

A STUDY OF UNIVERSITY FACULTY AND NON-UNIVERSITY  
ASSOCIATED PATRONS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
SCHOOL-RELATED ISSUES

By

MARTHA MARTIN MCMILLIAN  
//  
Bachelor of Science  
Oklahoma State University  
Stillwater, Oklahoma  
1969

Master of Science  
Oklahoma State University  
Stillwater, Oklahoma  
1975

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate College  
of the Oklahoma State University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the Degree of  
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION  
July, 1981



A STUDY OF UNIVERSITY FACULTY AND NON-UNIVERSITY  
ASSOCIATED PATRONS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
SCHOOL-RELATED ISSUES

Thesis Approved:

*Daniel Selapovich*  
Thesis Adviser

*Kenneth H. Clark*

*Russell B. B...*

*Harold V. Sore*

*Norman N. Durham*  
Dean of the Graduate College

1099212

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express a sincere thanks to the members of my advisory committee. Special appreciation is extended to my chairman, Dr. Daniel Selakovich, for his months of guidance and assistance in writing this dissertation. Also, a thanks is expressed to Dr. Kenneth St. Clair for having confidence in me when I had so little, to Harold Sare for allowing me to study his school board and for helping to clarify information, and to Dr. Russell Dobson for helping teach me to think.

A thank you is also extended to Iris McPherson, Joyce Gazaway, Dr. Ann Hickman and Marcia Hickman for their additional help. Also, gratitude is expressed to all of my "town" and "gown" friends for allowing me to see their worlds from differing viewpoints.

A final thank you and love is extended to my family for their patience and encouragement throughout this work. I only hope that Michol and Morgan will love to learn as their mother and love to live as their father.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. THE RESEARCH QUESTION . . . . .	1
Introduction . . . . .	1
Need for the Study . . . . .	3
Purpose of the Study . . . . .	4
Assumptions . . . . .	5
Research Questions . . . . .	5
Definition of Terms . . . . .	7
The Study Setting: Stillwater, Oklahoma, Its Schools, and Recent School Controversies . . . . .	10
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE . . . . .	18
Historical Overview . . . . .	18
The Disproportionate Liberalism of American Academics . . . . .	22
Conceptual Framework . . . . .	35
Related Studies . . . . .	37
Summary . . . . .	50
III. METHODOLOGY . . . . .	58
Introduction to Phenomenology . . . . .	58
Beginning Phases--Procedures of Observation and Interpretation . . . . .	60
Participant Observation . . . . .	60
Interviews With Community Leaders . . . . .	66
Written Records and Research . . . . .	68
Advantages and Disadvantages of Phenomenology . . . . .	68
Supporting Observations and Interpretations With Tangible Evidence Obtained From Questionnaires . . . . .	72
Sample . . . . .	72
Follow-Up . . . . .	75
Instrumentation . . . . .	78
Summary . . . . .	82
IV. THE CASE STUDY . . . . .	85
The 1949 Bond Issue Failure . . . . .	85
A Series of Recent School Controversies . . . . .	86
The 1976 Through 1980 Bond Issues . . . . .	86

Chapter	Page
Changes in School Board Membership and Voting Patterns . . . . .	95
Due Process . . . . .	100
Athletics Versus Academics . . . . .	103
A Concluding Chapter Note . . . . .	108
V. PRESENTATION OF QUANTITATIVE DATA . . . . .	112
Introduction . . . . .	112
Answering Research Questions One Through Six:	
Looking at "Town" Versus "Gown" . . . . .	116
Research Question One . . . . .	116
Research Question Two . . . . .	119
Research Question Three . . . . .	122
Research Question Four . . . . .	125
Research Question Five . . . . .	128
Research Question Six . . . . .	128
Devising a Liberal-Conservative Scale . . . . .	137
Answering Research Question Seven: Variations Within the Faculty . . . . .	139
The Bond Issues and School Elections . . . . .	145
Research Question Eight . . . . .	145
How Did Town and Gown Vote? . . . . .	152
Looking at "Other Variables" . . . . .	155
Chapter Summary . . . . .	167
VI. CONCLUSIONS, VERIFICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS . . . . .	171
Introduction . . . . .	171
A Brief Summary . . . . .	171
Conclusions Relative to the Review of Literature . . . . .	173
Verifications and Speculations . . . . .	176
Athletics Versus Academics . . . . .	176
Due Process . . . . .	178
Bond Issues . . . . .	179
School Board Elections . . . . .	181
Research Problems Encountered . . . . .	182
Recommendations for Further Study and to the Stillwater Public School System . . . . .	186
A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	191
APPENDIX A - COVER LETTERS AND SURVEY INSTRUMENT . . . . .	196
APPENDIX B - NOTICES FOR FOLLOW-UP . . . . .	205

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. Survey Question One--Goals of Schooling . . . . .	118
II. Survey Question Two--Academics Versus Athletics . . . . .	119
III. Survey Question Three--Grades Given School System . . . . .	120
IV. Survey Question 10--Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction With Various Curriculum Areas . . . . .	121
V. Public's Overall Attitude Toward Curriculum Areas . . . . .	123
VI. Overall Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction With Curriculum . . . . .	124
VII. Survey Question Five--Schools' Approaches to Education . . . . .	124
VIII. Survey Question 11--Airing Controversy and Minority Rights is Necessary . . . . .	126
IX. Survey Question 12--Boards Have the Right to Dismiss Employees Without Documented Evidence . . . . .	126
X. Survey Question 13--School Board Solidarity . . . . .	127
XI. Survey Question Six--In Decision Making, the Board Should . . . . .	129
XII. Survey Question 14--Knowledge of Superintendent . . . . .	130
XIII. Survey Question 15--Knowledge of High School Principal . . . . .	130
XIV. Survey Question 16--Knowledge of School Board Members . . . . .	131
XV. Survey Question Seven--Voting on School Issues . . . . .	132
XVI. Survey Question Eight--Talked to School People on School Topics . . . . .	133
XVII. Question Eight--Gown Parents and Non-Parents on "Talked To" School People . . . . .	134

Table	Page
XVIII. Survey Question Nine--Participating in School Activities . . . . .	135
XIX. Survey Question Nine--Extent of Activity . . . . .	137
XX. Variations Between Colleges Within the Faculty . . . . .	143
XXI. Various Colleges' Responses to "Approaches Schools Should Follow" . . . . .	144
XXII. Various Colleges' Responses to "Knowledge of High School Principal" . . . . .	144
XXIII. Extent of Criticism and Voting Behavior in School Bond Elections . . . . .	147
XXIV. Criticism and Voting Behavior in School Board Elections . . . . .	148
XXV. Approaches Favored in Education and Voting Behavior . . . . .	148
XXVI. Citizens' Beliefs About School Board Decision Making and Bond Issue Voting Behavior . . . . .	149
XXVII. Talking to School People and Voting Behavior . . . . .	150
XXVIII. The Airing of Controversy and a School Board Election . . . . .	151
XXIX. Town and Gown Voting Behavior . . . . .	153
XXX. Survey Question 22 - Was the Board Open to Input and Suggestions? . . . . .	154
XXXI. Parent and Non-Parent Voting Behavior . . . . .	156
XXXII. Property Taxpayers' Voting Behavior . . . . .	157
XXXIII. Voting Behavior by Sex . . . . .	159
XXXIV. 1976 Bond Issue and 1977 School Board Election Vote by Income Level . . . . .	161
XXXV. 1976-1977 Bond Issue Vote and 1977 Board Race by Educational Level . . . . .	161
XXXVI. Voting Behavior by Age Group . . . . .	164
XXXVII. Reasons Why Voted as Did in 1976 and 1977 Bond Elections . . . . .	165

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Conceptual Framework to Explore Ideologies and Trends of Patrons in Stillwater . . . . .	36
2. Voting Record of Bond and Board Elections . . . . .	96
3. Research Questions, Instrument Items Analyzed, and Categorization . . . . .	113
4. Liberal and Conservative Responses . . . . .	138
5. College Representation in Faculty Sample as Compared to Actual College Percentage of Total Faculty . . . . .	140



## CHAPTER I

### THE RESEARCH QUESTION

#### Introduction

Community interest groups differ from school district to school district. The only way a school board and administration can attempt to understand pressures from local groups is to study their respective individual communities. There may be no sure way to avoid community pressures, but looking at a single community's history may offer new insights into how to avoid conflict and division in that one community's future. In addition, such a study might provide some general insights into the sources and nature of pressure.

The object of this study, the school district in Stillwater, Oklahoma, for years had experienced little open or hostile community pressure. School boards and school superintendents, although having some battles over various school issues, had experienced few serious or highly publicized battles. The community seemed very supportive of most things recommended by school officials and the school board, but suddenly, in March, 1976, there developed a serious and prolonged school battle, which ultimately came to involve the entire community. It began with the failure of a 1976 bond issue but extended into nearly every aspect of school policy from the years 1976 through 1980. The community was mobilized; opposing groups were organized; the

schools made headlines; the board and the administration were attacked; people took sides; and almost every policy decision was subject to prolonged and sometimes bitter community controversy. This study is an examination of those struggles.

The community studied may be atypical in some respects in that it contains a major state university with a high number of "pro-education" citizens, yet it might also be typical of all communities within the United States during the 1960's and 70's with common school financial problems. In recent years dozens of school districts in a number of states have had to close their doors temporarily due to lack of funds; therefore, Stillwater is certainly not unique with its financial problems. Although funding is a serious problem, there can be many other reasons for community pressure on local schools. Those reasons may be as much political as financial. This study will attempt to identify other factors and influences in Stillwater that might help explain reasons for controversy within the school district.

The common political issues which can be related to any school politics are the seeming distrust of elected government officials and a desire for a more "grass roots" or participatory democracy. Whether such a movement is labeled "liberal" or "conservative" is irrelevant, for definitions of such terms are constantly changing. However, this desire for a "voice" in government, a demand for the input and opinions (both majority and minority) of the public into decision making, seemed to be the growing mood of the nation. Not only can this movement be traced to the presidential candidates in the 1964 and 1972 elections, but also to the political protests of the 1960's and 70's.

This egalitarian, critical mood, according to Ladd and Lipset, has been led and supported throughout American history by members of the academic community who historically have held the role of recognizing the discrepancy between what "is" and what "should be" in our society.<sup>1</sup> This study attempts to explore the possibility that this one interest group, the university faculty (politically powerful or not), due to its liberal, idealistic, and critical perspective toward society and society's institutions, may have differing views from the non-university community concerning the institutions of the public school in the one community of Stillwater, Oklahoma, and controversies associated therein.

#### Need for the Study

In any community, particularly one with a wide variety of interest groups as is true in the community of Stillwater, it is important that in the decision-making processes school board members and administrators be aware of the public's perception of what it wants the schools to be, the changes or new approaches they view as important, and the criticisms they have of the schools and their decision-making processes. Thompson recognizes that the most distinctive feature of the American educational system is its decentralization, which obligates school governments to adjust to the concerns of the individual school and the local community.<sup>2</sup> Hence, it is crucial for school decision makers to have an understanding of what constituents desire in and for the schools within their community.

Thompson also outlines several variables influencing educational policies, two of which are (1) economic factors and (2) social and

cultural factors, such as beliefs about the importance and role of education, the status of educational programs, and the status and influence of educational professionals.<sup>3</sup> This study will examine this last variable, identifying a division of town versus gown elements within one community, while asking if there are distinct differences between these groups in regard to how they view the public schools and to how their basic political ideologies relate to the schools.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to describe certain educational perceptions of selected elements of the population in Stillwater, Oklahoma, for the purpose of attempting to determine if there is a basic difference in the way the university faculty segment of the community, or gown, and the non-university community, or town, view the public schools in that city.

Responses to school-related issues, in particular town and gown responses, will be analyzed. Real conflicts will be described as they occurred within the Stillwater School District during a four-year period when university faculty members appeared to be directly involved, either as leaders or as participants in this conflict. These same issues will be examined for particular ideological concepts that they seemed to illustrate, based on other studies and theories which seek to prove that the intellectual community, of which faculty are a part, are inherently questioning, critical, and socially disruptive.

Before discussing these concepts further, several prior and fundamental assumptions which are supported by Ladd and Lipset's theory

expressed in Academic, Politics, and the 1972 Election should be made explicit.<sup>4</sup>

#### Assumptions

1. A university faculty reflects more intellectual attitudes and values than the non-faculty public at large.

2. A university faculty is more critical of society and its institutions, and opposed to the establishment and the status quo than non-university laymen.

3. A university faculty is more liberal and change oriented than non-university laymen.

4. A university faculty is more liberal than the public at large in terms of belief in egalitarian values, i.e. belief in equality of social, political, and economic rights and privileges and belief in a participatory democracy with citizen involvement in the making of decisions for the system.

5. A university faculty is more politically active than non-university laymen.

6. There are wide variations of liberality between faculty members of different disciplines based on their more critical attitude toward society, their support of change in society, the status quo and the establishment, their beliefs in a participatory democracy and egalitarian values, and their amount of political activity.

#### Research Questions

These assumptions lend themselves to the following research question. Is there a difference in university faculty patrons and

non-university patrons in the way they view the schools, specifically:

1. Are the perceptions of university faculty and non-university patrons different concerning what the goals of schools should be?
2. Do university faculty patrons criticize the schools more or less than non-university patrons?
3. Do university faculty patrons and non-university patrons differ in their attitudes toward new or different approaches in education?
4. Do university faculty patrons and non-university patrons differ in their position on school-related egalitarian values, such as equal political and social rights and privileges for all (minority representation and due process)?
5. Do university faculty patrons and non-university patrons differ in their beliefs concerning the processes of citizen participation in the school system's decision-making process?
6. Do university faculty patrons and non-university patrons differ in their participation in the system as reflected in their knowledge of the school system, and in their input offered the schools in the form of voting in school elections, voicing opinions on school-related topics, and participating in school activities?
7. Are there differences among faculty members of various disciplines in their school-related political views on a liberal-conservative continuum based on their amount of criticism of the schools, their belief in the processes of citizen involvement in school decision-making, their attitude toward new approaches in education, their

participation in and input offered the schools, and their position on school-related egalitarian values?

8. Were such differing liberal-conservative ideologies manifested in support of or opposition to certain school board candidates and bond issues during a series of recent school controversies?

#### Definition of Terms

Although one might find many definitions of basic terms and concepts used in this work, for purposes of clarity the following definitions will be used in this study:

University Faculty or Gown--(These terms will be used interchangeably.) Those persons are employed by the university as members of the Oklahoma State University faculty; hence, they are professors, associate professors, assistant professors, visiting professors, instructors, associate teachers, and associate researchers. Students, administrators, and other personnel will not be included.

Non-University or Town--(These terms will be used interchangeably.) Those persons who are not students or employees of Oklahoma State University and also who do not have a spouse either working in any capacity or attending the university as a student are considered in this group.

Liberalism--According to Ladd and Lipset, this is the quality or state of being "critical of society from the perspective of liberal and egalitarian values . . . inherently questioning, critical, socially disruptive . . . predispose(d) toward a critical, questioning, oppositionist political stance."<sup>5</sup>

Liberals--This group of people are those who desire a better order of government and society and propose new institutions to replace the old. They reject the status quo, the established, and the values and activities of the larger society. They are creators of "new knowledge, new ideas, new art." They test reality in terms of the ideal and theoretic. Their "function is to increase rather than to preserve knowledge, to undermine rather than to stabilize custom and social authority," thus they help society adjust to change, revolution, and novel conditions. They tend more toward the Democratic in their voting behavior and are more activist and favorable toward change in society.<sup>6</sup>

Political Liberals (in relation to schools)--This is a political group regarded as anti-establishment and against the status-quo; hence, it is more critical of society and of the school bureaucracy with its hierarchical system of decision making. It is also more critical of the schools themselves and their everyday practices. Participatory or "grass roots" democracy consisting of input from all citizens and an egalitarian society are goals of this group. They are more aware and supportive of equal rights of all citizens and employees' rights to due process. They are oppositionists and activists, hence more involved in controversies and more aware of political issues. They have a high regard for the theoretical, academic, and cultural realm of society, and are more aware of new approaches in education and more willing to try such approaches in the public schools.

Conservatism--Defense of the status quo against major changes in the political or social institutions of a society.<sup>7</sup>



Political Conservatives (in relation to schools)--This definition refers to that political group characterized by a practical, realistic approach to school problems. It believes in a more representative type of democracy and consists of older, more established leaders in the community. They are supporters of "the system" or the bureaucracy and are more in favor of the hierarchy's power to make decisions concerning the school system and its employees. Taking the suggestions of the administrator in charge is usually considered the most efficient approach to decision making. This group is more in favor of consensus politics, where the voices of the majority overshadow those of the minority or the dissenters. A split vote is indicative of poor leadership; therefore, this group feels no minority's views or dissent should be publically displayed. People with this approach value the more traditional methods of schooling and desire that their children be taught in the same manner they were taught, or in a more traditional mode. They trust "proven" ways and feel that these should not be discarded for new, unproven forms of government or schooling; hence, they are more cautious in trying new methods of doing things. This element believes in the status quo and measures success chiefly through the absence of controversy.

Intellectual--This element of the community is characterized by intellect, which

. . . is the critical, creative, and contemplative side of mind. . . . (It) examines, ponders, wonders, theorizes, criticizes, imagines . . . (it) evaluates evaluations, and looks for the meanings of situations as a whole.<sup>8</sup>

These characteristics are not simply a matter of vocation, yet this

study assumes that this element is predominantly from the university faculty in Stillwater.

Democracy--A political system in this concept supplies regular constitutional opportunities for changing the governing officials and a social mechanism which permits the largest possible part of the population to influence major decisions by choosing among contenders for political office.<sup>9</sup>

Egalitarianism--This philosophy is a belief in human equality, especially with respect to social and political rights and privileges, with the social philosophy advocating the removal of inequities among men.

Ideology--

This term implies . . . a set of prescriptive positions on matters of government (in this case, the school board) and public policy that are seen as forming a logically . . . interrelated system . . . includ(ing) such things as the structure of government (the board) and the distribution of power (decision making), the political objectives that the society should try to realize (in the schools) and how it should go about it, the distribution of the resources of the system, and the manner and bases for their allocation.<sup>10</sup>

The Study Setting: Stillwater, Oklahoma,

Its Schools, and Recent School

Controversies

Almost since its very beginning, the community of Stillwater has been educationally oriented, with the founding of Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College in 1890. Until approximately 1970, Stillwater remained economically geared toward this college, now referred to as Oklahoma State University. Yet, gradual changes have taken place as new industry has been added, and Stillwater has become

a center of regional trade.<sup>11</sup> Still the most important impact on community wealth which indirectly affects the public schools is the university, despite the fact that the university property itself is tax deductible for ad valorem tax purposes.

With a total operating budget of \$106.7 million in 1976-77 approximately one-third of the total work force of Stillwater is employed by the university in some capacity. The university distributed approximately \$38 million in payroll to its employees in 1976-77, which represented 29.4% of local, aggregate income. Full-time faculty incomes averaged \$19,733 during the 1976-77 academic year, and average income of all full-time employees was around \$10,000,<sup>12</sup> compared to the average household income in the entire community of Stillwater of \$10,732 during this same period.<sup>13</sup>

The composition of the population in the community is obviously affected by the university, with the 1976 total population of 37,200 consisting of approximately 21,000 students, and a work force of 4,398 persons including 1054 faculty members, 2, 814 administrative personnel, and 530 part-time employees.<sup>14</sup>

Light industry in the city has been growing at a fairly rapid rate, with the addition of four firms since 1968 -- Mercury Marine, Moore Business Forms, National Standard, Inc., and Swan Hose. In December, 1977, these firms employed 1,287.<sup>15</sup> However, as of now, O.S.U. remains the top employer in this city.

The level of education for the community is extremely high, partly due to the presence of the university, with 36.1% of its population holding bachelor's degrees or above, 19.5% having one to three years of college, and 21.23% with four years at the high school level.<sup>16</sup>

The Stillwater Public School Independent District Number 16 has a total enrollment of 4,503. There are five elementary schools, grades K-5: Westwood, located in the west-central section of the city; Will Rogers, located in the north-central area; Highland Park, located in the east-central area; and Skyline, based on the open concept and located in the northeast section of the city. An additional elementary school, Sangre Ridge, opened in the fall of 1980 in the southwest section of the city. All elementary schools operate under an open enrollment policy; hence, parents may choose which school they wish their children to attend, provided there is space in that particular school.<sup>17</sup>

During the school year 1979-1980, there were 904 students enrolled in the Stillwater Middle School, grades 6-8, and 1,416 students enrolled in C. E. Donart High School, grades 9-12. The middle school was filled beyond capacity, and a new school opened in August, 1980, to lessen this overload. The new school is located near the Skyline Elementary School in the northeast section of the city. The entire professional staff of the school system consists of a total of 267 members, 13 of whom were administrators.<sup>18</sup>

In recent years, the Stillwater Public School District has appeared to experience a great deal of controversy in four areas which seemed to reflect differing ideological beliefs and value judgements within the community. These four areas of conflict were (1) bond issues for building and construction purposes, (2) school board member actions in relation to administrative suggestions and changes in board make up, (3) due process for teachers and administrators, and (4) expenditures for athletic versus academic programs.

The springboard for all four problem areas seemed to be the failure of a 1976 bond issue. Up until a few days before the defeat of this bond issue, there seemed to be very little public interest in local school politics. However, news concerning school politics and school issues became headlines overnight, from its usual monthly spot on the bottom of the third page in the local newspaper, to daily front page coverage.

Exactly why public interest in this particular bond issue was so high and why a bond issue failed after almost 30 years of "blanket" passage of others cannot be answered conclusively, for any one ex post facto explanation would be insufficient. However, from some evidence, it appears that one possibility might be that certain segments of the community felt uninformed as to how and why certain decisions were made by the board and administration. Some asked why the public had not been consulted when choosing building sites, grade configuration, and renovation of buildings.

A series of school elections followed this failure, elections concerning both bond issues and school board members. These elections received loud cries of public opposition. Opposition to administrators, board members, and their voting behavior showed up in accusations that the board was a "closed" system, deaf to "people input." One critic of the board interviewed in this study related the sympathies and beliefs of many citizens:

Up until last year and the failure of the bond issue, the board felt itself to be infallible. They listened to the administration, then they made up their own minds. They wanted total support from the public saying, 'Your role as citizens is not to question what we do, but to follow blindly,' their rationale being, 'We've studied the issues.'<sup>19</sup>

Another patron interviewed summarized her views,

The attitudes about the board of education are that regardless of how much you try, they will never change. One thinks of the board of education as a 'Private Club' that is hard-of-hearing which leads one to say that the implementation of new ideas will be long in coming.<sup>20</sup>

Underlying all of these controversies, attitudes seemed to be opposed to the status quo and to more traditional forms of democratic decision making. There were attitudes expressing desire for change and the desire for more egalitarian values to be displayed within the system.

As the composition of the board changed gradually, so did the tone of the board. More public airing of controversy was heard and more citizen input took place, often openly hostile. There was questioning of each decision that was to be made by the board, including questions concerning teachers' and administrators' rights to due process. Both before and after passage of a second bond issue in 1977, which was only slightly different than the first and thus still questionable to some of the public, questions concerning the uses of limited funds to complete the building projects and to use in general school operations arose, forcing decisions as to what priorities and goals the district should hold.

In the following chapters, the nature and degree of this conflict involving the Stillwater Public School System will be examined, as well as possible differences of opinions between the two groups of town and gown.

Chapter II will provide a review of the literature on the culture and political ideologies of university faculties and the general role of the academician and scholar in American society. A conceptual

framework to be used in analyzing the data will be presented, as well as relevant studies concerning the measuring of political and educational attitudes, school bond issues, and town and gown divisions in other communities.

Chapter III will outline the methodology used in this study.

Chapter IV will offer an overview of the recent history of the Stillwater Public School District between the years of 1976 through 1980, based on the author's personal observations and interpretations, interviews with community leaders, and extensive research into newspapers and other public records of events occurring during this same time period.

Chapter V will analyze the data received as a result of opinionnaires sent to selected elements in the community.

Chapter VI will offer conclusions and recommendations to the school district in light of the findings.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Everett Carl1 Ladd, Jr. and Seymour Martin Lipset, Academics, Politics, and the 1972 Election (Washington, D. C., 1973), p. 11.

<sup>2</sup>John Thomas Thompson, Policymaking in American Public Education (Englewood Cliffs, 1976), p. 22.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>4</sup>Ladd and Lipset, pp. 5-29.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 5-7.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 6-17 and 22.

<sup>7</sup>Jack Plano and Milton Greenberg, The American Political Dictionary (New York, 1963), p. 8.

<sup>8</sup>Richard Hofstadter, Anti-Intellectualism in American Life (New York, 1963), p. 25.

<sup>9</sup>Seymour Lipset, Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics (Garden City, 1960), p. 27.

<sup>10</sup>Everett Carl1 Ladd, Jr., Ideology in America (Ithaca, 1969), pp. 7-8.

<sup>11</sup>Frank Osgood Associates, Inc., Stillwater's Economic Base (Tulsa, 1978), p. 13.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., pp. 17-18.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>16</sup>Stillwater Chamber of Commerce, Community Report (Stillwater, 1979), p. 3.

<sup>17</sup>Stillwater Public Schools, Know Your Schools (Stillwater, 1979-1980), pp. 2-3.



<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>19</sup>Interview with anonymous patron, Spring, 1979.

<sup>20</sup>Interview with second anonymous patron, Spring, 1979.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A theory base will be developed in this chapter to provide a more detailed understanding of the role of the academician in society and a general idea of the assumed disproportionate liberalism of American academicians. Also, a conceptual framework to be used in analyzing the data will be presented, and relative studies will be critiqued.

#### Historical Overview

In examining the ideology and role of college faculties today, it is necessary to first look back into history to determine the role of the academician in the past. The basic assumptions of this study are based on the work of Ladd and Lipset in Academics, Politics, and the 1972 Election, which is a study of faculty members' voting behavior in the McGovern-Nixon presidential election.<sup>1</sup>

Ladd and Lipset maintain that, historically, college and university faculties

. . . have established a reputation as one of the most liberal-left strata in the United States. . . . This proclivity for a politics which is critical of society from the perspectives of liberal and egalitarian values seemingly manifests across virtually the entire spectrum of political activity.<sup>2</sup>

It is assumed in this work that the liberalism and egalitarianism of

academics found by Ladd and Lipset in voting behavior can be applied to school political activities.

Many have written on the political attitudes of academics. In 1971, Galbraith described faculty and students as the main support of the protest politics of the 1960's.<sup>3</sup> Leading conservative economists such as Hayek, Friedman, and Stigler earlier concluded that American university faculty, as a group, have been a major source of political unrest. Friedman cited unpublished comments of his colleague Stigler reflecting on the politically volatile 60's:

The university is by design and effect the institution and society which creates discontent with the existing moral, social and political institutions and proposes new institutions to replace them. . . . Invited to be learned in the institutions of other times and places, incited to new understandings of the social and physical world, the university faculty is inherently a disruptive force.<sup>4</sup>

In commenting almost 100 years ago on American history and the scholar in politics, Reid argued that "exceptional influences eliminated, the scholar is pretty sure to be opposed to the established." He cited that scholars of France prepared the way for the first Revolution, and the prevailing parties in the United States also were progressive and radical. Even as our politics began to settle toward a more conservative degree,

. . . a fresh wind began to blow about the college seats, and literary men, at last furnished inspiration for the splendid movement that swept slavery from the statute book. . . . Wise unrest will always be their (the scholars') chief trait. We may set down . . . the very foremost function of the scholar in politics, to oppose the established.<sup>5</sup>

More recently, Moynihan commented on the cultural elite as having "pretty generally rejected the values and activities of the larger society. It has been said of America that the culture (intellectual

elite) will not approve that which the policy strives to provide."<sup>6</sup> Trilling describes this intellectual role of a predisposition toward a critical, questioning, oppositionist political stance as the "adversary culture."<sup>7</sup>

Hofstadter explored this same topic in a different context in his book, Anti-Intellectualism in American Life, which traces "a suspicion and a resentment of the life of the mind and those who are considered to represent it" throughout our nation's history.<sup>8</sup> He attributed intellect to intellectuals, and warned that with it came a shroud of suspicion from the majority of the people for its critical, negative stance. Hofstadter differentiated "intellect" from "intelligence," and explained that intellect is not simply the result of membership in a social class or a well educated group of professionals with certain educational attainment. Many physicians, lawyers, businessmen, and other professionals, although in an upper class socially and educationally, do not necessarily possess the attribute of intellect, but perhaps that of intelligence, according to Hofstadter. More specifically, intellect was defined in the following manner:

Intellect . . . is the critical, creative, and contemplative side of mind. . . . (It) examines, ponders, wonders, theorizes, criticizes, imagines. . . . (It) evaluates evaluations; and looks for the meanings of situations as a whole.<sup>9</sup>

In contrast to intellect, intelligence, which society values,

. . . is an excellence of the mind employed within a fairly narrow, immediate, and predictable range. . . . It is a manipulative, adjustive, practical quality. . . . Intelligence works within the framework of limited but clearly stated goals and eliminates questions of thought that do not seem to help in reaching them.<sup>10</sup>

Thus, intellect adheres not to vocations, but to persons that have a certain mental quality.

The difference is not in the character of the ideas with which he (the intellectual) works but in his attitude toward them. . . . He lives for ideas (not off them), which means that he has a sense of dedication to the life of the mind which is very much like a religious commitment.<sup>11</sup>

The intellectual's role and activities, which may also be said of the role of the university, involves the creation of new knowledge and new ideas. "Reality is held up to the test of the ideal, the theoretic." Consequently, the ideal of a participatory democracy and egalitarian state may come under the scrutiny of the intellectual, with one dimension focusing on the public's participation or involvement in the making of decisions for the system,<sup>12</sup> or in this study's case, the school system.

Writing in 1958, Lazarsfeld and Thielens saw in history a need for a category of people who could explain, chart, and direct the flow of societal response to egalitarian-industrial-technological changes that had a beginning in seventeenth-century Europe but which pushed out to become global. Such people were needed to help society adjust to changing conditions, while discarding outmoded patterns.<sup>13</sup> If anything, the egalitarian impulses and technological change has accelerated since the publishing of The Academic Mind in 1958. The civil rights struggle, the student movement, the womens' movement, and other such forces all testify to increasing demands for explaining change. Those that are looked to for aid in the adjustment process are academicians and intellectuals, or as Becker described them in 1936, "the new class of learned men whose function is to increase rather than to

preserve knowledge, to undermine rather than to stabilize custom and social authority."<sup>14</sup>

Lipset has noted that when American intellectuals have become aware of the gap between the ideal and reality, between what is and what was or what should be, they have challenged the system for not fulfilling ideals inherent in the American creed.<sup>15</sup> This same challenge seemed to evolve in the community of Stillwater, Oklahoma, when some citizens saw a gap in the school decision-making process between what should be and what was, as far as representative and/or participatory democracy was concerned.

#### The Disproportionate Liberalism of American Academics

It has been found that faculty are more inclined than the general public to describe their politics as liberal, according to the Carnegie Commission study which found that 46% of their professors considered themselves on the liberal-left end of the scale.<sup>16</sup> By contrast, a 1970 Gallup survey found only a fifth of the general public describing themselves as "very liberal."<sup>17</sup>

Yet, what constitutes liberality and conservatism has always been answered differently by various political scientists and theorists. In fact, there seems to be as many different definitions of liberalism and conservatism as there are political scientists. Robinson, Rusk, and Head in Measures of Political Attitudes state that terms like "liberalism" and "conservatism" have little meaning to most voters since "there is a lack of an all-embracing ideological structure or frame of reference within which specific issues and events are viewed."<sup>18</sup>

The term "liberality" is inferred rather than explicitly defined by Ladd and Lipset in their study of the liberality of university professors. For purposes of this study, liberality will refer to these two author's descriptions and adjectives which explain characteristics of university professors' liberalism.

To confirm the idea that American academics and other intellectuals are more liberal than the population generally, there are empirical data demonstrating that the politics of American academics, for at least the last half of the century, have been disproportionately left of center. Since the 1930's, there have been data dealing with party and candidate choice which reveal the relative liberalism of college professors when compared to other segments of the middle class. They have also been found to be more "liberal" than manual workers and low-income groups. The 30's were the age of the New Deal, and it was here that professors so obviously took the lead in liberalism, when in 1937 84% of the professors of social science, 65% of natural science faculty members, 45% of the manual workers, and only 15% of the lawyers, physicians, dentists, and engineers reported pro-New Deal sentiments.<sup>19</sup>

Not surprisingly, political analysts turned to studies of voting records to confirm their hypotheses about liberalism. Hofstadter speculated on the first real intellectual support of a presidential candidate in Adlai Stevenson, a non-successful democratic candidate in 1952. A politician of uncommon mind and style, "(his) appeal to intellectuals over-shadowed anything in recent history." Concerning Eisenhower's victory over Stevenson, Time said, "(It) discloses an

alarming fact long suspected: there is a wide and unhealthy gap between the American intellectual and the people."<sup>20</sup>

In 1955, Lazarsfeld and Thielens tested faculty members of only one discipline, the social scientists. The two assumed this group might be the most liberal and Democratic within a faculty. They found Stevenson taking 65% of the social scientists' vote, as contrasted with 34% for Eisenhower. They also found in this same study that 63% of the social scientists voted for Harry Truman in 1948, 8% for Henry Wallace or Norman Thomas, and 28% for Republican Thomas Dewey.<sup>21</sup> This 1955 study was particularly significant because it was the first national survey of politics of academics to apply fully the methods of systematic sampling.<sup>22</sup>

In that 1955 study, 900 accredited four-year undergraduate colleges in the United States were first classified according to information available in published records. Then 182 colleges were chosen at random to study, of which 20 refused to participate, and six were dropped for other various reasons. Respondents were selected from the latest obtainable catalogues of the colleges in the sample, with 2,451 social scientists interviewed (or 90% of the original list).<sup>23</sup> Questions pertained to such topics as professional leadership and productivity, family background, political activism, permissiveness or left-of-center attitudes, opinions on academic freedom, civil liberties, philosophy of education, membership in controversial political organizations, voting behavior, and a variety of other pertinent topics relative to political beliefs and ideologies.<sup>24</sup> Individual interviews lasted anywhere from 45 minutes to five hours.<sup>25</sup>



Another much smaller study was done on academic voting in the 1948 and 1952 presidential elections. This study by Howard attempted to answer two research questions: (1) Do college professors constitute an electoral group distinct from the general population and (2) Is it meaningful to link academics to a single group? From 15 colleges 1,284 college professors responded to mailed questionnaires (35% of the original mailing), and it was found that three factors characterized the vote of these academicians: (1) the high percentage of turn-out of 82% in the 1948 election and 91% in the 1952 election was approximately one-third greater than the electorate turn-out as a whole, (2) there was a distinct preference for the Democratic Party, and (3) there was a tendency to shift in an opposite direction from the general population. Thus, in conclusion, professors appeared to be sufficiently different from the general electorate, suggesting that they are a definable group.<sup>26</sup>

Howard's study and findings contain one potentially serious flaw--that of a low return rate from those professors in the sample. The high turn-out rates of professors voting in the 1948 and 1952 elections may simply reflect that most of those 35% professors responding to the questionnaire concerning voting behavior were regular, conscientious voters. Those not interested in voting and those who were not regular voters may simply have failed to respond to the questionnaire. Although this is speculation, one must be cautious in making broad generalizations based on limited returns of questionnaires. Howard himself admitted that his results might not be mathematically precise but added that the size and nature of the sample did provide sufficient data to warrant his conclusions.<sup>27</sup>

The first national study of academics that included professors of all disciplines was the famous study sponsored by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education in 1969. This faculty study, on which Ladd and Lipset draw heavily, employed a questionnaire which was mailed to approximately 100,000 full-time college and university professors located at 303 schools around the country. The questionnaire solicited more than 300 items of information from each respondent, including social background, professional activities and achievements, and "opinions on a broad range of political issues and controversies from those largely restricted to the campus to matters of national and international affairs."<sup>28</sup> The Carnegie survey also provided full, comprehensive data on the 1964 and 1968 presidential elections, and contrasted results with the college-educated population and the population in professional and managerial occupations. They found Lyndon Johnson was supported by 77% of professors, in contrast to 52% of the college-educated public in general. The faculty was also 20 to 25 percentage points more Democratic than groups of the same social-economic status. The distributions of the vote in 1968 between Hubert Humphrey and Richard Nixon were essentially the same.<sup>29</sup> Although many special factors may have been responsible for this support, such as the strong position of Johnson and Humphrey on aid to education or the candidates who were opposing them, such overwhelming support is interesting.

Perhaps part of the support may be due to the fact that academics appear to be issue oriented. Academics turned against the war in Vietnam earlier than other groups in the population. According to a 1966 survey of professors conducted by the National Opinion Research

Center, over half opposed the government's Vietnam policies.<sup>30</sup> The 1969 Carnegie survey also found that 60% of college professors favored getting out of Vietnam by either withdrawing all American troops immediately or by encouraging a coalition government,<sup>31</sup> whereas the general public, when asked an almost identical question a few months later on a Gallup survey, favored either "Vietnamization" or "more military force" by 45%.<sup>32</sup>

Ladd and Lipset saw a need to update the Carnegie survey due to what they saw as "important changes in the political agenda of American higher education;" consequently, in the summer of 1972 they undertook a small follow-up of the 1969 study. They conducted a telephone survey of a national sample of professors in late August and early September; in November (following the presidential election, which served as a focal point in the inquiry) they again questioned these respondents through a mailed questionnaire.<sup>33</sup>

During this study, Ladd and Lipset hypothesized that campus protests of the 60's and early 70's "had led to the emergence of new divisions among professors which would manifest themselves in the 1972 presidential voting," and that McGovern would experience some attrition of support among normally Democratic professors, who had reacted negatively to the activism of recent years of students, and young faculty, who furnished the core of McGovern's most visible supporters in many university communities.<sup>34</sup> What Ladd and Lipset ultimately found was that McGovern was supported by 56% of the academics (whereas he was backed by just under 38% of the national electorate). Thus, McGovern did win a solid majority among professors, but

. . . in running as a liberal and antiwar nominee (in university circles where liberal and antiwar sentiments were predominant), with his candidacy heavily reliant upon university support, and contesting a Republican who had never been the darling of American intellectuals, McGovern gained a smaller proportion of the faculty vote in 1972 than did Democratic congressional candidates.<sup>35</sup>

Ladd and Lipset offered examples of more data supporting the relative liberality of college professors on issues when compared to the general public in the areas of rights for black Americans, legalization of marijuana, school busing, and opinions of the demonstrations and riots that occurred during the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago. There is lack of comparable data from the general public to confirm that statistics of professors would be higher in other examples.<sup>36</sup>

One qualifying point must be interjected concerning the relative liberalism of professors. According to Ladd and Lipset, this inclination of professors over other groups to support liberal and even radical, social change "ends at the borders of the campus," wherein faculty are more conservative with respect to the university itself. Kerr emphasized this point when he wrote: "few institutions are so conservative as universities about their own affairs while their members are so liberal about the affairs of others . . ."<sup>37</sup> In their reactions to campus events, student demonstrations (particularly in the 60's and early 70's), and demands that faculty share "power" with students, many academics who were normally liberal or left on larger social issues proved more conservative (yet even here appeared more supportive of liberal positions than the public at large).<sup>38</sup>

Ladd and Lipset felt that one reason faculty might have been skeptical of student activism was that it may have appeared to be

"a threat to the relatively great autonomy universities have enjoyed, and to the atmosphere of free and open inquiry on which scholarship depends," and thus might crumble the ideal that the university is apolitical.<sup>39</sup> Also, another possible fear of the professoriate was that in such an environment of intense political pressures and differences of opinion among faculty ranks, in some way the decentralized and power diffuse mode of operation in their own domain (whereby decision making is a collective endeavor of peers and thus accepting of diversity among its members) might be altered. This alteration might come in the form of bureaucratizing the university with directives flowing from top to bottom with a strong central administration imposing unity on its faculty,<sup>40</sup> which would hardly sound desirable to most "liberal" professors.

Regardless of this tendency to be more conservative within their own domain, for reasons mentioned above, outside the university there is still a general overall disproportion of liberalism by the American academic compared to other occupational groups. Ladd and Lipset note another qualifying point, the existence of sharply patterned political differences within the professoriate. There are large segments of the academic community whose politics have not proven more liberal or left-of-center than the rest of society.

There is a rather neat progression from the most left of center to the most conservative, running from the social sciences to the humanities, law and the fine arts through the physical and biological sciences, education and medicine, on to business, engineering, nursing and home economics, and finally to agriculture, the most conservative of the discipline groupings. Within universities, political differences relating to discipline are as great or greater than those between the well-to-do and the poor, between Christians and Jews, or than almost any other group variance in political outlook in the larger society.<sup>41</sup>

These two authors feel this difference is great between discipline subcultures because these disciplines are concerned with very different sorts of subject matter and work. Therefore different disciplines attract different types of people, for example, agriculture schools have drawn their faculty heavily from children of farmers, usually Protestants. Also, faculty members who were liberal in their younger days are more likely to enter the liberal arts rather than those who are more conservative.<sup>42</sup> Further supporting the effect of discipline affiliation was the Carnegie survey, where about 70% of academic social scientists identified themselves as left or liberal in comparison to 43% of the natural scientists and 31% of the faculty in business schools.<sup>43</sup>

Bereiter and Freedman in "Fields of Study and the People in Them," present a review of literature attempting to answer the question, "What is it about the various fields that cause them to attract the people they do?" They found basically three different characteristics of students which might help answer this question: (1) intelligence, (2) liberalism of attitudes, and (3) psychological adjustment.<sup>44</sup> Based on research done through the years concerning liberalism of attitudes, Bereiter and Freedman felt that "students in certain fields of study have tended toward positions that are popularly regarded as liberal, and students in other fields have tended toward conservative positions."<sup>45</sup> They found, similar to Ladd and Lipset's findings about professors, that students in social science have the most liberal attitudes, while students in engineering and agriculture appear among the least liberal. Literature, arts, and natural science groups are usually in between these extremes, with natural scientists

tending to be less liberal than the others. Education students vary greatly, with those in elementary and physical education tending to be the most conservative and those in secondary education tending to reflect the attitudes of their prospective teaching fields.<sup>46</sup>

Looking further into the field of education, Zeigler studied the political behavior of 803 high school teachers in Oregon during the 1960's. Assuming that men take a more active role in politics than do women, Zeigler wondered what effect being a member of a vocation dominated by women (such as education) would have on the political beliefs and activity of the men and women in that field. He maintained that men in education suffer degradation in status from working in an occupation viewed to be feminine and also suffer considerable deprivation in financial rewards, yet he felt women do not suffer these same problems for, most generally, they are single or simply supplement the family income. In addition, their salaries are better than the salaries of most women working in other jobs.<sup>47</sup>

Zeigler examined the political impact of three variables: sex, income, and teaching experience on conservatism. His measure of conservatism involved three scales: one measuring attitudes toward overt government activity, another measuring the values normally described as "middle class," and the third emphasizing concern for moral standards and patriotism. He found that basically teachers tended to be conservative in nature, with this conservatism increasing as teaching experience increased. Also, most generally, women tended to be slightly more conservative than men.<sup>48</sup>

Zeigler speculated that conservatism among high school teachers could be partly due to lower status given the teaching profession and

to the desire of teachers for social mobility, or to achieve a higher status by adopting values thought to be middle class. However, most of his speculations related to roles society expects public school teachers to play, mainly those of developing an enthusiasm for democracy among their students and thus being "agents of socialization." Thus, in contrast to the role of college professors, high school teachers often see themselves as "mediators of the culture"<sup>49</sup> rather than change agents or critics of the culture.<sup>50</sup>

Relative to social mobility, Wolfle looked again at students in a university environment and why they choose the fields they do. He noted that the most conservative groups are in applied (as education may be considered) rather than academic fields. He speculated that a factor helping to account for this conservatism is that applied or vocational fields tend to draw more students from the lower social class levels than do the academic fields,<sup>51</sup> who perhaps see teaching and other applied fields as a means to rise up the social class scale.

Another common-sense explanation offered by Bereiter and Freedman as to why certain fields attract certain students, is the type instruction received by students. "The amount of liberal teaching to which a student would be exposed would be expected to vary with the subject."<sup>52</sup> Students entering social science might expect a fairly strong dose of liberal teaching, whereas those entering a literary field could expect somewhat less, and those students in natural science might expect hardly any liberalism from their professors. This might tend to result in a "self-selection process" whereby conservative-minded (and likewise liberal-minded) students would be discouraged from entering fields where their beliefs will be directly



challenged. Whatever the reason, it does appear that "some fields are relatively more attractive than others to liberal-minded people and some more to conservative-minded people."<sup>53</sup>

When considering the political orientation of professors, Ladd and Lipset found age to make a great difference, "with older faculty much more conservative than their junior colleagues in all university settings, in all groups of disciplines."<sup>54</sup> They found the "top of the academic community to be more liberal or left-of-center than the bottom," or simply the more successful, achieving, and rewarding members are more liberal.<sup>55</sup> This finding is paradoxical to the theory that the more deprived and discriminated against in our society are more critical of the status quo. Thus, it might be surmised that the more scholarly tend to sympathize more with minorities and the socially oppressed.<sup>56</sup>

In summary, Ladd and Lipset found two well established theories concerning the disproportionate liberalism of American academics. On one hand, they said the "what we have described is a relatively striking commitment by faculty, especially in view of their middle-class standing, to political positions reflective of egalitarian, change-oriented and generally liberal perspectives," and on the other hand, they found the existence of sharply patterned political differences within the professoriate itself, where large segments in the academic community have not stood to the left of the American political center.<sup>57</sup>

Hence, it can be expected in this study that university faculty patrons in the sample are more politically liberal in relation to the public schools than the non-university sample. However, it also can

be expected that there will be a great variation within the faculty sample between professors of different disciplines. With regard to the patrons' criticisms of and toward the schools, it can be anticipated that "gown" patrons will be more critical due to their reputation of being the change agents and critics of society, hence "intellectuals." Also, they should favor more citizen input and representation in the schools decision-making process, as well as be more politically knowledgeable and active themselves in this process.

Concerning goals of schooling, it can be expected that gown patrons desire more intellectual and personal development pursuits for children due to the more intellectual character of their values and surroundings. As Hofstadter would say of intellectual education, it aims to produce minds responsive to new trends in thought, art, pure science--those subjects which would give students a distinctive feeling about ideas such as qualities of "disinterested intelligence, generalizing power, free speculation, fresh observation, creative novelty, radical criticism."<sup>58</sup>

In contrast, non-university patrons might be expected to respond to more vocational-social, pragmatic goals for children, or as Hofstadter explains, "The plain sense of the common man, especially if tested by success in some demanding line of practical work, is an altogether adequate substitute for, if not actually much superior to, formal knowledge and expertise acquired in the schools."<sup>59</sup> Intelligence is valued and is a goal of central importance, but the extent to which education should foster intellect, or the critical, creative, contemplative side of mind could be a matter of heated controversy.

According to Hofstadter, opponents of intellect in public education have exercised much power,<sup>60</sup> many of whom share these sentiments:

Even at the level of elementary education, a schooling that puts too much stress on the acquisition of mere knowledge, as opposed to the vigorous development of physical and emotional life, . . . threatens to produce social decadence.<sup>61</sup>

He later adds,

Ours is the only educational system in the world vital segments of which have fallen into the hands of people who joyfully and militantly proclaim their hostility to intellect and their eagerness to identify with children who show the least intellectual promise.<sup>62</sup>

### Conceptual Framework

In analyzing the views of patrons in the Stillwater Public School District now and during the time period of controversy described in this study, a conceptual framework was designed showing possible differing ideologies and trends moving away from the older, more conservative and established political beliefs in the community to more "liberal," changing beliefs and back again. This framework is found in Figure 1, and the following questions might be asked as one reads the historical account of these controversies and the analysis of data: During the controversies, did certain segments of the public desire change in the board makeup and decision-making process? Were certain groups more critical of the school board, administration, and the decision-making process, as well as the overall school system itself? Was there more of a desire for a participatory democracy? Of pluralism? More minority and egalitarian rights? Were certain groups more politically active and less apathetic during this bond issue controversy?

I. Desire to maintain the status quo, or the present school board and administration, acceptance of the established institution (the school system)	vs.	Desire to change the status quo, or desire to change board and administration composition, highly critical of the established institution
II. Belief in bureaucratic system of decision making, or decision making by elected board members and hired administrators	vs.	Belief in participatory, "grass roots" democracy, or belief in public involvement in decision making
III. Belief in consensus politics or board agreement on all decisions	vs.	Belief in rights of opposition or minorities to be heard and represented
IV. Belief in the right of the bureaucratic hierarchy to make personnel decisions	vs.	Belief in egalitarian values and employees right to due process
V. Political noninvolvement and apathy	vs.	Political activism and awareness

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework to Explore Ideologies and Trends of Patrons in Stillwater

In answering these questions, one might also observe certain evolutions and revolutions in the school political system and the public therein, such as these:

1. from STABILITY to INSTABILITY to STABILITY
2. from CONSENSUS to CONFLICT to CONSENSUS
3. from CONTENTMENT to DISCONTENTMENT to CONTENTMENT
4. from SATISFACTION to DISSATISFACTION to SATISFACTION.

### Related Studies

Since Ladd and Lipset's 1972 study,<sup>63</sup> the 1969 Carnegie survey,<sup>64</sup> Lazarsfeld and Thielen's 1955 study,<sup>65</sup> and other cited studies had little, if any, reference to educational politics, other than those within and behind the university domain itself, the author explored other theories and studies relative to liberalism and conservatism, educators and public opinion concerning educational issues, as well as studies involving other possible town and gown disputes over political issues.

The tendency of university faculties toward a liberal political stance has never been tested in a local school political situation, as far as this author can determine. However, whether there is a consistency of political ideology throughout various dimensions or levels of politics has been explored to some extent. Robinson, Rusk, and Head indicate in Measures of Political Attitudes that there is

. . . a tendency among the five percent of the most intellectually aware people for liberals on domestic economic welfare policy to be liberals on foreign policy and for conservatives on domestic policy to be conservative on foreign policy, (although) such a correlation has hardly been apparent in the majority of the citizenry.<sup>66</sup>

Although the finding is interesting, the assumption cannot be made that university faculties are among the upper 5% of the most intellectually aware. Even if they were, there is no guarantee this liberalism would also involve the dimension of school affairs.

Concerning political ideological consistency, McClosky's study of "Conservatism and Personality" disagrees with Robinson, Rusk, and Head and attempts to determine if the knowledge of certain attitudes of an individual would enable one to predict that individual's position on other beliefs. He studied the relationship between a man's beliefs

and attitudes about education, intelligence, and personality variables and how these may affect his value system in politics.<sup>67</sup> His findings are numerous, but McClosky was positive that the scale he devised, The Florida Scale of Civic Beliefs, separated individual's attitudes into discrete categories.<sup>68</sup> For example, one of his many findings was this:

Of the four liberal-conservative classifications the extreme conservatives are easily the most hostile and suspicious, the most rigid and compulsive, the quickest to condemn others for their imperfections or weaknesses, the most intolerant, the most easily moved to scorn and disappointment in others, the most inflexible and unyielding in their perceptions and judgments.<sup>69</sup>

In conclusion, McClosky says, "If we may trust the evidence just presented, there seems little doubt that support for conservative doctrines is highly correlated with certain distinct personality patterns."<sup>70</sup>

Kimbrough and his associates were interested in knowing whether a consistency existed in a person's liberal-conservative attitudes and his outlook on foreign affairs, economics, political finance, the functions of government, and of the nature of man and society.<sup>71</sup> Kimbrough borrowed from the Florida Scale of Civic Beliefs developed by McClosky, yet was concerned that McClosky had not been "clear as to whether liberalism and conservatism were opposite ends of a single dimension so that a high score on one necessarily meant a low score on the other." Also, he reported no measure of reliability.<sup>72</sup>

Even though McClosky claimed success in the use of this instrument, Kimbrough felt it desirable to attempt to develop a scale which would measure and contain both liberal and conservative items, plus achieve a higher reliability.<sup>73</sup> Therefore, Kimbrough and his

associates revised McClosky's instrument by a complicated method of collecting items for the scale from a variety of sources, submitting them to colleagues, and then to 15 social scientists to mark as liberal or conservative. These were then categorized and submitted to 370 subjects, revised again, and given to three more groups. This final instrument was composed of 60 items, 18 considered liberal statements and 42 considered conservative, with different statements on foreign affairs, economics, function of government, public finance, and nature of man and society. The findings of this study seem to indicate a definite positive relationship between a person's liberal-conservative attitudes and his outlook on foreign affairs, economics, and others mentioned above.<sup>75</sup>

Although findings of McClosky and Kimbrough were supportive of the consistency of liberal and conservative beliefs, the instruments used have very questionable relevance to the measurement of liberality and conservatism today due to the changing nature of definitions and meanings of such terms. What was relevant in 1964 and 1958 may certainly not be today. Therefore, the author, in devising an instrument to test beliefs concerning school political issues, did not attempt to conform to any one definition of liberalism and conservatism but only to the implied meanings of the terms by Lipset and Ladd. Using their descriptions, it was possible to adapt or impose characteristics of "liberalism" onto school political issues.

Another study attempting to measure attitude structures of professors and laymen and their consistency was "The Attitude Structure of the Individual: A Q-Study of the Attitudes of Professors and Laymen" by Kerlinger. Kerlinger remarked that "attitude-value structures

of individuals are not too well understood . . . (and) the highly important problem of the consistency and inconsistency of an individual's attitudes is unsolved."<sup>76</sup> Therefore, his study attempted to investigate attitudes of the individual toward education and educational issues. Specifically, he measured attitudes of Education professors, Liberal Arts professors, and outside people using a methodology based on the Stephenson Q-technique.<sup>77</sup>

To explore the attitude structures of individuals, Kerlinger established an educational attitude theory and empirically tested a small sample of 25 subjects selected on the basis of: (1) occupational roles, using eight Education professors, 10 Liberal Arts professors, one university administrator, and six outside people; and (2) known attitudes toward education, or restrictiveness versus progressivism, and authoritarianism versus democracy in education.<sup>78</sup> Thus, roles were conceived as the independent variable and known attitudes toward education as the anticipated dependent variable.

The Q-technique involves choices (which values and attitudes are said to involve) where a subject is given a deck of statements and then sorts the cards according to how much he favors or does not favor the statements. In this case, there was a stack of 80 cards, each having typed on it a single statement referring to some phase of educational attitudes (restrictive-traditional vs. permissive-progressive, etc.) which the subjects were asked to sort according to a standard set of instructions. Any individual would have a unique sort which could be analyzed objectively. This sort not only told how conservative or how liberal the individual was, but would tell what his overall attitude structure was.<sup>79</sup>



Although Kerlinger's methodology would be difficult to use in the study presently being outlined, several of Kerlinger's research questions and findings seem relevant to this study. Those questions were: (1) "Is it possible to analyze an individual's educational attitudes so that an attitude structure will emerge?" Finding: Yes. (2) Can people, especially educators, be categorized on the "restrictive-traditional, permissive-progressive" dimension? Finding: Yes. (3) "Do individuals with similar roles and role expectations hold similar values and attitudes? Do professional educators, for example, hold similar values and attitudes toward education?" Findings: Yes. (4) "How do the educational attitudes of educators compare with those of non-educators?"<sup>80</sup> Findings:

. . . they differ rather sharply: professors, at least those in this sample, are generally Permissive, and laymen, again those in this sample, have no well-differentiated educational attitude structures, are Restrictive, or are Permissive only to a small degree.<sup>81</sup>

(5) "What are the similarities and differences in education values and attitudes of Education and Liberal Arts professors?" Finding: While the two groups differ in some respects, "there seems to be a common value core running through the educational attitude structures of Education and Liberal Arts professors."<sup>82</sup> (6) How well-integrated are the educational value-attitudes structures of professors compared to value-attitude structures of people outside the university? Findings: The Education professors are well-integrated, some structures of Liberal Arts professors are well-integrated, while others are poorly-integrated, whereas all outside people are all "non-integrated."<sup>83</sup>

If one could simply substitute the words "permissive and restrictive" for "liberal and conservative," these findings would be

even more relevant to the present study being described in this paper. Lazarsfeld and Thielens do use these terms somewhat interchangeably in analyzing social science teachers, when using as their dichotomy "Permissive versus Conservative," rather than permissive versus restrictive or liberal versus conservative.<sup>84</sup> This implies that these four terms might be considered synonymous; still one must be extremely careful in attempting to transfer definitions of liberal and conservative to any other situation other than the specific one being studied. Ladd says the following in regard to this idea:

Most descriptions of ideological divisions in the United States have revolved around 'liberal' vs. 'conservative' - what we call the 'Conventional Dichotomy' (C.D.). Any ideological category . . . is nothing more than a form of shorthand, an intellectual yardstick for measuring, simplifying, and organizing a multitude of political elements. . . . A conflict situation comes into existence, and labels are attached to the competing positions. As long as this conflict situation persists, the use of these labels to describe a component of it efficiently conveys extensive information about the component. But let the conflict situation be substantially altered and the continued application of the old categories only distorts.<sup>85</sup>

Although it is a difficult task, several other social science researchers have attempted to measure beliefs and attitudes. In reading the political philosophy of Dahl, one sees the importance of continuing to find better and more accurate methods of doing so. In his book Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition, Dahl well illustrates the importance of such an attempt:

Beliefs guide action not only because they influence or embody one's more distant goals and values . . . but because beliefs make up our assumptions about reality . . . the past and the present, . . . (and) the future . . .<sup>86</sup>

He also adds these points, which could be important to the politics of education:

In politics, what we believe influences not only what we want to happen, but what we think actually happens. . . . It seems evident, too, that individuals' beliefs influence collective actions and hence the structure and functioning of institutions and systems.<sup>87</sup>

Concerning activists and leaders, which also could be relative to school politics, Dahl says:

- . . . it is reasonable to think that activists and leaders are more likely than most other people
1. to have moderately elaborate systems of political beliefs
  2. to be guided in their actions by their political beliefs
  3. and to have more influence on political events.<sup>88</sup>

Thus, if educators do, in fact, have elaborate belief systems relative to politics and to education and are more activist than non-educators, then it is extremely important to attempt to measure educators' attitudes and beliefs such as this study is attempting to do.

Studies have been done which attempt to measure various attitudes and beliefs of the general public on education and educational issues, one of which will be examined in this review of literature. Goodlad's eight year "Study of Schooling" was chosen for two reasons: (1) segments of his "parent questionnaire" relative to goals of schooling, criticisms of schools, and amount of input offered schools were used in the instrument in this study being outlined to test "town" and "gown" differences in responses and (2) Goodlad's study appeared to be the most comprehensive long-term study of schools done at this point.<sup>89</sup>

Goodlad, using teams of 20 researchers in each, studied 38 schools throughout the nation, working on only one basic assumption: "Improving schools requires knowing what is happening in and around them."<sup>90</sup>

The purpose of his study was not

. . . to produce a set of generalizations and recommendations regarding 'the American school,' or schooling in the U.S., (but) . . . simply to provide some insight into schools studied . . . and to stimulate discussion about what schools are for and how they might be improved.<sup>91</sup>

Another purpose, Goodlad admitted, "was to formulate, not test, hypotheses about schooling."<sup>92</sup> This "Study of Schooling" prompted the author of this study to formulate research questions relative to the effect the presence of a major state university faculty might have on the school system in Stillwater, Oklahoma, in which the findings, just as Goodlad's, cannot be generalized.

Goodlad's study, too, is wholly descriptive. He drew his sample of subject schools from several major regions of the U.S., choosing schools differing with respect to several general features: size; economic status; ethnicity; and whether urban, suburban, or rural. There was no attempt, however, to draw a random sample. The schools chosen were in sets of three--a high school, a junior high school sending students to it, and a feeder elementary school.<sup>93</sup> Questionnaires were administered to several different groups within the subject schools. The respondents were parents, teachers, students, principals, school board members, and central office administrators. Data was also gathered through observation of classrooms or other instructional learning centers, as well as interviews with non-teaching staff members, teachers, and principals. The variables studied were 16 "commonplaces," including teaching practices, content, organization, communications, decision making, goals, issues, and problems.<sup>94</sup> The final results of Goodlad's study are yet to be published.

Later in Chapter IV of this study, a series of bond issues in the community of Stillwater, Oklahoma, will be analyzed, one failing and two other passing. Naturally questions arise as to why one failed and others similar to it did not. It would seem, then, that studies of school politics relative to the passage or non-passage of bond issues should be cited in this review of literature. Again, many descriptive case or field studies have been done, and one by Miskel in 1970 appears to be most relevant to this study.<sup>95</sup>

Miskel studied four communities in Oklahoma which had held bond elections during the academic year of 1968-69, two communities in which the school bond referendums were successful and two in which they were unsuccessful. He focused on community leaders and school board members, the amount of activity they exerted to support their bond issue, their sentiments regarding the superintendent's and school board's management of the bond issues, and their possible difference of opinion.<sup>96</sup>

Miskel used the field study approach in his research inquiry, first determining community leaders through the "reputational technique," whereby panels of "knowledgeables" representing certain interest groups were interviewed to determine representatives of the community power structure. Ten members of this power structure were chosen per community, then were interviewed to gain information in regard to their activity on the school bond issue and sentiments toward the school officials' management of the bond issue.<sup>97</sup>

Miskel then analyzed his data through a "content analysis" procedure, whereby simple sentences of interviewees (subjects and predicates) were categorized into selected concepts with explicit rules

identifying the category each statement should fall into, such as "Activity" (active against, voted no, inactive, voted yes), or "Sentiment" (very low, moderate, high).<sup>98</sup>

Many of Miskel's findings could be considered quite relevant to the present study being presented. For the purpose of reviewing his study, a few will be listed as follow: (1) Community leaders' activity in districts where bond issues passed was not significantly higher than in districts where they failed, nor were boards of education activities. (2) Community leaders had significantly higher levels of positive sentiments toward their superintendents and boards of education in districts where issues passed than where they failed. Then

1. The most frequently mentioned reasons for passage or failure of the bond issue by the community leaders in each of the four districts was found to be the planning and presentation of the bond issue to the public . . . (however) board members ascribed the failure to different reasons. . . .

2. A factor that appeared to be essential in passing a school bond issue was convincing the people it was needed for the children's education. . . .

10. The bond issues in the school districts with the larger percentage turnouts . . . as compared to smaller percentage turnouts . . . failed.<sup>99</sup>

The most significant finding relative to the study presently being done is the following:

The research findings indicate that a rejected bond issue is a symptom of a conflict between the policies of the board of education and the values held by the community at large. . . . However . . . the board of education members did not seem willing to admit that it was a rejection of their policy but rather attributed the failure to other issues like integration or a vague concept of a conservative national trend.<sup>100</sup>

Finally, the implications of Miskel's study are even more relevant to the present study being done:

. . . when the patrons of a school district vote on a school bond issue, they are voting on a more pervasive issue than just the passage or failure of a bond issue; that is, the total school policy, the complaints and irritations involving school personnel, and the community issues external to the school organization can become important factors in the outcome of the vote. . . .

A second implication from the findings is that extensive preparatory planning, presenting the details of construction, and the development of a need for the school in the minds of the patrons by the superintendent and board of education are essential though not necessarily sufficient conditions for the passage of the bond issue. . . .

The third implication from the findings is that the individual loser where a bond issue is defeated probably is the superintendent of schools. . . .

The fourth implication was that the boards of education were the crucial factor in determining the results of the bond issue. . . . Furthermore, the frequency of communication was found to be significantly higher among the board of education members where the bond issues had passed indicating that they used their availability to communicate with the school patrons. . . .

The fifth implication is that . . . the community leaders' influence might not be as pervasive as some of the literature would indicate. . . .

A final implication from the findings and rationale is that the superintendent and board of education as school representatives should strive for maximum interaction and exchange between the school system and the larger social system. This interaction and exchange would give the school officials the information necessary to keep the school policies consistent with dominant interests and values of the community and thus avoid the effects of being rebuffed at school elections.<sup>101</sup>

The final search of literature revealed two studies concerning town and gown political divisions in other communities with major universities, neither of which involve possible divisions on public school issues, but on local politics in those cities.

Warren examined conflict in the Yale-New Haven setting in 1976 and attempted to prove that

. . . three sets of interrelated determinants -- ideological, interest group, and social class orientation (resentment) -- converge as predictor variables in specific patterns which create in individuals and groups opposition to or support for, university-associated issues.<sup>102</sup>

These conflicts involved such issues as tax-exemption of university property, student participation in local elections, and university physical plant expansion.<sup>103</sup> The researcher hypothesized that certain opposition to the university was often based on an extreme conservative ideological perspective which viewed the university and its associated issues as too radical or left-liberal. He also considered the possibility that some individuals and groups viewed the university and its issues as insufficiently leftist and therefore symbols of compromise and conservatism.<sup>104</sup>

Warren's main source of data was a research instrument composed of six parts:

- 1) selected issues of town-gown conflict; 2) a values inventory; 3) an index for social class orientation, and an index for economic interest; 4) demographic characteristics for social class status; 5) New Haven involvement items; and 6) group qualities.<sup>105</sup>

A three-phase administrative procedure followed this pattern: (1) Interviews were held with 18 group leaders; (2) questionnaires were administered to 513 individuals in 18 groups by those group leaders; and (3) a follow-up was done, although this posed a problem due to the anonymity of the respondents. Each of the 18 group leaders were to complete one follow-up, either by phone or by mail. The results indicate a much better return rate for Insiders (those groups inside the university) of 75.2%, than for Outsiders (those groups outside the university) of 51.3%. This was due largely to the fact that Inside



group leaders were more systematic in their follow-up and had the use of the Yale Campus Mail System for returns.<sup>106</sup>

The findings in this study were quite lengthy and diverse, but it appeared that Warren contributed very little to town-gown literature because his findings were too long, detailed, and difficult to follow and apply to other studies. Rank order correlation findings demonstrate that both the separate predictor variables (ideological, interest group, and social class orientation) do successfully predict the average group response on Yale issues, and essentially the same findings were found to be true on the individual level. "This indicates that predictor variables can be used to determine group as well as individual response to Yale on the issues."<sup>107</sup> Another finding relative to this present study is that

. . . every issue of contention between the university and the city will be colored inescapably by the issue of social distance which exists between a Yale professor and an ethnic blue-collar worker. And on occasion, it may be the symbol of Yale as an elite institution . . . which triggers conflict between town and gown. . . .<sup>108</sup>

Thus, conflict can be an expected element in such a community.

Although the Stillwater study does not attempt to predict causality conflict within a school district due to the descriptive nature of the study, this researcher is looking to see if different beliefs concerning the schools exist between two "interest" groups in Stillwater, that of the university faculty group and the non-university group. Warren's findings indicate that future studies, such as this one in Stillwater, might indicate that university affiliation may pre-predict certain school voting patterns and behaviors. Such a statement is not made in this present study since there was no attempt to

control for all variables that could possibly be predictors of position on conflict issues other than university faculty membership.

The second town-gown study involving a university town was done by Alexander. He determined "current opinions of several selected community leaders on matters of economic and sociological import related to college/university relations."<sup>109</sup> The information was secured from selected community leaders in 95 college/university communities in 21 states east of the Mississippi River plus four other states in different regions of the country.<sup>110</sup> Alexander stated that

. . . institutions do not generally pay taxes or vote and may take little interest in community affairs. So, often the community views the college/university as being walled off, enshrouded by entangled ivy and often amidst eggheads who expound on the new social order of people and things.<sup>111</sup>

However, findings from Alexander's study of questionnaires sent to the community leaders indicate that there is a desire among these leaders that the university be more involved in the community as indicated in these responses: 86-100% agreed that "the faculty of the university/college should take an active part in the community's affairs."<sup>112</sup> This leads the author of this study to ask, "Does the O.S.U. faculty take an active part in the Stillwater community school affairs?" Hopefully, the results of the present study will answer this question.

### Summary

In summary, the review of literature has provided a historical overview of the role of the scholar or academician in our society now and in the past, and has outlined several means by which academicians have proven disproportionately liberal in our society (through

presidential voting records, stances taken on controversial issues, etc.). Two qualifications were noted: (1) that of professors' general lack of liberalism with respect to the university itself, and (2) that there are sharply patterned political differences within the professoriate, some of which have not proven more liberal than the rest of society. A conceptual framework was devised by which the case history of the controversies and issues of the Stillwater Public School System might be viewed and interpreted. Related studies explored the following topics:

1. Liberal versus Conservatism. Studies attempting to measure the political ideologies and beliefs (as well as their consistency and structure) of educators and/or laymen were discussed. It was established that, although definitions of liberal and conservative are constantly changing, it is quite important to continue attempting to measure ideologies, beliefs, and attitudes, especially of educators and leaders, for these are quite important to the future and stability of our society, as well as to the structure and functioning of its institutions.

2. Public Opinion of Schools and Attitudes toward School Issues. The methodology used in a recent "Study of Schooling" done by Goodlad was presented, as well as the methodology, findings, and implications of a study done by Miskel on bond proposals in four Oklahoma communities.

3. Town and Gown Disputes. Two studies in communities containing major universities in America were reviewed.

Thus, this review of literature found a research base that could support the belief that the school conflicts in Stillwater, Oklahoma,

could have been led and supported more strongly by the university faculty members in this community than the general public. This could be possible due to the historical roles assigned professors as social critics and change agents. This strength of support could also be due to the consistency of their "liberal" political ideologies throughout all realms of political events which might be extended to include school politics as well. Finally, the literature supported the expectation that conflict between town and gown is common throughout university communities, and could naturally exist in this particular community as well.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Everett Carl Ladd, Jr. and Seymour Martin Lipset, Academics, Politics, and the 1972 Election (Washington, D.C., 1973), pp. 1-29.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>3</sup>John Kenneth Galbraith, "An Adult's Guide to New York, Washington and Other Exotic Places," New York, IV (November 15, 1971), p. 52.

<sup>4</sup>George Stigler, unpublished memorandum as cited by Milton Friedman, "The Ivory Tower," Newsweek, LXXIV (November 10, 1969), p. 92.

<sup>5</sup>Whitelaw Reid, "The Scholar in Politics," Scribner's Monthly, VI (1873), pp. 613-614.

<sup>6</sup>New York Times (March 11, 1970), p. 30.

<sup>7</sup>Lionel Trilling, Beyond Culture (New York, 1965), pp. xii-xiii.

<sup>8</sup>Richard Hofstadter, Anti-Intellectualism in American Life (New York, 1962), pp. 3-7.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., pp. 25-26.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 27-28.

<sup>12</sup>Ladd and Lipset, pp. 8-9.

<sup>13</sup>Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Wagner Thielens, Jr., The Academic Mind (Glencoe, 1958), p. 151.

<sup>14</sup>Carl Becker, Progress and Power (Stanford, 1936), p. 93.

<sup>15</sup>Ladd and Lipset, p. 11.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>17</sup>George Gallup, Gallup Opinion Index, Report No. 58 (April 1970), p. 9.

<sup>18</sup>John P. Robinson, Jerrold G. Rusk, and Kendra B. Head, Measures of Political Attitudes (Ann Arbor, 1969), p. 35.

<sup>19</sup>Arthur Kornhauser, "Attitudes of Economic Groups," Public Opinion Quarterly, II (1938), p. 264.

<sup>20</sup>Hofstadter, pp. 3-4.

<sup>21</sup>Lazarsfeld and Thielens, p. 402.

<sup>22</sup>Ladd and Lipset, p. 12.

<sup>23</sup>Lazarsfeld and Thielens, p. 5.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., pp. 134-140, 377-402.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>26</sup>Lawrence C. Howard, "The Academic and the Ballot," School and Society, LXXXVI (November 22, 1958), pp. 415-419.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 416.

<sup>28</sup>Ladd and Lipset, The Divided Academy (New York, 1975), pp. 3-4.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., pp. 28-29.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 229.

<sup>32</sup>George Gallup, The Gallup Poll, III (December, 1969), p. 232.

<sup>33</sup>Ladd and Lipset, The Divided Academy, p. 6.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 233.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 241.

<sup>36</sup>Ladd and Lipset, Academics, Politics, pp. 14-18.

<sup>37</sup>Clark Kerr, The Uses of the University (New York, 1966), p. 99.

<sup>38</sup>Ladd and Lipset, Academics, Politics, p. 16.

<sup>39</sup>Lipset and Ladd, "The Divided Professoriate," Change, III (May/June, 1971), p. 60.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

<sup>41</sup>Ladd and Lipset, Academics, Politics, p. 28.

<sup>42</sup>Lipset and Ladd, "The Divided Professoriate," p. 55.

<sup>43</sup>Ladd and Lipset, Academics, Politics, p. 28.

<sup>44</sup>Carl Bereiter and Marvin B. Freedman, "Fields of Study and the People in Them," The American College, ed. Nevitt Sanford (New York, 1962), pp. 563-564.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 568.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

<sup>47</sup>Harmon Zeigler, The Political World of the High School Teacher (Eugene, 1966), pp. 1-3.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., pp. 5-8.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., pp. xii-xiii.

<sup>50</sup>Ladd and Lipset, Academics, Politics, pp. 5-9.

<sup>51</sup>Bereiter and Freedman, p. 569.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid.

<sup>54</sup>Ladd and Lipset, Academics, Politics, p. 29.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., pp. 18-19.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., pp. 27-28.

<sup>58</sup>Hofstadter, pp. 26-29.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., pp. 18-19.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., pp. 25-26.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., p. 51.

<sup>63</sup>Ladd and Lipset, Academics, Politics, pp. 1-4.

<sup>64</sup>Ladd and Lipset, The Divided Academy, pp. xiii-xv.

<sup>65</sup>Lazarsfeld and Thielens, pp. v-vii.

<sup>66</sup>Robinson, Rusk, and Head, p. 37.

<sup>67</sup>Herbert McClosky, "Conservatism and Personality," American Political Science Review, III (March, 1958), pp. 27-45.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., p. 38.

<sup>71</sup>Ralph B. Kimbrough, Informal County Leadership Structure and Controls Affecting Education Policy Decision-Making (Washington, D.C., 1964), p. 173.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., pp. 176-177.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., p. 172.

<sup>76</sup>Frederick Kerlinger, "The Attitude Structure of the Individual: A Q-Study of the Educational Attitudes of Professors and Laymen," Genetic Psychology Monograph, LIII (Princetown, 1956), p. 287.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., p. 289.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., pp. 293-295.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., pp. 289, 295-296.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., pp. 290 and 312.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., p. 312.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., pp. 290 and 312.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid.

<sup>84</sup>Lazarsfeld and Thielens, p. 128.

<sup>85</sup>Everett Ladd, Ideology in America (Ithaca, 1969), p. 9.

<sup>86</sup>Robert Dahl, Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition (New Haven, 1971), p. 125.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid., pp. 125-126.

<sup>88</sup>Ibid., p. 128.

<sup>89</sup>John I. Goodlad, Kenneth A. Serotnik, and Bette C. Overman, "An Overview of 'A Study of Schooling,'" Phi Delta Kappan, LI (November, 1979), pp. 174-178.

<sup>90</sup>Ibid., p. 174.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid.



<sup>92</sup>Ibid.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid.

<sup>94</sup>Ibid.

<sup>95</sup>Cecil G. Miskel, "A Field Study of the Activities and Sentiments of Community Leaders and Board of Education Members Regarding School Bond Elections in Four Oklahoma School Districts," (unpub. Ed. D. dissertation, Oklahoma State University, 1970), pp. 4-5.

<sup>96</sup>Ibid., pp. 4-5 and 21.

<sup>97</sup>Ibid., pp. 21-22.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid., pp. 29-36.

<sup>99</sup>Ibid., pp. 94-95, 98-100.

<sup>100</sup>Ibid., p. 101.

<sup>101</sup>Ibid., pp. 102-105.

<sup>102</sup>David Liles Warren, "Town-Gown Conflict: Ideology, Class Resentment, and Group Interest in the Responses to an Elite University," (unpub. Ph. D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1976), p. 2.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>104</sup>Ibid.

<sup>105</sup>Ibid., pp. 132-133.

<sup>106</sup>Ibid., pp. 145-147.

<sup>107</sup>Ibid., pp. 226-228.

<sup>108</sup>Ibid., p. 239.

<sup>109</sup>Robert Paul Alexander, "Town and Gown Relations -- How and What Community Leaders Think," (unpub. Ph. D. dissertation, Ohio University, 1969), p. 4.

<sup>110</sup>Ibid., pp. 6-8.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>112</sup>Ibid., p. 99.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction to Phenomenology

The basic methodology used in this study is that of phenomenology. Considered to be a "new method" of sociological research which deemphasizes the importance of the standard empirical method, it employs the descriptive realm of research whereby the researcher describes a certain phenomenon in terms of his own consciousness of what occurs.<sup>1</sup> In this study, the author was aware and conscious of several school-related controversies occurring in one particular community which seemed to be related to differing beliefs and political ideologies between the university faculty and non-university sections of this community. As noted in the introduction, these political ideologies also appeared to be linked to a nation-wide emphasis on "grass roots" or participatory democracy.

Involved in both town and gown segments of the community, the author was always conscious of a basic difference in the goals, projects, and processes desired for the schools by the university faculty and the non-university segments of the community, which refers to one of phenomenology's major tenets, that of the notion of "intentionality."<sup>2</sup> Observations were made over a four-year period between 1976 and 1980. Differences in and throughout four specific areas of

controversy dealing with the public school system in the community were studied: bond issues, school board makeup and decision-making processes, due process for public school employees, and competition for limited school funds between athletic and academic-oriented programs.

"The project of phenomenology . . . is the description of the phenomenal precisely as it appears to us in our consciousness," because there is no way to be rationally certain about the existence of any phenomenon without someone having knowledge of it.<sup>3</sup> In this study there were no prejudgments prior to the observations. Differences within the community were simply determined by "phenomenological reduction," observing several situations and then attempting to clarify their meaning by the use of intuition. Thus, phenomenology, as described by Merleau-Ponty, "is not empirical; the descriptions . . . are not concerned with real objects of existence but essences" or the basic nature of things.<sup>4</sup> The "essences" of this researcher's intuitions seemed to repeatedly turn to differences in ideologies and beliefs held by members of the community, and these essences were periodically altered and modified as the research progressed. "Evidence" is the selfgivenness or meaning of an object in the experience of the phenomenologist which can be objective without being real or factual.<sup>5</sup> The researcher can then rely on his own commonsense understandings to make sense out of his observations.

There are practical questions involved in "how to use the phenomenological method," but answers are not as clearly given as they are in the empirical method. However, there are suggested aims mentioned by Phillipson: (1) ". . . to describe the phenomenological objects of consciousness" and clarify the concepts being viewed which constantly

undergo clarification, revision, and change as the observations take place; (2) to reconstruct the human activities one has observed and then show how the meanings were derived and how application occurred; (3) to verify and support the researcher's observations and interpretations with tangible evidence validating that the observations and interpretations are consistent with other men's experiences and thoughts.<sup>6</sup>

In this study these steps were achieved with the use of not one, but a combination of several procedures and methodologies, including field study, participant observation, interviews, historical research, as well as the use of a questionnaire to obtain further data to verify or disprove observations that were made. Thus, although the phenomenological method is the base for the research, several methods of research were employed. Mills maintains that herein lies the value of such a methodology, which avoids the "fetishism of any one technique," adding, "Let every man become his own methodologist, let every man be his own theorist, let theory and method again become part of a craft."<sup>7</sup>

#### Beginning Phases--Procedures of Observation and Interpretation

##### Participant Observation

The methods of observation used in this study included such first-hand experiences of the author as: (1) an administrative intern in the public school system under the superintendent and two assistant superintendents in the fall of 1979, (2) an interested parent and

patron attending board meetings and citizens' meetings, and (3) a university student and teacher of a college curriculum and instruction course on social foundations of education between the years 1975 and 1978 in which the conflicts were viewed for academic, analytic, and theoretical purposes.

This firsthand type observation procedure is referred to as "participant observation" by Lutz and Iannaccone and is defined many different ways by various social scientists.<sup>8</sup> Schwartz and Schwartz define participant observation as:

a process in which the observer's presence in a social situation is maintained for the purpose of scientific investigation. The observer is in a face-to-face relationship with the observed, and by participating with them in their natural life setting, he gathers data. Thus, the observer is part of the context being observed, and he both modifies and is influenced by this context.<sup>9</sup>

Klockhorn defines participant observation as "the conscious and systematic sharing insofar as circumstances can permit, in the life activities and on occasion, in the interests and affairs of a group of persons."<sup>10</sup> In this case, participant observation evolved over a five-year time period from observing in a university setting (outside the system) to being included in the public school administrative team as an administrative intern (inside the administrative decision-making system).

The author's first contact with the Stillwater Public School System was during the academic year of 1969-70, as a secondary social studies teacher in the high school. Although this study was not then planned, some impressions were made at that point relative to the role and rights of teachers in the system, as well as the public's and system's values concerning the academic discipline of the social

studies. These were hardly articulated during that time period but only observed and sensed.

After leaving the community and school system for some four years between 1970 and 1974, the researcher's next association with the system was one of an observer, as both a graduate student of curriculum and instruction and educational administration and a teacher of a university course dealing with the social, political, and economic forces of education between the years 1975 through 1978. It was at this point that interest in the system broadened, and activities and controversies became excellent illustrations of concepts being studied and taught in classes. Several times board members, community leaders (usually opponents of the system), the superintendent, assistant superintendent, and school board candidates acted as guest speakers in university classes. Also, the researcher periodically attended board meetings for information-gathering purposes.

Potential biases are possible during this time, for at this point the observer assumed the role of the academician as social critic, opponent of the system and the status quo, noting the differences in the "real" and the "ideal," as well as other characteristics.

It would seem important to note that the observer was not only a member of the "gown" community during this time, but also could be considered a member of the "town" community due to family connections. Upon returning to Stillwater in 1974, her husband was employed by the city of Stillwater as the city attorney, whereby both experienced daily contact with the "town" governmental units and town leaders. In this way "town" bias was possible since the researcher could be influenced by their ideology, beliefs, and ways of viewing the community

and school system. During this same time period, the author also assumed the role of "parent" and viewed the school system from the perspective of one having a child within the school system, and thus was potentially biased in terms of desiring "what would be best for her child."

In addition to possible biases as critic and parent, the researcher must also consider a possible bias in favor of both board and administration, due to membership on the administrative team in the fall of 1979. As part of an administrative internship with the superintendent, assistant superintendents, and principals, the researcher was observing and working with the administration as well as somewhat with the board. The author had

. . . the advantage of knowing the motives, hidden agenda, and secret procedures unobservable to anyone not in that role. (S)he is (was), however, subject to the emotional biases of the role. It has been shown that one's perception is shaped by his being a member of a group.<sup>11</sup>

As explained by Lutz and Iannacone, the opportunity to view the day-to-day decision-making process assumed by administration and board made possible awareness of the care, hard work, and sincerity that went into each decision. The "best for the system" always seemed to be the goal of these decision makers, whether or not the public viewed these decisions as best for them or not.

Thus, at this point, if biases existed, they might have leaned in the direction of "favorable toward the system;" although so many different roles and so many different viewpoints "balance out" potential biases and aid rational and unemotional assessment and interpretation of data over this five-year time period.

Only twice during this research did the author feel as if she was viewed with suspicion: once when very confidential personnel decisions were explained to her by an assistant superintendent, and another when she was questioning criticism of one school to the principal of that school. In both cases, there was fear that information might be leaked to the public; therefore, confidentiality of information was essential.

On the other hand, for the most part, the author witnessed the "Hawthorn Effect," for people volunteered information when they otherwise might not. It became easy to ask questions because it was expected. People seemed pleased to know that they were interesting enough to be studied.<sup>12</sup>

With assuming such a broad spectrum of roles, the advantages of the participant observation method outlined by Lutz and Iannaccone were experienced by this researcher, to mention a few:

1. Areas not open to other researchers are open to the participant observational roles.
2. Process variables of human interaction which presently defy quantification are less likely to be distorted.
3. Pre-judgment in terms of hypotheses are not necessary or desirable as the process is studied.
4. The role is either occupied by the observer, or he can 'build' a suitable role as the research proceeds.
5. The observer is free to move from data to theory and back again.
6. The researcher is freer to 'explain' his data. In fact, he is obligated to do so while the experimentalist either supports or fails to support his hypothesis without the necessity of explaining the process. . . .
8. Depending on the researcher's role, the motives of the society are more easily described and explained. . . .



12. Process and understanding of process . . . is better done through this methodology. . . .

14. Information collected and recorded is wide and varied but constantly appraised to direct further data collection.<sup>13</sup>

During the course of research when asked by a friend and former professor, "Wouldn't someone from outside the community have been a better, less biased, more accurate researcher?" the author could only answer "No," for few others could have had the wealth of experiences and opportunities. The researcher was exposed to a series of events over a prolonged and extended period of time, thus seeing situations evolve, take new direction, and then change.

Thus, in summarizing the observations, the author did experience problems. Living in the community and being associated with the university and the public schools created strong feelings. It is difficult to work in a system and observe the daily problems of school administrators, board members, and others and yet be totally objective. At the same time, it is difficult not to be overly critical of these same individuals as the realities of school administration are compared with what ideally should exist. In experiencing many roles, the author became as Paul observed: "In part, the field worker defines his own role; in part, it is defined for him by the situation."<sup>14</sup>

The described observations were kept and inscribed in ongoing logs during this time span. Then pages of notes over a four-year period were synthesized and intertwined with the chronological history of events found in Chapter IV. The analysis of the observations could also become more objective since it was done after the author severed official connection with the public schools.

### Interviews With Community Leaders

Another source of data used by the author as a participant observer was a series of interviews with community leaders in the spring of 1979. Those interviewed included the Chamber of Commerce executive director, a bank president, a past city commissioner, the then president of the school board, the president of the League of Women Voters, a past state president of the American Civil Liberties Union, an Oklahoma Education Association lobbyist (now state senator), and four university professors. Many asked to remain anonymous for fear someone might be offended; therefore, no names nor footnotes will be used in reporting these interviews. Thus, it should be understood by the reader that when certain unidentified direct quotes appear within this study, the sources for such information were these anonymous interviews.

These interviews were semi-unstructured initially, but a structure emerged as the interviews progressed. This, according to Lutz and Iannaccone, is desirable in skillful unstructured interviews.<sup>15</sup>

The emerging structure resulted in the following questions:

1. What groups affect educational decision making in this school district (decisions made by administration and board, policymaking, goals, etc.)?
2. Identify previous community efforts to affect school policy.
3. Identify social tensions or divisions within the community.
4. What is the relationship between the city governing bodies (city commission, school board, university government)?
5. Identify the top leaders in the local community.
6. Describe community attitudes concerning the board of education in Stillwater.

7. What are the goals and expectations of education from various groups and individuals in Stillwater?

Initial stages of the study were for the purpose of generating research questions and theories. There were several reappearing themes in all the interviews. For example, initial responses common to most of those interviewed referred to the 1976 and 1977 bond issues as being the initiators of pressure groups attempting to affect the school board. Another underlying theme was the high value the public seemed to have toward quality education in this city. Even the opponents of the bond issue considered themselves "pro-education," for they viewed themselves as wanting more for the schools than the bond issues offered. Finally, in asking those interviewed about social tensions within the community, the "town and gown" division was mentioned repeatedly. One leader interviewed believed it was a myth, while another felt there was no gap, with as proof that there was one university professor on the board. Some townspeople seemed somewhat belligerent toward the university faculty, whereas others claimed faculty members were apathetic.

The following methods were suggested for use by the participant observer by Lutz and Iannaccone: (1) observation and recording of descriptive data, (2) recording direct quotes of sentiment, (3) unstructured interviews, and (4) written records such as newspapers, official minutes, letters, and speeches.<sup>16</sup> The fourth method was used extensively.

### Written Records and Research

Daily newspaper accounts beginning as early as 1949 and up through December, 1980, were read for exact, precise data and information. Also, some minutes of school board and committee meetings were read for further accounts, as well as Citizens' Advisory Committee Reports, surveys of public school patrons, and relevant personal letters made available by various school employees and patrons. Personal observations up to this point were then modified and altered by a study of pertinent facts and are also related in Chapter IV.

After these four stages of investigation, the author then conducted library research in the areas of political theories, sociological theories, and theories of community power structure--all of which were relevant to the observations made. Ladd and Lipset's political theory concerning university faculties came to be the most appropriate in analyzing her observations. From these steps assumptions and research questions finalized.

### Advantages and Disadvantages of Phenomenology

The method of phenomenology emphasizes the descriptive approach, which distinguishes itself from the more analytic forms of explanation which characterize other sciences. Now and in the past, the majority of researchers in various disciplines have assigned priority to the controlled experiment where the investigator has direct control over at least one independent variable and manipulates at least one independent variable. According to Kerlinger, the researcher then can have more confidence that the relations he discovers are the relations he thinks they are since he discovers them under carefully controlled

questions.<sup>17</sup> Yet even Kerlinger, a critic of descriptive research, sees the value of phenomenological methods. He admits, "In studying life, we depend on such experimental evidence. We act . . . on the basis of our own experience, and this is the only way we can act." Yet Kerlinger also says that such research is scientifically worthless and misleading.<sup>18</sup>

The author was aware of such criticism of this method of research, as well as those of Neale and Liebert's. Their criticisms are: Descriptive research (1) can not be generalized and (2) is not good for testing hypothesis; (3) it is hard to determine causality in descriptive studies,<sup>19</sup> (4) the observer's presence may alter the behavior observed, (5) there are no controls, (6) no variables are manipulated, and (7) the observer can make quite incorrect inferences from observations due to human fallibility.<sup>20</sup>

Fully aware of these problems, the author was even more aware of criticism of empirical methods of research such as Silverman's. In particular, he criticizes:

- (1) A view of theory as something constructed and negotiated from the armchair and presented to students as something quite separate from an understanding of the everyday world.
- (2) A view of methodology as a set of techniques to be used to catch the unchanging properties of a 'solid' factual world.
- (3) A reliance on the unexplicated assumptions of common-sense knowledge expressed in a preparedness to impute 'reasonable' motives to actors and to make phenomena non-problematic in terms of 'what everybody knows.'
- (4) An absence of philosophical sophistication in focusing on 'things' taken to be unquestionably obvious within a world through which our mind can roam at will.<sup>21</sup>

Thus, in several sociological researchers' opinions, theory should not be analyzed from an ivory tower, but should be observed in

the real world which is constantly changing and rarely falls into perfect predictable theories.

Another criticism of phenomenology and descriptive approaches is that it cannot be generalized; yet in actuality, very little theory is totally generalizable. The findings in this study can relate only to this one community of Stillwater, Oklahoma, for no other community would have the identical history and/or population characteristics. However, the methodology used can be applied to any study which attempts to describe a certain phenomenon.

In standard empirical research, too often certain roles, activities, and processes are assumed to exist or are "taken for granted," which is called "glossing" by Cicourel. Rather than taking for granted these properties, this "glossing" becomes the phenomenon of interest in the phenomenological approach. How accounts are constructed and read by providing for a factual world becomes a phenomenon worthy of study in its own right.<sup>22</sup>

In the phenomenological method, nothing is taken for granted and free observation takes place where theories can evolve from gathered or observed data. Phenomenology, in the words of Merleau-Ponty,

. . . is a matter of describing, not of explaining or analyzing. . . . I cannot shut myself up in the realm of science. All my knowledge of the world, even my scientific knowledge of the world, is gained from experience of the world without which the symbols of science would be meaningless.<sup>23</sup>

According to Husserl, data is collected as the researcher observes the world and this data "lets theories chatter about them, but remain what they are. It is the business of theories to conform to data,"<sup>24</sup> not vice-versa as is true in the empirical method used

commonly in research of the natural or social sciences, where data attempts to conform to theory.

Both Kerlinger and these phenomenologists seem to be responding to a "chicken-or-the-egg" question, "Which comes first, theory or experience?" In this study experience resulted in the testing of a theory. Several theories were "in mind" when observing the school controversies outlined: theories of political conflict, theories of power structures, theories of sociological interaction, theories of cultural aspects of academicians and intellectuals, and theories of decision making in a democracy. Any one of such theories could have been used in attempting to explain and analyze the school controversies, which questions any attempt to determine a "cause and effect" relationship since there are many causes of controversies, not just one. As stated by Walsh, "In the end we have to conclude that the cause of B is the whole antecedent universe. The cause of B becomes not one phenomenon A, but a vast array of phenomena not as separable factors but as a total conjuncture."<sup>25</sup>

However, in writing the descriptions of events, newspaper accounts, interviews and observations, there seemed to be an underlying political and cultural-ideological difference in the community's response to these controversies. This seemed to illustrate Ladd and Lipset's political characteristics of the college faculty. In several, but certainly not all cases, these characteristics seemed to be attributed to O.S.U. college professors involved in the local school district observed. This source of data was then further explored by collection of data gathered from sources other than the author's own

intuitive experiences, which Phillipson says must be collected in the phenomenological method for validity's purposes.<sup>26</sup>

Supporting Observations and Interpretations  
With Tangible Evidence Obtained  
From Questionnaires

The observations and interviews took place before a particular theory was chosen for empirical testing. The theory arose after the collection of some data took place, and not before, which is contrary to the standard procedure in empirical research where a theory is chosen, then variables are manipulated to test this theory. In the phenomenological method, objectivity is or is not achieved by demonstrating that the researcher's interpretation of his consciousness is consistent with other men's experiences and thoughts,<sup>27</sup> obtained through newspaper accounts, other records, and responses on a questionnaire.

Thus, the final stage in the phenomenological approach involves attempting to support the author's observations and interpretations with actual tangible data, evidence validating that the beliefs of the actors or members of these two various sections of the community were consistent with the author's observations and interpretations.

Sample

Tangible data was obtained from the mailing of questionnaires to a random sample of registered voters in the Stillwater Public School District. To obtain this sample, the list of Payne County Registered Voters was first reduced to only those precincts falling totally



within this school district, resulting in 22,684 names. Then, using a table of random numbers, the sample was reduced to 300 voters. After choosing this random sample of 300 names, it was found that four of the 22 precincts were almost entirely made up of university students. In Precinct 7, of the 34 names falling into the random sample, 27 had readily identifiable resident hall or apartment addresses. In Precinct 8, of 30 total names, 23 were Greek sorority or fraternity houses, and 9 were University Avenue, Monroe, or Lincoln addresses within a few blocks of campus, thus it was assumed most were university students. In Precinct 20, of the 37 names falling into the random sample, 34 had dormitory addresses, one had a sorority house address, and two were apartment addresses. The author eliminated these four precincts from the sample completely, for these would not truly be representative of the entire community. Also, since there had been an approximate five-year time lapse since the bond issue failure in 1976, the majority of student residents had not even lived in Stillwater at the time. Further, it was felt that there would be a significant portion of the student population represented in the remaining 16 precincts sampled.

In the first random sample of registered voters, only 5% of those chosen were university faculty members. Since the entire study focuses on the question of whether or not there is a difference in college faculty and non-university patrons' perceptions of schools, the author felt justified in altering the selection procedure to involve not just one, but two random samples of selected elements of the population of Stillwater.

After eliminating the four student precincts and all university faculty members (obtained by cross-checking all names with faculty members in the 1980-81 O.S.U. Student-Faculty-Staff Directory), from the original sample of voters totaling 300, there remained 199 names. Of these, 49 were removed by again using a table of random numbers (with the total population again being 22,684), thus leaving 150 random non-faculty Stillwater voters.

To obtain a sample of 150 faculty members, a list of the total O.S.U. faculty membership with academic rank (hence, only professors, associate professors, assistant professors, visiting professors, instructors, research and teaching associates) was devised using the O.S.U. Student-Faculty-Staff Directory. This list resulted in a total population of 1,144. Again, using a table of random numbers, 150 faculty names were chosen.

Questionnaires were mailed to these two samples, with letters of explanation enclosed in each. (See Appendix A.) The campus mail was used for the faculty sample and their responses, and the U. S. mail was used for the town sample. Return envelopes were enclosed in the latter, addressed to O.S.U. Central Mailing whereby only those envelopes returned required payment of postage.

After approximately one week it was obvious that the Payne County voter registration list was not up to date, for 38 in the town sample were returned marked "not deliverable," "not at this address," or "address unknown." In order to keep the original number in each sample equal, 38 names were chosen from the 49 eliminated from the original 199 names taken from the voter registration list, and questionnaires were mailed to them.

### Follow-Up

Approximately three weeks from the first mailing, 57 of the gown, 35 town with no university affiliation, and 24 town with some university affiliation (or a total of 64 from the voter registration sample) had responded. Since there was no way to identify those who had responded (which was done purposely to protect respondents' anonymity), all of those in each sample were contacted for "follow-up" purposes.

Faculty members' university offices were contacted and messages were either left with their secretaries or those in the sample were spoken to personally. In either case, the author thanked them for filling out the questionnaire or encouraged them to mail them in as quickly as possible. Some of those in the sample whom the author knew personally had verbally expressed to her that they had sent in their responses. For this reason there was no follow-up on them.

Rather than telephoning the town sample as originally was intended, it was discovered that post cards were the most economical as far as time and effort were concerned. A three sentence reminder, again either thanking them for their response or encouraging them to send them in quickly was sent to each one in the sample except those few the author knew personally who had expressed verbally that they had returned them. (See Appendix B.) Also, a few had written return addresses on their envelopes, obviously unconcerned about the confidentiality of their responses, and post cards were not sent to them.

Ultimately, the final return rate totaled 144 respondents, of whom 69 were members of the gown community, 43 were members of the community with no university affiliation, and 32 were town members

with some type of university connection (student, employee other than faculty member, or spouse of such). This final 48% return rate seemed acceptable, considering the length and complexity of the questionnaire itself. Kerlinger, commenting on the mail questionnaire survey, maintains that:

Responses to mail questionnaires are generally poor. Returns of less than 40 or 50 percent are common. Higher percentages are rare. At best, the researcher must content himself with returns as low as 50 or 60 percent.<sup>28</sup>

Due to these expected low response rates, he suggests that this type of survey be "used in conjunction with other techniques."<sup>29</sup> Since interviews, observations, research of documents, newspapers, and other sources of information were done, it was felt that this study more than adequately satisfied Kerlinger's suggestion for use of other techniques.

During the three-week waiting period after questionnaires were mailed out, the author received several interesting phone calls, most of which came from the gown sample. Several were curious as to what this information was to be used for. One professor on the Chamber of Commerce Education Committee was particularly interested in the results of the study since they might be beneficial in an "educational needs assessment project" this committee was undertaking. A few other professors called, expressing interest in the results, for they had been long time residents of Stillwater interested in the school system, or had been involved in the controversies themselves.

Other calls revealed comments or questions about certain parts of the questionnaire, such as "Why isn't there a 'C' grade that I can give the schools, rather than a choice of A-B or D-F?" or "I just

moved to Stillwater, and I don't know enough about the school system to reply," or "I have no children in the public school system and am not up-to-date." Another professor wanted to know why there was not a "status quo" response to the academics versus athletics question, saying he was satisfied with the present balance. However, in all cases, if there seemed to be some suspicion both in the purpose of the questionnaire or how it was going to be interpreted and used, after briefly explaining the study, all inquirers seemed quite content with the answer and/or very sympathetic to a graduate student doing research. Most also made some comment as to how they thought the results would come out and encouragement was offered.

Such a good feeling of understanding and encouragement, however, was not present on a few of the returned questionnaires. Some were marked emphatically with red ink or magic markers with comments ranging from "none of your business" on questions concerning their voting behavior, or marked "irrelevant" when asked their sex, to "This answer should not exclude the importance of the other three goals of schooling." Several forced choice questions were answered "both A and B," which denies the purpose of a forced choice question.

Sometimes cutting and derogatory comments were made, which was to be expected when part of the sample included those whose entire profession involves critiquing and questioning research instruments and designs. Some comments of the respondents also offered relevant and valuable data. In general, from these comments, one might surmise that schools and opinions on school issues are very emotion-laden topics, and hence, it is quite difficult, if not impossible, to devise

an instrument to test such attitudes, behaviors, and topics without certain flaws and shortcomings.

### Instrumentation

The measuring of attitudes, according to Henerson, Morris, and Fitz-Gibbon,<sup>30</sup> is the most difficult of all evaluation tasks, since the concept of attitude is abstract and is a creation--a construct. It is a tool that serves the human need to see order and consistency in what people say, think and do, so that given certain behaviors, predictions can be made about future behaviors. An attitude is not something that a researcher can examine and measure in the same way one measures the cells of a person's skin or measures the rate of a heartbeat. An observer can only infer a person's attitudes by words and actions.

Although the task of measuring attitudes is difficult, there is no reason to back off, but one should proceed with the following precautions in mind:

- When we measure attitudes, we must rely on inference, since it is impossible to measure attitudes directly.
- Behaviors, beliefs, and feelings will not always match, even when we correctly assume that they reflect a single attitude; so to focus on only one manifestation of an attitude may tend to distort our picture of the situation and mislead us.
- We have no guarantee that the attitude we want to assess will 'stand still' long enough for a one-time measurement to be reliable. A volatile or fluctuating attitude cannot be revealed by information gathered on one occasion.
- When we study certain attitudes, we do so without universal agreement on their nature.<sup>31</sup>

Henerson, Morris and Fitz-Gibbon go on to discuss various means to measure attitudes, all of which were used in this study:

(1) interviews, (2) questionnaires and attitude rating scales, (3) logs, and (4) observation procedures.<sup>32</sup>

The questionnaire, the final method of collecting data used in this study, consisted of the following sections:

1. Questions measuring political attitudes and ideology relevant to the first six research questions;

2. Questions concerning specific voting behavior of the respondents over the four-year period of conflict;

3. Certain demographic data first distinguishing between university faculty and non-university respondents to eliminate those not conforming to the designated requirements, with additional demographic questions to be used for further analysis of data. (See Appendix A.)

Concerning the first section, each research question was related to specific conflicts outlined in the phenomenological observations, for example, a specific forced choice question pertains to the choosing of athletic versus academic goals for schooling due to the nature of the conflict observed over competition for funds for each of these respective programs. Also, a question over goals of schooling taken from Goodlad's "Study of Schooling"<sup>33</sup> seemed pertinent with intellectual and personal goals congruent with assumed intellectual, "idealistic" values held by the gown, and vocational and social goals congruent with the pragmatic, "realistic" goals believed held by the town.

The second research question involving the extent of criticism aimed at the schools focused on one's overall opinion of the schools and educational process therein, then focus was on satisfaction with specific areas in the curriculum. The degree of satisfaction was

asked; then answers were reversed to indicate extent of criticism in the analysis. Concerning differences in beliefs relative to citizen input into the decision-making processes, one question dealt specifically with whether the school board should listen predominantly to their constituents or to their hired administrators. Only one question dealt with a general question on desire to try new innovations and changes in schooling.

Agreement or disagreement on specific egalitarian beliefs relative to school-related issues concerning due process, minority representation, and the exposure of dissent were included in the instrument to explore research question number five.

Questions relative to research question number six on the amount of interest and input into the schools simply asked the frequency of voting and talking to school personnel, as well as specific questions on respondent knowledge concerning the school system (name of superintendent, high school principal, and school board members). One question with several parts asked what types of input were specifically offered by respondents.

The second part of the instrument involved questions on specific voting behavior on school bond and school board elections since 1976.

The third part of the questionnaire dealt with demographic factors, the first of which identified the two groups: (1) university faculty and (2) townspeople. Besides the university faculty, anyone belonging to the O.S.U. staff, administration, support personnel system or student body, as well as their spouse was automatically separated from the "town" sample due to the university faculty influence in their environment, yet included in the analysis of data. In the



university faculty sample, only those university employees with academic rank were included: professors, associate professors, assistant professors, visiting professors, instructors, associate teachers, and associate researchers.

Before deriving the final instrument, two steps were taken for content validity: (1) Several questions were submitted to a panel of four judges along with the questions for research each was addressing. These questions were then narrowed down to those which best addressed the questions for research. (2) These remaining questions were then submitted to groups of known school "conservatives" and "liberals" in the community for a test on construct validity, as well as for pilot testing purposes. This piloting resulted only in minor changes in wording for clarification purposes in some questions and in verification that most, but not all, of the questions did, in fact, result in those responses thought to be characteristic of liberals and conservatives. No changes were made as a result of some answers not conforming to the author's expectations, for it was thought that no one, even among those in the pilot groups, would be a "pure" liberal or a "pure" conservative.

Questionnaires were then mailed to those chosen randomly from the two populations, along with return envelopes. A cover letter was sent with the questionnaire noting that there would be no means to trace members of the sample to encourage a higher rate of return, the purpose of which was to assure respondents of their anonymity. The responses to the questionnaire were tallied with the use of computer assistance and analyzed, first according to faculty and non-university responses then according to other groupings.

### Summary

Chapter III presented the procedures used in conducting this study. The first procedure involved phenomenological observations done over a four-year time period where data was gathered to generate certain concepts and questions relative to school controversies present in the community. Then extensive interviews were conducted with community leaders and research was done through daily newspaper accounts and other forms of public records to obtain additional information relative to these controversies. Library research was undertaken, and a theory was selected to apply to the observations and certain ideas and concepts derived from the previous research procedures. The final stage of research involved the use of an instrument which was mailed to two random samples in the community to see if this theory applied to situations viewed and to see if the actors' interpretations of the phenomenon observed were the same as the researcher's.

The presentation and analysis of all data collected will appear in Chapters IV and V.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Michael Phillipson, "Phenomenological Philosophy and Sociology," New Directions in Sociological Theory (Cambridge, 1973), p. 121.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 124-125.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 123.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 127-131.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 130-131.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 135-140.

<sup>7</sup>C. W. Mills, The Sociological Imagination (Oxford, 1959), p. 224.

<sup>8</sup>Frank W. Lutz and Lawrence Iannaccone, Understanding Educational Organizations: A Field Study Approach (Columbus, 1969), pp. 106-128.

<sup>9</sup>M. S. Schwartz and C. G. Schwartz, "Problems in Participant Observation," American Journal of Sociology, LX, 4 (January, 1955), p. 344.

<sup>10</sup>Florence R. Kluckhohn, "Participant Observer Techniques in Small Communities," American Journal of Sociology, LX, 4 (November, 1949), p. 344.

<sup>11</sup>Lutz and Iannaccone, p. 114.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 111.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., pp. 115-116.

<sup>14</sup>B. D. Paul, "Interview Techniques and Field Relationships," Anthropology Today, ed. A. L. Kroeber et al. (Chicago, 1953), p. 43.

<sup>15</sup>Lutz and Iannaccone, p. 113.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Fred N. Kerlinger, Foundations of Behavioral Research (New York, 1964), pp. 290-292.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 294.

<sup>19</sup>John M. Neale and Robert M. Liebert, Science and Behavior--An Introduction to Methods of Research (Englewood Cliffs, 1973), pp. 143-151.

<sup>20</sup>Kerlinger, pp. 291-292 and 505.

<sup>21</sup>David Silverman, "Introductory Comments," New Directions in Sociological Theory (Cambridge, 1973), p. 124.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 11-12. See also Aaron V. Cicourel, Method and Measurement in Sociology (London, 1964), pp. 1-38.

<sup>23</sup>M. Merleau-Ponty, "What is Phenomenology?" Phenomenology, ed. J. Kockelmans (New York, 1967), p. 356.

<sup>24</sup>Edmund Husserl, Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology (London, 1967), p. 89.

<sup>25</sup>David Walsh, "Sociology and the Social World," New Directions in Sociological Theory (Cambridge, 1973), p. 28.

<sup>26</sup>Phillipson, p. 149-151. See also Cicourel, pp. 1-38.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 132.

<sup>28</sup>Kerlinger, p. 397.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup>Marlene E. Henerson, Lynn Lyons Morris, and Carol Taylor Fitz-Gibbon, How to Measure Attitudes (Beverly Hills, 1978), pp. 11-12.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>33</sup>John I. Goodlad, Kenneth A. Serotnik, and Bette C. Overman, "An Overview of 'A Study of Schooling,'" Phi Delta Kappan, LI (November, 1979), pp. 174-178.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CASE STUDY

#### The 1949 Bond Issue Failure

Historically, Stillwater has been a city supportive of education and educational endeavors. Previous to 1976, only one school bond issue had ever failed in the community. Ironically, it appeared that both the 1949 issue and the 1976 issue failed not due to lack of support for building projects, but to a desire for more and better facilities than the bond issues described.

To illustrate this point, the failed 1949 issue specifically involved the selling of two older, crowded elementary schools, Eugene Field and Norwood, in order to obtain funds to build one new school. The chief argument against the proposal was that, based on surveys, the new school would be just as crowded within five years as the present facilities.<sup>1</sup> Thus, according to one newspaper editorial, the vast majority of voters simply did not agree that the way to solve the shortage of classroom space was to sell two school buildings and build one new one.<sup>2</sup>

The bond issue failed drastically, 1,102 to 437,<sup>3</sup> although it was revealed later that the board had already sold one of the two schools in anticipation of its passage. Although this could have been the basis for a huge public outcry against the school board, the public

remained calm, and letters to the editor even assured the board that their "no" vote was not a vote of "no confidence" in the school board.

Only two days after the failure of this bond issue, a self-formed "Citizens' Committee" had already submitted a list of new recommendations and proposals to the board.<sup>4</sup> Within nine months, a new bond issue passed, 1,008 to 39 adding 14 classrooms to the city's school system.<sup>5</sup>

### A Series of Recent School Controversies

#### The 1976 Through 1980 Bond Issues

The 1976 bond issue controversy seemed much more complicated than the 1949 election. This unsuccessful \$2 million-plus bond issue was to provide for (1) three elementary library-media centers at the three oldest elementary schools, (2) a second middle school located on the northeast side of the city, (3) a new cafeteria at the then present middle school, and (4) tennis courts at the high school.<sup>6</sup> Unlike the failure of the first and only other bond issue to fail in Stillwater, the 1976 failure seemed to carry with it a vote of "no confidence" in some members of the school board as well as the superintendent.

One event prompting the failure of the bond issue implied distrust in the board and superintendent's decision making and was labeled the "Friday Afternoon Massacre" by one board member. Three women, two of whom were doctor's wives, publicly questioned the superintendent as to whether this bond issue presented the "best plan" for the system and whether or not all options were considered.<sup>7</sup> The "massacre" label was given to this event because of a local newspaper

policy that no more than five days before an election could any attack be answered by opposite sides; hence, the school board was unable to assure the public that this was the "best plan." It was felt that this incident was the main reason why the bond issue failed, for public opinion which had seemed favorable to the bond issue or at least apathetic, swayed at the end. Throughout this four-year period of school-related controversy, the newspaper repeatedly and consistently seemed to take the opposite side of the board and administration.

According to an October 7, 1976 "Letter to the Editor," a group of middle school teachers who were disappointed with the failure of the bond issue, felt the city was influenced by these few citizens wanting a school on the west side of Stillwater, and others who did not wish to pay the additional taxes.<sup>8</sup> The next day that same newspaper column was filled with letters from offended parents and citizens who were angered at the accusations made that their negative votes were cast for selfish reasons.<sup>9</sup>

In the discussion, there were accusations made that the "country club set" had been opposed to the bond issue partially because that area would be left with the 50 year-old middle school, which would also have a poor, black section of town within its jurisdiction. There was fear that two middle schools would segregate the town economically, racially, and socially. Underlying all opposition seemed to be a general dissatisfaction from the people that their voices were not being heard by the school administration and board in their decision-making process. Commenting on educational decisions, one interviewee, an opponent of the bond issue, said,

We shouldn't give educators or the superintendent all the power. School administrators shouldn't get involved in school bond or board elections or making policy. Their job is to implement it. Let the people set it. If you want fair government, you shouldn't both set and implement it (policy).

He used this as an example:

On the first bond issue, the administration got no input from anyone. They asked for public input too late. Administrators should only recommend, and shouldn't play political games. They should say, 'These are our needs. Here are some options.' They should inform the public, but not set up mechanisms to get their way across.

One indication that public opinion toward the board was changing was that just four months after the failure of the 1976 bond issue, one of the doctor's wives involved in the "Friday Afternoon Massacre" ran for a school board seat. She was narrowly defeated by the incumbent after a hard campaign, but the strength of dissatisfaction with the then present board was illustrated in the close vote of 1,492 to 1,306,<sup>10</sup> which was the largest voter turnout on any school board election during the four-year period of controversy.

In the widening confrontation over the bond failure, new issues surfaced: the grade configuration of the schools, the need for another elementary school, the condition of the "old" middle school, and the location of the "new" middle school. At this point, the school board appointed a Citizens' Advisory Committee made up of 18 members, three of whom were faculty members of Oklahoma State University. The remaining members were representative of the business community, school faculty, PTA groups, as well as special interest groups such as the League of Women Voters.<sup>11</sup>

The Chamber of Commerce, which had sensed dissatisfaction within the community, took credit for the idea of establishing this committee,



yet actually the original idea came from the one "gown" board member previous to the failure of the first bond issue. Then, an attempt was made to appoint the owner of the radio station, television station, and town's only daily newspaper to chair the committee. However, he declined, and some observations indicated that he seemed to "discreetly" campaign against the issue through controlling the media. The committee appointed on November, 1976, was given the duty "to help the board put together a bond package which voters could approve."<sup>12</sup> The public temporarily seemed appeased. After several months of work, the C.A.C. report resulted in 19 recommendations, with the grade configuration question probably being the most controversial. Summarizing their 19 specific recommendations, the following were two general recommendations to the Board of Education:

1. Move to a grade level configuration consisting of K-5, 6-7, 8-9, and 10-12.
2. Submit, for approval, a bond issue to the citizens of the community in order to begin construction immediately on the following new facilities:<sup>13</sup>

with an outline of five different construction projects immediately following.

Of the 19 specific recommendations, few reports agreed on how many the board and administration actually accepted. The board and administration said they accepted all but one,<sup>14</sup> whereas opponents claimed only three were fully accepted, leaving the rest to be only partially accepted or rejected.<sup>15</sup>

Because there seemed to be confusion and lack of communication between these groups, the board met publically for three successive evenings with the Citizens' Advisory Committee and patrons to reply to any questions.<sup>16</sup> Many questions asked came directly from C.A.C.

members themselves, to the point that the board and C.A.C. appeared to be adversaries, not co-workers. Some felt that this committee actually tried to take over the power of the board, rather than functioning in an advisory position and simply offering suggestions.

One point of contention repeatedly brought up was grade configuration. Citizens often asked why the people were not allowed a choice in grade configuration through a referendum vote. This question was left unanswered by the board, and inferences were made that there would be duplicate middle schools, hence two schools with a 6-8 grade configuration. The basis of this choice was that the superintendent of schools had recommended such a grade configuration after studying the population predictions and community growth pattern.<sup>17</sup> The phrase, "according to my professional judgment," was used repeatedly by the superintendent during the controversies as he explained his reasons for certain recommendations placed before the board.<sup>18</sup>

The one and only O.S.U. professor on the board at this time considered the possibility that a referendum dealing with the grade configuration would pull the people together, but had come to the conclusion, among other considerations, that the board and administration needed flexibility in making this kind of decision.<sup>19</sup> Thus, he recognized the seriousness of the situation, but felt that further delay would only postpone the building bond issue.

At the third and final session of this three day "marathon meeting" between board, C.A.C. members, and public, the board chose to submit another bond election for \$3.6 million which included (1) a new elementary school on the southwest side of town, (2) three library learning centers at the three oldest elementary schools, (3) a new

middle school on the Skyline site on the northeast side of town, (4) a new cafeteria at the old middle school, and (5) the renovation of the old middle school. Even after this "final" decision was made, the board noted that there was no indication concerning how far the money would go in completing the five projects,<sup>20</sup> thus raising suspicion among some that the old middle school could be neglected.

After the announcement of a new bond election, opponents capitalized on the board's handling of the C.A.C.'s recommendations and their supposed lack of compliance. One anonymous patron interviewed for this study said: "The board was going to do what it wanted to anyway, so why did they appoint a committee?" Another community businessman interviewed said, "The board should have identified what they (the committee) could decide. They should have told them what they'd accept, like for grade configuration, then say 'If it's anywhere close, we'll accept it.'" Others eluded to the fact that C.A.C. members had been "hand-picked."

An active group of citizens who opposed the passage of this 1977 bond issue was formed, calling themselves "Citizens for Better Schools and Straight Facts." Led by a then local bank president, this group's motto was "Vote NO on October 11 So We Can Vote YES NEXT FEBRUARY."<sup>21</sup> One main concern of this group was that the amount of \$3.6 million in this bond issue was not sufficient to cover all the items contained in the question. By waiting until February, the district's bonding capacity would have risen to \$4.2 million which would have been enough to complete the projects.

A bitter battle began. The daily newspaper was full of advertisements every day, with the Citizens for Better Schools and Straight

Facts being confronted by another group called "Building Bonds for Classrooms Committee,"<sup>22</sup> each attacking the other with facts and figures, resulting in counter-attacks or rebuttles the next day.

Another group composed of then former C.A.C. members was formed to support a "yes vote" for the bond issue. All three O.S.U. faculty members on the original C.A.C. committee were among these supporters. Although favoring this issue, this group was clearly aware of the growing hostilities in the community as shown in this excerpt of a letter used as an advertisement:

Community voters will decide on October 11th whether or not there will be adequate space for Stillwater's school children. . . . If the issue is defeated, we believe the 'corrective' action suggested by the administration will be put into operation - split shifts, temporary structures, even twelve month schools.

There are those in the community who have a totally different opinion, and we believe they are sincere and conscientious people. They believe a defeated issue will cause the administrators and Board members to resign which will somehow clear the way for a successful bond election in February. We have concluded that such a position is not realistic. Regardless of the vote, there will probably be no resignation, and no new bond proposal.

The bond election is clouded not because of need - every one recognizes the need - but because some have a deep-seated hostility toward and suspicion of the administration and the Board. In our opinion, it is inappropriate to use a building bond election as a means of venting frustration with the school administrators and School Board members.<sup>23</sup>

Thus, these committee members had their criticism and reservations yet still remained education oriented and supportive of the issue while not necessarily supportive of the board and administration.

One of these three "gown" committee members who was head of a department in the College of Education, also attended a board meeting and publicly asked the board to answer statements that had been made in their oppositions' advertisements. The board agreed to do so.<sup>24</sup>

This same committee spokesman later wrote a "Letter to the Editor," appealing to the people:

. . . we simply cannot operate any longer without additional physical facilities. . . . Buildings for children is the primary issue. The secondary issue is what grade configuration will be used by the system. . . . I strongly encourage voters to support the bond issue that has been submitted by the Board of Education.<sup>25</sup>

An ad signed by another "gown" member of the C.A.C., also recording secretary, consisted of the minutes of the final meeting of that committee. These minutes contained a resolution formulated and stated by the third and final "gown" member of this committee, supporting any recommendations that the Board of Education made to the citizenry at large for resolving the severe space needs of the school district.<sup>26</sup> With efforts such as these individuals' and groups', the bond election passed 1,990 to 1,176, a narrow margin of 63% of just 3% or 90 votes above the required amount.<sup>27</sup>

After the passage of the bond issue, the board still felt the need to win the confidence of all the opposition, including those who voted "yes" for the children's sake, but not because they felt this to be the best plan. In an attempt to please those concerned with the still undecided grade configuration, the board sanctioned members of the faculty of the College of Education of Oklahoma State University to conduct a feasibility study on grade configuration. This study involved three phases: (1) a public opinion survey which found that the plan placing grades 6 and 7 in one building and 8 and 9 in the second was the preferred alternative with 56.13% of the 408 respondents choosing this plan, (2) a study of current practices, and (3) a scan of related literature on grade configuration. The latter phase

found a great diversity, yet no significant difference in grade configuration practices. A control question used in the survey phase dealt with satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the Stillwater Public Schools, and, as a group, respondents were not dissatisfied with the Stillwater Public Schools.<sup>28</sup>

This school district expenditure of \$3,500 for this three-phase research study perhaps was a conscious effort on the part of the board to determine the best possible grade configuration for the community. By referring to the O.S.U. College of Education which also used the services of the Psychology Department to actually conduct the survey phase, the board was calling on what might be considered the "professional experts" on education and research in the community, as well as involving more segments of the community in offering input into the decision-making process.

The discontent within the community seemed to settle somewhat until a new complication appeared. The board, in planning the 1977 bond issue, had been coping with a limited bonding capacity, and, although they suspected that \$3.6 million would not be enough to complete all the projects outlined in the issue, they had felt it necessary to move ahead and do what could be done with this amount. Opponents of the issue had capitalized on this possible lack of sufficient funds. Due to inflation and under estimation of costs, the board found themselves short several hundred thousand dollars in order to complete the intended projects, and, on Tuesday, March 3, 1980, the board had to propose another bond election, this time for \$1.49 million.<sup>29</sup> Two options were given to the voters: (1) to provide for

only partial completion of the two buildings, Sangre Elementary and the second middle school, or (2) full completion.

The campaign for the passage of these questions appeared to be low-key, perhaps to keep potential opposition from opening any of the past controversies concerning these two school sites. There seemed to be little interest in this election also, as if the passage of the previous issue had cleared the air. Perhaps, too, the people felt that the board had sufficiently listened to opposition and attempted to include the people in the decision-making process. Three out of the five members on the board changed in elections, and rumors persisted that the superintendent had been encouraged to resign by the "new" board. He did resign in January, 1980, thus, the formal school bureaucratic structure was reordered and the status quo or board membership changed drastically.

Concerning this 1980 bond election, both propositions passed. Proposition One passed 681 to 251, and Proposition Two was approved 646 to 282.<sup>30</sup> Thus, only slightly over 900 total patrons voted out of a potential 15,732 voters.<sup>31</sup> The entire voting record concerning these three bond elections, as well as school board races appear in Figure 2. These records obviously point out the intense interest of voters during periods of controversy, and a dying of citizen activity as issues were resolved and/or forgotten.

#### Changes in School Board Membership and Voting Patterns

During the time between the failure of the 1976 bond election and the 1980 bond election, the makeup of the board changed considerably

## OCTOBER 5, 1976 BOND ISSUE FOR \$2,920,000

1334 for the issue	
<u>995</u> against the issue	Failed (lack of 60% majority)
2329 total voters	

## JANUARY 25, 1977 SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION

1492 for the incumbent
<u>1306</u> for opponent
2798 total voters

## OCTOBER 11, 1977 BOND ISSUE FOR \$3,600,000

1990 for the issue	
<u>1176</u> against the issued	Passed
3166 total voters	

## JANUARY 24, 1978 SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION

735 ten-year incumbent
<u>1159</u> opponent
1894 total voters

## JANUARY 23, 1980 SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION

533 for former mayor
<u>426</u> for his opponent
959 total voters

## APRIL 8, 1980 BOND ELECTION FOR \$1,490,000

681 for issue 1	646 for issue 2	Both issues
<u>251</u> against issue 1	<u>282</u> against issue 2	Passed
932 total voters	928 total voters	*

\*Voting records obtained from Payne County Election Board Office,  
Payne County Court House, Stillwater, Oklahoma.

Figure 2. Voting Record of Bond and Board Elections



and moved from a consistent 5-0 unanimous vote in favor of administrative suggestions to a more common 1-4 or 2-3 vote. In January, 1978, a little over one year after the 1976 bond issue failed and just after the heat of controversy over the 1977 bond issue, a 10-year incumbent, then president of the board, was defeated by a leader of the opposition group (Citizens for Better Schools and Straight Facts) by a vote of 1,159 to 739.<sup>32</sup> The election of the co-chairman of her campaign who had no opposition, followed just one year later. A dentist and former mayor of the city won a seat in January, 1980, which had been vacated by a 13-year school board veteran who resigned from his seat.<sup>33</sup>

These first two changes might have been indicative of an overall public displeasure of administrative and board policies. At one point in 1979, the League of Women Voters went so far as to distribute among its members, an article accusing the administration of gerrymandering school district lines in 1972.<sup>34</sup> By so doing, the administration had been able to keep its then 5-0 board which favored administrative suggestions by not drawing lines which would make the then present board members unable to serve.<sup>35</sup>

One community leader felt the administration had made too many decisions that the board too often approved, saying, "Our whole U.S. government is based on the philosophy of laymen setting the rules under which professionals will operate and usually their rules are better than the rules set by experts." Another individual interviewed said,

The board should be a check and balance, not a rubber stamp. Yet the board was of the idea that they must be unanimous, with one past board member saying, 'We do not

have negative votes in board meetings. It is 5-0 always. You've got to present a unified front.'

One more recent board member was quoted as saying that formerly, executive sessions were used for the airing of controversy. "The session did not end until the vote was unanimous," thus it was implied that the public never heard any of the oppositions' ideas relayed or any of their questions answered, for the board never addressed controversy publically. Yet in reality, according to a third board member, only matters pertaining to personnel and discipline were actually discussed in executive session due to legal limitations.

Looking specifically at the first drastic change in board makeup in 1978, when the 10-year incumbent was overwhelmingly defeated by an active critic and former member of the Citizens for Straight Facts Committee, it seemed that the victor campaigned as a "grass roots" candidate. One of her goals during the campaign was to change boundary lines to achieve a more equitable representation. As a mother of six involved as a homeroom mother and PTA member, she emphasized her continual contact with teachers and administrators, working with as many as 50 per term. She expressed a desire to see better communication between teachers, administration, and board, while feeling the need for a "genuine citizen committee to be formed by the citizens themselves in order to fully represent the citizens." Constantly emphasizing her desire for openness of the board in her campaign, she stated five areas pertinent to quality education: continued parental involvement, increased teacher input, curriculum improvement, ongoing citizens advisory groups, and personal sensitivity.<sup>36</sup>

Her incumbent opponent's advertisements concentrated on his record as a successful businessman and as a cooperative worker with other board members. He constantly stressed the honesty and integrity of the board.<sup>37</sup> Yet election results could have indicated a lack of trust and faith in that board. The local newspaper discretely showed its preferred candidate through the headlines on election day, featuring an article showing a \$500,000 deficit of funds for the proposed new middle school.<sup>38</sup> That evening, the incumbent failed to be re-elected.

The winner affirmed her belief that "the school system belongs to the people and we're going to back up and include them more in decision making."<sup>39</sup> She carried out her campaign promises the best she could--almost too well in most administrators' and board members' eyes, as she began a five-year "devil's advocate" role on the school board. Consequently she was often shunned by other board members and rudely addressed by them and administrators at board meetings. One undergraduate student required to attend a board meeting for college class credit said, "I've never seen adults treat another adult so rudely at a public meeting."

Examples of her non-conformist, oppositionist behavior began the first month after her election when she abstained from voting on all decisions concerning alternatives to take when bids for construction of the new middle school came in over expected costs. She warned the board that they might expect "grave repercussions if the buildings' plans don't meet what the public wants in the way of grade level distribution," reminding them, "We told the public we'd take the grade level survey into consideration." One board

member responded with, "We can't change our minds everytime the public raises up and barks."<sup>40</sup>

This new board member also often sided with and spoke up for teachers. Once when teachers objected to the school calendar adopted by the board for the 1978-79 school year, she brought to the board's attention a letter addressed to the board from the Stillwater Education Association Advisory Committee stating requests concerning the school calendar. This letter never made it before the board, but had been screened by the superintendent.<sup>41</sup>

Three days after this incident, she publicly accused the board of misusing an executive session, revealing that it had been used mostly to "chew her royally" for leaking a rumor following a board meeting concerning an elementary principal's probation. She also stated she had been reprimanded by one board member for "brown-nosing" the teachers in the district.<sup>42</sup>

At the next board meeting, this same new board member requested a retraction and/or apology from the superintendent to a former teacher, then an O.S.U. doctoral student, for letters sent to his employer and supervisor. These letters supposedly accused him of questioning the integrity of an administrator and board member by referring to a possible "whitewashing of the grade configuration study."<sup>43</sup> This former teacher has been treasurer of the new board member's campaign for election approximately three months prior to this request.

### Due Process

Another concern of the new board member was whether proper procedures of due process had been granted employees in three separate

incidents. First, a non-tenured teacher's contract had not been renewed on the basis of substandard teaching. There was no documented proof from the administration of this substandard teaching, nor could the principal cite any specific incidences worth dismissal other than the pinning of notes of reminders on students' collars, which was interpreted by some as a degradation of students. This newly elected board member was the only board member to vote for reinstatement of this teacher, while the other four members had voted to uphold the superintendent's recommendation of non-renewal. Quoted in a newspaper article was this statement: "Voting by the board after executive session bore out what school board audiences have almost come to expect in recent months--support for the administration and support for district teachers and patrons in the ratio 4:1." This same article identified the crowd as "a mix of parents, children and patrons, teachers . . . and a sprinkling of Oklahoma State University faculty. An atmosphere of support for this teacher was subtle, but present."<sup>44</sup> This teacher later sued the school district, and this case is still pending in the Oklahoma State Supreme Court.

Two other cases raised the question of whether proper rights and/or due process were granted. One involved an elementary counselor questioning the fact that her pay was docked while on emergency leave. She, too, sued the school district, and her case is also still pending an appeal in the state supreme court. Secondly, an elementary school principal's status was changed to that of a middle school math teacher. This principal maintained the reason for his reassignment was never made clear to him or to the public. He filed suit in the federal district court, whereby the court denied his wish to be

temporarily reinstated. He then dropped the case. The school district applied for attorney fees to be assessed against the plaintiff, but this was denied by the court.<sup>45</sup>

One could speculate that political liberals might have a more favorable attitude toward employees' right to due process, while suspicious of the bureaucratic hierarchy's power to alter a worker's position without revealing to the public the exact reasons for dismissal or reassignment, whereas conservatives might view themselves as supporters of "the system" or "the bureaucracy" and would be more favorable to the hierarchy's power to make such decisions. One university faculty member interviewed made the comment, "The school board has had to move away from its primitive stance in due process cases."

Perhaps the previously mentioned changes in board membership from a once united board to a divided board could be due somewhat to divergent political ideologies. It could be speculated that political liberals within the community might have been more in favor of a participatory democracy in board decision making, more critical of the bureaucracy with its hierarchial system, more critical of the schools and their common everyday educational practices, more active in changing society, and more aware of civil rights involving educational issues, as well as more cognizant of employees' rights to due process. The election of the first two candidates might be a reaction to, and indicative of, beliefs and activities of this group. The election of the dentist and former mayor might have indicated a swing back to a more conservative element of the community if viewed as a bureaucrat and leader of the status quo when in a former role as city mayor. The conservatives, who might view themselves as supporters of "the system"

or the "bureaucracy," could favor the hierarchy's power to make decisions concerning the school system and its employees, usually by taking the suggestions of the administrator in charge.

### Athletics Versus Academics

The final area of school-related conflict examined in this study involved the competition of limited school funds for athletic programs versus increased academic-oriented and personal enrichment-type programs. One illustration of such conflict was the question of how to spend limited funds when bids came in \$800,000 short for construction of the new middle school. The board initially eliminated a math pod and a science, art, and industrial complex to lower costs, but left the school gymnasium in the plan.<sup>46</sup>

Despite this cut, financial problems increased when the next bids came in \$897,000 more than the original estimate for the proposed middle school. Meanwhile, the costs were increasing \$1,000 per day due to inflation.<sup>47</sup> A few weeks later, the PTA Council presented the board with a resolution urging them not to construct a gymnasium at the proposed Skyline Middle School, but to use the money for completing classrooms at the proposed middle school and elementary school. Their resolution went on to say:

The Council recognizes quality education for the children of Stillwater is a common goal of both the council and board. The Council, therefore, strongly opposes spending 25 percent of allocated moneys at the middle school for a gym while providing less than adequate classroom facilities.<sup>48</sup>

Other evidence of problems resulting from limited funds sometimes came in the form of "sensational journalism." One such example

illustrating concern for the music and counseling programs, was a story on the first page of a Sunday newspaper with the headlines, ". . . Musicians Practice As Nearby Boilers Roar."<sup>49</sup> This story reported the inadequate facilities at one elementary school, with the bandroom being a potentially dangerous boiler room and the counseling room being in an unventilated closet.

On the other hand, other articles reflected interest in the schools' athletic programs such as the one entitled "Want a Good Laugh?"<sup>50</sup> Written by the sports editor, this article described the "laugh" as being the things that went wrong around the athletic programs that season--the football field being plowed up just about the time it was ready for use, no gymnasium for basketball teams or wrestlers to practice in due to the danger of deteriorating arch beams, a baseball festival played on a little league ball yard because the high school field had not been ready for use, with the concluding note saying that year Stillwater lost a large number of coaches, leaving it up to the reader to reason why.

This following quote by this same sports editor well describes one side of the battle of athletics versus academics:

Someone in the hierarchy needs to care about quality coaches and quality programs. I realize athletics is just a part of the overall picture, but I happen to believe they are an important part and should be taken seriously to insure a first-class operation for the youngsters of this town, who are deserving of such.<sup>51</sup>

A group of parents sympathetic to the same cause appeared at a board meeting protesting the lack of athletics for seventh graders. Their complaint was that football and basketball, as well as individual sports such as tennis, golf, and wrestling, had been omitted due



to lack of financing and facilities. This group believed students were being cheated out of the chance to compete in sports. One spokesman for the group explained, "The key is not whether they're champions later in high school, but whether they participate. If kids are kept busy, they're out of trouble."<sup>52</sup>

Other illustrations of administration and board decisions involving competition between sports versus academic, personal enrichment-type programs were: (1) the tabling of the motion to accept two \$5,000 grants for the hiring of two additional elementary counselors at the November 5, 1979, board meeting, with no action taken to receive these funds thereafter, (2) the expenditure of an excess of \$25,000 to repair and reconstruct the arch beams in the City Gym whose decay resulted in the high school basketball team having no home court for the entire 1979-80 season, (3) the hiring of an additional half-time teacher to establish a limited "gifted and talented" program at the middle school level, then abolishing this new program just one semester later, (4) the approval of a 1979-80 budget expenditure of \$4,000 to cooperate with the city to upgrade the baseball field if and when the expenditure was needed,<sup>53</sup> and (5) the elimination of the high school honors English program in the school year 1979-80. These are just a few decisions illustrating that repeatedly, the board was forced to utilize limited schools funds based on what they felt the public wanted in the schools. In a mixed community, composed of both town and gown elements, this could be difficult to determine.

Underlying evidence indicated that the leaders for personal growth and academically-oriented programs, such as "gifted and talented" programs, honors programs, music, foreign language, elementary and

secondary counseling, appeared to be predominately from the university community. For example, in one university professor's unsuccessful bid for election to the board, his main concern was continued emphasis on programs for children with learning disabilities and also on "equal support for a total effort at meeting the needs of the academically gifted child in our school," feeling they must be challenged through enrichment programs.<sup>54</sup>

Leaders of the movement to increase and develop athletic programs tended to be among the "town" element. These programs included the buying of an "activities bus," resurfacing the gym floor, building additional tennis courts, hiring additional coaches, hastening repairs on the City Gym, and upgrading the baseball and football fields.

Other examples of town and gown preferences and divergent views were evident in personal interviews with patrons in the community: One university faculty member interviewed was quoted as saying,

The board is too controlled by those who aren't interested in academics. They should seek out the needs, not the wants of people. They should look for hard data. We don't publish reading rates, math scores, or S.A.T. scores. Those merit scholars we have are from university families usually, and they learn at home.

On the other hand, one businessman interviewed was quoted as saying, "Their Ph.D.'s don't qualify university people to make curricular decisions, but a university professor thinks he knows more about education. They even think their kids are brighter than the others."

Criticism concerning curriculum and instruction in the schools came from both town and gown interviewees. One "town" leader said, "We're graduating illiterates; our S.A.T. scores are down; and our curriculum is at a state minimum level." Another said, "We want

improvement. We're getting away from instruction and going more toward buildings in our priorities." A "gown" interviewee described teachers as "bland," saying our system doesn't advertise and recruit for teachers and administrators. "Rather than looking at the O.S.U. Placement Office, decisions are based on 'who you know' or the 'Good Ole Boy.' We have competitive resources due to our being a university city, but we have a small town, non-competitive, closed system."

A public school faculty member presented a complimentary statement about the citizens in the community:

We have a unique community. They (parents) respect militant teachers that strive to better the schools, salary, and programs. Due to the number of parents informed and educated, they want quality educators and are willing to support the teachers. For example the two new board members have a high regard for the qualified teacher.

On goals of education, a "town" spokesman felt "We're too college prep oriented. The teachers and public school administrators view vo. tech. students as second class. We don't stress the basic 3 R's enough." Yet one college professor disagreed, "The vo. tech. students are well accepted. We value both types of education--vocational and college prep. Even college professors see the need for vocational training." Another faculty member viewed the students as being tracked into vocational technical or academic. "The two schedules conflict with one another," hence students cannot fulfill vocational and academic goals at the same time.

In the area of guidance counseling, one O.S.U. psychology instructor commented on the need for more elementary and secondary counseling programs. "We have no preventive care, no spotting of kids in trouble. By high school, they're thrown out. All high school

counselors do is schedule classes--and we turned down matching funds for elementary counselors."

A black League of Women Voters president, also the wife of an O.S.U. professor, stated this limitation concerning Stillwater patrons' attitudes toward education: "I think the majority of the people of Stillwater value an education, but you must remember the majority of the people are connected with the university in some way." This statement relates to the central question in this study which seeks to determine if association with the university faculty affects opinion and attitudes toward the public school system in Stillwater.

#### A Concluding Chapter Note

In conclusion to this chapter, as a result of further analyzing observations, interviews, and historical data concerning the bond elections and other school controversies, the critical, egalitarian, liberal political ideology displayed was even more evident after these stages of research. However, the author's initial "hunch" or position that such beliefs, particularly opposition to the bond issues, came predominantly from the university faculty was altered, for leadership for such a movement came from both town and gown elements of the community. Hence, the question for research is even more relevant, "Is there a difference in town and gown's perceptions of the schools?" If so, where and how do they differ? Who are the "liberals" and who are the "conservatives?" Data from surveys of both segments of the community hopefully will help answer these questions.

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup>Stillwater News Press (February 27, 1949), p. 1.
- <sup>2</sup>Ibid. (March 2, 1949), p. 7.
- <sup>3</sup>Ibid. (March 6, 1949), p. 1.
- <sup>4</sup>Ibid. (March 8, 1949), p. 1.
- <sup>5</sup>Ibid. (December 21, 1949), p. 1.
- <sup>6</sup>Ibid. (October 6, 1976), p. 1.
- <sup>7</sup>Ibid. (October 1, 1976), p. 1.
- <sup>8</sup>Ibid. (October 7, 1976), p. 6.
- <sup>9</sup>Ibid. (October 8, 1976), p. 12.
- <sup>10</sup>Ibid. (January 25, 1977), p. 1.
- <sup>11</sup>Citizens' Advisory Committee, Final Report to the Board of Education, Stillwater I-16 School District, Payne County, Oklahoma (April, 1977), pp. 1-2.
- <sup>12</sup>Stillwater News Press (November 7, 1976), p. 1.
- <sup>13</sup>Citizens' Advisory Committee, Final Report, pp. ii-iii.
- <sup>14</sup>Stillwater News Press (September 7, 1977), p. 1.
- <sup>15</sup>Ibid. (September 28, 1977), p. 36.
- <sup>16</sup>Ibid. (September 8, 1977), p. 1.
- <sup>17</sup>Presentation to Oklahoma State University Curriculum Class by Robert Hale, Superintendent of Schools, Stillwater, Oklahoma, Fall, 1977.
- <sup>18</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>19</sup>Stillwater News Press (September 8, 1977), pp. 3 and 13.
- <sup>20</sup>Ibid. (September 9, 1977), p. 1.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid. (October 2, 1977), p. 26.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid. (September 26, 1977), p. 4.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid. (October 5, 1977), p. 3.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid. (October 4, 1977), p. 1.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid. (October 6, 1977), p. 14.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid. (October 12, 1977), p. 1.

<sup>28</sup>The Office of Extension, College of Education, Oklahoma State University, "Report Summary," Final Report: Grade Configuration Survey for the Board of Education, Stillwater Public School District I-16 (July 3, 1978), pp. 1-3.

<sup>29</sup>Stillwater News Press (March 4, 1980), p. 1.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid. (April 9, 1980), p. 1.

<sup>31</sup>Telephone interview with Lavern Reuter, Payne County Election Board Chairman, January 1, 1980.

<sup>32</sup>Stillwater News Press (January 25, 1978), p. 1.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid. (January 23, 1980), p. 1.

<sup>34</sup>Stillwater League of Women Voters, "Do You Feel Gerrymandered???" The Stillwater Voter (February-March, 1979), pp. 9-10.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

<sup>36</sup>Stillwater News Press (January 13, 1977), p. 1.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid. (January 24, 1978), p. 1.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid. (January 25, 1978), p. 1.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid. (February 15, 1978), p. 1.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid. (March 7, 1978), p. 1.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid. (March 10, 1978), pp. 1 and 3.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid. (April 11, 1978), p. 1.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid. (April 16, 1978), p. 1.

<sup>45</sup>Telephone interviews with Winfrey Houston, Stillwater School Board Attorney, March 31, 1980 and May 20, 1981.

<sup>46</sup>Stillwater News Press (February 16, 1978), p. 1.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid. (September 12, 1978), p. 1.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid. (October 1, 1978), p. 1.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid. (March 12, 1978), pp. 1 and 3.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid. (May 4, 1980), p. 13.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid. (April 3, 1979), pp. 1 and 3.

<sup>53</sup>The Board of Education of Independent School District No. 16, Minutes of Regular Meeting (November 5, 1979), p. 2.

<sup>54</sup>Stillwater News Press (January 13, 1977), p. 1.

## CHAPTER V

### PRESENTATION OF QUANTITATIVE DATA

#### Introduction

This chapter contains results of quantitative data obtained through questionnaires mailed to a random sample of "townspeople" taken from the list of registered voters in Payne County and a random sample of university faculty or "gown" taken from the 1980-1981 O.S.U. Student-Faculty-Staff Directory.

The following tasks are undertaken in this chapter:

1. Answering Research Questions One through Six,
2. Devising a Liberal-Conservative Scale,
3. Answering Research Question Number Seven--Variations within the Faculty,
4. The Bond Issues and School Board Elections.

The research questions and data relevant to these questions are discussed in the following pages. Various items on the survey instrument were used to establish relevant categories, while responses to the other items on the instrument were analyzed to determine answers to the eight research questions. Figure 3 shows the research question number, the survey questions used to categorize respondents, and the survey item responses analyzed for each research question.



Research Question	Instrument Item Responses Analyzed	Instrument Items Used for Categorization
1 2 3 4 5 6	1, 2 3, 4, 10 5 11, 12, 13 6 7, 8, 9	26,27,28,29 (for Gown, Town <sub>1</sub> with no university affiliation and Town <sub>2</sub> with some university affili- ation other than faculty member
7	3,5,6,7,8,10,11 12,13,14,15,16	26 for college with which each faculty member is associated
8	17,19,20,22, 23,24 for voting behavior	3,5,6,7,8,10,11,12 13,14,15,16 for liberal-conservative responses

Figure 3. Research Questions, Instrument Items Analyzed, and Categorization

The chi square test was run on each question, and the variables or combination of variables were examined. These results were used to evaluate whether or not frequencies obtained from the survey instrument results differed significantly from those which could be expected under a certain set of theoretical assumptions. In order to determine if significant differences occurred between groups in their responses, a .05 level of probability was used.<sup>1</sup> If the probability was greater than .05, it was determined that any differences could have occurred by chance.

Tables presenting data relative to each research question will be presented. Other data which might be interesting and relevant to the phenomenon being examined, yet do not specifically answer any one research question, will also be presented, particularly when significant differences occurred.

One recurring problem appeared in the computer print-out data. Too small an expected cell size occurred with the warning: "Over 5% of the cells have expected counts less than 5. Table is so sparse that chi-square may not be a valid test."<sup>2</sup> Anderson and Zelditch refer to this warning by stating that "the computed value of chi square is only approximately distributed as chi square and . . . the approximation breaks down when the expected frequencies are very small."<sup>3</sup> Hence, even with much larger samples, chi square is only an approximation. With small samples that sometimes result in small cell sizes consisting of expected frequencies of less than five, this approximation must include or involve several considerations.

One suggestion of Anderson and Zelditch used in this study was: "In the case of tables with more than one degree of freedom, the proper procedure to follow in this situation is to reduce the size of the table by combining categories."<sup>4</sup> This procedure was used on survey question 10 in which respondents were asked to identify their level of satisfaction with certain areas of the curriculum. (See Appendix A.) Rather than reporting results of all four possible choices per items A through K (very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, and very dissatisfied), where chi squares and probabilities resulted in chi square warnings, the researcher reduced the table to two

categories (satisfied and dissatisfied), thus increasing cell sizes to an acceptable level. (See Table IV.)

However, this was not possible when the expected frequencies in 2 x 2 tables were too small. In these cases, Anderson and Zelditch recommended Fisher's exact test.<sup>5</sup> This test simply employs a mathematical means of increasing the sample size to increase cell sizes to above expected frequencies of five, eliminating the cell size problem. However, since the use of Fisher's exact test was not crucial to the purposes of this study, the test was not employed on this data.

Logic was applied where appropriate to assure that despite small cell warnings, results could still be significant and statistically correct. In this process, the researcher simply looked at the cell where the expected frequency was less than five and then observed the individual cell chi square. If too much of the total chi square was based on that cell chi square (or "those" if more than one cell had an expected frequency less than five), and if that cell frequency was only one, then it was assumed that the total chi square and its probability level would not be a valid indication of the true significance of the table. However, if the cell chi square was not too large in relation to the total chi square, and if the actual frequency was more than one or at least one-half or more than the expected frequency of that cell, it was assumed that the total chi square and probability would not be skewed and therefore would indicate the true significance of the table.<sup>6</sup>

Also, if the probability level was greater than .05 when a warning appeared, most generally the small expected frequency warning would go in the direction of "not significant" when corrected;

therefore, there would be no need to reanalyze those tables with chi square warnings where the probability was greater than .05.<sup>7</sup> All tables relative to the research questions were examined in this way, and there were no instances when the cell size warning would considerably reduce the significance level of the results (where at least a probability of .05 had existed).

A notation is presented in tables to alert the reader to instances where warnings appeared (<sup>W</sup>). Footnotes appear in the tables referring to meanings of abbreviated terms (such as G, T<sub>1</sub>, T<sub>2</sub>, T<sub>1+2</sub>), significance levels, and probabilities. Tables are combined in many instances where gown was compared to the "pure" town sample with no university affiliation (T<sub>1</sub>), when gown was compared to those town with some type of university affiliation other than faculty member (T<sub>2</sub>), and then when gown was compared to the combined town sample (T<sub>1+2</sub>). These combinations were done in order to make comparisons easier.

#### Answering Research Questions One Through Six:

##### Looking at "Town" Versus "Gown"

##### Research Question One

"Are the perceptions of university faculty and non-university patrons different on what the goals of schools should be?"

The majority of all respondents chose "intellectual development" as their preferred goal of schooling, with the gown group favoring this goal by 83%, and "personal development" next in order of preference with 12% of the gown sample responding. There were no significant differences between goals of this gown group and the "pure" town

sample ( $T_1$ ), for 76% of this town group chose "intellectual development" also. However, the second choice for  $T_1$  was "social development" with a 10% response.

There were significant differences in the gown responses and the town group having some university affiliation ( $T_2$ ), for only 52% of the latter favored "intellectual development," giving second place to "personal development" (23%), then "social development" falling third with 19% of the  $T_2$  group responding here. A significance of difference at a lower level of .04 appeared between the total town ( $T_{1+2}$ ) group's responses and the gown's responses, with the overall preferences of all town subjects being 66% for "intellectual development." (See Table I.)

When asked on survey question number two whether or not they preferred that more emphasis be placed on academic subjects or on athletics and sports, overwhelmingly the majority chose more emphasis on academics. A total of only three respondents disagreed, with one town and one gown respondent preferring that more emphasis be on athletics and one other gown adding the comment that he would have preferred a "status quo" response, indicating that he liked the present balance of academics and athletics. (See Table II.)

Thus when asked their preferred goal of schooling on survey question one, and their preference for emphasis on academic subjects or athletics on question two, there were no significant differences between responses of the university faculty and non-university patrons.

TABLE I  
SURVEY QUESTION ONE--GOALS OF SCHOOLING

Responses	G <sup>a</sup>	T <sub>1</sub> <sup>b</sup>	T <sub>2</sub> <sup>c</sup>	T <sub>1+2</sub> <sup>d</sup>
A. Social Development	3%	10%	19%	14%
B. Intellectual Development	83%	76%	52%	66%
C. Personal Development	12%	7%	22%	13%
D. Vocational Development	2%	7%	6%	7%
	w		w	w
$\chi^2$	4.847 <sup>e</sup>		12.563 <sup>f</sup>	8.1399
Probability	.1833		.0057**	.0432*

a G = "Gown" or O.S.U. faculty members holding academic rank

b T<sub>1</sub> = those "town" with no university affiliation

c T<sub>2</sub> = those "town" who may be students of, employees of (other than faculty status), or spouses of students or employees of O.S.U.

d T<sub>1+2</sub> = All combined "town" groups

e The  $\chi^2$  and probability of G vs. T<sub>1</sub>

f The  $\chi^2$  and probability of G vs. T<sub>2</sub>

g The  $\chi^2$  and probability of G vs. T<sub>1+2</sub>

\* Significant at the .05 level

\*\* Significant at the .01 level

w Cell size warning

TABLE II  
SURVEY QUESTION TWO--ACADEMICS VERSUS ATHLETICS

Responses	G	T <sub>1</sub>	T <sub>2</sub>	T <sub>1+2</sub>
A. There should be more emphasis on academics	97%	98%	100%	99%
B. There should be more emphasis on athletics	3%	2%	0	0
$\chi^2$ Probability	2.859 <sup>a</sup> .2395	3.089 <sup>b</sup> .2134	3.089 <sup>c</sup> .2134	

a  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G and T<sub>1</sub>

b  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G and T<sub>2</sub>

c  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G and T<sub>1+2</sub>

<sup>w</sup> Cell size warning

### Research Question Two

"Do university faculty patrons criticize the schools more or less than non-university patrons?"

There was no significant difference in the overall criticism of the schools by the university faculty (G) and the non-university segment of the community (T<sub>1</sub>) as manifested in overall grades given the schools. A majority of all groups gave A's and B's to the schools, with the gown being the group less critical of the schools with 85% giving grades of A's and B's, compared to 77% of the T<sub>1</sub> group and 71% of the T<sub>2</sub> group. (See Table III.)

TABLE III  
SURVEY QUESTION THREE--GRADES GIVEN SCHOOL SYSTEM

Responses	G	T <sub>1</sub>	T <sub>2</sub>	T <sub>1+2</sub>
A. A's and B's	85%	77%	71%	74%
B. D's and F's	15%	21%	23%	21%
$\chi^2$	<sup>w</sup> 2.229 <sup>a</sup>	<sup>w</sup> 5.180 <sup>b</sup>	<sup>w</sup> 3.900 <sup>c</sup>	
Probability	.3281	.0750	.1423	

<sup>a</sup>  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>1</sub>

<sup>b</sup>  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>2</sub>

<sup>c</sup>  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>1+2</sub>

<sup>w</sup> Cell size warning

However, when asked to rate satisfaction with specific subject areas within the curriculum, the respondents indicated that some differences do exist. By the use of chi square, it was found that the university faculty was significantly more dissatisfied with the social studies and foreign language programs than the T<sub>1</sub> group, as well as all other town groups. (See Table IV.)

Also looking at Table IV, although only two of the 11 curriculum areas were significantly different, the gown was more critical and dissatisfied with all of the curriculum areas than the non-university (T<sub>1</sub>) sample except for the math, physical education, and learning disability programs where T<sub>1</sub> was the more critical group.



TABLE IV  
 SURVEY QUESTION 10--SATISFACTION AND DISSATISFACTION  
 WITH VARIOUS CURRICULUM AREAS

Curriculum Areas	G	T <sub>1</sub>	T <sub>2</sub>	T <sub>1+2</sub>
A. Satisfied with Reading/English	65%	70%	76%	73%
Dissatisfied with Reading/English	35%	30%	24%	27%
$\chi^2$	.215 <sup>a</sup>		1.070 <sup>b</sup>	
Probability	.6426		.3010	
B. Satisfied with Mathematics	68%	67%	75%	70%
Dissatisfied with Mathematics	32%	33%	25%	30%
$\chi^2$	.029 <sup>a</sup>		.391 <sup>b</sup>	
Probability	.8637		.5315	
C. Satisfied with Social Studies	63%	87%	93%	90%
Dissatisfied with Social Studies	37%	13%	7%	10%
$\chi^2$	5.658 <sup>a</sup>		8.798 <sup>b</sup>	
Probability	.0174**		.0030**	
D. Satisfied with Science	69%	86%	71%	79%
Dissatisfied with Science	31%	14%	29%	21%
$\chi^2$	3.123 <sup>a</sup>		.042 <sup>b</sup>	
Probability	.0772		.8380	
E. Satisfied with the Arts	80%	84%	66%	75%
Dissatisfied with the Arts	20%	16%	34%	25%
$\chi^2$	.196 <sup>a</sup>		2.124 <sup>b</sup>	
Probability	.6578		.1450	
F. Satisfied with Foreign Language	42%	73%	67%	70%
Dissatisfied with Foreign Language	58%	27%	33%	30%
$\chi^2$	6.675 <sup>a</sup>		4.000 <sup>b</sup>	
Probability	.0098**		.0455*	
G. Satisfied with Physical Education	84%	77%	86%	82%
Dissatisfied with Physical Education	16%	23%	14%	18%
$\chi^2$	.506 <sup>a</sup>		.096 <sup>b</sup>	
Probability	.4769		.7568	
H. Satisfied with Competitive Sports	72%	81%	85%	82%
Dissatisfied with Competitive Sports	28%	19%	15%	18%
$\chi^2$	.835 <sup>a</sup>		1.593 <sup>b</sup>	
Probability	.3608		.2068	
I. Satisfied with Gifted & Talented Programs	48%	59%	62%	60%
Dissatisfied with Gifted & Talented Programs	52%	41%	38%	40%
$\chi^2$	.890 <sup>a</sup>		1.260 <sup>b</sup>	
Probability	.3454		.2617	
J. Satisfied with Counseling Services	53%	67%	69%	68%
Dissatisfied with Counseling Services	47%	33%	31%	33%
$\chi^2$	1.545 <sup>a</sup>		1.974 <sup>b</sup>	
Probability	.2139		.1600	
K. Satisfied with Learning Disability Programs	75%	69%	73%	71%
Dissatisfied with Learning Disability Programs	25%	31%	27%	29%
$\chi^2$	.285 <sup>a</sup>		.033 <sup>b</sup>	
Probability	.5937		.8565	

a  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>1</sub>  
 b  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>2</sub>  
 c  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>1+2</sub>

\* Significant at the .05 level  
 \*\*Significant at the .01 level

It would seem important to note that the overall satisfaction level of the entire population sample of town and gown seemed fairly high except in three curriculum areas where over 40% of the total of all groups were dissatisfied: (1) the gifted and talented program with 46% of the entire population feeling dissatisfied, (2) the foreign language programs with 44% feeling dissatisfied, and (3) the counseling program with 40% indicating dissatisfaction. (See Table V.)

In an effort to condense the satisfaction variations of town and gown, it was found that although the difference was not particularly great, gown was more critical of the total curriculum since 14% of this group was dissatisfied with six or more areas of the curriculum, whereas only 5% of the T<sub>1</sub> group and 6% of the T<sub>2</sub> were this critical. (See Table VI.)

### Research Question Three

"Do university faculty patrons and non-university patrons differ in their attitudes toward new or different approaches in education?" was the question asked here.

The calculated chi square on the question designed to test differences between gown and town, was 2.695. With one degree of freedom, the probability was .1007; therefore, no significant difference existed at the .05 level in university faculty and non-university patrons' attitudes toward new or different approaches in education.

Table VII presents the survey results on this question. Although not significant, the gown was more in favor of seeking innovations and newer approaches in educating our children rather than sticking to

traditional approaches in teaching, 76% compared to 61% of the T<sub>1</sub> group.

TABLE V  
PUBLIC'S OVERALL ATTITUDE TOWARD CURRICULUM AREAS

Curriculum Area	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
A. Reading/English	67%	31%
B. Mathematics	69%	30%
C. Social Studies	77%	23%
D. Science	74%	26%
E. The Arts	77%	23%
F. Foreign Language	56%	44%
G. Physical Education	83%	17%
H. Competitive Sports	77%	23%
I. Gifted & Talented Program	54%	46%
J. Counseling Service	60%	40%
K. Learning Disabilities Program	73%	27%

TABLE VI  
 OVERALL SATISFACTION AND DISSATISFACTION  
 WITH CURRICULUM

Responses	G	T <sub>1</sub>	T <sub>2</sub>
A. Satisfied with six or more areas	86%	95%	94%
B. Dissatisfied with six or more areas	14%	5%	6%

TABLE VII  
 SURVEY QUESTION FIVE--SCHOOLS' APPROACHES TO EDUCATION

Responses	G	T <sub>1</sub>	T <sub>2</sub>	T <sub>1+2</sub>
A. Should Seek Innovation	76%	61%	68%	64%
B. Should Stick to Tradition	24%	39%	32%	36%
$\chi^2$ Probability	2.695 <sup>a</sup> .1007		.756 <sup>b</sup> .3846	2.344 <sup>c</sup> .1258

a  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>1</sub>

b  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>2</sub>

c  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>1+2</sub>

#### Research Question Four

"Do university faculty patrons and non-university patrons differ in their position on school-related egalitarian values such as equal political and social rights and privileges for all (minority representation and due process)?

Three "Agree-Disagree" questions appeared on the survey that were to deal specifically with this research question, and two of the three indicated significant differences do exist between town<sub>1</sub> and gown relative to egalitarian values.

Responses to question number 11 on the survey found that there was a significant difference at the .0094 level in the agreement and disagreement of the university faculty and non-university patrons that "The airing of controversy and minority points of view by school board members is necessary for a democratic system to function properly," with the gown agreeing significantly more than the T<sub>1</sub> group (97% compared to 83%). (See Table VIII.)

There was also a significant difference in gown and T<sub>1</sub> responses at the .0094 level on survey question number 12, with 99% of the gown disagreeing that "School boards should have the right to dismiss any employee of the school system without specific documented evidence as to why he/she was fired," compared to 81% of the T<sub>1</sub> or non-university affiliated sample. Table IX further outlines the results of this question.

The only question of the three on egalitarian values that did not indicate a significant difference between the gown and T<sub>1</sub> responses was concerning the agreement or disagreement that "School board

TABLE VIII  
 SURVEY QUESTION 11--AIRING CONTROVERSY AND MINORITY RIGHTS  
 IS NECESSARY

Responses	G	T <sub>1</sub>	T <sub>2</sub>	T <sub>1+2</sub>
A. Agree	97%	83%	88%	85%
B. Disagree	3%	17%	12%	15%
$\chi^2$ Probability	<sup>w</sup> 6.743 <sup>a</sup> .0094**		<sup>w</sup> 3.525 <sup>b</sup> .0604	6.186 <sup>c</sup> .0129**

TABLE IX  
 SURVEY QUESTION 12--BOARDS HAVE THE RIGHT TO DISMISS EMPLOYEES  
 WITHOUT DOCUMENTED EVIDENCE

Responses	G	T <sub>1</sub>	T <sub>2</sub>	T <sub>1+2</sub>
A. Agree	1%	19%	3%	12%
B. Disagree	99%	81%	97%	88%
$\chi^2$ Probability	<sup>w</sup> 10.503 <sup>a</sup> .0012**		<sup>w</sup> .292 <sup>b</sup> .5892	6.075 <sup>c</sup> .0137**

a  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>1</sub>

b  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>2</sub>

c  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>1+2</sub>

<sup>w</sup> Cell size warning

\*\* Significant at the .01 level

decisions should express solidarity and a united front on controversial issues." Here 83% of the gown disagreed, and 69% of the T<sub>1</sub> disagreed, resulting in a chi square of 3.323 and significance of .0683. However, significant differences did result between the gown and T<sub>2</sub> sample at the .0021 level, and also between the gown and the T<sub>1+2</sub> sample (significance at the .0054 level). (See Table X.)

TABLE X  
SURVEY QUESTION 13--SCHOOL BOARD SOLIDARITY

Responses	G	T <sub>1</sub>	T <sub>2</sub>	T <sub>1+2</sub>
A. Agree	16%	31%	45%	37%
B. Disagree	84%	69%	55%	63%
$\chi^2$	3.323 <sup>a</sup>		9.477 <sup>b</sup>	7.744 <sup>c</sup>
Probability	.0683		.0021**	.0054**

a  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>1</sub>

b  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>2</sub>

c  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>1+2</sub>

\*\* Significant at the .01 level

Based on these three questions and their results (shown in Tables VIII, IX, and X), in addition to the high significance level between gown and T<sub>1</sub> on the first two questions and the .0683 significance

level on the third question, one might conclude that there is a significant difference in the O.S.U. faculty and the non-university oriented segment of the community concerning school-related egalitarian values.

#### Research Question Five

"Do university faculty patrons and non-university patrons differ in their beliefs concerning the processes of citizen participation in the system's decision-making process?"

Respondents were asked to select between two choices which the Stillwater Board of Education should follow in its decision-making process: (A) the views and desire of its constituents or (B) the advice and recommendations of the administration even though their advice may not have public support.

All groups, gown, T<sub>1</sub> and T<sub>2</sub>, chose the former by a majority (answers ranging from 73% to 76%), with no significant differences occurring in any combination of gown and town. Approximately one-fourth of all respondents chose "follow advice and recommendations of the administration." (See Table XI.)

#### Research Question Six

"Do university faculty patrons and non-university patrons differ in their participation in the system as reflected in their knowledge of the system and in their input offered the schools in the form of voting on school elections, voicing opinions on school-related topics, and participating in school activities?"



Responses to selected survey questions show no significant differences between town and gown concerning knowledge of the leaders in the school system (names of superintendent, principal of the high school, and school board members). In most cases, slightly more than one-half of each group made correct responses in each case. However, respondents were more knowledgeable of the high school principal than any other leader or group. (See Tables XII, XIII, and XIV.)

TABLE XI  
SURVEY QUESTION SIX--IN DECISION MAKING, THE BOARD SHOULD

Responses	G	T <sub>1</sub>	T <sub>2</sub>	T <sub>1+2</sub>
A. Represent Constituents	72%	76%	73%	75%
B. Follow Administration's Advice	27%	22%	27%	24%
$\chi^2$ Probability	<sup>w</sup> 1.722 <sup>a</sup> .4228		.002 <sup>b</sup> .9638	<sup>w</sup> .973 <sup>c</sup> .6149

a  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>1</sub>

b  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>2</sub>

c  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>1+2</sub>

<sup>w</sup> Cell size warning

TABLE XII  
SURVEY QUESTION 14--KNOWLEDGE OF SUPERINTENDENT

Responses	G	T <sub>1</sub>	T <sub>2</sub>	T <sub>1+2</sub>
A. Correct	54%	58%	56%	57%
B. Incorrect	46%	42%	44%	43%
$\chi^2$	.148 <sup>a</sup>		.030 <sup>b</sup>	.124 <sup>c</sup>
Probability	.7000		.8632	.7253

TABLE XIII  
SURVEY QUESTION 15--KNOWLEDGE OF HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Responses	G	T <sub>1</sub>	T <sub>2</sub>	T <sub>1+2</sub>
A. Correct	68%	70%	63%	67%
B. Incorrect	32%	30%	37%	33%
$\chi^2$	.055 <sup>a</sup>		.257 <sup>b</sup>	.016 <sup>c</sup>
Probability	.8148		.6123	.9008

a  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>1</sub>

b  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>2</sub>

c  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>1+2</sub>

TABLE XIV  
 SURVEY QUESTION 16--KNOWLEDGE OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Responses	G	T <sub>1</sub>	T <sub>2</sub>	T <sub>1+2</sub>
A. Three or more correct	57%	60%	47%	55%
B. Incorrect (less than three correct)	43%	40%	53%	45%
$\chi^2$	.105 <sup>a</sup>		.962 <sup>b</sup>	.104 <sup>c</sup>
Probability	.7457		.3267	.7466

a  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>1</sub>

b  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>2</sub>

c  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>1+2</sub>

Being a parent in any of these groups (G, T<sub>1</sub> or T<sub>2</sub>) did not make a noteworthy difference in knowledge of the system. The only group to show any significant differences within their responses as parents and non-parents was the T<sub>1</sub> group, in which 80% of the T<sub>1</sub> parents could name the superintendent and only 46% of the T<sub>1</sub> non-parents could do so. This finding was significant at the .05 level.

Concerning participation in the form of regularity of voting, the responses to survey question seven resulted in no significant differences between university faculty and the town groups. Over 90% of all groups responded that they "usually vote" when school bond issues and school board elections are held. (See Table XV.)

TABLE XV  
SURVEY QUESTION SEVEN--VOTING ON SCHOOL ISSUES

Responses	G	T <sub>1</sub>	T <sub>2</sub>	T <sub>1+2</sub>
A. Usually Vote	93%	91%	97%	93%
B. Never Vote	7%	9%	3%	7%
$\chi^2$	<sup>w</sup> .152 <sup>a</sup>		<sup>w</sup> .665 <sup>b</sup>	.019 <sup>c</sup>
Probability	.6971		.4150	.8913

a  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>1</sub>

b  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>2</sub>

c  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>1+2</sub>

<sup>w</sup> Cell size warning

The gown scored only slightly higher on voicing opinions concerning school-related topics by 88% responding that they had talked to teachers, administrators and/or board members over school-related topics during the past few years, as compared to 76% of the T<sub>1</sub> sample. The level of significance of this question was only .1022, and therefore these differences could be due to chance. (See Table XVI.)

At this point, it is again valuable to note differences between parents and non-parents within each group concerning their responses to talking to teachers, administration, etc. Both parents groups in gown and T<sub>1</sub> were 100% active in this way (with the exception of one gown parent). Significant differences occurred between parents and

non-parents in each respective group. However, it might be noted that 17% more of the gown non-parents were involved in talking to people within the school system about school issues than were the T<sub>1</sub> non-parents. (See Table XVII.)

TABLE XVI  
SURVEY QUESTION EIGHT--TALKED TO SCHOOL PEOPLE  
ON SCHOOL TOPICS

Responses	G	T <sub>1</sub>	T <sub>2</sub>	T <sub>1+2</sub>
A. Have	88%	77%	81%	79%
B. Never	12%	23%	19%	21%
$\chi^2$	2.671 <sup>a</sup>	<sup>w</sup>	.938 <sup>b</sup>	2.454 <sup>c</sup>
Probability	.1022		.3329	.1172

a  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>1</sub>

b  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>2</sub>

c  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>1+2</sub>

<sup>w</sup> Cell size warning

The final means to measure potential differences in participation between town and gown was question nine on the survey whereby patrons were to mark any of those activities in which they now participate or have participated. No significant differences occurred anywhere

between gown and T<sub>1</sub>. However, approximately five differences were significant between gown and the other town groups. The T<sub>2</sub> and T<sub>1+2</sub> groups were significantly more active as aides or volunteers and were also more active as PTA officers. The gown sample was significantly more active as guest speakers than the T<sub>1+2</sub> (at the .0534 level) and the T<sub>2</sub> group was more actively involved at special events (at the .0078 level) than gown. (See Table XVIII.)

TABLE XVII  
QUESTION EIGHT--GOWN PARENTS AND NON-PARENTS  
ON "TALKED TO" SCHOOL PEOPLE

Groups	Have Talked	Have Never Talked
Gown Parents	97%	3%
Gown Non-Parents	79%	21%
$\chi^2$	5.000 <sup>w</sup>	
Probability	.0239*	
Town <sub>1</sub> Parents	100%	0
Town <sub>1</sub> Non-Parents	62%	36%
$\chi^2$	6.981	
Probability	.0082**	

\* Significant at .05 level

\*\*Significant at .01 level

TABLE XVIII  
 SURVEY QUESTION NINE--PARTICIPATING IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Activity	G	T <sub>1</sub>	T <sub>2</sub>	T <sub>1+2</sub>
A. Aide or Volunteer	13%	23%	41%	31%
$\chi^2$	1.96 <sup>a</sup>		9.23 <sup>b</sup>	6.458 <sup>c</sup>
Probability	.1614		.0024**	.0110**
B. PTA Officer	12%	23%	36%	29%
$\chi^2$	2.671 <sup>a</sup>		9.23 <sup>b</sup>	6.857 <sup>c</sup>
Probability	.1022		.0024**	.0088**
C. Advisory Committee	6%	7%	9%	8%
$\chi^2$	.063 <sup>a</sup>		.434 <sup>b</sup>	.270 <sup>c</sup>
Probability	.8019		.5101	.6034
D. PTA Meetings	49%	49%	66%	56%
$\chi^2$	.002 <sup>a</sup>		.236 <sup>b</sup>	.652 <sup>c</sup>
Probability	.9640		.1248	.4194
E. Guest Speaker	26%	14%	13%	13%
$\chi^2$	2.316 <sup>a</sup>		2.369 <sup>b</sup>	3.732 <sup>c</sup>
Probability	12.80		.1238	.0534*
F. Special Events	43%	47%	72%	57%
$\chi^2$	.099 <sup>a</sup>		7.069 <sup>b</sup>	2.766 <sup>c</sup>
Probability	.7535		.0078**	.096
G. Meetings on School Issues	43%	47%	50%	48%
$\chi^2$	.099		.375 <sup>b</sup>	.296 <sup>c</sup>
Probability	.7535		.5403	.5864
H. Meetings on Comm. Problems	39%	47%	38%	42%
$\chi^2$	.593 <sup>a</sup>		.025 <sup>b</sup>	.186 <sup>c</sup>
Probability	.4414		.8756	.660

a  $\chi^2$  and probability of G vs. T<sub>1</sub>

b  $\chi^2$  and probability of G vs. T<sub>2</sub>

c  $\chi^2$  and probability of G vs. T<sub>1+2</sub>

\* Significant at .05 level

\*\* Significant at .01 level

As one might expect, if the gown or town respondents were parents of school-aged children, they were significantly more active in certain ways than non-parents in the same group. Of the 68 gown respondents, one-half (or 34) were parents, and these parents were significantly more active in obvious areas (attending PTA meetings, special school events, and meetings on school issues). This was also true of the T<sub>1</sub> group where 15 of the 43 total (or 35%) were parents. The T<sub>2</sub> group was the most active group in all cases, perhaps due to the high percentage of parents (68% of the entire T<sub>2</sub> group).

Table XIX, although indicating no chi square or probability level, summarizes the extent of activity for each group as shown in responses to question nine. This table indicates the percentage in each group marking "three or less activities" and those marking "more than three." The gown group was slightly more active than the pure or non-university affiliated T<sub>1</sub> group, yet slightly less overall active than the T<sub>2</sub> group. Again, one must keep in mind that one-half of the gown group were parents, 35% of the T<sub>1</sub> group were parents, and 68% of the T<sub>2</sub> group were parents of school-aged children. Therefore, this survey question might have been more indicative of parental activity rather than differences in gown and town.

In answer to research question six concerning differences in participation, there were no significant differences between university faculty and non-university patrons in their knowledge of the system and its leaders, their voting regularity in school elections, their voicing of opinions to school people on school-related issues, or the extent and type of involvement and participation in school activities.



TABLE XIX  
 SURVEY QUESTION NINE--EXTENT OF ACTIVITY

	Gown	T <sub>1</sub>	T <sub>2</sub>
% marking three or less activities	52%	56%	34%
% marking more than three activities	48%	44%	66%

#### Devising a Liberal-Conservative Scale

A liberal-conservative scale attempted to answer the next research question. The questions from the survey used to derive a score and the responses regarded as liberal and conservative appear in Figure 4.

All conservative responses were given the value of one, and all liberal responses were given the value two. The lowest possible score of 12 was the most conservative score possible, whereas 24 would be the most liberal possible score. A continuum was designed so as scores of 12 to 14 were very conservative responses, 15 to 17 were somewhat conservative, 18 to 20 were somewhat liberal, and 21 to 24 were very liberal.

The results were such that almost all respondents fell into the somewhat liberal-very liberal categories with one respondent falling into the very conservative category, 14 respondents into the somewhat

Question Number 3	- A-Conservative Response B-Liberal Response
Question Number 5	- A-Liberal Response B-Conservative Response
Question Number 6	- A-Liberal Response B-Conservative Response
Question Number 7	- A-Liberal Response B-Conservative Response
Question Number 8	- A-Liberal Response B-Conservative Response
Question Number 10	- Six or more marked dissatisfied-Liberal Response Six or more marked satisfied-Conservative Response
Question Number 11	- A-Liberal Response B-Conservative Response
Question Number 12	- A-Conservative Response B-Liberal Response
Question Number 13	- A-Conservative Response B-Liberal Response
Question Number 14	- Correct Answer-Liberal Response Incorrect Answer-Conservative Response
Question Number 15	- Correct Answer-Liberal Response Incorrect Answer-Conservative Response
Question Number 16	- Three to five Correct-Liberal Response Less than three Correct-Conservative

Figure 4. Liberal and Conservative Responses

conservative category, 63 respondents into the somewhat liberal category, and 65 respondents falling into the very liberal category. Even if the categories had been limited to only two (liberal and conservative), the results would still have been "liberal" laden. However, in attempting to note differences between the seven colleges with which faculty members were affiliated, this scale was still quite useful.

#### Answering Research Question Seven:

##### Variations Within the Faculty

"Are there differences among professors of various disciplines in their school-related political views on a liberal-conservative continuum based on their amount of criticism of the schools, their belief in the processes of citizen involvement in school decision making, their attitude toward new approaches in education, their participation in and input offered the schools, and their position on school-related egalitarian values?"

In faculty responses, this sample closely represented the actual percentages each college represented in the total O.S.U. faculty membership, except in two cases: Business Administration and Engineering. Outlined in Figure 5 are the number responding from each college, their percentage of the total faculty sample, and the actual percentage each college represents of the total university faculty for comparison purposes.

Although there is no significant difference shown between faculty members of the various colleges, still several points can be considered relevant when examining the liberality or conservatism of the college samples relative to school issues. For example, although the business

administration sample consisted of only three respondents, two were "somewhat conservative" on the continuum and thus represented one-third of the total "somewhat conservative" ideological group. Thus, the Business Administration College's sample was the most conservative percentage-wise. However, the small size of this sample cannot enable one to make definite conclusions. (See Table XX.)

College	Frequency	Percentage of Total Sample	Actual College Percentage of Faculty
A. Agriculture	11	15%	16%
B. Arts & Sciences	27	39%	38%
C. Business Adm.	3	4%	9%
D. Education	11	16%	11%
E. Engineering	2	3%	13%
F. Home Economics	8	12%	5%
G. Vet. Med.	7	10%	7%
	—	—	—
Total Faculty Sample	69	100%	99%

Figure 5. College Representation in Faculty Sample as Compared to Actual College Percentage of Total Faculty

There were three persons in the "somewhat conservative" category in Arts and Sciences, and one with a "very conservative" score. These

four were only 15% of the entire Arts and Sciences College sample; thus the Business Administration sample was still more conservative percentage-wise than the Arts and Sciences faculty sample.

The most liberal group appeared to be the College of Education, with 64% of this sample resulting in "very liberal" scores. Arts and Sciences was next with 52% being "very liberal." One might note that the Arts and Sciences College contains both the second largest percentage of conservative scores and the second largest percentage of liberal scores, perhaps due to the fact that it had the largest total response in this study.

Those college groups whose goals might be said to be "agriculturally-oriented" tended to be "somewhat liberal" rather than conservative, as the review of literature might suggest. Among those in Agriculture, 55% responded somewhat liberally, whereas 45% were "very liberal." Their "sister college," Home Economics, responded 63% and 38% respectively, and Veterinary Medicine, which might be considered a graduate school extension of Agriculture, responded 71% "somewhat liberal," and 29% "very liberal." Hence, these groups, although not the most liberal, were not the most conservative as Ladd and Lipset suggested.

Before too many conclusions are drawn from a table showing a probability of .1359, it must be considered that these results could have occurred by chance. There are no significant differences in liberalism and conservatism among professors of the various colleges of Oklahoma State University, based on a continuum which took into consideration their beliefs in the processes of citizen involvement in school decision making, their attitudes toward new approaches in

education, their participation in and input offered the schools, and their position on school-related egalitarian values. Additional comments were made simply to point out variations of frequencies within each college sample.

It should be pointed out that when each question included in the liberal-conservative score was analyzed individually, significant differences occurred in two cases: (1) choices between using innovations or traditional approaches in our schools and (2) knowledge of the high school principal. In the first case, all three of those in the Business Administration sample responded conservatively, as did the majority (or 71%) in the College of Veterinary Medicine. Again, the College of Education was most liberal, with 90% responding to "seek new innovations," with Agriculture and Home Economics close behind (88% each), then Arts and Sciences with 86% choosing the liberal response. (See Table XXI.)

Of the 14 cells in Table XXI, eight had expected frequencies of less than five, thus the warning sign appeared. The Veterinary Medicine traditional cell, although having a high cell chi square (6.1 of the total 18.990), was important in that five of the total 14 traditional answers came from this group, therefore the author felt this cell did not skew results. Almost all of the remaining seven cells had very small cell chi squares. With the low probability level of the total chi square (.0042), these findings show significant differences.

The second question in which faculty colleges differed significantly was when respondents were asked to identify the high school principal. With a probability of .0191, the majority of those in the

TABLE XX  
 VARIATIONS BETWEEN COLLEGES WITHIN THE FACULTY

College	Very Conservative	Somewhat Conservative	Somewhat Liberal	Very Liberal	Total in College Sample
A. Agriculture (frequency) % of total ag. sample	0 0	0 0	6 55%	5 45%	11
B. Arts & Science (frequency) % of total A&S sample	1 4%	3 11%	9 33%	14 52%	27
C. Business Adm. (frequency) % of total Bus. Adm. sample	0 0	2 67%	0 0	1 33%	3
D. Education (frequency) % of total Ed. sample	0 0	1 9%	3 27%	7 64%	11
E. Engineering (frequency) % of total Eng. sample	0 0	0 0	2 100%	0 0	2
F. Home Economics (frequency) % of total Home Ec. sample	0 0	0 0	5 63%	3 17%	8
G. Veterinary Med. (frequency) % of total Vet. Med. sample	0 0	0 0	5 71%	2 29%	7
Total Frequencies	1	6	30	32	69
$\chi^2$	24.614				
Degrees of Freedom	18				
Probability	.1359				

<sup>w</sup> Cell size warning

TABLE XXI  
 VARIOUS COLLEGES' RESPONSES TO "APPROACHES  
 SCHOOLS SHOULD FOLLOW"

Responses	Agr.	A&S	Bus.	Ed.	Eng.	H.Ec.	Vet.Med.
A. Innovations (frequency)	7	19	2	9	0	7	2
% of college	88%	86%	67%	90%	0	88%	29%
B. Traditional (frequency)	1	3	1	1	2	1	5
% of college	13%	14%	33%	10%	100%	13%	71%
Total in college	8	22	3	10	2	8	7
$\chi^2$	W 18.990						
Probability	.0042**						

TABLE XXII  
 VARIOUS COLLEGES' RESPONSES TO "KNOWLEDGE OF  
 HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL"

Responses	Agr.	A&S	Bus.	Ed.	Eng.	H.Ec.	Vet.Med.
A. Correct (frequency)	9	21	1	9	0	3	3
% of college	82%	81%	33%	82%	0	38%	43%
B. Incorrect (frequency)	2	5	2	2	2	5	4
% of college	18%	19%	67%	18%	100%	63%	57%
Total in college	11	26	3	11	2	8	7
$\chi^2$	W 15.148						
Probability	.0191**						

W Cell size warning  
 \* Significant at the .05 level  
 \*\* Significant at the .01 level



Agriculture, Education, and Arts and Sciences samples knew the correct answer (82%, 82%, and 81% respectively), whereas the majority of the Engineering, Business, Home Economics, and Veterinary Medicine samples did not know the correct answer (100%, 67%, 63%, and 57% respectively). (See Table XXII.)

### The Bond Issues and School Elections

#### Research Question Eight

"Were such differing liberal-conservative ideologies manifested in support of or opposition to certain school board candidates and bond issues during a series of recent school controversies?"

Rather than attempting to use the liberal-conservative continuum on this question, the author examined individual questions and responses. These are analyzed in order to see how and if certain ideological beliefs and ideas were manifested in voting behavior. Analysis of questions was employed because this scale failed to differentiate between groups of conservatives and liberals. Due to the extremely large number of cross-checkings, only those with significant differences are presented.

When crossing survey question number three on grades given the schools (a measure of criticism whereby A's and B's were thought to be less critical, conservative responses, and D's and F's were thought to be more critical, liberal responses) with voting behavior on bond issues, it was found that there were no significant differences in the more and less critical in the 1976 bond election voting behavior. Yet

there were highly significant differences in the 1977 and 1980 bond elections.

Of the total 92 respondents living in the district during this 1977 election (in all instances, those not living in the district at the time of each election did not respond), the more critical tended not to vote. When they did, they were slightly more inclined to vote "no" rather than the less critical. However, more than one-half of each sample voted "yes," with 82% of the less critical voting "yes" compared to 53% of the more critical. A slightly lower percentage of each group voted "yes" in 1980. (See Table XXIII.)

Concerning school board races, there were no significant differences in how the two groups voted, although voting percentages were interesting in that support for the 1978 incumbent was less than support for the 1977 incumbent. This lessening of support for the incumbent appeared more frequently among those who were less critical of the schools. (See Table XXIV.)

When crossing survey question five concerning attitudes toward new approaches in education, it appeared that significant differences between those preferring new approaches over traditional occurred in only one bond election (1980) and one board election. Among those favoring new approaches, 73% voted "yes" for the 1980 bond issue, considerably more than those voting "yes" who favored traditional approaches (51%). Also, 58% of those favoring innovations voted for the new, grass roots candidate for school board in 1978, whereas only 17% of this same group voted for the incumbent. (See Table XXV.)

In looking at whether the board should primarily represent the views of its constituents rather than following recommendations of the

TABLE XXIII  
 EXTENT OF CRITICISM AND VOTING BEHAVIOR  
 IN SCHOOL BOND ELECTIONS

Voting Behavior	Those Giving Schools A's and B's	Those Giving Schools D's and F's
Did not vote in 1976 Bond Election	12%	16%
Voted Yes	64%	42%
Voted No	24%	42%
$\chi^2$	W 4.544	
Probability	.3373	
Did not vote in 1977 Bond Election	13%	37%
Voted Yes	82%	53%
Voted No	5%	11%
$\chi^2$	W 22.826	
Probability	.0001**	
Did not vote in 1980 Bond Election	29%	33%
Voted Yes	70%	48%
Voted No	1%	19%
$\chi^2$	W 15.340	
Probability	.0040**	

W Cell size warning

\*\* Significant at the .01 level

TABLE XXIV  
CRITICISM AND VOTING BEHAVIOR IN  
SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS

Voting Behavior	Those Giving Schools A's and B's	Those Giving Schools D's and F's
Did not vote in 1977 Board Election	25%	26%
Baker (incumbent)	39%	37%
Trotter	36%	37%
$\chi^2$	W .128	
Probability	.9980	
Did not vote in 1978 Board Election	23%	26%
Farmer (incumbent)	22%	26%
Lambert	54%	47%
$\chi^2$	W 1.203	
Probability	.8776*	

TABLE XXV  
APPROACHES FAVORED IN EDUCATION AND VOTING BEHAVIOR

Voting Behavior	Favored Seeking New Approaches	Favored Traditional Approaches
Did not vote in 1980 Bond Election	25%	37%
Voted Yes	73%	51%
Voted No	2%	11%
$\chi^2$	W 7.158	
Probability	.0279*	
Did not vote in 1978 Board Election	25%	28%
Farmer (incumbent)	17%	38%
Lambert	58%	34%
$\chi^2$	W 6.443	
Probability	.0399*	

W Cell size warning

\* Significant at the .05 level

administration in their decision-making process, significant differences appeared in two of the three bond elections, but neither school board race. Those that favored following administrators were more favorable of the bond issues than those favoring representing constituents. Thus, it might indicate supporters of the failed 1976 bond issue seemed to also be supporters of the administration and its recommendations, as well as the 1977 issue, although a considerably larger percentage of those feeling the board should represent the people's views voted in favor of the 1977 bond issue than had one year previously. (See Table XXVI.)

TABLE XXVI  
CITIZENS' BELIEFS ABOUT SCHOOL BOARD  
DECISION MAKING AND BOND ISSUE VOTING BEHAVIOR

Voting Behavior	Represent Constituents	Follow Administration
Did not vote in 1976 Bond Election	17%	4%
Voted Yes	51%	81%
Voted No	32%	15%
$\chi^2$	W 13.289	
Probability	.0099**	
Did not vote in 1977 Bond Election	22%	7%
Voted Yes	73%	83%
Voted No	5%	10%
$\chi^2$	W 15.590	
Probability	.0036**	

W Cell size warning

\*\* Significant at the .01 level

Only two elections showed any significant differences in those offering more input into the schools (in the form of talking to teachers, administrators, and/or board members over school-related topics) and those were the 1977 bond election and the 1978 board election. Those that talked more showed a more favorable vote for the bond issue than those who had not (77% to 55%). They also favored the new, grass roots candidate over the incumbent (57% to 29%). (See Table XXVII.)

TABLE XXVII  
TALKING TO SCHOOL PEOPLE AND VOTING BEHAVIOR

Voting Behavior	Have Talked to School People	Have not Talked to School People
Did not vote in 1977 Bond Election	14%	44%
Voted Yes	77%	5%
Voted No	8%	0
$\chi^2$	w 6.859	
Probability	.0324*	
Did not vote in 1978 Board Election	21%	50%
Farmer (incumbent)	23%	21%
Lambert	57%	29%
$\chi^2$	w 6.172	
Probability	.0457*	

w Cell size warning

\* Significant at the .05 level

The only question concerning school-related egalitarian values that reflected a significant difference in voting behavior was survey question number 11 which asked if the airing of controversy and minority points of view by school board members is necessary for a democratic system to function properly. Those agreeing were more supportive of the grass roots candidate in 1978. (See Table XXVIII.)

TABLE XXVIII  
THE AIRING OF CONTROVERSY AND A SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION

Voting Behavior	Airing Controversy and Minority Rights	
	Is Necessary	Is not Necessary
Did not vote in 1978 Board Election	23%	36%
Farmer (incumbent)	20%	45%
Lambert	58%	18%
$\chi^2$	<sup>w</sup> 6.621	
Probability	.0365*	

<sup>w</sup> Cell size warning

\* Significant at the .05 level

As far as a definite summary and conclusion to this research question, there is none. However, one might respond by saying those showing a less critical attitude toward the schools by grading the schools on an A and B level and who voted in the 1977 bond election were significantly more inclined to vote "yes" for the bond issues

than those giving D's and F's to the system (82% as compared to 53% voting "yes"), rather than to vote "no" or not vote at all. The same was true in the 1980 bond election, but not the 1976 bond election. Also, those giving a more liberal response favoring the seeking of new approaches in education were more in favor of the 1978 bond issue and the grass roots candidate in the 1978 board election, compared to those desiring the use of more traditional approaches in education in the schools. A larger percentage of those favoring the board following administrators' suggestions rather than constituency voted "yes" for the 1976 and 1977 bond issues, but no such difference occurred in school board races.

Finally, those more active in talking to school leaders were more inclined to vote yes in the 1977 bond election, but not so in the two other bond elections. They were also more inclined to vote for the grass roots candidate in the 1978 board race. The latter was also true of those who favored the airing of controversy and minority rights by the board, for 58% of this group voted for Lambert as compared to only 18% who disagreed.

#### How did Town and Gown Vote?

Although the above is not a research question, it still seemed important and appropriate to examine such a question due to the phenomenon being studied. In examining the samples of town and gown and their voting behavior, there was not one instance where voting behavior differed significantly between the pure town group ( $T_1$ ) in either school bond issues or school board elections, nor between gown and other town groups ( $T_2$  and  $T_{1+2}$ ). However, it seems extremely



relevant to note that in all of the three bond issues, the gown sample voted in favor of the issues by larger percentages than any town group. This was also true of the gown's votes for the "new" candidates (as opposed to the incumbents) in the two school board races examined. Also note that a larger percentage of gown than town voted in these elections. (See Table XXIX.)

TABLE XXIX  
TOWN AND GOWN VOTING BEHAVIOR

Voting Behavior	G	T <sub>1</sub>	T <sub>2</sub>	T <sub>1+2</sub>
1976 Bond Issue				
Did Not Vote	10%	17%	20%	18%
Yes	67%	51%	52%	52%
No	23%	31%	28%	30%
1977 Bond Issue				
Did Not Vote	15%	19%	23%	18%
Yes	84%	70%	65%	68%
No	2%	11%	12%	11%
1980 Bond Issue				
Did Not Vote	26%	38%	28%	33%
Yes	69%	60%	66%	62%
No	5%	2%	7%	4%
1977 Board Election				
Did Not Vote	17%	22%	40%	29%
Baker	38%	41%	36%	39%
Trotter	45%	38%	24%	32%
1978 Board Election				
Did Not Vote	20%	25%	28%	26%
Farmer	20%	25%	24%	25%
Lambert	59%	50%	48%	49%

There were no significant differences found between parents and non-parents within each of these three groups, therefore support of bond issues and actual getting out to vote was not necessarily a reflection of whether a certain group contained more parents of school-aged children. In feelings as to the openness of the board during this time of controversy, again there were no significant differences in town and gown. If anything, the pure town group (T<sub>1</sub>) felt more negative with 62% either feeling the board was not open to input or were not sure, whereas only 55% of the gown group fell into these two categories. (See Table XXX.)

TABLE XXX  
SURVEY QUESTION 22 - WAS THE BOARD OPEN TO  
INPUT AND SUGGESTIONS?

Responses	G	T <sub>1</sub>	T <sub>2</sub>	T <sub>1+2</sub>
A. Yes	45%	38%	48%	42%
B. No	18%	21%	26%	23%
C. Not Sure	37%	41%	26%	35%
$\chi^2$	.365 <sup>a</sup>		1.009 <sup>b</sup>	
Probability	.8330		.6037	
			.8532	

a  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>1</sub>

b  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>2</sub>

c  $\chi^2$  and Probability of G vs. T<sub>1+2</sub>

<sup>w</sup> Cell size warning

The overall opinion derived from this question was that more of the total population felt either that the board was not open to public input or was unsure as to whether they were open, than compared to those who felt assured that the board was open to input, 57% to 43%.

#### Looking at "Other Variables"

In light of the case study presented in the previous chapter, it might seem relevant to ask what types of patrons in the community were more opposed to the bond issues and the two school board incumbent candidates. Did opposition come from certain interest groups, or was this opposition chiefly a result of isolated individuals' voices causing a "ripple effect" of opposition throughout the community? Results from the survey questionnaire may help shed some insight on these questions.

In looking first at parents versus non-parents, there were no significant differences in their voting behavior on the bond issues and board elections. In all but one bond issue, parents were slightly more inclined to vote and to vote "yes." For some reason, more non-parents voted in 1977 and more voted in favor of the bond issue than parents. In both school board races, parents were again slightly more inclined to vote and to vote for the "new" candidates rather than the incumbents. (See Table XXXI.)

When looking at these same elections for property owners versus non-property owners (hence, ad valorem taxpayers versus non-taxpayers), no conclusions or statements concerning differences could be made for only five of the total who voted in any election were non-property owners and this was too few on which to base any statements.

TABLE XXXI  
PARENT AND NON-PARENT VOTING BEHAVIOR

Voting Behavior	Parents	Non-Parents
1976 Bond Election		
Did Not Vote	9%	20%
Voted Yes	63%	57%
Voted No	29%	24%
$\chi^2$	2.573	
Probability	.2763	
1977 Bond Election		
Did Not Vote	19%	17%
Voted Yes	71%	79%
Voted No	10%	4%
$\chi^2$	1.778	
Probability	.4111	
1980 Bond Election		
Did Not Vote	24%	34%
Voted Yes	73%	59%
Voted No	3%	6%
$\chi^2$	2.747	
Probability	.2533	
1976 Board Election		
Did Not Vote	27%	23%
Baker (incumbent)	30%	46%
Trotter	43%	31%
$\chi^2$	2.984	
Probability	.2247	
1977 Board Election		
Did Not Vote	23%	26%
Farmer (incumbent)	18%	26%
Lambert	59%	47%
$\chi^2$	1.726	
Probability	.4219	

However, when looking at property taxpayers alone, it was interesting to learn that they were basically in favor of each bond issue, with 61% favoring the 1976 bond issue, (28% opposed, and 11% not voting) and 76% favoring the 1977 bond issue (8% opposing it and 16%

not voting). Thus, the accusation that property taxpayers were opposed to the bond issues seems ungrounded. Also, taxpayers were considerably more in favor of the grass roots candidate in the 1978 board election compared to the incumbent with 54% favoring Lambert and 23% in favor of Farmer. (See Table XXXII.)

TABLE XXXII  
PROPERTY TAXPAYERS' VOTING BEHAVIOR

Election	Vote
1976 Bond Issue	
Did Not Vote	11%
Voted Yes	61%
Voted No	28%
1977 Bond Issue	
Did Not Vote	16%
Voted Yes	76%
Voted No	8%
1980 Bond Issue	
Did Not Vote	28%
Voted Yes	67%
Voted No	5%
1977 Board Election	
Did Not Vote	22%
Baker	40%
Trotter	38%
1978 Board Election	
Did Not Vote	22%
Farmer	23%
Lambert	54%

In looking at sex of the respondents, no significant differences existed. However, males were slightly more inclined to vote "yes" in the first two bond issue elections than women (men--65% and 76% "yes," compared to women--52% and 73% "yes"). Men were more inclined to vote for the men school board candidates and women for the women candidates in both the school board races. It should be noted that in the total sample, there were more men than women (80 versus 61). Due to the predominance of men in the O.S.U. faculty, 49 of the gown sample was composed of men, whereas there were only 18 women. The reverse was true in the total town sample, where women outnumbered men, 43 to 31. (See Table XXXIII.)

In examining the various income levels in the sample, significant differences occurred in voting in the 1976 bond election, showing that although not a majority of each group voted so, the more wealthy, upper income groups were more opposed to the 1976 bond issue. Of the total opposition (of 39), 81% of them came from these upper two income levels with 33% of all those in the \$30-40,000 income group voting "no," and 32% of the \$40,000 and over group voting "no." However, these comments tend to be misleading, for 57% and 63% of those in the two levels favored the bond issue and only 10% and 5% did not vote. Thus, according to this sample, the bond issue passed 63 to 27, when actually the issue failed. This leads the author to believe that only those who consistently voted "yes" for bond issues responded to this questionnaire in the majority of the cases. Despite this possibility, significant differences between income groups did occur in this 1976 bond election, but not in the 1977 or 1980 bond elections. (See Table XXXIV.)

TABLE XXXIII  
VOTING BEHAVIOR BY SEX

Voting Behavior	Males	Females
1976 Bond Issue		
Did Not Vote	14%	6%
Voted Yes	65%	52%
Voted No	21%	34%
$\chi^2$	2.511	
Probability	.2850	
1977 Bond Issue		
Did Not Vote	16%	21%
Voted Yes	76%	73%
Voted No	8%	6%
$\chi^2$	.519	
Probability	.7716	
1980 Bond Issue		
Did Not Vote	31%	27%
Voted Yes	62%	71%
Voted No	7%	2%
$\chi^2$	2.322	
Probability	.3132	
1977 Board Election		
Did Not Vote	20%	32%
Baker	48%	25%
Trotter	33%	43%
$\chi^2$	5.662	
Probability	.0589*	
1978 Board Election		
Did Not Vote	50%	35%
Farmer	22%	20%
Lambert	28%	46%
$\chi^2$	3.623	
Probability	.1634	

\*Significant at the .05 level

In school board elections, a significant difference occurred in the Baker-Trotter election, with over one-half of the new candidate's votes coming from the \$30-40,000 income group. It might also be noted that over one-half of each of the lower two income groups did not vote, whereas less than 17% of each of the two larger categories did not vote. Also important is the fact that one-third of the total sample had incomes over \$40,000, with 27% of the town group having such, 45% of the T<sub>1</sub> group, and 27% of the T<sub>2</sub> group (or 38% of the total town group). (See Table XXXIV.)

In all of the bond and school board elections examined, it can be seen that generally, the lower the educational level, the higher the percentage not voting. According to income level, significant differences occurred in two of the three bond issues and one of the two board races. The educational level having the largest percentage opposed to the 1976 bond issue was the college graduate category with 57% dissenting. This group seemed to have a drastic change in this election compared to their behavior in the 1977 bond election where only 18% dissented there. Despite this fact, they still remained the group with the largest number opposed to the bond issue. Note, too, that the largest percentage support for both issues came within the highest educated group, or post-graduate group. (See Table XXXV.)

In the 1977 board race, the group most supportive of the incumbent was the one with some college (46%), and the group most favorable toward the new candidate, the college graduate category with 57% of its ranks supporting Trotter. Other than these findings, no other races showed significant differences among educational levels.



TABLE XXXIV  
1976 BOND ISSUE AND 1977 SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION  
VOTE BY INCOME LEVEL

Voting Behavior	\$0-10,000	\$10-20,000	\$20-30,000	\$30-40,000	Over \$40,000
1976 Bond Issue					
Did Not Vote	60%	20%	19%	10%	5%
Voted Yes	40%	60%	65%	57%	63%
Voted No	0	20%	15%	33%	32%
$\chi^2$	w 15.154				
Probability	.0562*				
1977 Board Election					
Did Not Vote	80%	50%	39%	17%	13%
Baker	20%	25%	29%	30%	54%
Trotter	0	25%	32%	53%	33%
$\chi^2$	w 21.126				
Probability	.0068**				

TABLE XXXV  
1976-1977 BOND ISSUE VOTE AND 1977 BOARD RACE  
BY EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

Voting Behavior	H.S. Graduate	Some College	College Graduate	Post- Graduate
1976 Bond Election				
Did Not Vote	50%	23%	5%	10%
Voted Yes	50%	46%	38%	71%
Voted No	0	31%	57%	19%
$\chi^2$	w 26.942			
Probability	.0001**			
1977 Bond Election				
Did Not Vote	55%	23%	9%	14%
Voted Yes	45%	62%	73%	83%
Voted No	0	15%	18%	3%
$\chi^2$	w 18.999			
Probability	.0042**			
1977 Board Election				
Did Not Vote	55%	38%	14%	19%
Baker	27%	46%	29%	42%
Trotter	18%	15%	57%	39%
$\chi^2$	w 12.986			
Probability	.0433*			

wCell size warning  
\*Significant at the .05 level  
\*\*Significant at the .01 level

Concerning number of years living in the school district, of the total sample, over one-half of the respondents had lived in Stillwater over 10 years. Although no significant differences occurred in any election, this group was the most inclined to vote and to vote "yes" on bond issues. Of those living in Stillwater one to five years, a larger percentage did not vote but seemed to have the next highest percent in favor of bond issues. In the Farmer-Lambert campaign, the group most in favor of the grass roots candidate (rather than the incumbent) was the 5-10 year group.

Age may have had the most complicated findings. There were three elections with significant differences existing, but it was most difficult to see a pattern, if any, emerging. More than one-half of all the respondents fell into the 35-55 category. Before looking further at the election results, one should first look at the following number of parents of school-aged children and non-parents in each age group:

<u>Age</u>	<u># of Parents</u>	<u># of Non-parents</u>
Under 21	0	1
21-35	14	23
35-55	52	24
Over 55	3	24

The significant differences occurred among age groups in the 1976 bond election and both the 1977 and 1978 board elections. Again, as mentioned, had it been left up to this sample, the 1976 bond issue would not have failed. The group having the largest percentage of non-voters was the 21-35 age group. The group that had the largest percentage voting for the bond issue and also had the largest percentage voting against it, which was the 35-55 year old group. This finding is a result of their extremely low "non-voting" level (6%)

compared to 31% and 19% of the groups before and after it. Perhaps the reason for this high voter turnout rate was due to the large number of parents of school-aged children in this category. The group to have the largest percentage within itself to oppose the 1976 bond issue was the 21-35 age group, with 31% voting "no." (See Table XXXVI.)

In looking at both the board races, the new candidates got the largest support from the 35-55 age group, again the age group having the largest number of parents. The majority of the votes of the "over 55" group went for the incumbent in the 1977 race, and 38% went for the incumbent in the 1978 race. (See Table XXXVI.)

A final look at the bond issue elections may offer insight as to why patrons voted as they did. When asked to mark reasons why they voted "yes" or "no" in both elections, the following reasons were given. Of the total 60 respondents who voted "yes" on the 1976 bond issues, 51 did so due to "need for the facilities," two mentioned "the need for renovation of the old middle school," four mentioned they had "always voted 'yes' on school bond issues," one marked "property taxes," one marked "disapproval of administration and board," and one marked "approval of administration and board." Of those 25 voting "no" in the 1976 bond election, 11 had specific reasons of their own, four marked "the idea of having two middle schools," two marked "need for facilities," two--"inflation," two--"property taxes," and four marked "disapproval of administration and board." (See Table XXXVII.)

The same question, when asked about the 1977 bond issue, produced these results: Of the 81 voting "yes," 55 did so due to the "need for the facilities," 11 did so due to the "Citizens' Advisory

Committee formed", six did so due to "the addition of the elementary school," and one each marked "no" due to "renovation of the middle school," "fear of lack of funds," and "other reasons." Of the seven opposing the issue, two said "fear of lack of sufficient funds" was the reason, two said "disapproval of administration and board," and three had "other reasons."

TABLE XXXVI  
VOTING BEHAVIOR BY AGE GROUP

Election	21-35	35-55	Over 55
1976 Bond Election			
Did Not Vote	31%	6%	19%
Voted Yes	38%	65%	62%
Voted No	31%	29%	19%
$\chi^2$	W 14.969		
Probability	.0205*		
1977 Board Election			
Did Not Vote	65%	16%	12%
Baker	20%	37%	56%
Trotter	15%	47%	32%
$\chi^2$	W 27.677		
Probability	.0001**		
1978 Board Election			
Did Not Vote	57%	13%	25%
Farmer	5%	22%	38%
Lambert	38%	65%	37%
$\chi^2$	W 24.765		
Probability	.0004**		

W Cell size warning

\* Significant at the .05 level

\*\* Significant at the .01 level

TABLE XXXVII  
REASONS WHY VOTED AS DID IN 1976  
AND 1977 BOND ELECTIONS

---

<u>1976 Bond Issue</u>	
Why 60 voted "Yes": 51 - Need for facilities 5 - Have always voted "yes" 2 - Need to renovate middle school 1 - Property taxes 1 - Disapproval of administration and board 1 - Approval of administration and board	Why 25 voted "No": 11 - Specific reasons 4 - Idea of two middle schools 4 - Disapproval of administration and board 2 - Need for facilities 2 - Property taxes 2 - Inflation
<u>1977 Bond Issue</u>	
Why 81 voted "Yes": 55 - Need for facilities 11 - Citizens' Committee formed 6 - Addition of elementary schools 6 - Support of administration and board 1 - Renovation of middle school 1 - Fear of lack of funds 1 - Other reasons	Why 7 voted "No": 2 - Fear of lack of funds 2 - Disapproval of administration and board 3 - Other reasons

---

In summarizing this last section on voting behavior in the three bond elections and two school board elections, some tendencies within the quantitative data were noted, although all may not necessarily have been statistically significant.

Characteristics of patrons supporting the 1976 bond issue, as well as other bond elections tended to be:

1. Oklahoma State University faculty members,
2. Parents of school-aged children (as compared to non-parents, except in the 1980 election),
3. Men (as compared to women, again except in 1980),
4. Those earning \$10-30,000 (as compared to those earning more),
5. Those with post-graduate or professional degrees.

On the converse, characteristics of patrons opposing the bond issues (in particular the 1976 election) were:

1. In the more wealthy, upper income groups making over \$30,000,
2. Those in the college graduate educational level,
3. Those in the 21-35 age group (compared to other age groups).

Characteristics of those tending to favor the new candidates for school board, as opposed to the incumbents, in the 1977 and 1978 school board races were:

1. Oklahoma State University faculty members,
2. Women (as opposed to men) in 1977,
3. Those making \$30-40,000 (in the 1977 race),
4. In the college graduate category (in 1977).

Characteristics of those supporting the incumbents in the school board races were those of:

1. Men (as opposed to women) in 1977,
2. Those with some college,
3. Those making over \$40,000,
4. Those over 55 years old.

Characteristics of regular voters in school elections were:

1. Oklahoma State University faculty members,
2. Those making \$20,000 and above,
3. College graduates and above,
4. Those 35 to 55 years old,
5. Parents of school-aged children,
6. Those living in Stillwater over 10 years.

Those tending to be non-voters in school elections were:

1. Those making below \$20,000,
2. Those with educational levels below some college,
3. Those 21 to 35 years old.

The author wishes to note that the above generalizations are not all inclusive or exclusive. Categories overlap in many cases. Some

categories were almost equal in support of or opposition to elections or candidates, thus were not included. This was simply an attempt to roughly summarize a huge amount of data.

#### Chapter Summary

It was found that there were no significant differences between the university faculty and the town segment of the community with no university affiliation on goals of schooling. "Intellectual development" was the preferred goal of schooling, with "personal development" second for gown, and "social development" second for town<sub>1</sub>. Both groups also favored more emphasis being placed on academic rather than athletic programs.

Concerning criticism of the schools and their curricula, the gown tended to be somewhat more critical and dissatisfied than the non-university group. There were specific areas within the curriculum where the gown was significantly more dissatisfied, those being the social studies programs and the foreign language programs. Generally, the overall satisfaction with the curriculum of all the groups was high, except in the cases of the gifted and talented programs, the foreign language programs, and the counseling programs.

There were no significant differences in gown and town concerning approaches in education, although the gown sample was slightly more in favor than the town sample of seeking innovations and newer approaches in education rather than using traditional approaches.

Concerning egalitarian values, the faculty and the town differed significantly, in that the university faculty was more favorable toward the airing of controversy and minority points of view by school

board members. Also, they felt more strongly that school boards should have documented evidence expressing to an employee why he or she was dismissed. They agreed more strongly that the board should not necessarily express solidarity and a united front on controversial issues.

Town and gown showed no significant differences in their beliefs regarding citizen participation in school decision making, with approximately three-fourths of both groups agreeing that the board should express the views of its constituents rather than the recommendations of the administration when these two differed.

The town and gown groups also showed no significant difference in their participation in the system, with more than one-half having knowledge of school leaders and over a majority of all voting regularly and voicing opinions to school leaders. Also, approximately 45% of both groups were involved in three or more activities within the system.

Using a liberal-conservative score devised from these same questions, no significant differences were found among faculty members of the various colleges. The most conservative tended to be those in the College of Business, whereas the most liberal were within the College of Education.

When comparing respondents' answers to various questions on the instrument with their voting behavior, some interesting combinations resulted. For example, results of the 1977 and 1980 bond elections showed that those more critical of the school system tended not to vote. When they did, they voted "no" significantly more often than the less critical. Also, those favoring new approaches in education



voted "yes" significantly more in the 1980 bond election. Those favoring the following of administrative advice by the board (as opposed to following constituents' views) were significantly more in favor of two of the bond issues (the 1976 and 1977 issues). Finally, those actively talking more to administrators and school leaders favored the 1977 bond issues more than those who had not done so.

Concerning school board elections during the designated time period, the following significant differences were found in the 1978 board race: Those favoring new approaches and innovations in the schools tended to vote significantly more for the grass roots candidate in this election (Lambert), whereas those for more traditional approaches voted for the incumbent (Farmer). Lambert also received more votes from those who were more active in talking to school leaders. This same candidate received a significant percentage more of the votes of those who believed the airing of controversy and minority rights by school boards is necessary for a democratic system to function.

The following chapter will analyze these findings relative to the review of literature in Chapter II and the phenomenological case study presented in Chapter IV.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Fred N. Kerlinger, Foundations of Behavioral Research (New York, 1964), p. 154.

<sup>2</sup>Statistical Analysis System Printout, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, March 18, 1981.

<sup>3</sup>Theodore R. Anderson and Morris Zelditch, Jr., A Basic Course in Statistics (New York, 1958), p. 264.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 264-265.

<sup>6</sup>Personal interview with William Warde, Associate Professor of Statistics, Stillwater, Oklahoma, April 17, 1981.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSIONS, VERIFICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

After a lengthy presentation of the findings obtained from the survey instrument in Chapter V, this final chapter will attempt to offer the following:

1. A Brief Summary of the Study,
2. Conclusions Relative to the Review of Literature
3. Speculations and Verifications of the Phenomenological Observations,
4. Research Problems Encountered, and
5. Recommendations for Further Study and to the Stillwater Public School System.

#### A Brief Summary

Beginning in the academic year of 1976-77, a series of school-related controversies were observed in the community of Stillwater. These controversies involved: (1) bond issues for building and construction purposes, (2) school board makeup and decision-making processes, (3) due process for public school employees, and (4) competition for limited school funds between athletic and academic-oriented programs.

As a participant observer actively involved as an administrative intern, as an interested parent, as well as an uninvolved observer viewing the conflict for academic purposes, the researcher became conscious of the possibility of differing beliefs and ideologies coming from the town and gown segments of the community. As observations took place and extensive interviews with leaders of both segments of the community were undertaken, perceived intuitions and concepts were clarified, revised, and changed over a period of four years. Membership in both the town and gown segments of the community increased awareness of potential differences in how each group perceived the controversies within the community.

After observations and interviews were undertaken, extensive research into newspaper accounts and other forms of public records relative to school controversies began with 1949. After this stage of research, although differing underlying political and cultural ideologies still seemed present, the original opinion that the leadership of opposition toward the bond issues, (as well as the board and administration), was predominantly from the gown community was modified to the belief that this leadership came from both town and gown segments.

Library research was conducted to provide a theory on which to base further research. Using political theories of Ladd and Lipset, basic assumptions and research questions were then formulated.

The next stage in the research involved the collection of tangible, quantifiable data from the town and gown segments of the community to answer the research questions and to either disprove or verify the phenomenological observations of the author. Questions were designed

for the instrument and what was hoped would be a representative sample was drawn from both segments of the community.

An attempt to establish validity of the instrument was made by using a panel of four professors who helped choose questions which would best "get at" or measure the concepts being examined. These questions were then submitted to a group of "known" school liberals and conservatives. A few minor changes were made in the wording of the the questionnaire after this pilot, but there were no major changes in the instrument as a result of this test.

The author was fully aware of many flaws in this instrument, but further delay in implementing this survey would have resulted in the abandonment of this research effort due to insufficient time, money, and energy. Unfortunately, an instrument to perfectly test beliefs, attitudes, and opinions may be impossible. However, the importance of such attempts is paramount in behavioral research; therefore, although research into the measurement of attitudes is in its earliest and roughest stages, efforts must still be made to progress in this area. As a result of this survey, some of the author's phenomenological observations were confirmed and verified, and some were disproved.

#### Conclusions Relative to the Review of Literature

When compared to the general public, the university faculty appears to be similar in terms of political liberalism generally on broad issues. For example, in the realm of academicians' critical stance toward society and its institutions, there were few significant differences found between the faculty sample and the non-university sample in the amount and extent of criticism aimed toward the schools, except in

the area of the social studies and foreign language curriculum, whereby faculty members were significantly more critical. They were slightly more critical in six other curriculum areas, whereas the town was more critical in only three remaining areas.

The findings did, however, support the more liberal, egalitarian political attitudes found previously to be characteristic of university faculties. Gown was found significantly more in favor of the school board's presentation of documented evidence when dismissing an employee, as well as significantly more in favor of the airing of controversies and minority points of view by school boards. They were also less in favor of the board presenting a solid or united front on controversial issues.

Concerning decision making, there were no differences in town and gown when asked whom the board should follow when making decisions, their constituents or the administration (if differences in these two should occur). Approximately three-fourths of both groups chose adherence to constituents views as their preferred answer.

This was the overwhelming view even though much has been made of the increasing trend in large bureaucratic societies to leave "professional" decisions to the professionals. In this study, apparently three-fourths of those surveyed had more faith in the "people" than the experts. That is, when there was disagreement between "professionals" and constituents, three-fourths of the sample felt the constituents views should prevail.

Concerning the seeking of innovations and newer approaches in education, the findings in this study only partially supported the idea that faculty are more in favor of change, for no statistically

significant difference was found between the town and gown, although 76% of the gown favored seeking innovations compared to only 61% of the town group.

As far as political activity was concerned, again the gown showed no significant differences in the extent of their activity in school politics, except when looking at non-parents only. Whereas, as might be expected, 17% more of the gown non-parents were active in talking to school people concerning school issues than town non-parents. In examining goals of schooling, the expected intellectual goals of faculty members appeared, yet this spilled over into the town element of the community also, where "intellectual" was the preferred goal of all groups. One can only speculate as to why this is the case.

When looking at the second choice of each group, differences are more obvious. The gown showed 12% favoring "personal development" as their preferred goal, whereas the town group favored "social development" second with 10% responding here. These results might seem to be more in line with what Hofstadter might have expected from an intellectually-oriented community and a non-academically oriented one.

Thus, the relative liberalism of college professors in politics applied only to egalitarian values concerning due process, representation of minority points of view, and the airing of controversy in the case of school politics. Also, their more critical stance relative to the general public's applied only to selected areas of the curriculum, those being of a more academic nature (social studies and foreign languages).

Finally, when differences within the professoriate were examined, again the literature was not particularly supported, for the most

liberal tended to be professors in the College of Education and the least liberal were in the College of Business (rather than Agriculture, as Ladd and Lipset projected). This was also contrary to Zeigler who implied that those in Education would be more conservative in nature if they followed his findings concerning high school educators. One can only speculate on the reasons for educational liberalism on the part of professors of Education among the sample in this study.

This study was not designed to test for the consistency or inconsistency of political values referred to in the review of literature. Whether or not those who resulted in being liberal on school-related political issues were also liberal in other political realms (local, state and federal governments, foreign affairs, etc.), was not explored due to the limited scope of the study. Also, this study did not find that the school controversies outlined were exclusively town and gown issues, as studies reviewed in Chapter II had determined in local political controversies.

#### Verifications and Speculations

Since both phenomenological and survey research was utilized in this study, an effort was made to compare the results of these two research techniques. To accomplish this, a framework was designed to integrate the four areas of controversy in the Stillwater Public School System outlined in Chapter IV with the eight research questions.

#### Athletics Versus Academics

Concerning the dispute over emphasis on academic programs versus athletic-oriented areas of the curriculum, the findings from the survey



indicated concern about the former from the entire community, not just the gown community, as anticipated. Overwhelmingly, all groups favored more emphasis being placed on the academic realm of the schools. Also, when goals were assessed and areas of the curriculum were criticized, it was the academic subjects and personal growth programs which received the most overall criticism (those being the gifted and talented program, foreign languages, and the counseling services). Very little dissatisfaction with the athletic programs was displayed.

Adding to further dissatisfaction with academic subjects, the gown was significantly more dissatisfied than the town with the social studies programs, as well as the foreign language programs. In light of Ladd and Lipset's theory that academicians are more politically concerned and conscious, it is possible that faculty members would desire more emphasis placed on the social sciences. Also, with such varied cultures, countries and languages represented by students on the campus of Oklahoma State University, it is also possible that faculty members would be aware of the importance of foreign language programs in our public schools.

Assuming the dissatisfactions and criticism exhibited by these respondents reflected a desire for more emphasis in these areas rather than less, those vocal advocates for more funds and emphasis on athletic programs described in the case study were simply a minority group of parents and patrons who joined together due to their common interest in sports and did not necessarily reflect a view of any sizeable number of Stillwater public school patrons. There is no real tangible verification (other than that presented in Chapter IV) that a large "pro-athletic" segment of the community exists in Stillwater.

This finding is somewhat surprising in light of the overt emphasis appearing to be placed on athletics in the community with its expensive additions and renovations of gymnasiums, football fields, tennis courts, and wrestling rooms, not to mention the public's large turnout to athletic events. When considering the amount of effort the school system makes relative to such sporting events, there seems to be a dissonance between what the board and administration thinks the public wants and what the public actually indicates to be their wants on paper.

#### Due Process

Concerning the issue of due process, there was considerable evidence found to prove that Stillwater is a community extremely aware of the rights of employees. This is particularly from the academic segment of the sample. Of the faculty, 99% agreed that school boards should present documented evidence when dismissing employees. It appears that this same faculty sentiment filtered down into that town group somewhat affiliated with the university (T<sub>2</sub>) also, for 97% agreed to the need for evidence (whereas 81% of the pure town group agreed). Thus, concern for the rights of employees to due process was so strongly supported by these two segments of the community that perhaps even the hint that these rights might have been abused by the board could have been reason for controversy and extreme concern in this area, as outlined in the case study.

### Bond Issues

A third area of controversy explored in much detail was that concerning the bond issues. Every research question somehow related to this area of controversy, for it was the springboard for all the others. To have asked "after the fact," why a bond issue failed is a question that could never be tested empirically. Those same events could not be recreated, manipulating certain variables such as changing the campaign tactics of the board and administration, having a new superintendent, and allowing "a day of rebuttal" to explain the accusations against the bond issue in the newspaper. Only a study of events as they occurred, verified by persons observing and involved in these events in the community as this study attempted, might help explain why a bond issue failed and why other controversies surrounded it.

The attitudes portrayed by the respondents from the questionnaire clearly showed that public participation in school board decision making is desired by a majority of Stillwater patrons. Over three-fourths of all groups felt the board should listen to its constituents, rather than the administration when his advice did not agree with theirs. It appeared that the superintendent's recommendations for a bond issue, although the best according to his professional judgement and expertise, were not what the majority of the patrons wanted in 1976. The statistics clearly showed that over a majority of those favoring "the following of administrative suggestions" also favored this bond issue (80%), whereas only 50% favoring "listening to constituents" favored this same bond issue.

Perhaps Goldhammer was correct when he observed:

With the increasing professionalization of the instructional staff, the public has come to believe that the public interest has been subordinated to the concerns of the professional educator, and the ordinary citizens find it increasingly difficult to have their point of view officially represented in the decision making that takes place. Their only hope for an adequate representation is through school board members who are responsive to the public interest through the decisions that they make and the control which they exercise over public education.<sup>1</sup>

When looking for more specific reasons behind voting behavior, "need for facilities" was by far the reason most often given on the survey for voting "yes" for both the 1976 and 1977 bond issues. "The Citizens' Advisory Committee formed" was the second most often reason checked for voting "yes" in 1977. "Disapproval of administration and board" was the most frequently given reason for voting "no," however such a small number in the samples voted "no" in the elections, that no real conclusions can be drawn.

A "cause and effect" explanation simply cannot be drawn from either source of data given, but only speculations as to reasons for controversy and passage or failure of bond issues. One could speculate in several ways. The mere fact that over one-half of all patrons either felt the board was not open to input during the controversies or were not sure places doubts on the trust placed in that board and their decisions. In addition, the academic goals of the patrons were not exemplified in these bond issues when a gymnasium and wrestling room were left in architectural plans and math and science pods were deleted. The appointment of the Citizens' Advisory Committee perhaps satisfied the desire for "people input" as well as the desire for all points of view to be heard. The majority of the patrons' desires to

seek innovations and newer approaches in educating children could have been satisfied when the elementary school added to the 1977 bond issue was to be built around the "open" concept, as opposed to the traditional "contained" classrooms. Thus, in this manner, goals and attitudes of egalitarianism and desire for change may have manifested themselves in the 1976 and 1977 bond elections.

Concerning the bond issues, both sources of data showed that the gown element of the community was slightly more critical of the schools than the town, and was significantly more in favor of the board airing controversy rather than exhibiting solidarity. In addition, the gown group had several leaders voicing dissatisfaction with the board and administration in the handling of the bond issues. Despite these characteristics (which might lead one to believe that they were an adversary group), this same "gown" segment was the most supportive of the bond issues of any of the groups tested.

#### School Board Elections

Although not subject to empirical "proof," the desire for egalitarianism and for change was even more apparent in the school board elections than the bond elections. The very fact that 97% of the gown and 85% of the two town groups felt controversy and minority points of view should be aired might explain why the "grass roots," controversial candidate won the 1977 board race. The patrons, particularly the gown, who disapproved of board solidarity on controversial issues also tended to vote for that same candidate. Also, those favoring due process overwhelmingly voted for this same person, as well as those in

favor of innovations in educating our children and those more active in voicing opinions on school issues.

Thus, whether or not enough evidence has been presented to support the idea that many of those controversies outlined in the case study were partially a result of conflicting beliefs and ideologies concerning the goals of the schools and beliefs concerning democratic decision making and egalitarian values, is an open question. According to Ladd, even if there was sufficient proof that the differing ideologies existed in the community,

Only a portion of conflict in any system can be accounted for in terms of ideology. There will be arguments around personalities and narrow interests in the most ideological politics. Thus, an observer wishing to describe conflict in . . . (a community) as efficiently and parsimoniously possible, must apply the economies of ideological categories but a great deal of conflict is not in any way accounted for by these categories.<sup>2</sup>

#### Research Problems Encountered

The greatest problems encountered in this research involved writing items needed to measure concepts concerning attitudes and beliefs, obtaining a sufficient representative sample, and receiving a good return rate of both town and gown. Problems relative to the above, such as the failure of most questions on the instrument to sufficiently divide respondents into "liberal" and "conservative" camps resulted in the clustering of most answers into the "liberal" category. This fact may have contributed to several related problems.

The chi square warnings appeared in many tables. Also contributing to these warnings was the small size of the town and gown samples.

However, had the responses not been so uniform, perhaps fewer warnings would have appeared.

As was pointed out, the liberal-conservative scores were extremely "liberal-laden" and could not be satisfactorily used to analyze data as had been planned.

A few respondents indicated that they were offended by some of the more "black and white" questions on the survey which gave no room to respond to "middle-of-the-road" or status quo answers.

The response rate was 48%, even after a follow-up was attempted. However, considering the length of the questionnaire and the potential controversial nature of the questions asked, even this high a percentage return rate was surprising.

A major weakness was found when attempting to answer research question seven, "Are there differences among faculty members of various disciplines in their school-related political views?" Instead of dividing faculty members into disciplines, the seven colleges of the university were used as categories. It was quickly realized that in lumping all the Arts and Sciences professors and Education professors together, there was too broad a spectrum of disciplines within each college. It would have been more informative to have grouped the behavioral or social sciences together, the natural sciences, the professional areas (such as Veterinary Medicine, Engineering, Business) and the applied fields, as well as the agriculturally-oriented fields.

Those responding to the questionnaire tended to have certain characteristics. As was pointed out, most of those voting in the 1976 election voted in favor of the issue, although in reality it failed. This could reflect a biased sample made up of those generally voting

favorably on school issues. Perhaps those voting "no," in particular college professors, did not wish to reveal their dissenting vote on an educational question.

The sample seemed highly educated and of a high income level. No one had less than a high school education, and, of those in the town groups, less than 20% earned less than \$20,000. Only 4% of the gown group earned less than \$20,000. This places further doubt as to the representativeness of the sample.

Perhaps the general liberalism toward the schools in this community was due to the presence of the university (with its high value placed on education) in the city, both from an economic and cultural standpoint.

The greatest problem encountered was in the form of questions which the author asked repeatedly during this research: Can truths always be proven? Is quantitative data the only reliable measurement of events and happenings? Can feelings, attitudes, intuitions, beliefs, goals, changes, and thoughts be expressed numerically, then put in precise tables to prove or disprove a point? Why is such type measurement any more true than what one sees as he views a situation carefully?

As has been exhibited, some of the researcher's ideas, intuitions, observations, and interpretations were verified by the "actors" in the "scenes" described in the collection of tangible data. Some were not and could never be, since some observations were ex post facto. However, the causes of school controversies in Stillwater, in this author's mind, were partly due to beliefs, attitudes, and ideologies which varied throughout the community. An attempt to measure the



"life-world" and "mind-sets" of the various actors and elements in the community was made. These were not tangible, measurable, quantifiable "things," but ideas and desires of the "actors" or the "ideals" behind the "real" events.

Phenomenological researchers imply that without the consciousness of the existence of a phenomenon (such as differing beliefs and ideologies), it may exist, but may never have been "discovered" through empirical research methods. In empirical research, generally no room is left or made for consciousness. Something either exists or it does not, depending on what the numbers say. This leaves no room for the "discovering" process. Merleau-Ponty outlines the project of phenomenology in the following way:

All my knowledge of the world, even my scientific knowledge, is gained from my own particular point of view, or from some experience of the world without which the symbols of science would be meaningless. The whole universe of science is built upon the world as directly experienced and if we want to subject science itself to rigorous scrutiny and arrive at a precise assessment of its meaning and scope, we must begin by re-awakening the basic experience of the world of which science is the second-order expression.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, the project of phenomenology is the description of the phenomenon precisely as it appears to us in our consciousness. It allows us to say "Something exists because I saw it exist and see it existing." With that not necessarily empirically defensible, this author observed a distrust in the school board and administration during the series of controversies described. Certain values, goals, beliefs, and ideologies seemed present in the community. There was an anti-bureaucratic, anti-administration attitude present in the movement

for the people's voice to be heard within the school decision-making process. A period of instability existed where a "liberal," critical orientation existed. Later, a more stable conservative mood prevailed. Finally, there seemed to be differing attitudes toward the schools from the university-oriented segment of the community reflecting a more critical, questioning, suspicious nature. Months and even years were spent gathering quantitative and other types data from "actors" within the community, but the researcher's views given above can never be proven by use of empirical methods. They can only be perceived through the minds and intuitions of those who have "lived" the life of one involved in the situations described.

#### Recommendations for Further Study and to the Stillwater Public School System

Only one community was studied to test if responses differed between the town and gown segments of this community. Perhaps if other communities with university settings were tested and compared to similar-sized communities with no university present, it could be determined what, if any, effect the university environment might have on a public school system. To see if the same patterns exist in a community without the presence of a university would be even more informative in extending this study than testing between town and gown in another university community.

Also, completely separate from the town and gown concept, in further studies of community controversies, perhaps other variables or attributes besides faculty membership could be carefully controlled. Perhaps only parents of school-aged children could be tested for their

opinions and these could be further statistically controlled for level of income, sex, and property ownership. Also, the value of using a much larger sample is self evident. Questionnaires could be administered during the heat of the controversy to test attitudes, rather than waiting until "after the fact," such as in the case of this study.

Despite its flaws and problems, this research still provides valuable insights and suggestions for the Stillwater school board members and administration concerning the constituents it serves such as the following:

1. The community, on the whole, places an extremely high value on the academic realm of the curriculum. At least 40% of the total sample indicated dissatisfaction with the gifted and talented program, the foreign language programs, and the counseling services. The university community added the social studies curriculum to its "dissatisfaction" list. Perhaps it would be well worth the time and effort to form a task force within the school system itself to investigate further and to determine if this feeling continues to exist and, if so, what could be done to alleviate this dissatisfaction.

2. The school patrons tested in the community seemed to desire a significant voice in the making of school decisions and desire that all points of view, although some controversial, be heard and expressed by board members. Perhaps the board should attempt to publically discuss all points of view on an issue and more effort should be made by the board to determine what the community feels to be important. When major decisions (such as those surrounding bond issues for building and construction purposes) arise, the board could appoint citizen

advisory committees early in the planning stages rather than after controversy and disagreement occur. Although the appointment of such committees may seem to slow down the decision-making process, in the long run, time (such as in the 1976 bond issue failure's case) may be saved if controversy and failed bond elections are avoided.

3. Relative to egalitarian values, the community of Stillwater is "due process" oriented. Efforts are being made by the present administration toward fulfilling the legal requirements outlined in Oklahoma's Senate Bill 249 (to document evidence held against a school employee, to offer suggestions to help that employee improve his or her performance, and to offer a proper time period in which to attempt that improvement). Since the controversies in this area between 1976 and 1980, no due process cases have publically appeared, which may be an indication that proper procedures are carefully being used and undertaken.

4. In view of its interest in school matters, the Stillwater board and administration should devise a method to improve its communication with the large interest group comprising the university faculty, perhaps by further utilizing the resources and expertise therein. Although often they might appear to be the board's and administration's worst critics and to have the most vocal opinions, it might be noted that when voting and elections occur, those faculty members tested showed that this group is the system's strongest supporter. Therefore, the school board and administration need to be cognizant of the role society has placed and still places on the university professor and academician--that of critic and change agent of society and its institutions. Those criticisms and voices are

reflections of a desire to improve the schools as institutions, not to destroy them.

In reflecting on what this study has shown in light of the newer methods of sociological research, it appears that little progress was made relative to the quantifying of intangible constructs such as ideologies, beliefs, and attitudes. Yet, questions concerning goals, beliefs, and ideologies are the most important questions which can be asked by school boards and administrators in their educational decision making. To acknowledge and accept the fact that such constructs cannot be numerically assessed, and that more intuitive, phenomenological approaches must be used to measure beliefs, attitudes, and goals, could very well be this study's chief contribution to sociological and educational research.

ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Keith Goldhammer, The School Board (New York, 1964), p. 11.

<sup>2</sup>Everett Carl Ladd, Jr., Ideology in America (Ithaca, 1969), p. 258.

<sup>3</sup>M. Merleau-Ponty, "What is Phenomenology?" Phenomenology, ed. J. Kockelmans (New York, 1967), p. 356.

## A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Books

- Anderson, Theodore R. and Morris Zelditch, Jr. A Basic Course in Statistics. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1968.
- Becker, Carl. Progress and Power. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1936.
- Bereiter, Carl and Mervin B. Freedman. "Fields of Study and the People in Them." The American College. Ed. Nevitt Sanford. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1962, pp. 563-596.
- Cicourel, Aaron V. Method and Measurement in Sociology. London: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1964.
- Dahl, Robert. Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971.
- Goldhammer, Keith. The School Board. New York: The Center for Applied Research in Education, Inc., 1964.
- Henerson, Marlene E., Lynn Lyon Morris and Carol Taylor Fitz-Gibbon. How to Measure Attitudes. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1978.
- Hofstadter, Richard. Anti-Intellectualism in American Life. New York: Vintage Books, 1963.
- Husserl, Edmund. Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology. London: Allen and Unwin, 1967.
- Kerlinger, Fred N. Foundations of Behavioral Research. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., 1964.
- Kerr, Clark. The Uses of the University. New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1966.
- Ladd, Everett Carl, Jr. and Seymour Martin Lipset. Academics, Politics, and the 1972 Election. Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1973.
- \_\_\_\_\_. The Divided Academy. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1975.

- Ladd, Everett Carl, Jr. Ideology in America. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969.
- Lazarsfeld, Paul F. and Wagner Thielens, Jr. The Academic Mind. Glencoe: The Free Press, 1958.
- Lipset, Seymour Martin. Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics. Garden City: Anchor Books, 1960.
- Lutz, Frank W. and Lawrence Iannaccone. Understanding Educational Organizations: A Field Study Approach. Columbus: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1968.
- Merleau-Ponty, M. "What is Phenomenology?" Phenomenology. Ed. J. Kockelmans. New York: Anchor Press, 1967.
- Mills, C. W. The Sociological Imagination. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959.
- Myers, Donald. Decision Making in Curriculum and Instruction. Dayton: The Institute for Development of Education and Activities, Inc., 1970.
- Neale, John M. and Robert M. Liebert. Science and Behavior: An Introduction to Methods of Research. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1973.
- Paul, B. D. "Interview Techniques and Field Relationships." Anthropology Today. Ed. A. L. Kroeber et. al. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953.
- Phillipson, Michael, David Silverman, David Walsh, et. al. New Directions in Sociological Theory. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1972.
- Plano, Jack and Milton Greenberg. The American Political Dictionary. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963.
- Robinson, John P., Jerrold G. Rusk and Kendra B. Head. Measures of Political Attitudes. Ann Arbor: Institute of Social Research, University of Michigan, 1969.
- Schutz, A. Collected Papers. The Hague: Nijhoff, 1962.
- Selakovich, Daniel. The Schools and American Society. Lexington: Xerox Corporation, 1973.
- Thompson, John Thomas. Policymaking in American Public Education. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1976.
- Trilling, Lionel. Beyond Culture. New York: Viking Press, 1965.



Wofle, D. America's Resources of Specialized Talent. New York: Harper Bros., 1954.

Zeigler, Harmon. The Political World of the High School Teacher. Eugene: University of Oregon Press, 1966.

Publications of the Government,  
Learned Societies, and Other  
Organizations

Citizens' Advisory Committee. Final Report to the Board of Education. Stillwater I-16 School District, Payne County, Oklahoma, April, 1977.

Gallup, George. Gallup Opinion Index. Report No. 58. New Jersey: Gallup International, Inc., April, 1970.

\_\_\_\_\_. The Gallup Poll, III (December, 1969).

Kimbrough, Ralph B. Informal County Leadership Structure and Controls Affecting Education Policy Decision-Making. U.S.O.E. Cooperative Research, Project 1324. Gainsville, Florida: College of Education, University of Florida, 1964.

Office of Extension, College of Education, Oklahoma State University. "Report Summary." Final Report: Grade Configuration Survey for the Board of Education. Stillwater, Oklahoma, Public School District I-16, July 3, 1978.

Osgood, Frank and Associates, Incorporated. Stillwater's Economic Base. Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1978.

Statistical Analysis System Printout, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, March 18, 1981.

Stillwater Board of Education of Independent School District No. I-16. Minutes of Regular Meeting (November 5, 1979).

Stillwater Chamber of Commerce. Community Report. Stillwater, Oklahoma, 1979.

Stillwater League of Women Voters. "Do You Feel Gerrymandered???" The Stillwater Voter. (February-March, 1979), 9-10.

Stillwater Public Schools. Know Your Schools. Stillwater, Oklahoma, 1979-1980.

## Periodicals

- Galbraith, John Kenneth. "An Adult's Guide to New York, Washington and Other Exotic Places." New York, IV (November, 1971), 52.
- Goodlad, John I., Kenneth A. Serotnik and Bette C. Overman. "An Overview of 'A Study of Schooling.'" Phi Delta Kappan, LI (November, 1979), 174-178.
- Howard, Lawrence C. "The Academic and the Ballot." School and Society, LXXXVI (November 22, 1958), 415-419.
- Kerlinger, Frederick. "The Attitude Structure of the Individual: A Q-Study of the Educational Attitudes of Professors and Laymen." Genetic Psychology Monograph, LIII (1956), 287-322.
- Kluckhohn, Florence R. "Participant Observer Techniques in Small Communities." American Journal of Sociology, LX (November, 1940), 331.
- Kornhauser, Arthur. "Attitudes of Economic Groups." Public Opinion Quarterly, II (1938), 264.
- Lipset, Seymour M. and Everett C. Ladd, Jr. "The Divided Professoriate." Change, III (May/June, 1971), 54-60.
- McClosky, Herbert. "Conservatism and Personality." American Political Science Review, III (March, 1958), 27-45.
- New York Times. March 11, 1970.
- Reid, Whitelaw. "The Scholar in Politics." Scribner's Monthly, VI (1873), 613-614.
- Schwartz, M. S. and C. G. Schwartz. "Problems in Participant Observation." American Journal of Sociology, LX (January, 1955), 344.
- Stigler, George. (unpublished memorandum) cited by Milton Friedman, "The Ivory Tower," Newsweek, LXXIV (November 10, 1969), 92.
- Stillwater [Oklahoma] News Press. March 2, 1949 through May 4, 1980.

## Unpublished Materials

- Alexander, Robert Paul. "Town and Gown Relations--How and What Community Leaders Think." (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Ohio University, 1969.)

- Miskel, Cecil G. "A Field Study of the Activities and Sentiments of Community Leaders and Board of Education Members Regarding School Bond Elections in Four Oklahoma School Districts." (Unpublished Ed.D. Dissertation, Oklahoma State University, 1970.)
- Sullivan, L. M. "A Study of the Attitudes of School Boards and Superintendents and Their Relationship to Innovation in Selected Oklahoma Schools." (Unpublished Ed.D. Dissertation, Oklahoma State University, 1968.)
- Warren, David Liles. "Town-Gown Conflict: Ideology, Class Resentment, and Group Interest in the Responses to an Elite University." (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, The University of Michigan, 1976.)

#### Personal Communication

- Anonymous Patrons. Personal Interviews. Stillwater, Oklahoma, Spring, 1979.
- Hale, Robert. Stillwater Superintendent of Schools. Presentation to Oklahoma State University Curriculum Class. Stillwater, Oklahoma, Fall, 1977.
- Houston, Winfrey. Stillwater School Board Attorney. Personal Interviews. Stillwater, Oklahoma, March 31, 1980 and May 20, 1981.
- Reuter, LaVern. Payne County Election Board Chairman. Personal Phone Conversation. Stillwater, Oklahoma, January 1, 1980.
- Warde, William. Personal Interview. Stillwater, Oklahoma, April 17, 1981.

APPENDIX A

COVER LETTERS AND SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Martha McMillian  
30 Yellow Brick Road  
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74074

Dear Patron:

Your name has been selected from a list of Stillwater patrons through a random sampling procedure to be surveyed on various school-related issues in the Stillwater Public School System. Some of the survey questions have been taken from a nation-wide study done by the Institute for Development of Educational Activities at the University of Southern California. The remaining questions were devised to test opinions on various local issues.

Your answers will be kept completely confidential. There will be no way to identify respondents by name, and results will be analyzed through various groupings of patrons. Results will be given to the school administration, although this research is being done by a private individual for academic purposes only.

I would appreciate your help in filling out the enclosed form. Please answer each question as honestly and completely as possible and return them to Poultry Science 212A through campus mail by February 23, 1981. If there are any questions, feel free to call 377-8896. Thank you very much.

Respectfully,

Martha McMillian

Martha McMillian  
30 Yellow Brick Road  
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74074

Dear Patron:

Your name has been selected from a list of Stillwater patrons through a random sampling procedure to be surveyed on various school-related issues in the Stillwater Public School System. Some of the survey questions have been taken from a nation-wide study done by the Institute for Development of Educational Activities at the University of Southern California. The remaining questions were devised to test opinions on various local issues.

Your answers will be kept completely confidential. There will be no way to identify respondents by name, and results will be analyzed through various groupings of patrons. Results will be given to the school administration, although this research is being done by a private individual for academic purposes only.

I would appreciate your help in filling out the enclosed form. Please answer each question as honestly and completely as possible and return them in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope by February 23, 1981. If you have any questions, feel free to call 377-8896. Thank you very much.

Respectfully,

Martha McMillian

## STILLWATER SCHOOL PATRON OPINIONNAIRE

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Schools usually provide education in a variety of areas. If you had to choose only one, which do you think this school district should emphasize? Please select the letter (A-D) that best answers the question and write it in the space to the left of the question number.
- A. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (Instruction which helps students learn to get along with other students and adults, prepares students for social and civic responsibility, develops students' awareness and appreciation of our own and other cultures.)
  - B. INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT (Instruction in basic skills in mathematics, reading, and written and verbal communication, and in critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.)
  - C. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT (Instruction which builds self-confidence, creativity, ability to think independently, and self-discipline.)
  - D. VOCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (Instruction which prepares students for employment, development of skills necessary for getting a job, development of awareness about career choices and alternatives.)

For items 2 through 8, please choose the statement (A or B) you believe to be true or more nearly correct in your opinion, and place it in the blank provided at the left of the question number.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. A) More emphasis should be placed on academic programs in this school district and less on athletics and sports.  
 B) More emphasis should be placed on sports and athletic programs and less on the academic.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. A) If schools could be graded by the quality of their work, just as students are graded, this school system would make A's and B's.  
 B) If schools could be graded on the same scale as students, this school system would make D's and F's.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. A) I have never voted against a school bond issue.  
 B) I have voted against a school bond issue.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. A) Schools should seek innovations and newer approaches in educating our children.  
 B) Schools should stick to the traditional approaches in teaching.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. A) The Stillwater Board of Education should primarily represent the views and desires of its constituents in their decision-making process.  
 B) The school board should primarily follow the advice and recommendations of the administration in making decisions for the school system even though their advice may not have public support.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. A) I usually vote when local school bond issues and school board elections are held.  
 B) I never vote in local school bond or school board elections.

8. A) I have talked to teachers, administrators, and/or board members over school-related topics during the past few years.  
 B) I have never talked to teachers, administrators, and/or board members over school-related topics.

9. Below is a list of ways in which patrons might participate in school activities. Please check (✓) those ways you participate or have participated:

- Acting as classroom aide or volunteer  
 Serving as a PTA officer or committee member  
 Serving as an Advisory Committee member  
 Attending PTA meetings  
 Acting as guest speaker  
 Helping at special events  
 Attending meetings to discuss local school issues  
 Attending meetings to discuss other community problems

10. Each item below refers to a specific subject area in the curriculum. Please circle the letter which best describes your feelings toward each area:

	<u>Very Satisfied</u>	<u>Somewhat Satisfied</u>	<u>Somewhat Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Very Dissatisfied</u>
A. Reading/Language/Arts/English	A	B	C	D
B. Mathematics	A	B	C	D
C. Social Studies (history, geography, government, etc.)	A	B	C	D
D. Science	A	B	C	D
E. The Arts (painting, drawing, crafts, music, drama, etc.)	A	B	C	D
F. Foreign Language	A	B	C	D
G. Physical Education	A	B	C	D
H. Competitive Sports	A	B	C	D
I. Gifted & Talented Programs	A	B	C	D
J. Counseling Services	A	B	C	D
K. Learning Disability Programs	A	B	C	D

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with questions 11-13 by placing the letter of your response next to the question number:

11. The airing of controversy and minority points of view by school board members is necessary for a democratic system to function properly.

- A) Agree  
 B) Disagree



- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. School boards should have the right to dismiss any employee of the school system without specific documented evidence as to why he/she was fired.
- A) Agree  
B) Disagree
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. School board decisions should express solidarity and a united front on controversial issues.
- A) Agree  
B) Disagree

---

Please answer the following questions as best as you can:

14. Who is the Superintendent of Stillwater Schools? \_\_\_\_\_
15. Who is the principal of the high school? \_\_\_\_\_
16. Who are the five members of the Stillwater School Board?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The following section asks questions over specific school elections held in Stillwater between 1976 and 1980. Please omit each question if you were not living in Stillwater at the time of that election. If living here, place the letter of the most appropriate response in the space provided at the left of each question number.

For the first time since March, 1949, a school bond issue failed in the community of Stillwater on October 5, 1976. This bond issue was for \$2.92 million to construct a second middle school on the northeast side of the city, a new cafeteria at the present middle school, three elementary library-media centers at the three oldest elementary schools, and new tennis courts at the high school.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. If living in this school district at the time of this 1976 bond election, how did you vote on this issue?
- A) Did not vote  
B) In favor of the bond issue  
C) Against the bond issue

\_\_\_\_\_ 18. Place the letter of the answer which best describes your reason for voting as you did in the space provided.

- A) Need for these facilities
- B) Have always voted yes on school bond issues
- C) Location of construction sites
- D) The idea of having two middle schools
- E) Grade configuration
- F) Old middle school needed renovation
- G) Inflation
- H) Property taxes
- I) Approval of board and administration
- J) Disapproval of board and administration
- K) Other; (list) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 19. For whom did you vote in the January 25, 1977 school board election?

- A) Did not vote
- B) James Baker
- C) Patsy Trotter

Approximately one year after the failure of the first bond issue, a similar bond issue passed by a 3 percent margin on October 17, 1977. This \$3.6 million bond issue included: (1) a new elementary school in the southwest side of town, (2) three library learning centers, (3) a new middle school on the northeast side of the city, and (4) a new cafeteria at and renovation of the "old" middle school.

\_\_\_\_\_ 20. If you voted in this election, how did you vote?

- A) Did not vote
- B) In favor of the bond issue
- C) Against the bond issue

\_\_\_\_\_ 21. Place the letter of the answer which best describes your reason for voting as you did.

- A) The Citizens' Advisory Committee formed
- B) The crucial need for the facilities
- C) Advertisements by the Citizens for Straight Facts
- D) The advertisements of those in favor of the bond election
- E) The addition of the elementary school
- F) The addition and renovation to the old middle school
- G) The fear of lack of sufficient funds to finish the projects
- H) Support for administration and board
- I) Disapproval of administration and board
- J) Inflation
- K) Other; (list) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 22. Did you feel that the school board was open to input and suggestions from the community during the time of controversy?

- A) Yes
- B) No
- C) Not sure

\_\_\_\_\_ 23. If you voted, for whom did you vote in the January 24, 1978 school board election?

- A) Did not vote
- B) Robert Farmer
- C) Dol Lambert

\_\_\_\_\_ 24. How did you vote in the last bond election for \$1.49 million on March 3, 1980 to complete the two schools?

- A) Did not vote
- B) Yes
- C) No

This section will be used to categorize you into different groupings. Your responses will be anonymous and results will be calculated on a group basis.

\_\_\_\_\_ 25. Do you live within the Stillwater Public School District?

- A) Yes
- B) No

\_\_\_\_\_ 26. Are you currently employed by Oklahoma State University as a faculty member (a professor, associate professor, assistant professor, visiting professor, instructor, teaching or research associate)?

- A) Yes
- B) No

\_\_\_\_\_ If so, please indicate with which college you are affiliated.

- |                                       |                                   |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| A) College of Agriculture             | E) College of Engineering         |
| B) College of Arts & Sciences         | F) College of Home Economics      |
| C) College of Business Administration | G) College of Veterinary Medicine |
| D) College of Education               |                                   |

\_\_\_\_\_ 27. Is your spouse employed by Oklahoma State University as a faculty member?

- A) Yes
- B) No

\_\_\_\_\_ 28. Are you or your spouse employed by Oklahoma State University in any other capacity (administration, staff, or other employee)?

- A) Yes
- B) No

\_\_\_\_\_ 29. Do you or your spouse attend the university as a student?

- A) Yes
- B) No

- \_\_\_\_\_ 30. Do you presently have a child (children) in the Stillwater Public School System?
- A) Yes
  - B) No
- \_\_\_\_\_ 31. Do you work for the public school system in any capacity (with the exclusion of volunteer work)?
- A) Yes
  - B) No
- \_\_\_\_\_ 32. Do you own property that is taxable for ad valorem or property tax purposes?
- A) Yes
  - B) No
- \_\_\_\_\_ 33. How would you describe your political beliefs?
- A) Very Liberal
  - B) Somewhat Liberal
  - C) Somewhat Conservative
  - D) Very Conservative
- \_\_\_\_\_ 34. What is your sex?
- A) Male
  - B) Female
- \_\_\_\_\_ 35. What is your total yearly family income?
- A) \$0-\$10,000
  - B) \$10,000-\$20,000
  - C) \$20,000-\$30,000
  - D) \$30,000-\$40,000
  - E) Over \$40,000
- \_\_\_\_\_ 36. What is your highest level of education?
- A) Below High School
  - B) High School Graduate
  - C) Some College
  - D) College Graduate
  - E) Post-Graduate or Professional Degree
- \_\_\_\_\_ 37. How many years have you lived in the area served by this school district?
- A) Less than 1 year
  - B) 1-5 years
  - C) 5-10 years
  - D) Over 10 years
- \_\_\_\_\_ 38. What is your age?
- A) Under 21
  - B) 21-35
  - C) 35-55
  - D) Over 55

APPENDIX B

NOTICES FOR FOLLOW-UP

February 27, 1981

Dear

Just a reminder about my questionnaire on the school system. If you have sent it in, thank you. If not, please fill it out and return it in the addressed envelope.

Thank you,

Martha McMillian

2  
VITA

Martha Martin McMillian

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: A STUDY OF UNIVERSITY FACULTY AND NON-UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATED PATRONS' PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL-RELATED ISSUES

Major Field: Curriculum and Instruction

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in McAlester, Oklahoma, July 1, 1947, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Martin.

Education: Graduated from Yale High School, Yale, Oklahoma, in May, 1965; received the Bachelor of Science degree in Sociology from Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, in May, 1969; received the Master of Social Studies degree in Secondary Education from Oklahoma State University in July, 1975; completed the requirements for the Doctor of Education degree at Oklahoma State University in July, 1981.

Professional Experience: Classroom teacher at C. E. Donart High School, Stillwater, Oklahoma, 1969-70; classroom teacher at Gilcrease Junior High School, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1970-74; graduate assistant at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, 1975-81.

Professional Organizations: Phi Kappa Phi, Delta Kappa Gamma.