

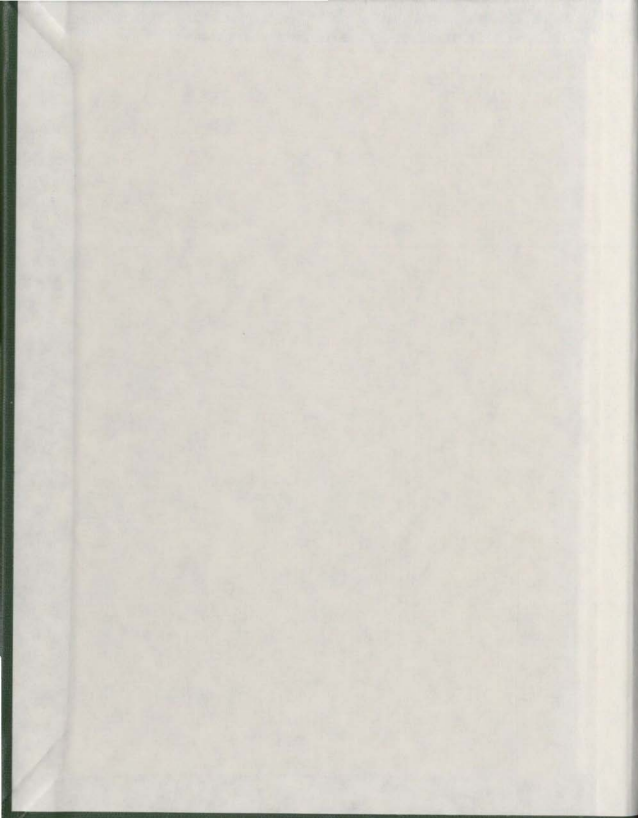
SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND SELF-CONTROL
FOR ADOLESCENTS:
Teaching Psychology In
Newfoundland High Schools.

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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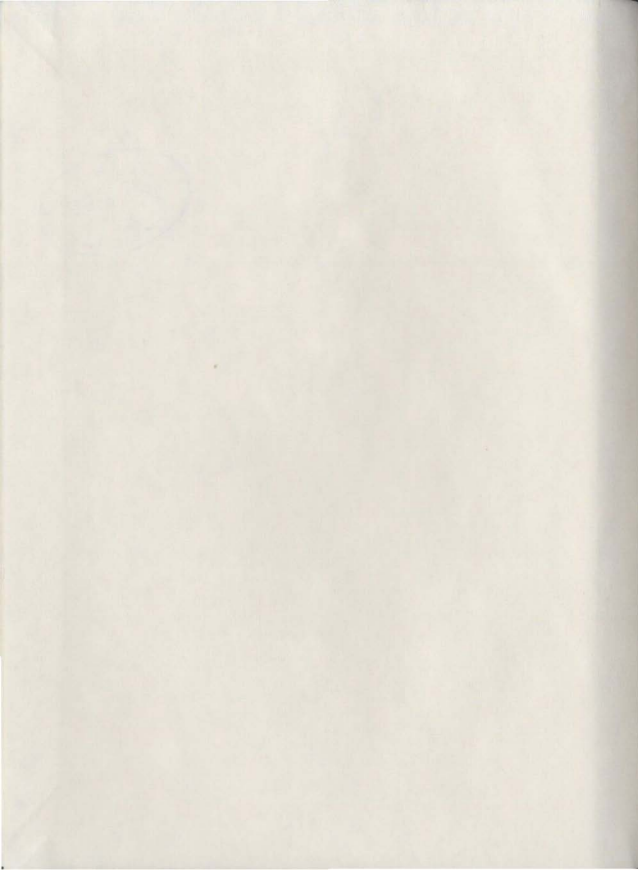
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SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND SELF-CONTROL FOR ADOLESCENTS:
TEACHING PSYCHOLOGY IN NEWFOUNDLAND HIGH SCHOOLS



by

P. Leonard Foley

A Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Education

Department of Educational Psychology
Memorial University of Newfoundland
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St. John's

Newfoundland

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was two-fold: first, to investigate the nature and potential effects of high school psychology, as taught to secondary school students in the United States and, secondly, to experimentally assess the main effects of a six-week high school psychology course on student self-perception and locus of control.

A preliminary study was conducted by visits to twenty selected high schools in the eastern United States. Interviews were conducted with teachers and self-reports obtained from students who were participating in high school psychology courses. The central theme emerging from this data indicated that such courses have a positive effect on student level of self-knowledge and self-directedness.

Based on the findings of this investigation an experimental study was conducted with a class of Grade X students at a secondary school in St. John's, Newfoundland. They were taught a six-week psychology course and administered pre and post outcome measures of self-perception and self-directedness using the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale and Rotter's Internal-External Locus of Control Scale. The same measures were administered to a comparable Grade X class which served as a control group.

An analysis of covariance with pre-scores treated as co-variables resulted in no significant differences between the experimental and control groups on either outcome measure. These findings are discussed with consideration of their implications and suggestions for subsequent research.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Purpose

This thesis consists of two complementary studies: (1) a descriptive study of the nature and effects of psychology as taught in secondary schools, and (2) an experimental study of the effects of teaching a six week high school psychology course to a Grade X class of high school students in St. John's, Newfoundland.

The first component of the thesis deals with an investigation into high school psychology as taught in the United States. The major thrust of this research was to determine the philosophy behind psychology courses in U.S. high schools.

Questions of interest were: (i) What constitutes the curricula, instructional approaches and educational objectives for psychology courses as taught in selected secondary schools in the eastern United States as reflected by the related course materials and as reported by teachers of such courses? and (ii), How do students in such courses critically evaluate their course experiences? More specifically, what are the important outcomes which they report?

As contrasted with the above qualitative method of research, the second component of the thesis employed the quantitative method of an experimental study. The broad research question addressed was: Can self-knowledge be "taught" to adolescents through the medium of high school psychology? Specifically it was hypothesized that (1) adolescents taught a course in high school psychology will show a stronger belief

that life's events are brought about by self-control rather than luck or chance, as compared with adolescents not taught the course, and (2) adolescents taught a course in high school psychology will show a greater improvement in self-concept, as compared with adolescents not taught the course.

Rationale

This rationale begins with an explanation of why research on high school psychology in the United States (which comprises the first component of this thesis) was undertaken. It then examines various areas in which high school psychology--because of its potential to enhance self-knowledge--could possibly help today's adolescent in his relationship with himself and society. The phenomenon of self-knowledge is then addressed in terms of its emergence as the central theme of the descriptive data and subsequent focal point of an experimental study.

The preliminary investigation into high school psychology in the United States had its origin and motivation in the writer's own experience. This can be briefly described as follows.

Rather late in life a real need surfaced to acquire self-knowledge. Preliminary reading and reflection suggested that self-knowledge (or self-understanding, the terms are interchangeable) could be acquired through the study of psychology. And so in 1973, at the age of 51, when circumstances increased motivation, the writer entered Memorial University of Newfoundland as a full-time student, and majored in psychology.

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The results in terms of self-knowledge were beyond expectations, even though the psychology courses were taught as objective science, rather than as a means to self-understanding.

This experience led to the belief that the most fundamental and relevant knowledge which can be "taught" adolescents today is a knowledge of themselves, i.e., an awareness of the motivation behind their own behaviour.

A search of the literature followed. This revealed that psychology had been taught in United States high schools for many years. Moreover, it was taught, not as an objective science like physics or chemistry, but as self-knowledge (Stahl, 1977; Hershey & Lugo, 1970; Grace, Nicholson & Lipsitt, 1976).

In Stahl's 1977 study, for example, high school psychology teachers in Mississippi were asked to indicate the three most-preferred objectives for a psychology course from a list of twelve. Of the thirty-four respondents who answered this question, thirty-two selected the objective, "To help students better understand themselves as individuals," as first choice.

In high school psychology then, the emphasis is on the practical application of the principles of psychology to the student's own life. This raises the question of the relevance of high school education to life as experienced by present day adolescents. In Psychology for a Changing World, Evans and Smith (1970) describe the student unrest of the 1960s. American college students demanded that education be relevant to life in the modern world. Newfoundland parents share this concern. A study by Thomas Grace (1972) surveyed parental attitudes regarding the existing state of education within the schools

under the Roman Catholic School Board of St. John's. Grace stated:

The predominant curriculum concern of parents appears to center around the relevancy of the curriculum to the student's future life situation. (p. 107)

The question of relevancy may have been behind the burgeoning enrollment figures which followed high school psychology course offerings in the United States. Engle and Snelgrove (1979) estimate that between 500,000 and 750,000 students were registered in precollege psychology courses in the U.S. in 1979. This contrasts with about 150,000 such students in the early 1960s. Adolescents may be attracted by the life-centred approach characteristic of high school psychology as indicated by the titles of some representative text books: Psychology for Living (Forehand et al., 1977); Using Psychology Principles of Behaviour and Your Life (Holland & Tarlow, 1980); Your Self: An Introduction to Psychology (Grace, Nicholson & Lipsitt, 1976); Living Psychology (Hershey & Lugo, 1970).

The promise of self-knowledge and help in daily living which these titles suggest must be examined in the light of topics covered in a typical psychology course. Psychology is concerned with processes--processes such as learning (conditioning), thinking, feeling, which go on within the self and find outward expression in human (or inhuman) behaviour. Insofar as the adolescent becomes aware of how these processes operate uniquely within him, he is said to acquire self-knowledge, that is, knowledge of the motivation behind his own behaviour. In Freudian terms, unconscious motivation becomes conscious (Grace, Nicholson & Lipsitt, 1976), and the potential for self-control is increased.

The necessity of self-control seems especially urgent today if adolescents are to withstand the manipulative aspects of modern

life. In Beyond Freedom and Dignity (Skinner, 1972), a best seller of the recent past, the American psychologist B.F. Skinner envisaged an ideal society, based on the principles of learning theory (conditioning), in which citizens would be manipulated for their own good.

In the writer's view this scenario not only exaggerates the power of learning theory but also goes beyond freedom and dignity towards human slavery. However, lest the baby be thrown out with the bath water, it must be admitted that learning theory (conditioning) has power to explain behaviour, and our debt to Skinner in this regard must be acknowledged.

Psychology can be put to nefarious uses as can any area of human knowledge. However, the purpose of high school psychology is to help the student control his own behaviour, not that of others (Watson, 1977). The more an adolescent becomes aware of the motivation behind her actions, the less susceptible she will be to manipulation by others, whether the promise be the Utopia of B.F. Skinner or the happy lifestyle of the TV beer advertisements.

The manipulative aspects of modern life are very apparent in the advertising industry. This theme is developed at length in the high school-text book Your Self: An Introduction to Psychology (Grace et al., 1976). The authors explain how motivational research became important in advertising in the 1940s and 1950s. Psychologists probed motivation, perception, and learning, at the conscious and unconscious levels to gain knowledge of the consumer's behaviour. Advertisers use this knowledge to manipulate. A 30-second television commercial on one of the U.S. network situation comedies could cost \$120,000.00 (Newsweek, January 14, 1980); advertising must be working.

The blandishments of the advertising industry—as with many forms of persuasion—are not addressed to the rational side of human nature. The appeal is to the emotions. It is the emotional development of the student which has largely been lost sight of in education.

In this regard, Edmund Jacobsen, a medical doctor and psychologist, who has spent a lifetime of research on emotion, makes this striking statement:

Emotion is not only being "moved" physiologically: Emotion is the framework in which man apprehends reality. . . . Until we understand this, we have failed to comprehend the role of emotion. (Jacobsen, 1967, p. 125)

If Jacobsen's thesis is accepted, it follows that education fails to prepare the student for the real world, insofar as affective learning is omitted from the curriculum.

A rationale for a study of the effects of high school psychology on adolescents can find its basis in the possibility it holds out for self-knowledge and self-control. However, behaviour is a function both of the self and the environmental situation (Rotter, 1954; Mischel, 1968). Consequently, to understand the adolescents of the 1980s it is necessary to examine the environment in which they are immersed.

If there is any single phenomenon which has burst in upon the human consciousness in recent years it is an awareness of the accelerating rate of change, or evolution, taking place in the world. Accelerating evolution on the outside (e.g., the electronic revolution) can affect the individual within, as described by Alvin Toffler (1970) in his well known book Future Shock:

. . . for the speed up of change is a psychological force as well. Although it has been almost totally ignored by psychology, the rising rate of change in the world around us disturbs our inner equilibrium altering the very way we experience life. Acceleration without translates into acceleration within. (p. 32)

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This theme of Toffler's (i.e., that acceleration of change in the environment affects the individual within) is developed further by the scientist-philosopher-theologian Teilhard de Chardin (1959). The latter's thesis extends the Darwinian theory of evolution into the future. Briefly stated, his central idea is that the "within-of-things" is becoming more manifest as man and his world continue to evolve (develop). The "within-of-things" is conceived of as a spiritual reality (e.g., the energy of creative thought) which is transforming man and the material universe. This transformation is accomplished through a shift in evolution from the biological to the spiritual plane.

It is into this maelstrom of change which the modern adolescent plunges as he moves away from parental dominance into the adult world. If he believes the "locus of control" of his behaviour (Rotter, 1966) is to be found in the external environment, rather than within, the adolescent may get caught up in the swirl of change and lose all sense of his own identity. "According to Erikson the core conflict of adolescence is identity versus identity diffusion. . ." (Horrocks, 1976, p. 97).

Adjusting to a rapidly changing environment presents a unique challenge to the modern adolescent. This problem of adjustment is addressed by Calhoun and Acocella (1978). Although these authors' text, Psychology of Adjustment and Human Relationships, is directed to first and second year college students, its purpose, as stated below, is much the same as high school psychology:

To teach students 1) what psychologists have learned about human behavior, and 2) how to use this knowledge to evaluate and (if they so chose) to change their own attitudes and behavior. (p. v).

Calhoun and Acocella define adjustment as:

The individual's interaction with self, others and the world. That is what we mean by "adjustment" - the individuals way

of influencing, and being influenced by these factors. (p. vi)

These authors deal with the first factor, the self, in terms of (a) the self--what it is and how to analyze it; (b) the self-concept; and (c) self-control. It is these three constructs which form the basis for the second component of this thesis--the experimental study with Newfoundland students.

The preliminary investigation in the United States was motivated by a reluctance to rely exclusively on the literature as a source of information on high school psychology. A prime concern was to learn how American adolescents and teachers felt about psychology as an academic subject. Did students apply the knowledge gained to their own lives, for example?

The experimental study, on the other hand, had its origin from the descriptive data of the preliminary investigation. American students indicated that self-knowledge was an important outcome of high school psychology, confirming Stahl's (1977) study which showed that high school psychology teachers considered self-understanding as the primary objective of their course. The following comments are indicative of students' viewpoints:

If you come to think about it psychology is one of the most important subjects that a high school student could engage in. . . . What's more important than teaching students about themselves? In my opinion, "nothing."

(Tom, Grade XII)

In the United States, psychology is and has been a major contributor to the educational and emotional awareness of high school students. Introductory psychology, as taught in the U.S. at the high school level, gives the student an opportunity to learn the basis of human nature and human drives, and enables the student to apply this knowledge to daily life.

In these liberal, anxious times it is my opinion that adolescents need a basic explanation for human actions and responses. This provides a pathway for the search for individuality and guidelines for moral and ethical standards.

(Ralph)

The phenomenon of self-knowledge (or self-cognition) appears to be at the very core of the human personality. This is the position taken by Karol Wojtyla, one of the leading philosophers and theologians of our time. In an analysis of Wojtyla's thought, Andrew Woznicki of the University of San Francisco, states:

"Self-cognition," then as the very core of man as a "person-act" . . . consists essentially in reflection. . . .

(Woznicki, 1980, p. 14)

The purpose of the high school psychology course, which is the independent variable in the present experimental study, was to have adolescents reflect on their own behaviour. Theoretically this would result in enhanced self-cognition or self-knowledge.

In assessing the results of the course, it was hypothesized that self-knowledge would manifest itself in two areas of the adolescent personality--self-control and self-concept.

This hypothesis is supported by the data from the preliminary investigation. The following American student's comments indicates that self-knowledge can lead to self-control.

. . . I have found some interesting things about myself; why I act the way I do for example. And in a few instances when that behaviour was detrimental I was able to recognize and correct or modify my behavior.

(Lynn, Grade XI)

The hypothesis that high school psychology can affect the adolescent's self-concept is also supported by data from the preliminary investigation. The following comment implies a change in self-concept:

One learns (from high school psychology) many new things that can help them in their day-to-day life. One can feel more at ease with society knowing that they are not abnormal and understanding those who are. They feel more confident with themselves and with others, thus making their life a little easier and better.

(Belinda, Grade XII)

It is plausible to suggest that an increase in self-knowledge could affect the self-concept. A negative self-concept is generally characteristic of the adolescent stage of development (Horrocks, 1976), also new information about ourselves, according to Calhoun and Acocella (1978), can change a negative self-concept.

The broad research question addressed in this study is: Can self-knowledge be taught to adolescents through the medium of a high school psychology course? The apparent paradox in this research question--that is, the idea of "teaching" self-knowledge--unravels if the word "teach" is understood in its denotive (dictionary) sense.

The dictionary definition of "teach" is "to make to know how; to show how; hence to train or accustom to some action." It is in this sense that self-knowledge may be taught.

Students may "be made to know how" to acquire self-knowledge. They may be "shown how" people listen; how people think; how people value; how people's emotions motivate, etc. (see course content, Appendix A). By applying this knowledge to her own individual experience the student may learn: how she listens; how she thinks; how she values; how her emotions motivate her, etc., which is what self-knowledge is. It follows from what has been said that to teach high school psychology is not just to add another subject to the curriculum. The subject is already in the classroom, that is, the student studies himself.

As educators become aware of students' need for knowledge in the affective as well as the cognitive domain, more programs which attend to this aspect of human development are being introduced.

But a paucity of research exists in this comparatively new area of education, as pointed out by Medway and Smith (1978) in a review of existing studies. These authors, in referring to studies of the Human

Development Program (Bessell & Palomares, 1970), state that the only conclusion to be drawn is that long-term use of affective education materials can improve students' self-concepts and attitudes towards school. However, in general, the experimental studies reviewed showed mixed and inconclusive results.

Another approach to affective education has been termed "Values Education" (Raths, Harmin & Simon, 1966). Students are given life problems to solve, which require reflection on their values as a basis for decision making. However, here, as in all areas of the affective domain, assessment of results presents a thorny problem. Handy (1970) reports that little progress had been made in the measurement of values.

The present study, dealing as it does with the effects of a high school psychology course, covers not only the affective aspect of the adolescent's personality but also the cognitive. In this respect it is similar to "Confluent Education" as developed by Brown (1971).

Confluent education integrates both cognitive and affective elements in the learning process. However, Brown makes no reference to empirical studies in support of his approach.

Whether or not the effectiveness of psychological education receives unequivocal verification by the experimental method, it seems here to stay. According to Ivey (1977), the movement towards "psycho-education" is too powerful and effective to ignore. Counsellors are moving into the classroom and teaching students to be competent in their relationships with themselves and others. This means taking a more active stance, with the object of preventing problems before they occur.

Since the purpose of the present study is to determine if self-knowledge can be taught to adolescents through the medium of high school

psychology, it raises the fundamental question: Why teach self-knowledge?

An answer is given in the following quotation taken from the teacher's manual of a high school psychology text book:

From the earliest times human beings have attempted to fathom the mystery of their own being. Philosophers and poets have agreed that self-understanding is essential if individuals ever hope to achieve control over their own destinies.

(Engle & Snelgrove, 1979, p. 1)

The same admonition, expressed more succinctly, is inscribed on the school emblem at the entrance to Roncalli High School in Avondale, Newfoundland. The inscription reads: "Nosce te Ipsum," "Know Thyself."

There is nothing new in this, of course; Socrates said it over 2,000 years ago.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This review is sub-divided into two areas. It deals first with the literature on high school psychology in the United States, where psychology has mushroomed as a curriculum subject, especially since the 1960s. This is followed by a review of additional programs in psychological education appearing under various names, together with related research studies.

Dr. T.L. Engle, Professor Emeritus of Psychology at Indiana University at Fort Wayne, is considered the dean of high school psychology in the United States; he has been promoting the teaching of psychology in high schools for many years (Engle & Snelgrove, 1979).

In outlining its early history, Engle points out that it was not until the late 1800s that psychology became a scientific discipline in its own right. At first it was taught at the college level but, before the turn of the century, it appeared in the curriculum of many academies and high schools in the United States.

In 1889, two textbooks for secondary schools were published. One had the title Elementary Psychology, or the First Principles of Mental and Moral Science for High, Normal and Other Secondary Schools and for Private Reading, by Daniel Putnam (Engle, 1967b). At the turn of the century, psychology was offered in Iowa as a "professional" course for students who intended to teach elementary grades after completing high school, and in 1910 it was included in the curriculum of Kansas City schools. A U.S. Office of Education survey in 1933-34 indicated psychology was being offered in some schools in at least 15

states. In 1935, the American Psychological Association in Washington, D.C., became interested in the growth of high school psychology and formed a special committee to monitor its progress (Kasschau & Wertheimer, 1974).

Enrollment in the 1940s gathered momentum. Figures published in the 1948-49 Biennial Survey of Education showed that 50,000 students were taking high school psychology; this compares with 12,000 at the beginning of the century, when psychology was designated as a separate course (Stahl & Casteel in H. Fisher, ed., 1974).

But it was not until the 1950s that enrollment accelerated rapidly. Whereas in 1950 psychology was offered in 1,082 high schools, a decade later 2,362 schools were offering the course, and the number of students had risen from 50,000 in 1948-49 to nearly 150,000; an increase of approximately 200 per cent (Johnson, updated monograph).

The 1960s showed a further acceleration of the growth pattern, which characterized the 1950s. The American Psychological Association had a list compiled of 1,700 known teachers of high school psychology (USO) under the auspices of its Division II, set up to deal exclusively with the teaching of psychology. Lists of films and a recommended list of readings for high school students were prepared, together with a catalogue of companies selling psychological apparatus, and a partly annotated bibliography for teachers and students. These materials were made available, free of charge, to any high school teacher of psychology (Kasschau & Wertheimer, 1974).

In 1967, an entire issue of Journal of School Psychology was devoted to precollege psychology. An article by Noland (1967) summarized the results of a survey of school psychologists and counselors. This article reported that (a) over 90 per cent of the respondents

favoured teaching psychology at the high school level; (b) the great majority preferred a "practical" personal adjustment course or a combination of scientific and practical content, but 95 per cent rejected an exclusively scientific treatment of psychology; and (c) almost three-quarters favoured mandatory state certification of high school psychology teachers (Kasschau & Wertheimer, 1974).

As high school psychology was "growing up," psychology itself was spreading out to a much wider reading audience. This is evidenced by the popular appeal of such best sellers as I'm OK - You're OK (Harris, 1969), and Love and Will, by the existential psychologist Rollo May (1974). In 1967, the magazine Psychology Today appeared; articles from this magazine are used by many teachers in their classes as supplementary material. This magazine continues to flourish to the present date.

As the teaching of psychology in high schools burgeoned, more funds were forthcoming for various projects. The American Psychological Association (APA) participated in an interdisciplinary behavioral science conference in 1967, in Williamsburg, Virginia, funded by the National Science Foundation. One of the recommendations from this conference was that courses in behavioral science be developed for the upper middle school and/or lower high school grades. In December, 1969, with funds from the U.S. Office of Education, the APA brought together a group of its ex-Presidents, who prepared a statement on "Psychology in the Educational Venture" (Kasschau & Wertheimer, 1974).

In 1969 also, George Miller, then President of the American Psychological Association, made an unusual address to that body. Instead of dealing with theory, as was the custom, Miller took as his theme: "Psychology as a Means of Promoting Human Welfare." The thrust

of his remarks (which are certainly applicable to high school psychology) is apparent from the following quotation:

... psychology must be practiced by nonpsychologists. . . . Our responsibility is less to assume the role of experts and try to apply psychology ourselves, than to give it away to the people who really need it--and that includes everyone. The practice of valid psychology by nonpsychologists will inevitably change people's conception of themselves and what they can do. (Annual Editions Readings in Psychology '72-'73, pp. 3, 4)

By 1972, the number of high schools in the United States in which psychology was taught had risen to 6,870. This compares with 2,352 schools in 1960. A survey conducted in Florida secondary schools by Stahl and Casteel (1973) stated that "psychology continues to be one of the fastest growing school offerings in the history of Florida education" (p. 3). In 1975, the number of high school psychology teachers stood at 11,460, vs. 7,400 in 1969. Nineteen hundred and seventy-four saw the beginning of a five-year Human Behavior Curriculum Project for high schools sponsored by the American Psychological Association and funded at that time by the National Science Foundation. Ten curriculum modules (two- to three-week learning units) were developed by curriculum planners for high school students. Stahl and Casteel (1973) made a summary of several surveys covering different aspects of precollege psychology in the United States. The most important facts and characteristics on which they found fairly common agreement were:

1. Student enrollment and numbers of schools offering the courses are rapidly increasing.
2. Students and teachers see the course as being valuable.
3. There is a (perceived) need for psychology courses in the curriculum.
4. Courses are very popular among students.
5. Courses are offered in all fifty states.

6. Courses are most often one semester in length.
7. Courses are offered as an elective more often than as a required subject.
8. Courses are more likely to be offered in schools with over 300 students.
9. Courses are most frequently opened to Grades 11 and 12.
10. Girls are more likely to take the course than boys.
11. Whites are more likely to enroll in the course than blacks.
12. The course is offered most often in urban school settings.
13. Personal adjustment and mental hygiene are the two most often stated objectives of the course.
14. Courses are usually assigned social studies credit.
15. Teachers are predominantly certified in social studies.
16. Teachers develop and use a great deal of materials such as popular magazines to supplement their courses.
17. The T. Engle and Louis Snelgrove textbook, Psychology: Its Principles and Applications, is the most popular text used.
18. Psychology is not required in any state for graduation.
19. More schools would offer the course if properly trained teachers were available. (pp. 27-28)

The latest enrollment figures to be found in the literature are given by Engle and Snelgrove (1979). They estimate between half a million and three-quarters of a million students were enrolled in precollege psychology courses in the United States in 1979. This is in contrast to only about 150,000 such students in the early 1960s.

In the course of this historical review reference has been made to various surveys of high school psychology. Perhaps a good way of indicating recent trends would be to take a look at one such survey in detail--The Status of Pre-College Psychology in Mississippi and Florida: A Comparative Report (1977). This report, by Robert Stahl of the Institute for Development of Human Resources, University of Florida, gives results of a survey of secondary school teachers and students in the State of Mississippi. He compared this data with a similar report compiled earlier on the State of Florida. The following covers the Mississippi study with intermittent reference to the Florida data.

An overall comparison between Mississippi and Florida revealed that when the survey was conducted in 1975, 17.7 per cent of Mississippi secondary schools offered psychology as a separate subject, whereas in Florida the figure was 53 per cent. The author states that one surprising finding of the study was the similarity which existed between the types of psychology courses taught in the high schools of these states.

Generally speaking, in Mississippi the course was confined to the upper grade levels, tenth through the twelfth grade. Of the 33 teachers who replied to the question, re grades taught, 17.1 per cent said the course was open to twelfth grade only; 57 per cent stated the course was for the eleventh and twelfth grades; and 22.9 per cent indicated it was for the tenth through twelfth grades.

Findings on sexual make-up of classes revealed that in nearly three-quarters of the schools the majority of the students were girls.

Florida results were nearly identical to Mississippi, in terms of grade levels taught and sexual make-up of enrollment.

In response to the question, asking if students' demand for the course had increased over the past two or three years, 18 of 26 (69.2 per cent) teachers who answered this question indicated that demand had risen. For most, it had risen sharply.

Twelve objectives for the course were listed on the questionnaire and respondents were to check the three most preferred objectives and the three least preferred objectives. The three objectives most supported by the teachers were:

- (a) To help students better understand themselves as individuals (32 responses or 91.4 per cent).

- (b) To help students understand and deal with their personal problems (32 responses or 91.4 per cent).
- (c) To assist students in adjusting to life and life's problems (29 responses or 82.9 per cent).

The three objectives least supported by the teachers were:

- (a) To help students in their vocational planning (10 responses or 28.6 per cent).
- (b) To assist students in understanding the vocabulary associated with psychology (15 responses or 42.9 per cent).
- (c) To help students for psychology courses in college (17 responses or 48.6 per cent).

Teachers were requested to add any objectives they felt applicable to the course. The only additions were: to assist students in understanding mental illness and retardation, and to assist students understand the learning process.

The Florida psychology teachers ranked objectives rated first, second and third by Mississippi teachers, as second, first and third, among the identical list of 12 objectives.

With regard to content, a list of 22 topics usually covered in a psychology course was provided on the questionnaire. Teachers were to indicate the topics covered in their course. Thirty-five teachers answered this question and the topics selected most often were: personality theory (32 responses or 91.4 per cent); social behaviour (31 responses or 88.6 per cent); mental illness (29 responses or 82.9 per cent); emotions (28 responses or 80 per cent); drugs, alcoholism, etc. (27 responses or 77.1 per cent); child care (9 responses or 25.7 per cent); the human body, physiology (13 responses or 37.1 per cent); and

parapsychology, ESP. (17 responses or 48.6 per cent).

The questionnaire also examined teaching methods. Five specific methods were listed with space provided to make additions, if required. The most popular method was lecture and discussion (31 responses or 88.6 per cent). Tied for second were the methods text and lecture, and discussion (20 responses or 57.1 per cent). Other methods added by teachers were: small group work; field trips; guest speakers; audio visual aids; research papers; stories in literature; peer groups teaching in elementary classes.

This close-up of a recent survey reinforces two major themes of this review: (1) the practical application of psychology to the student's everyday life; (2) the burgeoning enrollment figures since the 1950s.

One of the salient features of the history of psychology in U.S. high schools is the controversy over the philosophical underpinnings on which the teaching of psychology should be based. Two schools of thought have emerged. One, espoused by some university psychologists (e.g., see Kasschau & Wertheimer, 1974) holds the view that high school psychology should be taught as an objective science. Challenging this approach are the majority of high school teachers, who maintain that psychology ought to be directed towards helping adolescents understand themselves, and deal competently with personal problems.

The nature of the controversy is brought out in the following composite of opinions taken from the March, 1978, issue of High School Psychology Teacher, published by the American Psychological Association.

Teacher A: What your critics of the personal-adjustment approach don't seem to understand is that helping students with personal

problems is everyday work for the teacher--any teacher. We can't avoid it. Especially we psychology teachers.

Psychologist 1: That's all the more reason to be cautious, to resist the temptation to be savior, healer, helper. Leave counseling and therapy to the experts. Teach the discipline.

Psychologist 2: Right! Teach psychology, don't practice it! It's a legitimate subject of study, as important as biology or English. High school students should learn about all the subjects psychologists study--thinking, statistics, animal behavior, et cetera--and they should learn some of what we know about these subjects.

Teacher A: I can't go the discipline route. My students want relevance, personal applications. They signed up for the course to learn more about themselves, not to learn about some rat in a maze or some electrical activity at a synapse. They are at a time in life when they need greater self-understanding and greater self-assurance. The psychology course is a way that the school can meet their needs.

Reality is on my side. There was a national survey several years ago [Snelgrove, 1973] in which teachers identified as their first objective, helping students understand and cope with their personal problems. Helping students appreciate psychology as a field of scientific knowledge was ranked sixth--out of seven choices. And the students in that same survey largely agreed with the teachers--personal problems first, scientific knowledge last. (p. 2)

If the students' needs, as seen by them, are to be taken into account, it would appear that Teacher A clinched the debate in pointing out that,

... students in that same survey largely agreed with the teachers--personal problems first, scientific knowledge last.

In concluding this review of psychology as an academic subject in United States high schools, a summary can best be given in terms of the two major themes already referred to: First, the relevance which psychology has to the adolescent's everyday life and problems. Secondly, the burgeoning enrollment figures, as more schools offer the course and students choose it. The possibility of a causal relationship between these two themes has an intuitive appeal.

Turning now from academic psychology to psychological education in general, it will be noted that many programs are appearing under various names. Many of these programs are directed to elementary and junior high school students; also, in most cases, the affective element is predominant, whereas the present study is a balance of the cognitive and affective.

Psychological education is having an increasing influence on school curricula. Insofar as counsellors are concerned it can enhance their effectiveness by bringing mental health and life adjustment skills into the classroom (Ivey & Alschuler, 1973). Also, during the past decade programmed affective education materials have been made available commercially; however, there is little evidence for their effectiveness.

Medway and Smith (1978) examined four of the programs used most frequently by teachers, counsellors and school psychologists: Bessell and Palomaris (1970), Human Development Program (HDP); Dinkmeyer's (1970, 1973) Developing Understanding of Self and Others (DUSO); Dupont, Gardner, and Brody's (1974) Toward Affective Development (TAD); and Limbacher's (1973) Dimensions of Personality (DOP).

From the few research studies which have been done on the Human Development Program (Hawkinson, 1970; Mestler, 1974), Medway and Smith conclude that little evidence has been forthcoming that the HDP program, per se, enhances children's affective skills. The only conclusion to be drawn, according to Medway and Smith, is that consistent and long-term use of affective education materials can improve students' self-concepts and attitudes towards school.

Research results on the Developing Understanding of Self and Others program were mixed. Some studies showed DUSO to be effective (e.g., Cleminshaw, 1972), while others (e.g., Elridge et al., 1973),

showed no significant results.

Only one study on the Toward Affective Development program was traced. Pretest-posttest measures on social problem-solving skills of 60 sixth graders who received TAD lessons, showed better performance in problem-solving ability than the control group.

With regard to the Dimensions of Personality program, three studies were reviewed. One study (Swisher & Piniuk, 1973) found the program enhanced the overall mental health of children and seemed to improve favourable subjective judgements of the program by teachers and students. However, Evans and D'Augelli found no evidence that the DOP program was effective.

Medway and Smith (1978), in their overall assessment of the above four programs, give a limited endorsement (if used on a consistent and long-term basis) to the HDP (Human Development Program), DUSO (Developing Understanding of Self and Others), and TAD (Towards Affective Development). DOP (Dimensions of Personality) is categorized as of questionable use. In all cases reference was made to the paucity of research, which made it difficult to assess the effectiveness of the programs reviewed.

These programs were developed in the United States for elementary school students, an indication perhaps that psychological education is filtering down from high school to the lower grades. Also, the programs deal almost exclusively with affective education (rather than a combination of the cognitive and affective), due possibly to the age groups involved.

Another approach to psychological education--developed by George Brown and his associates at the University of California, Santa Barbara--has been termed "Confluent Education." In defining confluent education, Brown (1971) states:

Confluent education is the term for the integration or flowing together of the affective and cognitive elements in individual and group learning - sometimes called humanistic or psychological education.

Affective refers to the feeling or emotional aspect of experience and learning. How a child or adult feels about wanting to learn, how he feels as he learns, and what he feels after he has learned are included in the affective domain.

Cognitive refers to the activity of the mind in knowing an object, to intellectual functioning. What an individual learns and the intellectual process of learning it would fall within the cognitive domain - unless what is learned is an attitude or value, which would be affective learning.

(pp. 3-4)

Stated more simply, confluent education could be described as "putting feeling and thinking together in the learning process" (Brown, 1975, p. ix).

Confluent education has its foundation in Gestalt psychology. The word "Gestalt" indicates a whole, a functional unit. As applied to education it states, in effect, that we cannot educate students as if they were disembodied intellects. Students are persons with emotions as well as intellects and both have to be taken into account in the educational process.

When a teacher acknowledges the feelings of his students a sense of the "here and now" creeps into the classroom making it come alive and providing motivation--the perennial problem of teaching. The concept of the "here and now" is one of the basic tenets of Gestalt psychology.

In the preface to The Live Classroom, which contains many articles by teachers on confluent education, as practiced in the classroom, Brown (1975) points out that the book, and consequently confluent education, is not for all teachers, parents, or readers. To use it one must be:

... somewhat 'up front' at least with himself and, it is hoped, with some others, in terms of his own feelings and values. Of course, it is not a prerequisite that one do this in order to be considered a good teacher. There are many good teachers who consider their private thoughts and feelings sacrosanct and they are absolutely entitled to their privacy. The confluent teacher, however, tends to be sharing of himself.
(p. 14)

Brown (1975) makes the educated guess that 25 per cent of teachers are already intuitively teaching confluent education. About another 50 per cent (to varying degrees) are capable of accepting and learning this approach, while the remaining teachers will probably not be open to change. As a result of the work done by Brown and his colleagues, an academic program on the graduate level has been developed at the University of California, Santa Barbara, providing Master's and Ph.D. degrees in confluent education.

Another approach to psychological education has been devised by Gerald Weinstein and his team at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. It is called "self-science education" (Weinstein, 1973). Basically, the concept of self-science education is, as the name implies, an application of the principles of science to the self. Science is simply a systematic way of gaining knowledge. An hypothesis is developed, tested against the certainty of the laws of probability and either discarded, accepted as highly probable, or perhaps modified

and tested again.

When this method is contrasted with the usual way of obtaining knowledge of the self, we find--unlike in the scientific approach--all kinds of hypotheses about the self ("I am shy"), about others ("John Smith dislikes me"), are often accepted without testing. The self-concept is a cluster of hypotheses about the self. Many of us have negative ideas about ourselves, but never test them.

Weinstein and his colleagues have devised various conceptual tools to aid in self-science education. One of these tools has been named the "Trumpet."

This is a step-by-step model--there are eight steps in all--which starts with an experience--an individual's confrontation with some aspect of the environment.

This experience generates data (step 1). The next six steps involve a self-examination of the reaction to the experience and a testing of possible alternative reactions. Testing alternative behaviours provides new data and introduces the element of choice. The eighth step involves a choice among the alternative behaviours.

When a person is taught how to examine his behaviour in the light of the "Trumpet" model, he can pass this technique on to others. The hoped for outcome is that learners become teachers,

... capable of facilitating the expansion of each other's self-knowledge as well as their own, which is the ultimate goal of self-science education. (Weinstein, 1973, p. 606)

In May, 1973, a special issue of the Personnel and Guidance Journal was devoted to psychological education which integrates the cognitive and affective aspects of teaching.

Among the approaches described was "Values Education" by Sidney Simon. For several years Simon and his co-workers have been training people in values clarification (Raths, Harmin & Simon, 1966).

As their work became accepted, they developed techniques and exercises aimed at helping students understand themselves and others through an awareness of the values which motivate behaviour. This is the most important aspect of a value--its link with behaviour.

Although one feels intuitively that values clarification would be of benefit to students, the problem of empirical verification is very difficult, as it is in all areas of the affective domain; the difficulty is one of measurement.

Handy (1970), in dealing with the measurement of values, states that little of significance has been achieved to date. However, he feels that advances in knowledge can be made without precise quantification.

But to insist that assertions are warranted only if elaborately and precisely quantified neglects much of the history of science; often in an early stage of enquiry even crude quantification may be useful and mark an important advance. (p. 12)

In any event, it seems that values education is here to stay, since values have such a pervasive effect on human behaviour.

Another area which could be classified as psychological education (keeping in mind the UNESCO definition of psychology) is the area of moral development, as investigated by Kolberg (1976).

Kolberg studied how children and young adults reason about moral issues. He theorized there were six stages of moral development and an individual's thinking could be at any of these stages.

The developmental stages begin with the child using punishment as a norm of judgement for solving a moral problem. At the other end

of the scale (the sixth stage), the individual is guided in resolving his moral dilemmas by his ethical principles, e.g., respect for the dignity and value of human life. Kolberg's approach can be used as another route to self-knowledge. It provides a means to uncover how far along the road of moral development an individual has progressed since childhood.

In high schools in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the curriculum includes an elective to promote human development and growth of adolescents entitled, "Psychology of Counselling." The approach used in this course was to teach counselling skills to high school students using their classmates as clients. An evaluation of this course by Bernier and Rustad (1977) indicated it contributed to the maturing process in adolescents. For example, on the Newbert Borton, "Things I Learned in this Class Checklist," over 80 per cent of the class indicated they learned--to listen (92%), to understand people (92%), to be aware of other people (85%).

9 No review of psychological education would be complete without a reference to behaviour modification. To some, "behaviour modification" connotes manipulation. However, when the principles of behaviour modification (based on learning theory) are explained to the learner, it becomes a very useful tool for self-control.

This approach--teaching the learner to use behaviour modification on himself--is described in "Self-determined Behavior Change," a 1973 study by Robert Goshiko of the Western Massachusetts Learning Problems Laboratory. Goshiko was concerned with discovering whether elementary school children could learn about behaviour modification and

apply it to themselves by changing a behaviour of their own choice.

The primary tool used in this study was immediate video feedback. The project was based on a framework of openness between the child and the counsellor. In other words, the children were looked on as co-researchers with their instructors.

One child described the behaviour she decided to change: "I'm always looking at my feet when people talk to me." Another observed, "I wish I could stop biting my fingernails."

Results from this study gave clear evidence that children can learn the basics of behaviour modification and, with the help of video training, use this knowledge to change their own behaviour.

This literature review of psychological education can best be summed up by pointing out the major themes which bind the diverse approaches to psychological education together:

First, all approaches are alike in their objective--self-knowledge.

Secondly, all approaches place emphasis on the affective side of the personality.

Thirdly, all approaches deal with content which is relevant to the student's daily experience, inside and outside the classroom.

Fourthly, in psychological education, the students become involved in the learning process.

Fifthly, in psychological education, students and teachers acknowledge their feelings in the "here and now." This sense of immediacy creates a "live classroom" and promotes motivation--the perennial problem of teaching.

From this review of the literature on psychology as taught in secondary schools, and related programs of psychological education, it is apparent that changes in some aspects of self-perception is a primary expected outcome of such efforts. In this study, changes in level of self-esteem and self-control were selected as criteria of changes in perception of self.

The notion that the self-concept influences behaviour has been a part of psychology for many years. Yet, as with most self-referent constructs, there are problems of definition (Wylie, 1974). Insofar as this study is concerned the self-concept refers to the individuals' overall assessment of self in terms of high or low self-esteem or "a person's emotional attitude towards himself" (Scheirer & Kraut, 1979, p. 141).

Wylie (1974), in evaluating self-concept research, points out a major difficulty which theorists encounter. This concerns the ambiguity which arises in relation to the phenomenological (conscious) and non-phenomenological (unconscious) aspects of the self-concept. More specifically, the attitudes, motivations, and perceptions, which may or may not be admitted into awareness by the individual. However, this may be less of a problem in the present study since one of its purposes is to ascertain if the self-concept can be made more conscious, more insightful, and more positive, through growth in self-knowledge. If the self-concept can be improved in this way an increase in self-esteem may follow. In this connection Burns (1979) refers to two kinds of self-esteem. One (spurious) is characterized by a defensive style which rejects or minimizes failure; the other (genuine) is more accepting of

failure since it is less threatened by it. If growth in students' self-knowledge can be promoted then it may result in an increase in "genuine" self-esteem.

In dealing with the self-concept Burns (1979) emphasizes its phenomenological aspects:

The phenomenological approach to behaviour, into the principles of which the modern theory of self conception has become cemented, interprets behaviour in terms of analytical categories imposed by an observer. That is to say that behaviour can best be understood as growing out of the individual subject's frame of reference. (p. 32)

With regard to the relationship of the self-concept to education, it appears that the numerous studies which have been undertaken have not shown that an enhancement in self-concept results in an improvement in academic achievement. Scheirer & Kraut (1979) after reviewing several studies draw the following conclusion:

... the overwhelmingly negative evidence reviewed here for a causal connection between self-concept and academic achievement should create caution among both educators and theorists who have heretofore assumed that enhancing a person's feelings about himself would lead to academic achievement. (p. 145)

However, Burns (1979) in a similar review of empirical studies infers a reciprocal relationship between self-concept and academic success:

At the present state of knowledge it seems reasonable to assume that the relationship between self-concept and academic attainment is reciprocal, not unidirectional. Academic success raises or maintains self-esteem, while self-esteem influences performance through expectations, standards, recognition of personal strengths, higher motivation and level of persistence. (p. 283)

With regard to the present study, which links self-knowledge and self-esteem, insight into this relationship can be enhanced by

considering the self as subject and the self as object, or alternately the Knower and Known (Burns, 1979).. The implication of this dichotomy is that the adolescent's knowledge of self, on which the self-concept is based, can be of varying degrees of intensity and insightfulness. A continuum can be visualized along which would lie two extremes: one pole representing individuals who, through avoidance of self-knowledge, are almost strangers to themselves and consequently low in genuine self-esteem; the other representing individuals who not only make an effort to know and face themselves but who also possess the self-esteem this self-knowledge generates.¹

Besides instigating changes in the self-concept, self-knowledge may also lead to greater self-control. The notion of increased self (internal) control can be understood in terms of the internal-external locus of control construct -- a construct based on the assumption that beliefs affect behaviour. The underlying theory postulates two types of individuals: (1) the externally oriented person who believes that life's events are due to luck, fate, or chance; (2) the internally oriented person who believes life's events are mainly due to one's own efforts (Lefcourt, 1976).

The conceptual framework which constitutes the background to the locus of control construct is to be found in social learning theory. However, as the construct developed it, in turn, influenced social

¹ The writer believes that there is a Christian dimension to self-knowledge which, although fundamental, is beyond the scope of this thesis.

learning theory so that an interactive effect took place. Social learning theory deals with how individuals make behavioural choices among the many possibilities available in a given situation. Besides the situation, it takes into account the individual's reinforcement values and expectancy of success, so that human behaviour is attributed to a three factor motivational force (Phares, 1976).

The locus of control construct, together with Rotter's internal-external locus of control scale, have generated considerable research. Smith (1970), in reporting on the effects of therapeutic intervention, found that patients who sought therapy to resolve an acute life crisis showed a significant decrease in belief in external control. Whereas patients who became involved in therapy without experiencing a crisis state showed no change in locus of control belief. This seems to indicate that learning to effectively handle life's problems increases the individual's belief in internal control.

A study by Foulds (1971) examined the effects of personal growth experiences on a group of thirty undergraduates. The intervention consisted of 4 half hour sessions once a week for eight weeks. A control group received no treatment. Results from the posttests of the internal-external locus of control scale showed an increase in internal scores for the experimental group indicating a shift from an external to an internal frame of reference.

Insofar as experimental evidence for the effectiveness of psychological education is concerned, some studies show significant results while others do not. Two difficulties seem to arise: the first--inherent in the experimental method itself--centres around the

problem of valid measurement of internal states; the second--inherent in the individual--has to do with resistance to change, particularly over the short term. In any event a comparative analysis of these experimental studies is difficult since they utilize different curricula, and approaches.

One final point needs emphasis. This has to do with teaching a psychology course oriented towards self-knowledge. Not all teachers will be comfortable with instructional procedures required to deal with both affective and cognitive processes, as already pointed out (Brown, 1975). A variety of teaching methods must be used (see Appendix A) but all are designed to draw out the adolescent student by encouraging reflection and a sharing of ideas. Also the teacher should be the type of person who, without conscious effort, models the course content in his own behaviour. For example, a teacher who gives a lesson on "listening," and spends the entire class period lecturing, is not practicing what he teaches. In addition to modelling the behaviour taught, the teacher will need various skills, such as competency in handling small group discussions, a facility for pointing out applications of principles to everyday life, and an ability to make advantageous use of peer teaching.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the method used in the two components of this study. The purpose of the preliminary investigation was to obtain a broad view of the nature of high school psychology as taught in the United States. The qualitative (descriptive) approach employed seemed best suited for the purpose. By contrast, quantitative methods were used in the experimental study in an attempt to measure the effects of high school psychology on Newfoundland students.

Preliminary Investigation

Research on high school psychology in the United States--which took place in April and May, 1979--was undertaken by way of a preliminary investigation. The purpose of the investigation was to look, listen, and absorb all that could be learned about high school psychology. It is felt that this attitude was more productive than a more rigorously structured approach, which, in a certain sense, can pre-determine the data to be collected. This approach is similar to the "unstructured interview" as described by Schwartz and Jacobs (1979), except that in the present case some set questions were posed.

The underlying concern was to ascertain how psychology was taught to American adolescents. Was it taught as an objective science like physics or biology, for example, or was self-understanding the main objective of the course as indicated in the literature?

Supplementary questions of interest were: (1) Do teachers have an academic background in psychology, and in what department is the subject taught? (2) What grades are taught? (3) Topics covered? (4) Is psychology an elective? (5) What text books are used? (6) How long is the course? (7) In what year did the school begin teaching psychology? (8) Are many diversified teaching methods used?

Twenty high schools in the eastern United States were visited, as follows:

Madison High School, Boston, Mass.

George Marshall High School, Falls Church (suburb of Washington, D.C.)

Pinellas Park High School, Pinellas Park, Fla.

St. Petersburg Catholic High School, St. Petersburg, Fla.

Lakewood High School, St. Petersburg, Fla.

Seminole Senior High School, Seminole, Fla.

C.A. Brown High School, Charlestown, S.C.

Hanahan High School, North Charleston, S.C.

St. Andrews High School, Charleston, S.C.

Dreher High School, Columbia, S.C.

Northern High School, Durham, N.C.

Southern High School, Durham, N.C.

Roanoke Catholic High School, Roanoke, Va.

Cave Spring High School, Roanoke, Va.

Northside High School, Roanoke, Va.

Amherst Regional High School, Amherst, Mass.

Hampshire Regional High School, West Hampton, Mass.

Bucksport High School, Bucksport, Maine

Brewer Regional High School, Brewer, Maine

Bangor High School, Bangor, Maine

The writer observed classes in progress, interviewed teachers, and obtained written reports from students on how they reacted to high school psychology in terms of its usefulness in everyday life. Questions were raised regarding curricula, instructional approaches and educational objectives as outlined in Chapter 1.

Experimental Study

This section has six sub-divisions: (1) Pilot study of psychology course (Appendix A); (2) Sample used in the study; (3) Design; (4) Instrumentation; (5) Procedure; (6) Limitations.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was carried out for a one-week period with a Grade X class at Mary Queen of the World School in St. John's. This was in the nature of a trial run of the course to ascertain if Grade X students would be receptive to the subject matter and instructional procedures. The content selected by the writer (teacher) was Unit 6 of the course, Reflection on Values.

The unit on values was chosen because values, tied as they are to our emotions, have such a pervasive effect on human behaviour. In this connection Woznicki (1980) quotes Wojtyla:

Wojtyla describes "value-feeling" in the following words: "By value, we understand all that toward which man opens himself in his internal life, and toward which he strives in his actions. . . ." (p. 26)

A questionnaire was prepared and administered, at the end of the week's teaching, to obtain students' evaluation as to whether the unit was beneficial, interesting, relevant to daily experience. A summary of results follows:

95 per cent of students found the topic (values) interesting.

90 per cent of students found the topic (values) meaningful to them.

100 per cent of students found the topic (values) was important for their overall education.

100 per cent of students found they understood group and class discussion.

90 per cent of students found the topic (values) relevant to their everyday experience.

80 per cent of students found they benefitted from class activities.

Students' comments were also solicited on the questionnaire and also after each day's class, as homework. Some examples follow:

Psychology is the study of my mind, my emotions and my awareness of my actions. These classes impress me in a way that I feel like my thoughts are being exposed. It makes me aware now of how I am going to act. The study of my mind is fascinating. Yet no one knows how and why we think what we do. To explore the inner thoughts is an amazing experience. The impression I get is that we are trying to make contact with our thoughts and how they affect our actions.

When I reflect on today's class, I remember that before you make an action you have to think about the many consequences which may happen and then decide whether or not to act.

I think the topic values is an important topic in our lives for without values decision-making would be very difficult.

Values are the basis for our thoughts which are parallel with our actions and today's teenagers perform many good and many stupid actions, so I feel this was a good topic.

The above reactions from the pilot study with Grade X students seems to indicate that psychological education has something of value to offer adolescents. Students appeared to be able to see the relevance of the unit taught to their own lives, which is a major objective of the course. The pilot study did not indicate a need for changes in course content or instructional procedures; consequently, it was followed by the experimental study.

Sample

The sample used in the study consisted of a Grade X social studies class of 21 students, at Mary Queen of the World School in St. John's. This school was selected because permission to do the study there was readily obtained.

The control group consisted of 18 students in a Grade X social studies class at Holy Spirit School, Manuels. Intact classes were used since random assignment to experimental and control groups was not practical.

Both schools are administered by the Roman Catholic School Board in St. John's, and are all-grade schools. The student body is co-ed, consequently the experimental and control groups were made up of both sexes. Each school could be considered as serving an urban population since, although Manuels and the surrounding area is outside St. John's, it has become heavily populated in recent years and is close enough to be considered a satellite of the city. The students of both classes were designated by their schools as having average ability.

Design

As already indicated, subjects were not randomly assigned to experimental and control groups; intact classes were used for practical reasons. The design could best be described as quasi-experimental involving a pretest/posttest paradigm with non-equivalent groups (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). As a check on the equality of the two groups with respect to the research variables, pretests were administered to both groups; no significant differences were found. An analysis of grade point averages by t-test revealed no significant difference in ability between groups.

The study was designed to test the following hypotheses:

- (1) Adolescent students taught a high school course in psychology (USO) will show a stronger belief that life's events are due to self (internal) control rather than fate or luck, as compared with adolescent students not taught the course.
- (2) Adolescent students taught a high school course in psychology (USO) will show a significant improvement in self-concept, as compared with adolescent students not taught the course.

Definition of terms is as follows:

Teach is used in its denotive sense: "to make to know how; show how; hence to train or accustom to some action" (Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, 1953).

High School Psychology is defined in the applied sense of "understanding self and others."

Belief that life's events are due to self (internal) control refers to Rotter's Internal-External Locus of Control Scale which measures the extent to which the individual believes life's events are due to one's own efforts rather than luck or fate.

Self-concept refers to the individual's assessment of himself; his evaluation of self in terms of high or low self-esteem.

Instrumentation

Rotter's Internal-External Locus of Control Scale. The I-E scale and the locus of control construct had their origin in the case work of clinical psychologists at Ohio State University in the 1950s.

E.J. Phares, a collaborator with Rotter, describes the locus of control construct in these terms:

Suppose that (externally oriented) person feels that personal achievements, failures, victories, and shortcomings all stem from the capricious or unfathomable hand of fate or luck. Contrast this person with one who is convinced that such outcomes are the direct product of one's own efforts (or lack of them) or personal attributes. Will there be a difference in the behavior and overall life-styles of two such divergent individuals? (Phares, 1976, p. 1)

From this description a continuum representing the locus of control construct can be visualized: One pole indicating the passive personality, characterized by belief in the uselessness of effort or self-control since events in life are the result of external forces such as fate, luck, etc.; the opposite pole indicating the active and involved personality, characterized by the belief that effort and self-control can bring about desired outcomes.

The Internal-External Control Scale was developed by Rotter and his associates to measure the extent to which an individual believes his life's events--successes and failures--are under internal (self) control or the control of external forces, as described above.

The I-E scale underwent many revisions. The final version consists of 23 I-E items and six filler items. It is scored in an external direction; the higher the score, the greater the individual's belief that his life is controlled by the environment.

Atkin (1979) refers to the prolific research generated by the locus of control construct and the I-E scale; he contends the scale has been well validated but offers no evidence to support the contention.

Phares (1976) states that the test-retest reliability of the scale appears adequate. He cites reliability data reported by Rotter (1966) as varying from .49 to .83 depending on sample and time interval; Hersch and Schirb (1967), .48 to .84; Harron and Ferrante (1969), .75 over a six-week time period.

This writer, after spending a great deal of time researching a suitable measuring instrument for this study, found the I-E locus of control construct and scale extremely well suited to his purpose. The purpose of teaching high school psychology is to show adolescents how to be more aware of what goes on internally in order that through this self-knowledge more internal (self) control can be exercised.

Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (TSCS). Qualitative evidence from students in the United States suggests that high school psychology can change the self-concept. The use of the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale is an attempt to measure this change and determine its statistical significance.

The TSCS is one of the more frequently used self-concept measures. It contains 100 self-descriptive statements and ten assessing self-criticisms. Items are worded half positively and half negatively as a control for positive or negative habits of responding. Each item on the scale is rated along a five point continuum from "completely true" to "completely false."

As evidence for reliability, the TSCS manual (Fitts, 1965) gives test-retest reliability coefficients of all major scores derived from the scale as greater than six. Also, over long periods of time--a year or more--profiles obtained from the scores by repeated measures maintain their characteristic features. This is seen as additional

evidence of reliability.

With regard to validity the manual explains content validity in terms of classification of items. Specifically, an item was retained in the scale only if there was unanimous agreement by experts as to its classification. Validity is also attested to by the ability of the TSCS to discriminate between groups, as for example between delinquents and non-delinquents. Correlation with other similar measures is also a method of assessing validity. In this regard, the TSCS correlates with two major personality measures--the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory and the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule.

Procedure

The purpose of this study was to determine if a course in high school psychology (USO) taught to adolescents would (1) significantly increase their belief that life's events are due to self-control rather than luck or fate, and (2) significantly improve their self-concept.

To check for variation between groups in levels of the dependent variables, prior to commencement of teaching, the Rotter Internal-External Locus of Control Scale and the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale were administered to both groups in January, 1982.

The writer began teaching the course to a Grade X social studies class at Mary Queen of the World School on February 1, 1982. Classes were held for one period each day, five days a week. The regular Grade X social studies teacher was present during these sessions.

With regard to course content, detailed lesson plans are given in Appendix A. Topics covered included learning (conditioning), thinking (problem solving), creative thinking, emotions, behaviour,

which would be typical of a high school course as determined by textbook content. It was assumed that the 28 lesson program would be of adequate duration to demonstrate the hypothesized outcomes. Group counselling programs often take place in a short time period.

After completion of the course on March 16, 1982, a posttest of the Locus-of-Control Scale and the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale was administered to both groups. Additional data collected consisted of grade point averages obtained from school records. The purpose of procuring the latter was to determine if GPA interacted with treatment.

Limitations

It was not possible to randomly allocate students to the experimental and control groups due to practical considerations. However, there is no reason to suppose that a class of average Grade X students at Mary Queen of the World School would be different in any systematic way from a class of Grade X students in any comparable urban centre.

The design used in this study does not allow for the determination of the interactive effects of the teacher with the curriculum being utilized.

Another limitation has to do with student motivation. Psychology is an elective in the social studies curriculum in the United States. Consequently, an element of personal choice is involved, which could possibly increase the student's motivation to apply the psychological knowledge gained, to his own behaviour. In the case of the present study, the course was not optional.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter gives an account of the research findings and discusses some possible explanations for results obtained in the experimental study.

Preliminary Study

The underlying concern of the preliminary investigation was to determine the philosophy behind the teaching of psychology in United States high schools. Was psychology taught as an objective science like physics or biology, or was self-understanding the main objective of the course? Additional questions of interest, as outlined in Chapter 1, referred to the curricula, instructional procedures, and educational objectives.

From the writer's observations in various classrooms, and from interviews with teachers, it was evident that most teachers (17) advocated the self-understanding approach. This confirmed reports in the literature.

One teacher, for example, in a high school in Virginia demonstrated her students' awareness of ego defenses by asking her class for an example. A student replied, "Blaming someone else for bad marks!"

Another instance indicative of the self-understanding approach was described by a teacher in Maine. He explained how in one exercise the class forms a circle and a volunteer is requested to enter the "ring." Anyone may ask the volunteer a question. Communication and trust are the benefits of this exercise. Also, the teacher contended,

"You can learn a lot about yourself from questions others ask you about yourself."

Students also saw self-understanding as a main objective of high school psychology, confirming data from a study by Stahl (1977) in which teachers were the respondents.

Students' comments on the theme of self-understanding will be given later in this chapter. The following examples are reported here:

I feel that a psychology course offered in high school is very important. It helps a person come to a better understanding of themselves and other people. High school can be a confusing time for most teenagers and I feel that a psychology course promotes self-awareness and offers insight into personal relationships.

(Anita, Grade XI)

Psychology can be an excellent course to teach if it is handled properly. An objective and carefully controlled psychology course can help a high school student to understand his personality and the personality of others. This understanding can be very important at a time when a student is wondering and worrying the most who he is, where he is going and why.

(Nancy, Grade XII)

In summary, it could be stated that information in the literature as to the main objective of high school psychology, i.e., helping adolescents to achieve self-understanding, was confirmed by research in United States high schools.

In addition to determining the main purpose of the course, answers were sought to supplementary questions dealing with teachers' academic background, course content, etc. These questions and the answers obtained are given below:

- (1) Do teachers have an academic background in psychology; and in what department is the subject taught?

Psychology was included in the Social Studies Department and in most cases, taught by teachers majoring in social studies. As examples

of backgrounds, one teacher had a major in social studies and a minor in physical education; three teachers majored in psychology; one was a psychology/sociology major; one had a Master's degree in psychology; another teacher majored in sociology; and one was a history major with a Master's degree in political science.

(2) In what grades is psychology taught?

Psychology was taught in Grades XI and XII. In one school Grade X was included, and in another Grades IX and X.

(3) What topics were covered?

The units taught followed the text book used. The undernoted core topics were usually included:

Personality	→	healthy (normal) and unhealthy (abnormal)
Learning	--	conditioning
Motivation		
Emotion		

(4) Is psychology an elective?

Yes.

(5) What text books are used?

No text book stood out as first choice. The commonly used textbooks were:

Hersey, G., and Lago, J. Living Psychology
 Gordon, Sol. Psychology for You
 Forehand, G., Horner, A., Sorenson, H., and Main, M.
Psychology for Living
 CRM Books. Understanding Psychology
 Engle, T., and Snelgrove, L. Psychology: Its
Principles and Applications

(6) How long is the course?

Among 13 schools answering this question, 6 offered Psychology I the first semester (18 weeks) and Psychology II the second; 4 schools offered psychology the first semester and sociology the second; 2 schools offered a one-semester psychology course; 1 school offered Psychology I and Psychology II the same semester. One school offered a one-semester course in psychology and a one-semester course in anthropology.

(7) In what year did the school begin teaching psychology?

In one school psychology had been taught since 1955. Another school commenced teaching psychology in 1974. Some teachers could not give a specific date on which the course was introduced. However, in six schools psychology was introduced in the 1960s (several schools visited were built in this decade), and in five schools in the early 1970s.

(8) Are many diversified teaching methods used?

Teaching methods included: films; small group activities; class activities; student projects; student research projects; role playing; guest lectures; lecture and discussion; articles brought to class for discussion (e.g., from the magazine Psychology Today); student presentations (i.e., peer teaching).

The general atmosphere in the psychology classrooms observed by the writer was one of alertness and active participation. One teacher reported he had extended his course from 18 to 22 weeks because of student interest—an unusual occurrence in a high school!

When investigating course content, some unexpected information came to light. Specifically it was a surprise to learn of the coverage given, first to the ideas of Sigmund Freud, the father of unconscious motivation; and secondly, to abnormal psychology (the unhealthy personality).

Freud's ideas were introduced in the context of personality theories. Ego defenses was a popular topic. With regard to abnormal psychology, in schools in which two psychology courses are offered, Psychology I is labelled "normal" and Psychology II is labelled "abnormal" psychology. Apparently American adolescents are interested in learning about the unhealthy, as well as the healthy personality.

The qualitative data reported on above originated with teachers and classroom observations. Written reports were also obtained from students as to the value of a high school psychology course for adolescents.

These reports were analyzed, and the themes extracted are presented below, together with samples of students' comments illustrative of each theme:

Themes

Examples of Themes in Students' Own Words

- (1) Self-knowledge,
self-understanding
*-21-

"... it [psychology] has taught me things about myself I never knew. Like why I act the way I do. That is very important for teenagers to know. . . ."

"By taking this course [psychology] I have a greater understanding of my own personality, my parents' behaviour and my home life. I think

*Indicates number of students addressing this theme.

ThemesExamples of Themes in Students' Own Words

(1) cont'd.

everyone that goes through a psych course feels more complete, a more whole person. It is very helpful in shaping a sense of identity and an excellent course for seniors because they must decide which directions and style their life will take following graduation."

(No name given)

"In a well-rounded psychology class a person may learn a great deal about himself. He may learn to cope with emotions that were unreachable before. . . ."

(Barbara, Grade XII)

" . . . it [psychology] helped me understand myself and the difficult times I'm going through at this stage of my personal development. . . ."

(No name given)

(2) Knowledge,
Understanding of Others
-21-

" . . . psychology helps you understand why different people react to the same thing in different ways. . . . Psychology helps you understand all people. . . ."

(Patty, Grade XII)

I think what I have out of this course is an understanding of not only myself but also others. I can relate to the different ways people act and their moods they might happen to be in.

I can not only understand the grown persons but also the infants. Their needs, wants, etc. . . ."

(No name given)

" . . . it [psychology] has helped me understand myself better and especially to understand others' behaviour. . . . It [psychology] has helped me be prepared for college in being able to relate to other people. I studied about personalities of people with handicaps, learning disabilities and the mentally retarded. When you learn about people with abnormal behaviour or with a physical handicap, it is easier to accept them when you come in contact with them. . . ."

(Gina, Grade XII)

(3) Helps in
everyday life
(e.g., handling
problems
etc.)
-18-

" . . . I know it [psychology] has helped me through some very difficult times. Psychology helps us teenagers deal with our everyday problems rationally. . . ."

(Annie, Grade XI)

ThemesExamples of Themes in Students' Own Words

(3) cont'd.

"I think psychology should be taught in high school because it teaches a person to understand himself and also to deal with the problems of everyday life."

(Kathy, Grade XI)

"... if the student is willing he/she can incorporate information given in the course into everyday life. This is true because in everyday social interactions this student will come in contact with many different people. Having some sort of psychological background on these people, this student can sometimes interact more efficiently. This is not only true because you know something about the other person's reasons for doing something, but it is because you know more about yourself. . . ."

(Michael, Grade XII)

(4) Helps understand the mind, stimulates the intellect, is useful and enriching, helps make choices

"It seems sinful to keep students from learning more about the precious gift we take for granted, our mind."

I, myself, have definitely benefited from studying psychology. I understand people better, including myself. In all honesty, it has been one of the few intriguing classes I've taken. Plain and simple, psychology has enriched my life."

(Jennie, Grade XII)

"The learning of psychology has proven to me to be intellectually stimulating and fascinating. The study of psychology has provided mankind with so many helpful clues as to why we act the way we do. Providing interesting insights not only on self-actions and reactions in various situations and relationships, but also more understanding for the attitudes and actions of others. The development of the study of psychology has been one of the most significant breakthroughs in modern thought. Its understanding should be encouraged on every level of the educational process."

(Julie, Grade XII)

"I think psychology is a very beneficial aspect of learning and should be taught in secondary or high school. This subject can help the individual understand the people around him. In high school the average person undergoes many changes in personality, thus being able to understand these changes is vital. Psychology at this time would give the person an open mind as to what is going on about him. It would give him ideas on critical choices that have to be made during this time."

(Terrance, Grade XII)

ThemesExamples of Themes in Students' Own Words

- (5) Helps in understanding human behaviour, helps in inter-personal relationships
-13-

"... psychology teaches about the interactions of the individual. How the individual reacts within himself and how he reacts with people around him. . . . He learns to accept the behavior of others because now he may understand it better."

—(Barbara, Grade XII)

"... it [psychology] does help one to realize what other people are like and I think that is the most important thing, to get along good together."

(Ward, Grade XII)

"I feel by studying psychology in high school I have benefited in many ways. I've adjusted not to judge people at first meetings and impressions. Learning psychology teaches one that generally everyone is the same and have emotional feelings and problems all alike. I have been able to talk out my problems better with my parents and have been able to solve them myself without a doubt. . . ."

(Boebe, Grade XI)

- (6) Helps students--to mature, to change, to study, to learn
-16-

"... psychology can help to create in a person a much better insight into his own behavior and ways he may be able to improve himself. . . ."

(Debbie, Grade XII)

"Psychology can also be a help to students in other classes. For example, by studying about the different methods of learning, a student may discover new and better ways to prepare for tests and other class assignments."

(Tim, Grade XII)

"... I have also found out some interesting things about myself; why I act the way I do for example. And in a few instances, when that behavior was detrimental I was able to recognize and correct or modify my behavior."

(Lynn, Grade XI)

- (7) Helps in career choice
-8-

"... it [psychology] can also open the door to careers in psychology, psychiatry, mental health care--all interesting, rewarding careers."

(Jennie, Grade XII)

ThemesExamples of Themes in Students' Own Words

- (7) cont'd. "... in mastering this course, a future career choice may have been introduced. This course serves as an excellent motivating factor not only for future psychologists, but for social workers, therapists and ward attendants as well."
(Maren, Grade XI)
- "... the field of psychology is going to grow larger and larger and for this reason students should have the opportunity to study psychology in high school, in order to open them up to the possibility of a psychology related career."
(Debbie, Grade XII)
- (8) Should be "... it [psychology] can teach them [students] what taught in they can do to help themselves. ... They feel more high confident with themselves and with others, thus making school their life a little easier and better. I firmly believe that students should have the opportunity to, if they wish, study psychology."
(Belinda, Grade XII)
- "Psychology has been my favorite class in high school, ... I think everyone should have the chance to take psychology because it gives them better chance of understanding themselves and people in general."
(Anne, Grade XII)
- "Most high school courses you take don't relate to life at all. ... Psychology is very useful and becomes active in a person's mind from the first day the course begins and is with you the rest of your life. I believe it would be profitable at the high school level."
(Rocky, Grade XII)

This completes results of research in United States high schools. In summary it could be said that the main goal of high school psychology is to help adolescents understand themselves, i.e., their own behaviour. This goal is sought through the curriculum and instructional methods, which not only impart knowledge of human behaviour but also encourage students to apply this knowledge to their own lives. Students' reactions to the course indicate they are aware of the potential which psychology has to help them in their struggle towards self-understanding and self-control.

Experimental Study

The experimental study was carried out with a class of 21 Grade X students at Mary Queen of the World School as the experimental group, and a class of 18 Grade X students at Holy Spirit School as the control group.

Treatment consisted of a course (28 lessons) in high school psychology, and pre and posttest measures were taken with two instruments--the Internal-External Locus of Control Scale and the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale.

The pretest scores were analyzed with a t-test to ascertain the extent to which the experimental and control groups differed in levels of the dependent variables prior to treatment. Grade point averages of both groups were also subjected to a t-test analysis to determine if any significant differences existed in the initial levels of ability.

As shown in Table 1, no significant differences were found, indicating that both groups were from the same population.

TABLE 1

GRADE POINT AVERAGES; PRETEST MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR
LOCUS OF CONTROL AND TENNESSEE SELF-CONCEPT SCALES
FOR EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

	Experimental			Control			
	\bar{X}	SD	N	\bar{X}	SD	N	t
Locus of Control	10.52	.92	21	9.39	2.7	18	1.75 NS
Tennessee Self-Concept	309.10	31.09	21	320.56	15.8	18	1.41 NS
Grade Point Average	63.95	8.63	21	68.39	10.63	18	1.45 NS

An analysis of covariance was performed on the posttest scores, using pretest scores as covariates. This procedure was adopted because even in cases where pretest scores of nonrandomised groups are shown not to differ significantly, equivalency cannot be assumed (Cook & Campbell, 1979).

The following hypotheses were tested at the .05 level of significance:

Hypothesis 1: Adolescent students taught a high school course in psychology (USO) will show a significantly greater belief in the power of self-control to determine life's events rather than luck or chance, as compared with adolescent students who are not taught the course.

Hypothesis 2: Adolescent students taught a high school course in psychology (USO) will show a significant improvement in self-concept, as compared with adolescent students not taught the course.

Means and standard deviations for experimental and control groups are shown in Table 2:

TABLE 2
MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR LOCUS OF CONTROL AND
TENNESSEE SELF-CONCEPT OBTAINED ON POSTTEST
FOR EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

	Experimental			Control		
	\bar{X}	SD	N	\bar{X}	SD	N
Locus of Control	10.14	4.32	21	9.94	1.08	18
Tennessee Self-Concept	319.48	27.76	21	318.72	20.11	18

As will be noted, means of both the I-E scale and the TSCS are slightly higher for the experimental group. However, results of the ANCOVA as presented in Tables 3 and 4 show that these differences are not significant. Consequently, both hypotheses were rejected. Also it was found that there was no interaction between grade point averages and treatment.

TABLE 3

ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE OF POSTTEST SCORES FOR LOCUS OF CONTROL WITH PRETEST SCORES ON THE LOCUS OF CONTROL AS COVARIATE

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F
Covariate				
Locus of Control pretest	155.681	1	155.681	14.322*
Main Effect	15.914	1	15.914	1.464 NS
Residual	413.493	36	43.902	

*Significant at the .001 level.

TABLE 4

ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE FOR POSTTEST SCORES TSCS WITH TSCS PRETEST SCORES AS COVARIATE

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F
Covariate				
TSCS pretest	12067.211	1	12067.211	47.104*
Main Effect	783.141	1	783.141	3.057 NS
Residual	8977.262	36	266.989	

*Significant at the .000 level.

Discussion

The preliminary investigation indicated that high school psychology (USO) can help adolescents understand themselves, i.e., their own behaviour. This data came from students who had taken the course in United States high schools. However, the quantitative data obtained from an experimental study with local students contradicted the descriptive evidence. Some possible reasons for this conflicting evidence are given below.

The data obtained from American adolescents came from students in Grades XI and XII, whereas the local study was carried out with Grade X students. It seems plausible that the American students were more mature, more reflective, and consequently, more receptive to psychological concepts than the younger local students. Supporting this conclusion is the fact that in the great majority of U.S. high schools psychology is not usually taught below the Grade XI level.

It is also worthy of note that in U.S. high schools psychology is an elective. Consequently, a student who makes a decision to take a certain course is likely to be interested in it and motivated to learn. The local students, on the other hand, had no choice; they were a captive audience. This idea of motivation is especially applicable to a course in high school psychology since a student who is not motivated to apply the principles learned to his own life can hardly gain insight into the "why" of his behaviour.

The teacher is also a confounding variable in a study such as this. The writer, who taught the course, had just two years' classroom experience. Perhaps a more experienced teacher would have achieved a more positive outcome.

Another aspect of the program which may have led to insignificant results had to do with the length of the instructional period.

The course involved 28 lessons taught over a period of approximately five and a half weeks. A longer course may be required, extending over one semester, as is the case in United States high schools.

Finally, a more fundamental question needs to be addressed: Is the scientific model (founded as it is on a rigid researcher-object dichotomy) applicable--without modification--to educational research? Can students be subjected to "treatments" and measured for "effects" as would a passive object in the physical sciences? Perhaps the scientific model needs some modification before it can be applied to persons. Otherwise there may be a danger that the researcher will "measure everything and understand nothing" (Filstead, 1970, p. vii). An alternative research model, which treats subjects as co-researchers with the experimenter, has been proposed by Paul Colaizzi (a learning/theorist turned phenomenologist) in Existential-Phenomenological Alternatives for Psychology (Valle & King, 1978). In commenting on this new research model in the March, 1979 Canadian Counsellor, R. Vance Peavy, University of Victoria, states:

Colaizzi presents an example of research, including procedures used, which could easily be a prototypical model for research into counselling topics.

However, returning to the present experiment, it must be entertained that even in a tightly designed study, with many of the above factors controlled, it may in fact be difficult to demonstrate that the course taught would result in the outcomes predicted.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this thesis was to evaluate the effects of teaching high school psychology to adolescents. Psychology was defined in the applied sense of "understanding self and others."

Two research methods were used in the collection of data: First, the subjective or qualitative method in which information was sought directly from teachers and students in United States high schools, where psychology has been taught for many years. This qualitative approach was in the nature of a preliminary investigation and involved interviews with teachers, observations in the classroom, and self-reports from students. Twenty high schools in the eastern United States were visited.

The second research method involved an experimental study with a class of 21 Grade X social studies students at Mary Queen of the World School, St. John's. The control group consisted of a class of 18 Grade X social studies students at Holy Spirit School, Manuels.

The purpose of the experimental study was to determine if self-knowledge could be taught to adolescents through the medium of high school psychology. Self-knowledge was operationalized in terms of self-control and self-concept, as measured by the Rotter Internal-External Locus of Control Scale and the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale.

Conclusions

The ANCOVA analysis of posttest scores found no significant differences between experimental or control groups. It would appear, therefore, that the hypotheses indicating that adolescents' belief in self-control, and their self-concept would be enhanced by high school psychology should be rejected.

However, this conclusion conflicts with the qualitative data. Consequently, a more cautious approach would be to consider the possibility of a weakness in experimental design or the confounding effects of extraneous variables.

In this connection it is plausible that the length of course was insufficient to bring about change in the dependent variables (e.g., self-concept) which undoubtedly have an innate resistance to change.

Alternately, in the experimental study students had no option but to take the course, whereas in the United States high school psychology is an elective. This difference could affect the students' motivation to learn.

Recommendations for Further Study

1. In view of the problem of measurement (particularly as it relates to construct validity) in self-referent research, it seems almost impossible to obtain quantitative data with any real meaning (Wylie, 1974). Further research, therefore, on high school psychology as a means to self-understanding would be more fruitful if carried out either using qualitative methods, or a modified experimental method in which subjects would be co-researchers with the experimenter. The

latter approach has a common sense appeal since, in researching self-knowledge, subjects are in reality researching themselves.

2. A replication of this study with Newfoundland Grade XI or Grade XII students extending over a one-semester period, using one of the methods recommended above. The teacher selected should value psychological education, that is, education in which the students are "shown how" (the denotive meaning of "teach") their rational (thinking) and affective processes operate.

3. The study recommended above could be a pilot study with a local school board, with a view to introducing psychology (understanding self and others) into the curriculum as an elective for Grades XI and XII.

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APPENDIX A

HIGH SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY LESSON PLANS

UNIT 1: COMMUNICATION-LISTENING.

Note: Handout to be given students before course begins describing psychology as an "Approach to Life." The handout is from Your Self, an introductory text for high school psychology, pp. 6, 7, 8. Also, each student to be given a copy of "Dibs In Search of Self" as homework reading material.

Lesson 1

- (a) Say to students: I am here to teach a mini-course in high school psychology. But I am not starting with psychology, but with communication. Can anyone guess why I am doing this?

After a short wait, ask a specific student or two. If no response, move on. Ask, What does the word "communication" mean to you? Wait, then ask specific students.

Hopefully some answers forthcoming which can be used as a baseline to lead into an explanation of the false assumption that words convey the precise meaning the speaker (teacher) or writer wishes. Explain that words are symbols (stand for) experiences and convey meaning only insofar as the speakers and listeners experiences overlap.

This is why listening and feedback are necessary for teaching (communicating) a course such as psychology which has so much to do with human experience.

- (b) To demonstrate this (i.e., the importance of listening and feedback in a course on psychology) do the following activity with the class.

Understanding Communication. Counselor's Resource Book, Unit 104, p. 6, No. 3. Squares Experiment.

Lesson 2

Film: "Effective Listening," Department of Education, Division of Instruction.

- (a) Tell class before film to try and be aware of their reactions (interior responses). Explain that film is a stimulus and will trigger reactions by each individual. The problem is to be aware of their reactions.
- (b) Show film. _____
- (c) After film have students write a short paragraph on their reactions (thoughts, feelings, questions, experiences, stimulated by film). Have some students share their reactions with class. This sharing

UNIT 1: COMMUNICATION-LISTENING (Cont'd.)

itself can become a listening exercise. When a student has finished speaking select another student to repeat what was said.

Lesson 3

Activity: Communication: Listening Skills, Counsellor's Resource Book for Groups in Guidance, Unit 104, p. 1. (Note: Teacher allows students to choose topic).

Lesson 4

Activity: lesson 3 took this period to complete.

UNIT 2: LEARNING-CLASSICAL CONDITIONING

Lesson 1

Handout: Here's Psychology, pp. 62-64.

Film: Pavlov's Experiment Conditioned Reflex. 9 mins.
Department of Education, Division of Instruction.

Students to be given handout prior to today's class and assigned following homework: "Read handout and write one question on the material you have read. Bring this question to class."

- (a) Students put in groups of 4 to discuss question they have brought to class and attempt to answer them as a group. After 10 or 15 minutes have one or two groups report to the class.
- (b). Show film on conditioned reflex.

Lesson 2

Handout: Your Self: An Introduction to Psychology, pp. 458-460.

This handout deals with conditioning and its application to advertising. Go over the handout with class. Start with them, to get a baseline to teach from. Find out how many students understood what the authors are trying to say. Encourage questions. Stress that conditioning is learned associations (paired stimuli) which are stored in the memory (brain). These associations are "acted out" in future behaviour. All this can take place below the level of awareness. Much of advertising is based on the principle of "learned associations." Repetition is the method used in advertising to strengthen these associations in the memory (brain).

UNIT 3: LEARNING-OPERANT CONDITIONING

Lesson 1

Handout: Psychology for Living, pp. 370 and 134.

- (a) To capture attention, show picture of B.F. Skinner. Explain his work briefly, referring to the handout on Operant Conditioning from Psychology for Living, p. 370. Also refer to handout from same text, p. 134 - Basic Principles of Operant Conditioning.

Question students for feedback to see if meaning is coming across.

Show following definitions on overhead:

"Operant conditioning is the strengthening of a stimulus-response association by following the response with a reward."

"Learning by reinforcement (reward) is called operant conditioning."

Question students as to meaning of these definitions for feedback.

- (b) Allot about 25 minutes to above. Balance of class period to be used in describing tomorrow's field trip to MUN Psychology Department to witness demonstration of conditioning of lab animal. Explain in terms of: (1) purpose of demonstration; (2) what will happen, i.e., animal's behaviour will be conditioned; (3) meaning of what will take place in terms of animal learning and behaviour, and relationship to human learning and behaviour.

Lessons, 2, 3, 4

This demonstration will take about three class periods.

Students witness a lab animal being conditioned at MUN. (Set this up with Psychology Department).

Lesson 5

Discuss principles of operant conditioning in the light of the lab demonstration: Get students' reaction to demonstration. What meaning did it have for them? Encourage application to own behaviour by having students write down two behaviours of their own and the reinforcers (rewards) which "stamped in" these behaviours (habits). Have three or four students read out to the class what they have written (peer teaching).

UNIT 3: • LEARNING-OPERANT CONDITIONING (Cont'd.)

Lesson 6

Guest speaker - Dr. Harley (physiological psychology), MUN
Psychology Department.

Topic - Conditioning - the Brain and Behaviour

To get students thinking about the brain and behaviour prior to this class, have them reflect and write out one question about the brain, as homework. These questions given to Dr. Harley prior to her talk, to be answered the last 15 minutes or so.

UNIT 4: THINKING-PROBLEM SOLVING

Lesson 1

Handout: Living Psychology, pp. 67-70.

- (a) Begin this unit by showing relationship of thinking to previous units in course, i.e., conditioning. (Thinking is the power to look ahead at the consequences of our behaviour and decide.) When animals are conditioned the behaviour, i.e., response to a stimulus, occurs automatically.
- (b) Have student read out in class an adolescent's problem with jealousy, as given in handout. This should stimulate interest and attention.
- (c) Show 5 steps to problem solving on overhead. Teacher explains by taking a mini problem of his (her) own and working it through the 5 steps:
 - (1) Positive attitude. Problems are a part of living.
I can solve them.
 - (2) Describe problem in detail. Get information.
 - (3) Think of different solutions and their probable consequences.
 - (4) Make a decision and act.
 - (5) Evaluate consequences of action.

Note: As homework, have students reflect on and select one of their own problems (not too personal) for tomorrow's class.

UNIT 4: THINKING-PROBLEM SOLVING (Cont'd.)

Lesson 2

Each student is asked to write his "problem" (see note last lesson) on a piece of paper.

Class is divided into groups of four. Each student in group places his piece of paper in a container of some sort for his group. Student who has been assigned the number 1 in his group picks out (blindly) a piece of paper and the problem written on it is worked through by the group, using the steps (up to No. 4) as outlined in last lesson.

The person whose problem is being worked on by the group is the "recorder" for that problem. He writes down a description of how the steps outlined in Lesson 1 were applied to find a solution.

Time allotted for each step is as follows:

Step No. 1 - 1 min.; Step No. 2 - 4 mins.; Step No. 3 - 4 mins.;
Step No. 4 - 2 mins.

Peer teaching: At the end of 11 minutes, first problem should be finished. Pick out several "recorders" to report to the class describing the problem attacked and the steps taken by the group to reach a solution.

Report the above procedure until each student in the group has his problem dealt with. This should take about one more period.

Lesson 3

Continue above small-group activity until completed.

Lesson 4

Probably the most important of the five steps in problem solving given in Lesson 1, is No. 4, decision making. This lesson is a class activity on decision making.

Activity: Decision Making, Counsellor's Resource Book, Unit 16, p. 1.

UNIT 5: THINKING-CREATIVE THINKING

As homework, have each student think up one question about creativity to bring to this class.

Lesson 1

Handout: Here's Psychology, pp. 300-303.

To capture attention, show picture of Einstein (Handout, p. 301).

Ask student what the word "creativity" means to them as a baseline. Lead into the idea that there are two kinds of creativity. Einstein is an example of special talent creativity.

Then show picture of Mrs. Ernesto Mapa, Prospero Place, St. John's, holding a dish of "Chicken Tin," her own creative recipe. (Good Cooks, The Evening Telegram, 9-1-82). This is an example of self-actualizing creativity, which every individual has, and can improve. This unit deals with the latter type of creativity, which springs from each individual's uniqueness.

Go over the handout in class, stressing the following:

- (a) Creativity is not the same as intelligence - a person of average intelligence may be highly creative.
- (b) Characteristics of creative people.
- (c) How to improve your creative thinking.

Have students ask questions (assigned). See if classmates can answer these questions before "jumping in" yourself.

Lesson 2

- (a) Finish answering questions assigned from last lesson until each student has his question answered.
- (b) Activity: Be Yourself Creatively. Counsellor's Resource Book, Unit 301, p. 10.

Lesson 3

Guest speaker on creativity: Bob Sauve, Social Studies,
Mary Queen of the World.

UNIT 6: REFLECTION ON VALUES

Lesson 1

- (a) To capture attention and start this lesson, play tape of "What's It All About, Alfie" (Barbara Striesand); just first few lines of lyrics will do.

Say life is all about the values we freely choose. But we are unaware of many of the values we have absorbed since childhood. The purpose of this unit is to make us more aware of the values we hold and their effect on our behaviour.

- (b) Show film: What Are Values? 10 mins. Department of Education, Division of Instruction.

Remind students film is a stimulus to which each individual will react. The idea is to try and be aware of this interior reaction (response) for class discussion afterwards.

After students have given reaction to film, ask what the word "value" means to them. Using this as a baseline, lead into following definition:

A value is something that is freely chosen from alternatives after considering the consequences of each alternative. And that having been chosen they are celebrated and acted upon repeatedly.

Briefly: A value is freely chosen from alternatives, celebrated (prized), and acted upon.

Explain definition, telling students the key to our values is our behaviour. If we want to know our values, we can start with our behaviour and work backward from there.

Lesson 2

- (a) Finish activity lesson No. 1.
- (b) Activity: Choosing and Ranking Values: Values Clarification as Learning Process, p. 198.

Lesson 3

This lesson period required to finish activity lesson 2. Stress the relationship between our values and our actions.

UNIT 6: REFLECTION ON VALUES (Cont'd.)Lesson 4

Activity: Alternatives Action Search: Values Clarification, p. 198.

Do an example on the board.

Lesson 5

Activity: Consequences Search. Values Clarification, p. 207.

UNIT 7: AWARENESS OF EMOTIONSLesson 1

1 Handout: Your Self: An Introduction to Psychology, pp. 566-567.

2 Handout: Why Am I Afraid to Tell You Who I Am?, pp. 87-93.

- (a) Ask students what the title of this unit means to them? What is an emotion? Tie in the concept "awareness of emotion" with their own experience by asking them to go back in memory to the last time they felt anger, for example. Ask if the flashback brought on some of the feeling of anger.
- (b) Have two students role play "anger" as described in vignette handout No. 1. Describe and discuss the feeling of anger.
- (c) Go over the mechanics of awareness of emotion step by step, as described in handout No. 2.

Lesson 2

Handout: Using Psychology, pp. 177-180.

- (a) Finish going over mechanics of awareness of emotions as described in handout, Why Am I Afraid to Tell You Who I Am?, pp. 87-93, from last lesson.
- (b) Handout from Using Psychology, p. 177. "Dealing with Anger." Have a student read out in class the story of Daniel White. Discuss. Then have students do exercise pp. 177-179.

UNIT 7: AWARENESS OF EMOTIONS (Cont'd.)

Lesson 3

Film: Don't Be Afraid. 12 mins. Department of Education, Division of Instruction.

Handouts: Your Self: An Introduction to Psychology
pp. 586-588 - The emotion of fear.
pp. 560-561 - Self-Love: Necessity or Selfishness.

Living Psychology
p. 183 - Sense of Well-Being, Joy, or Zest for Life.

Deal with the emotions of fear, love and joy as follows:

- (a) Show film "Don't Be Afraid."

Afterwards have students write a paragraph on: What the film meant to me. Select two or three students to share what they have written with class. (Peer teaching).

- (b) Comment on and discuss the emotions of fear, love, and joy, with reference to handouts. Explain the "Avoidance Response" as it relates to fear and anxiety.

UNIT 8: OVERT BEHAVIOUR

Explain to students that all previous units lead up to this one, in the sense that these units offer an explanation of the "why" of overt behaviour, i.e., behaviour which can be seen by others.

Adolescents are often very critical of themselves and fail to see their good points. The purpose of the following activity is to make students aware of the "good" others see in them, because it "comes out" in their overt behaviour.

1. Have each student write his name at the top of a blank page.
2. Have them pass each page from one student to the next in rotation around the class. Each student writes something positive about his classmate as he receives each page (i.e., a comment such as generous, pleasant to be with, helpful, sense of humour, etc.).
3. When the sheet returns to its owner it will have many positive comments on it.
4. Give students a few moments to digest what is on their sheet.
5. Follow with a discussion on the reaction of the students when they view the positive self as seen by their classmates.

APPENDIX B
AMERICAN STUDENTS' SELF-REPORTS
ON THE EFFECTS OF HIGH SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

AMERICAN STUDENTS' SELF-REPORTS
ON THE EFFECTS OF HIGH SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

There are biology classes to teach students how the body functions. There are religion classes to enlighten students concerning matters of the soul. Therefore, it should logically follow that there be psychology classes to instruct students about something extremely complex and important to all of us - the mind. After all, what three things are more important than the body, soul, and mind?

Psychology can open up your mind and force you to think twice about such things as personality development, basic human behavior; why people act the way they do.

Besides being very interesting, psychology can lend insight into normal everyday living. Students may come to understand their friends and family better after studying psychology.

Of course, psychology is not a necessary course. But, like humanities, music, or art, it can broaden the mind and make life richer and fuller.

Psychology should be an elective. It needn't be forced on anyone. Only those who are interested in it will benefit from studying it.

Let's face it - nearly everybody is curious about "what makes people tick." Psychology can destroy harmful myths about behavior that students may believe to be true. It can also open the door to careers in psychology, psychiatry, mental health care - all interesting, rewarding careers.

It seems sinful to keep students from learning more about the precious gift we take for granted, our mind.

I myself have definitely benefited from studying psychology. I understand people better, including myself. In all honesty, it has been one of the few truly intriguing classes I've taken. Plain and simple, psychology has enriched my life.

(Jennie, Grade XII)

Our course instructor for Psychology I and II, Mr. Kevan Karol, asked our class to write what we thought of our psychology course, the pros and cons of having it as an academic course. Personally, I lean towards the pro side heavily. If the student is willing he/she can incorporate information given in the course into everyday life. This is true because in everyday social interactions this student will come in contact with many different people. Having some sort of psychological background on these people this student can sometimes interact more efficiently. This is not only true because you know something about the other person's reasons for doing something but it is because you know more about yourself.

As well as being one of my more interesting classes it has also shown me the complexities of the human mind. I think having psychology in any academic schedule would be a great asset.

(Michael, Grade XII)

Psychology is usually an elective course that a person chooses to take. For some who are interested, it turns out to be very advantageous. Psychology teaches about the interactions of the individual. How the individual reacts within himself, and how he reacts with people around him.

In a well rounded psychology class, a person may learn a great deal about himself. He may learn to cope with emotions that were unreachable before. He learns to accept the behavior of others because now, he may understand it better.

Psychology covers a vast amount of information; from personality, to maturation, to body types; from Sigmund Freud, who taught us about ourselves through the id, ego, and superego, to Joseph Breuer, who taught us about ourselves through hypnosis. Psychology can teach a person as much about himself and other people as he's willing to learn.

Psychology is one class that will make a person more prepared to handle situations that will arise in everyday life, whether it be when interacting with others, or when trying to understand oneself.

I definitely have a positive attitude about psychology and feel it should be taught everywhere. Anyone with the slightest bit of interest in himself, will surely benefit a great deal.

(Barbara, Grade XII)

I, being a student presently taking psychology, feel that every high school student should have the opportunity to take the class of psychology. I know it has helped me through some very difficult times. Psychology helps us teenagers deal with our everyday problems rationally.

Psychology teachers play a very important role in the class. If the teacher is someone the students can trust, then the students will often go to this teacher for guidance and counseling.

There is not much a person can say except that the class is very interesting and extremely beneficial.

(Anne, Grade XI)

Psychology helps to broaden ones knowledge of themselves and others. Through teaching, students can learn some of the history, and they can find out some of the reasons they behave as they do. Everyone is curious to find out about themselves and through psychology, one can do this. Knowledge in psychology can also help to destroy myths and untruths people have. The study of psychology can also help those with problems. It can teach them how to deal with it, be aware of it, and most important, teach them what they can do to help themselves. As a student I can truthfully say that I have both enjoyed and benefited from my studies. One learns many new things that can help them in their day to day life. One can feel more at ease with society knowing that they are not abnormal and understanding those who are. They feel more confident with themselves and with others, thus making their life a little easier and better. I firmly believe that students should have the opportunity to, if they wish, study psychology.

(Belinda, Grade XII)

I think psychology should be taught in high school because it teaches a person to understand himself and also to deal with problems of everyday life. A person learns why he does some of the things he does. I have learned a lot from this class and am planning to go on to Psychology II next year. I look at things differently than I used to because I think why am I doing this. I have been interested in psychology for a few years and am planning to go on with it in college. It is interesting to me because it's a type of course that doesn't have a certain amount of information and then that's it. People are finding new things about it every day. It is an excellent course and I would recommend it to anybody.

(Kathy, Grade XI)

The study of psychology encompasses a wide range of topics. Because of the limited time in one school year, each topic can only be touched upon, leaving further study up to the individual interests of each student. However, in order for the course selection offering of any high school to be complete, I feel it is essential that at least one introduction to psychology be offered. The benefits of the students who take this interesting course are widespread, for not only is the knowledge gained helpful in dealing with everyday problems, situations and unusual and sometimes unfortunate experiences which are bound to arise, but in mastering this course a future career choice may have been introduced. This course serves as an excellent motivating factor not only for future psychologists, but for social workers, therapists, and ward attendants as well.

The personal benefits I have received from this informative and enjoyable course, include: a compassion toward patients of mental illness and a more complete understanding of its causes and treatments; a better understanding of fears and anxieties experienced in everyday situations and the defense mechanisms used against them; and finally, a greater insight into such topics such as learning and conditioning, abnormal behavior, schizophrenia, and unconventional sexual behavior.

It is obvious that this course has not only widespread benefits, but can be designed to truly captivate the interest of most any student and to be used as a motivating factor in future career plans of many students.

(Marin, Grade XI)

Psychology teaches students how to understand people and their behavior. Beyond a shadow of a doubt I believe this subject should be available to high school students. If you come to think about it, psychology is one of the most important subjects that a high school student could engage in. Psychology teaches students to deal with problems in their own society. This all depends to what degree or extent the class is carried on to. What's more important than teaching students about themselves? In my opinion, "nothing." When I heard that psychology was not permitted where you're at I found it shocking. I hope you will gain something from my letter.

(Tom, Grade XII)

I think that the teaching of psychology in schools is a very good thing. Included in the study of this subject are explanations of many different types of behavior, from simple learning processes to abnormal psychological disorders. The student is taught how learning can be influenced through such things as negative and positive reinforcement and how behavior can be altered. He learns about many emotional, psychological, and even physical patterns that affect behavior and about such things as "defense mechanisms" which are unconscious ways the person protects himself from emotional harm. In the latter part of the course, students are also given definitions and an understanding of different types of neurosis, psychosis, schizophrenia, and other social deviances.

I feel that the understanding of all these things plus the many other objectives the course has, can help to create in a person a much better insight into his own behavior and ways he may be able to improve himself. I think he may also become more sensitive to and aware of other people's problems and gain valuable insight into the troubles of society as a whole and be better able to cope with it.

(Debbie, Grade XII)

When I was scheduling my classes last year, I more or less decided to take psychology because there wasn't too much else I was interested in. I am now glad I made the decision to take this course. I feel that psychology is informative and interesting.

Psychology can be very informative. One learns about certain types of behavior and why a person might act that way. One learns about the interaction between himself and others. I have also found out some interesting things about myself; why I act the way I do for example. And in a few instances when that behavior was detrimental I was able to recognize and correct, or modify my behavior. Psychology also helps you understand others. Being able to recognize and understand another's problems may make one more comfortable with that person and one may even be able to help the problem person.

I also feel that psychology is an interesting course. That mayn't sound very important, but it is. With so many dull (however necessary) courses, it is great to be able to enjoy a class. And oftentimes a student will work harder if he likes the subject.

These are just a few reasons why I feel psychology should be taught. Or at least give the students the option to study it! With so many people today who deviate from the norm, it gives one a better understanding of the world around them.

(Lynne, Grade XI)

Psychology is what makes man better than animals, the ability to act and understand why you act in that way. Psychology is necessary at the high school level to promote this study to the college level. I have found most intelligent people find psychology very interesting and useful.

Most high school courses you take don't relate to life at all and the student can't see why it is necessary to study certain courses. Psychology is very useful and becomes active in a person's mind from the first day the course begins and is with you the rest of your life. I believe it would be profitable at the high school level.

(Rocky, Grade XII)

Psychology is a very important class for everyone to take. Psychology helps you to understand why different people react to the same thing in different ways.

Psychology shows you how important to your future your past experiences are. It answers some of the questions of how and why some people do not act like the rest of the population and don't seem to care.

My opinion is that some time in your life you will become acquainted to a person with some type of a mental disorder. Some of the things taught in psychology, even in a mini course, will help.

I know someone who is very close to me that has a very serious disorder. I never before understood her strange moods of why she got depressed so easy. I used to blame her for changing her mind about things so quickly and how she would lose her temper so easily at any small problem. I now understand that she could not help the way she acted. I also try to be more patient with her.

Psychology helps you understand all people, even yourself.

(Fatty, Grade XII)

Psychology is the science that studies the behavior of an organism. In studying this, I have learned more about myself. It has helped me understand myself better and especially to understand others behavior.

In Psychology I, I learned how to think and learn efficiently. This has helped me immensely in becoming a better person. It has helped me be prepared for college in being able to study better and to relate to other people. I studied about personalities of people with handicaps, learning disabilities and the mentally retarded. When you learn about people with abnormal behavior or with a physical handicap, it is easier to accept them when you come in contact with them. I also learned how to measure an I.Q. When my guidance counselor told me my I.Q., it wasn't just a number. I knew what it meant and what it stood for.

In Psychology II, I studied Abnormal behavior in humans such as schizophrenia, psychosis, and people with abnormal sexual behavior.

Both of these psychology classes have been very interesting and a vital learning experience to me. I definitely feel that psychology should be taught in high school as an elective, as it is in our school. You should have a very interesting teacher who can relate to the students. Students who don't have the opportunity to take psychology in high school will find that it is a lot harder to function in society, because they aren't aware or don't understand the behavior and realities of people.

(Gina, Grade XI)

I feel that psychology should be taught in high school because it is useful to many people in clearing up common misbeliefs about what behavior in today's society is actually regarded as normal and abnormal.

Psychology can also be a help to students in other classes. For example, by studying about the different methods of learning, a student may discover new and better ways to prepare for tests and other class assignments.

Studying psychology is also important because it also helps a person understand himself; especially his personality traits and how they affect relationships with other people in society.

Finally, high school students who might be considering psychology as a career choice will benefit by learning about the different methods used by psychologists in their work.

(Tim, Grade XII)

I think psychology should be taught in high schools. For one thing, it is a very interesting subject. It has taught me things about myself I never knew. Like why I act the way I do. That is very important for teenagers to know. So many things around us affect our personalities. That is why everyone is so different from everyone else. Also, if a student takes psychology, he will know if he likes it enough for a career as a psychologist. He can take it in high school instead of wasting time in college and finding out too late that he does not like it. You really should teach it in high schools. I am very glad I took it. It is the most interesting subject I am taking.

(Christine, Grade XII)

Well to tell you the truth I'm not really too sure if psychology should be taught in high school. I think a high school student should know about how people's mental behavior affects them in life, but it might not be so good. Because the student might try to psychoanalyze people who are not really mentally sick.

(Larry, Grade XI)

Psychology is an important and interesting part of our lives. Without knowing about how the mind works, we could never fully understand each other.

Psychology teaches us about the basic aspects of our lives such as thinking, learning, development of personality, and our sexual behavior.

Another aspect of psychology is the study of abnormal psychology. If we are ignorant of how the mind can malfunction, we can never know how to help them. Treatment of psychological disorders is not limited to professionals only. If society knows how to help, treatment or rehabilitation is sped up considerably.

If we understand these things about ourselves and our society, we can improve our whole environment.

(David, Grade XII)

Psychology has been my favorite class in high school, and I think that everyone should be able to take it. It provides a chance for students to learn more about what is going on around them, and about what kind of people exist.

I have never had so much fun in any other class as I do in psychology. We have a great teacher, and the people in my class respond and show their own feelings. It's the kind of class where a person can show a great deal of interest and never get bored or fall asleep.

I think everyone should have the chance to take psychology because it gives them better chance of understanding themselves and people in general.

(Anne, Grade XII)

Psychology should be taught in high schools because it helps out a student in many ways. Our society is very psychological. It helps students understand our society and why people do the things they do, and act the way they act.

High school is a time that kids become adults and learn many different responsibilities and other things. Psychology helps a person learn responsibilities and learn about their environment.

Psychology also teaches people about all the problems others have, which you or someone close to you might have, and how to cope with them. Psychology also teaches all the human theories which psychologists thought such as: Freud, Adler, and Jung. It compares their theories with what we believe today and show how our society has changed so much.

(Susan, Grade XI)

High school is an opportune time to introduce the basics of psychology. A beginning course in psychology is helpful to high school students in learning how to handle problems, recognizing certain things in their own and others' behavior and it even gives insight to better study habits. Learning about certain psychological or mental problems is of utmost importance, because too often, people are ignorant of these things and they may inadvertently hurt someone's feelings just because they don't understand the reasons for certain behavior. Then, the increase in pressure for grades and acceptance in college can be a really big problem for some people. But if they have studied something about psychology in high school they will be better prepared to handle things. The field of psychology is going to grow larger and larger and for this reason, students should have the opportunity to study psychology in high school, in order to open them up to the possibility of a psychology related career.

(Debbie, Grade XII)

Psychology, the study of human behavior, is a very important topic that all humans should be aware of. It not only goes into the abnormal part of human behavior but also the normal behavior. How a person

should function in a normal situation is the first question that is asked. Sometimes the teachings and practicing of psychology cures people of a bad behavior pattern letting them know and be aware of what they are doing. Not in all cases the person is completely cured but it did help in certain areas. It would be wrong not to teach psychology. I think it is another different branch of medical care but without artificial means of curing.

Of all the subjects we have, the expression "you do it this way and it will work out right," is a one-sided view of how it works. Psychology gives different points of views and experiments done by groups of people asking two questions, why and how, always getting two reasons to back up their statements.

"We only use 1/4 of our brains." Don't you find it interesting to find out how a human works. The big thing it helps is the growing up of an individual. Making known what's around him, what that person is going to go through and meet up with in life. This paper may be very one sided but it does help one to realize what other people are like and I think that is the most important thing to be able to get along good together.

(Weid, Grade XII)

I feel by studying psychology in high school I have benefited in many ways. I've adjusted not to judge people at first meetings and impressions. Learning psychology teaches one that generally everyone is the same and have emotional feelings and problems all alike. I have been able to talk my problems out better with my parents, and have been able to solve them myself without a doubt. There was a possibility of my studying a field of psychology in the future as my career, and now that I have taken the course I definitely will.

(Boebe, Grade XI)

The learning of psychology has proven to me to be intellectually stimulating and fascinating. The study of psychology has provided mankind with so many helpful clues as to why we act the way we do. Providing interesting insights not only on self actions and reactions in various situations and relationships, but also more understanding and tolerance for the attitudes and actions of others. The development of the study of psychology has been one of the most significant breakthroughs in modern thought. Its understanding should be encouraged on every level of the educational process.

(Julie, Grade XII)

In the United States, psychology is and has been a major contributor to the educational and emotional awareness of high school students. Introductory psychology, as taught in the U.S. at the high school level, gives the student an opportunity to learn the basics of human nature and human drives, and enables the student to apply this knowledge to daily life.

In these liberal, anxious times it is my opinion that adolescents need a basic explanation for human actions and responses. This provides a pathway for the search for individuality and guidelines for moral and ethical standards.

(Ralph, Grade XIII)

I think psychology should be taught in school today because it gives a person a basic understanding how they and those people around them behave. It's almost like an open door to communication. You are able to relate to people better, since you understand maybe why some people retreat off into themselves, or close themselves off because they can't cope with the world around them.

Even in your everyday life you may come upon someone who is depressed or having problems coping with their life. And you can help if you just let them speak their troubles, or just talk to you about - you know - what's going on in their life.

I really think that psychology is something that needs to be taught today, because there are so many people who need help, and just need love and understanding. (And I think that love is a big part of psychology and communication and I know that I enjoyed it; and I know other students would too.)

(No name given)

I found psychology very interesting and helpful. It helped me understand myself, and the difficult times I'm going through at this stage of my personal development. Through this course I became a little clearer on the changes we all go through, the reasons for the changes. I think that I will be better able to raise a child, and understand my friends a little better also. Altogether, this was a very worthwhile, and interesting class.

(No name given)

I am basically pleased with this course, excepting that I would have liked to have gone over earlier chapters. Chapters like Ch. 4, "States of Consciousness" seems more interesting than say Ch. 11, "Attitudes and Social Influences." As far as teaching goes I feel that it is very dangerous for the teacher to be opinionated due to the complexity of the subject. In fact the teacher is sticking her neck out when throwing in premature personally opinionated material.

(Jeff)

I think what I have gotten out of this course is an understanding of not only myself but also others. I can relate to the different ways people act and their moods they might happen to be in.

I can not only understand the grown persons but also the infants. Their needs, wants, etc.

I feel that this course gives you a look at the real world and in some ways prepares you for it.

(No name given)

By taking this course, I have a greater understanding of my own personality, my parents' behavior, and my home life. I think everyone that goes through a psych course feels more complete, a more whole person. It is very helpful in shaping a sense of identity, and an excellent course for seniors because they must decide which direction and style their life will take following graduation.

(No name given)

