and criticism of public education on the part of the American people. This growth of interest in public education indicates a need for analysis of the nature and extent of popular concern so that it may be used as a positive force to improve the service of the public schools. If the best interests of the society for which public schools exist are to be served, heed must be taken of the interest and criticisms of reliable and sincere lay observers by the teachers and administrators who are responsible for the functioning of the public education system.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. The purpose of this study was (1) to determine what aspects of public education have recently been of most concern to the American public; (2) to analyze the relative importance placed upon these various topics of popular interest; and (3) to show how the intensity and nature of interest in public education have varied in the past three decades with changing national and international conditions.

Importance of the study. Schoolmen in general acknowledge the importance of considering public opinion in fashioning the policies and practices of the schools, and a great deal of speculation is evident as to what aspects of the educational process are of most concern to the public. However, there are few noteworthy studies providing accurate data on just what aspects of education are considered most important and in need of investigation or, perhaps, change.

Several reasons for a lack of such thoroughgoing studies are the expense and large numbers of workers involved in adequately polling national opinion. In this study an attempt was made to provide the needed data by employing a different investigative technique than that used in more elaborate nation-wide polls.

It has also been assumed by those concerned with education that popular criticism of current practices is on the rise, but here, too, substantiating data are lacking. A further aim of this study was to evaluate quantitatively the postulated rise in popular interest and draw inferences from these data concerning the effect of international and national conditions upon public interest and opinion.

It was hoped that the value of this study would be increased by the use of the historical approach to a study of current problems. According to Johnson, "In no other way can we obtain the perspective, the values, the facts, on

which our most crucial decisions depend."¹

II. DELIMITATION

Delimitation of the study. No attempt was made in this study to go beyond the limits set in the statement of the problem, either to examine the rightness or wrongness of current criticisms of public education or to present data substantiating either side of such controversy. Such an undertaking would entail extensive research and the filling of several volumes the size of this one. Several recent studies have dealt with such controversy in this manner and they are discussed at greater length in Chapter II.

This study was intended to show what phases and issues of public education have recently been of concern to the American public, the comparative importance placed upon these, and how that interest has changed and been influenced by varying national and international conditions.

The data gathered concern only public education, and exclude private education altogether. Throughout the study the term "public education" shall be interpreted as indicating education and schools supported by local, state or federal tax revenues and provided free to pupils. This in-

¹Leighton H. Johnson, "Education Needs Historical Studies," Phi Delta Kappan, XXXVI (January, 1955), p. 159.

cludes elementary and secondary schools as well as state-supported colleges and universities.

The term "critical," as used to describe references to public education, is in all cases taken to mean unfavorable or censorious comment.

III. ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

The remainder of the thesis is organized into four chapters and a bibliography. Chapter II provides a resume of the history and present status of the problem by reviewing previous investigations and literature concerning this and closely related problems. Chapter III describes the method of investigation used, the sources of data, and the treatment of the findings. Chapter IV deals at length with the findings of the study, giving data on what aspects of public education were found to be of greatest concern to the American public, the relative importance placed upon the various topics of concern, and data on how public concern has changed in intensity and nature in the past three decades with changing national and international conditions. The presentation of data is accompanied by an analysis of the statistical findings. Chapter V is a summary of the study, restating the developments of previous chapters, showing the more important findings and conclusions of the whole study, and listing unanswered questions that came to

light in the course of the investigation.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A great deal has been written during the past few years about the public schools, both from a critical standpoint and from a standpoint defending current policies and practices.

A number of studies of the popular opinion of the public schools and how well they have been doing their job have also been undertaken, but these have dealt mainly with local conditions, in isolated situations, and few have approached the problem from a national viewpoint.

No studies were found in which the investigators attempted to show historical changes in the popular view of public education, or how these changes might have been the result of varying world or national conditions.

In this chapter a brief summary will be given of the most significant studies and writings concerning the problem at hand, and those very closely related to it.

I. LITERATURE ON THE POPULAR VIEW OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

Alberty and others, working at Ohio State University, made a detailed study of the popular view of public education and the attacks on the schools in 1951. The purpose of the study was " . . . to identify and evaluate the criticisms of

public school education made by individual and organized groups of laymen, and by professional educators."¹

In establishing the importance of the study the investigators examined briefly some of the underlying causes of critical attacks on education and implied that the popular view of education is governed by both national and international conditions. The authors state that:

The public school, one of democracy's most cherished institutions, has always been subject to attack by laymen. This is as it should be, for deeply imbedded in the American way of life is the right - yes, the obligation - to criticize its leaders and its institutions. Without such criticism, institutions are likely to become static and worthless.

This critical attitude toward school is likely to be more pronounced in times of crisis. It is only natural for people to look to the schools for the cause of our shortcomings as a nation. Even war and depressions are thought to be traceable to our failure to provide the right kind of education for youth. Today, our nation is threatened by powerful forces from within and without, which seek to destroy the way of life we have built up.

In such a time it is to be expected that criticism of education . . . should be widespread. Much of this criticism seems to be leveled at schools introducing new ideas and new practices not accepted, perhaps not clearly understood, by the public. Some is directed toward the failure of the school to adapt to changes in society. There is also much evidence to support the conclusion that a good deal of criticism is inspired by organized groups that want the schools to operate in such a way as to promote their own selfish

¹Harold Alberty, et al., Let's Look at the Attacks on the Schools (Columbus: Ohio State University, 1951), p. 11.

interests.²

The remainder of Alberty's study is divided into two sections, the first of which analyses the popular view of public education into ten critical statements, based on the results of an opinion poll given to 165 laymen. The final section presents answers to these criticisms to show how the schools are trying to meet the demands and criticisms of the public.

Popular concern, as analyzed by this study, may best be expressed by the following ten criticisms: (1) schools are not effectively teaching fundamental skills; (2) the public schools do not teach obedience, with respect for authority and a sense of responsibility, nor do they stress the importance of hard work; (3) a sense of competition is not stimulated, and there is inadequate reporting of pupil progress to parents; (4) too many children are in school who cannot benefit from formal schooling; (5) public relations are generally poor; (6) schools fail to develop a wholehearted allegiance to the American way of life; (7) too many functions and responsibilities of the home and other institutions are being taken over by the schools; (8) pupils are not being trained adequately to make a living;

²ibid., p. 1.

- (9) the schools have not kept pace with social changes; and
- (10) many school personnel are incompetent.

In concluding, this report states that the public is generally satisfied with public education, but that deviations from the traditional pattern give rise to critical attacks. It further states that opposition by laymen is generally centered in relatively small minority groups within a community, often aided by organized pressure groups on a national scale, and that this opposition in many cases is not a reflection of general popular concern. To help reduce criticism and opposition to the schools' programs, it is recommended that more sound public relations programs be established whereby the people are more adequately informed of the schools' progress and objectives.³

The National Congress of Parents and Teachers established a committee in 1954, under the chairmanship of John W. Studebaker, to determine what questions concerning public education seemed most important and serious to parent-teacher groups throughout the United States. The study used a questionnaire technique and established 101 questions as most important. These, in general, dealt with curriculum, methods of instruction, and the achievement of pupils.⁴

³Ibid., Chapter V.

⁴John W. Studebaker (chairman), 101 Questions About Public Education (Chicago: The National Congress of Parents and Teachers, 1954).

In reporting the study, a booklet was prepared listing the questions and giving answers to these based on studies which reveal inadequate sampling and rather poor statistical treatment.

The study was typical of others of recent years that base conclusions on limited sampling and, as such, may not yield significant data on the popular view of public education. Of significance, however, is the apparent interest of parents in a rather small number of the many problems confronting the schools at the time.

The results of a nation-wide poll taken by Roper in 1950 conflict with those of Alberty's study. Roper found general approval of some of the things that Alberty⁵ thought to be most highly criticized.

Roper's study yielded the following information concerning public opinion: 67 per cent of the people believed that children of today are being taught more worthwhile things than 20 years ago; almost all parents believed school should play as nearly important a role as the home in the raising of children; 67 per cent thought that teachers were more competent than they were in the 1930's in handling children; teachers were regarded as more important than

⁵ Alberty, loc. cit.

clergymen, public officials, merchants, or lawyers; and 50 per cent thought teachers were underpaid. In general, it was found that people felt that the schools were doing a good job, but nowhere near as good as could be hoped.⁶

Lovelace, in a report on an opinion survey being undertaken in 1955 by the Commission on Free Public Education, Phi Delta Kappa, reports that Americans, by about a 2-to-1 majority, think that current attacks on public education are unjustified.⁷ Of those polled, a 9-to-1 majority thought that today's schools are better than those of 30 or 40 years ago. Interviewees rated the schools as "more effective" as follows: More subjects taught; superior guidance programs; teachers better trained; more thought given to educational problems; more and better equipment; more practical education; and education is tailored for everyone rather than a few. Interviewees rated the schools "less effective" on the following: less emphasis on discipline; weak on fundamentals; education suffers from overcrowded classes; teachers are less able; education is not interpreted to the public very well; not as much individual attention to students; teachers aren't as conscientious; too

⁶Elmer Roper, "What the U.S. Thinks About Its Schools," Life, XXX (October 16, 1950), pp. 11-13.

⁷Walter B. Lovelace, "Preliminary Report on Opinion Survey," Phi Delta Kappan, XXXVI (March, 1955), p. 234.

much emphasis on sports; too many general subjects taught; not enough emphasis on music and the arts; schools are too often given to "mass-production" techniques; too few teachers; and too much use made of audio-visual aids.⁸

Another finding of the study was that those interviewed placed more credence on the views of national critics than on those of local critics of the schools. The general conclusion was that about one-third of the public believes the national critics, one-third does not, and the last third has not made up its mind. With regard to the local scene, replies showed a 5-to-1 ratio against the opinions of local critics.

A review of a number of significant studies of parental opinion was made by Goodykoontz in 1950. She referred to a poll of parental opinion made by the Board of Education of the San Francisco Unified School District in 1944. In that study 42,000 parents were questioned, with the following results: 80 per cent thought that their children were making satisfactory progress in reading; 70 per cent felt that their children were properly prepared in writing; 75 per cent thought there was adequate instruction in language; but there was some criticism of a lack of emphasis on the fundamentals, the system of teaching reading,

⁸Ibid.

and discipline.

Mention was also made of a statewide study in 1946, by the Florida Citizen's Commission on Education, which revealed the following report on public opinion: 90 per cent of the nearly 9,000 persons polled considered the most important contributions of the schools to be the teaching of the basic tools of learning, good citizenship, good character and moral principles, good health habits, and more effective use of individual resources in developing a high standard of living.⁹

Again, in these studies, it is noted that the emphasis was upon determining what the public thinks about the achievements or shortcomings of the schools, rather than examining the causes of these feelings, the historical background and shifts in opinion, or determining the relative importance placed by the people upon the various aspects of concern. Further, there is no general agreement upon what the public favors or does not favor in the current practices of public schools. This, in part, may be due to the generally local nature of the studies, or inadequacy of sampling.

Hand reported in 1947 on a study made in Peoria, Illinois, of parental opinion of the schools. He reported

⁹Bess Goodykoontz, "Parents Know What They Want for Their Children," Educational Leadership, VII (February, 1950), pp. 286-291.

that laymen, in general, were satisfied with the schools, but that too little emphasis was placed upon teaching human relations, sex and religious education, and that the schools were failing to explain adequately to the parents the aims of the schools. There was also some dissatisfaction with a lessened emphasis upon American history, citizenship and democracy.¹⁰

In addition to the relatively few statistical studies of the popular view of public education, there have been numerous articles and books dealing with the rise of public criticism of the schools, and the underlying causes of dissatisfaction. Butts and Cremin recognized the rise in critical public opinion and recommended that answers to the criticisms and problems facing the schools be based on proper evidence and good judgment. In their book, they state:

In recent years more and more people have become vitally concerned about the future of American education. Individual parents and citizens and organized groups of all kinds are taking a renewed interest in the conduct of schools and colleges. Inevitably, differences of attitude and opinion have arisen; sometimes these differences have led to vigorous controversy charged with emotional overtones. In a word, education has become a paramount matter of public interest that ranges in scope from the private discussions between parent and teacher in a local school to the widely publicized debates in the legislative halls and public forums of the

¹⁰Harold C. Hand, What Parents Think About Their Schools (New York: World Book Company, 1947).

state and nation.

In this setting of public interest in education it is vitally important that judgments be based upon the best evidence available and the most intelligent processes of thought and discussion.¹¹

Wakefield has written a detailed analysis of the current rise of popular interest in public education in a series of articles published in the Phi Delta Kappan. In Part I he reviews the philosophy underlying four concepts in general education. His second article describes and discusses the validity of three criticisms which are frequently raised against general education, and in the final article he points out positive action which can be taken in meeting criticisms, allaying unfounded fears, and ensuring wide understanding by communities of what is being done in their schools.

In an analysis of the present state of public interest, he states:

The public schools of America have been criticized in every year of their existence; within the past decade the criticisms have increased in tempo, sharpness, and extensiveness. Many are constructive, offered by individuals or groups who are devoted enough to their school to want it to be better than it is. Occasionally, the criticisms are intensely negative in their direction, offered without any constructive suggestions for improvement, except possibly an unrealistic look backward at things as they "used to be." The groups and

¹¹Freeman R. Butts and Lawrence A. Cremin, A History of Education in American Culture (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1953), p. 13.

individuals from which the disapprobations stem are not always united in their efforts, but the positions they take are along several now familiar lines.

School leaders can ill afford to shrink from any criticisms which may offer clues to the improvement of the school program. On the contrary, educational administrators should seek constantly to familiarize themselves with the necessities and difficulties of living in their locale; to direct educational improvement toward the rectification of whatever is insistently enigmatic in their communities; to help in setting the social stage upon which each future citizen can portray a satisfying and acceptable role.

Considerable criticism is directed against the movement of the school curriculum away from the departmentalized structure of logically classified subjects toward the more general treatment of immediate and anticipated problems and needs. There is also much criticism of the process involved in projecting learning beyond subject mastery into understandings of effective ways of using knowledges and skills to some accepted purpose. It therefore seems essential for administrators to evaluate criticisms in the light of what constitutes a sound educational program.¹²

Wakefield thus points up the rise in critical interest in education, and some of the basic philosophical reasons for that interest, and calls for constructive analysis and use of such public interest. In the remaining two articles he states that primary public concern is with the failure of the schools to stress fundamentals, and shows by analyzing numerous data that the criticism may bear some relationship to fact. The major controversy, he says, rages over assigning this fault, rather than establishing it.

¹²Howard Wakefield, "In the Limelight-Part I," Phi Delta Kappan, XXXVI (November, 1954), p. 125.

In his analysis of the methods used by major critics, he concludes:

The tactics of some critics of the public school program are often diversionary. Occasionally, money is the real issue--perhaps an additional school levy. But the tactician doesn't always strike directly at his objective; he hits the vulnerable points. Consequently, schools have found themselves being criticized for failing to teach the fundamental skills, being lax in their enforcement of discipline, and destroying initiative by making school marks meaningless. When you think about it, that is a rather complete summation of the school program. Content, method, and evaluation seem to be considered the weak points. In each instance, there is some truth in the basic contention. The extension of responsibility solely to the schools and especially to those which try out newer methods is erroneous and is often used simply to secure the support of a wider following.¹³

Thus, there seems to be some agreement among the writers that one of the major causes of increased public concern of the recent years is some personal interest, backed by a large or small minority group, which may often be disguised behind attacks on the innovation of new ideas or methods into the schools. Often these minority groups operate most effectively on a national scale.

II. LITERATURE ON CRITICISMS OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

Some of the more recent effective influences on public interest in education, from a critical standpoint, are such widely publicized books as those written by men outside the

¹³ Ibid., p. 126.

field of public education. The writings of such critics as Lynd¹⁴, Bestor¹⁵, and Flesch¹⁶ have been widely circulated, and all have been critical of modern curricula and methods. Flesch has limited his criticisms to the field of the teaching of reading, but Lynd and Bestor have attacked nearly every aspect of public education, from the certification and training of teachers to classroom procedures. Each of these men has been accused of misinterpretation of fact and exaggeration of isolated circumstances by leaders in the field of education. Unfortunately, such writings are too readily accepted as truthful analyses by many readers, and public opinion is often falsely formed.

A great many periodicals have carried articles in recent years that strongly criticize nearly every aspect of public education, but few contain significant data to substantiate their claims, and only a selected number will be discussed here.

Cary has compiled a series of articles dealing with criticisms of public education, showing what Americans think of their schools, why, and what is being done to improve the

¹⁴Albert Lynd, Quackery in the Public Schools (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1953).

¹⁵Arthur E. Bestor, Educational Wastelands (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1949).

¹⁶Rudolf Flesch, Why Johnny Can't Read (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955).

conditions that are considered to be undesirable. In this work, Allen A. Zoll, executive vice-president of the Manhattan National Council for American Education, Milo P. McDonald, executive director of Manhattan's American Education Association, and Chicago's Conference of American Small Business Organizations are identified as some of the most vocal critics of the public schools. Also mentioned in this light are Dorothy Thompson, columnist, and James T. Flynn, radio commentator.¹⁷

Typical of many criticisms are those of Mrs. W. T. Wood, president of a parent's group in Eugene, Oregon. She believes that fundamentals are not being taught as thoroughly as necessary, there is an over-emphasis on making learning pleasurable, there is over-emphasis on self-motivation, too much time is consumed by the use of audio-visual aids, the grading system is poor because it is based on ability rather than achievement, and there is too great an emphasis on vocational education. She states that all teachers should have as a major goal the teaching of fundamentals, and that there should be a stronger emphasis on the humanities: literature, language, and history.¹⁸

¹⁷ Sturges F. Cary (ed.), New Challenges to Our Schools (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1955).

¹⁸ Mrs. W. T. Wood, "How Well Are Our Schools Doing the Job?" Vital Speeches of the Day, XVIII (March 1, 1952), pp. 308-311.

Fine has placed the blame for failure of the schools to meet the expectations of the people on the war, which brought about a drastic shortage in buildings and equipment, a loss of teaching personnel, and an attendant drop in the morale of teachers. He says that the ". . . main bulwark of the democratic way of life, the schools, have deteriorated alarmingly since Pearl Harbor . . . public confidence in the schools has dropped sharply."¹⁹

Whitman states that "American education has drifted into the gravest crisis in its 300-year history . . . never before have our schools, what they believe in, what and how they teach, needed such a searching inquiry."²⁰ He based his conclusions on interviews with many people throughout the nation, and made broad generalizations from isolated cases. Typical of his critical statements that were not supported by evidence are the following:

Subtly, unnoticed by most Americans, highly organized left-wing and right-wing extremist groups are exerting unprecedented pressures on the public schools in a struggle to capture the minds of our children . . . parents are discovering that their children no longer are being given the basic education needed to face today's problems, let alone enter college. Some children are no longer taught to write. Censorship is

¹⁹ Benjamin Fine, "Education Today," The New York Times (October 6, 1940), p. 5.

²⁰ Howard Whitman, "Speak Out, Silent People," Collier's, CXXVIII (February 5, 1954), p. 23.

reaching into the classrooms.²¹

Wilkinson lays the cause of increased criticisms to a divergence of philosophical ideas. He believes that strife within the ranks of educators concerning the aims of education have brought on the host of criticisms that have arisen in the last decade.²²

III. LITERATURE DEFENDING PUBLIC EDUCATION

In opposition to the many adversely critical writings about public education, there have arisen a number of writings defending the current policies and practices of the public schools. In contrast to many of the critical writings, these have more often been a sincere attempt to find answers to problems, and many present significant data disproving the critics. Only a few will be reviewed here to give an indication of their nature and content.

The Kiplinger magazine, Changing Times, gave a reply to many of the criticisms of public education in June, 1954. Basing its conclusions on the results of studies conducted in various cities to compare the abilities of present-day pupils with those of pupils in previous years, the article

²¹ ibid., p. 25.

²² D. H. Wilkinson, "Divergent Philosophical Ideas: An Under-current to Lay Criticism of Education," Educational Administration and Supervision, LX (December, 1954), pp. 461-472.

reports:

The U. S. public schools are under the stormiest attack in their history. The ruckus arises principally over charges that the schools are failing in their job. Today's youngsters aren't learning anything, say the critics. Modern pupils are particularly deficient in reading, writing and arithmetic. What's more, they don't know geography; they sometimes don't even know the alphabet; and under "progressive" methods of education they do as they please, turning the day into one long fun session devoid of all real mental effort.

In a nutshell, declare the assailants of the modern public school, today's youngster just hasn't a prayer of learning as much as his lucky parent did in "the good old days." And, they warn, any conscientious father who wants his son or daughter to escape being an ignoramus will seriously consider sending him or her to private school.²³

The article relates the intensity of attacks to a general attitude of unrest, suspicion and uneasiness, as well as to irresponsible reporting, statements of educators themselves, and such minor matters as letters-to-the-editor. Studies cited reveal that pupils are getting a better education today than ever before, and comparisons of present-day and earlier-day tests given to pupils in Cleveland and in Indiana show that modern students are superior in all respects, with the possible exception of spelling.²⁴

A study mentioned earlier in this chapter, made by the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, revealed that

²³"The Truth About Our Public Schools," Changing Times, VIII (June, 1954), p. 7.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 8-10.

today's children receive better instruction in the skill subjects, and devote more time to such studies than children did a generation ago. There is evidence which seems to show that the nation's children use arithmetic, read, write, and spell in a better fashion than 100 years ago. The work further stated that most of our schools are not given to "progressive" education, but that most are more concerned with the intellectual, cultural, emotional, moral and spiritual development of each child than in the past.²⁵

Ellicker, in a reply to previous critical articles in Collier's, stated that "more educational opportunities are available to more youth today. Conditions for effective teaching are not as favorable as in a former day, but the results and benefits to American youth and to our nation are better and greater than a generation ago."²⁶

The National Association of Manufacturers made a study of major controversial issues concerning education in 1954. The study covered such vigorously debated topics as the basic purposes of education, the rights of teachers, objective teaching and indoctrination, academic freedom, and the investigation of charges against schools and educa-

²⁵Studebaker, loc. cit.

²⁶Paul Ellicker, "How Good Are Our Schools?" Collier's CXXXIII (June 11, 1954), p. 78.

ators. The findings were in general agreement with other studies defending public education, and indicate that most criticisms are unfounded as regards the national scene.²⁷

IV. LIMITATIONS OF PREVIOUS STUDIES

As can be seen from this review of the related literature, the majority of studies have dealt with adverse criticisms of public education. Few have explored the reasons for the rise of such criticism in the past decade or utilized an historical approach to this problem. Further, none has attempted to determine the relative importance placed on the various topics of concern by the public. In view of these shortcomings of previous studies, it was hoped that this study, and its method of approach to the problem, would provide needed information not heretofore presented.

²⁷This We Believe About Education, (New York: The National Association of Manufacturers, 1954).

CHAPTER III

THE METHOD OF INVESTIGATION AND DOCUMENTS SURVEYED

The discussion of the problem and survey of related literature found in the preceding chapters are followed here by an explanation of the method of research used and the documents surveyed.

This chapter is organized into two sub-divisions, the first of which explains the basis for choosing the method of research, the procedure followed throughout the collection of the data, and the manner of presenting the findings. The second section discusses the choice of documents and their importance to the study.

I. THE METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

The investigative method used in this study was a documentary analysis involving a survey of all references to public education found in four high-circulation, non-professional magazines during three years of their publication. This approach to sampling public opinion is based upon several assumptions. The first is that the subject matter and content of non-professional periodicals are chosen, in the main, because of their popular appeal and agreement with the public beliefs of the time. Second, in order for such publications to maintain a high level of

circulation they must publish news and feature articles which coincide closely with general public interest. Third, no such magazine could long maintain its popularity and high circulation if its articles did not excite the interest and express the general opinions of a majority of its reading public. Thus, it was believed that a careful analysis of all references to public education found in selected magazines would yield significant data on the nature and extent of national interest in public education at the time of the publications.

Four of the highest-circulation magazines in the United States were analyzed during three years characterized by varied national and international conditions in an attempt to show how these conditions affect popular interest and to provide definite information on the rise of popular interest in public education during those periods.

The years of publication chosen for analysis were 1934, 1944, and 1954. In the case of one magazine, the twelve-month period from November, 1936, to October, 1937, was substituted for the year 1934 because the magazine was not in print prior to November, 1936. It was assumed that the conditions which might have affected public opinion and interest were not significantly different in the year 1934 and the annual period from November, 1936, to October, 1937, and that the substitution of a different year would not

adversely affect the validity of the sampling.

The years 1934, 1944, and 1954 were chosen as years representing, respectively, pre-war economic depression, a war-time economy, and post-war prosperity with international tensions. These widely-varying conditions were expected to have a significant effect on the data.

All issues of the four magazines published during the three selected years were examined as to number of references to public education, the amount of space devoted to public education, and the main topic of the references.

These data were recorded and compiled in tables in Chapter IV. In order to tabulate the data it was necessary to compile a list of the subjects which might be mentioned pertaining to public education. Table I, page 31, is a revised list of the references, arranged according to topics. As each article on public education was examined, a tabulation was made for one reference to the main topic of the article. In some cases an article referred to several topics, and in that case tabulation was made for one reference to the main topic only, and none to the subordinate topics.

The amount of space devoted to each article was measured in column-inches of print. A column-inch is interpreted as meaning one vertical inch of printed column. The width of the column was disregarded, so that in maga-

zines of different column width a comparison of space devoted, if expressed in column-inches, would be misleading. Such comparisons between magazines have been avoided in this study. The space devoted to titles, pictures or illustrations was not included in the measurement, and only the body of the article and captions to pictures were considered.

II. THE DOCUMENTS SURVEYED

The four magazines chosen for use in this study were Soldier's, Life, Saturday Evening Post, and Time. The choice of magazines was based upon the circulation and popular appeal of each, the predominance of news coverage and feature articles dealing with items of national interest, and the availability of back issues. It was believed that these four magazines were particularly suited to the study in that they best met the criteria just stated, and that they would provide the best sampling of the popular view of public education to be obtained by such a technique.

This method of investigation required the examination of 636 issues of the magazines selected, in which were found 182 references to public education. Each of the four magazines had 53 issues in each year, yielding a total of 636 issues that were examined.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The preceding chapters have described the problem to be investigated in the study, reviewed the related literature, and discussed the method of investigation. This chapter presents the data obtained from four selected magazines, during three years of their printing, as it relates to public education. The first section presents the results of the study in statistical form, and the second analyzes these data.

I. STATISTICAL PRESENTATION OF DATA

The topics of reference. During the survey of the selected periodicals, as outlined in Chapter III, it was necessary to classify each of the articles pertaining to public education according to the major topic of reference. As new topics were discovered in the magazine issues, additions were made to the list until the survey was completed and the final, most practical classification could be made. The final list included 33 different topics of reference, as listed in Table I. It was sometimes difficult to classify an article under a single topic of reference, but a consistent practice was established of selecting the major theme and making a tabulation for the entire article as

TABLE I

CLASSIFIED LIST OF MAJOR TOPICS OF REFERENCE TO PUBLIC
EDUCATION FOUND IN FOUR NON-PROFESSIONAL MAGAZINESControversial issues involving basic philosophies

- 1 Academic freedom and national security
- 2 Censorship and "book-burning" in the schools
- 3 Private vs. public education
- 4 Progressive vs. traditional education
- 5 Vocational vs. liberal education

Curriculum and instruction

- 6 Education through experience or activity
- 7 Teaching of basic skills
- 8 Home economics education
- 9 Reading difficulties and the teaching of reading
- 10 School curriculum
- 11 Special education for exceptional children
- 12 Vocational education

Negro education

- 13 Cost of educating Negroes
- 14 Desegregation of Negroes in public schools
- 15 Education of Negroes (general)
- 16 School housing for Negroes

School finance

- 17 Cost of public education
- 18 Government support of public education

School housing

- 19 Community use of school buildings
- 20 School building planning
- 21 School building shortage, including population growth

Teachers

- 22 Attracting and keeping teachers
- 23 Teacher in-service training
- 24 Teachers' salaries
- 25 Teachers' schedules and work loads
- 26 Teacher-shortage

TABLE I (continued)

27 Teacher training and qualifications

Miscellaneous

- 28 Cheating in the schools
- 29 Discipline in schools, and mental problems of pupils
- 30 Extra-curricular activities of pupils and delinquency
- 31 Higher education
- 32 Meetings of public school professional organizations
- 33 Public relations and public interest in schools
- 34 Report cards
- 35 Safety and accidents in schools
- 36 School administrators and administration
- 37 School Boards of Education
- 38 Transportation of pupils

though it contained no topics other than the major one. This avoided the difficulty of attempting to measure and tabulate short, isolated references to a different topic which might occur within the body of an article devoted to one large topic.

In order not to have the list of reference topics too large, it was necessary in some instances to combine several closely related topics under one, more inclusive, heading.

When only one reference was found to a particular topic it was sometimes classified under another topic which was closely related. However, in some cases, where a reference did not easily combine with another, a new reference topic was established. The loss of data on single topic references, due to this technique, was not considered to be of major importance since the study was concerned with measuring the comparative interest in various aspects of public education rather than any absolute measures of amount of interest.

Despite this simplifying and combining of data on references the final list is made up of topics dealing with nearly every aspect of public education. Because of the comprehensiveness of the final list, it is assumed that the methods used in tabulating the data did not significantly affect the validity of the sampling.

The various reference topics were combined in Table I

into several meaningful groupings under explanatory headings and are alphabetized within the sub-headings. The seven groupings into which the reference topics were put are the following: (1) controversial issues involving basic philosophies; (2) curriculum and instruction; (3) Negro education; (4) school finance; (5) school housing; (6) teachers; and (7) miscellaneous. Those topics which were not related to the first six were listed last, in alphabetical order, under the heading, "miscellaneous."

References to public education in Collier's. A survey of all the issues of Collier's in the year 1954 revealed no references to public education. The first year in which references were found in that magazine was 1944, and the data obtained are presented in Table II, page 34. In that year there were only two references to public education, totaling 50.25 column-inches of print. The two references dealt with government support of education (30.75 column-inches) and transportation of pupils (19.50 column-inches), with the larger reference comprising 61.3 per cent of the total column-inches of print.

The year 1954 saw some increase in the number of references to public education (3) and a significantly larger amount of space devoted, as shown in Table III, page 35. In 1944 there were only 50.25 column-inches devoted to public education, but in 1954 the total space totaled

TABLE II

NUMBERS, COLUMN-INCHES AND PERCENTAGES OF REFERENCES
TO PUBLIC EDUCATION IN COLLIER'S
MAGAZINE FOR THE YEAR 1944

Topic ^a of reference	Number of references	Column- inches of print	Per cent of total column- inches
18 Govnt. support	1	30.75	61.2
38 Transportation	1	19.50	38.8
Totals	2	50.25	100.0

^aSee Table I, pp. 30-31, for more complete descriptions of reference topics.

TABLE III

HEADINGS, COLUMN-INCHES AND PERCENTAGES OF REFERENCES
TO PUBLIC EDUCATION IN COLLIER'S
MAGAZINE FOR THE YEAR 1934

Topic of reference	Number of references	Column- inches of print	Per cent of total column- inches
4 Prog.-trad. educ.	2	209.75	51.4
5 Voc.-lib. educ.	1	34.50	12.7
9 Reading	1	82.50	18.4
30 Bldg.-planning	1	25.00	5.7
32 Discipline	1	80.50	18.1
33 Pub. relations	1	91.50	18.7
34 Report cards	1	35.00	13.9
Totals	2	606.75	100.0 ^a

^aPercentage column in this and following tables may not total exactly 100.0 because of rounding of figures.

666.75 column-inches, or an increase of more than 1200 per cent over the previous period. Analysis of the issues in 1954 showed the greatest number of references (2) devoted to controversial issues surrounding progressive and traditional education (209.75 column-inches). This was 31.4 per cent of the total space. Next in amount of space were report cards (95.00 column-inches), public interest in schools (91.50 column-inches), vocational vs. liberal education (84.50 column-inches), reading difficulties and instruction (82.50 column-inches), discipline in schools (80.50 column-inches), and school building planning (25.00 column-inches).

References to public education in Life. Each of the years surveyed in Life revealed references to public education. The first period investigated, from November, 1936, to October, 1937, had five references to public education, totaling 77.00 column-inches of print, as shown in Table IV. One reference was made to each of five topics, with the greatest amount of space devoted to higher education (58.75 column-inches). This was 76.50 per cent of the total space for the year. Next, in amount of space devoted, was safety and accidents in schools (12.00 column-inches), followed by public interest in schools (4.75 column-inches), extra-curricular activities of pupils and delinquency (1.00 column-inch), and school administrators and administration (.50 column-inch).

TABLE IV

NUMBERS, COLUMN-INCHES AND PERCENTAGES OF REFERENCES
TO PUBLIC EDUCATION IN LIFE MAGAZINE FOR
THE PERIOD FROM NOVEMBER, 1936,
TO OCTOBER, 1937

Topic of reference	Number of references	Column- inches of print	Per cent of total column- inches
30 Extra-curric. activities	1	1.00	1.3
31 Higher edue.	1	58.75	76.5
33 Pub. relations	1	4.75	6.2
35 Safety	1	12.00	15.6
36 Administration	1	.50	.6
Totals	5	77.00	100.0

Data for the year 1944, as compiled in Table V, show a slight increase in number of references (6), but a drop in total space devoted to public education from 77.00 column-inches in 1936-37 to 38.75 column-inches in 1944. A total of 26.75 column-inches of print contained a discussion of the extra-curricular activities of pupils, divided among four references. One reference was made to each of the other two topics: Education through experience (7.25 column-inches); and community use of school buildings (4.75 column-inches).

The year 1954, for which data are tabulated in Table VI, page 40, showed an increase in number of references (15) as well as total space given to public education (221.00 column-inches). The greatest amount of space was given, in one reference, to reading difficulties and the teaching of reading (91.50 column-inches). This accounted for 41.4 per cent of the total amount of print dealing with public education. The next most widely discussed topic was desegregation of Negroes in public schools (45.75 column-inches), divided among four references. Two references, totaling 27.00 column-inches of print, dealt with school building planning and these, in order of space devoted, were followed by one reference each to vocational education (18.75 column-inches), home economics education (8.25 column-inches), safety and accidents in schools (6.25 column-

TABLE V

NUMBERS, COLUMN-INCHES AND PERCENTAGES OF REFERENCES
TO PUBLIC EDUCATION IN LIFE MAGAZINE
FOR THE YEAR 1944

Topic of reference	Number of references	Column- inches of print	Per cent of total column- inches
6 Exper. educ.	1	7.25	18.7
19 Comm. use-bldgs.	1	4.75	12.5
30 Extra-curric. activities	4	26.75	68.9
Totals	6	38.75	100.0

TABLE VI

NUMBERS, COLUMN-INCHES AND PERCENTAGES OF REFERENCES
TO PUBLIC EDUCATION IN LIFE MAGAZINE
FOR THE YEAR 1954

Topic of reference	Number of references	Column- inches of print	Per cent of total column- inches
8 Home econ.	1	8.25	3.7
9 Reading	1	91.50	41.4
12 Voc. educ.	1	13.75	6.5
14 Desegregation	4	45.75	20.7
16 Negro-housing	1	5.25	2.4
20 Bldg.-planning	2	27.00	12.3
21 Bldg.-shortage	1	5.25	2.4
22 Keeping teachers	1	3.50	1.6
23 In-service educ.	1	3.75	1.7
25 Teachers-sched.	1	5.75	2.6
33 Safety	1	6.25	2.8
Totals	15	221.00	100.0

inches), teachers' schedules and work load (5.75 column-inches), school housing for Negroes (5.25 column-inches), school building shortage (5.25 column-inches), teacher in-service training (3.75 column-inches), and attracting and keeping teachers (3.50 column-inches).

References to public education in Saturday Evening Post. A survey of the year 1934 yielded data on only one reference to public education in the Saturday Evening Post. These data, shown in Table VII, reveal that this one reference dealt with higher education, and covered 177.25 column-inches of space.

The year 1944 showed a slight increase in the number of references to public education (4), but a decrease in amount of space devoted (58.50 column-inches). A look at Table VIII, page 43, will show that 67.9 per cent of the total space for the year was devoted, in one reference, to a discussion of the extra-curricular activities and delinquency of pupils (39.75 column-inches). One reference each was found to the controversy of progressive vs. traditional education (3.75 column-inches), the school building shortage (5.25 column-inches), and the school curriculum (4.75 column-inches).

Data on the year 1954, given in Table IX, page 45, show a jump in number of references to public education (9) as well as a marked increase in space devoted (625.00

TABLE VII

NUMBERS, COLUMN-INCHES AND PERCENTAGES OF REFERENCES
TO PUBLIC EDUCATION IN SATURDAY EVENING POST
MAGAZINE FOR THE YEAR 1934

Topic of reference	Number of references	Column- inches of print	Per cent of total column- inches
31 Higher educ.	1	177.25	100.0

TABLE VIII

NUMBERS, COLUMN-INCHES AND PERCENTAGES OF REFERENCES
 TO PUBLIC EDUCATION IN SATURDAY EVENING POST
 MAGAZINE FOR THE YEAR 1944

Topic of reference	Number of references	Column- inches of print	Per cent of total column- inches
4 Prog.-trad. educ.	1	8.75	14.9
10 Curriculum	1	4.75	8.1
21 Bldg. shortage	1	8.25	8.9
30 Extra-curric. activities	1	39.75	67.9
Totals	4	58.50	100.0

column-inches). The greatest amount of space was given, in two references, to reading difficulties and the teaching of reading (212.00 column-inches), which accounted for 53.9 per cent of the year's total space. Only one reference was made to each of the remaining eight topics, which included higher education (117.75 column-inches), school administrators and administration (98.25 column-inches), teacher training and qualifications (82.00 column-inches), safety and accidents in schools (65.25 column-inches), desegregation of Negroes (21.50 column-inches), academic freedom and national security (15.25 column-inches), and government support of education (13.00 column-inches).

References to public education in Time. The greatest number of references to public education, of the four magazines surveyed, was found in Time. Table X, page 46, reveals that there were 29 references to public education in the year 1954, with a total of 237.50 column-inches of print. The greatest amount of space (62.25 column-inches), was devoted to discussion of higher education, to account for 21.6 per cent of the total space, in five references. There were four references to meetings of professional organizations, for a total of 52.50 column-inches. Next in amount of space devoted were three references to school administrators and administration (47.25 column-inches), two references to academic freedom and national security (25.50

TABLE IX

NUMBERS, COLUMN-INCHES AND PERCENTAGES OF REFERENCES
TO PUBLIC EDUCATION IN SATURDAY EVENING POST
MAGAZINE FOR THE YEAR 1964

Topic of reference	Number of references	Column- inches of print	Per cent of total column- inches
1 Acad. freedom	1	15.25	2.4
9 Reading	2	212.00	33.9
14 Desegregation	1	21.50	3.4
18 Govt. support	1	13.00	2.1
27 Teachers-training	1	82.00	13.1
31 Higher educ.	1	117.75	18.8
35 Safety	1	65.25	10.4
36 Administration	1	98.25	15.7
Totals	9	625.00	100.0

TABLE X

NUMBERS, COLUMN-INCHES AND PERCENTAGES OF REFERENCES
TO PUBLIC EDUCATION IN TIME MAGAZINE
FOR THE YEAR 1934

	Topic of reference	Number of references	Column- inches of print	Per cent of total column- inches
1	Acad. freedom	2	25.50	8.9
10	Curricula	1	19.00	6.6
13	Negro-cost	1	10.00	3.5
17	Cost of educ.	3	13.00	5.2
24	Salaries	3	13.25	4.6
27	Teachers-training	1	10.00	3.5
28	Cheating	1	5.00	1.7
30	Extra-curric. activities	2	12.00	4.2
31	Higher educ.	5	62.25	21.6
32	Prof. organ.	4	52.50	18.5
35	Safety	1	5.75	2.0
36	Administration	3	47.25	16.4
37	School Boards	2	10.00	3.5
Totals		29	237.50	100.0

column-inches), one reference to school curriculum (19.00 column-inches), three references to the cost of public education (15.00 column-inches), three references to teachers' salaries (13.25 column-inches), two references to extra-curricular activities and delinquency of pupils (12.00 column-inches), one reference to the cost of Negro education (10.00 column-inches), one reference to teacher training and qualifications (10.00 column-inches), one reference to safety and accidents in schools (5.75 column-inches), and one reference to cheating in schools (5.00 column-inches).

Data on the references to public education found in the year 1944, shown in Table XI, reveal a slight increase in the number of references (32), but a drop in total space devoted (194.50 column-inches). The greatest amount of space was given to discussion of school administrators and administration (44.0 column-inches) in five references. This topic accounted for 22.6 per cent of the total space devoted to public education for that year. Next, in amount of space, was higher education (39.50 column-inches) in ten references. These were followed, in order of amount of space, by four references to the extra-curricular activities and delinquency of pupils (31.25 column-inches), two references to school curricula (16.00 column-inches), one reference to the controversy of progressive vs. traditional

TABLE XI

NUMBERS, COLUMN-INCHES AND PERCENTAGES OF REFERENCES
TO PUBLIC EDUCATION IN WINE MAGAZINE
FOR THE YEAR 1944

	Topic of reference	Number of references	Column- inches of print	Per cent of total column- inches
1	Acad. freedom	1	4.00	2.1
3	Priv.-pub. educ.	1	2.00	1.0
4	Prog.-trad. educ.	1	14.75	7.6
7	Basic skills	1	1.50	.8
10	Curriculum	2	16.00	8.2
15	Negro-educ.	1	4.25	2.2
26	Teachers-shortage	3	12.00	6.2
29	Discipline	1	9.00	4.6
30	Extra-curric. activities	4	31.25	15.9
31	Higher educ.	10	39.50	20.3
32	Prof. organ.	1	12.50	6.4
33	Pub. relations	1	3.75	1.9
36	Administration	5	44.00	22.6
	Totals	32	194.50	100.0

education (14.75 column-inches), one reference to meetings of professional organizations (12.50 column-inches), three references to the shortage of teachers (12.00 column-inches), one reference to discipline in schools (9.00 column-inches), one reference to education of Negroes (4.25 column-inches), one reference to academic freedom and national security, (4.00 column-inches), one reference to public relations and public interest in schools (3.75 column-inches), one reference to the controversy of private vs. public education (2.00 column-inches), and one reference to failure of the public schools to adequately teach basic skills (1.50 column-inches).

The greatest number of references to public education to be found in any magazine for any year was that in Time for the year 1954. The number of references that year totaled 71, and occupied 532.25 column-inches of space. As shown in Table XII, the greatest number of references (16) was to desegregation of Negroes in public schools, for a total of 85.25 column-inches of print. This amounted to 16.6 per cent of the total space given to public education in that year. The next most discussed topic was school administrators and administration. Three references were made to this topic in a total of 71.50 column-inches of print. In order of amount of space, this was followed by six references to discipline in the schools (60.25 column-

TABLE XII

NUMBERS, COLUMN-INCHES AND PERCENTAGES OF REFERENCES
TO PUBLIC EDUCATION IN TIME MAGAZINE
FOR THE YEAR 1954

	Topic of reference	Number of references	Column- inches of print	Per cent of total column- inches
1	Acad. freedom	5	21.00	4.0
2	Censorship	2	9.50	1.8
3	Priv.-pub. educ.	2	14.50	2.8
4	Prog.-trad. educ.	3	36.75	7.0
7	Basic skills	1	1.50	.3
9	Reading	1	2.00	.4
10	Curriculum	3	27.25	5.2
11	Special educ.	3	28.25	5.4
13	Negro-cost	1	3.00	.6
14	Desegregation	16	85.25	16.6
15	Negro-educ.	1	.75	.1
17	Cost of Educ.	2	2.00	.4
18	Govnt. support	2	13.75	2.6
21	Bldg. shortage	3	17.75	3.4
24	Salaries	3	13.25	2.5
26	Teachers-shortage	5	23.75	4.5
27	Teachers-training	1	9.75	1.9
28	Cheating	1	2.75	.5
29	Discipline	6	60.25	11.5
30	Extra-curric. activities	1	7.25	1.4
31	Higher educ.	2	43.75	8.4
32	Prof. organ.	1	11.50	2.2
35	Safety	1	6.50	1.2
36	Administration	3	71.50	13.7
37	School Boards	1	1.00	.2
38	Transportation	1	7.75	1.5
	Totals	71	522.25	100.0

inches), two references to higher education (43.75 column-inches), three references to the controversy of progressive vs. traditional education (36.75 column-inches), three references to special education for exceptional children (28.25 column-inches), three references to the school curriculum (27.25 column-inches), five references to the teacher shortage (23.75 column-inches), five references to academic freedom and national security (21.60 column-inches), three references to the school building shortage and population trends (17.75 column-inches), two references to the controversy of private vs. public education (14.50 column-inches), two references to government support of public education (13.75 column-inches), three references to teachers' salaries (13.25 column-inches), one reference to meetings of public school professional organizations (11.50 column-inches), one reference to teacher training and qualifications (9.75 column-inches), two references to censorship and "book-burning" in schools (9.50 column-inches), one reference to transportation of pupils (7.75 column-inches), one reference to the extra-curricular activities and delinquency of pupils (7.35 column-inches), one reference to safety and accidents in schools (6.50 column-inches), one reference to the cost of Negro education (3.00 column-inches), one reference to cheating in schools (2.75 column-inches), one reference to reading difficulties and the teaching of reading

(2.00 column-inches), one reference to the cost of public education (2.00 column-inches), one reference to the failure of the public schools to adequately teach skill subjects (1.50 column-inches), one reference to school Boards of Education (1.00 column-inch), and one reference to the education of Negroes (.75 column-inch).

II. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The survey of references to public education in four magazines during three different years yielded a broad selection of items that were of interest to the American people between the years 1934 and 1954. Assuming that the method of investigation was valid, it may be concluded that the American people have been interested in, or concerned with, almost every aspect of public education over the period of time surveyed.

The popular view of public education in 1934. In Table XIII, a summary has been made of the combined data gathered on references to public education in the selected magazines for the year 1934. This method of considering the combined data for all magazines within a single year will be followed from this point forward so that the effect of emphasis in a particular magazine will be offset. The editorial policy of a particular magazine might have resulted in an over-emphasis on some topics, so that the combining of

TABLE XIII

COMBINED NUMBERS, COLUMN-INCHES AND PERCENTAGES OF
REFERENCES TO PUBLIC EDUCATION IN COLLIER'S*,
LIFE, SATURDAY EVENING POST AND
TIME FOR THE YEAR 1934

	Topic of reference	Number of references	Column- inches of print	Per cent of total column- inches
1	Acad. freedom	2	25.50	4.7
10	Curriculum	1	19.00	3.5
13	Negro-cost	1	10.00	1.8
17	Cost of educ.	3	15.00	2.8
24	Salaries	3	13.25	2.4
27	Teachers-training	1	10.00	1.8
28	Cheating	1	5.00	.9
30	Extra-curric. activities	3	13.00	2.4
31	Higher educ.	7	298.25	55.1
32	Prof. organ.	4	52.50	9.7
33	Pub. relations	1	4.75	.9
35	Safety	2	17.75	3.3
36	Administration	4	47.75	8.8
37	School Boards	2	10.00	1.8
	Totals	35	541.75	100.0

*No articles on public education were found in
Collier's for the year 1934.

data for all magazines within a year should give a more realistic picture of general popular interest without over-weighting some areas.

A study of the data gathered for the year 1934 reveals that popular interest in public education centered mainly around higher education, as indicated by the fact that 55.1 per cent of the year's total of 541,75 column-inches of print was concerned with this topic. The next most discussed topics were meetings of professional organizations (9.7 per cent) and school administrators and administration (6.3 per cent). Only a small degree of interest was shown in other aspects of public education, and the space devoted in no case amounted to more than 4.7 per cent of the total. Only two references were made to an issue of controversy (academic freedom and national security); a single article mentioned the school curriculum; one reference was made to Negro education; three small references concerned school finance; there were four mentions of teachers; cheating in schools was referred to once; three articles referred to the extra-curricular activities of pupils and delinquency; there was one reference to public relations and public interest in schools; and two references were found to each of the topics, safety and accidents in schools and school Boards of Education.

In the year 1934, a year characterized by severe

economic depression, high interest in the policies of a new government, concern for business developments and the prospects of economic recovery, there seemed to be relatively little interest in public education on the part of the American people. The great majority of writings in that year dealt with political and economic developments, and very little with the public schools.

In contrast with later years, there was little interest in many controversial issues, in a teacher shortage, a school building shortage, the desegregation of Negroes in public schools, school finance, or the adequacy of the job being performed by the schools. Such topics were left until later to become items of major concern.

The popular view of public education in 1944. The references to public education in 1944, for which data are presented in Table XIV, show a rise in number to 44, or an increase of nine over the number of references in 1934. This increase, however, was not paralleled by a similar increase in the amount of space devoted to public education. Although the number of references to public education shows an increase from 1934 to 1954, the least amount of space for any single year (342.00 column-inches) was found in 1944. During that year the nation was engaged in war, and it is possible that much potential interest in the public schools was diverted to the war effort and happenings on the battle-

TABLE XIV

COMBINED NUMBERS, COLUMN-INCHES AND PERCENTAGES OF
REFERENCES TO PUBLIC EDUCATION IN COLLIER'S,
LIFE, SATURDAY EVENING POST AND
TIME FOR THE YEAR 1944

Topic of reference	Number of references	Column- inches of print	Per cent of total column- inches
1 Acad. freedom	1	4.00	1.2
3 Priv.-pub. educ.	1	2.00	.6
4 Prog.-trad. educ.	2	23.50	6.8
6 Exper. educ.	1	7.25	2.1
7 Basic skills	1	1.50	.4
10 Curriculum	3	20.75	6.1
15 Negro-educ.	1	4.25	1.2
18 Govnt. support	1	30.75	8.9
19 Comm. use-bldgs.	1	4.75	1.4
21 Bldg. shortage	1	5.25	1.6
26 Teachers-shortage	3	12.00	3.5
29 Discipline	1	9.00	2.6
30 Extra-curric. activities	9	97.75	28.6
31 Higher educ.	10	39.50	11.5
32 Prof. organ.	1	12.50	3.7
33 Pub. relations	1	3.75	1.1
36 Administration	6	44.00	12.9

TABLE XIV (continued)

Topic of reference	Number of references	Column- inches of print	Per cent of total column- inches
53 Transportation	1	19.50	5.7
Totals	44	342.00	100.0

fronts. The shortage of paper during those years may have been an additional limiting factor.

The greatest popular concern in 1944, as measured by the amount of space devoted to the topic, was with the extra-curricular activities of pupils. This topic accounted for nine of the references and 28.6 per cent of the total space devoted to public education in that year. The next two most discussed topics were school administrators and administration (12.9 per cent), in five references, and higher education (11.5 per cent), in ten references. None of the remaining references utilized more than 8.9 per cent of the total space for the year. There were four references to controversial issues; five references dealt with curriculum and instruction; one reference discussed Negro education; there was one reference to school finance; school housing was mentioned in two articles; three articles dealt with the teacher shortage; discipline in schools was mentioned once; meetings of professional organizations were referred to once; one reference was made to public relations and public interest in the schools; and transportation of pupils was discussed in one article.

Despite the preoccupation of the nation in 1944 with World War II, there appeared to be an increase in concern with controversial issues, as compared to what was measured in the year 1934. Evidence of an emergent critical interest

In public education was the appearance in 1944 of the first reference to an implied failure of the public schools to teach basic skills. A preview of the problems to arise in the first post-war decade was seen in the first attention to be given to the school building shortage, rise in school population, and the teacher shortage.

The most significant loss of interest was that in higher education. In comparison with the 293.25 column-inches of print devoted to this topic in 1934, there were only 39.50 column-inches in 1944. This may have been due, in part, to the fact that most college-age men were in the armed forces at that time.

In general, the year 1944 was characterized by relatively little interest in public education, and what interest there was centered around such things as the out-of-school activities of pupils, including their contribution to the war effort, and the part played by colleges and universities in training military personnel. In that period, also, were seen the beginnings of controversy and national concern that would increase in the post-war decade.

The following analysis of the popular view of public education at the close of the first post-war decade will show how the people's interest and concern grew, and changed in nature, during the years following the war.

The popular view of public education in 1954. Of the

three years included in the survey, the year 1954 revealed, by far, the greatest popular concern. That year revealed interest in the widest variety of topics and the largest number of references to public education (103). This compared to 44 in 1944 and 35 in 1934. The total amount of space devoted to public education was also largest in that year, with 2,035.00 column-inches of print being devoted to public education, in comparison with 342.00 column-inches in 1944 and 541.75 column-inches in 1934. The total amount of space devoted in 1954 was more than three and one-half times that in 1934, and six times that in 1944. These findings confirm the belief of many concerned with public education that there had been a definite and significant rise of public interest in education during the several decades leading up to the year 1954.

A look at Table XV, where data for the year 1954 are presented, provides significant insight into the nature of popular concern in that year and the changes that had occurred in the nature of that concern over the period of time included in this study.

The single topic about which the greatest amount of concern was expressed was reading difficulties and the teaching of reading. Although there were only five references to this topic throughout the year, there were 333.00 column-inches of print devoted to it. This was nearly one-fifth of

TABLE XV

COMBINED NUMBERS, COLUMN-INCHES AND PERCENTAGES OF
REFERENCES TO PUBLIC EDUCATION IN COLLIER'S,
LIFE, SATURDAY EVENING POST AND
TIME FOR THE YEAR 1954

	Topic of reference	Number of references	Column- inches of print	Per cent of total column- inches
1	Acad. freedom	8	36.25	1.78
2	Censorship	3	9.50	.46
3	Priv.-pub. educ.	2	14.50	.71
4	Prog.-trad. educ.	5	246.50	12.15
5	Voc.-lib. educ.	1	34.50	1.66
7	Basic skills	1	1.50	.07
8	Home econ.	1	8.25	.41
9	Reading	5	393.00	19.08
10	Curriculum	3	27.25	1.36
11	Special educ.	3	23.25	1.19
12	Voc. educ.	1	13.75	.68
13	Negro-cost	1	3.00	.15
14	Desegregation	21	152.50	7.49
15	Negro-educ.	1	.75	.04
16	Negro-housing	1	5.25	.26
17	Cost of educ.	2	2.00	.10
18	Govnt. support	3	26.75	1.32
20	Bldg.-planning	3	52.00	2.56
21	Bldg.-shortage	4	23.00	1.13
22	Keeping teachers	1	3.50	.17
23	In-service educ.	1	3.75	.18
24	Salaries	3	13.25	.65
25	Teachers-sched.	1	5.75	.28
26	Teachers-shortage	3	23.75	1.17
27	Teachers-training	2	91.75	4.51
28	Cheating	1	2.75	.13
29	Discipline	7	140.75	6.92
30	Extra-curvic. act.	1	7.25	.36
31	Higher educ.	3	161.50	7.94
32	Prof. organ.	1	11.50	.56
33	Pub. relations	1	91.50	4.50
34	Report cards	1	93.00	4.57
35	Safety	3	73.00	3.64
36	Administration	4	160.75	7.84

TABLE XV (continued)

Topic of reference	Number of references	Column- inches of print	Per cent of total column- inches
37 School Boards	1	1.00	.05
38 Transportation	1	7.75	.38
Totals	103	2035.00	100.00

the total space devoted to public education for the year. This topic was not even mentioned in the two previous years studied, and in the three-year totals there was only one topic to which more space was given. That topic was higher education, to which were given 499.25 column-inches of print in the three years, of which only 161.50 appeared in 1954.

Since reading ability is not only a major key to academic success, but the one skill most easily observed by parents in their children, it is perhaps not surprising that this topic achieved a position of such prominence in the popular mind during this period of widespread popular concern with the achievements of the schools.

It may be inferred from the results of this study and the review of related literature in Chapter II that public interest in the year 1954 centered around nearly every aspect of public education. It appeared then that many Americans were prone to criticize existing conditions and praise the processes and achievements of the "glorious" past.

The next most important topic, in amount of space devoted to its discussion, was the controversy over progressive vs. traditional education. This topic accounted for 246.50 column-inches of print, in five references, and amounted to 12.15 per cent of the year's total.

This was followed in importance by four references to

school administrators and administration (8.34 per cent of the year's total column-inches of space), three references to higher education (7.94 per cent), 24 references to the four topics included under the heading of Negro education (7.94 per cent), and seven references to the extra-curricular activities and delinquency of pupils (6.92 per cent). The remainder of the 103 references to public education were divided among 30 topics, with none comprising more than 4.57 per cent of the total amount of space given to public education in the year 1954.

With the exception of education through experience or activity, and community use of school buildings, there were references to all 38 of the topics dealing with public education that had been uncovered in the survey. Many of the topics referred to in 1954 had not been mentioned in the two previous years surveyed, so that it may be concluded that popular interest in public education increased in the year 1954, not only in intensity, but many new aspects of the field became the concern of the people that had previously been ignored.

Tables XVI, XVII, pages 67-68, and XVIII, pages 69-70, provide data for comparison of the number of references and amount of space devoted to each topic of reference in the three years included in the survey. One notable rise in public interest in the year 1954 concerned controversial

TABLE XVI

TOTAL NUMBERS OF REFERENCES TO PUBLIC EDUCATION IN
COLLIER'S, LIFE, SATURDAY EVENING POST AND
TIME FOR THE YEARS 1934, 1944 AND 1954

Topic of reference	1934	1944	1954	Three- year totals
1 Acad. freedom	2	1	6	9
2 Censorship	"	"	2	2
3 Priv.-pub. educ.	"	1	2	3
4 Prog.-trad. educ.	"	2	5	7
5 Voc.-lib. educ.	"	"	1	1
6 Exper. educ.	"	1	"	1
7 Basic skills	"	1	1	2
8 Home Econ.	"	"	1	1
9 Reading	"	"	5	5
10 Curriculum	1	3	3	7
11 Special educ.	"	"	3	3
12 Voc. educ.	"	"	1	1
13 Negro-cost	1	"	1	2
14 Desegregation	"	"	21	21
15 Negro-educ.	"	1	1	2
16 Negro-housing	"	"	1	1
17 Cost of Educ.	3	"	2	5
18 Govnt. support	"	1	3	4
19 Comm. use-bldgs.	"	1	"	1
20 Bldg.-planning	"	"	3	3
21 Bldg.-shortage	"	1	4	5
22 Keeping teachers	"	"	1	1
23 In-service educ.	"	"	1	1
24 Salaries	3	"	3	6
25 Teachers-sched.	"	"	1	1
26 Teachers-shortage	"	3	5	8
27 Teachers-training	1	"	2	3
28 Cheating	1	"	1	2
29 Discipline	"	1	7	8
30 Extra-curric. acts.	3	9	1	13
31 Higher educ.	7	10	3	20
32 Prof. organs.	4	1	1	6
33 Pub. relations	1	1	1	3
34 Report cards	"	"	1	1
35 Safety	2	"	3	5
36 Administration	4	5	4	13

TABLE XVI (continued)

Topic of reference	1934	1944	1954	Three- year totals
37 School Boards	2	-	1	3
38 Transportation	1	1	1	3
Totals	35	44	103	182

TABLE XVII

TOTAL COLUMN-INCIDES OF PRINT DEVOTED TO PUBLIC EDUCATION
 IN COLLIER'S, LIFE, SATURDAY EVENING POST AND TIME
 FOR THE YEARS 1934, 1944 AND 1954

Topic of reference	1934	1944	1954	Three- year totals
1 Acad. freedom	25.50	4.00	36.25	65.75
2 Censorship	-	-	9.50	9.50
3 Priv.-pub. educ.	-	2.00	14.50	16.50
4 Prog.-trad. educ.	-	23.50	246.50	270.00
5 Voc.-lib. educ.	-	-	84.50	84.50
6 Exper. educ.	-	7.25	-	7.25
7 Basic skills	-	1.50	1.50	3.00
8 Home econ.	-	-	8.25	8.25
9 Reading	-	-	388.00	388.00
10 Curriculum	19.00	20.75	27.25	67.00
11 Special educ.	-	-	26.25	26.25
12 Voc. educ.	-	-	18.75	18.75
13 Negro-cost	10.00	-	3.00	13.00
14 Desegregation	-	-	152.50	152.50
15 Negro-educ.	-	4.25	.75	5.00
16 Negro-housing	-	-	5.25	5.25
17 Cost of educ.	15.00	-	2.00	17.00
18 Govnt. support	-	30.75	26.75	57.50
19 Comm. use-bldgs.	-	4.75	-	4.75
20 Bldg.-planning	-	-	52.00	52.00
21 Bldg.-shortage	-	5.25	23.00	28.25
22 Keeping teachers	-	-	3.50	3.50
23 In-service educ.	-	-	3.75	3.75
24 Salaries	13.25	-	13.25	26.50
25 Teachers-sched.	-	-	5.75	5.75
26 Teachers-shortage	-	12.00	23.75	35.75
27 Teachers-training	10.00	-	91.75	101.75
28 Cheating	5.00	-	2.75	7.75
29 Discipline	-	9.00	140.75	149.75
30 Extra-currlic. acts.	13.00	97.75	7.25	118.00
31 Higher educ.	296.25	39.50	161.50	497.25
32 Prof. organs.	52.50	12.50	11.50	76.50
33 Pub. relations	4.75	3.75	91.50	100.00
34 Report cards	-	-	93.00	93.00
35 Safety	17.75	-	78.00	95.75
36 Administration	47.75	44.00	169.75	261.50

TABLE XVII (continued)

Topic of reference	1954	1944	1954	Three- year totals
57 School Boards	10.00	-	1.00	11.00
38 Transportation	-	19.50	7.75	27.75
Totals	541.75	342.00	2035.00	2918.75

TABLE XVIII

TOTAL COLUMN-INCHES OF PRINT DEVOTED TO PUBLIC EDUCATION
 IN COLLIER'S, LIFE, SATURDAY EVENING POST AND TIME
 FOR THE YEARS 1934, 1944 AND 1954, EXPRESSED
 IN PERCENTAGES OF EACH YEAR'S TOTAL
 COLUMN-INCHES OF PRINT

Topic of reference	1934	1944	1954	Three- year totals
1 Acad. freedom	4.7	1.2	1.73	2.26
2 Censorship	-	-	.46	.33
3 Prlv.-pub. educ.	-	.6	.71	.56
4 Prog.-trad. educ.	-	6.8	12.15	9.25
5 Voc.-lib. educ.	-	-	4.15	2.90
6 Exper. educ.	-	2.1	-	.25
7 Basic skills	-	.4	.74	.10
8 Home econ.	-	-	.41	.29
9 Reading	-	-	19.03	13.61
10 Curricula	3.5	6.1	1.36	2.30
11 Special educ.	-	-	1.39	.97
12 Voc. educ.	-	-	.92	.64
13 Negro-cost	1.8	-	.15	.45
14 Desegregation	-	-	7.49	6.22
15 Negro-educ.	-	1.2	.04	.17
16 Negro-housing	-	-	.26	.13
17 Cost of educ.	2.8	-	.10	.53
18 Govnt. support	-	6.9	1.32	1.97
19 Comm. use-bldgs.	-	1.4	-	.16
20 Bldg.-planning	-	-	2.56	1.73
21 Bldg.-shortage	-	1.6	1.13	.97
22 Keeping teachers	-	-	.17	.12
23 In-service educ.	-	-	.13	.13
24 Salaries	2.4	-	.65	.91
25 Teachers-sched.	-	-	.28	.20
26 Teachers-shortage	-	3.5	1.17	1.23
27 Teachers-training	1.3	-	4.81	3.49
28 Cheating	.0	-	.13	.27
29 Discipline	-	2.6	6.92	5.12
30 Extra-curr. acts.	2.4	23.6	.36	4.04
31 Higher educ.	55.1	11.5	7.94	17.25
32 Prof. organs.	9.7	3.7	.55	2.63
33 Pub. relations	.9	1.1	4.50	3.43
34 Report cards	-	-	4.37	3.19
35 Safety	3.3	-	3.64	3.23

TABLE XVIII (continued)

	Topic of reference	1934	1944	1954	Three- year totals
36	Administration	8.8	12.9	8.54	3.96
37	School Boards	1.8	-	.05	.38
38	Transportation	-	5.7	.38	.93
Totals		100.0	100.0	100.00	100.00

issues involving basic philosophies that affect the process of public education. In 1934 there were only two references to a controversial issue, for a total of 85.50 column-inches of print. In 1944 there were twice that number of references, to three different issues, for a total of 29.50 column-inches, or only slightly more than in 1934. In sharp contrast, in 1954 five controversial issues were discussed, in 16 articles, for a total of 391.25 column-inches. This amount of space devoted to controversial issues (academic freedom, censorship in schools, private vs. public education, progressive vs. traditional education, vocational vs. liberal education) was more than 13 times the space devoted to such issues in either 1934 or 1944.

According to Alberty¹, this very striking increase in concern with basic philosophies was accompanied by great concern for national security, the infiltration of Communism, and signs of general anxiety resulting from the tensions of a prolonged "cold war" which followed close after the close of World War II. This tendency to anxiety and attacks on the status quo apparently has had its counterpart in similar national attitudes in previous post-war periods.

Paralleling this concern with basic philosophies was a rise in amount of attention given to the curriculum and

¹Alberty, loc. cit.

instruction in public schools. Whereas only one reference was made to this general area in 1934, and five references in 1944, there were 14 references to these topics in 1954, for a total of 472.00 column-inches of print. This was about 23 times the space given to the same topics in either 1934 (19.00 column-inches), or 1944 (20.75 column-inches).

Prior to the year 1954, there had been only two references to Negro education, and neither of these discussed desegregation in the public schools. However, in 1954 there were 24 references to Negro education, of which 21 dealt with desegregation, for a total of 175.75 column-inches of print. This compares with 10.00 column-inches in 1934 and 4.25 column-inches in 1944. Such a precipitous rise in popular concern with desegregation and Negro education may be explained by the United States Supreme Court decision of that year declaring desegregation unconstitutional.

As a result of the sudden rise in school population in the years following World War II, it is not surprising to find increased interest in 1954 in school building planning, the school building shortage, the shortage of teachers, teachers' salaries, and the qualifications and training of teachers, as the data reveal. A significant increase was noted in attention paid to teachers' qualification and their professional training.

Higher education, which was forced to the background during the war years, once again became a topic of major interest in the year 1954, and over the entire period of the survey had more space devoted to it than any other subject.

The general rise in public interest appears to have been reflected in increases in space devoted to such topics as public relations and public interest in schools, report cards, safety and accidents in schools, school administrators and administration, and discipline. However, there was evidence of some loss of interest in cheating in schools, the extra-curricular activities of pupils, meetings of public school professional organizations, Boards of Education, and transportation of pupils.

An over-all view of the year 1954 shows that popular interest in public education increased significantly over that in the previous years studied. More aspects of the field of public education came to the attention of the public and there was a rise in a critical attitude toward the basic philosophies underlying public education, and the adequacy of the job being done by the schools. This was accompanied by a rise in concern over many of the more financial and practical problems that faced the schools as a result of population growth and the need for replacement of old buildings and equipment.

As revealed in the data collected in this survey,

popular interest in public education has been on the increase since 1934. Figure 1 and Figure 2, page 76, show in graphic form how that interest has varied in the different years. The number of references to public education found in the selected periodicals has shown a steady rise through the years 1934, 1944 and 1954. The amount of space devoted to public education in these magazines was comparatively small in both the years 1934 and 1944. The lessened amount of space given to public education in 1944 may have been the result of a general tendency for magazines to be smaller in size during the war, due to the paper-shortage, as well as decreased interest on the part of the people.

Of significance was the increase both in numbers of references and amount of space devoted to public education in 1954 over the same measures in 1934 and 1944. Apparently, popular concern with public education was at its height then, as compared with the other two years surveyed, and national and international conditions have affected popular interest and opinion, both in the intensity of that interest and the nature of the concern.

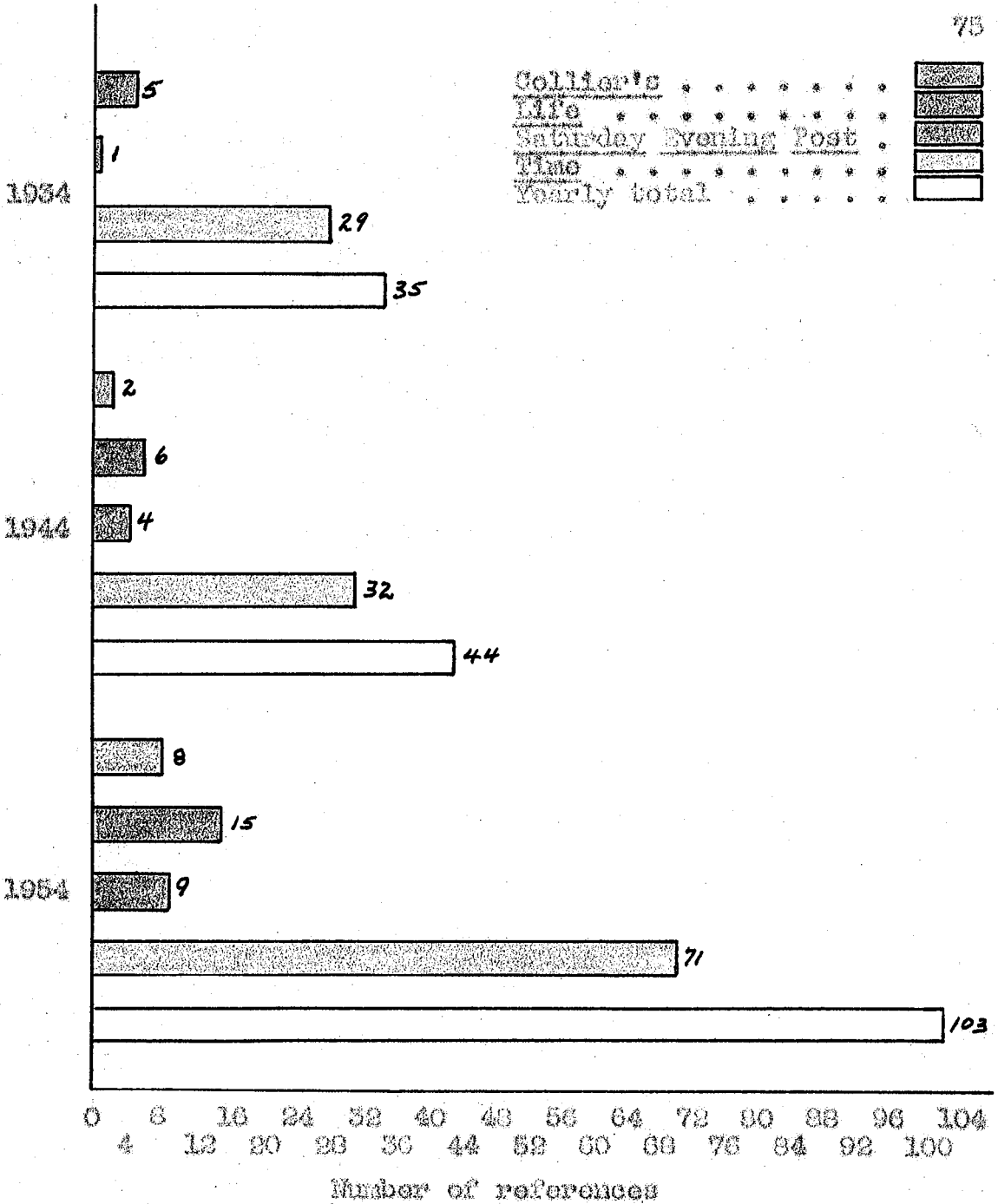


FIGURE 1

NUMBER OF REFERENCES TO PUBLIC EDUCATION IN COLLIER'S,
LIFE, SATURDAY EVENING POST, AND TIME,
FOR THE YEARS 1934, 1944 AND 1954

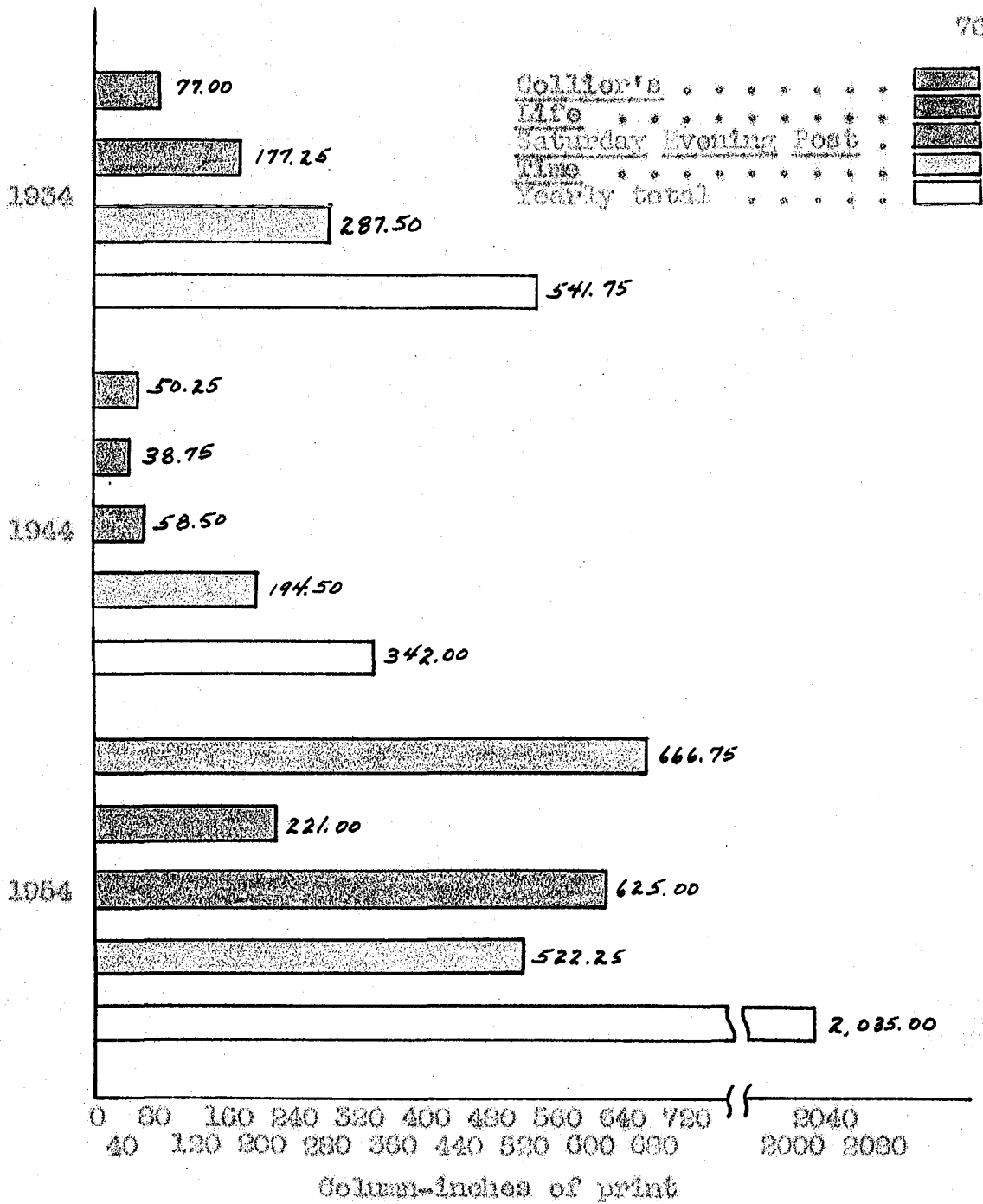


FIGURE 2

COLUMN-INCHES OF PRINT DEVOTED TO PUBLIC EDUCATION IN COLLIERS, LIFE, SATURDAY EVENING POST, AND TIME, FOR THE YEARS 1934, 1944 AND 1954

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

I. SUMMARY

The increased popular interest in public education of the past few years indicates the need for a careful analysis of both the nature and extent of that interest. The public schools, as an institution of a society, must take heed of the sincere evaluations and criticisms of members of that society if the best interests of the people are to be served. It is important, then, that popular interest in public education be recognized, evaluated, and utilized as a positive force in bettering the service of the schools.

It was the purpose of this study (1) to determine what aspects of public education have recently been of most concern to the American public; (2) to analyze the relative importance placed upon these various topics of popular interest; and (3) to show how the intensity and nature of interest in public education have varied in the past three decades with changing national and international conditions.

There are few noteworthy studies providing accurate data on just what aspects of public education are considered most in need of investigation, or change, by the people. Likewise, there are few studies that have analyzed, stat-

istically, the rise in popular criticism of the schools, or shown how the nature of popular interest varies with changes in world and national circumstances.

It was hoped that this study, utilizing a historical approach, would provide some of the lacking data.

The vast majority of studies dealing with this problem have dealt mainly with criticisms of public education in a single case, or limited area. An investigation of the related literature shows a popular concern, primarily, with the achievements of the schools today as compared with the achievements of some years ago, and nowhere was there found a detailed investigation of the rise of popular concern, or special attention given to changes in popular sentiment.

The method used in this study was a documentary analysis, involving a survey of all references to public education made in selected periodicals in the years 1934, 1944 and 1954. This approach to sampling popular opinion is based upon the premise that the content and nature of references to public education found in high-circulation, non-professional magazines are correlated highly with, and dependent upon, popular opinion at the time of publication. Thus, a careful analysis of such writings should yield a valid sampling of public opinion.

The magazines chosen for analysis in this study were Collier's, Life, Saturday Evening Post and Time. All issues

of these four periodicals, in the years 1934, 1944 and 1954, were included in the survey.

The year 1934 revealed relatively little apparent interest in public education by the people of the United States. That year was characterized by serious economic depression, high interest in the policies of a new political administration, and concern for business developments and the prospects of economic recovery. What interest there was in the public schools centered around higher education, with little attention given to controversial issues, needs of the schools, or the achievements of the schools. In comparison with the year 1954, there was no pressure being placed upon the schools by a rising population.

No significant rise was seen in popular concern with public education between the years 1934 and 1944. During the war and the depression, people's interest apparently centered around national problems and international crises. With regard to the public schools, greatest concern was shown in 1944 with the extra-curricular activities of pupils, and those activities of the schools that were connected with the war effort. Some interest was expressed in administration of schools. At that time there were seen some of the beginnings of interest in many problems and controversial issues that became major concerns after World War II.

The year 1954, of all the years studied, revealed the

greatest amount of popular interest in public education. A very significant rise was evident in concern over numbers of controversial issues involving basic philosophies. For the first time, national concern was greatest in regard to the teaching of reading and the quality of the job of instruction being done by the schools. A great deal of interest was also shown in many of the needs of schools, including buildings, equipment and personnel.

Much of this rise of interest may be explained by the general temper of the times. The nation, according to many observers, was then being attacked by forces, both from within and without, that threatened to destroy many of the basic beliefs upon which American democracy is founded. It is natural, in such times, for the schools to come in for their share of critical analysis. There arose, however, many attacks based more on special interests than upon a desire to see improvement in the public schools. In addition, by the year 1954, the schools were being subjected to severe strains upon existing facilities by a rapid rise in school population, which resulted in a growing popular concern.

II. CONCLUSIONS

There has always been interest, both critical and otherwise, in the public schools of the United States. This

interest has varied in nature and intensity throughout the years, and tends to be greater during times of national crisis. However, results of this study seem to indicate that public interest in education is not at its height during a depression or a war, but during the period directly following a war.

Popular concern with public education was apparently low during the depression of the 1930's, and during the years of World War II, because national interest was too generally concerned with other, more pressing, issues. During those times the national forces of energy were seemingly directed toward the solution of common problems that faced all the people. Not until after the war were the apparent divisions in belief and objectives to arise. This concern for security and national success manifested itself in great concern over all aspects of political and domestic life, and this included the schools.

Popular concern with the public schools since the war has centered mainly around the adequacy of the job being done by the schools, the basic philosophies underlying the objectives of the schools, and the more physical needs of schools arising from a shortage of buildings, equipment and personnel. During World War II, concern was greatest with the role of the schools in the war effort, and during the depression of the 1930's with higher education.

Apparently, in no previous period has interest in the public schools been so high as during the years following World War II, nor have national critics, whose bases for criticism may often have been questionable, been so widely acclaimed and their influence so strongly felt. As information comes to light, as presented in many of the works reviewed in Chapter II, it appears more certain that many of the current criticisms of public education are untrue, except as may be found in isolated situations.

It is perhaps true that the rise in popular concern, as uncovered in this study, has served a worthwhile purpose by renewing interest in improvement and progress in that important institution, both in the minds of the people, and the teachers and administrators who are responsible for the schools.

During the course of this study, there came to light several questions that merit further investigation that did not fall within the limits of this work. A further extension of the years that were included in this study might yield valuable data as to similar rises in popular interest in public education in earlier, comparable, eras. A study of changes in public interest in other countries might give answers to many questions that face students of comparative education, as well as educational sociology. Although much has been done recently to investigate the validity of many

of the criticisms of public education, there is much to be done in this field. One final question arose that might yield significant data with closer study, and that was the question of how closely the expressed opinions of the people correlate with their true beliefs when it comes to putting these beliefs into practice, or giving approval of proposed new programs in the schools. There seems to be little of significant value done in any of these fields of inquiry, and they pose real problems and questions that are in need of answer.

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