

GREAT BOOKS AND SMALL GROUPS

Studies of the Dynamics of Participation In
a Program for Adult Liberal Education

NATIONAL OPINION RESEARCH CENTER
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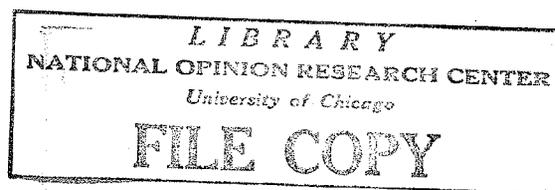
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Clyde W. Hart, Director
Herbert Goldstein, Business Manager

Survey No. 408B



by

James A. Davis, Senior Study Director

with the assistance of:

Ruth Ursula Gebhard
Herbert Hamilton
Carolyn Huson
Joe L. Spaeth

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Acknowledgments

It is perhaps appropriate that a study of small groups be conducted not by an individual, but by a small group. A complete listing of the people involved in this research would probably involve close to 100 names, but I should like to convey special thanks to the following:

This study was commissioned by The Fund for Adult Education, and I should like to thank them, and particularly Mr. G. H. Griffiths, vice-president of the Fund, not only for their obvious generosity in providing the funds, but also for encouraging us to follow what paths we chose in our research, rather than to hike down a pre-determined route. Money is not hard to come by in social research, but freedom is.

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Although it would not be obvious to anyone but a specialist in the field, a very large proportion of the ideas in this report follow from the work and advice of James S. Coleman, now of The Johns Hopkins University and Peter Blau, of The University

Acknowledgments, continued

of Chicago.

In terms of the project staff, our division of labor was as follows: Ruth Ursula Gebhard had the sole responsibility of supervising the follow-up wave of data gathering and processing, and is the author of Chapter 2 of Part II, the bulk of which is reported in fuller detail in her master's thesis, "Patterns of Participation Among Husbands and Wives in Discussion Groups," (unpublished M.A. Thesis, Department of Sociology, University of Chicago 1959). The study director edited these materials for inclusion in this report, and any resultant distortions of the materials are not Ursula's fault. Herbert Hamilton analysed the materials reported in Chapter 1 of Part II, and is the author of that important chapter. Carolyn Huson did all of the calculations for Chapter 1, Part I; contributed very important ideas to the methodological analysis in Chapter 1, Part I; and is the author of Chapter 3, Part I. Joe L. Spaeth, although not a regular member of the project team, is a co-author of the methodological analysis reported in Chapter 1, Part I. Since the rest of the report stands or falls on this analysis, his contribution cannot be measured in terms of hours alone.

Last, I should like to thank my wife, Martha Davis. Without her patience and perpetual coffee pot, this report would have been delayed even further beyond its original deadline.

None of these estimable people, however, have volunteered to shoulder the responsibility for errors of fact, method, and interpretation, which will come to light when the report is read.

Acknowledgments, continued

This task role has been and should be allocated to the project director.

James A. Davis
Chicago, Illinois
October 18, 1959

INTRODUCTION

This is the third and last in a series of reports by National Opinion Research Center on a national survey of participants in The Great Books program. This report may be read independently, but its aims will, perhaps, become clearer if we review the history of the project.

Great Books is a national program for the liberal education of adults. In 1957-1958, when our research began, it consisted of some 1,960 discussion groups dispersed through the United States, with additional groups in Canada and overseas. Each group meets every other week from September to June and at each meeting the members discuss specific selections which they have read before the meetings. The selections are either complete works, or excerpts from such writers as Aristotle, Virgil, St. Francis, Melville, Shakespeare, Hume, Darwin, and Aeschylus. The readings are organized into blocks of one year each, and, in theory, groups proceed from the first year readings through the second, third, fourth, etc. in a continuous program.

The groups vary in size (from around five to around 35 with an average of eleven in our sample), in sponsorship (most are affiliated with public libraries, but some are sponsored by churches and business firms, and some are unsponsored), and in leadership (some have a single leader, most have co-leaders, and a few rotate the leadership from meeting to meeting). They all have the characteristics of small, informal discussion groups, however.

In order to understand the program, we should stress the following characteristics. The leaders are not professional

teachers, but a number have had brief training courses sponsored by The Great Books Foundation, and many are long-time participants who are now leading beginning groups. The members do not pay any tuition or get any degree or certificate for completing the program. In fact, no one can "complete" the program as additional readings are always available, currently up to the 14th year. Members are encouraged to buy the readings from the Foundation but are not required to do so. The Great Books Foundation itself is a non-profit organization which attempts to stimulate groups and provides readings and publicity materials. It also provides advice and help to some groups through local community coordinators in larger cities. It would be fair to say, however, that the national organization has little or no specific contact with a given group, unless that group seeks aid or advice from the Foundation.

During December, 1957, NORC interviewers attended the meetings of 172 groups, sampled on a national basis. Members had not been informed before the meeting that they were to participate in the research that night, although some knew their group would be called on at some time. Each member of the sampled groups filled out the self-administered questionnaire which is attached as Appendix 2 to this report.

Coding, punching and card cleaning of these data were completed by June, 1958, and analysis and write-up took place during June, July, and early August, 1958. A completed report was submitted to The Fund for Adult Education in September, 1958. The report was long and detailed (261 single-spaced typewritten pages) and we shall not attempt to summarize it here. Basically,

it covered a description of the members, some guesses about the audience from which the members are recruited, an analysis of the members' reported motivations for joining, and a very detailed statistical examination of data on the effects of participation.

Of all these topics, only the description of the members concerns us here, and we can review quickly by citing from the summary of the appropriate chapter:¹

What are the participants like? They tend to be highly educated, quite married, somewhat female, disproportionately professional men and wives of white collar husbands; infrequently intellectuals; under-mobile; possibly disproportionately irreligious; possibly under-proportionally Catholic; sociable; joining; Republicans and Democrats.

Where participants can be compared with the national population of college alumni, they tend to accentuate those qualities (mostly associated with high levels of interest and intellectual sophistication) which, in turn, differentiate the alumni from the general population.

In short, the participants are well educated, high status, socially active, youngish adults.

However, since it was the effects analysis which led to the present research, we should explain some of the problems involved. Basically, we wished to determine whether exposure to Great Books leads to changes in the members' knowledge, attitudes, and community participation. In theory, a controlled experiment is the only air-tight way of answering these questions, but this was impossible; and so we were forced to rely upon statistical comparisons between beginning and advanced members. Now, if there are effects, they will show up in such contrasts, but it does not follow that if the contrasts turn up that they must be due to the effect of the program. In particular, in our

¹James A. Davis, Lathrop Vickery Beale, and Ruth Ursula Gebhard, "The Great Books Program: A National Survey," Chicago, National Opinion Research Center, 1958, p. 22.

original report we were concerned about the possibility that drop-outs could lead to spurious findings. For example, we found that advanced year members had much higher knowledge of liberal arts than did beginners. This suggested that exposure to Great Books leads to increased information about liberal arts. However, if members with low knowledge tend disproportionately to drop out of the program, we would get a spurious difference between beginning and advanced members even if the program did not have any effect on knowledge.

While we did the best we could with the statistical tricks available, at the time of the completion of our report we were still worried about the drop-out problem. Therefore, we proposed to The Fund for Adult Education that we collect follow-up data in order to locate actual drop-outs and then re-examine our original findings with these new data as controls. The Fund accepted our proposal, and during the Fall of 1958 we collected our follow-up information. We did not get our information from the group members, but from questionnaires to leaders and informal questions to community coordinators we managed to determine the continuation status of 92 per cent of the people in our original sample.

Subsequently, we re-analysed parts of our original data, and managed to get a much more adequate (although far from perfect) picture of the program's effects by using the actual drop-out data as a statistical control. A second report, embodying this re-analysis, and summarizing the highlights of the first report was delivered to The Fund for Adult Education in the winter of 1959. Under our continuation grant we were able to use the

drop-out data, originally collected as a statistical control, to examine the substantive problem of program retention in Great Books.

Essentially this report consists of a series of studies, all oriented around the problem of locating and understanding the factors which keep people in Great Books and those which lead them to drop out of the program.

Now, our data can be looked at as either 1,909 individuals who happen to be sampled in 172 discussion groups, or as 172 discussion groups which happen to contain 1,909 individuals. This form of sample, by accident, enabled us to make a much more sophisticated attack on the problem than we might have otherwise. In particular, it led us to wonder how much of the retention process could be allocated to individual factors (the characteristics of people as individuals which affect their continuation) and how much to group factors (the characteristics of groups as groups which affect the retention of their members). This duality is the heart of this study, which consists, in essence, of an attempt to view the same set of variables simultaneously as individual variables and as group variables.

While such a program of analysis is naturally attractive to sociologists, it is easier said than done. Our first task was to analyse the methodological problems involved, and Chapter 1 of Part I is devoted to an exposition of the technique we developed. While this chapter is devoid of substance, the rest of the study flows from the ideas developed there, and the reader is hereby warned that Chapter 1, Part I is a pre-requisite for all of the remaining analyses.

Chapter 2 of Part I, applies our techniques to the question of group factors in program retention, and develops a model which sums up our findings on the characteristics of successful and unsuccessful groups.

Chapter Three, Part I considers another set of the group variables, leadership, leader training, and discussion techniques, in order to find out whether program retention is related to the way the leaders organize and conduct the discussions.

Part II shifts from the group to the individual level. In Chapter 1 of Part II we present a detailed analysis of those characteristics of individual members which relate to program retention, regardless of the type of group.

Chapter 2 of Part II is an analysis of one of our major variables, "discussion activity," and although it considers such odd things as the socialization of women in American Society and the effect of getting married on one's style of interaction, basically it tries to pinpoint the sources of particular variables which are of prime importance for program retention.

The final chapter is a brief review of the findings, along with some speculations on their practical application to The Great Books program.

PART I

Chapter 1

Group and Individual Factors, A Technique for Measurement

Introduction

Let's assume that we have finally decided to pay off a mounting list of social obligations by throwing a party. Let's further assume that we have been so remiss in our obligations that, given our tiny apartment, we must have three separate parties. So, we sit down with the list of names and try to juggle them around so that things will work out well. Should we, for instance, try to make the three parties homogeneous - all people from the office at one, all neighbors at another, and, crossing our fingers, the parents of our childrens' school friends at the third? Or, should we try and mix the guests thoroughly and hope that chemistry, physiological or social, will generate a series of successful evenings?

The dilemma may appear trivial, except to the hostess, but it contains the germ of a very important problem - that of the relationships between individual characteristics and group characteristics. Our hesitation and indecision stems from a tacit assumption that groups are real, and there is something to group situations beyond that accounted for by adding up the characteristics of the individuals involved. Thus, to have one amateur pianist at the party may help a lot, but to have four may not be so desirable. On the other hand, if we invite only amateur

pianists, they may have a marvelous time discussing music.

While the general problem of the relations between groups and individuals has been vigorously discussed for some 2500 years, that particular corner of it which was suggested by our party problem, has received little attention in social science. Actually, it is a practical problem which turns up rather frequently in modern society. Should, for instance, school children be grouped according to their abilities, or mixed up randomly? Do the modern suburbs, which are so homogeneous in their class structure and family type, produce stultifying effects on the children who grow up there? What are the optimal proportions of whites and Negroes to maintain a stable inter-racial neighborhood? Or again: Should older, retired people be advised to live with their families or should they be segregated into homogeneous colonies of people with similar interests and problems? Does co-education lead to greater or lesser concentration on studies? And finally, are there any general rules which would help us in making up small, informal discussion groups, in such a way as to maximize the quality of the discussions?

Each of these queries really asks, in a particular situation, the same general question: Given people who possess some particular characteristic, will they behave differently in groups which vary in the proportion having that characteristic?

Contemporary sociology is quite interested in this problem - which we can call the "compositional problem," but the issues involved may be clearer if we begin with the great pioneer sociologist, Emile Durkheim, and his 1895 essay, The Rules of Sociological

Method.¹

Durkheim begins by asking what sorts of phenomena are peculiarly social, and hence, whether sociology has a unique domain of study. In particular he is faced with the challenge of discriminating between "individual" and "social" events. His answer is that social facts "are not only external to the individual but are, moreover, endowed with coercive power, by virtue of which they impose themselves upon him, independent of his individual will." (p.2) In his essay, Durkheim defends his position with a number of verbal examples, for instance, "When I fulfill my obligations as brother, husband, or citizen, when I execute my contracts, I perform duties which are defined, externally to myself and my acts, in law and in custom." (p.1)

When, however, one turns to statistical data, in the fashion of contemporary sociology, it is difficult to deduce what properties should appear in a set of observations if they are to be in accordance with Durkheim's strictures. This question can be broken into two separate problems: the problem of assessing constraint and the problem of assessing exteriority. Constraint presents little difficulty, since Durkheim stresses that the constraint need not be perceived ("If the complacency with which we permit ourselves to be carried along conceals the pressure undergone, nevertheless it does not abolish it. Thus, the air is no less heavy because we do not detect its weight.") (p.5) All that one needs to demonstrate constraint is a correlation between

¹Durkheim, E., The Rules of Sociological Method (1895), eighth edition, translated by S. A. Solovay and J. H. Mueller, and edited by G.E.G. Catlin, Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1950.

an exterior situation and a behavior. Thus, although the heavy stress in Durkheim's analysis is on normative constraint, he includes by implication relationships based on the existence of laws of behavior as well as those deriving from social norms.

The empirical assessment of "exteriority" is another matter. When he is discussing examples of exteriority Durkheim typically cites cultural phenomena such as codes of law, business rules, and religious systems, which exist as symbols independent of particular persons. However, to limit social facts to the realm of culture would exclude inter-personal phenomena from sociology and do an injustice to the spirit of Durkheim's work. Frequently, the exterior social fact is a person or group of persons, so that the same empirical phenomenon can be simultaneously individual fact and exterior social fact.

Durkheim wrestled with the statistical problems implied by this position, and although he usually managed to reach correct statistical answers in advance of the historical development of statistics, this time he failed. He wrote:

Currents of opinion . . . impel certain groups either to more marriages, for example, or to more suicides, or to a higher or lower birth-rate, etc. These currents are plainly social facts. At first sight they seem inseparable from the forms they take in individual cases. But statistics furnish us with the means of isolating them. They are, in fact, represented with considerable exactness by the rates of births, marriages, and suicides. . . . Since each of these figures contains all the individual cases indiscriminately, the individual circumstances which may have had a share in the production of the phenomena are neutralized. (p. 8)

The fallacy lies in the assumption that the individual facts are randomly correlated with the social facts and/or the dependent variable. This assumption is empirically untenable and methodologically unwarranted, since it is essentially a solution

by fiat.

Although Durkheim anticipated a surprising number of the techniques of modern research, it apparently did not occur to him that one answer to his problem goes as follows: since many observations may be simultaneously individual facts and exterior social facts, one should classify each observation both ways simultaneously, and observe the results when, with a large number of observations, the social dimension is varied and the individual aspect is held constant. As a matter of fact, this solution did not occur to anyone until shortly after World War II, a gap of half a century.

In 1950 Patricia L. Kendall and Paul F. Lazarsfeld² published a now famous review of methodological problems suggested by another famous study, The American Soldier Series.³ The last part of the essay is devoted to logical distinctions in the unit of aggregation involved in constructing an index. Thus, they distinguish among individual observations used to characterize individuals, aggregate observations (averages) used to characterize groups, aggregate level data used to characterize the milieu of a given individual, etc. In closing, they note:

There is no reason why unit data cannot be used to characterize individuals in the unit. A man who does not have malaria in a unit where the incidence of malaria is very low probably feels differently about his state of health than does the man who has no malaria but serves in a unit with high

²Kendall, P.L. and Lazarsfeld, P.F., "Problems of Survey Analysis" in R.K. Merton and P.F. Lazarsfeld, editors, Continuities in Social Research: Studies in the Scope and Method of 'The American Soldier', Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1950, pp. 187-96.

³Stouffer, S.A., Studies in Social Psychology in World War II, Vol. 1, The American Soldier During Army Life, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1949.

incidence. . . .

In terms of actual analysis the matter can be restated in the following terms: just as we can classify people by demographic variables or by their attitudes, we can also classify them by the kind of environment in which they live. The appropriate variables for such a classification are likely to be unit data. A survey analysis would then cover both personal and unit data simultaneously. (2, pp. 195-96)

Since then a number of students and colleagues of Kendall and Lazarsfeld have seized upon this approach as a research strategy. Thus, Berelson, Lazarsfeld and McPhee⁴ show that among friendship groups the per cent voting Republican increases with the proportion in the group whose party affiliation is Republican, both for individuals who are Republicans and for those who are Democrats. (4, pp. 100-01) Or again, Lipset, Trow, and Coleman⁵ in their study of printers report that in shops where there is consensus on politics, political interest is higher (regardless of political preference) than in shops where there is a division in political allegiance.

Such findings are, of course, not new. Durkheim himself in his work on suicide noted not only that suicide rates vary considerably among different religions, but also that, for a given religion, suicide rates are much lower when its adherents are in a distinct minority in the society.⁶ Similarly, Faris and Dunham, in their 1939 study of the ecological distribution of home addresses

⁴Berelson, B.R., Lazarsfeld, P.F., and McPhee, W.N., Voting: A Study of Opinion Formation in a Presidential Campaign, Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1954.

⁵Lipset, S.M., Trow, M.A., and Coleman, J.S., Union Democracy, Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1956, pp. 163-71.

⁶Durkheim, E., Suicide, A Study in Sociology (1897), translated by J.A. Spaulding and G. Simpson, Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1951, p. 156.

of psychotics in Chicago found that some psychosis rates were higher for Negroes living in white areas and whites living in Negro areas than for the same races when living in areas where they comprised the majority.⁷ And, of course, a number of findings in The American Soldier were of this type, including the ever cited analysis which showed that while promoted soldiers were less critical of the military promotion system than non-promoted soldiers, criticism was greater among both promoted and non-promoted in units with high rates of promotion.³

What all of these samples have in common is the claim that the probability of possessing a given dependent attribute (voting Republican, being politically interested, committing suicide, becoming psychotic, approving of the promotion system) varies among people homogeneous on an independent attribute when the proportion possessing the attribute (proportion Republican in a friendship group, proportion holding a given political position in a shop, proportion in a region adhering to a given religion, proportion Negro in an ecological area, and proportion promoted in a military unit) varies in the social group. This looks very much as if these authors were holding constant the individual fact (possession of the attribute) and varying the social fact (proportion of the group possessing the attribute).

So far, we have looked at a methodological problem and a specific statistical technique. In an article published in 1957, Peter Blau advanced the claim that the latter is the answer to the

⁷Faris, R.E.L., and Dunham, H.W., Mental Disorders in Urban Areas, Chicago, Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 1939, pp. 110-23.

former.⁸ Blau writes:

The general principle is that if ego's X affects not only ego's Y but also alters Y, a structural effect will be observed, which means that the distribution of X in a group is related to Y even though the individual's X is held constant. Such a finding indicates that the network of relations in the group with respect to X influences Y. It isolates the effects of X on Y that are entirely due to or transmitted by the process of social interaction. (8, p. 64)

Our approach stems from Blau's analysis, and differs in only three ways. First, we shall call these phenomena "compositional" rather than "structural" effects because we think that social structure involves a lot of other aspects (communications patterns, role structures, etc.) in addition to the effects of group composition. Secondly, we shall attempt to spell out in precise terms some statistical techniques and tests of significance for the analysis of compositional effects. Third, we shall suggest a typology of different kinds of compositional effects, along with some brief speculations about the social processes which might produce them. The basic logic and the assumptions about the significance of the technique, however, are essentially those outlined in Blau's article.

Important ideas, of course, turn up everywhere, and one can point to many other writers who have stressed the importance of distinguishing between individual and group properties.⁹ What

⁸Blau, P.M., "Formal Organization: Dimensions of Analysis," American Journal of Sociology, LXIII, July 1957, 58-69.

⁹In particular, a number of famous experiments in social psychology have demonstrated a strong relationship between group composition and the probability that an individual member will resist group coercive pressures. Cf. Solomon Asch, "Effects of Group Pressure Upon the Modification and Distortion of Judgments," in Eleanor E. Maccoby, Theodore Newcomb, and Eugene Hartley, editors, Readings in Social Psychology, New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1958, pp. 174-83.

is more important to us for our study of the Great Books program is to establish a statistical technique for making the analyses. We want to know whether the characteristics of the discussion groups affect the retention of members in the program, and if argument from analogy were sufficient, we could probably rest, for the studies cited, as well as numerous others, document the sociologist's claim that there is more to a group than a collection of individual personalities.

In order to do this in a specific fashion, it is necessary to develop, from our verbal discussion, some specific tabulation techniques. They involve no fancy mathematics at all, but the exposition of our findings will be a lot simpler, if we can adopt a few notational conventions.

Statistical Procedures

Let us consider two or more populations or groups, which we shall denote with arabic numerals. Within each population, individuals may be characterized by the presence or absence of a given independent attribute (A or \bar{A}). Consequently, each population may be characterized by the proportion of its members having the attribute, which is also the probability that a member selected at random is an "A." Kendall and Lazarsfeld refer to such a group level datum as a rate. (2,p.191) We shall denote these rates or probabilities as P_1, P_2, P_3 , etc., the subscript designating the population in question. Within each of the populations we can also determine the probability that a member of a sub-class defined by the presence or absence of A possesses a given dependent attribute. Thus, we shall define D_{A1} as the probability than an A

in population₁ possesses the dependent attribute. Finally, the probability that any unselected member of a specific group possesses the dependent attribute will be denoted by D_1 , D_2 , D_3 , etc.

The underlying strategy of any such analysis consists of making comparisons between the D probabilities in different categories. In our situation, there are two basic axes of comparison: (a) We may compare members of a particular kind of group who belong to different sub-classes of the independent attribute and (b) we may compare members of the same sub-class who belong to different kinds of groups. The end result will be a set of probability or percentage differences, one set of within group differences and a second set of between group differences.

A hypothetical example may make these distinctions clearer. Let's assume that we have conducted a survey in four different communities. Our questionnaire, for a change, consisted of only two items, "Do you like baked beans and brown bread?" and "Were you born in New England?" The results of the hypothetical study are presented in the following fictitious table.

Table 1.

Imaginary Survey Findings

Per Cent Who Liked Baked Beans and Brown Bread

City	<u>Oneville</u>		<u>Twoville</u>		<u>Threeville</u>		<u>N-ville</u>	
	<u>N.E.</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>N.E.</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>N.E.</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>N.E.</u>	<u>Other</u>
Birthplace								
% Liking	77	43	68	32	59	21	86	54
no. of cases	600	400	400	600	200	800	800	200

Table 1 can be described in the terminology outlined above, as follows:

D = per cent liking baked beans and brown bread (e.g. 59% among New Englanders in Threeville)

A = born in New England

\bar{A} = born elsewhere

P = proportion of the town which is born in New England (e.g. 20% ((200 out of 1000)) in Threeville).

Thus, $D_{\bar{A}2}$ is the per cent liking among non-New Englanders in community₂ (32%), and D_{A1} is the per cent liking among New Englanders in community₁ (77%).

Let us now make the two types of comparison. Within each community, when we compare New Englanders and others, we find that New Englanders are more likely to endorse baked beans and brown bread than are non-New Englanders. Then, when we contrast New Englanders in different communities, we notice a range of values (77-68-59-86); as we also do when we contrast non-New Englanders in different communities (43-32-21-54).

We conclude that within a given community there is a difference related to birthplace, and among communities there is a difference among people who are identical in their birthplaces. Have we then demonstrated a compositional effect? Not yet, for we haven't shown that either of these differences is related to population composition. To put it formally:

A compositional effect exists when the absolute size of either: (a) the within group differences and/or (b) the between group difference for A's and/or \bar{A} 's can be described as a function of P .

To test this, all we have to do is to shift from a percentage table to a graph in which the vertical axis is the D probability, the horizontal axis is P, and the points are the D values for the sub-classes in the populations considered. Chart 1 illustrates the graph for our hypothetical survey.

Chart 1

Graph of Hypothetical Compositional Effect

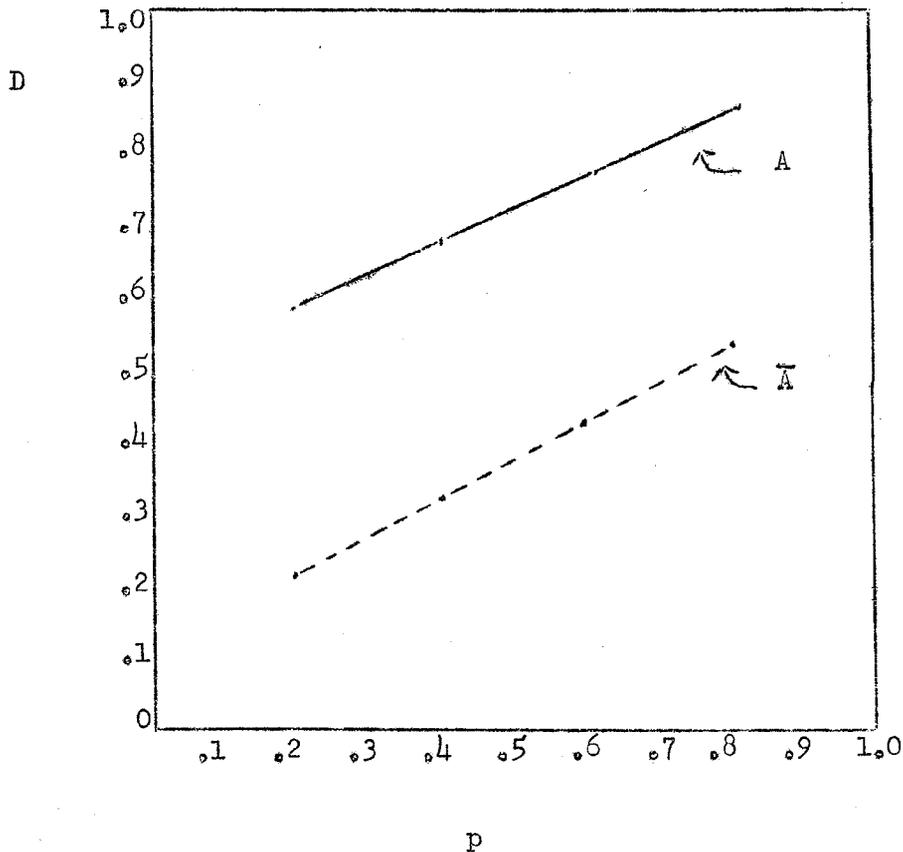


Chart 1, being fictitious, is nice and clear. Examining it carefully, we note the following:

- a. Among both the A's (solid line) and the \bar{A} 's (dotted line) there is a linear increase of D as P increases.
- b. The two lines connecting the observations are parallel.

From these two observations, we can draw the following inferences about our hypothetical compositional effect.

- a. There is a distinct compositional effect on the between group difference, for among both A's and \bar{A} 's D increases steadily with P; hence, variation in the social fact (composition) produces an effect on behavior even when the individual fact (the attribute) is controlled. The more New Englanders in a town, the more likely it is that everyone, regardless of his birthplace, will endorse a New England diet.

- b. There is no compositional effect on the within group difference; for at all P levels the difference between D_A and $D_{\bar{A}}$ is constant; hence, variation in the social fact (composition) produces no effect on behavior within a group, other than that accounted for by the individual level difference common throughout the universe; i.e., regardless of the composition of the community, there is a constant dietary difference related to birthplace.

As often happens when one proceeds to formalize a verbal statement, the possibilities turn out to be more numerous than expected. Thus, it appears that there can be at least two rather different types of compositional effects, one a change in the between group differences and the other a change in the within group difference, as P varies. Since, in addition, the lines need

not be straight, it is clear that potentially, at least, instead of "a" compositional effect, there can be a rather wide variety of types. In the following section, we shall present a rough classification of types of compositional effects, along with empirical examples of each.

A Classification of Compositional Effects

When we defined compositional effects as functions, we were careful to set no limitation on the kind of function involved, but merely stated that such effects will be found whenever one or both of our differences varies with P . Thus, there is no reason, in principle, why compositional effects could not take on the form of any of the luxuriant spirals and curves which thrive in mathematics texts.

Nevertheless, even in preliminary work with a technique, some attempt at classification will aid in structuring the analysis. Therefore, we will suggest that out of the infinite possibilities, eight loom as of strategic importance. Our classification system combines some elementary mathematical considerations along with some speculations about the social processes which might generate the mathematical forms.

Let us begin with the mathematics. One of the attractive features of compositional analysis is that in the process, qualitative data are transmuted into quantitative data. That is, even though A is typically an attribute or qualitative observation, P can be treated as a real number. It has a meaningful zero point, the distances between P values can be given real numbers, and the values may legitimately be squared. In short, one may perform

all of the operations of algebra on the P values without having to introduce any further evidence or assumptions. Given this property, it is possible to describe the functions by which compositional effects are defined in terms of the standard geometrical analogues of algebraic equations - linear, monotonic, parabolic, bi-modal, etc.

As our basis for interpreting the underlying social process, let us think of what is going on as a process of interpersonal influence, in which each group member has a certain tendency to influence all the other members of his group with regard to D. As we noted in our discussion of Durkheim, it is not necessary to assume that this influence is deliberate or that it is perceived by any of the people involved.

Furthermore, let us assume that members of the group differ in their influence status, but only if they differ in A. That is, we shall think of all A's as having the same influence status, and likewise for all non-A's.

The influence we are talking about is an influence toward or away from possession of D. Now, the basic idea of the model is that the Attribute A contributes to this influence process. Logically, it can do so in three different ways:

1. The attribute can increase or decrease the probability of D regardless of the group composition. This is our old friend the individual level difference, or "individual fact."

2. Throughout the universe A's may differ in the values of their D influence in comparison with \bar{A} 's, although each A has the same influence and each \bar{A} has the same influence. This difference may be a difference in value or sign or both. Such a

phenomenon will generate compositional effects on the between groups difference, as follows: Let us assume that the weight of the influence of each A is w_1 and the weight of the influence of each \bar{A} is w_2 . The net influence in a given group then will be $\frac{\sum w_1 + \sum w_2}{N}$. Now, if $w_1 = w_2$ the net influence will be the same in each group, but if w_1 does not equal w_2 , which is the assumption of our model, net influence will be a function of P, and this is our definition of a compositional effect. We can illustrate with a hypothetical example. Let us consider groups which are made up of varying proportions of Republicans and Democrats. Furthermore, let us assume that each Democrat tends to influence everyone else in the group toward a Democratic candidate, and that each Republican tends to influence everyone else in the group toward a Republican candidate. This influence may be deliberate campaigning, the creation of a cultural climate, or any intervening process which seems agreeable. Then, in groups with a high proportion of Democrats, a greater proportion of the total influence will be Democratic, and we will observe a correlation between the percent Democratic in the group and a dependent variable such as the Democratic vote among both Republicans and Democrats.

4. There is a third possibility (to be denoted by 4 for reasons to be developed later), which falls between an individual fact and a social fact, so we can, perhaps, think of it as a social psychological fact. The possession or non-possession of the attribute may affect a person's susceptibility to influence, rather than his influence per se. Thus, at the same time that the attribute affects a person's ability to influence others, it may conceivably affect his insulation from or vulnerability to the net

influence in the group. For example, let us think of groups which are made up of Democrats and a-political people, those who have no party preference at all. We would expect that Democrats would tend to influence their groups toward a Democratic candidate, and a-politicals would tend to influence people away from the Democratic candidate, either toward another candidate or toward non-voting. Thus, again, we should expect to find the Democratic vote rising and falling with the proportion Democrats among both groups. However, it might be true that the a-politicals were more sensitive to the influence process than the Democrats, since they have a lesser investment in their political allegiance. If so, we should find that their vote increased more precipitously as the proportion Democratic (P) increased, than the voting of the Democrats did. The net result would be that among both groups we would see our social fact, but the functions describing it would be different for the A's and \bar{A} 's. In terms of the results of such a process, it can be shown that this should produce a relationship between P and the value of the percentage difference between A's and \bar{A} 's, within groups.

Now, we are ready to mesh our substantive model with the mathematical functions, using the following inferences:

a. If there is a type 1 process (individual level effect) operating, the functions for the A's and \bar{A} 's will have different parameters, and, geometrically, they will be described by two different lines or curves. If there is no type 1 process operating, the functions for the A's and \bar{A} 's will be identical, and, geometrically, there will be only one line.

b. If there is a type 2 process (group influence process)

Let us consider each of the five types in turn.

Type 0

Type 0 is a simple and trivial case. Both A and \bar{A} produce the same horizontal line running parallel to the P axis. In type 0, A has no effect on D whatsoever. There is no individual level difference, no between groups difference, and no difference of the type we have called differential susceptibility.

Type I

In a type I relationship we find two horizontal lines, parallel to each other and to the P axis. This means that at every level of P there is a within group difference between the A's and the \bar{A} 's, and this difference is constant, the relationship being interpreted as what we have called an individual level effect.

Type II

A type II relationship is the polar opposite of type I, corresponding to a "pure" type II process in which we observe a between groups difference related to P, but no within group difference at all. The end result is a single straight line for both A's and \bar{A} 's, as illustrated in Chart 2.

Type II relationships present some interesting problems of interpretation. The influence process here may be thought of as acting in the absence of any individual trait difference. The effect may possibly be thought of as a "catalytic" one in which the influence of the attribute works through affecting the group climate or milieu without influencing individuals directly.

Type IIIa

In a type III relationship we see a combination of a type I process and a type II process. That is, there is a constant individual difference, along with a linear effect of group composition. In Chart 2, we see that the graphic representation of such an effect consists of two parallel lines which rise or fall with P. Of all our types, this one seems to square best with the influence model. We find, in short, that A leads to an individual level difference which then may be thought of as radiating out to influence A's and \bar{A} 's in relation to D. Our hypothetical gustatory survey would be a classical type IIIa relationship.

Type IIIb

Type IIIb is the same as type IIIa, except for a paradoxical fact, the individual level effect is opposite from the group level effect. In Chart 2, we see an example where, within groups, being an A leads to lower D probabilities, while between groups, the proportion of A's leads to an increase in D among both subclasses. One would think that this is merely one of those unlikely things ground out by listing logical possibilities, except that this is the paradigm for a now classic sociological finding: Within military units, promoted soldiers are more pleased with the promotion system than non-promoted, but between units, the proportion who approve declines with the per cent promoted, among both types of soldiers. As Blau notes in his discussion of structural effects, such phenomena are extremely important for the sociologist, as they are striking confirmations of his claim that group level effects are different from individual level effects.

Type IV

Geometrically, type IV relationships consist of those forms where there are two straight lines which are not parallel. This corresponds to what we have called a type IV process, or social psychological fact. The difference in slope of the two lines can be interpreted as a differential susceptibility to the influence process for the A's and the \bar{A} 's. Since there are many ways in which lines can diverge, there are obviously many different kinds of type IV relationships. In Chart 2, however, we have selected three which are of interest. In example IVa, we see a situation where both groups show a linear increase with P, but the rate of increase, or slope, of the line is greater for one group (here, the \bar{A} 's) than for the other. That is, in the example, the \bar{A} 's are more sensitive to variation in composition than the A's. In type IVb, we find the A line parallel to the P axis, and the \bar{A} line showing a linear increase. This suggests that only the \bar{A} 's are sensitive to composition, while the A's are immune to its effect. Finally, in type IVc, we see a situation where the D rate increases with P for one group and decreases for the other. The role of A is such as to reverse the effect of P in the different groups. Actually, a type IVc relationship is not as esoteric as it appears, for it may simply be interpreted as saying that for each group D is a linear function of its majority-minority position. We can think of an obvious political example here by assuming that D is the probability of becoming elected to office and the A's are Democrats, and \bar{A} 's Republicans. As the proportion of Democrats rises in different communities, the election chances of Democrats increase, while the election chances of Republicans

decrease.

In spite of their obvious differences, all the type IV linear relationships share one property: in each the percentage difference between the A's and \bar{A} 's is a linear function of P. That is, the individual level correlation varies directly as a function of P. In types IVa and IVb the correlation maintains direction, but varies in magnitude, and in the case of IVc, we find a reversal of the sign of the correlation along with a linear decrease in the percentage difference. This formalizes our suggestion that the differential susceptibility process will produce a compositional effect on the within groups difference.

This completes our description of the five major linear forms and their interpretation. We have been unable to provide a complete codification of the non-linear types, but we shall sketch out some which deserve specific, although brief, discussions.

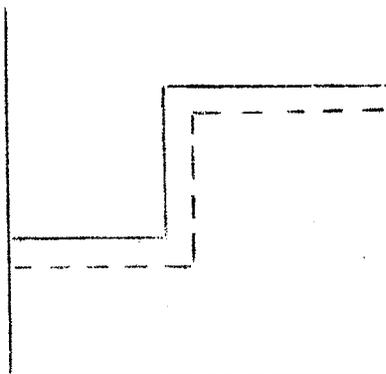
Monotonic Types

In certain cases the forms which appear will not be linear, but will show a definite direction. Technically speaking, we can call them monotonic functions and include among them all forms in which the graph is not linear, but where the resultant curves never rise and fall. Step functions, in which for certain ranges of P there is no effect, but at others there is a precipitous rise; accelerating and decelerating curves, and certain combinations of the two would ~~be~~ included here. Chart 3 illustrates some a priori possibilities.

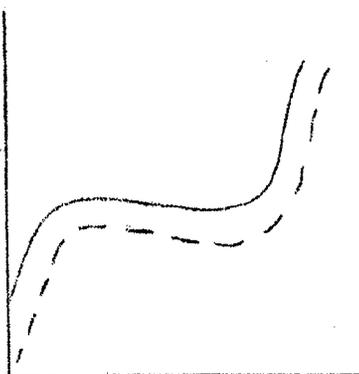
Chart 3

Some Possible Monotonic Forms

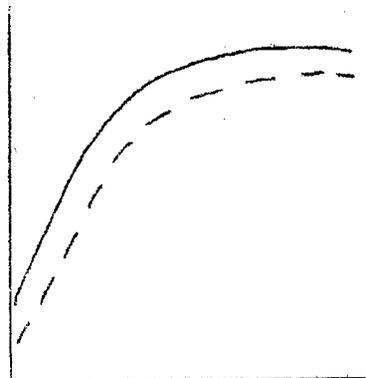
a



b



c



Example "a" in Chart 3 illustrates a step-function, which would suggest that there is some threshold necessary before the compositional influence effect occurs. In example "b" we see a situation where the rate of change is greater at the extremes than in the middle of the range, which in terms of our influence model would suggest a situation where the influence process was most effective when one of the groups of "influencers" was clearly dominant, a situation sometimes suggested in propaganda and communications research. The final example, "c," is simply a case where D increases at a decreasing rate with increase in P, a situation which substantively suggests something like a saturation process.

Monotonic forms can in addition include type I, II, III, and IV processes as we have defined them, all of the examples in Chart 3 being type IIIa.

Uni-Modal Types

A second type of non-linear compositional effect is one in which the curves produced have a single mode or peak, that is, where the curve describing the relationship has a single bend, the general family of "normal curves" being a good example. Substantively, they suggest either an "optimum" point or the result of consensus. Thus, for instance, if (as in the example cited from Union Democracy) sheer unanimity were important for the occurrence of D, we should expect to find that the D levels at extremely high or low P values would be identical, but that the curve would reach a minimum .5 where the heterogeneity was the highest.

Poly-Modal Forms

The last group of structural effects we shall consider are those where one or both curves have two or more bends, and thus

two or more modes. We have found no easy way to stretch our influence model of interpretation to cover the generic possibilities. Nevertheless, such forms have been relatively common in our Great Books analysis. We shall consider them as they turn up in the following chapter.

Techniques of Analysis

While laying out the data in the graphic form we have described usually tells most of the story, the eye is not the most trustworthy measuring instrument available to the research worker. Therefore, it is preferable to find a computational procedure to make sure that hope and fear have not biased our conclusions. The project staff has wrestled with the problem, and our current suggestions are detailed below. The reader who is not familiar with the statistical technique of regression analysis will probably find the argument unrewarding. If he cares to skip on to Chapter Two at this point, we need only detain him with the statement that throughout our analysis we will be reporting statistical tests for our conclusions, tests which, we think, enable us to weigh the risk that the results do not reflect real differences, but could instead have been produced by random sampling fluctuations.

The considerations advanced above suggest that the basic technique for the analysis of compositional effects is standard bivariate regression and covariance analysis. However, the problems of N's and degrees of freedom are knotty with these data,

and the general strategy of analysis is worth discussing.

Let us begin with the general approach. We assume that in any practical research situation, either the data will be a probability sample or, if a universe, will never fit any of the model forms suggested without some degree of error. Therefore, the basic question in compositional analysis is not "What form is it?", but rather, "To what form are the data a reasonable approximation?" We suggest that the null hypotheses implied are as follows:

(a) These data could have been sampled from a universe in which there is no compositional effect, and (b), if null hypothesis (a) must be rejected, these data could have been sampled from a universe in which the effect is mathematically least complicated.

These two considerations suggest that the natural steps in such analyses are as follows:

1. Fit the best possible straight line for the A's and also for the \bar{A} 's, using the least squares criterion.

2. Test to see whether the observations depart significantly from linearity. If one or both are non-linear, skip to step 6.

If linearity cannot be rejected:

3. Test both slopes to see whether they depart significantly from zero.

a. If neither departs from zero, there is no compositional effect, and the type of relationship is 0 or I.

b. If one departs from zero and the other does not, a type IVb relationship is suggested. Proceed to step 4.

c. If both depart from zero, proceed to step 4.

4. Test the slopes of the two lines to see whether they are identical.

If preceded by 3b:

- a. If the hypothesis that the slopes are identical is rejected, the relationship is type IVb.
- b. If the hypothesis that the slopes are identical is accepted, the conclusion is indeterminate, and no inference as to type can be drawn.

If preceded by 3c:

- a. If the hypothesis that the slopes are identical is rejected, the relationship is type IVa or IVb.
 - b. If the hypothesis that the slopes are identical cannot be rejected, proceed to step 5.
5. Test the null hypothesis that the lines are not different. That is, specifically, that one line will fit both sets of data.
- a. If the null hypothesis is rejected, the relationship is of type III.
 - b. If the null hypothesis is accepted, the relationship is type II.
6. If one or both of the relationships is non-linear, one can proceed with curvilinear curve fitting. We shall not describe the procedure in detail as the possibilities are exceedingly numerous.

The procedures involved are: (a) Fitting a straight line, (b) testing the departure of the slope from zero, (c) testing for a difference in slope, and (d) testing whether the lines, if parallel, are significantly different. The general computational approach which we used is the standard textbook procedure, but we shall comment briefly on the special problems raised by these data.

There are two different situations possible. First, one may work from a scatter diagram in which each group is represented by a point. If one has a fairly large number of relatively small groups, it seems appropriate and conservative to proceed as if N equals the number of groups, since this is the largest number of independent observations in the data, observations on individuals within a group being heavily clustered.

If, however, there are a large number of groups (in our case we had 163 groups with follow-up data) the computational time and cost looms large, and there is a strong temptation to combine groups with similar P values. This is what we did in the examples reported in this essay, grouping the data by P deciles, except at the extremes where the small numbers of cases in some instances required more gross grouping. The best advice we could get from mathematical statisticians was to then proceed as if each P group had an N of 1, except in the case of tests of linearity. For technical reasons, when making the test for linearity one cannot use this approach, since the variance within each "column" is zero. The only way linearity could be tested was to make predictions of the expected number of drop-outs on the basis of the hypothesis of linearity and then test by χ^2 whether these predicted values were significantly different from the observed values, using as N in each column of the contingency table the number of individual cases.

Once these conventions were determined, we proceeded to use the standard regression tests to classify the data according to the type of relationship. Thus, for each line a slope was calculated, and its significance was tested by $t = \frac{r \sqrt{N-2}}{\sqrt{1-r^2}}$, since

testing the hypothesis that $\rho = 0$ is equivalent to testing the hypothesis that $\beta = 0$. When this null hypothesis was rejected at the .05 level or better, the regression equation calculated was used to predict values of D and \bar{D} for each value of P , and the goodness of fit of these predicted values with the observed ones was tested by χ^2 . The number of degrees of freedom used in each case was the number of values of P less one more than the number of parameters estimated (in the linear case, $P - 3$, in the parabolic, $P - 4$).

If the two lines fit, we then moved into the analysis of covariance, which told us first, whether or not the slopes differed significantly (that is, whether the lines were parallel or not), and second, when the slopes were not significantly different, whether or not one line would fit both A 's and \bar{A} 's. With slight modifications, the same basic techniques can be used to fit curves and test whether or not the curves account for a significant amount of the variance (by a multiple regression coefficient, for the parabola) and whether one curve would adequately fit both the A 's and \bar{A} 's.

Summary

In this Chapter we have outlined a statistical procedure designed to codify analysis in situations where one wishes to assess the effect on a dependent variable of a given attribute, both as an individual characteristic and also as a group characteristic. Analysis of the formal possibilities suggested that a wide variety of such relationships is possible. We proposed a scheme for classifying eight types of such compositional

effects, defining them in terms of the mathematical functions involved, and also suggesting a model of social influence which might generate each type. In the next chapter, we shall apply this model to certain group factors which contribute to the retention of members in Great Books discussion groups.

Chapter 2

Program Retention: Group Factors

Introduction

Philosophers and historians have long been fascinated by the search for an explanation of the rise and fall of societies. From Gibbon to Spengler to Toynbee and Sorokin bold minds have attempted to specify the factors which can explain the decay or continuation of large scale social systems. Despite a wealth of insights and ideas which have come from these broad-canvas studies, the dynamics of large scale societies are still a mystery. Shifting the scale of the problem - from societies to groups - does little to improve the situation, for about as little is known about the survival of small social systems as we know about the future of Western civilization. About the only difference between the two problems is that many fewer people have worked on the latter, so there are fewer answers which are known to be inadequate.

Actually, as far as we can tell from our search of the literature, no one has ever made an empirical study of this problem at the level of the small group. That is, we have been unable to find a study where a number of groups were followed over time and an attempt was made to find out why some survived and some fell apart. Certain sociological theorists have advanced ideas on the matter, but of data we have none. Our study goes in the opposite direction. We have proceeded without theory, except for the hunches which every research worker brings to his materials, and have attempted to isolate empirically the important

factors in the survival of Great Books discussion groups. By the time we have finished, we will have developed a theoretical scheme to pull together our findings, but it will be derived from the analysis instead of guiding it.

One distinction, however, has been constantly before us. Regardless of the characteristic in question, we have always asked whether it appeared to operate as an individual factor - that is, as a characteristic which affected the retention of individuals regardless of the type of group, or, conversely whether it appeared to be a group factor, a property of the group which affected retention regardless of the individual's personal characteristic. In the previous chapter we outlined the statistical procedures we developed to answer this question. Now, we are ready to apply the technique to our data.

Our dependent variable, in this and in the following chapter, is program retention, a very important matter indeed. To begin with, from the point of view of The Great Books program, and this study was commissioned to aid in the operations of the program, program retention is an important practical matter. To the extent that the program is able to maintain its groups, and maintain individuals' memberships in them, it will reach greater numbers of people, and its practical efficiency of operations will increase. To the extent that groups disband or individuals leave on-going groups, the effectiveness of the program is lessened (our previous study indicated that for all of the effects located, changes increased steadily with length in the program), and costs of administration and organization rise. From the viewpoint of the social scientist, on the other hand, data on program

retention provide vital information about our ill-understood problem of what leads to the survival of small social systems. In fact, Great Books groups are of particular interest from the sociological point of view, since they represent a sort of pure case. None of the members has an economic investment in the survival of the group, and there is little or no formal organizational structure beyond the group to pressure it into continuation. Thus, in Great Books groups we ought to see the operation of group processes in a pure form, undistorted by the effects of economics or other institutional structures.

Despite the importance of this question, we should note that we do not assume that for Great Books groups, or for any other type of group, that survival is a good in itself. However, we shall limit ourselves solely to the criterion of survival in this research, the effects of the program having been treated in detail in one of our previous reports.

Let us now examine what happened to our 1909 individuals and 172 groups in the year between our original survey and the follow-up study in later 1958.

Table 1
Continuation Status of Individuals

	N	%
Continued in same group	1106	64
Transferred groups	60	3
Dropped from Program	513	33
Presumably dropped*	52	
		<u>100</u>
Insufficient information	154	
Visitor**	<u>24</u>	
	1909	

*Presumably dropped out refers to cases where the leader's report was ambiguous, but the coders felt from the information available that the person was not attending the same group this year.

**24 persons in the original sample were reported by the leaders at the time of follow-up as visitors, not members. In the original study they were treated as new members, since they might have gone on to become members of the group.

Thus, a little less than two thirds of our sample continued with the same group, one third left the program, and a small number switched groups. Since, in this chapter we are looking at the materials from a group point of view, the transfers are treated as drop-outs. Their number is so small, however, that none of our conclusions would be changed if they had been treated as continuing. Thus, for all practical purposes, and the point is of some interest, to leave the discussion group is to leave the program.

Table 2

Per Cent Losses for Sample Groups

Per Cent of Group Continuing	Number of Groups	%
0 (Group died)	27*	17
01-50	32	20
51-70	57	35
71-99	42	25
100	5	3
		<hr/> 100
No information	9	
	<hr/> 172	

*This includes six groups which ceased to exist as independent entities by merging at least in part with other groups.

In terms of groups, we find that about one third lost more than half of their members, including 17% which succumbed; about one third lost between 30 and 50% of their original members; and a little less than one third kept more than 70% of their members. We should note that these figures refer to members in the original sample. Since the groups gain as well as lose, the net effect is a different matter. When we consider gains and losses we find that 39 groups increased their size, 11 remained constant, 86 lost in absolute size, and 27 perished.¹

Both in terms of individuals and in terms of the program, maintenance predominates over drop-out, but the margin is not such

¹A complete analysis of the factors in group survival should cover gains, as well as losses. Thus, a group with a very high loss rate can survive if it also has a very high gain rate. Since we have little or no data on the characteristics of new members, we have not been able to do such an analysis. What findings we do have suggest that in almost all cases, the variables we find associated with loss are not good predictors of gains. Thus, presumably the group factors in recruitment of new members are of an entirely different type than those discussed in this chapter.

that drop-out can be ignored as an infrequent accident. Rather, as we shall see, it appears that retention is a distinct function of certain factors which strengthen or loosen the individual's ties to Great Books. In this chapter we shall describe these factors, using our statistical technique to isolate those which seem to work as group influences and those which operate as personal factors. The personal factors will be dismissed temporarily, since they are treated in detail in a following section. However, we shall proceed to try to pull together the group variables in order to seek an understanding of the group process in Great Books.

In this chapter, we shall divide the variables in question into five pigeon holes: 1) Discussion process, 2) Social structural characteristics, 3) Intellectual characteristics, 4) Ideological positions, and 5) outside sociability. We shall discuss each in turn.

1) Discussion Process

Of the large number of variables we have examined, we have grouped together seven which seem logically related as elements in the discussion group process itself, and not personal characteristics which might affect the discussion. They are: 1) Exposure, 2) Group size, 3) Member's contacts outside of the group, 4) Participation in the discussion, 5) The effect of Great Books on understanding community problems, 6) Changes in the acceptability of various schools of thought, and 7) Perceived impact of the program. Each of these seems more intimately related to the discussion than are such factors as age, sex, religion, etc.

We can begin with the two factors, which, surprisingly enough seem to have little importance from the group point of view. The first is size. While many sociological studies have shown that a group's size is correlated with its social structure and communication process, and many professional workers in the Great Books program have firm impressions about the optimum size of the discussion groups, our data show no simple relationship between size and retention.

Table 3
Age, Size, and Group Loss
Average Per Cent Loss
Age of Group*

Size**	1st Yr.	2d-3rd	4th or More	All groups
6-10	- (2)***	41 (3)	42 (11)	49 (16)
11-15	61 (11)	54 (16)	27 (15)	46 (42)
16-20	67 (15)	41 (17)	47 (22)	51 (54)
21-24	47 (14)	30 (14)	40 (4)	38 (32)
25 or more	66 (7)	28 (7)	39 (5)	45 (19)

*Age is the number of years the group has met, regardless of the year of readings. 1st year groups, thus, are groups first formed in the fall of 1957.

**Size is the number of schedules turned in in the 1957 survey.

***The number in parentheses is the number of groups upon which the average loss was calculated.

Table 3 shows no consistent pattern. Within the first year groups there is no trend at all; within the 2d and 3rd year groups there is some tendency for larger groups to have higher average retention rates; and in the oldest groups there is no trend. This is not to say that there may not be some relationship

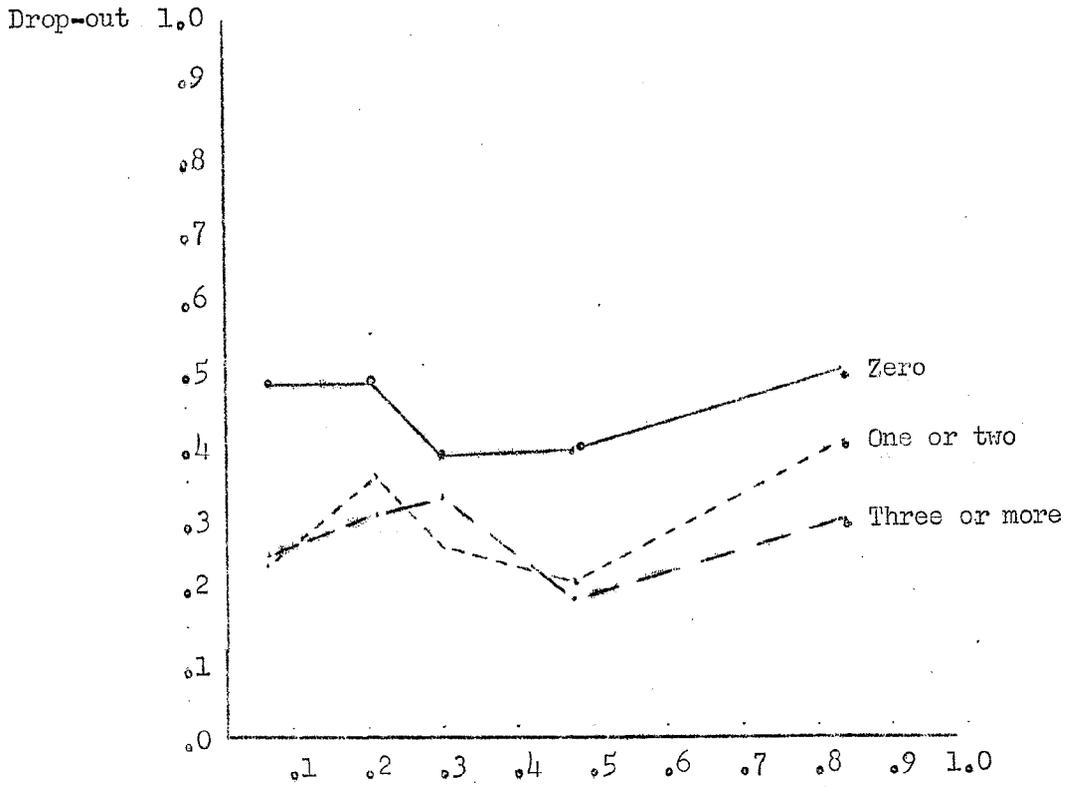
between size and retention, but there is no simple pattern such that one can conclude that large groups or small groups are more successful.

When, however, we read the rows we find that in each case the first year groups have higher drop-out averages than the advanced year groups. This suggests that new groups, with less opportunity to develop a smoothly functioning pattern of discussion may have a higher loss rate. Before we jump to this conclusion, let us apply the techniques developed in Chapter 1 to see whether new groups have trouble, new individuals tend to drop out, or both.

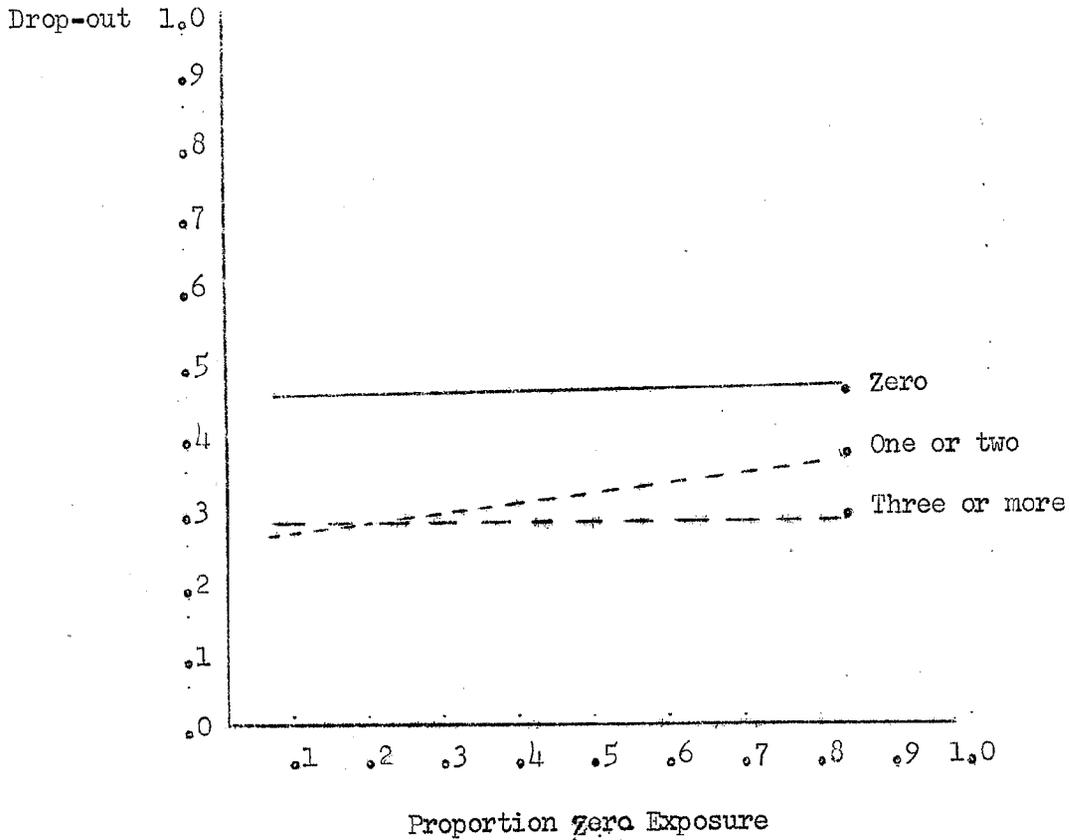
In Chart 1, we see the data laid out in our standard format. P is the proportion of the group who are new to the program, and can be thought of as a measure of the new-ness of the group as group. We have three individual lines instead of two, but this doesn't change the general interpretation, the lines indicating the drop-out rates for people who have completed zero, one and two, or three or more years in the program.

Chart 1

Exposure and Drop-out



Proportion Zero Exposure



The individual difference is clear. Beginners have higher drop-out rates when contrasted with advanced members. There is no consistent individual level difference between the other two exposure groups. When we look at the directions of the three lines, despite some bulges here and there, no trend is visible. Statistical analysis indicates that there is no reason to reject the hypothesis that the data fit three straight lines parallel to the P axis; that is, by our criteria there is no group level effect of the age of the group, although beginners, as individuals, have high loss rates.

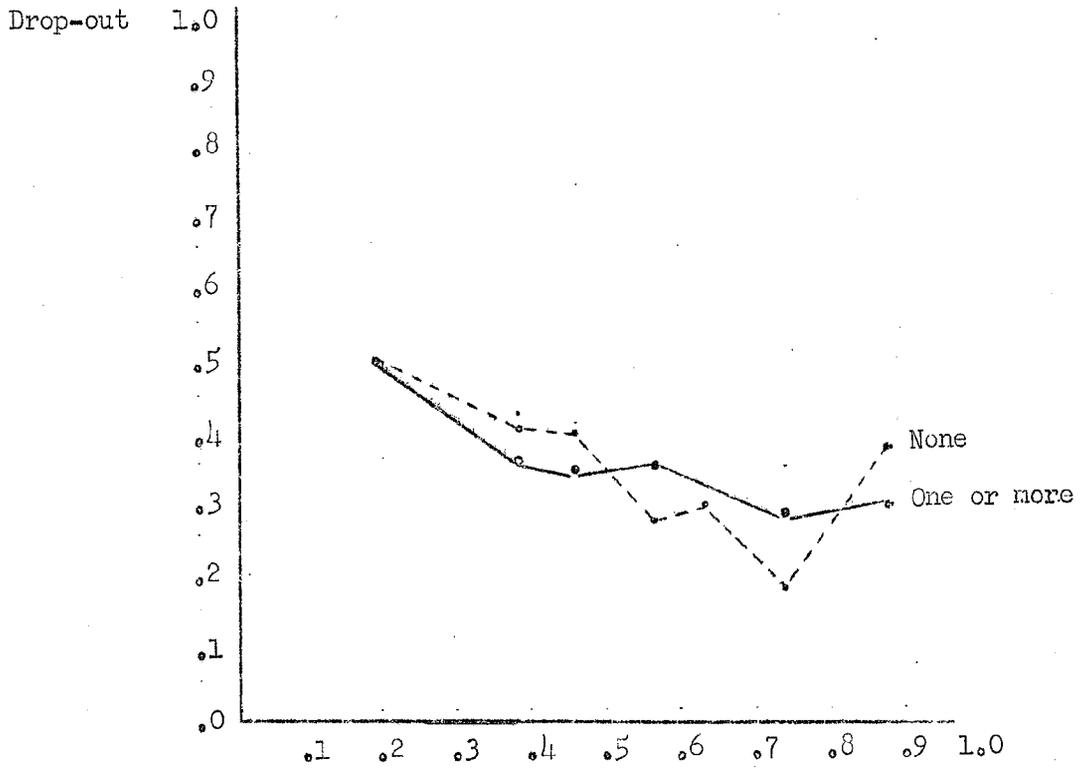
Age and size, it appears, are not terribly important for the survival of Great Books groups, except as both are related to the individual propensity for newcomers to have a greater loss rate. Presumably, the people who don't find Great Books to their liking discover this during the first year.

The remaining five discussion variables do show group effects. We can begin with outside contacts. Each respondent was asked "How many members of your group (excluding your spouse) do you see regularly outside of the group discussions?" Individuals are divided into those who report one or more outside contacts versus those with none, giving us our attribute. The group variable is the proportion of the group with at least one outside contact, which we can think of as a rough index of the volume of the bonds between the members, aside from their program participation. Groups with low P values can be thought of as having few extra-program bonds, groups with high values probably have many.

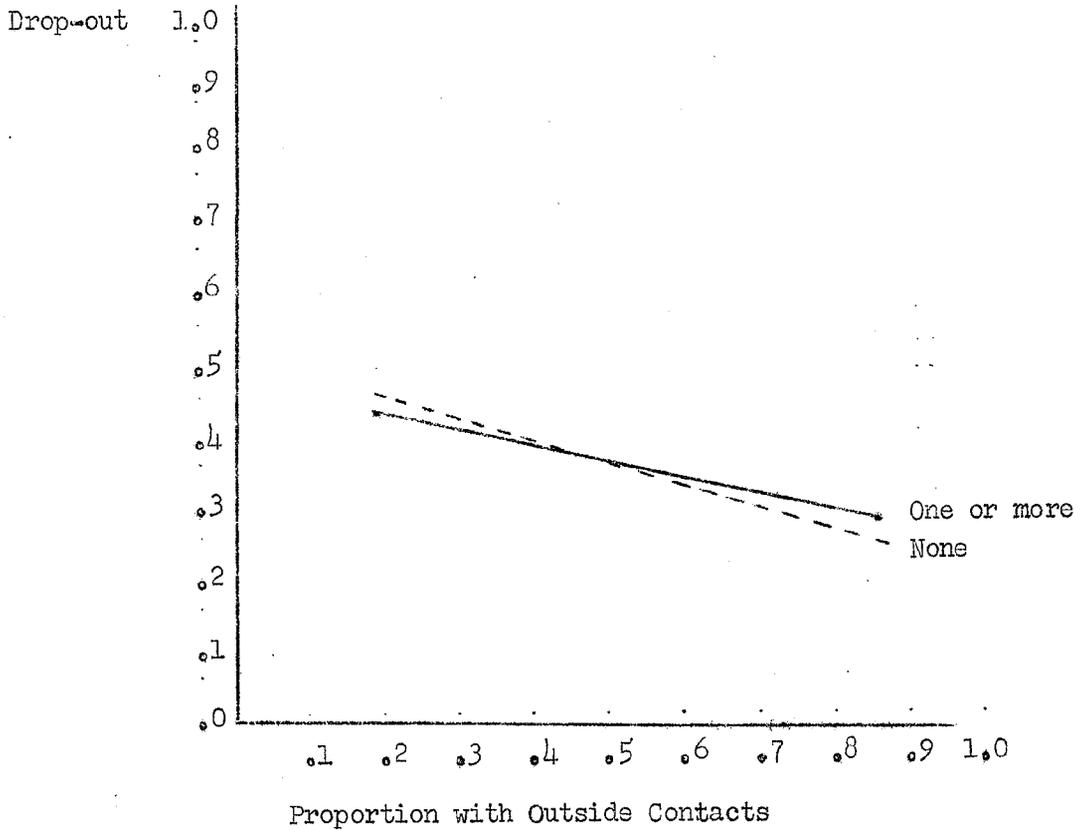
In Chart 2 the A's are those with outside contacts, and P is the proportion of the group reporting one or more contacts.

Chart 2

Outside Contacts and Drop-out



Proportion with Outside Contacts



The net result is what we have called a type II relationship, or pure compositional effect. Within a given P level, there is no consistent difference between the retention of isolates and those with extra-group bonds; but for both types of people, retention varies directly with P. The more the bonds, the greater the retention.* It would seem that a high volume of extra-group relationships acts to create a favorable group situation. At first glance, one might hazard the guess that this is because in groups with high "bondedness," leaving the group would create strains on other social relations with the members. However, if this were true we should expect to find higher loss rates for those with no contacts within P levels. An explanation which fits our data much better will be forthcoming in this section.

An equally striking relationship, of the form we have called type III, is shown by "Activity." This is going to be one of the key variables throughout the report, so it may be well to describe its measurement in some detail.

In the questionnaire five types of specialist roles in group discussions were listed, as follows:

- 1) "Pulling the threads of the discussion together and getting different viewpoints reconciled.
- 2) "Joking and kidding, finding the potentially humorous implications of the discussion.
- 3) "Providing 'fuel' for the discussion by introducing ideas and opinions for the rest of the group to discuss.
- 4) "Making tactful comments to heal any hurt feelings which might arise in the discussion.

*Note to the technical reader: unless otherwise specified, all zero-order compositional effects stated to exist are significant at or beyond the .05 level. The significance of partials has not been tested.

- 5) "Clarification, getting the discussion to the point by getting terms defined and pointing out logical problems."

Each respondent was asked to rate his own activity in these roles and then to "jot down the names of any members of your group who tend to perform this role frequently." Thus, for each respondent we had a self-rating on each of the five specialties along with the frequency with which he was named by others. In a later section of this report we shall examine qualitative differences in performance of different roles, but as a general measure of discussion prominence for an individual we chose to use the frequency with which he was named by others as active in any one or more of the set. There is, as one might expect, a strong relationship between self-ratings and number of mentions by others, but we chose the objective half of the measure as being probably somewhat more reliable. Since statistical analysis showed no correlation between group size and the frequency of designations, we decided to call all members who were named by two or more other group members "actives," and all others "inactives." The difference, obviously, is relative, not absolute, but two seemed a reasonable cutting point since it requires some group acknowledgment, rather than merely catching the fancy of one individual (especially one's spouse). The unofficial group structure which is delineated by our activity measure is related to the formal division of labor in the group, but the two are not interchangeable. Here, for instance, is the association between activity and formal leadership.

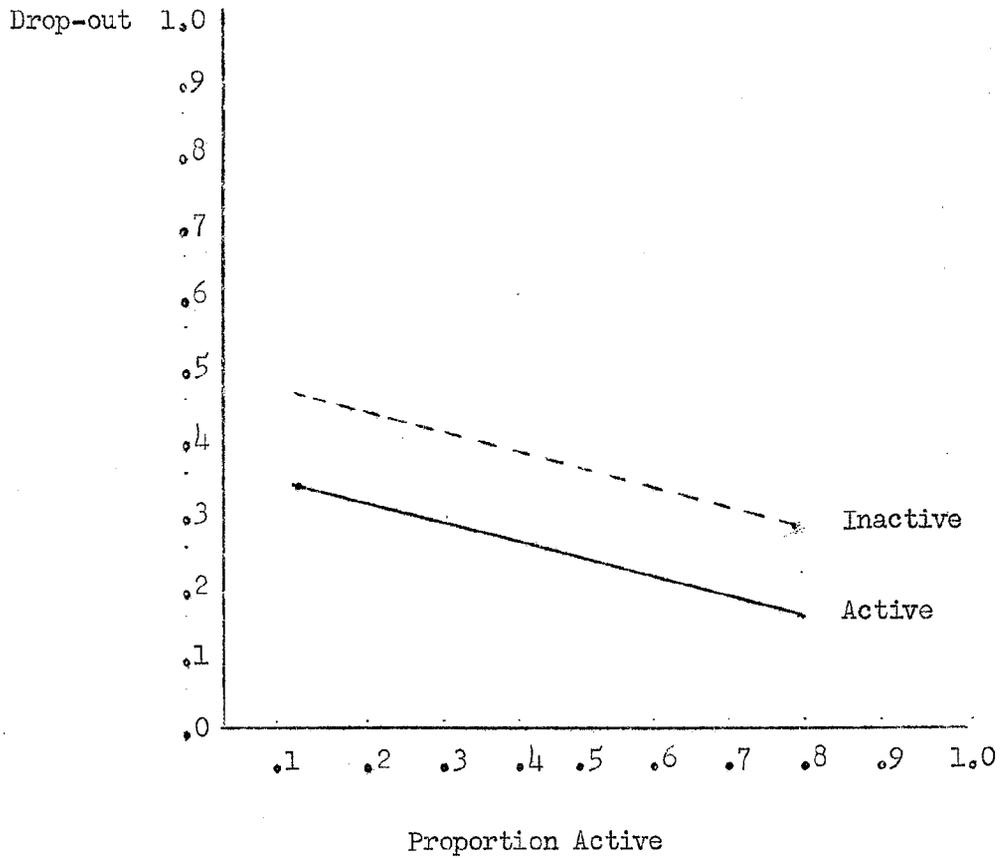
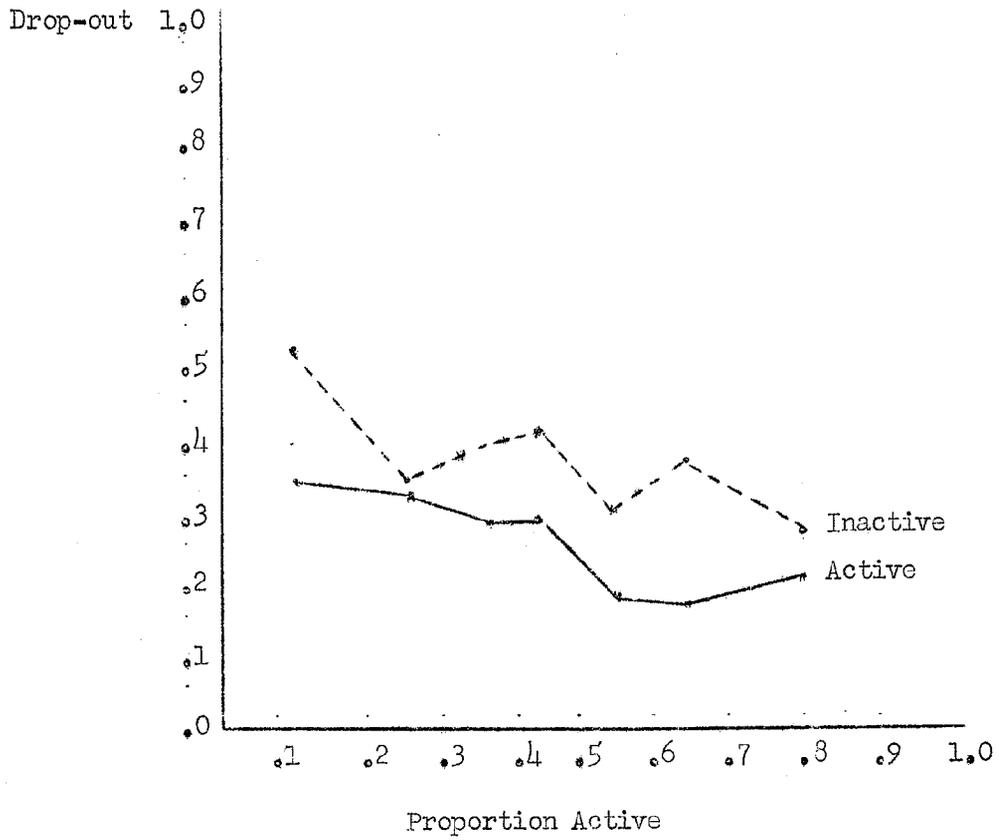
Table 4
Activity and Leadership

	Leaders	Members	
Active	234	436	
Less Active	<u>151</u>	<u>1063</u>	
	385	1499	1874
Per Cent Active	64	29	<u>35</u> No infor- 1909 mation

There is a strong correlation between leadership and activity, but we note 151 leaders who are not named as active participants and 436 members who are chosen as leading contributors to the discussions.

For each group we computed the proportion of individuals named as actives, and tabulated this against drop-outs.

Discussion Activity and Drop-out



Both relationships are linear by our tests, and the result is a clear type IIIA relationship, which shows a combination of individual and group effects. Within each P level, inactives have a much higher drop-out rate than actives, and within each class of individuals, drop-out decreases with the level of group activity. Both relationships are quite strong, and we note that the group effect is strong enough so that inactive members in groups with a high P value have a lower drop-out rate than active members in the least volatile groups. We may add activity level to our list of group effects.

The next three characteristics may be considered as a package, since they are all three measures of group output or effectiveness. The first is "impact," and is based upon answers to the following question:

"On the whole, which of the following best describes your feeling about Great Books?"

1 _____ It is a marvelous program and has had a genuine impact on me

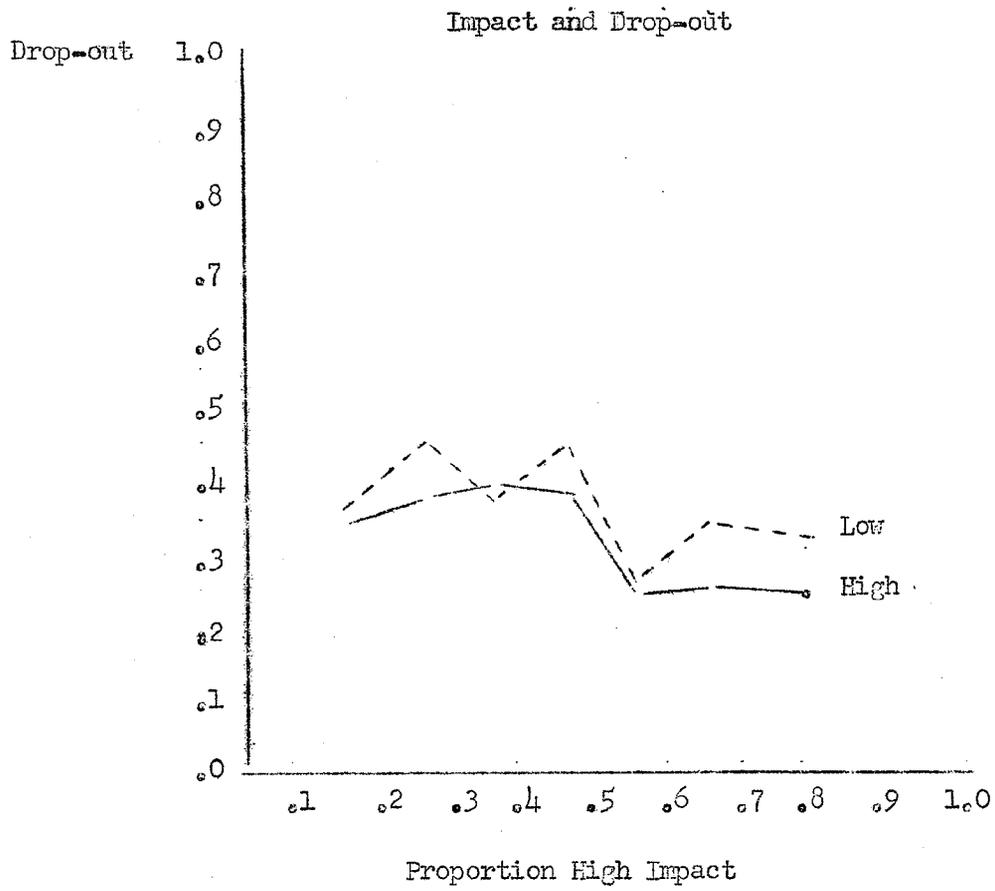
2 _____ It is a fine thing and I enjoy it very much, but I can't say it has changed me much

3 _____ I have enjoyed some parts of it, but on the whole I haven't gotten much out of it

4 _____ I haven't gotten anything at all out of Great Books."

High Impact for individuals is defined as checking alternative 1 (checked by 42% of the original sample); low impact is defined as any other response. Groups are characterized by the proportion of members reporting high impact. Chart 4 shows the relationship with drop-out.

Chart 4



The relationships in Chart 4 are non-linear by our statistical tests and don't fit any of our models clearly. However, we do note that among individuals, low impact people have a fairly consistent higher loss rate. Between groups, the pattern is less clear, but generally, groups with P values below .5 have higher drop-out rates among both sub-classes of individuals. The pattern vaguely suggests what we have called a "step-function" such that above and below .5 there is little variation in drop-out, but a fairly sharp break occurs between groups with majorities and minorities reporting high impact.

The second effect characteristic carries the odd name of "Effect on Problem One" and is defined as follows: each respondent was asked to list "the two or three most important problems facing your community today" and then to "indicate below any ways in which you think your participation in Great Books has affected your understanding of the problem or your activity regarding the problem." Respondents are coded simply as those reporting an effect and those not doing so, and groups are classified by the proportion reporting any effect.

Chart 5

Effect on Problem I and Drop-out

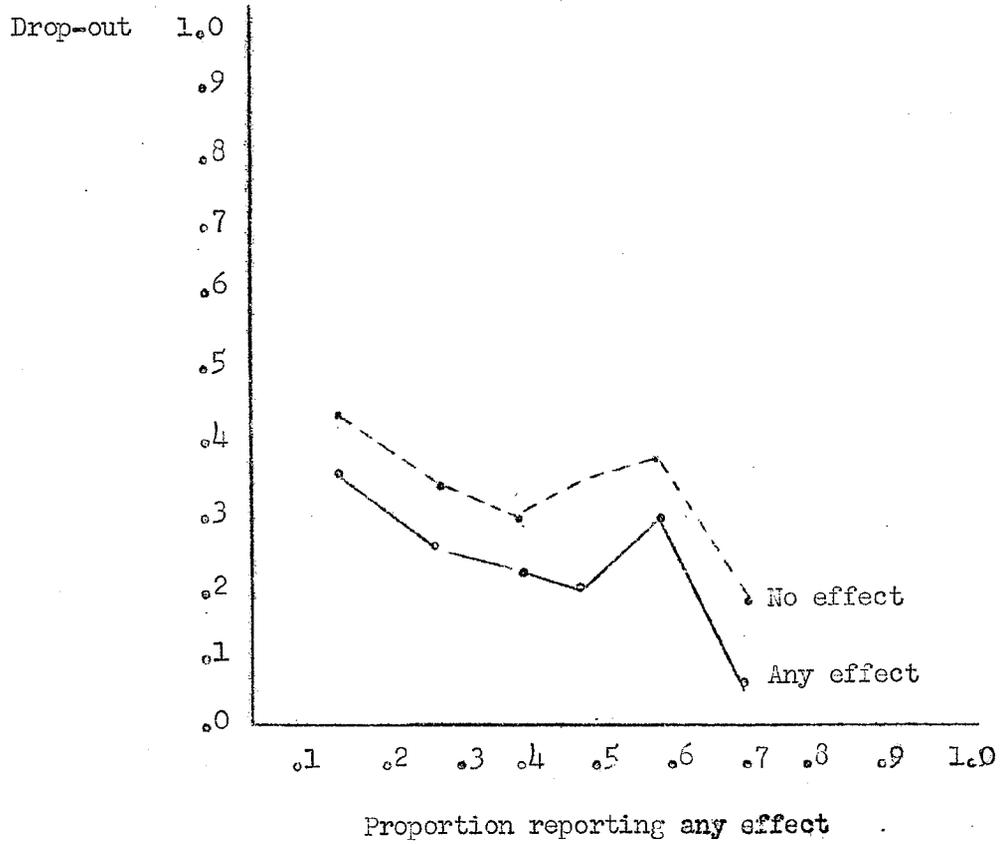
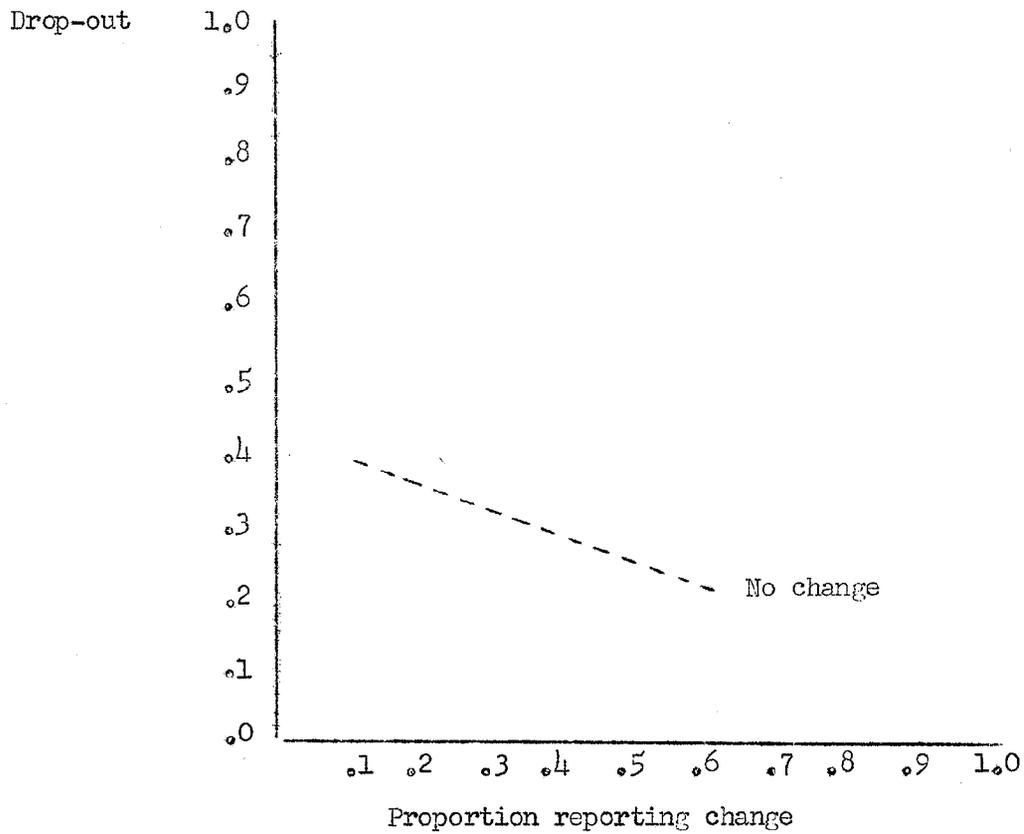
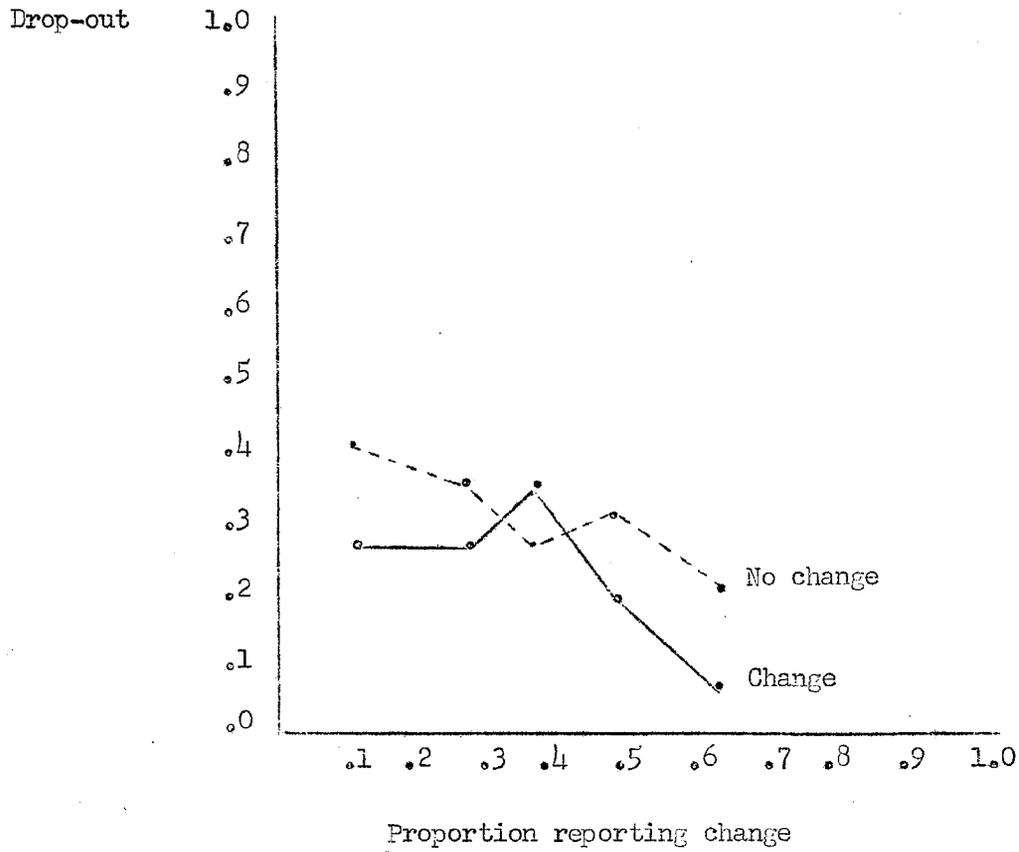


Chart 5 does not fit any of the logical models sketched out in our introduction. Both lines are significantly non-linear, but what they are is somewhat puzzling. In a general way, with some clear exceptions, high proportions of no effect are not a good omen for groups. As well as the consistent individual level advantage for the respondents reporting an effect, we see a rough advantage for the groups with greater effectiveness over the groups with a lower proportion.

The third effect variable has another odd name, "change in acceptability of schools," which has nothing to do with the respondent's education, but, rather, his answer to the question, "Since you began Great Books have there been any particular authors or schools of thought which you once disliked, but now find more acceptable?" A member who said "yes" to the question is a changer, as contrasted with a non-changer who said "no," or didn't answer the question. Groups, in turn, are sorted by their proportion of changers, and when this is tabulated against drop-out, we get Chart 6.

Chart 6

Change in Acceptability of Schools and Drop-out



As we might expect from its two predecessors, change of schools is somewhat irregular according to our classification system. For the non-changers there is a linear decrease in drop-out as P increases. Thus, the more changers, the better retention of non-changers. The line for changers is significantly non-linear, without, however, taking any clear curvilinear form. When smoothed, it suggests a rapid increase in drop-out as P rises to .6 and then a leveling off. The rise is so sharp, however, that around .6 changers have a higher loss rate than non-changers, although generally the advantage is with the former.

All three effect characteristics would belong in the discard pile, except that despite their idiosyncracies, taken together, they suggest a common pattern. In general, for each of the effect variables, we find an individual level advantage for those who show the effect, and a tendency for high proportions of effect to raise retention among both classes. That is, in their joint implication, they suggest that some purer measures of "effect" might show a classical type IIIA relationship in which the individual effect radiates out to raise the success level among both types of individuals. We may hazard the hypothesis that success at the individual level breeds success at the group level in Great Books.

We can summarize the findings so far, with the following table.

Table 5
Discussion Process Effects

Individual Effect	Group Level Effect	
	Yes	No
<u>Yes</u>	Activity Impact Problem One Change in Schools	Exposure
<u>No</u>	Outside Contacts	

Table 5 summarizes, but it provides no insight into how these characteristics relate to each other and whether they contribute independently to program retention.

We can begin our analysis by examining the group level inter-correlations of the five characteristics which seem to show a group effect. In Table 5 we see the Q coefficients (a measure of association for dichotomous relationships).² A high positive value of Q indicates that groups which are above the median on one proportion tend also to be above the median on the other; a Q near zero indicates no relationship; and a negative Q indicates that groups above the median on one proportion tend to be below the median on the other.

²Calculation of a matrix of product-moment coefficients using deciles instead of above or below the median gives essentially the same results, although the values of the product-moment coefficients are much smaller, as is always the case. (Those relationships with Q's of .27 and greater have r's significant at the .05 level or better.)

Table 6

Group Level Inter-Correlations of
Discussion Process Characteristics

	Contacts	Activity	Problem One	Schools	Impact
Contacts	-	.42	.24	.12	.13
Activity	.42	-	.46	.37	.09
Problem One	.24	.46	-	.51	.27
Schools	.12	.37	.51	-	.48
Impact	.13	.09	.27	.48	-

The five form a distinct pattern such that each characteristic has a fairly high relationship with its neighbor and steadily declining relationships with other variables. Thus, outside contacts relates fairly strongly to activity, moderately to effect on problem one and has no very important relationship to the other effect characteristics. The pattern suggests, although it does not demonstrate, a causal chain which may be interpreted as follows: High outside contacts lead to high activity (which may be interpreted as vigorous discussions with many people participating). High activity (vigorous discussion) leads to seeing the relevance of Great Books for community problems (problem one). The perception of relevance, in turn, leads to changes in acceptability of various schools of thought. Finally, changes in acceptability lead to a feeling that Great Books has had a genuine impact. Schematically, we may put the model as follows:

Outside Contacts → Vigorous Discussion → Relevance to Community → Change in Acceptability → Impact

Now, we may ask whether each of these factors contributes to program retention or whether only some parts of this chain are relevant. We don't have enough cases to consider all the combinations necessary for thorough analysis, but we can select three of our five variables. We chose outside contacts, activity, and change in schools, since they seem to summarize the model, which implies that a given type of social relationship influences the discussions which lead to intellectual changes.

The groups were dichotomized on the three items on the basis of being above or below the median, all of the possible combinations were sorted out, and the per cent dropping out was calculated for the resulting eight types of groups.

Table 7
Group Typology and Drop-Out

Group Type			Per Cent Dropping Out	Base N	
Contacts	Activity	Schools		Individuals	Groups
+	+	+	23	288	30
+	+	-	19	155	16
+	-	+	30	134	15
+	-	-	56	174	21
-	+	+	31	157	18
-	+	-	35	126	13
-	-	+	37	250	26
-	-	-	44	331	33

In Table 7, a + means above the median, - means below. Thus, the top row can be interpreted as follows. In groups which were above the median on proportion outside contacts, proportion active, and proportion reporting change in schools, 23% dropped out, this figure being based on 288 individuals in 30 groups.

Let us now see whether active groups still show a greater retention rate when we control for outside contacts and change in schools, both of which are related to retention and to activity.

Table 8
Per Cent Dropping Out

Contacts	Type of Group Schools	Active	Less Active
+	+	23	30
+	-	19	56
-	+	31	37
-	-	35	44

Controlling for each of the four possible combinations on contacts and schools, we find that groups above the median on activity have a better retention rate than groups below it. Thus, at the group level, activity contributes to program retention independently of contacts and our effect measure. That is, regardless of variation in the proportion of outside contacts and change in schools, groups which involve large proportions of their members in the discussion have better retention.

We can now apply the same test to our effect variable, change in schools.

Table 9
Per Cent Dropping Out

Contacts	Type of Group Activity	High Change	Low Change
+	+	23	19
+	-	30	56
-	+	31	35
-	-	37	44

Except for the first row, there is a general tendency for high effect groups to have a more favorable retention rate, controlling for outside contacts and the activity level of the group.

Finally, let us look at outside contacts.

Table 10
Per Cent Dropping Out

Activity	Effect	Type of Group	
		High Contacts	Low Contacts
+	+	23	31
+	-	19	35
-	+	30	37
-	-	56	44

In the first three rows of Table 10, we see a retention advantage for the groups with high volume of outside contacts, but in the bottom row - the minus-minus group, the difference reverses. That is, among groups which are low on both activity and effect, high outside contacts is an unfavorable sign. What we see is an interaction: i.e., in combination with activity and/or effects, outside contacts are a favorable sign, but in their absence high rates of outside social interaction are an obstacle to group maintenance. Thus, we can think of outside contacts as a two-edged sword. When it leads, as it typically does, to active discussions and intellectual changes, it aids the group; but when it fails to produce these results it leads to a greater loss rate.

Before we reach a firm conclusion, we should check to see whether we still have a group level process here, or whether the pattern is spurious, due to the operation of the individual

level effects we have seen. In order to do this, we need to show that individuals with the same personal characteristics have varying drop-out rates in our eight types of groups. In theory we should compare eight types of individuals (e.g., members with outside contacts who are active and have changed, members with outside contacts who are active and have not changed, etc.) in the eight types of groups. However, the case bases become so small that little reliable information comes from this. Therefore we shall treat the individual characteristics one at a time.

Table 11

Control for Individual Activity
Per Cent Dropping Out

Contacts	Group Type		Individuals	
	Activity	Change	Active	Inactive
+	+	-	13 (95)*	30 (60)
+	+	+	16 (153)	31 (135)
+	-	+	12 (26)	34 (108)
-	+	+	30 (89)	31 (68)
-	+	-	24 (76)	52 (50)
-	-	+	25 (51)	41 (199)
-	-	-	30 (69)	48 (262)
+	-	-	41 (39)	60 (135)

*Numbers in parentheses are the number of individuals upon whom the percentage is based.

In Table 11 the eight types of groups are arrayed according to their retention rate. The table gives us the drop-out percentages for active and inactive members. The progression is not perfect by any means, but there is a tendency for the order within a class of individuals to follow the group order. That is, regardless of the activity of the individual person his probability of dropping out varies with the composition of his group. At the extreme we see twice as great a drop-out in the +-- group as

in the ++-, for both actives and inactives. Within each type of group, there is a consistently strong individual difference between actives and inactives, but the group level effects also turn up, confirming our impression that activity works simultaneously as a group and individual factor in retention.

Table 12 asks the same questions for individual differences in change in schools.

Table 12
Control for Individual Change in Schools

Contacts	Group Type		Individual			
	Activity	Change	Changer		Non-Changer	
+	+	-	15	(20)	20	(135)
+	+	+	23	(117)	23	(171)
+	-	+	27	(51)	31	(83)
-	+	+	25	(67)	35	(90)
-	+	-	25	(16)	36	(110)
-	-	+	31	(81)	41	(169)
-	-	-	36	(36)	45	(295)
+	-	-	47	(19)	57	(155)

Table 12 is even more consistent than Table 11. In each type of group, we see that non-changers have a higher drop-out rate. In addition, among non-changers there is a perfect rank-order correlation between the drop-out rates and the group types, and among changers the relationship only shows two negligible exceptions. In fact, in terms of percentage differences the variation in drop-out by group type is greater than the individual difference within a type of group.

Finally, let us consider contacts as an individual control.

Table 13

Control for Individual Differences in Contacts

Contacts	Group Type		Individual Contacts			
	Activity	Change	Yes		No	
+	+	-	20	(129)	19	(26)
+	+	+	24	(224)	20	(64)
+	-	+	27	(110)	42	(24)
-	+	+	28	(68)	33	(68)
-	+	-	33	(60)	36	(66)
-	-	+	37	(180)	40	(70)
-	-	-	41	(148)	46	(183)
+	-	-	59	(135)	44	(39)

Again, the same pattern appears. Within both sub-classes, drop-out rates increase as one moves from more favorable to less favorable group compositions. As we thought, individual level outside contacts are fairly unimportant, since no consistent differences turn up. However, we do see some support for our interpretation of the role of outside contacts. In the +-- group, it is those who have outside bonds who drop out at a greater rate, while those who do not have them have a lower proportion of losses. This is congruent with our hypothesis that when high bondedness does not lead to activity or effectiveness it has a negative effect on retention.

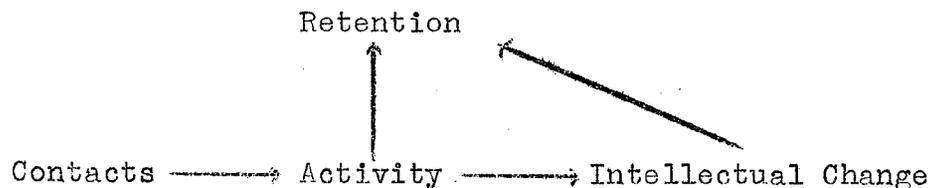
We are now in a position to summarize our analysis so far.

Seven aspects of the group discussion were examined for individual and group relationships with program retention. Of the seven, five seemed to show a group effect. These five formed a pattern of inter-correlations which suggested a model of what might be going on. The model implies that close personal ties in a group lead to vigorous discussions, which in turn lead to a sequence of changes in the intellectual effect climate of the

groups, which in turn lead to high impact. Next we turned to the question of the relationship between the stages in this hypothetical causal chain and program retention. Analysis of the data, simultaneously controlling for individual characteristics and multiple types of group characteristics, suggests the following:

- 1) High levels of group activity lead to high retention, independently of the group variables of outside contacts and change in schools, and also independently of the individual characteristics involved.
- 2) High levels of intellectual change lead to high retention, independently of the group variable of outside contacts, and to some extent independently of group activity (although, in all cases the ++- groups do better than the +++) and also independently of the individual characteristics involved.
- 3) High levels of outside contacts lead to high retention rates only if they also lead to activity and change. If not, high levels of outside contacts are an unfavorable characteristic. This group effect occurs independently of the effect of individual characteristics.

We are now ready to suggest a modification of our model. The concepts in the model refer to group and not individual characteristics, and may be visualized as follows:



The diagram summarizes our interpretation, and shows contacts leading to activity and, in turn to effects. In terms of relationships with retention, it shows activity and changes leading to high retention, but outside contacts operating favorably only when combined with the other two effect variables.

Having outlined a scheme for looking at the major groups

discussion variables as they affect program retention, we are ready to examine the relationships between personal characteristics and group retention. In order to do so, for each characteristic we will have to ask whether it appears to operate as an individual characteristic or as a group effect, and if as a group effect, whether it seems to work through the contacts-activity-schools (CAS) process, or whether it contributes independently. We will begin with a group of "social structural" variables.

2) Social Structural Characteristics

Of the data routinely collected by social scientists, a number of characteristics stand out as indicators of a person's general lot in life, or location in the total social structure. We would include in this group: age, sex, marital status, and social class. We think of them, not as variables in themselves, but as indicators of types of roles, which extensive research has shown to be important in human behavior. Thus, one does not need esoteric sociological theory to predict that a young, single, working class girl will differ in numerous ways from a middle aged, married, middle class man, or an old, widowed, upper class woman. Although not much is known about the relationships between roles in the larger social structure and behavior in small group situations, there is some evidence³ to suggest that we do not drop our outside characteristics when we join a discussion group.

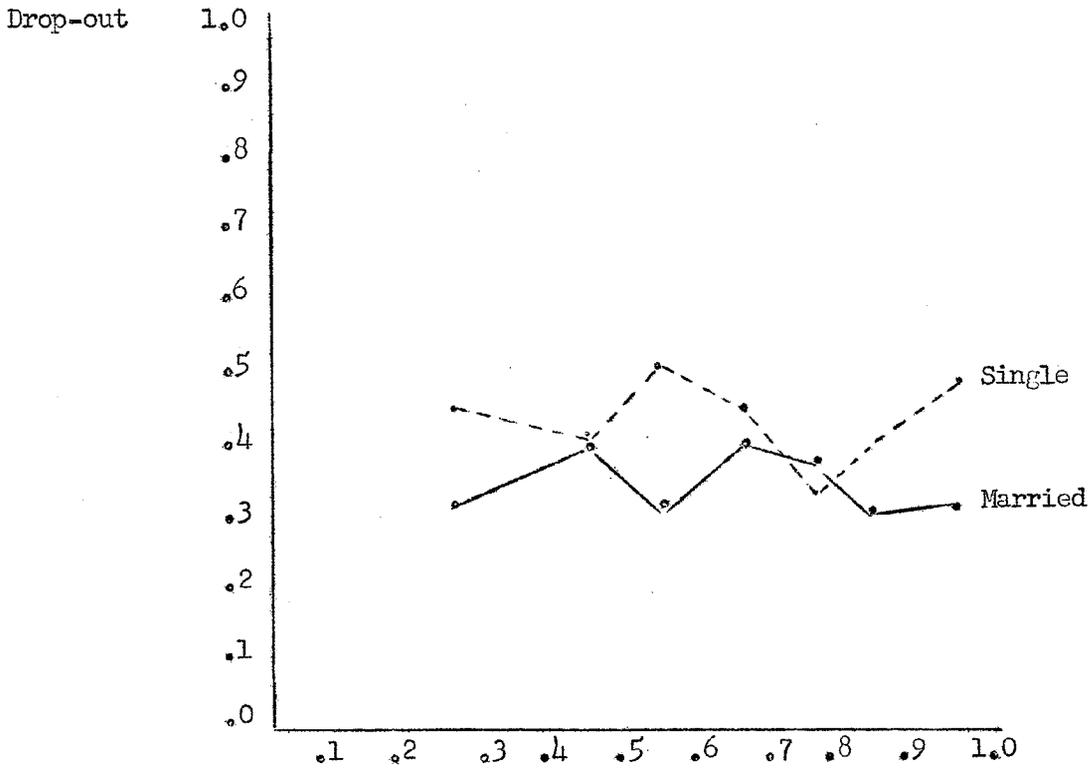
We will begin with marital status, only to dismiss it. Chart 7 gives the drop-out rates for single and married members,

³Several pertinent studies are discussed in Chapter 2, Part II.

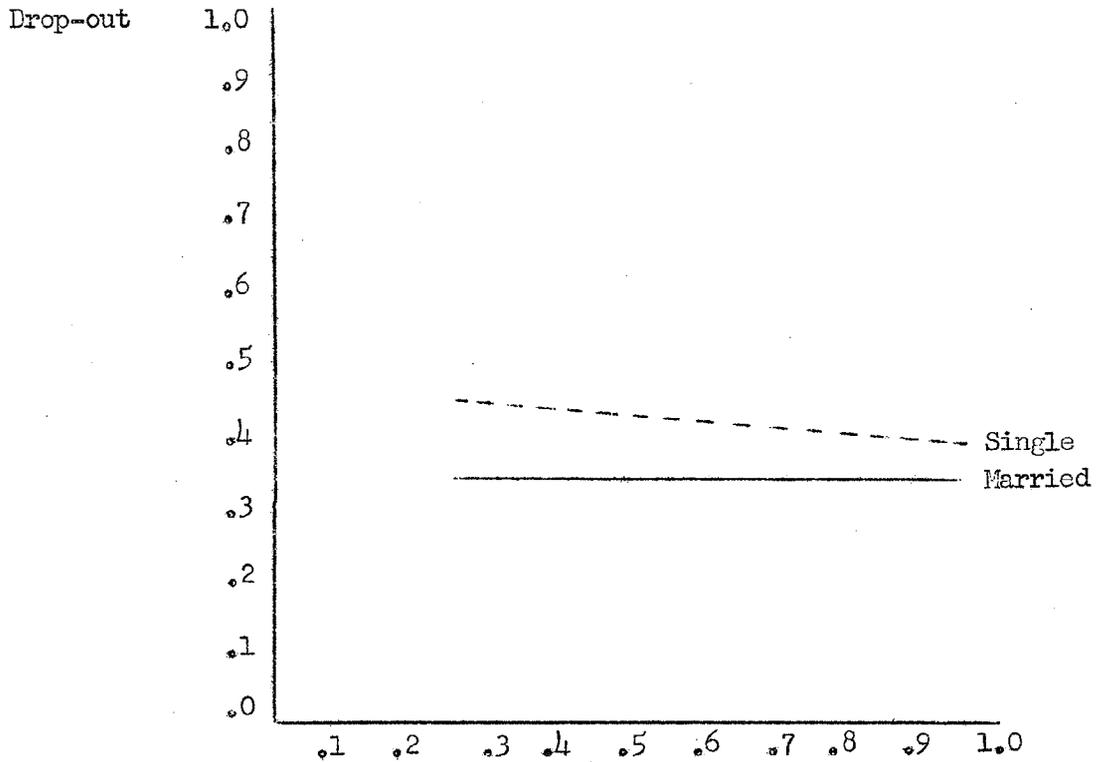
in groups with varying proportions married. There is a general tendency for single people to have higher drop-out rates, but for neither type of person do drop-out rates vary with the marital composition of the group. Marital status, is thus a purely individual level characteristic, and will be treated in detail in a subsequent chapter.

Chart 7

Marital Status and Drop-out



Proportion Married

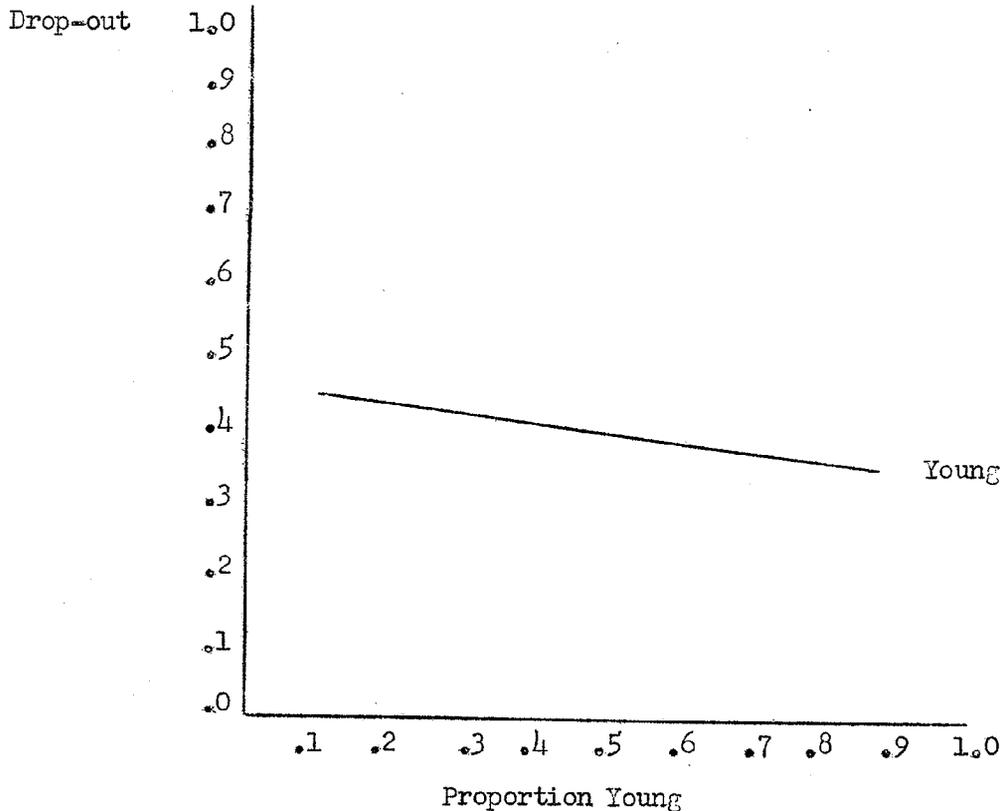
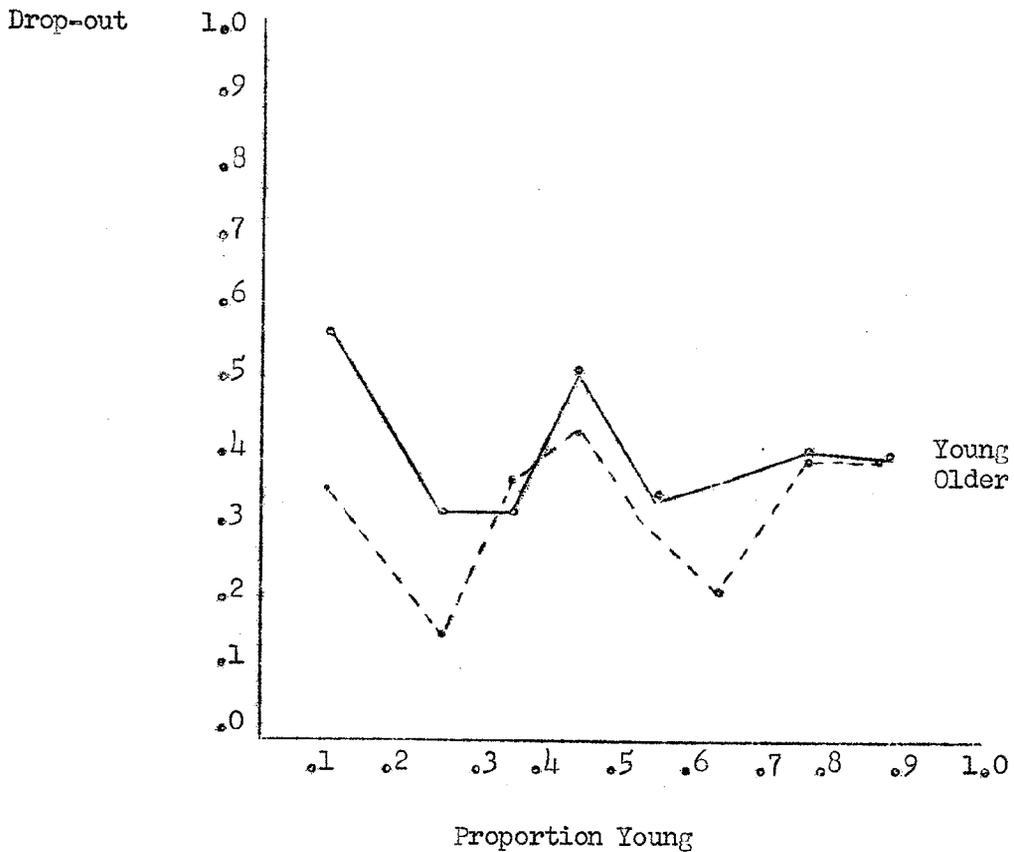


Proportion Married

Our second social structural characteristic is age and we are reporting on it out of a sense of dutifulness, not because we have any clear understanding of how (or whether) it operates in group retention. In our survey, if not elsewhere, youth ends at age 35, and we have divided the respondents into those under 35 and those over that age. Groups are characterized by the proportion of their members who are "young," i.e., under 35.

Chart 8

Age and Drop-out

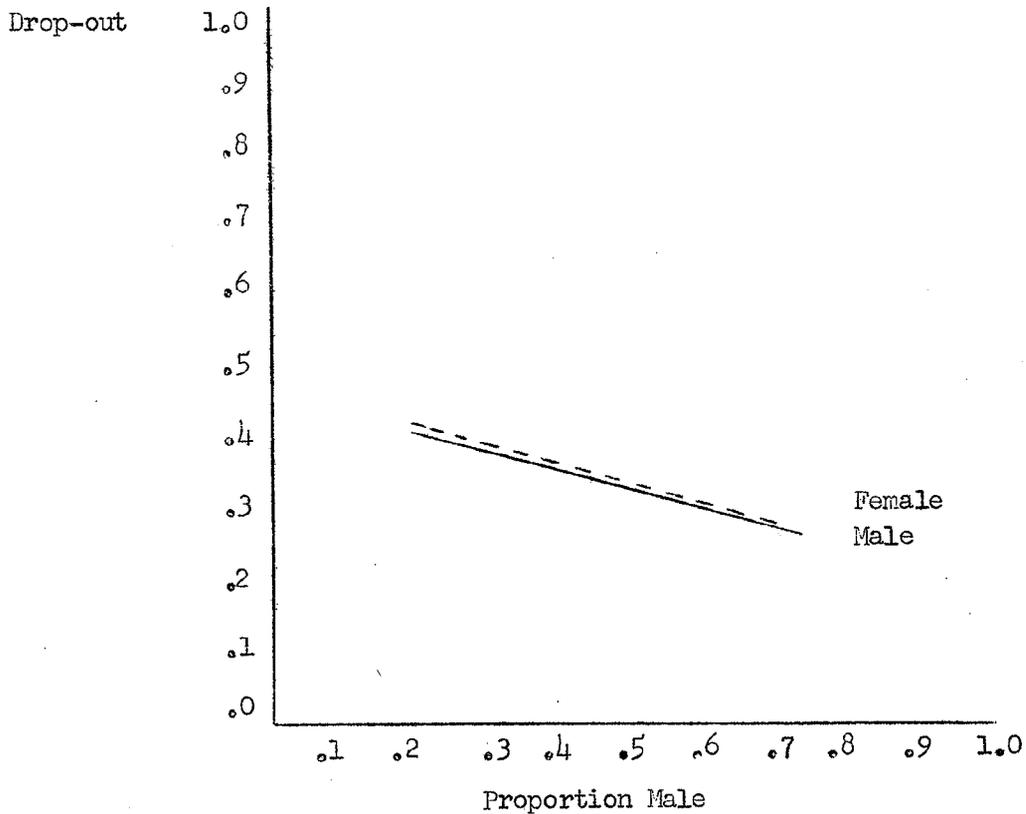
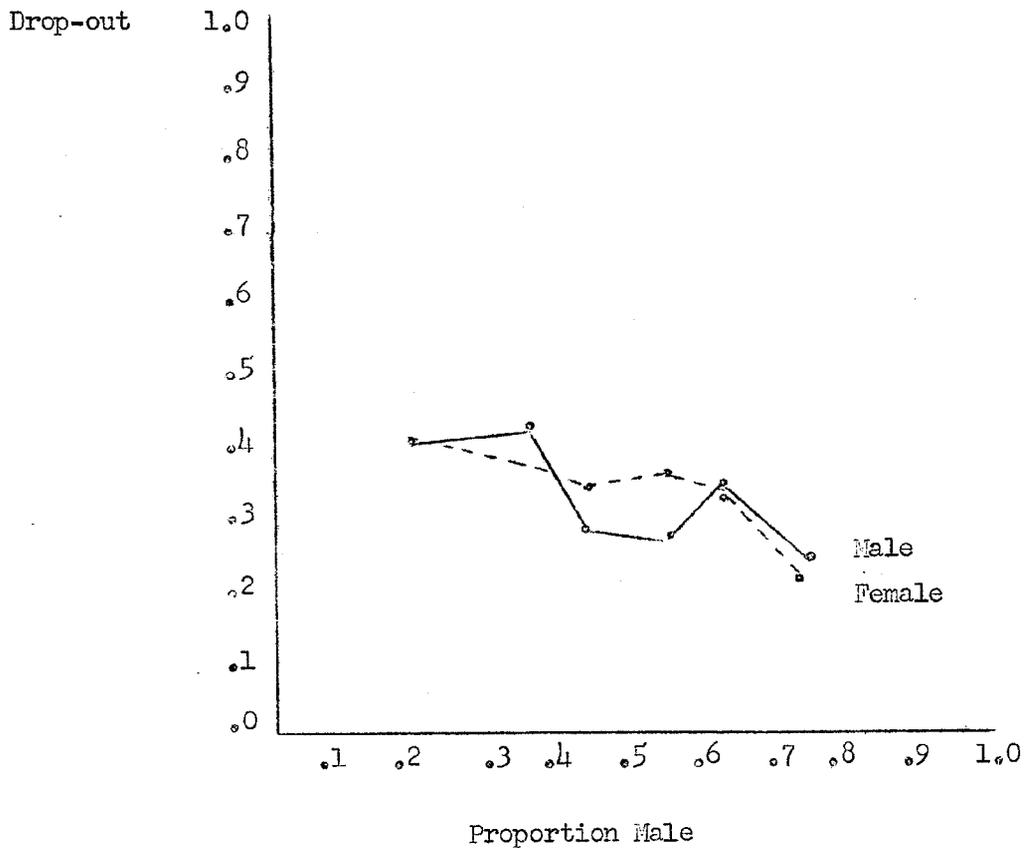


At first glance, we see what appears to be a W shaped curve for both age groups, with high drop-outs at the extremes and around .45. However, our statistical tests concluded that only the older group departs from linearity. Although it is possible that there is an intricate relationship between age composition and drop-out with optimal compositions around .25 and .60, our personal belief is that the picture is more congruent with erratic fluctuations than with some subtle process. However, we do note that in almost every instance, the younger people show higher drop-out rates than the older. Hence, we shall treat age as an individual characteristic and conclude that it has no meaningful relation with drop-out when considered as a group compositional variable.

Somewhat more definite findings, however, follow from the analysis of our other two social structural characteristics, sex and socio-economic status. In Chart 9, we see the drop-out rates for men and women by the percent male in the group. Our statistical check suggests that both relationships are linear and that there is no difference between the two lines. That is, we have a type II relationship in which drop-out decreases steadily with the proportion male, although there is no consistent sex difference in drop-out at specific P levels.

Chart 9

Sex and Drop-out



Although a number of explanations could be advanced to suggest why high proportions of women are associated with a high loss rate, we believe that the answer lies in the relationship between sex and the CAS process described above. Later we shall report data on some rather striking relationships between sex and activity in group discussions, but for now, let us merely note that men are much more likely to be active than are women. If so, it is possible that our relationship is spurious, the high loss rates of the ultra-feminine group being explainable by their low activity rate. Since sex composition is unrelated to outside contacts or change in schools, we can test this hunch by examining the drop-out rates when groups are classified simultaneously by activity and sex composition.

Table 14

Activity, Sex, and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Proportion Active	Proportion Male		
	0 - .29	.30 - .49	.50 or more
0 - .19	51 (200)*	57 (208)	41 (97)
.20 - .39	39 (150)	26 (172)	39 (132)
.40 -- .59	44 (119)	26 (257)	20 (114)
.60 or more	18 (93)	27 (106)	24 (85)
All groups	41 (562)	35 (743)	33 (343)

*Number in parentheses is the number of individuals upon which the percentage is based.

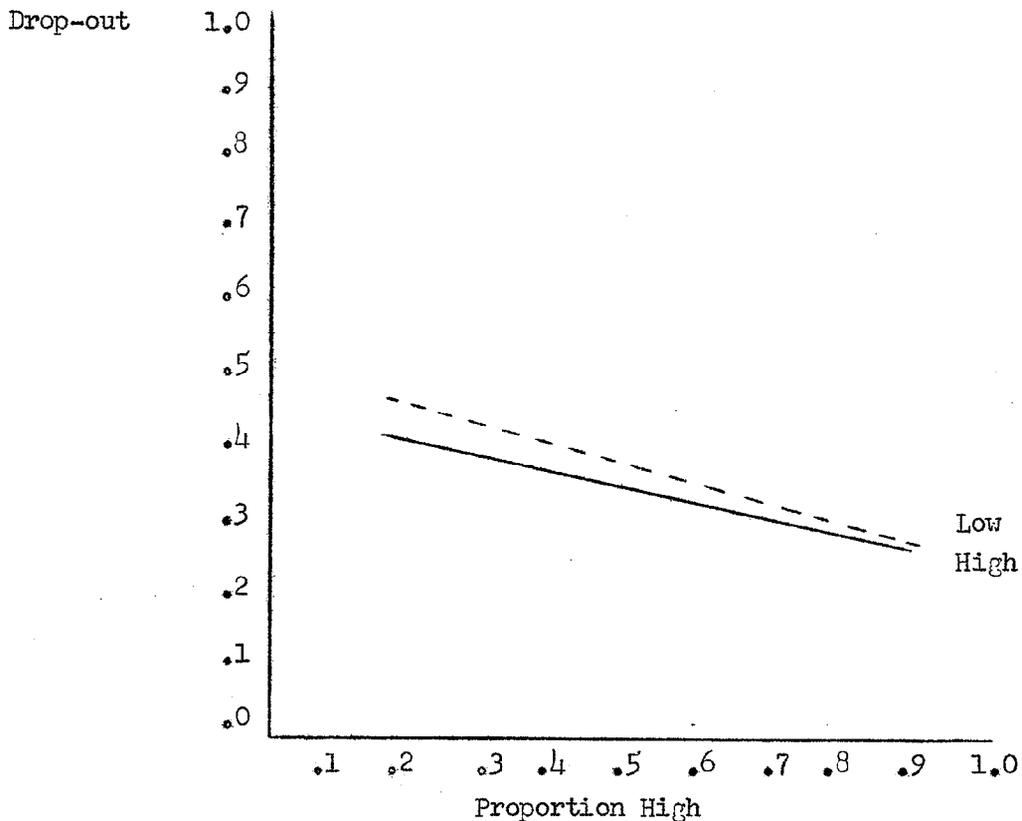
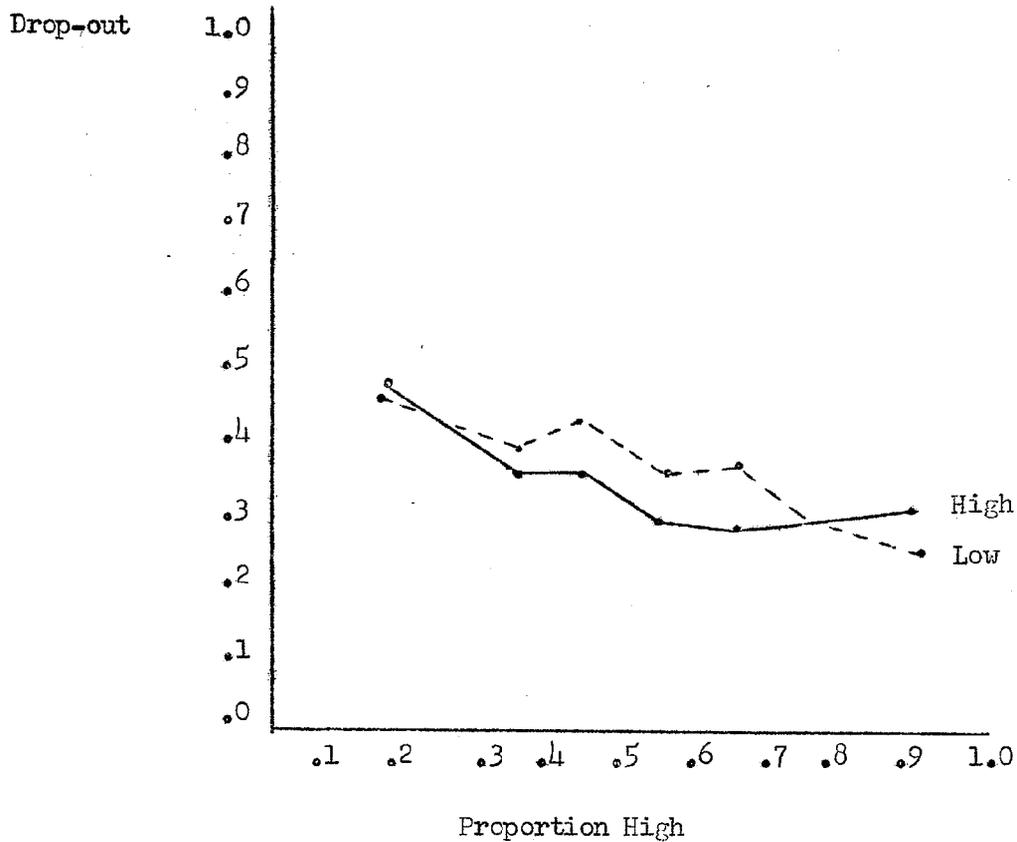
Reading across the rows in Table 14, we find that there is no consistent decrease in drop-out as the proportion male increases, within a given level of activity. Reading down the columns, however, despite some exceptions, we find that groups with a

given sex composition show a negative relationship between activity level and drop-out. By and large, we conclude that sex affects group retention through affecting the activity level in the group. This does not mean that the sex difference is unreal. Rather, the analysis suggests the mechanism or process through which sex composition operates.

Our final social structural characteristic is social class, or rather, socio-economic status. The measure here is a prestige rating of the occupation of the head of the household. It should be noted that since a large proportion of the respondents are married women, the rating is not necessarily a personal characteristic, but rather an index of the social milieu of the family unit. Respondents are characterized as "high" or "low" status on the basis of an arbitrary dichotomization of our index. The break corresponds roughly to dividing the families into those headed by "free professionals" and major business administrators versus all others. Groups in turn are characterized by their proportion of high status members. Chart 10 shows the group and individual relationships of status and drop-out.

Chart 10

Socio-Economic Status and Drop-out



The status relationship is on the borderline between our types I and III. As the percent high status increases, drop-out decreases among both types of participants. There is also a slight tendency for low status persons to have higher drop-out rates for most P levels, but the difference is not terribly reliable according to our statistical criterion. However, we shall consider status as an individual level correlate in our later analysis.

We can now ask whether, like sex, status composition affects drop-out through the CAS mechanism, or whether it is an independent contributor. To begin with, although status has no strong relationship with outside contacts or change in schools, controlling for the other elements in our model, there is some tendency for high status groups to be high on activity.

Table 15

Status and Activity, Controlling for Outside
Contacts and Change in Schools

Contacts	Per Cent of Groups with .50 or more high status		
	Schools		
		Active	Less Active
+	+	67 (30)	53 (15)
+	-	69 (16)	57 (21)
-	+	67 (18)	65 (26)
-	-	46 (13)	58 (33)

The differences are quite small, but in all but the - - comparison, we do find more high status groups in the high activity groups. In the - - group, however, we find a reversal. The reason for this will become clear when we consider education as a variable. For now, let us merely note the possibility that status is related to the CAS variables. Consequently, we shall

want to examine the relationship between status and drop-out, controlling for CAS, and also for the individual level status in order to see whether status composition is an independent contributor to the drop-out process.

Table 16 meets this prescription, by indicating the proportion of drop-outs, for high and low status individuals, in groups which vary in status composition and also CAS composition.

Table 16
Status Composition, Individual Status, CAS
Composition, and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

			Individual							
			High Status				Lower Status			
			.50+		0-.49		.50+		0-.49	
P. High Status										
<u>Contacts Activ. Schools</u>										
+	+	-	13	(95)	25	(4)	27	(33)	29	(17)
+	+	+	25	(110)	29	(35)	24	(58)	26	(74)
+	-	+	41	(39)	*29	(24)	12	(17)	33	(51)
-	+	+	19	(57)	42	(24)	27	(33)	41	(39)
-	+	-	39	(38)	*22	(23)	32	(19)	38	(48)
-	-	+	32	(85)	46	(26)	37	(43)	42	(59)
-	-	-	39	(140)	50	(36)	49	(63)	52	(75)
+	-	-	41	(51)	48	(27)	49	(35)	68	(63)

The case bases become very small and unreliable in tables like Table 16, so we have to draw our conclusions from the overall pattern. We note that there are 16 comparisons which contrast status compositions, holding constant individual status and CAS. Since in 14 out of the 16 (the two exceptions are marked with an asterisk) the drop-out rates are lower in the groups which have more high status people, we may conclude that status composition is a pretty consistent group level contributor to program retention.

We should now reverse the question and ask whether, when status composition is controlled, the CAS characteristics still show a relationship with drop-out. They do. Of the 16 comparisons involving activity, drop-out was lower in the high activity groups in 13 cases, higher in two, and tied in one. Change in schools shows 11 comparisons in the predicted direction, two ties, and three reversals. Contacts, which we have already seen is not a consistent performer, has a slightly lower record, 10 comparisons in the predicted direction, one tie, and five reversals. However, since we note that two of the reversals and the tie are in the +- type, these results are fairly consistent with our previous interpretation of the effect of this characteristic.

We are now ready to expand our classification of variables, and to make two additions to our conceptual model.

Table 17

Social Structural Effects

		Group Level Effect	
		Yes	No
Individual Effect	Yes		Marital Status Age
	No	Sex Socio-economic Status	

And, consequently, we can modify our CAS scheme as follows:

High Status	Retention	
Contacts	Activity	Intellectual Change
	Males	

3) Intellectual Characteristics

In a program devoted to the serious discussion of the classics, it would not be surprising to find that the composition of the group in terms of intellectual characteristics is important for its success. However, a methodological problem arises because our previous research has shown that a number of intellectual characteristics may be thought of as effects of participating in the program, rather than immutable characteristics of the members. Therefore, we shall have to look separately at the intellectual factors which may be thought of as effects and those which are not modified by program experience.

The prime example of an "effect" characteristic is the "quiz" score, used in the original study. Its properties are described in great detail in our previous report, but for present purposes, all we need to know is this: the quiz consisted of 31 sketches which purported to tap knowledge of liberal arts (e.g., three surprised looking angels plummeting from the clouds to suggest Milton's Paradise Lost) and respondents who identified large numbers of the pictures were given high scores on knowledge. Rather detailed statistical analysis suggested that, controlling for quite a number of other variables, increased exposure to Great Books leads to higher scores on the quiz. Now, after dividing the members into high and low scorers (in terms of the sample median) and sorting groups by their proportion of high scores, we can see whether quiz scores relate to drop-out.

Chart 11

Cartoon Quiz Score and Drop-out

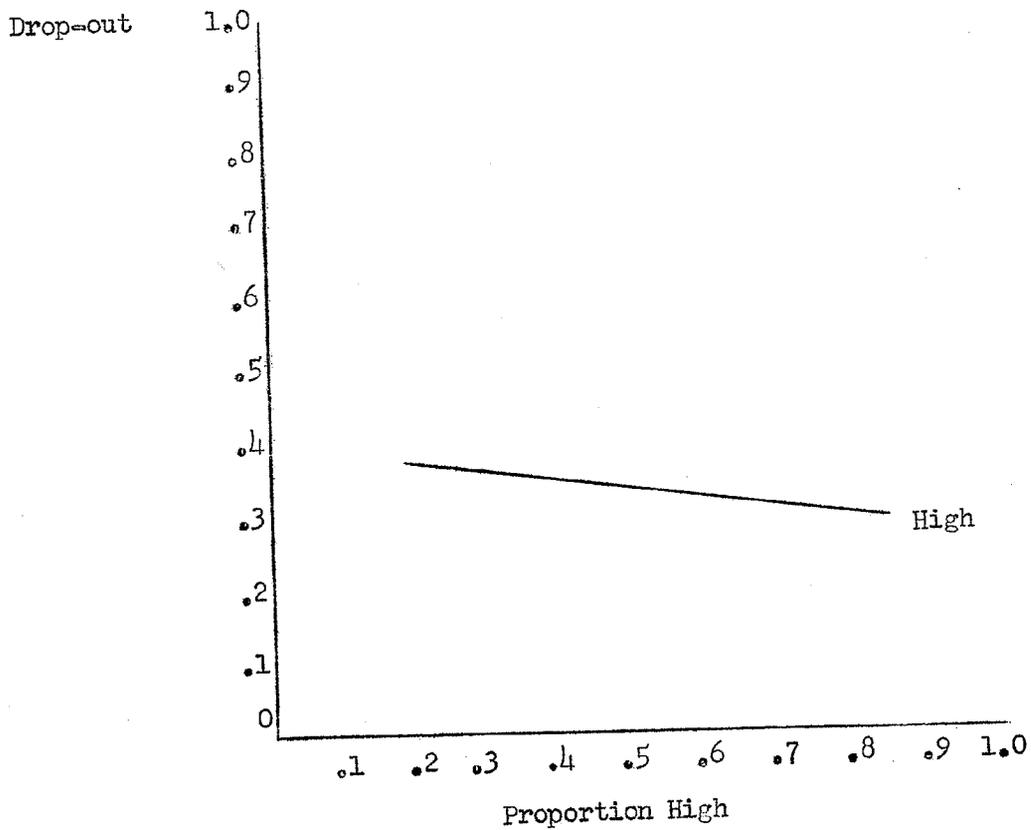
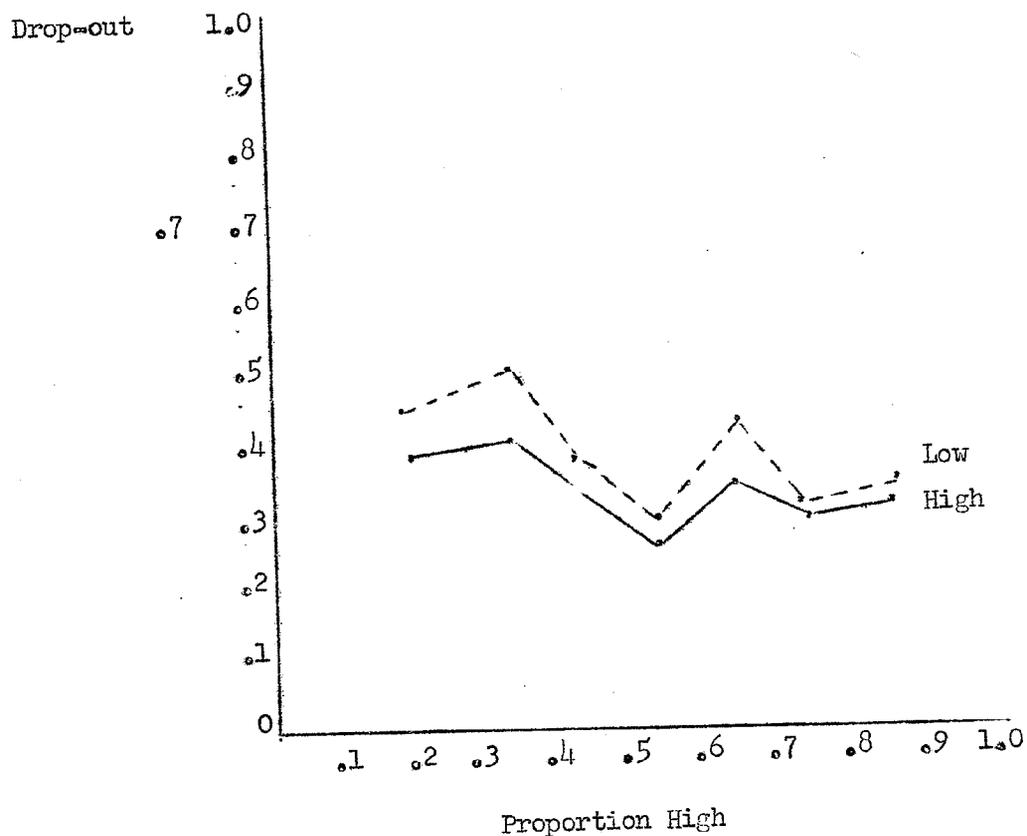
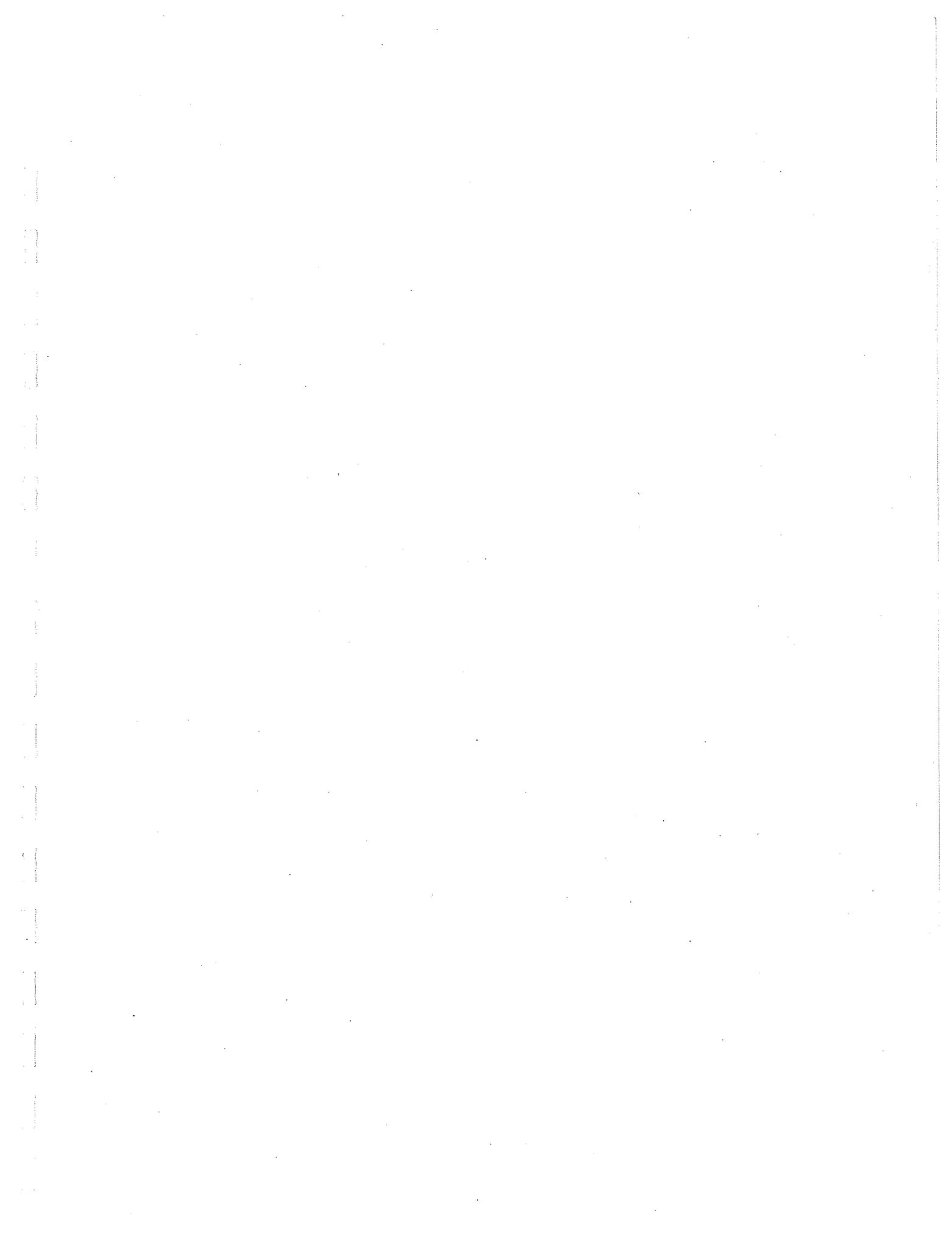


Chart 11, like every one of our "effect" measures shows a sort of mangled version of what we have termed a type III or radiating effect. At each P level, low scorers have higher drop-out rates; and although the form is more meandering than classically linear (the points for the high scorers are linear by our tests, but the ones for the low scorers are not), drop-out rates tend to be lower in groups with high proportions of high scorers. There is some hint that there is an optimum point around .50, but no clear parabolic form is suggested. In short, we can add quiz scores as a further confirmation of our rough generalization that intellectual changes and effects have a general favorable radiating effect on group retention rates.

In terms of our Tinkertoy conceptual model, quiz scores, probably belong over on the right side in the group of variables we have called "Intellectual Change." Quiz scores do have a strong relationship with the other CAS characteristics, and if we dichotomize groups as high or low in proportions of high scorers, we find that the Q measures of association with contacts, activity, and change in schools are .27, .35, and .40, respectively. Thus, as one would expect this variable shows its strongest relationships on the effect side of our model. We shall not present the detailed data here, but when we treat quiz scores in the fashion of Table 16, we find that the group level difference holds in 11 of the 16 comparisons, which suggests that quiz scores themselves add a little, although not much to the CAS process.

The data controlling for quiz scores do, however, provide some slight reinforcement to our interpretation of the problem of the +- group, the group with high outside contacts, but low activity, and



If we think of quiz scores as one of the intellectual changes produced by discussion, we may make the following hypothesis:

- 1) In groups which have high activity and high change in schools and/or high increase in knowledge, outside contacts lead to greater retention.
- 2) In groups which have low activity, low change in schools, and low increase in knowledge, outside contacts make no difference or lead to lesser retention.

In short, we would advance the hypothesis (and it is only that) that the CAS process can lead to several different types of intellectual changes, and that if any of them occur, outside contacts are favorable for group retention, but if none of them occur, outside contacts are an unfavorable sign.

Another measure of intellectual prowess is provided by our index of reading quality. We have several different measures of the degree of intellectual challenge of the participants' reading. Since most of them show the same general type of relationship, we shall report on only one, "Level of most worthwhile book." This index was constructed as follows. Each respondent was asked "What book or books - outside of Great Books readings - which you read in the last year impressed you as particularly worthwhile?" The study director provided an impressionistic rating of the degree of intellectual challenge of the books. Respondents were divided into upper-middle or highbrows (readers of Camus, Froust, Strindberg, etc.) and middlebrows (readers of James Gould Cozzens, Edna Ferber, Peter Marshall, etc.), no lowbrows being detected by the measuring device. Groups were ordered by their proportion of middlebrows. Chart 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ shows the results in terms of drop-out.

Chart 12

Level of Most Worthwhile Book and Drop-out

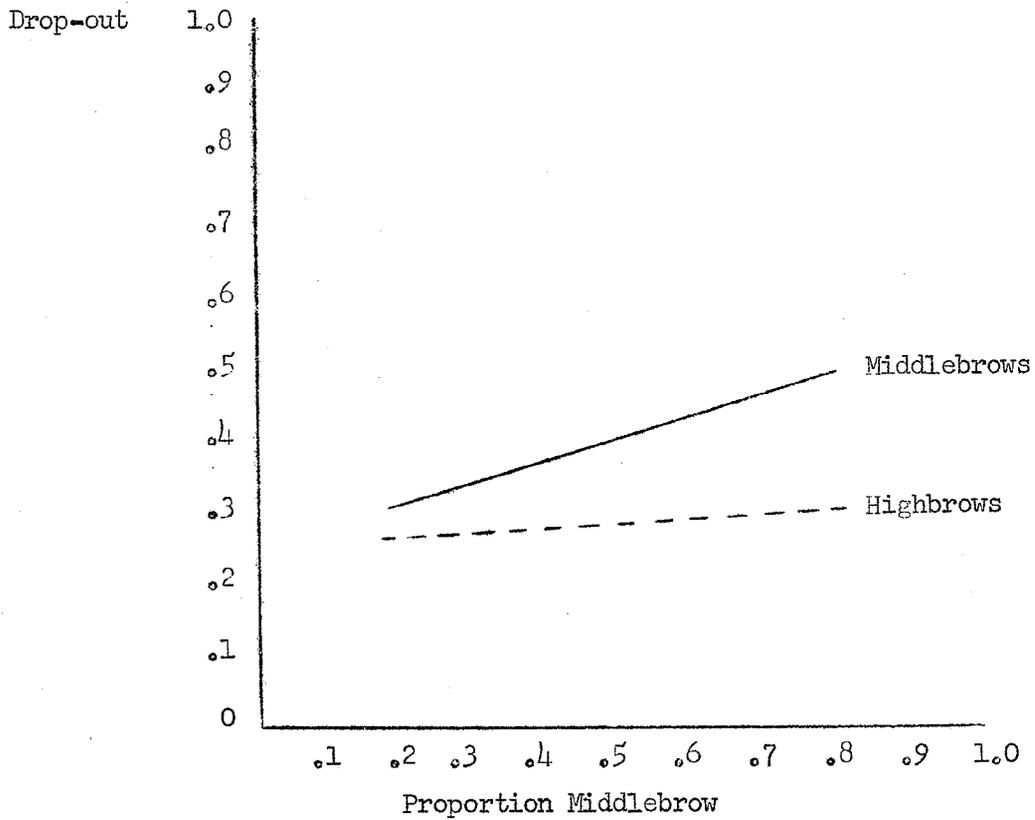
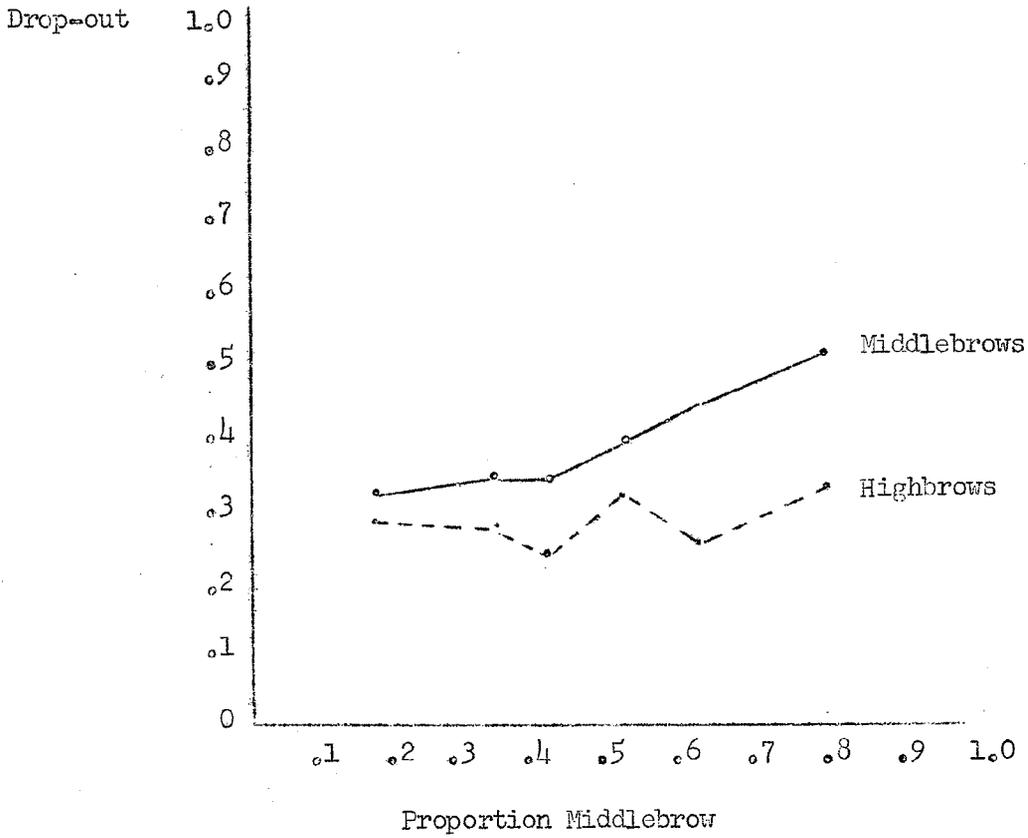


Chart 12 is the first example we have reported of a type IV, or differential effect relationship. As we noted above, the type IV situation is characterized by a differential impact of group composition on the two sub-classes of individuals. Let's begin with the upper-middle and highbrows, for convenience calling them by the latter term. At each P level, we find that highbrows have a greater retention rate. Thus, people whose outside readings are more in line with their inside readings are more likely to stay in the program. When we examine the line for the highbrows we find little or no variation, and although the best fitting line tips a little, our statistical analysis warns us that we have little reason to believe that the line isn't parallel to the P axis. In sum, highbrows tend, as individuals, to stay with the program and to show little reaction to the reading level of their groups. Middlebrows, however, show a rather strong reaction to composition. We can think of it in either of two ways. The more middlebrows, the greater loss among middlebrows, or the more highbrows the greater the retention of middlebrows. The choice between the two interpretations is perfectly arbitrary, but we rather prefer the latter, if only because it has a sort of optimistic ring. It suggests that although middlebrows are a fairly bad risk, groups with high levels of reading sophistication tend to hold their less sophisticated readers better than those with fewer highbrow readers.

Analysis of the relationships between brow composition and the other components of our analysis suggests that the reading variable is an independent contributor. That is, the group

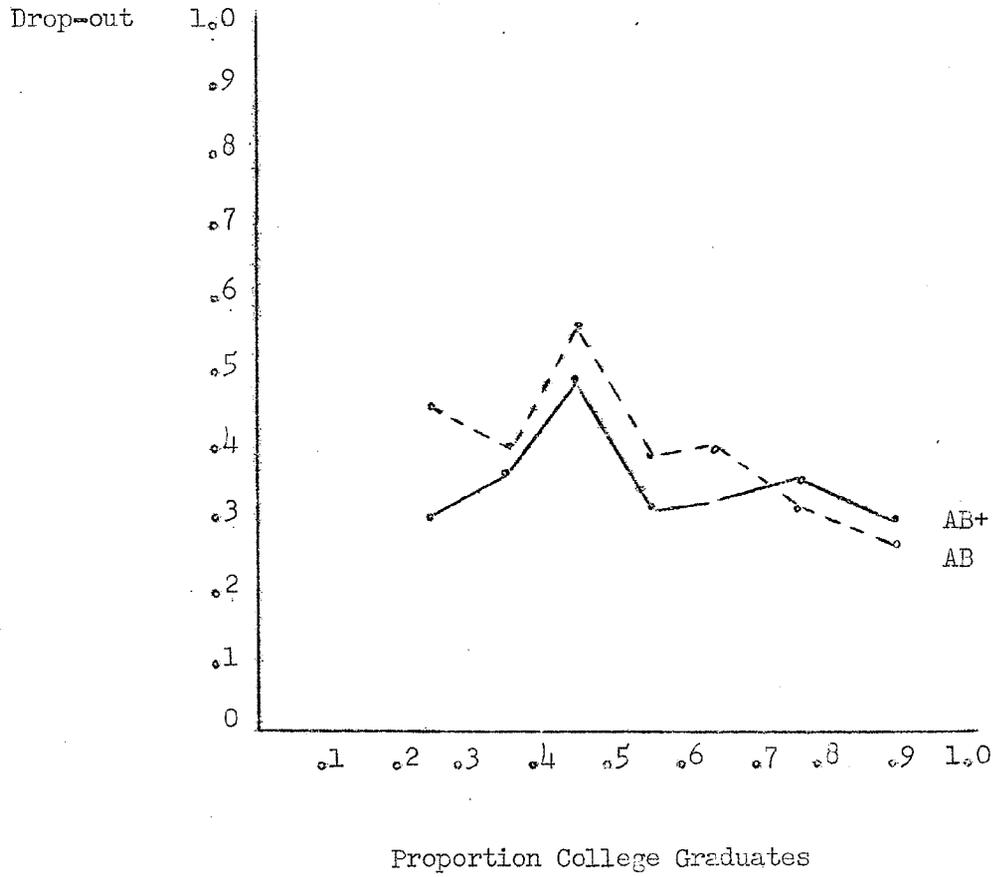
level Q coefficients between proportion middlebrow and contacts, activity, schools, and status are $-.12$, $.03$, $-.13$, and $-.09$.

Since reading composition is essentially independent of the other elements in the scheme, the reading effect is not a function of the relationship of the other elements to drop-out, and we may think of this factor as an independent contributor.

Our final cerebral characteristic is education. In most surveys education is the research worker's best friend. Compared with attitudes and personality characteristics its measurement is quite reliable, and its implications are vague enough so that the survey analyst may interpret its meaning in almost any fashion which seems agreeable: as an indicator of social status, or level of culture, or even native intelligence. Furthermore, it almost always correlates. However, this time, although we get a correlation, the operation of educational composition on Great Books groups turns out to be a very tricky thing indeed. In Chart 13, we see the relationships between educational composition, individual education, and drop-out. The respondents are divided into those with the bachelor's degree or more, and those with less than a bachelor's degree, and groups are arranged in terms of their proportion of A.B.'s.

Chart 13

Education and Drop-out



Overall, with the exception of the very highest P levels, we find that drop-out rates are higher among the less educated. This is still another instance of the general finding that the tendency in program retention is "them as has, gets," that is, drop-out is lower among those people and groups which show higher scores on measures of intellectual background, orientation, and skill. However, when we look at the compositional effects, they turn out to be curvilinear. For both classes of individuals drop-out rates rise as P increases to around .45 and then decline steadily as P increases beyond .50. The relationship is thus distinctly curvilinear. In Chart 13 we have not fitted a smooth curve to the data because the "bend" is too sharp to get a good fit with our standard kit of curves. However, it is clear that the relationships belong to the general family of parabolas.

Thus, in general it would appear that for education, drop-out varies with the homogeneity of the group. Groups which have about a 50-50 split between college graduates and non-college graduates seem to have the worst records; groups with high or low proportions of college graduates seem to do pretty well. Put this way, the suggestion is that while degree of "preparation" affects individual drop-out rates, evenness of preparation influences group drop-out rates. Before we settle on this hypothesis, however, let us look at the relationships between education and other elements in our model.

We have quite a way to go, but let us start by looking at the relationships between educational composition, and the CAS variables, using the format of Table 15.

Table 19

Group Level Inter-relations of Contacts, Activity,
Change in Schools, and Educational Composition
Per Cent of Groups with P (A.B.) of .50 or Greater

Contacts	Schools	19a Activity	
		More Active	Less Active
+	+	87 (30)*	73 (15)
+	-	81 (16)	67 (21)
-	+	67 (18)	77 (26)
-	-	46 (13)	79 (33)

Activity	Schools	19b Contacts	
		High Contacts	Lower Contacts
+	+	87 (30)	67 (18)
+	-	81 (16)	46 (13)
-	+	73 (15)	77 (26)
-	-	67 (21)	79 (33)

Contacts	Activity	19c Change in Schools	
		High Change	Lower Change
+	+	87 (30)	81 (16)
+	-	73 (15)	67 (21)
-	+	67 (18)	46 (13)
-	-	77 (26)	79 (33)

*Numbers in parentheses equal the number of groups.

Change in Schools is fairly straight-forward. In three out of the four comparisons high change groups tend to be high education groups, and the one reversal is very small. However, Tables 19a and 19b are somewhat more complicated. In 19a, we notice that in the top two rows active groups are more likely to be high education groups, but in the bottom two rows, active groups are less likely to be high education groups. Likewise, in Table 19b, we note that in the first two rows, high contact groups tend to be high education groups, but in the last two rows high contact groups tend to be low education groups. Since the difference be-

tween the first two and last two rows in Table 19a is a difference in contacts, and the difference between the first two and last two rows in Table 19b is a difference in activity, the tables strongly suggest that something complicated is happening. We can see what it is in a much more straight-forward fashion, by temporarily ignoring change in schools.

Table 19d

Education and Activity, Controlling for Contacts
Per Cent of Groups which are High on Activity

	P, Education	%	N
High Contacts	.70+	70	(37)
	.50-.69	52	(25)
	.40-.49	38	(8)
	0 -.39	33	(12)
Low Contacts	.70+	24	(21)
	.50-.69	30	(43)
	.40-.49	50	(12)
	0 -.30	50	(14)

What appears to be happening is this. In high contact groups, activity increases with educational level. In low contact groups, activity decreases with educational level. The relationship is perfectly symmetrical, so we can reverse the order of the variables and reach the same sort of conclusion.

Table 20

Contacts and Activity, Controlling for Education

P Education	Q Association between Contacts and Activity	
	Q	N
.70+	.76	58
.50-.69	.43	68
.40-.49	-.38	20
0 -.39	-.33	26

From this alternative perspective, the results read as follows: Among groups with high educational levels, outside contacts lead to higher activity levels, among groups with lower educational levels, outside contacts lead to lower activity. That the difference exists is fairly clear. Why it exists is a matter of speculation. Our speculation would go as follows. Presumably the amount of "intellectualism" in the members' outside contacts differs according to the educational level of the people involved. Among those with college degrees, even though their outside contacts do not approximate those of an eighteenth century salon, the natural patterns of association are likely to involve discussions of ideas, books, plays, etc. When groups of highly educated people then join to discuss the Great Books perhaps they carry over and accentuate patterns of intellectual discussion which already exist outside the group. For the less educated person and group, however, it may be that the intellectual discussions in the program differ considerably from their outside patterns of talk and associations. If so, patterns developed in the outside arena might tend to inhibit free and easy group discussion of intellectual affairs.

Do these findings then imply that our original relationship between educational composition and drop-out can be explained by the relationship between education and the CAS process? No, they do not. Although education has a distinct effect on the workings of the CAS process, by the time the whole thing has ground through everything is cancelled out. Somewhat more specifically, the cancelling out mechanism is in the relationship between outside contacts and education.

Table 21

Per Cent of Groups Which are High on Outside Contacts

P, Education	%	No. of Groups
.70+	64	(58)
.50-.69	37	(68)
.40-.49	40	(20)
0 -.39	46	(26)

There are really too few cases to establish any sort of relationship, but what there are, suggest that the true relationship may be curvilinear. It certainly would be plausible to think that groups which are homogeneous on education have higher rates of outside contacts, since friends tend to be homogeneous on most social characteristics, and we do notice that the highest percentages of outside contacts are in our extreme P groups, although the differences are small. If this interpretation is valid, it takes some of the sting out of the possibly negative effects of the educational differential. Specifically, the groups with a P of .40 show a negative relationship between outside contacts and activity levels. If however, they tend to have low rates of outside contacts, the practical effect will be small. That this may be the case, is suggested by the following:

Table 22

Per Cent of Groups which are High on Activity

P	% High	No. of Groups
.70+	53	(58)
.50-.69	38	(68)
.40-.49	45	(20)
0 -.39	42	(26)

There is no consistent pattern, although the groups with the highest proportions of college graduates do seem to have high activity levels.

In short, it appears that heterogeneity in educational composition may contribute independently toward drop-out rates, since, although educational composition is heavily involved in how CAS operates, it does not seem involved in the net effect of CAS. In order to demonstrate this, however, we need to examine drop-out rates, controlling simultaneously for individual education, educational composition, and CAS composition.

Table 23

Drop-Out, Individual Education, Educational Composition, and CAS
Per Cent Dropping Out

Non-College Graduates			College Graduates											
C	A	S	P Education			C	A	S	P Education					
			0 -	.30	.40-.49	.50+	0 -	.30	.40-.49	.50+				
+	+	-	26	(23)*	71	(14)	26	(100)	0	(10)	64	(11)	19	(305)
+	+	+												
+	-	+	33	(55)	43	(21)	31	(64)	46	(24)	24	(17)	28	(130)
-	+	+												
-	+	-	22	(40)	53	(45)	36	(81)	53	(15)	49	(37)	37	(121)
-	-	+												
-	-	-	73	(55)	60	(35)	48	(124)	23	(22)	58	(26)	42	(287)
+	-	-												

*Numbers in parentheses are the number of individuals upon which the percentages are based.

Attempting to control simultaneously for two types of individuals, three types of educational compositions, and eight types of CAS compositions, leaves us with too few cases in most cells to be of any use. We can improve the situation a little by combining

CAS types into four pairs, but even so, the crucial cells run too thin to draw firm conclusions. This in itself is probably the most important finding, for we note that of the 1662 respondents in Table 23, 73% are in groups with P values of .50 or higher, 15% are in groups with P values of .39 or less, and only 12% are in the danger zone from .40 to .49. Thus, from a practical point of view it is necessary to stress that educational heterogeneity is not a major issue in Great Books retention. However, in terms of a more abstract understanding of how these groups work, the effect of educational composition is a very interesting one.

Taking Table 23 variable by variable, we notice the following: in nine out of twelve comparisons, individuals with bachelor's degrees have lower drop-out rates than individuals with less than a college degree, thus corroborating our belief that on the whole education is a favorable sign, in terms of individual characteristics. In terms of educational composition, eight comparisons are possible, and in five of them the .40-.49 group has a higher drop-out rate. This is true in all but one of the comparisons involving non-college graduates, and in two of the four comparisons among A.B.'s. Somewhat more consistently, we note that in seven out of eight comparisons the .40-.49 groups have higher drop-out rates than the .50+ groups, and the single reversal is only four percentage points. Thus, while the advantage of the 0-.39 groups over the fearsome forties may be spurious (or the number of cases in these cells may be too small to justify any serious conclusions) the advantage of the high P groups

is probably not an artifact of CAS. Finally, we note that in the .50+ comparisons our CAS order holds up well, although in the other compositional groups it is spotty, either because of the effect of the educational composition, or more probably because of the small number of cases per cell.

In short, we actually have too few cases to draw any firm conclusion, but on the whole we find that we cannot get rid of the educational effect by controlling for CAS, and on the whole, it appears as if educational heterogeneity is an independent factor in the retention process.

In Great Books, as elsewhere, education is correlated with social status. When we dichotomize groups as high and low on these two proportions, we find a Q association of .64, which is the highest degree of association among any of our P values.

Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to examine social status and education simultaneously, before we draw any more arrows on our model.

Table 24

Status Composition, Educational Composition,
Education, and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

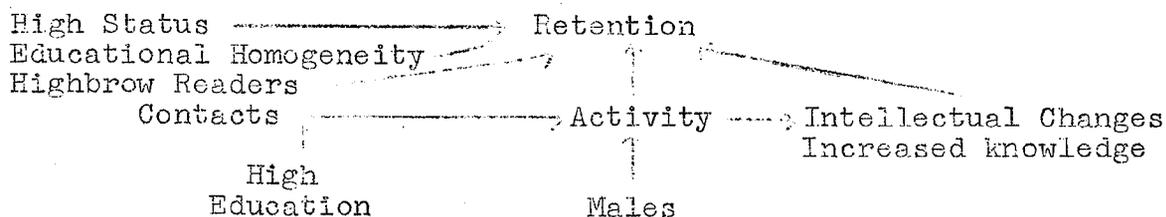
P. Status	Non-Graduates			College Graduates		
	0 - .39	.40-.49	.50+	0 - .39	.40-.49	.50+
.50+	27 (44)*	50 (46)	35 (237)	33(18)	37 (38)	30 (607)
0 -.49	47(129)	59 (69)	38 (129)	35(54)	57 (54)	34 (238)

*Number in parentheses = number of individuals upon which per cent is based.

Table 24, for a change, is pretty simple. In each of the six comparisons drop-out rates are lower in the high status groups; in each of the four comparisons, the relationship between educational composition and drop-out is curvilinear, and in five out of six comparisons, non-graduates have higher drop-out rates than college graduates. Thus, we conclude that status and educational composition contribute to group retention independently of each other.

It is not easy to summarize the effect of intellectual variables as a group, since each behaves in a different fashion, and the fashions tend toward the more complicated types of relationships in our classification. On the whole, the net effect of intellectual characteristics is clearly favorable at the individual level. That is, at most of the relevant P levels, there are fewer drop-outs among high quiz scorers, the highbrow readers, and the college educated. However, in terms of group effects, the three characteristics behave in different ways. Quiz scores generally, although not without exception, are a favorable sign in terms of composition; high proportions of highbrows are helpful, but mostly to the non-highbrows in the group; and only in the higher ranges is education a uniformly beneficent group characteristic, educational heterogeneity appearing to be an unfavorable omen.

We can now up-date our model as follows:



We have added educational homogeneity and reading level, as independent contributors, added increased knowledge (quiz scores) to the effect group, and indicated that educational composition affects the contacts-activity mechanism, as well as retention, per se.

Since the main idea of the model is to specify the variables which contribute "independently", it is necessary to conduct detailed statistical analyses of each. Where a given variable, such as reading quality, has a differential effect on sub-classes of individuals, it is necessary to hold constant that variable both on an individual level and on a group level, when testing an additional variable. We do not have enough cases to do this, and so variables which behave differently in different sub-groups will be excluded from further developments of our model. Putting it another way, the elements in our model are limited to variables which show the same sort of relationships in both of their individual sub-classes, that is, variables which apply "across the board."

Let us now turn to the consideration of a new set of variables, ideological positions.

4) Ideological Positions.

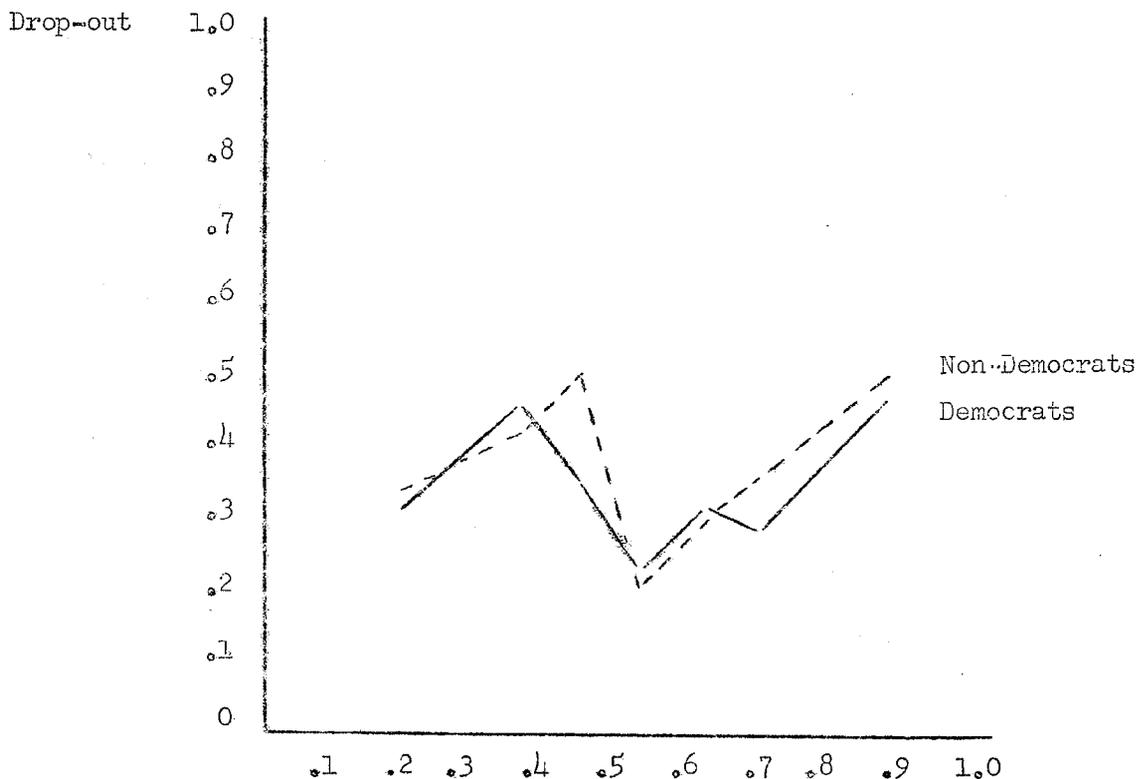
Just as the Great Books groups discuss religion and politics, in this section of our report we want to discuss religion and politics as factors in program retention. We can group them together and set them apart from the other variables because these are a type of membership in which ideological and value considerations are at the forefront. When we sort out members in terms of

their party allegiance or religious affiliation, we can be sure that they will differ in their opinions on many of the readings. Thus, the results we get will shed some light on the role of diversity of values in group discussion. In Part II we will present a very detailed discussion of specific ideological beliefs, but here we will limit ourselves to party and denomination.

In terms of political party preference, our original study found a fairly equal division between the major parties, 48% Democrats, 41% Republicans, and 10% independents. In order to simplify our analysis, independents are combined with Republicans, so that each member can be scored as a Democrat or non-Democrat, and each group scored in terms of its proportion of Democrats. Chart 14 summarizes the relationship with drop-out.

Chart 14

Political Preference and Drop-out



The most important, and only unambiguous conclusion here is that there are no simple linear relationships. There is no individual level difference between Democrats and non-Democrats in their drop-out rates. Likewise there is no simple increase or decrease in drop-out as the proportion of Democrats varies. This suggests that political position or orientation in itself is unimportant for program retention. Despite certain speculations voiced about the curriculum of the program, we see no tendency for either national political persuasion to cling tenaciously or abandon ship.

At the same time, it appears that the blend or mix of political position within the group is an important factor. In the .50-.59 group we find a low drop-out rate near 20% and at around .35 and .85 we find high rates near 50%. The form of the function is one which is not, however, in our tidy catalogue, and it is difficult to draw any simple conclusion. One way of looking at it might be as follows: the low drop-out rates are near the .50-.50 mark, or where "sides" are about equal, while the high drop-out rates occur in groups split into majority, minority sub-groups. One may speculate that equal division on politics would tend to result in vigorous discussion, while an unequal division would result in the majority dominating the minority and neither sub-group feeling that a fair opportunity for discussion had been achieved.

If this speculation has any merit, we should see some sort of relationship between political composition and the CAS mechanism, which we have hypothesized as a process for developing vigorous discussion and intellectual changes. We do not have enough cases

to pay any attention to the lower drop-out rates below .30, so we will merely contrast the .50-.59 group with the other types containing more and fewer Democrats. The former group we will call politically diverse, the latter politically homogeneous.⁴

Let us now see whether diversity relates to outside contacts, activity, and change in schools.

Table 25

Political Composition, Contacts, Activity,
and Change in Schools

% of Groups which are High on...	Proportion Democrat		
	0 -.49	.50-.69	.70+
Outside Contacts	47	40	62
Activity	40	51	47
Change in Schools	46	60	53
Number of groups	85	55	32

Comparing the diverse 50's with their homogeneous neighbors, we see some differences. The diverse groups are higher on change, higher on activity, but lower on outside contacts. The differences are slight, but they suggest that further mining may be profitable.

Remembering that on the whole, high rates of outside contacts lead to high activity, and noting that diverse groups are slightly higher on activity and slightly lower on outside contacts, let us look at political composition, outside contacts and activity.

⁴The terminology here is, we admit, a little deceptive. Actually, of course, groups with P's of .30-.49 are just as diverse as groups with P's of .50-.69, from a formal mathematical point of view. By diversity we really refer to slight Democratic majorities, since the .30-.49 groups have quite high drop-out rates.

Table 26

Outside Contacts, Political Diversity, and Activity

Outside Contacts	Per Cent of Groups High on Activity	
	Political Type	
	Diverse	Homogeneous
High	55 (22)*	57 (60)
Low	48 (33)	26 (57)

*Number in parentheses is the number of groups upon which percentage is based.

There is a fair difference in Table 26, and we have two alternative ways of interpreting it. On the one hand, we can say that political composition seems to affect activity differently in high and low outside contact groups. In groups with high outside contacts, political diversity makes no difference at all. In low contact groups, however, diversity appears to lead to higher activity. This makes a certain amount of sense. For groups who already know each other well, political diversity is probably only one of a large number of social characteristics which affect their relations with each other. However, for the low outside contact groups, political diversity may provide the spark necessary to get a vigorous discussion going.

An alternative, but not contradictory formulation is to say that groups will have high activity rates if they know each other well and/or are politically diverse. Conversely, a group will have a low activity rate if it is politically homogeneous and is low on social bondedness.

In short, it appears that political composition, like education, intervenes in the contacts-activity corner of our model. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to plug in education here.

Table 27

Education, Outside Contacts, Political Composition, and Activity

Outside Contacts	Per Cent of Groups High on Activity			
	P Education		P Education	
	0 - .49		.50+	
	Diverse	Homogeneous	Diverse	Homogeneous
High	- (2)*	39 (18)	60 (20)	64 (42)
Low	78 (9)	35 (17)	38 (24)	22 (40)

*Number in parentheses is the number of groups upon which the percentage is based.

The number of variables here is breathing down the neck of the number of cases, but we can learn a little more from Table 27 than we could by speculating about what might happen. To begin with we note that our conclusions about the relations among outside contacts, political diversity, and activity are unchanged. If we look at the bottom row of Table 27 we see that in both educational levels, there is more activity among diverse groups in those groups with low outside contacts. Among the high contact groups, however, there is no relationship in the only educational level with enough cases to examine.

How about our previous finding that the relationship between contacts and activity reverses direction in different educational types? In the high educational levels, we certainly see that high contacts relate to high activity, for in both political types there is a strong difference between the rows. We just don't have enough cases to tell much in the low education group. However, another inference suggests that the reversal is there. Let us look at low contact groups (the bottom row of Table 27), and

compare groups which have the same political type. We notice that among low contact groups, activity is higher in the low education groups. However, when we turn to the top row, we note that the opposite is true. The high education groups both have higher activity percentages than the single low education cell with enough cases to percentage. Thus, although we can't tell whether the correlation between activity and contacts reverses in the low education groups, we do see that the correlation between education and activity reverses in different contact groups, which amounts to the same thing.

We can now sum up our findings on variables which intervene in the contacts-activity process:

- 1) Over-all, high rates of outside contacts lead to higher proportions of members active in the discussion.
- 2) When, however, one controls for educational composition, one finds that in high education groups contacts lead to activity, but in low education groups, outside contacts appear to inhibit activity, inference (1) being a spurious function of the fact that most Great Books groups have high proportions of A.B.'s.
- 3) Political composition plays little role among the high contact groups, but among low contact groups, political diversity appears to be associated with high activity, regardless of the educational level.

One might speculate that if one had a free hand in arranging the composition of the discussion groups, the best strategies to maximize activity might be as follows:

- 1) If most of the members will be college graduates, try to arrange groups among people who already know each other, and ignore their political composition.
- 2) If most of the members will be non-college graduates, try to arrange groups of people who are strangers to each other and have slight majorities of Democrats.

Our final question about political composition and CAS

is whether diversity has any relationship with change in schools, other than that accounted for by its role as an energizer of discussion activity in the low contact groups. The answer is maybe.

Table 28

Political Diversity and Change in Schools,
Controlling for Outside Contacts and Activity

Outside Contacts	Activity	Per Cent Diverse	
		High Change	Low Change
+	+	37 (30)*	6 (16)
+	-	33 (15)	24 (21)
-	+	50 (18)	55 (13)
-	-	31 (26)	27 (33)

*Number in parentheses is the number of groups upon which percentage is based.

The difference holds in three out of four rows, but is only striking in the top row, hence, we would be loath to draw any conclusion beyond noting that political diversity certainly does not lower change in schools and may raise it a little.

We are now ready to ask whether political diversity contributes to program retention independently, or only through its influence on the CAS process.

Table 29

Political Diversity and Drop-Out, Controlling for CAS
Per Cent Dropping Out

C	A	S	Diverse	Homogeneous	Per Cent Diverse	N***
+	+	-	25 (12)*	18 (149)	6	16
+	+	+	21 (93)	27 (219)	37	30
+	-	+	25 (53)	34 (99)	33	15
-	+	+	15 (84)	46 (82)	50	18
-	+	-	27 (81)	51 (55)	55	13
-	-	+	29 (85)	37 (172)	31	15
-	-	-	39 (92)	48 (255)	27	33
+	-	-	30 (30)	63 (169)	24	21

*Number in parentheses is the number of individuals upon which the percentage is based.

**N = number of groups upon which the percentage is based.

Table 29 is really two tables in one. On the right side we see the relationship between political diversity (by which we must remember we mean slight Democratic majorities) and the CAS types, computed at the group level. The relationship is curvilinear. CAS types with very high or very low drop-out rates tend to be homogeneous, while types with average drop-out rates tend to be disproportionately politically diverse.

The left side of the table tells us about individual drop-outs. The story is fairly simple. In all but one of the comparisons members of diverse groups have lower drop-out rates, regardless of the CAS type. Within a political composition type, we find that the CAS drop-out order holds pretty well among the homogeneous groups, but among the diverse groups the effects are reduced. Among the diverse groups the highest drop-outs are toward the bottom of Table 29, but the differences are small. However,

when we apply our comparison count, we find that out of eight possible comparisons, the contact difference holds in six instances, activity in six, and change in schools in seven, thus over-all we can not say that political composition washes out the CAS effects.

In terms of the other components of our model, we find that political composition, when dichotomized in terms of diverse versus homogeneous groups, is not associated with status level, and has a slight negative relationship with educational heterogeneity. Thus, the effect we find cannot be explained by a strong relationship with another independent contributor, and we are ready to add political composition to our group level effects.

However, we should note that we are adding it without any full understanding of how it really works. We are tempted to believe that diversity in political opinion is a favorable characteristic among the Great Books discussion groups. However, if this were the perfect explanation, we would find low drop-outs among the .30-.49 P values, which, in truth, have very high drop-out rates. Thus, the inference must be limited to concluding that slight Democratic majorities have a favorable effect on group retention. The answer seems to be in some sort of balance of political memberships.

If diversity in politics is a good sign, does it then follow that diversity in religion is also? One is tempted to suggest this hypothesis, but we should remember that although we have grouped these two variables together they differ considerably. In politics one agrees to disagree, and one of the major faiths of Americans is in the legitimacy of the two party system. When it comes to religion, despite great tolerance in this nation, there is probably less conviction that differences in religion are merely a matter of taste and preference. With this alibi in mind, let us turn to the data.

The 1958 survey found that 62% of the participants are Protestant, 15% Jewish, 12% "None," 10% Catholic, and 1% Other. This distribution is very much like that found in surveys of the adult population who have one or more years of college, although Great Books may have some excess of "Nones" and Jews, and a slight deficit in Catholics.

In terms of groups, we get the following distribution:

Table 30
Religious Composition of Groups*

	N	% of All Groups
One Religion Only	25	14
All Protestant	23	13
All Jewish	2	1
All Catholic	0	
Two Religions Only	51	29
Protestant and None	21	12
Protestant and Catholic	14	8
Protestant and Jewish	11	6
Jewish and None	4	2
Catholic and None	1	1
Three Religions Only	53	31
Protestant, Catholic, None	24	14
Protestant, Jewish, None	17	10
Protestant, Catholic, Jewish	12	7
Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, None	43	25
	172	99

*The handful of "other" religions have been excluded from this classification.

Although detailed statistical analysis indicates that the groups are much more homogeneous on religion than chance would predict (it also indicates that they are much more homogeneous than chance would predict on almost any variable you can name), there is considerable religious diversity in the groups, only 14% of the groups being of one single religious position, and 25% of the groups including at least one spokesman of each of the four positions in question. We note, however, that not all types of mixtures occur with considerable frequency. Thus, only 5 groups (3% of the groups in the sample) include a mixture of religions, but have no Protestants. Hence, the diversity of composition is

essentially that of different mixtures of non-Protestants in groups which have one or more Protestants, 93% of the groups having one or more Protestant members. This asymmetry is going to turn out to be of some importance in considering religious composition.

The simplest test of what may be dignified by the title of the diversity hypothesis is to count the number of religious positions in each group and then look at the drop-out rates in groups which vary in this number. That is, for the moment we will not work with proportions, but rather, assume that the presence of one or more members of a given faith (or non-faith) enables that position to have a hearing. Obviously, the situation will vary with the personalities and numbers of spokesmen, but this simple index provides a good beginning point for our analysis. As in our usual mode of tabulation, we shall hold constant the individual level attribute.

Table 31

Religious Diversity and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Number of Positions Represented in the Group	Individual Religious Preference			
	Protestant	Catholic	Jewish	None
1	45 (190)*	-	59 (17)	-
2	27 (270)	44 (25)	53 (30)	52 (64)
3	35 (280)	34 (65)	30 (82)	24 (67)
4	37 (239)	38 (66)	39 (107)	35 (82)

*Number in parentheses is the number of individuals upon whom the percentage is based.

Here is some support for the diversity hypothesis. We note that for the only two religions with completely homogeneous groups (Protestants and Jews) that drop-out is higher in the unanimous situation than in any of the mixed situations. However, we also notice that the effect is not consistent enough to justify the simple proposition that retention increases with diversity. For one thing, there is a slight but consistent tendency for higher drop-outs in the fourth row (Protestant-Catholic-Jewish-None) than in the third. We also note that among Protestants, the best retention rates are in row two, while among the other religions, the third row does best. The differences are not terribly strong, but they do seem to suggest that Protestants react most favorably to a little heterogeneity, while the other religions react more favorably to moderate heterogeneity, and extreme diversity doesn't help any of the four.

The question now arises of whether certain qualitative combinations enter into the picture, in addition to the purely quantitative variable represented by the number of positions to be found in the group. We can look at this by ranking the combinations in terms of drop-out rates, separately for the four positions.

Table 32

Religious Composition and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Group Type	Protestants	Group Type	Catholics	Group Type	Jews	Group Type	None
P	45 (190)*	PC	43 (23)	JN	69 (16)	JN	55 (11)
P JN	40 (77)	PCJ	43 (28)	J	59 (17)	P N	39 (41)
PCJN	37 (39)	PCJN	38 (66)	PCJ	43 (23)	PCJN	35 (82)
P J	34 (47)	PC N	27 (37)	PCJN	39 (107)	P JN	31 (26)
PCJN	34 (143)			P J	36 (14)	PC N	20 (41)
PCJ	32 (60)			P JN	25 (59)		
P N	30 (138)						
PC	20 (85)						

*Number in parentheses is the number of individuals upon whom the percentage is based.

In Table 32, the group types are summarized by use of capital letters (e.g., PCN means groups consisting of Protestants, Catholics, and Nones), and the types are arranged in order of descending drop-out rates. We can draw a number of conclusions from Table 32.

First, in terms of our diversity hypothesis, we note that among Protestants, the all Protestant groups have higher drop-out rates than any other type; however, among the Jews, although the J type has the second highest drop-out rate, the JN type is slightly higher. Since both are based on a small handful of cases, it is hard to reach a firm conclusion. However, we should note that some of our tabulations suggest, by inference, that a high proportion of the None's are ex-Jews. Therefore, the JN group may be ethnically homogeneous, although it includes two different religious positions according to our index. We also note, that in each of the four groups, there is no simple relation-

ship between drop-out and number of positions represented, the most heterogeneous type (PCJN) being in the middle in each of the four sub-tables.

What about specific qualitative combinations? We can begin with the Catholics. Since all the Catholic combinations include Protestants, we have no evidence on the effect of Protestants on Catholics. However, when we look at Jews and Nones, there is a hint that the presence of "Nones" has a beneficial effect on Catholic drop-out. We can see this possible trend, by re-casting the data in a fourfold table.

Table 33

Jews, Nones, and Catholic Drop-Out
Per Cent of Catholics Dropping Out

		Jews	
		Present	Absent
Nones	Present	38 (66)	27 (37)
	Absent	43 (28)	43 (23)

Table 33 shows a slight increase in Catholic retention in groups where Nones are included, regardless of the presence or absence of Jews, although the difference is small. The presence of Jews, controlling for Nones, shows no consistent effect. We should stress that the number of cases in Table 33 is so small that the results are only suggestive.

We can now apply the same analysis to the Jews and Nones, again considering only groups with one or more Protestants.

Table 34

Catholics, Nones, and Jewish Drop-Out
Per Cent of Jews Dropping Out

		Catholics	
		Present	Absent
Nones	Present	39 (107)	25 (59)
	Absent	43 (23)	36 (14)

Table 35

Jews, Catholics, and Drop-Out Among Nones
Per Cent of Nones Dropping Out

		Jews	
		Present	Absent
Catholics	Present	35 (82)	20 (41)
	Absent	31 (26)	39 (41)

Table 34 shows a slight tendency among the Jews for higher retention when there are Nones in the group, and lower when there are Catholics. However, we remember that the very worst Jewish retention rates are in the JN groups, and hence this must be taken with a grain of salt. Table 35 shows no consistent trends in terms of effects of Jews and Catholics on drop-out among Nones.

Over-all, we find little evidence that combinations of specific religious positions affect program retention, in terms of comparisons among Catholics, Jews, and Nones.

What evidence there is hints that the presence of Nones in a group might have a favorable effect on retention for Catholics, but the effect is so small, in comparison with other

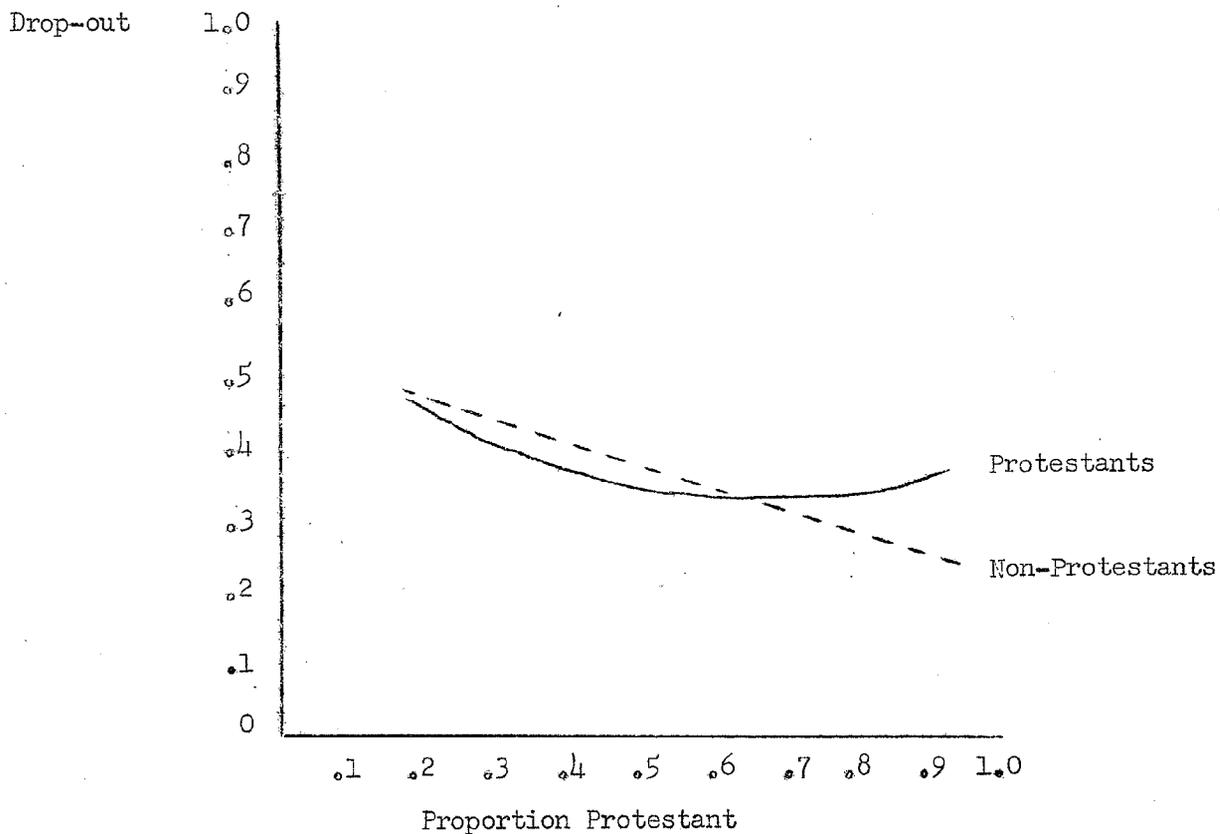
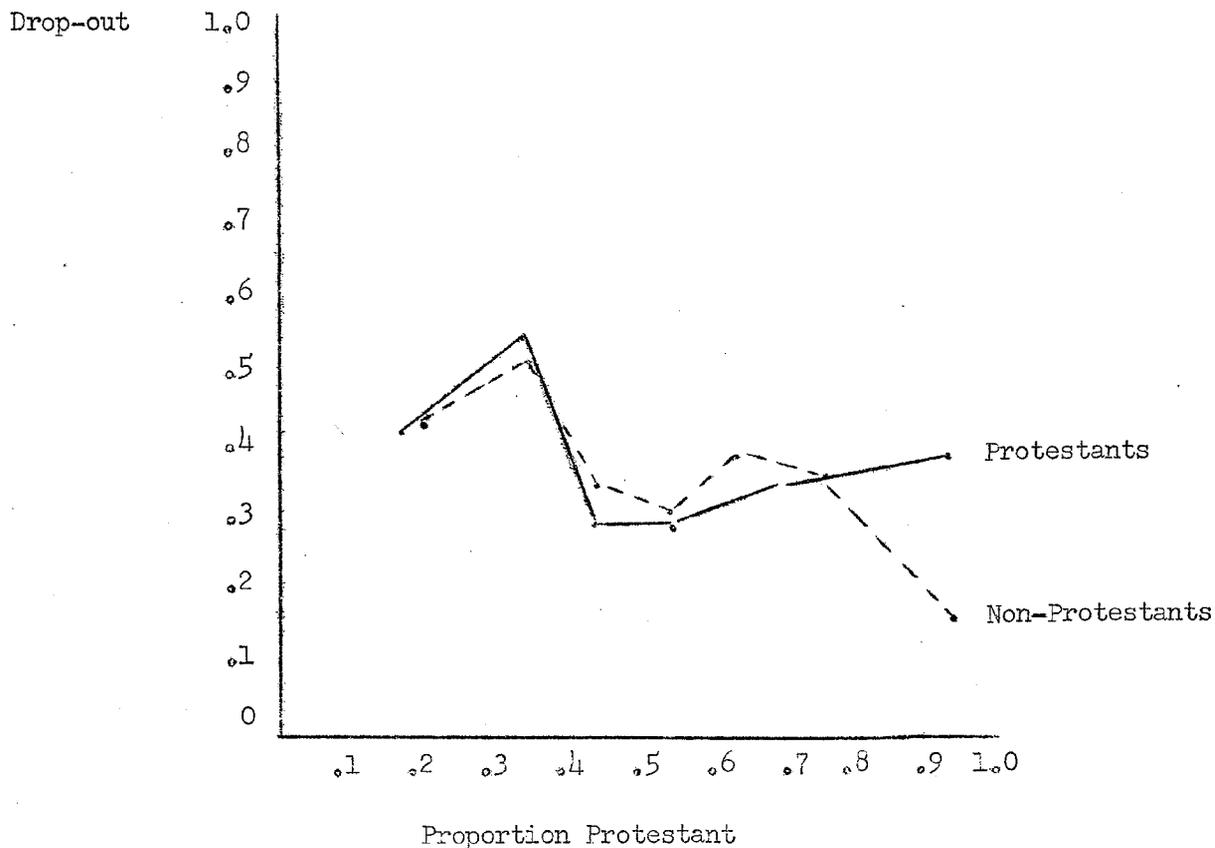
compositional variables, that we need not consider it seriously.

A similar analysis, examining the effect of the presence or absence of minority (Catholic-Jewish-None) spokesman on the retention of Protestants can be performed by re-arranging the materials in the left-hand column of Table 32. The arrangement is left as a homework assignment for the reader, but the result is that there is no consistent effect of minority spokesman on the drop-out of Protestants (although our entire story has not been told).

To sum up: it looks as if the presence of one or more members of a different faith is a favorable sign in terms of retention, although retention is not a straight line function of the number of viewpoints in the group. In terms of specific combinations, we find that the presence or absence of Catholics, Jews, and Nones, has no effect on their retention or, apparently, on the retention of Protestants.

One logical possibility has been left out, however. What about the effect of Protestants on other religions? Since 93% of the groups have one or more Protestants, our simple presence-absence index is of limited value here, and we will consider this problem in terms of our standard graph, dividing members into Protestants and Non-Protestants, and classifying groups in terms of their proportion of Protestants.

Religion and Drop-out



Here is a rather different story. Both Protestants and Non-Protestants seem to show a compositional effect. The effects are not the same though. For Non-Protestants, drop-out decreases as the proportion of Protestants increases. That is, the presence of Protestants tends to increase the retention of Non-Protestants. This is in accord with the diversity hypothesis, for among Non-Protestants, the greater number of Protestants can be thought of as an increase in the number of people who have a different religious position. If the hypothesis were correct, however, drop-out rates for Protestants should increase with the number of Protestants. Not so, although what they do is a little mysterious. The best fitting line we can get is a parabola, which suggests higher Protestant drop-outs at the two extremes. However, our statistical tests tell us that although the parabola gives a good fit it does not account for much of the variation in drop-out scores among the Protestants. In simpler terms, our statistical tests tell us that a straight line will not fit the Protestant data, and although a curve will fit, the curve doesn't do a good job of describing what happens.

One attack on this problem would be to imagine what would happen if two propositions were true: (1) Unanimous agreement with one's religious position is bad for retention and (2) The presence of Protestants is good for retention. Now, if so, what would we expect to find? Among Non-Protestants, we would find that drop-out decreased with P , for as P increases there are more Protestants (Proposition 2) and less chance that the group will agree with one's religious position (Proposition 1). However, among Protestants, we would expect a rise in retention as P moved from zero

to .5 (Proposition 2), but after .5 retention should decrease, as more and more of the group tend to agree with a given Protestant member's position. The net effect of these two hypotheses should be two curves rather like those in Chart 15 (and no wonder, since the hypotheses were deduced to explain Chart 15).

When we put all these things together, we have still further support for the diversity hypothesis, although not for the reasoning which led us to it. If in groups with low proportions of Protestants, we find high drop-out among both groups; in groups fairly evenly divided we find medium drop-out among both groups; and in groups with high proportion of Protestants, low drop-out among Non-Protestants and high drop-out among Protestants, the net effect should be to give low over-all drop-out rates for groups which are diverse in their religious composition. The data support this inference.

Table 36
Per Cent Dropping Out, by Religious Composition

	Proportion Protestant		
	0 - .39	.40-.59	.60+
Per Cent	44	31	36
No. of individuals	293	449	850

This then is the case for religious diversity, and we note that unlike political diversity, it may be of practical significance, since 29% of the members are in the diverse groups which appear to be benefitting from this process.

Our labors are about to go for nought, though, for in order to prove our case we should show that religious composition

still relates to program retention, when we control for our other variables: CAS, status, education, and political composition. This is necessary only, however, if religious composition is related to these variables, and it is.

Table 37

Religious Composition and Other
Correlates of Retention

Per Cent of Groups Which are High on....

	P Protestant		
	0 - .39	.40-.69	.70+
Political Diversity	26	37	32
Educational Diversity	26	11	7
Activity	38	46	46
Contacts	41	43	55
Change in Schools	47	57	49
Status	53	54	72
No. of groups	34	67	71

Regardless of the variable in consideration, the low Protestant group appears disadvantaged. Fewer of them show political diversity, activity, outside contacts, or change in schools, and more of them show educational diversity. The net result is that by controlling almost any of these, we can make our religious trends disappear. We shall not go through the entire analysis, but present the summary tables.

Table 3.8

Religious Composition and Drop-Out, Controlling
for Individual Religious Preference and
Group Characteristics
Per Cent Dropping Out

Type of Group P. Prot.	Protestants			Non-Protestants		
	0-.39	.40-.69	.7+	0-.39	.49-.69	.7+
<u>P. Democrat</u>						
0-.49	77 (22)*	38 (205)	36 (308)	69 (68)	35 (161)	37 (46)
.50-.69	14 (14)	28 (134)	29 (159)	19 (53)	32 (110)	12 (26)
.70+	38 (24)	39 (33)	43 (79)	40 (112)	37 (30)	- (7)
<u>P. Education</u>						
0-.39	64 (11)	25 (63)	64 (58)	49 (37)	20 (54)	- (7)
.40-.49	69 (13)	56 (34)	48 (44)	62 (65)	35 (31)	- (6)
.50+	33 (36)	33 (276)	30 (444)	31 (127)	37 (216)	32 (66)
<u>P. Status</u>						
0-.49	51 (37)	35 (177)	57 (134)	36 (130)	38 (137)	37 (19)
.50+	39 (23)	32 (196)	28 (412)	53 (103)	30 (164)	27 (60)
<u>CAS</u>						
(+++)(++-)	- (8)	32 (99)	21 (193)	5 (39)	25 (87)	19 (16)
(+-+)(-++)	50 (12)	28 (79)	29 (70)	44 (59)	25 (57)	20 (15)
(--+)(---)	45 (11)	41 (90)	33 (127)	44 (43)	41 (71)	21 (24)
(---)(+--)	59 (29)	34 (105)	56 (156)	60 (92)	43 (86)	50 (24)

*Number in parentheses is the number of individuals upon whom the percentage is based.

Table 3.8 combines four separate tables. We will begin with political composition. Our original analysis suggested that groups with between 50 and 70% Democrats have very good retention experience. Reading across in Table 3.8, we find that in each religious situation, the conclusion still holds. Hence, religion does not wash out political composition. However, among the Protestants, we no longer find a drop-out difference between the low and mediums and between the mediums and highs. Among the Non-Protestants we have too few cases in one of the crucial cells, but in politically diverse groups, at least, Non-Protestant retention

no longer increases with the proportion of Protestants.

Turning now to education, we remember that we have seen high drop-out in the .40-.49 range. In four out of five comparisons the .40-.49 drop-out is higher than the 0-.39, and in four out of five also it is higher in the .40-.49 groups than in the .50 or greater. Thus, religion does not wash out education. However, among the Protestants we find that the low-middle difference holds in only two out of three, and the middle-high in only one out of three. Among the Non-Protestants, the compositional effect washes out in the high education groups, although it may be present in the other two education levels.

Next is status. In five out of six comparisons the predicted retention advantage holds, but the predicted religious effect only appears among Protestants in low status groups and Non-Protestants in high status groups.

Finally, we turn to CAS. We notice that with only a few exceptions our familiar CAS trend appears in each column, but the predicted religious differences only turn up in about half of the comparisons.

In short, although none of these variables completely eliminates the religious effects, in none of them does religious composition maintain a consistent pattern of the type predicted from our analysis.

To summarize: we have probably given the greatest detailed attention to a variable which turns out to be unimportant when we control for other variables known to be important. Over-all, religious composition either in terms of presence or absence of specific religious positions, or in terms of proportion Protestant

does not seem to be an independent contributor to program retention.

Three qualifications must be made to this conclusion, however.

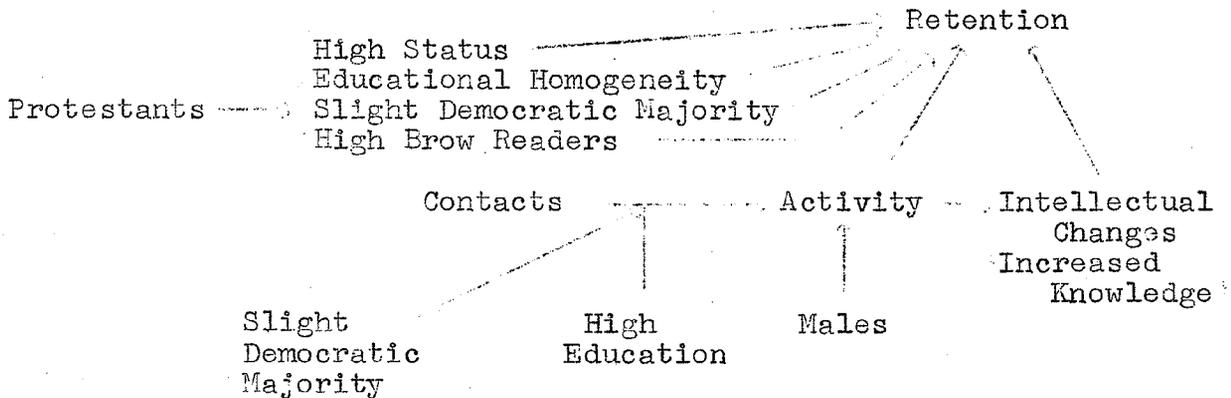
First, Part II will show that, while religion does not amount to much as a group variable, it is an important variable at the level of individual characteristics.

Second, we feel justified in still maintaining that totally Protestant groups are a fairly bad risk. We have already seen that they have high drop-out rates as compared with other possible combinations of positions. Furthermore, the preceding analysis suggests that they tend to be of high status and high education, both of which are favorable signs; hence, their high drop-out rates can not be explained by deleterious positions on other indexes. We can thus save one shred of our diversity hypothesis by suggesting that perfectly homogeneous groups are not to be encouraged, but among not perfectly-homogeneous groups, the nature of the blend of religious positions is not an independent factor in the group level retention process.

Third, it still remains that groups with low proportions of Protestants have high drop-out rates. All other things remaining equal (the most dangerous phrase in the academic world) an increase in the number of low Protestant groups would raise drop-outs in the program, a decrease would raise retention. The point of our analysis is that this would not be because of the religious composition, but rather because these groups would also tend to be low on political diversity, activity, outside contacts,

and status, and high on educational diversity. These factors, presumably, would account for their contribution to drop-out.

In concluding the analysis of ideological memberships as a group level factor in program retention, we can pull things together by putting our two new characteristics into their appropriate parts of the model. Political preference will appear twice; slight Democratic majorities being both an independent contributor to retention, and also an intervening variable in the relationship between outside contacts and activity. Religious composition will have to be placed out in left field, affecting drop-out only through its correlation with other variables. We will place it up with the personal characteristics, because its relationships with the CAS variables, although worth checking in the analysis, are small in comparison with its relationship with the personal characteristics of status, education, and party preference.



5) Outside Interaction

If there is any point which we hope we have made so far, it is that patterns of social interaction within the group have a lot to do with the group's maintenance of its membership. If we think of variables such as outside contacts and activity as inside interaction, that is, interaction within the group, we are led to check into the effect of outside interaction, or the patterns of membership and sociability outside the group. After doing this we can close the books in terms of personal characteristics, and move on to the question of discussion leadership and technique.

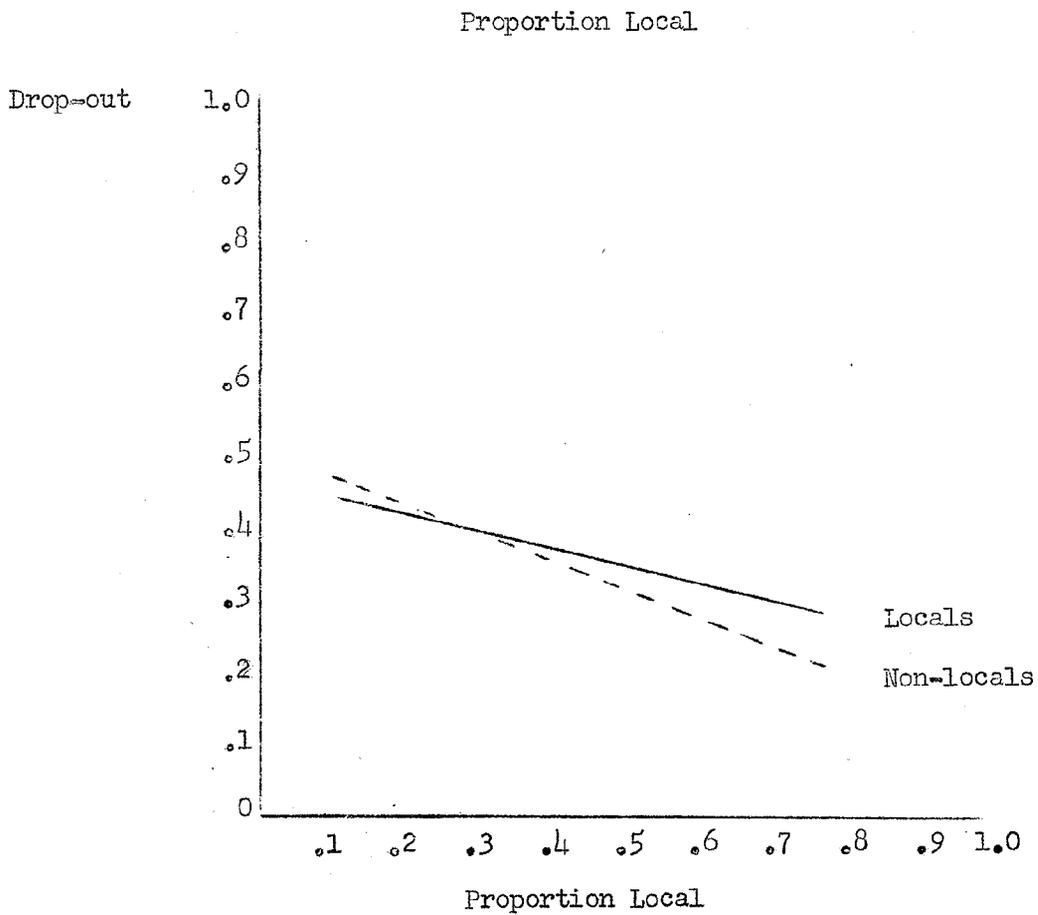
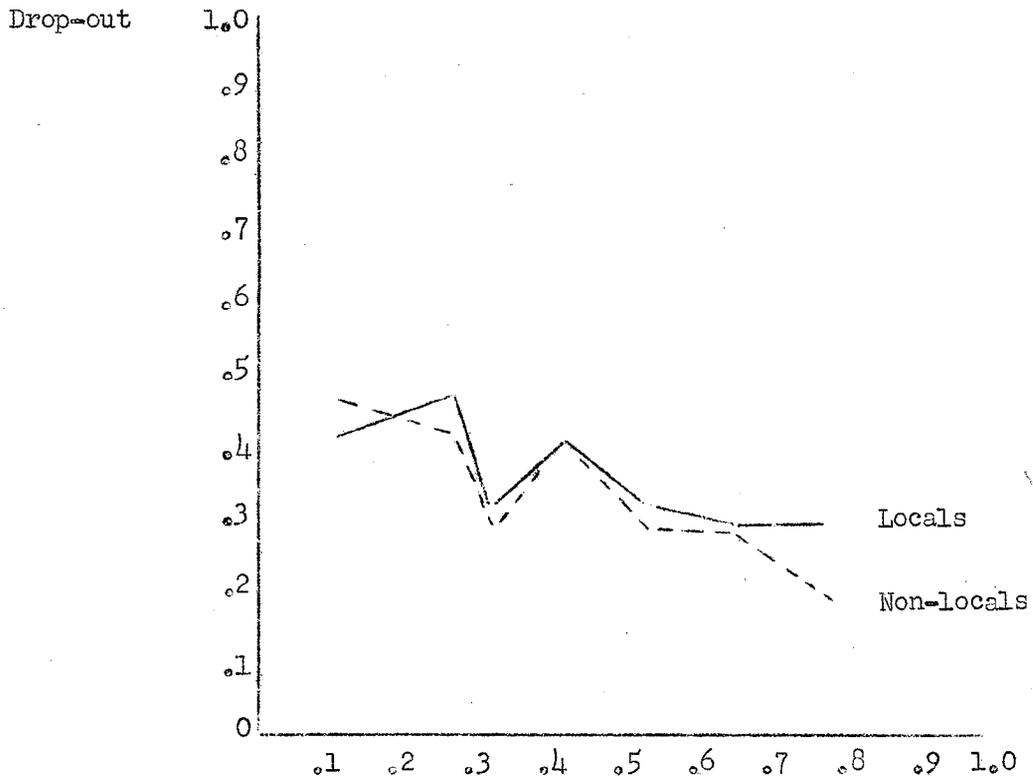
We will here consider three variables: activity in community affairs, interest in community affairs, and frequency of informal visiting. Ahead of time, it is hard to know what to expect. It could be that members who are very active in their communities, either in formal organizations or in informal social affairs, would be drawn into competing interests and their presence in the group would lower its cohesion. It could also be that people who are active outside develop skills in group participation which make them assets to the group or it could be that striking a balance between activists and passivists would be the best formula for producing an effective group.

In the original questionnaire, respondents were asked to rate their interest in local politics, civic organizations, national politics, world affairs, and church activities. Our original aim was to divide the members into those with a purely local orientation and those whose interests were in the national and world spheres. The pattern of inter-relationships of the items

cast doubt on this distinction, since we found that our "locals" had more national and world interests than did those disinterested in the local scene. That is, our original report developed in some detail the idea that among Great Books members extra-local interests are a necessary pre-condition for local interests, not a substitute. Therefore, when we look at the members who were scored as locals, we have a group who report high interest in affairs both in their communities and in the nation and world. Dividing members into local and non-locals, and scoring groups in terms of their proportion local, let us see whether these interests relate to program retention.

Chart 16

Local Interest and Drop-out



It is a long time since we've seen a compositional effect which isn't so complicated that it takes several hundred words to describe. This one is a standard type II relationship, in which retention increases with local interest at the group level, but there is no individual level difference. The greater the proportion of members who have high interests, the better the group does in holding its members. This tends to suggest that the competition hypothesis is false.

Outside interests appear to be effective, but we want to know whether this might be because they affect inside interaction. When we dichotomize groups between those with 40% or more locals versus those with 39% or less, we see that localism tends to be related to activity levels.

Table 39

Localism and Activity, Controlling for Contacts
and Change in Schools
Per Cent High on Local Interest

Contacts	Schools	Active	Less Active
+	+	53 (30)*	44 (18)
+	-	62 (16)	38 (13)
-	+	40 (15)	54 (26)
-	-	62 (21)	52 (33)

*Number in parentheses is the number of groups upon which the percentage is based.

Except for the low contact, high change groups, high local interest goes with high activity. Why there is this one exception, we do not know, but in spite of it, the relationship is strong enough so that when we control for CAS, the original relationship between local interest and retention evaporates.

Table 40

Local Interest and Drop-Out, Controlling for CAS
Per Cent Drop-Out

C A S	: Proportion Local	
	0 - .39	.40 or more
+ + -	21 (48)*	18 (113)
+ + +	24 (136)	27 (176)
+ - +	30 (94)	33 (58)
- + +	42 (86)	19 (80)
- + -	32 (79)	44 (57)
- - +	47 (150)	21 (107)
- - -	48 (163)	43 (184)
+ - -	48 (71)	63 (128)

*.Number in parentheses is the number of individuals upon whom the percentage is based.

The local interest effect has disappeared; groups with high proportions of locals have high drop-outs in four comparisons and lower drop-outs in four comparisons. Activity still holds, high activity groups having better retention in seven out of eight comparisons, and change in schools holds in five out of eight comparisons, a figure which would worry us if it were not that two of the three exceptions are due to the difference between the ++- and +++ types, an exception we have noted all along.

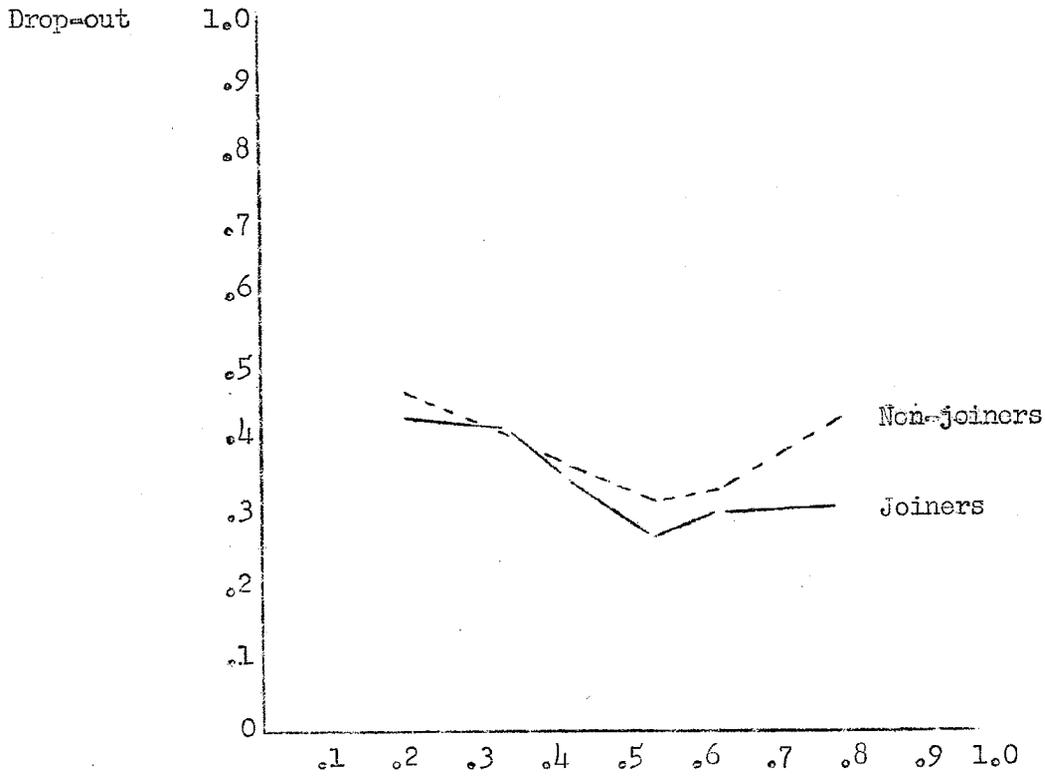
In short, groups with high proportions of locally interested have higher retention rates, but apparently only because high local interest facilitates high activity.

Our second outside interaction measure is that of membership in community organizations other than Great Books. On the basis of an index described in detail in our previous report, the members were divided into actives - those with many memberships, and inactives - those with fewer memberships. Since we want to avoid having to call them outer actives to contrast them with

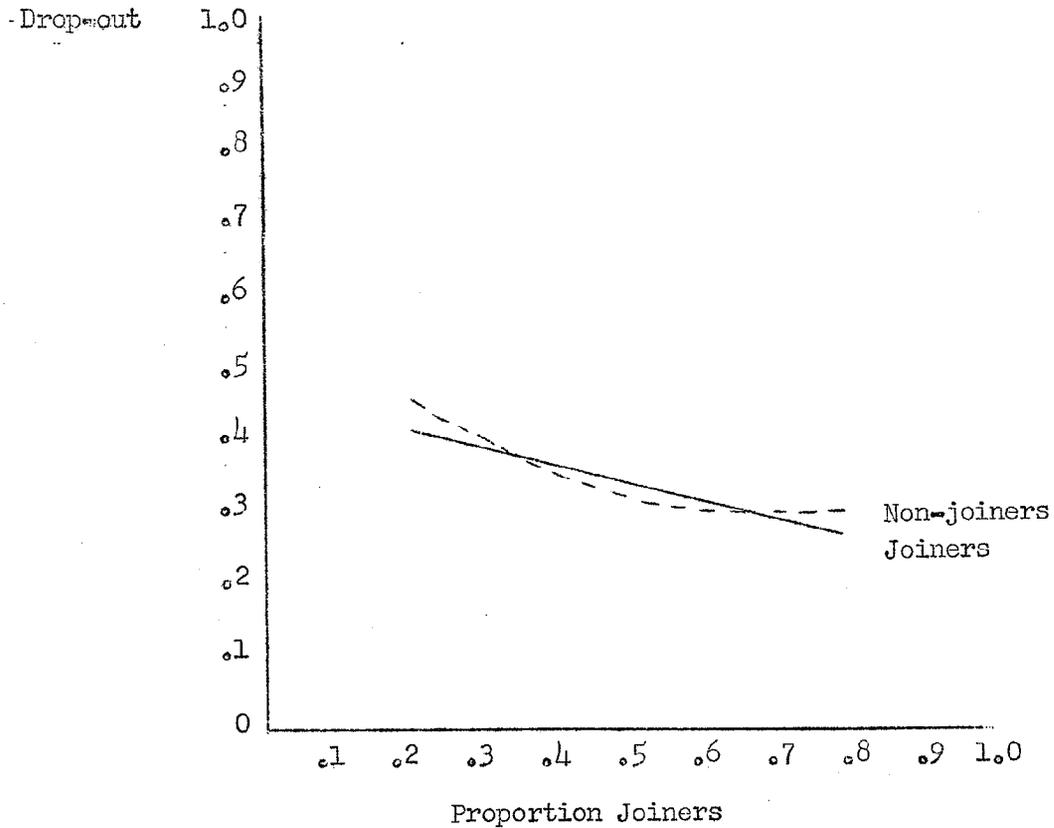
inner actives, we will call them joiners and non-joiners, and Chart 17 shows what happens when we tabulate the drop-out rates of joiners and non-joiners in groups which vary in their proportion of joiners.

Chart 17

Joiners and Drop-out



Proportion Joiners



The relationships here do not fall in our neat classification. For joiners, retention increases with the proportion of joiners. For non-joiners, however, retention increases as P slides up to .50, but as it moves onto the higher P levels, retention starts to decrease. Thus, we have two different relationships, a linear increase in retention for the joiners, and a curvilinear relationship for non-joiners, the non-joiners showing lowest drop-outs in mixed groups and higher drop-out rates in homogeneous groups. The linear increase for joiners seems sensible, if we assume that joiners as a class are more highly skilled in group participation, hence their presence in large numbers adds to the skill level of the group. Why the non-joiners show a curvilinear relationship is unknown. Perhaps they benefit from the presence of joiners up to a certain point, but beyond that feel uncomfortable in the presence of so many people who are skillful in interpersonal relations. However, we should note that despite the large number of complicated relationships in these data, we have yet to see a compositional effect which indicates that majority-minority position per se is important. Therefore, we see no reason why being in a minority on community participation should affect drop-out when being in a minority on other variables doesn't seem to effect retention.

Group level joining rates have very strong relationships with our other variables, and it will be necessary to consider statistical controls in some detail.

In terms of the CAS variables, groups with high proportions of joiners tend to have very high rates of activity.

Table 41

Proportion Joiners, Outside Contacts, and Change
in Schools

Per Cent of Groups which are High on Proportion Joiners
41a Activity

Contacts	Schools	High	Low
+	+	90 (30)*	53 (15)
+	-	75 (16)	67 (21)
-	+	89 (18)	58 (26)
-	-	62 (13)	58 (33)

41b Contacts

Activity	Schools	High	Low
+	+	90 (30)	89 (18)
+	-	75 (16)	62 (13)
-	+	53 (15)	58 (26)
-	-	67 (21)	58 (33)

41c Change in Schools

Contacts	Activity	High	Low
+	+	90 (30)	75 (16)
+	-	53 (15)	67 (21)
-	+	89 (18)	62 (13)
-	-	58 (26)	58 (33)

*Number in parentheses is the number of groups upon which the percentage is based.

In each row of Table 41a, active groups are more likely to be high joining groups, and except for the bottom row, the percentage differences are quite strong in comparison with similar tables in this report. Thus, regardless of the outside contacts or changes produced by the discussion, high proportions of joiners, people active in their communities, are associated with high proportions named as active in the discussion. When we turn to table 41b, outside contacts, we find that in three out of four cases, groups with many joiners are more likely to have higher

rates of outside contacts, a perfectly reasonable finding.

Table 41c, though, shows no consistent relationship between joining and change in schools, in these group level data.

Now, let us see what happens to our relationships when we control for CAS. We will have to control simultaneously for CAS, individual level joining, and two levels of activity among the joiners, and three levels among the non-joiners.

Table 42

Proportion of Joiners and Drop-out, Controlling
for CAS, and Individual Level Joining

C A S	Proportion Joiners	Joiners		Non-Joiners		
		0 - .39	.40+	0-.39	.40-.69	.70+
+ + -		25 (24)*	14 (107)	35 (23)	22 (46)	- (5)
+ + +		- (9)	18 (164)	46 (26)	29 (98)	- (8)
+ - +		30 (43)	34 (71)	31 (49)	24 (29)	- (4)
- + +		25 (12)	30 (121)	38 (13)	29 (58)	- (4)
- + -		39 (36)	39 (64)	29 (41)	40 (25)	45(11)
- - +		41 (73)	28 (104)	46 (90)	30 (50)	- (5)
- - -		52 (83)	36 (161)	52(105)	45 (80)	- (3)
+ - -		59 (34)	54 (107)	64 (39)	51 (39)	- (9)

*Number in parentheses is the number of individuals upon whom the percentage is based.

Tables like Table 42 should be familiar now, but we can review briefly by saying that comparisons across the rows enable us to look for the effects of joining, when CAS is held constant, and comparisons down columns enable us to look for the effects of CAS, with joining held constant.

The results seem to be as follows: in terms of joining, the relationship disappears among the joiners (4 comparisons favoring high levels of joining, 3 favoring low levels), but among the non-joiners, the relationship holds in seven out of eight com-

parisons between the 0-.39 and .49-.69 groups. We only have one cell with enough cases to look at the right side of the curve for non-joiners (that is, to test their increased drop-out in high P levels), but for what it's worth, that cell confirms the hypothesis.

When we examine our CAS variables, we find that activity holds in eleven out of fifteen possible comparisons, and change in schools holds in eleven, hence, their contribution does not appear to wash out when joining is held constant, although this batting average is lower than what we are used to.

Before we draw any conclusions, let us consider our other standard compositional controls: education, political preference, and status.

Table 43

Proportion Joiners and Drop-Out, Controlling
for Individual Level Joining and
Educational Composition
Per Cent Dropping Out

P	P	Joiners			Non-Joiners		
		0-.39	.40-.69	.70+	0-.39	.40-.69	.70+
0-.39		56 (64)*	18 (72)	90 (10)	54 (54)	25 (44)	- (7)
.40-.49		64 (42)	43 (69)	47 (15)	57 (49)	48 (27)	- (1)
.50+		27 (146)	30 (459)	28 (195)	43 (162)	34 (238)	42 (24)

*Number in parentheses is the number of individuals upon whom the percentage is based.

Among non-joiners, both effects appear to contribute independently, where there are enough cases to percentage. Drop-outs are higher in the .40-.49 education group than in high and low education; and drop-outs are lower in the .40-.69 joining

groups than in higher or lower groups. Among the joiners, as in the case of CAS, the effect of proportion joiners seems to disappear, although the educational effect remains, with one exception based on a cell containing only 10 cases. In short, the effect on non-joiners does not appear to be a spurious function of educational composition.

The results for political preference are much the same as for education.

Table 44

Proportion of Joiners and Drop-Out, Controlling
for Individual Level Joining and
Political Composition
Per Cent Dropping Out

P Demo- cratic	P Joiners	Joiners			Non-Joiners		
		0-.39	.40-.69	.70+	0-.39	.40-.69	.70+
0-.49		41(163)*	37(249)	30(111)	51(182)	37(138)	40(15)
.50-.69		31 (49)	25(227)	20 (79)	37 (43)	27(114)	- (4)
.70+		50 (40)	27(124)	70 (30)	45 (40)	38 (57)	46(13)

*Number in parentheses is the number of individuals upon whom the percentage is based.

With one exception (joiners in high education and high Democratic groups) both relationships hold. That is, in each of the five possible political comparisons, groups with slight Democratic majorities have better retention. The predicted pattern for non-joiners holds throughout, and the predicted pattern for joiners holds with the one exception noted. Therefore, although the two types of composition are related (the Q association between a high proportion of joiners and slight Democratic majority is

+.35), and they are both facets of involvement in the world of affairs, they are not the same thing, in terms of their effect on group retention.

When we turn to status, a more complicated picture develops. The data are presented in the following table.

Table 45

Proportion Joiners and Drop-Out, Controlling for
Individual Level Joining and Status
Composition
Per Cent Dropping Out

P	Status	P	Joiners			Non-Joiners		
			Joiners	0-.39	.40-.69	.70+	0-.39	.40-.69	.70+
.50+	(High)		26(53)*	42(218)	31(172)	37(139)	33(282)	45(33)
0-.49	(Low)		54(78)	31(166)	29(31)	49(247)	35(143)	38(16)

*Number in parentheses is the number of individuals upon whom the percentage is based.

Beginning with the non-joiners over on the right-hand side of the table, we see that in both status levels the curvilinear relationship is maintained. Thus, regardless of the variable controlled, non-joiners have a lower drop-out in the middle ranges of P. Among the joiners the picture is unclear. We could say that joiners show an increase in retention as P increases, but only in the low status groups, but we think we can show an alternative interpretation.

Let us look at status. Despite the fact that the status relationship has held in a number of controls, here it does not. In fact, in three of the comparisons, drop-outs are higher in the high status group. When we inspect Table 45, we note that when the probability of joining is less than .39 we get quite a strong

status difference, based on a reasonable number of cases. In groups with a higher proportion of joiners, however, status shows no consistent effect. What this suggests to us is not that our original status effect was spurious, but rather that status differences only help groups with low proportions of joiners.

Putting it another way, Table 45 suggests that again we have an either-or relationship. Program retention will apparently be greater in groups with high proportions of high status people and/or high proportions of joiners. Conversely, retention is lower in groups which have low proportions of high status people and low proportions of joiners. From this point of view it would seem that status composition and numbers of joiners serve equivalent ends, and groups which have one are not affected by the presence or absence of the other. Since, both in our sample and in other studies, high status goes with high activity in the community, the formulation is intuitively agreeable, but what this effect is we do not know. We may speculate that it is probably social and not intellectual, since we still get a status effect when we control for group composition in terms of education and quiz scores. Beyond this, our data do not shed much light on the matter.

If these conjectures are true, it may be that the strange curves in Chart 17 arise because two separate things are going on at the same time: 1) Status composition and proportion joiners together operate to create a favorable climate within the group. 2) Within groups with such a favorable climate joiners seem to be relatively unaffected by the proportion of joiners, but non-joiners

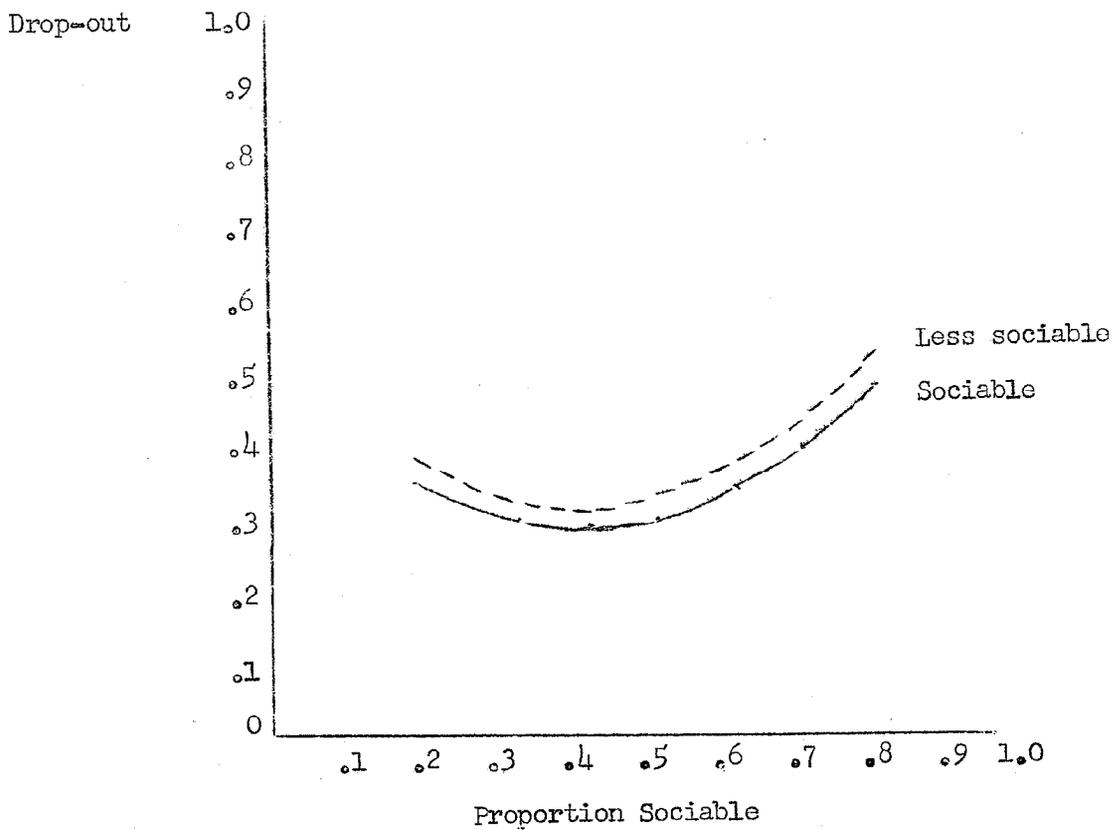
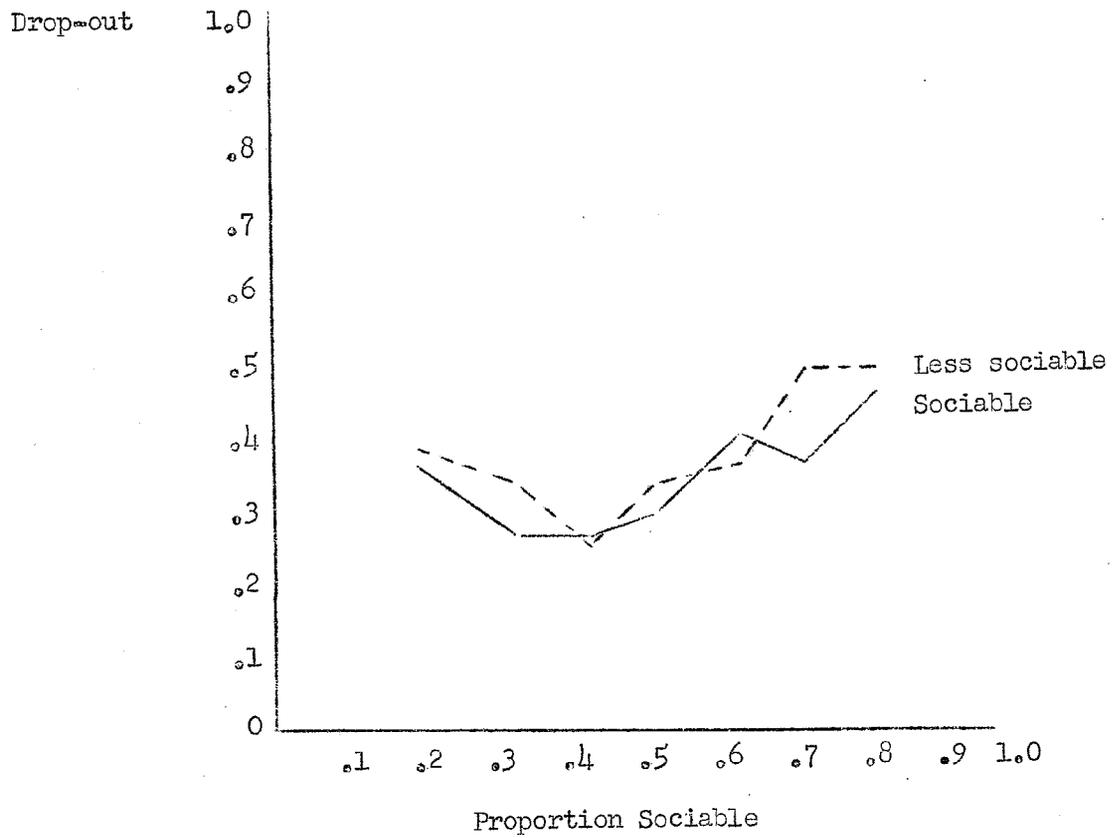
have higher drop-out rates when they are mixed in with high or low proportions of joiners.

Although the relationships are complicated, we should note that none of the evidence supports the "competition" hypothesis, and although it probably operates indirectly (community interest working through affecting discussion activity and joining working through some unknown relationship including status) Great Books groups seem to benefit from the presence of many members who are also interested and involved in other local groups and organizations, the only exception being the handful of non-joiners in groups with high proportions of joiners, these representing about 3% of the participants in our sample. In comparison about 20% of the sample participants are in the low status, low joining groups, which average about 50% drop-out, as compared with drop-out rates in the 30-40% range for most groups with a favorable climate.

Finally, we turn to pure sociability, the frequency of informal visiting. Our original questionnaire asked, "About how many evenings per month (on the average) do you spend in informal visiting and entertaining?" and individuals are divided into those who spend 5 or more (sociable) versus those who report fewer nights per month; with groups arrayed in terms of their proportion sociable. Tabulating all of this against drop-out, we get Chart 18.

Chart 18

Sociability and Drop-out



Regardless of its meaning, Chart 18 is a pretty thing to behold. We get two nice curves, parallel to each other, and a sharper "curvy-ness" than we have yet seen. At most P levels, the less sociable have slightly higher drop-out rates (another blow to the competition hypothesis), but within a given category, we find a curvilinear relationship. drop-outs being fewest where about half of the group are sociable, with higher attrition among groups low on sociability, and much higher attrition among groups with extremely high proportions of sociable members.

Moderation in all things, as Aristotle advises, may not apply to most of our variables, but here the data suggest that moderate sociability is a good omen in terms of program retention. Could it be that groups with unsociable people lack the ease of interaction necessary for active discussions, while among groups of very sociable people their high sociability creates "noise" which interferes with serious discussion?

If so, we should find that sociability is related to the CAS variables.

Table 46

Sociability, Contacts, Activity, and Change
in Schools
Per Cent of Groups High on...

	Proportion Sociable		
	0-.29	.30-.59	.60+
Activity	43	50	38
Contacts	34	50	53
Schools	51	54	49
Number of groups	35	84	53

The relationships are different for different variables. Outside contacts, as one would predict, increased steadily with sociability. However, activity, and change in schools are highest in the middle P values, and lower at each extreme.

Since activity level is related to outside contacts, let's hold it constant.

Table 47

Sociability and Activity, Controlling for
Outside Contacts
Per Cent High on Activity

Outside Contacts	P Sociability		
	0-.29	.30-.59	.60+
High	58 (12)*	60 (42)	50 (28)
Low	38 (23)	41 (42)	24 (25)

*Number in parentheses is the number of groups upon which the percentage is based.

Both types of social relationship contribute to high activity levels. Within each sociability category, groups with high outside contacts are more likely to be high on activity; within each contact level, sociability continues to show a curvilinear relationship with activity.

In order to see whether sociability affects change in schools, we have to hold constant contacts and activity, and this is just too much for our limited number of cases. For the record, however, when one does make such a tabulation, sociability shows no relationship with change in schools, although whether this reflects the real situation or merely attrition of cases, we cannot tell.

We do know enough to wonder whether the curvilinear re-

relationship between sociability and program retention is due to the fact that moderate sociability seems to grease the wheels of the CAS process. Table 48 answers this question.

Table 48

Sociability Composition and Drop-Out, Controlling
for Individual Sociability, Outside Contacts,
Activity, and Change in Schools

P	Sociable	Sociable			Less Sociable		
		0-.29	.30-.59	.60+	0-.29	.30-.59	.60+
++- & +++	-	(4)*	14 (99)	23 (118)	23 (30)	30 (132)	29 (49)
+-+ & -++	-	(9)	17 (70)	51 (23)	28 (36)	21 (96)	63 (24)
-+- & ---+	62	(16)	35 (88)	34 (64)	56 (55)	32 (110)	23 (31)
--- & +--	40	(22)	45 (94)	57 (149)	40 (75)	46 (98)	49 (57)

*Number in parentheses is the number of individuals upon whom the percentage is based.

The relationship with sociability appears to vanish, in Table 48. Our notion of curvilinearity will make specific predictions about 14 comparisons, but the predictions are correct in only 8 cases, incorrect in 6. CAS is strongly related to sociability, so the relationship between CAS and drop-out is somewhat reduced, but 31 predictions can be made on the basis of CAS, (e.g., predicting that the top row will have less drop-out than the second, third, fourth; predicting that the second will have less than the third and fourth, etc.). Of these 24 hold. Thus, CAS appears to have weathered the storm much better than has sociability.

Our inclination would be to infer that moderate levels of sociability have a favorable influence on retention, but only as they operate to raise levels of activity in the group.

In summary, the outside interaction variables are both very strong and quite unimportant factors in program retention. While they do show quite striking zero-order relationships with drop-out, when one controls for the other variables in our analysis, their independent contribution is negligible.

1) Program retention increases steadily with the proportion of locally interested people in the group, but this appears to be because such groups have high activity levels.

2) Among joiners program retention increases steadily with the proportion interested in community affairs, while among non-joiners a curvilinear relationship obtains. When, however, one controls for the other variables, some curious results turn up. First, the effect of the proportion joining on joiners disappears, while the curvilinear relationship among non-joiners remains (the only outside interaction variable which contributes independently). Second, the proportion joining appears to work with the proportion high status, as alternative effects on the group climate.

3) Program retention has a curvilinear relationship with the proportion of sociable members, retention being highest where about half are sociable, retention being low at the extremes. The contribution, however, disappears when we hold CAS constant, which suggests that moderate sociability operates to facilitate group activity levels, which, in turn, affect drop-out.

Two more general comments may be made.

First, on the whole, community activity and interest is a favorable sign in Great Books groups. Thus, there is little evidence to support the idea that competition with other community

organizations is a significant factor in losses from the discussion groups.

Second, it does not appear that pure frequency of outside interaction is the variable here, since we get different patterns of relationship with community interests and memberships than we get with informal visiting. Roughly speaking, it appears that high levels of serious outside interaction are a good sign, but beyond a certain point, high levels of sociability are a bad sign. Perhaps one of the key factors in Great Books is that it focusses on serious social interaction. Groups whose members have a limited range of social interaction do poorly, but so do groups with high amounts of non-serious social interaction. It is groups composed of people characterized by high rates of participation in serious affairs that seem to do particularly well.

Since we are at the end of our analysis of specific variables, we will consider the place of the outside interaction variables in our model in the summary section.

Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter we have considered eighteen personal characteristics in relationship to program retention in Great Books. The questions asked were these:

- 1) Is this characteristic related to program retention, from the viewpoint of continuation in the discussion group?
- 2) If so, is the relationship presumably due to a personal characteristic, a group compositional effect, or both?
- 3) If there appears to be a group compositional effect, is it an independent contributor to retention, or does it appear to operate through its relationship with other group variables?

The net result can be thought of in two ways: first, a list of the variables and their form of relationship; and second, an ad hoc model of the major group variables and their structure.

Let's begin with the list. Table 49 classifies all of our compositional effect analyses, in terms of the scheme developed in Chapter 1 (Cf. Chart 2, Chapter 1).

Table 49
Summary Classification of Findings

A) Linear and Monotonic

Type I Process (Individual Level Difference)	Type IV Process (Differential Susceptibility)	Type II Process (Between Groups Effect)	
		No	Yes
No	No		*Outside Contacts -Sex -Local Interest
Yes	No	Exposure (Advanced) ¹ Marital Status (Married) Age (older)	*Activity (Active) ?Impact (High) ?Problem 1 (Effect) *Change in Schools (Change) *Status (High) Quiz Score (High)
Yes	Yes		?Level of Most Worthwhile Book

B) Unimodal

Characteristic	Point of Optimum Retention	Individual Effect
*Education	Extremes	(High)
*Political Preference ²	Middle	No
-Informal Visiting	Middle	(More Sociable)

C) Unclassifiable

Characteristic	Individual Effect
-Religion	Type IV process
*Joiners	Type IV process

Notes:

1. The term in parentheses refers to the favorable characteristic where there is an individual difference.

*Variables marked with an asterisk contribute independently at the group level.

-Variables marked with a (-) do not contribute independently at the group level.

?Variables marked with a ? were not tested for independent contribution at the group level in order to simplify the analysis.

²Technically, political preference is polymodal, not unimodal, but it was treated as unimodal here for reasons discussed in the text.

We can begin by looking at group and individual effects.

Three characteristics show an individual effect, but no group level relationship; four show a group effect, but no individual difference, and eleven show both. This is, perhaps, the most important conclusion of the study. Although the relationships are complicated and often hard to interpret the fact that in analysis after analysis, group composition has contributed to program retention, independent of the individual characteristic involved, is an important one. It would appear that in the Great Books program, the group is somewhat more than a vehicle for providing an opportunity for self-expression. The climates created by various compositions seem to play an important part in the success of the program in terms of maintenance of its membership.

This is not to say that individual characteristics are

unimportant. Part II will treat them in detail, but here we can list the characteristics of the members most likely to remain with their group (and hence, with the program), regardless of its composition. The salient personal factors seem to be:

- 1) Active participation in the discussion
- 2) Reported impact of the program
- 3) Reported relevance of Great Books to community problems
- 4) Reported acceptance of schools of thought
- 5) High social status
- 6) High knowledge on quiz
- 7) High level of challenge in outside reading
- 8) High education
- 9) High informal visiting
- 10) Being an advanced year member
- 11) Being married
- 12) Being older

In addition, religion and community activity show individual relationships with drop-out which, however, vary in groups with different compositions.

Scanned quickly, these items suggest that the important personal characteristics are level of preparation and the extent to which changes have been effected by the program, but the reader is warned that in Part II, as so often in this one, things turn out to be pretty complicated.

What can we say, in sum, about the group level factors, beyond noting that they are extremely important? We can begin by saying that they are complex. More precisely, we can reject three generalizations which might seem plausible, in the absence of our data.

- 1) The group factors are not merely an extension of the individual factors. The simplest type of compositional effect to understand is the "radiating" (Type IIIa) effect in which an individual difference appears to radiate out and pull everyone in

the direction associated with the individual characteristic. Six of our group variables (activity, impact, problem 1, change in schools, status, and quiz score) do show this form, but eight group factors do not. Therefore, the group process in Great Books is not merely an accentuation of the individual level effects through radiation.

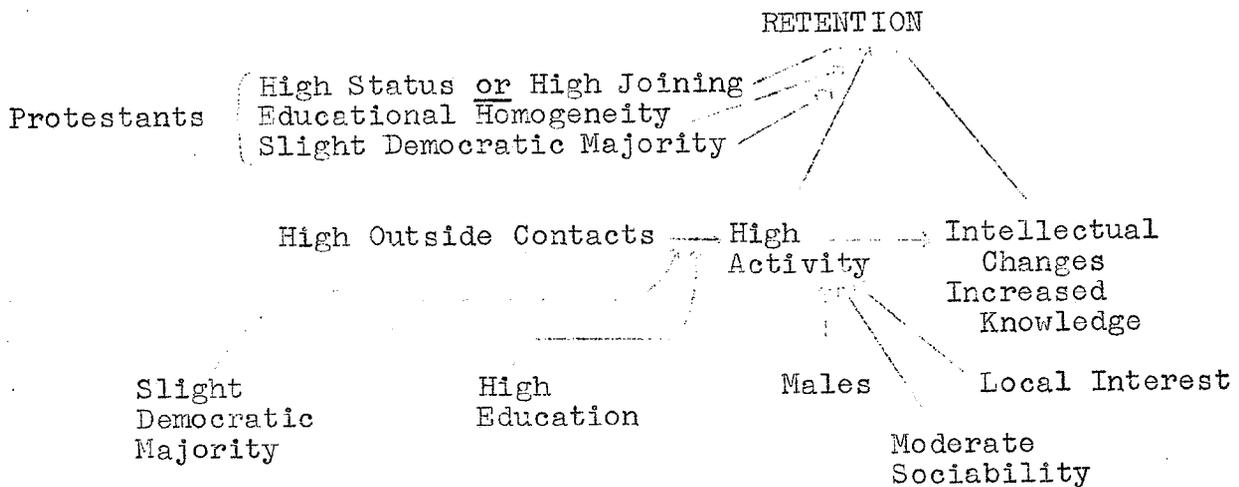
2) Homogeneity is not the key to the process. Although Great Books groups tend (as do all groups) to be socially homogeneous, and although some considerable body of sociological research indicates that homogeneity leads to ease in interaction, only one of the group relationships (education) suggests that diversity is a detrimental factor. One is tempted to infer that heterogeneity of preparation and background is a threat to group retention, except that other intellectual variables (quiz scores and most worthwhile books) do not behave in this fashion.

3) Similarly, heterogeneity per se is not a consistent advantage. In the beginning of this study, we felt that the more diverse the group, in terms of social composition, the more likely it would be to have diverse viewpoints which would lead to more vigorous discussion. However, only one variable, political preference, appears to behave in this fashion. One is tempted to infer that homogeneity of ideological position is a threat to group retention, except that our other ideological variable (religious preference) does not seem to behave in this fashion, except for the case of the all-Protestant groups.

In sum, our evidence dashes the hope of coming up with any general conclusion based on abstract structural concepts.

We cannot say that group factors serve to accentuate individual factors, that social homogeneity works consistently in any specific fashion, or that social heterogeneity has any consistent effect.

Any more general conclusions then must come from an inspection of the content. The chart below summarizes the group level variables as they relate to program retention.



Viewed this way, the program retention process really breaks down into two parts: Three extra-program personal characteristics (status or joining, education, and political preference); the remaining variables cluster together into a system of inter-relationships we have dubbed CAS.

The heart of CAS, as implied by our analysis, is activity. Whether viewed in terms of its individual level contribution, its group level contribution, or in terms of the fact that it explains the relationship with drop-out of six other variables, the variable we have called activity is extremely important.

We have to remember that by activity we merely mean the

probability that a given member will be named twice or more as a contributor to the discussion, and despite its statistical importance, it is not at all clear what activity really means. It probably is a sort of global measure which taps a number of things: a person's acceptance by the other members of his group, ease and skill in communication, strength of bonds among the group members, lack of shyness, equal distribution of participation roles among the members, etc., etc.

Correlational analysis of the sort seen here can go some distance towards clarifying the causal relationships, and we have been able to pinpoint the contribution of activity with some success. Beyond this point, however, it is hard to go with survey materials.

Nevertheless, we feel it fair to claim that our analysis has documented the social scientist's claim that even where least expected, the network of social relationships in which a person is imbedded is a key factor in his behavior. Even though Great Books groups meet relatively infrequently, involve little investment economically, have little formal structure, and have few or no sanctions with which to constrain their members, it seems clear that a system of roles develops, and that variation in the structure of this role system is a major factor in group, and hence program continuity. It is perhaps no accident that the slogan which the program holds out to its prospective members is "Join the Great Conversation."

Chapter 3

Leadership and Discussion Techniques

Introduction

The previous chapter may have seemed to imply that the prescription for success in Great Books discussion groups is: "Find the correct compound of member characteristics, shake well, and apply bi-weekly." One wonders if this formulation leaves any place for leadership and specific techniques of discussion, or whether, once the mixture has been fixed, compositional effects proceed inexorably, regardless of the quality of leadership and style of discussion. Certainly, the idea that leadership and technique are unimportant is an unpalatable one, both because this is one area which is amenable to control, and also because a large volume of research in the social sciences suggests that leadership and styles of leadership are very important components in the group process.¹

In order to explore this question, we shall consider in turn the following problems:

- 1) Is there a relationship between leader training and program retention?
- 2) Is retention affected by the members' preferences regarding discussion techniques?

¹Cf., for example, Ronald Lippitt and Ralph K. White, "An Experimental Study of Leadership and Group Life," in Eleanor E. Maccoby, Theodore M. Newcomb, and Eugene Hartley, editors, Readings in Social Psychology, New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1958, pp. 496-511.

- 3) Is retention affected by the members' consensus regarding discussion techniques?
- 4) Is retention affected by consensus or disagreement between leaders and members regarding techniques of discussion?

Leader Training

One factor which would seem to be of some importance for the group is its leaders (most groups have two of them). The quality of leadership presumably will have some effect on the quality of the discussion, and thereby on retention. While we have no direct measure of quality of leadership, we do have some information which will allow us to make certain inferences about it: that is, we know whether or not the leaders have completed the training course offered by the Great Books Program. Table 1 below shows the relationship of this variable to drop-out.

Table 1

Leader Training	Per Cent of Members Dropping Out	Number of Members
All trained	37	1024
One trained, one untrained	27	232
All untrained	33	280
Leadership rotates	32	103
No 1957 information from leaders	57	91

Two conclusions emerge from this table: first, that if the leaders are not interested enough to attend meetings (assuming that their absence on the evening we collected questionnaires was not an isolated instance), the chances for group survival are greatly reduced; and second, that leader training does not make much difference. The slight advantage that goes with being in a group with one trained and one untrained leader disappears when the level of discussion activity is controlled, as can be seen from Table 2.

Table 2
Per Cent Dropping Out

Leader training	High activity	Low activity
All trained	26 (370)*	44 (654)
Mixed	22 (173)	41 (59)
None trained	20 (114)	42 (166)
Total	24 (657)	43 (879)

*Number in parentheses is the number of individuals upon which the percentage is based.

Apparently leader training does not have the simple relation to discussion quality that was hypothesized, since it is the mixed groups which have such high activity levels and therefore low drop-out. Whether the relationship between training and activity is accidental or causal is unknown, for we find the meaning of being in a mixed group to be somewhat obscure.

Does Table 2 then suggest that the leadership training program is of no value for Great Books? We doubt it, for there are a number of other considerations which enter into the picture. In the first place, leader training is not specifically designed to focus on retention, and it may be that trained leaders produce results in other areas than in retention. (However, we must admit that we have a lot of evidence that composition relates to effects too). Second, we do not know anything about the differences between trained and untrained leaders. Thus, if, for example, persons who already have high skills in group leadership do not take the training courses, this would explain the lack of any difference.

Styles of Discussion

While Great Books has no party line in terms of attitudes toward the specific readings, the Great Books Foundation has a definite set of preferences regarding techniques of discussion.²

At first glance, the technique seems akin to "non-directive" group leadership, but upon closer examination it turns out that it is much more Aristotelian than Rogerian. As the leader training guide puts it:

The function of a Great Books discussion leader can be reduced to this: getting participants to think and express themselves about great books. The leader performs this function in one way only, by asking questions.³

Along with the positive exhortation to question the members in order to enable them to analyze and evaluate the readings, Great Books leadership style includes a number of specific "don'ts." Leaders are warned not to give their own opinions:

You will certainly have an opinion of your own, but beware! Revelations now, even outside the discussion meeting may be the beginning of your downfall.⁴

. . . not to introduce or sum up the discussion:

. . . neither introducing a discussion nor summing it up is in order.⁵

. . . and not to provide historical or biographical background:

We simply believe that, although the temporal and personal factors in a book will be illuminating to a scholar of that time or that person, those factors are not the distinguishing elements of that book's greatness.⁶

²Cf. "A Guide for Leaders of Great Books Discussion Groups," Chicago, The Great Books Foundation, Second edition, 1955.

³Ibid., p. 8.

⁴Ibid., p. 16.

⁵Ibid., p. 20.

⁶Ibid., pp. 21-22.

Unlike the non-directive group leader, the Great Books leader is encouraged to control specific aspects of the discussion. His major role is defined as "analytical questioning":

The real mental discipline resulting from discussion, the real training in the liberal arts for the participants, depend upon the quality of the analytical questioning by the leaders. . . . It is always necessary to obtain clarification of meaning when the leaders themselves do not understand exactly what the person speaking means or when it is evident that others in the group do not.⁷

In addition, leaders are encouraged to keep an even balance among the members in order to prevent one or two from monopolizing the discussion:

By the intonation of that new question you may even have to indicate gently that enough has been heard from one quarter, and others should have a chance.⁸

Of course, we have no data on how our groups actually carry out their discussions, but our questionnaire did include a set of items designed to measure the members' endorsement of the discussion techniques advocated by the national foundation.

Each respondent was asked whether the "ideal" Great Books leader should always, usually, sometimes, seldom, or never:

- 1) Tactfully squelch over-talkative participants
- 2) Summarize the results of the discussion
- 3) Give a short lecture on the historical and biographical background of the reading
- 4) Refrain from communicating, even indirectly, his own opinion
- 5) "Cross-examine" a participant to clarify the discussion.

⁷Ibid., pp. 30-31.

⁸Ibid., p. 24.

Members who accept the program's discussion style should agree with items 1, 4, and 5, and disagree with items 2 and 3. On the whole, the participants do accept these positions, but there is considerable variability. If we lump together "Always" and "Usually" for items 1, 4, and 5; and "Seldom" and "Never" for items 2 and 3, as acceptance of the program's techniques, and consider "Sometimes," as a neutral response, we get the following:

Table 3
Per Cent Accepting Various Techniques of Discussion

Item	Accept	Neutral	Reject	Total	N
Own opinions	59	15	26	100%	1867
Background	57	22	21	100%	1839
Squelch	55	38	7	100%	1866
Summarize	43	23	34	100%	1845
Cross-examine	42	43	15	100%	1879

Slightly more than half of the members endorse the preferred position on giving opinions, background, and squelching over-talkative participants, but one can hardly infer from Table 53 a uniform acceptance of the techniques in the leader's manual.

Now, let us look at the inter-relations of these items. Each was dichotomized as "Always" or "Usually" versus "Sometimes," "Seldom," and "Never," and ϕ coefficients were computed, with the following results:

Table 4

Inter-correlations of Technique Preferences (Q)

	Cross- Examine	Squelch	Summarize*	Back- ground*	Own Opinion
Cross-examine	-	.20	.04	.13	-.02
Squelch	.20	-	.12	.04	.04
Summarize*	.04	.12	-	.66	.26
Background*	.13	.04	.66	-	.28
Own Opinion	-.02	.04	.26	.28	-

*Indicates that direction of the association was reversed so that "positive" always indicates agreement with the program's recommendations.

Now, if the program's advice was taken or rejected in toto, we would expect to find high association among the items, people who agreed with one, tending to agree with all of the others. Except for summarize and background (the two items most distinctive of Great Books) no such pattern occurs. Therefore, we cannot hope to combine these measures into a single index of agreement with the program's position. We shall then treat each separately as a possible factor in retention.

We are now ready to tackle questions two and three on our list, by means of compositional analysis. If the answer to question 2 is "yes," that is, if there is a relationship between a member's position on these questions and program retention, we should find some sort of linear relationship, either at the group or individual level. If the answer to question 3 is "yes," we should expect to find some sort of parabolic group level relationship, with groups which are heterogeneous on these items showing different drop-out rates than groups which have high levels of agreement.

Chart 1

Ideal Leader: Squelch and Drop-out

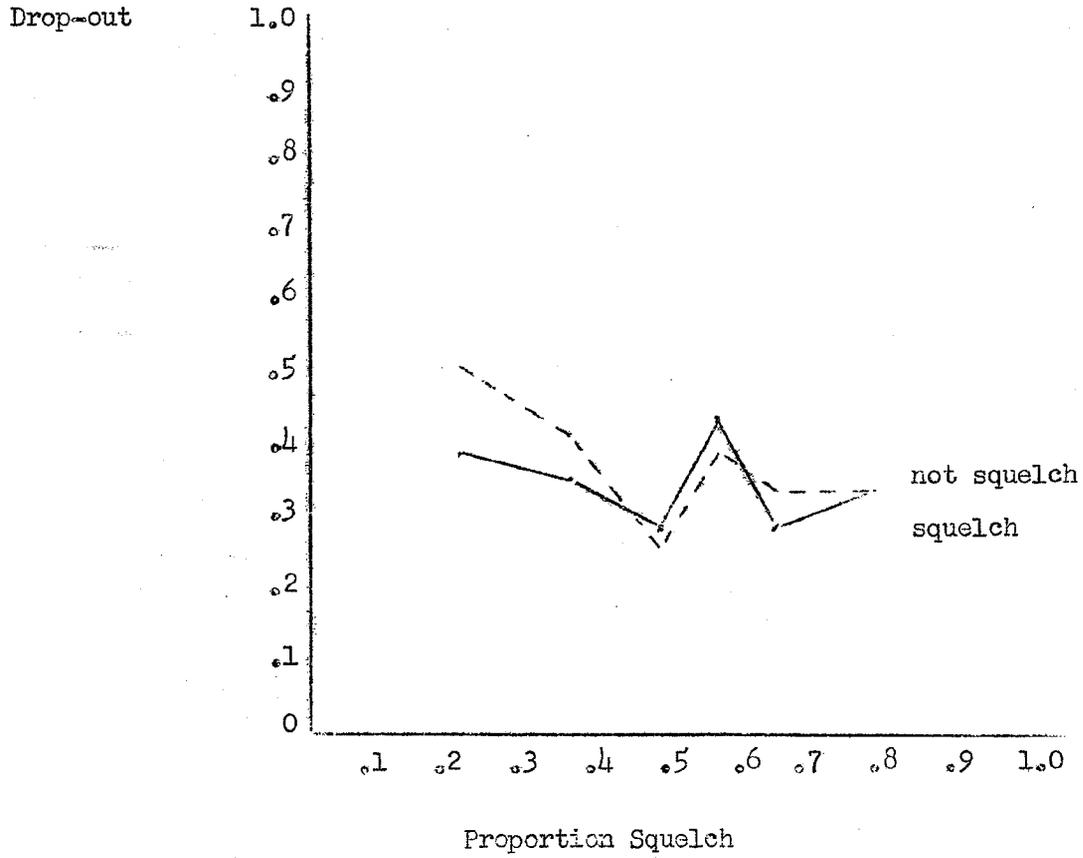
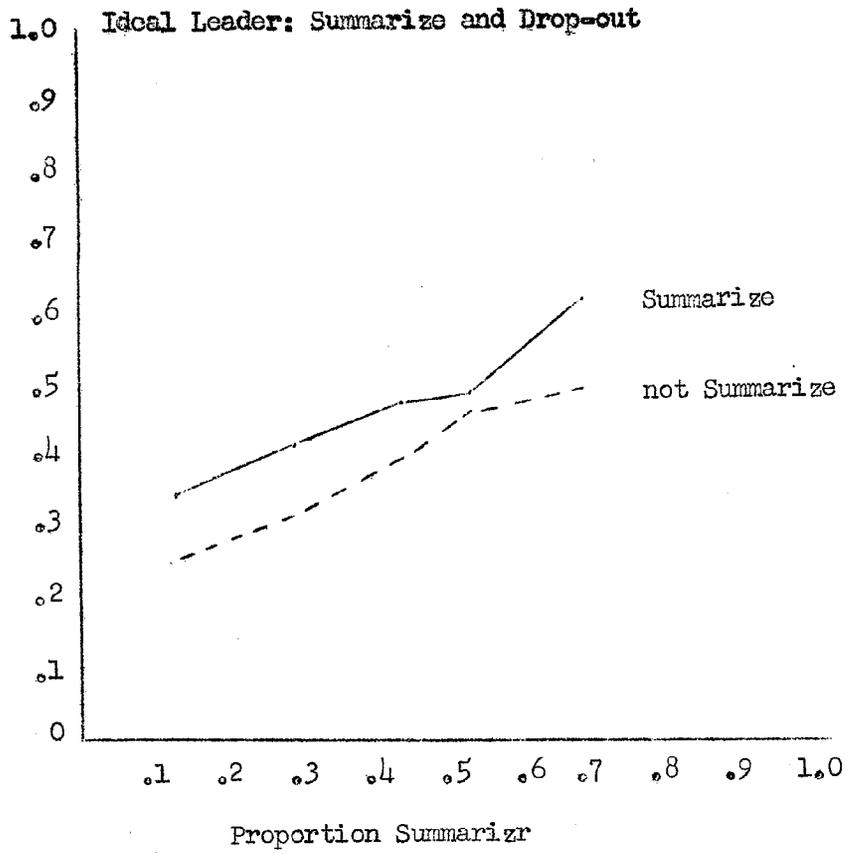


Chart 2

Drop-out



Drop-out

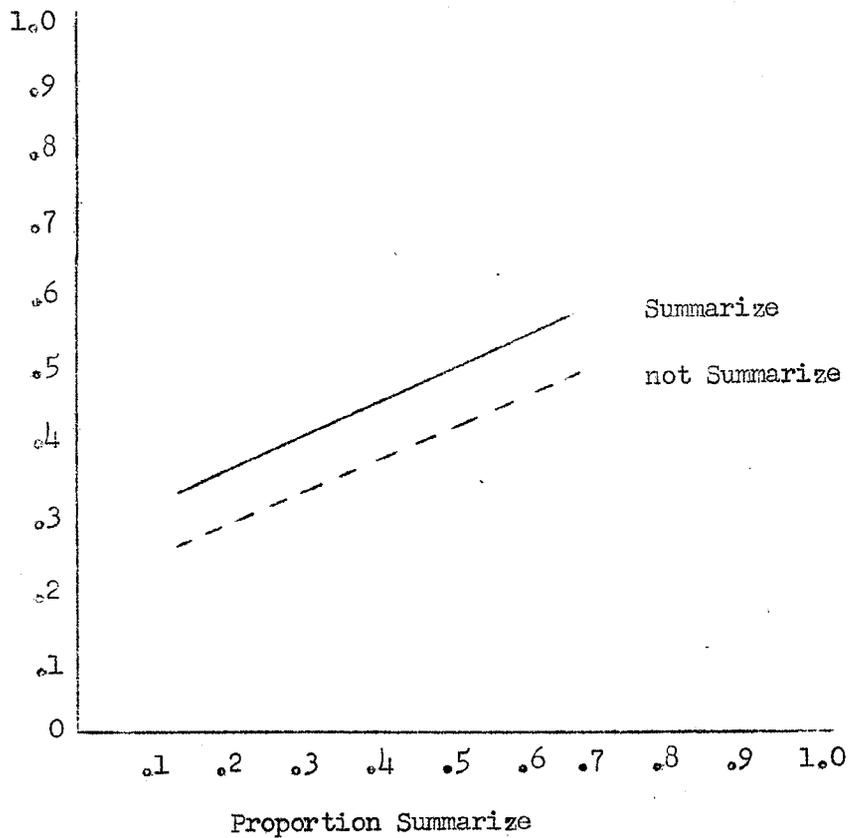


Chart 3

Ideal Leader: Background and Drop-out

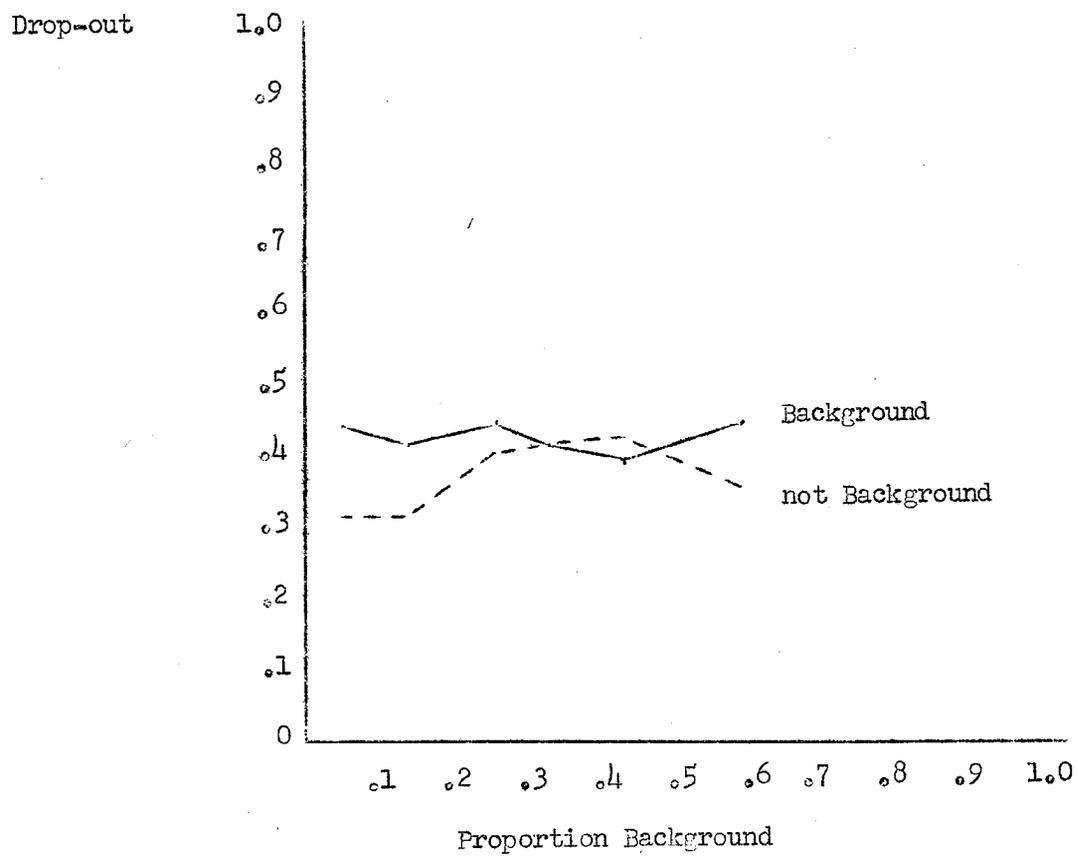


Chart 4

Ideal Leader: Refrain and Drop-out

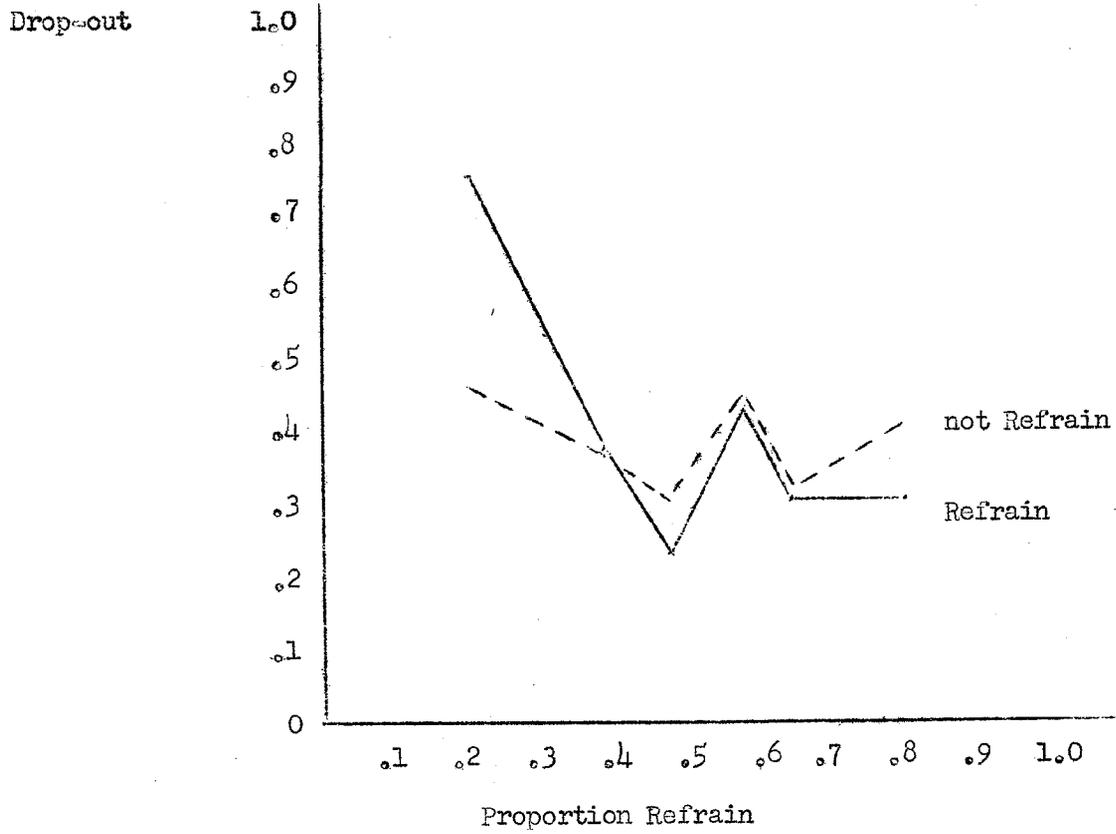
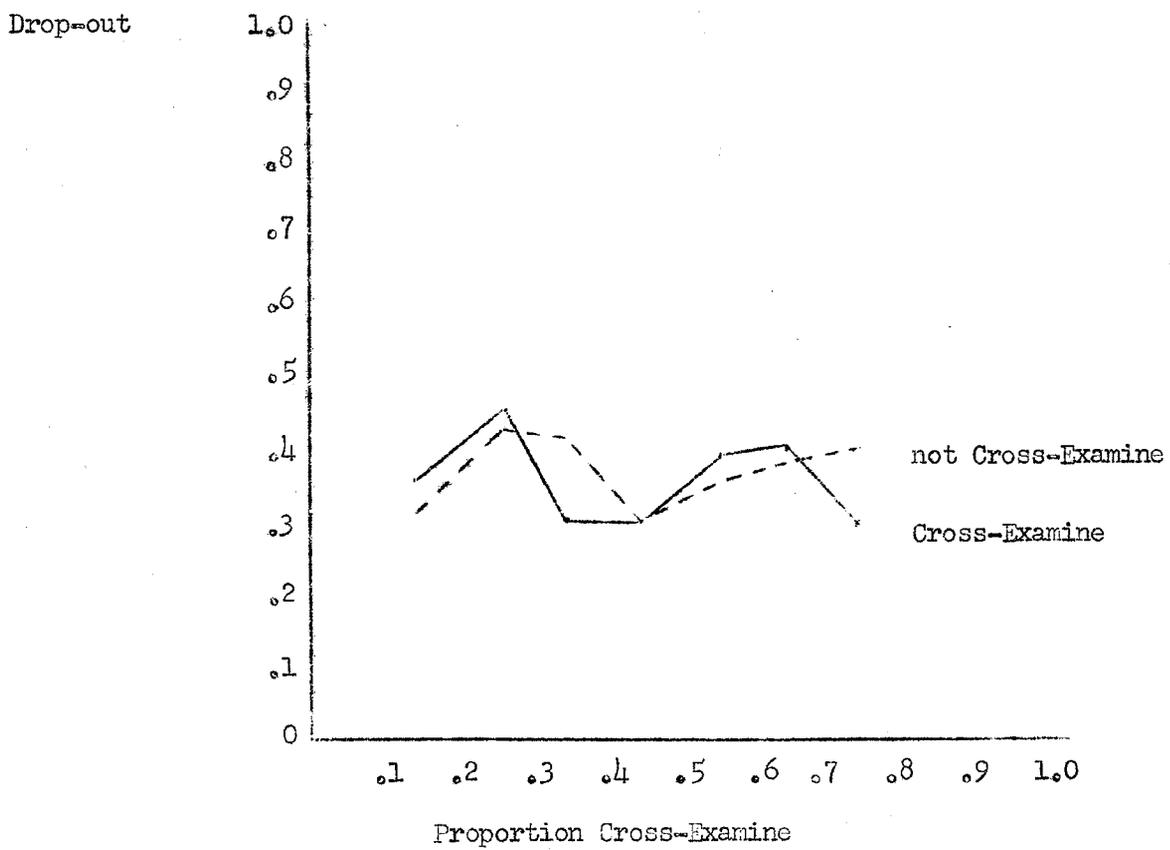


Chart 5

Ideal Leader: Cross-Examine and Drop-out



From Charts 1-5 it can be seen that none of the curves resemble very closely the typical parabola of the situation where consensus is important, nor do any of them fit any of our linear types, except summarize, which turns out to be a simple type II relation, wherein the A's are more likely to drop out than the \bar{A} 's, and the higher the proportion of A's, the higher the drop-out among both.

Since "summarize" does act like an attribute variable of the sort dealt with in the last chapter, it becomes important to see whether it fits in with the CAS model developed therein. The answer, as is so often the case, is both yes and no. As can be seen from Table 5, while it does relate to activity independently of contacts and schools, and to schools independently of activity and contacts, it does not relate to contacts at all.

Table 5

Per Cent of Groups Above the Median on Summarize

Contacts	Schools	High Activity	Low Activity
+	+	47 (30)*	60 (15)
+	-	56 (16)	62 (21)
-	+	39 (18)	42 (26)
-	-	62 (13)	61 (33)

Contacts	Activity	High Schools	Low Schools
+	+	47 (30)	56 (16)
+	-	60 (15)	62 (21)
-	+	39 (18)	62 (13)
-	-	42 (26)	61 (33)

Activity	Schools	High Contacts	Low Contacts
+	+	47 (30)	39 (18)
+	-	56 (16)	62 (13)
-	+	60 (15)	42 (26)
-	-	62 (21)	61 (33)

*The numbers in parentheses are the number of groups upon which each percentage was based, rather than numbers of individuals, as is true of the preceding tables.

Judging from its association with activity and schools, summarize would seem to be symptomatic of at least mild intellectual laziness, since groups high on it are likely to be low on activity and schools. Although it might be said that this interpretation is invalid because background ought to show a similar relationship to drop-out, we think that this is unjustified. Of the five ideal leader questions, background seems on an a priori basis most contrary to the stated aims of the program, and, insofar as there is some carry-over, to group norms; whereas summarize is relatively more innocuous.

Given the relationship of summarize to activity and schools, and their relationship to drop-out, we next want to look at the partials. Table 6 gives us this information.

Table 6
Per Cent Dropping Out

Activity	Schools	High Summarize	Low Summarize	Total
+	+	28 (227)	27 (247)	27 (474)
+	-	28 (160)	28 (137)	28 (297)
-	+	39 (207)	29 (202)	34 (409)
-	-	55 (347)	42 (200)	50 (547)

High activity is more important than summarize, since it manages to overcome the adverse effects of being high on summarize. Among those groups low on activity, however, being high on summarize is still a distinct disadvantage. Since it does seem to operate among the low actives mainly by preventing intellectual change, let us now turn to an examination of its relationship to measures of program effect other than schools.

Of the measures of program effect which were discussed in the last chapter, only three bear any relation to summarize impact, cartoon quiz score, and effect on problem 1. It will be remembered that all three of them, although non-linear, were basically type II variables. All three of them also relate to summarize in approximately the same way as did schools: groups high on summarize tend to be low on effect, regardless of which effect, and this correlation almost but not quite succeeds in washing out the relationship between summarize and drop-out, as can be seen from Table 7 below.

Table 7
Per Cent Dropping Out

A. Impact*	High Summarize	Low Summarize	Total
High	31 (299)	26 (400)	28 (699)
Low	45 (641)	36 (390)	42 (1031)
B. <u>Quiz Score</u>			
High	34 (421)	28 (437)	31 (858)
Low	44 (479)	35 (332)	40 (811)
C. <u>Effect on Problem 1</u>			
High	31 (319)	25 (360)	28 (679)
Low	45 (621)	36 (425)	41 (1046)

*In the case of impact and effect on problem 1, high and low have the same meaning as they have had earlier in the chapter, that is, above and below the median. For cartoons, however, the terms refer to individual scores, since dichotomizing the groups at the median leaves very little difference between them in drop-out (see Chart 11 of Chapter 2).

As the reader will remember from the last chapter, all of our effect variables are fairly highly interrelated. Table 8 shows the group level Qs for the three afore-mentioned variables, schools, and summarize.

Table 8

Inter-correlations of Effect Variables

	Problem 1	Schools	Impact	Quiz	Summarize
Problem 1	-	.51	.27	.10	-.22
Schools	.51	-	.48	.40	-.28
Impact	.27	.48	-	.01	-.37
Quiz	.10	.40	.01	-	-.50
Summarize	-.22	-.28	-.37	-.50	-

Some we don't have to worry about, but those with high Qs must be examined to see whether they contribute to summarize independently of one another. Due to the rapid attenuation of the case base, it is impossible to control for all four effect variables simultaneously: instead, we must look at every possible pair, excluding only those which do not relate to each other.

Table 9

Per Cent of Groups High on Summarize

		Quiz Scores			
		+		-	
Schools	+	41	(59)*	57	(30)
	-	42	(38)	76	(45)
		Impact			
		+		-	
Schools	+	41	(44)	51	(45)
	-	43	(30)	70	(53)
		Problem 1			
		+		-	
Schools	+	40	(48)	54	(41)
	-	61	(23)	60	(60)
		Problem 1			
		+		-	
Impact	+	39	(41)	45	(33)
	-	57	(30)	63	(68)

*Number in parentheses is the number of groups upon which the percentage is based.

On the whole, these factors seem to relate to summarize independently of each other, although in some cases the differences are not very large.

That problem out of the way, we can now turn to a re-examination of the relationship between summarize and drop-out controlling for more than one of these variables at a time. In fact, since we are now dealing with individuals rather than groups as our case base, we can control for all four group variables at once. Table 10 shows the results.

Table 10
Per Cent Dropping Out

Prob. 1	Schools	Impact	Quiz	Low Summarize	High Summarize
+	+	+	+	18 (160)	14 (42)
+	+	+	-	15 (26)	35 (54)
+	+	-	+	32 (63)	30 (91)
+	+	-	-	38 (24)	20 (15)
+	-	+	+	(0)	(0)
+	-	+	-	24 (41)	43 (44)
+	-	-	+	43 (47)	17 (6)
+	-	-	-	(0)	34 (67)
-	+	+	+	19 (32)	21 (34)
-	+	+	-	31 (16)	42 (60)
-	+	-	+	39 (83)	44 (78)
-	+	-	-	47 (49)	49 (73)
-	-	+	+	42 (59)	13 (31)
-	-	+	-	41 (66)	35 (34)
-	-	-	+	30 (89)	45 (117)
-	-	-	-	29 (35)	56 (194)

Of the fourteen possible comparisons in this table, only six show the original relationship between summarize and drop-out, and the rest are ties or reversals, so we feel safe in concluding that the original relationship is completely accounted for by the four effect variables, especially since the individual level effect

of summarize is uncontrolled in Table 10. Substantively, then, we can say that summarize probably contributes to drop-out by preventing program effects.

Finally, we can turn to our fourth question. Although consensus on discussion techniques among the members does not seem to affect retention, we can put the consensus question another way. It may be that, since leaders probably do more to set the style of the discussion (after all, that is their job) than do members, agreement between leaders and members is an important factor. Thus, one might expect trouble where the leader wholeheartedly endorses the program's techniques, while the members reject them, regardless of the intrinsic merits of the techniques.

In Table 11 groups have been divided into "yes" and "no" on the basis of what the majority of participants in them say. Groups in which the leaders do not agree among themselves or did not answer have, for the sake of simplicity, been excluded from the analysis.

Table 11
Per Cent Dropping Out

Leaders	Group		Group	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
	<u>Squelch</u>		<u>Summarize</u>	
Yes	35 (534)	31 (255)	21 (14)	- (0)
No	31 (145)	47 (232)	58 (131)	34 (1254)
	<u>Background</u>		<u>Refrain</u>	
Yes	- (9)	- (7)	36 (711)	41 (280)
No	40 (68)	35 (1391)	34 (64)	31 (81)
	<u>Cross-examine</u>			
Yes	32 (296)	37 (373)		
No	42 (19)	37 (509)		

If leader-member agreement is important we should expect to find a difference between the drop-out rates in the two types of diagonal cells. Specifically, if agreement facilitates retention, drop-out should be lower in the upper-left and lower-right cells (circled in Table 11) than in the lower-left and upper-right cells.

Disagreement per se certainly cannot be said to produce drop-outs. In no case where there are sufficient numbers of respondents in all four cells do we find higher drop-out in the disagreement cells, and in the case of squelch, drop-out is lower in both disagreement cells.

There is, however, a pattern in Table 11 which may be worth noting. Except for "squelch," we seem to get higher drop-out fairly consistently in one, but not the other disagreement cell. That cell is always where the group is "yes" and the leader is "no." (We remember that the refrain item is worded negatively, and the high drop-out occurs in the cell where the group wants the leader to give opinions, but the leader is opposed to this.) From this point of view high drop-out may be caused by situations where the group wants the leaders to summarize, give opinions, provide background, or cross-examine, but the leaders are reluctant to do so. This relationship, it should be noted, cuts across the recommendations of the program. Where the group seems to want what the program forbids, the leader's insistence on recommended techniques is possibly bad for retention, but when the group wants an approved technique such as cross-examination, and the leader is opposed, drop-out is also slightly higher.

The nub of the problem seems to lie in the fact that

leaders (as one might expect) are much more orthodox than members. We can see this by looking at the case bases in Table 12 in terms of the number of members in the two types of discrepancy cells.

Table 12
Number of Members in Discrepancy Cells

Technique	Type of Discrepancy	
	Leaders Orthodox Members Heterodox	Leaders Heterodox Members Orthodox
Squelch	255	145
Summarize	131	0
Background	68	7
Refrain	280	64
Cross-Examine	373	19

Regardless of the issue, it is much more likely that one will find a situation where leaders follow the book and members don't than vice versa. Thus, there are 131 members in groups where the leaders oppose summarize but the members want it, and no members in groups where the leaders want to summarize, but the members are opposed to this.

The summarize example was not chosen at random, for it not only shows the greatest skew between leaders and members (Table 3 indicated the highest rejection of the program's doctrine was on this item), but a careful examination of Table 11 suggests that our detailed analysis of the compositional effect of summarize may have been washed out. The deleterious effect of high proportions wanting summaries may well come from the fact that in these groups the odds are 90 to 10 that the leader will not want to summarize. Although the case base is ludicrously small (14 cases) we do note that where leaders and members both favor summaries

drop-out is lower than in the modal case where both leaders and members follow approved doctrine.

Can we then draw any firm conclusions from our analysis? Not many, for after all we have no firm evidence on what the leaders and groups actually do, and many a man's arm has been talked off by a person who would solemnly endorse non-directive techniques. However, the general line of our findings is:

1) that leader training per se shows no relationship with program retention, 2) that endorsement of the program's strategies of discussion techniques does not have an important effect except in the case of summarize (a conclusion about which there is considerable doubt after reviewing Table 11), and 3) the suggestions of Table 11. All of these findings suggest that the specific content of the discussion style is not a major variable in group retention. However, it may be that in situations where either through overzealous application of the program's doctrine or because of personal inclination, the leaders do not provide a "service" desired by the group, high drop-out follows.

One can hardly offer this as an unqualified rule, but our data suggest that in terms of retention, the most effective leadership technique is "Give 'em what they want."

PART II

CHAPTER 1

INDIVIDUAL FACTORS IN RELATION TO DROP-OUT

Introduction

A group approach to the problem of drop-out has been adopted in our previous analysis. Armed with a systematic tool for analyzing compositional effects, it has been possible for us to shed considerable light upon the factors of group composition that make for high or low rates of drop-out from the Great Books program. Structural effects analysis goes quite a way toward explaining this phenomenon, but in order to arrive at a more complete picture of the situation we believe it is equally desirable to approach the problem from an individual point of view. The present section will be dedicated to this task.

Before proceeding with the details of the analysis, the clarification of several matters is probably called for. To begin with, let us dispel any possible misinterpretations that may result from the use of the term "individual" factors related to drop-out behavior. Without desiring to prejudice the question of the importance of personality factors for the behavior we are interested in, it must be strongly emphasized that these factors are not the ones we propose to consider in terms of our "individual" approach. Contemporary psychology has, of course, achieved an admirable level of competence in developing techniques for tapping the varied and subtle aspects of the human psyche. Unfortunately

these techniques seldom lend themselves to the large scale procedures of survey research. The systematic investigation of such factors must therefore remain outside the scope of this study. Now that we have dispelled what is perhaps the most serious misunderstanding that can arise from our use of the term individual factors, let us proceed to a more positive level and specify just what we do mean by this term. While the compositional analysis focused attention on the manner in which variations in group composition produced uniformities in the drop-out behavior of Great Books discussion group members, our individual analysis will concentrate upon the regularities flowing solely from the fact that members are classifiable as particular types of persons. The categories in terms of which discussion group members have been classified are quite varied, but for the most part they will include those that have occupied our attention in the previous analysis. Only here, we shall concentrate upon those characteristics of the members qua individuals that have important consequences for their remaining with Great Books. The value of this approach is amply supported by the persistent finding that in many instances where a structural effects approach fails to uncover relationships of any real importance, an individual analysis adds very substantially to our understanding of the general problem. Of course, the reverse of this situation - where structural effects analysis proves more fruitful than individual analysis is hardly less frequent - and this only serves to emphasize the point being made; in order to obtain a full picture of the drop-out problem, we find it useful to employ both a group

approach and an individual approach.

So much for the nature of our task in general terms. Before jumping into the detailed report of our findings, let us also point out that these findings are at once intriguing and complicated. While it would certainly make life easier, both for the survey analyst and the reader, if the relationships requiring description and analysis were simple and uncomplicated; simplicity decidedly is not the chief characteristic of our findings in this area. To begin with, we have found a wide range of variables associated on the individual level with dropping out of Great Books. Perhaps this situation does not come as a very great surprise to those who are close to the program and "know" from first hand impression the wide range of factors that affect a Great Books member's staying with the program or leaving it. The survey researcher does not rest content with the impressions - no matter how insightful and valid they may eventually prove to be on the basis of systematic study - but rather employs careful sampling techniques and objective procedures in order to arrive at a scientific understanding of the situation. In the process of achieving this understanding it is not uncommon to uncover a large number of variables related to the phenomena under investigation. At this point the researcher can usually draw upon his general knowledge of the subject and proceed to explain a large number of the original relationships in terms of the operation of a few fundamental factors. He does this by controlling for the various factors that can be expected to play a fundamental part in the process, and then looking to see if the original relation-

ship can be accounted for primarily in terms of these factors. All too often the survey analyst is overly successful, in the sense that he may end up showing that many of the factors he was "sure" were important are eventually accounted for in terms of some more fundamental causal factor. To be sure, an analysis of this type can have its distinct disadvantages; in the more obvious instance, the major hypotheses underlying a research study can be tumbled resoundingly to the ground. At any rate, such problems are not the ones that plague us here.

When we proceeded according to standard research procedure to control for certain strategic variables, the original relationships did not prove to be spurious. Instead they were found to hold in specific ways that were as often as not previously unsuspected. The end result of this situation was to produce a series of specified or conditional relations, based upon the interaction of several key variables. Consequently, the heart of our individual analysis will consist of the description and interpretation of the more important of these conditional relations.

The General Picture

The first question to be posed is as fundamental as it is obvious. What per cent of the original sample interviewed stayed with the program and what per cent dropped out? How much turnover do we actually find among the Great Books participants? The relevant data are found in Table I.

Table 1

Drop-Out Among the Original Sample

Stay	67%
Drop out	33%
Total	100%

N = 1730

No answer or uncodable 179

Total sample 1909

Here we find that 67 per cent of the original respondents for whom drop-out information was available retained their association with the Great Books program. Drop-outs accounted for 33 per cent of this total.¹ That is, one third of the participants for whom information was available were no longer affiliated with the program, while the great majority - two thirds to be exact - were still active at the time of the follow-up study.

Admittedly, it is a good deal easier to report these findings than it is to interpret them. The immediate question that comes to mind concerns the relative level of drop-out among the participants. What can be said about the "mortality" rate revealed by these data? May we conclude that loss of membership poses a relatively insignificant problem for those vitally concerned with the success of the program? Alternatively, do these findings contain any dark and ominous forebodings for the future of Great Books? Let us state quite candidly at this point that

¹Relevant information could not be obtained for 179 of the originally interviewed members. This figure represents 9 per cent of the total sample.

the researcher can provide only partial answers to such questions. In a very real sense the evaluation of such information rests with those who are associated with the administration of the program, since any such evaluation must ultimately depend upon the standards desired or required by persons responsible for the continued health and success of the organization. Of course, in the extreme case alluded to above, we need not hesitate to offer our own judgement. It is certainly clear that the program reveals no sign whatsoever of impending disaster following from the drop-out rate. Among the members at any given date, we can, on the basis of this study, expect that the large majority will retain their affiliation with the organization. The program is fundamentally healthy in this sense. It is when we seek to go beyond a level as elementary as this that the difficulty becomes apparent.

Granting this, it is still possible to inquire if some sort of objective criteria based upon studies of groups similar to Great Books are available. An investigation of the literature intended to uncover such criteria leads to an astonishing fact. At least to our knowledge, studies of this nature do not exist. We can only speculate as to why this situation should obtain. One explanation that suggests itself derives from the unusual, if not unique, character of Great Books as a type of social organization. It is certainly not easy to think of other organizations that depend as exclusively upon the continuous, intensive, and voluntary interest of the participants in intellectual endeavor. This emphasis upon the voluntary or unconstrained element in Great Books membership is crucial. Great Books shares its nature as an adult

educational institution with a wide range of other formal organizations. Unlike these other institutions, however, Great Books cannot depend upon the constraining force of financial or other utilitarian incentives. The average college student has financial reasons for remaining in school - most immediately in terms of the money invested in his education, but perhaps even more strongly by virtue of envisioned job opportunities. No such constraints exist in the case of Great Books, at least not for the vast majority of participants.

In view of the particular differences we have stressed, one could hardly expect to derive from studies of college students the type of objective criteria ideally needed for assessing the Great Books drop-out rate. Yet, taking the position that some effort in this direction is better than none, we propose to offer, when relevant, data obtained by the U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, on the "retention and withdrawal" of college students.² The reader should bear in mind, however, that under the circumstances only rough and approximate comparisons can be employed.

The Department study is based upon a national representative sample of college students entering as freshmen for the first time in the fall of 1950. This sample was followed as a "cohort" for the succeeding period, data being obtained from both official records and questionnaire schedules of the type employed in our own study of Great Books. All told, the relevant information on

²Retention and Withdrawal of College Students, by R.E. Iffert, U.S. Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare: Bulletin 1958, No. 1.

continuance and withdrawal was obtained for 13,612 students. Drop-out information was classified by length of residence, and revealed the following rates for the sample considered as a whole.³

Table 2

College Students' Drop-Out by Length of Residence

Length of Residence	Per Cent Drop-Out
First Year	28
Second Year	25
Third Year	10
Fourth Year	14
Total	100

In order to draw any conclusions from the college student data - no matter how tentative these conclusions may be - it is necessary to look at some comparable information for our Great Books sample. We have already presented the drop-out data for all of the respondents without regard for their length of exposure to the program. Now we need this information taking account of length of exposure. The appropriate information is provided in the following table.

³Ibid., p. 152 where the data are described for sex and for type of institution. Here we are interested in obtaining only a general over-all picture in terms of which comparisons can be made.

Table 3

Great Books Drop-Out by Length of Exposure

Exposure	Per Cent Drop-Out
Less than one year	46
One and two years	25
Three years or more	22
Total Cases	1611

First we draw the reader's attention to the fact that the two tables do not present their information in precisely the same way, since exposure in the college student study was classified somewhat differently from the method utilized in our own research. In the college study those in residence for less than a year were considered together with those in residence for one full year. The Great Books method involved distinguishing between these two categories of participants. As long as we content ourselves with only approximate comparisons, however, this does not present a serious problem.

Among college students, we see that 28 per cent of the freshmen withdrew from school by the end of the year. Among those who continued into their second year, 25 per cent did not remain for work in the third year. The juniors suffered a mortality of 10 per cent, while 14 per cent of those entering the senior year withdrew before receiving their degree.

The Great Books figures show that 46 per cent of those attending for less than one year left the group, 25 per cent of

in the one to two year category did not continue, while 22 per cent of those with the program three years or more were listed as drop-outs. The general picture in both cases is not radically different; but on the whole the Great Books participants show a greater tendency to withdraw from their organization than the college students. The difference is especially pronounced in the early period where Great Books participants drop out quite heavily, less pronounced in the comparison of advanced students and advanced discussion participants, and totally disappears among the middle groups. In the case of both Great Books and the college students, the drop-out is heaviest in the very early period of exposure.

When the important differences in the general nature of the organizations considered above are taken into account, these differences in drop-out appear even less significant. At the same time the comparison seems to pinpoint the particularly vulnerable period as far as Great Books is concerned - the initial months of exposure. Viewing the total picture, our original expectation seems to be confirmed: the Great Books drop-out problem does not compare too unfavorably with what is typical of young adult educational institutions despite the fact that the latter offer many more practical incentives for the member to continue.

Because of the important differences described above, it is possibly more enlightening to compare the Great Books drop-out figures with findings on the active participation of members in various types of voluntary associations. Students of the latter problem generally emphasize the point that active participation in most organizations of this nature is limited to a rather small

inner circle of individuals. The majority of members are fundamentally members in name only - or as they are sometimes called, "dues paying members." Their failure to participate in organizational affairs has often been accounted for in terms of apathy stemming from considerations of the larger social structure, on the one hand, and from organizational requirements for centralization and bureaucratization of functions, on the other. The main point we wish to make is just this. In many ways, the most "inactive" members of a Great Books discussion group are very similar to the active inner circle of a typical voluntary association. If this is, indeed, the case, the fact that as many Great Books participants remain with the program as long as they do becomes all the more noteworthy.⁴

In the light of the paucity of relevant data, we must rest content with these rather loose evaluations of the Great Books drop-out problem. Perhaps the reader is now in a somewhat better position to form his own conclusions as to the magnitude of the problem posed by the drop-out of Great Books participants. We can only repeat what has already been stressed: that in the most fundamental sense an evaluation must rest with those responsible for establishing specific standards deemed appropriate for the evaluation of Great Books as a more or less unique organization dedicated to the purposes of "uncoerced," adult education in

⁴It is important to bear in mind, however, that even this comparison is far from satisfactory. As hinted above, there are reasons to believe that there are special mechanisms within voluntary organizations operating to discourage widespread participation on the part of the membership. By contrast, no such mechanisms would appear to be functioning in the case of Great Books discussion groups.

the classic literature of Western Civilization.

Putting aside the problem of how Great Books drop-out compares with the drop-out typical of another educational organization, we can now focus attention on the central concern of the chapter: the attributes differentiating members who stay and members who drop out. The first group of factors to be considered are those relating to the individual's position in the social structure.

Social Structure Variables and Drop-Out

It is one of the fundamental assumptions of present day social science that an individual can only be adequately understood when we take account of his location with reference to such elementary social categories as sex, age, marital status, education and social or occupational status. The present section will be concerned with examining the relevance of these factors for the specific problem of immediate concern to us in this chapter.

Two important large scale, social structural correlates of drop-out are age and education. They are, in addition, two of the most useful background factors in terms of which to examine a large number of other important relationships. In view of these considerations, it will certainly repay us to carefully examine the association between age, education and drop-out.

The relevant information for age and drop-out, presented separately for men and women, is found in Table 4.

Table 4
Sex, Age and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Age	Sex	
	Female	Male
Under 30 years	42 (195)	47 (75)
30-34	31 (180)	43 (107)
35-39	32 (173)	31 (115)
40-44	31 (134)	24 (95)
45-49	28 (107)	28 (60)
50-54	26 (69)	16 (64)
55-59	38 (29)	32 (38)
Over 60 years	43 (79)	20 (49)

To a certain degree, we can observe a trend common to both sexes. The younger age groups tend to drop out heavily, middle age is a period of optimum retention, while there is a tendency for losses to increase again in the twilight years.⁵ However, the pattern varies somewhat by sex. Thus, while the rate of drop-out remains very high for men until the age of 35, the rate for women tapers off at about 30 years of age. Indeed, the losses are generally somewhat greater for men in the younger years. This situation reverses in the middle and late periods,

⁵Two possible explanations for the higher drop-out figure among younger members were investigated. First we examined the possibility that the finding was due to variations in program exposure associated with age differentials. That is to say, older members were likely to be exposed to the program for a longer period of time, and exposure to the program was positively correlated with retention. Analysis clearly indicated, however, that age differentials in drop-out could not be explained on the basis of associated patterns of exposure. In fact, the differences in retention between younger and older members were greatest in the initial years of exposure. Next we looked into the possibility that a greater incidence of residential mobility among younger persons underlies the findings. Once more the potentially explanatory variable did not essentially modify the original relationship.

where men are found to be especially good "stayers." In fact, among men the loss increases in late middle age only to fall off to a very low level once again in the later period of life. This contrasts sharply with the consistently strong curvilinear pattern among the women.

Although it is perhaps not readily apparent from the table, there is a very slight tendency in the zero order findings for women to drop out of the program in greater number than men. But, this relationship disappears entirely when we hold education constant. The findings to support this statement are contained in Table 5.

Table 5
Sex, Education, and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Education	Sex	
	Female	Male
No college	37 (201)	36 (55)
Part college, no AB	36 (286)	37 (99)
AB degree	31 (242)	33 (116)
Graduate study	30 (279)	29 (327)

Whatever significance sex role may have in other life contexts, the data seem unmistakably clear in showing that the typical Great Books member who stays with the program and the typical member who leaves the program are not to be distinguished on the basis of this factor. Once the people are recruited into participation, it does not appear that the program has appreciably different levels of appeal for either sex. In other words, there are cer-

tainly no grounds for concluding that the values and interests the program is capable of satisfying are the exclusive or principal province of one sex.

Returning to Table 5, let us now focus upon educational differentials in drop-out. We find that the major contrast is between members who have and members who have not acquired at least a bachelors degree. Among the men, a graduate level education contrasts even more sharply with the first two categories. Furthermore, among men, the graduate category far outnumbers those with only a bachelor's degree.

The fact that the "part college" people hardly differ from the "no college" people raises an interesting problem. It suggests that the significance of formal education for retention goes beyond intellectual background and interests. We know these factors are associated with length of formal schooling and drop-out.⁶ Yet, members who have attended college without receiving a degree drop out as frequently as those who never advanced beyond high school. This suggests that the benefits of a partial exposure to college are largely offset by another characteristic that we can hypothesize to be associated with this level of education: a relative lack of "stick-to-it-ness."⁷ In other words, there is

⁶See earlier sections of this report for information on liberal arts quiz score and level of reading in relation to education. The relationships between intellectual background and interest and drop-out are considered in detail below.

⁷Of course, we must not overlook the possibility that an individual is prevented from continuing his education by circumstances "beyond his control" - economic pressures, or marital obligations in the case of women would seem to be the most important factors of this type. We can report that the finding is not limited to either women or lower status members.

reason to suspect that the member who drops out of college is deficient in the persistence that is also important for predicting continuance with Great Books.

We have seen that both age and education are strongly correlated with drop-out. Now we ask how each of these two variables operates when the other is controlled. As intimated earlier, even under these circumstances, their effects on drop-out remain considerable.

Table 6

Age, Education, Sex and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Sex	Education	Age	
		Under 35	35 and Over
Female	Less than AB	40 (153)	34 (325)
	AB and more	34 (222)	28 (293)
Male	Less than AB	61 (28)	31 (124)
	AB and more	42 (154)	24 (288)

To begin with, the reader will note that we have collapsed into dichotomies the finer distinctions in age and education utilized up to this point. This procedure will enable us to take account of several variables simultaneously, and will for the most part be employed in the remainder of the analysis. The general picture is brought out quite clearly: neither age nor education drop-out differentials can be explained in terms of the other factor.

Beyond this it is also important to note that these differentials are exceptionally strong among the males. The age differential holds powerfully for men of both educational levels,

while the educational differential is especially noteworthy among men under 35 years of age.

Sex, Age, Marital Status, Social Class
and Drop-Out

At this point, we introduce two additional factors, marital status and social class. Yet, we wish to obtain a picture that will do justice to both our image of the social structure and our data. In order to do this it is necessary to examine sex, age, marital status and social class simultaneously, in relation to drop-out. Some rather interesting findings will emerge from this procedure.

Before discussing the findings, perhaps we should explain something about the meaning of social class or prestige status as used in this study. The fact that Great Books participants tend to be recruited very heavily from the middle levels of the occupational status system has been emphasized in an earlier section of this report. Without losing sight of this fundamental fact, we have found it useful to differentiate participants in terms of some approximate ranking of social class in so far as this can be evaluated from knowledge of an individual's occupational activity. Thus, for purposes of analysis, participants have been classified into lower and higher status. It is important to bear in mind the fact that the classification is relative to the Great Books sample rather than to any other larger prestige system. It seems to us that the distinction used here between lower and higher status corresponds in an approximate fashion to the usual distinction between lower and upper middle class in the general social system.

Actually the procedure employed for assigning the participants into the status classifications was quite complex, and entails a good deal of technical detail that would be inappropriate for presentation at this point. We feel that a series of selected or "typical" examples taken from both the low and high status categories will serve far better to communicate to the interested reader the general significance of the differentiation. The appropriate examples are as follows.⁸

"Typical" respondents classified as "lower" status were engaged in the following occupational activities:

1. draftsman
2. owner of small retail store
3. factory sales representative
4. owner and operator of small mail order business
5. railroad engineer

"Typical" respondents classified as "higher" status were engaged in the following occupational activities:

1. bank officer
2. electrical engineer
3. owner of medium sized advertising agency
4. research scientist
5. physician

Let us turn now to the findings.

⁸Housewives were classified on the basis of husbands' occupational activities.

Table 7

Sex, Age, Marital Status, Social Status
and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Age	Marital Status	Social Status	Sex	
			Female	Male
Under 35	Married	Low	45 (111)	40 (68)
		High	28 (114)	32 (78)
	Single	Low	38 (64)	45 (44)
		High	- (5)	- (16)
35 and older	Married	Low	30 (231)	28 (200)
		High	26 (175)	21 (143)
	Single	Low	37 (131)	20 (25)
		High	- (12)	- (17)

The first thing to be noted is that most unmarried members are classifiable as lower status; in fact, there are too few single, high status members to permit the computation of percentages for these cells. Once this is recognized, it does not pose too serious a problem and we can proceed with the analysis. Focussing upon the women we find the following patterns. Young married women of lower status are the most likely to drop out. Among single women, age makes no difference in the probability of retention; in either case it is still high. In contrast, retention is considerably better among members 35 years and over, and also, interestingly enough, among young higher status members.

Now let us examine the findings for men in this same manner, considering age, marital status and social class together. Here we observe that young, single, lower status members drop out most frequently. Also very high on drop-out are young, married, lower status men. Intermediate figures are found among young,

married, higher status and older, married, lower status men. The older, married, higher status men occupy the other extreme showing excellent retention, as do the older, single, lower status men.

Approaching the data from another point of view, let us examine individually the pattern of relationships between age, marital status, social class and retention. Starting with age we find that the originally observed relationship between age and drop-out holds among women in only one out of the three possible comparisons, the lower status married category. Among men, on the other hand, age is a perfectly consistent correlate of retention. Looking next at marital status we fail to observe any consistent pattern; the relationship between marital status and retention varies with the sex and age of the member. This holds despite the fact that there is a rather strong zero order correlation between being married and remaining with the program. Consider now the relationship between social status and retention. For every possible comparison among both men and women we find that higher status members are more likely than lower status members to remain with Great Books.

We have described the findings, now we wish to see what can be made of them. For this purpose we make use of the general concept of social structure by which we essentially mean the inter-related positions that serve to differentiate the social experiences of the members of a society. For certain purposes society can be fruitfully analyzed as a matrix of broad social positions within which each individual finds his place. Some of the dimensions of such a structure relevant for the problem under investigation include sex, age, marital status, social status and educa-

tional background. The point to be emphasized is that social scientists generally assume differences in location within this social structure go hand in hand with differences in life experience, culture, and recurrent modes of activity. Several analytically separable aspects of these differentials should be noted. In one aspect, position within the social structure implies that an individual's behavior is governed by a more or less clearly defined body of expectations socially recognized as appropriate to specific social identities. Clearly distinguishable from these normative prescriptions as to what "ought" to be done, are differentials in actual social relationships characteristic of diverse locations in the social structure. Still a third aspect involves placement in what has been called the "opportunity structure" of a social system. That is to say, position within the social structure results in differential exposure to a wide range of experiences and conditions that have important ramifications for a person's career. The previously cited differences in drop-out among sex-age-marital status-social status categories relate directly to these considerations. Comparing these positions, in terms of what it means to be at each of these junctures in the "road of life" goes a long way toward making sense of the relevant quantitative findings.

Let us return to the findings with this much as background. Thinking of the various combinations of sex, age, marital status and social class described above as niches in the social structure leads in virtually every case to a clarification of the findings. Thus, for women, the highest drop-out occurred among the young, married lower status members. This immediately suggests the

pressures of time and energy upon young housewives busy with the activities of raising a family and maintaining their household. It is interesting to observe that the impact of these pressures appears to be alleviated either by age or social status. Within the same life cycle phase, young, married higher status women reveal themselves as rather good "stayers." This suggests that the crucial factor is a financial one, presumably operating in several ways. In certain cases the young married woman of lower class position must add to her household duties the burden of employment outside the home. A type even more common in our sample than the "working wife" is the plain, ordinary housewife. The crucial consideration here may well be the ability to obtain assistance in household duties from outside sources. To the degree that this ability is based upon the financial situation of the family we would expect the lower status mother to have a decided disadvantage in this respect. Of course, the duties of rearing a family are eased by more "natural" changes. In the middle years, the children are moving out of the home, producing an oft noted void in the mother's life. How shall she utilize her newly found leisure? At least some women in this life situation seem to turn to Great Books.

We have yet to discuss the single women. This category consists largely of "career women," although there are a small number of unemployed divorcees and widows included as well. At any rate, the data indicate that neither of these types display very good retention. In the case of "career women" there is perhaps a simple explanation in the competition for time and energy represented by putting in "a hard day at the office." Although we

would be the first to admit that the study contains no direct evidence for it, we would also suggest the following interpretation. As we know, women tend to outnumber men in the program; furthermore, even where men do attend they are very likely to be married. The unattached woman looking for a potential mate soon finds that she has come to the wrong place. It is our suggestion, at any rate, that the real or potential "husband hunter" - rare though she may be - doesn't stay too well.

Now for the men. Two points stand out here. First and most important, the younger man is prone to drop out. Second, within each age category, higher status is a positive factor in retention. Yet, the really interesting differences seem to be those arising from age. Why should this be? The middle years find women relieved of a considerable part of their family activities and responsibilities, but this certainly does not apply to men. The principal activity, to which they are expected to devote their fullest attention, is their occupation, and there is certainly no drastic reduction in the level of activity comparable to that which exists in the case of married women. Perhaps the age differential reflects a more subtle shift in emphasis. A man in his prime is busy devoting time and energy to a job, and this is the expected thing to do. There is little room at this period in his career for leisure pursuits. The drop-out behavior of older men seems to suggest that this situation undergoes important changes. Having dedicated his youth to hard work in pursuit of his vocation, we suspect that both the individual and the "significant others" of his social environment find his continued participation in adult liberal education a somewhat more appropriate role

to play, at least as a complement to his main endeavor.

Education and Status

Education was treated earlier together with age. While it certainly comes as no great surprise to find that education and status are somewhat strongly correlated with one another; this fact does render it advisable to examine these two attributes simultaneously. When this is done we obtain the following results.

Table 8

Education, Age, Status and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Age	Status	Education	
		Less than AB	AB and more
Under 35	Low	48 (123)	41 (215)
	High	33 (55)	30 (191)
35 and over	Low	31 (320)	30 (281)
	High	34 (87)	21 (262)

Focussing first upon the status differentials, we observe that the relationship between status and drop-out is maintained in each of the age-education categories with the exception of the older, less educated members. The largest difference is found among the young, less educated members. Shifting to the educational differentials we find that the relationship holds in each of the four possible comparisons, but at the same time the differences are extremely small both among young, high status and older, low status members. We observe, in short, a kind of neutral belt within which differences in education have little impact upon drop-out, with the important effects showing up among the extreme categories.

In conclusion, neither education nor status are capable of accounting for the other attribute's relationship with drop-out. Certain interactions are, however, to be observed between these two factors. This situation induced us to conduct a rather extensive examination of the relevant patterns of correlation for these two attributes. The results of this investigation indicated that they represented, at least in many strategic circumstances, significantly different underlying dimensions, and since these important differences were masked by an index combining the two elements, the decision was made to employ each of these as separate measures when they were used in subsequent analysis.

Summary and Conclusion

In this section we have examined the relevance of position within the larger social structure for retention, utilizing information about a member's age, sex, marital status, social status and education. In so doing the fact that Great Books is, at least in certain regards, similar to other organizations was clearly brought out. Active membership in any organization requires a significant outlay in time and energy. Participation in Great Books discussion groups is certainly no exception to this rule. Such circumstances lead to competition for the individual's relatively scarce resources and make sustained active participation in any particular voluntary association more or less feasible, depending upon the other activities to which the person is committed. To be sure, individuals differ in their capacity to cope with such commitments, but generally, the evidence from studies of activity in voluntary associations indicates that people in the "busier"

stages of life are especially vulnerable to such competition for time and energy. The findings of the present survey closely follow this pattern.

Considering age as a social factor conditioning drop-out, we observed that younger members were generally the most vulnerable category. The middle years proved to be the most congenial to retention, while drop-out tended to increase again in the later years. Taking account of sex, marital status and social status in addition to age made it possible, on the one hand, to state more precisely the relationship between social structural position and drop-out; and, on the other hand, to account for these findings in more meaningful terms. Focussing upon women, it was found that young, lower status, married members were especially vulnerable to withdrawal. These women, it seemed plausible to argue, were either busy raising a family or else were "working wives." In either instance, their dominant activities were likely to interfere with participation in a discussion group. Young, married women of higher status, on the other hand, were found to stay with the program quite well. In their case, the family financial position presumably enabled the mother to avoid the kind of maternal or occupational duties that interfered with outside activities. The considerably lower drop-out figures for women over 35 years of age seemed to parallel the changing life activities of motherhood. With her children moving out of the home, a woman in her middle years would have more time to devote to organizational and cultural activities. Great Books would be one type of activity to which a woman in this stage of her life could turn. This age-linked differential was not observed among

single, lower status women. These consisted of "career women" who were presumably devoting most of their energy to their jobs. It was also suggested that in so far as there were "husband hunters" among them, the rather meager opportunities in a typical discussion group (the males are overwhelmingly married) would soon become apparent.

The emphasis thus far has been upon the patterns of activity typical of the various female roles. As indicated earlier, however, social structure also involves the definition of appropriate or expected behavior. We need only point out that in the case of women these definitions appear to coincide with the behavioral aspects already noted. As others have emphasized, not only are younger married women busy with their families, but they are expected to occupy themselves in this way. When we focus upon the drop-out among the men of different social positions it seems even more necessary to stress the part played by such role definitions. Here we observe a very strong tendency for younger men to drop out of the program. To be sure, the preoccupation of men with their work at this stage of their career coincides with a culturally expected behavior pattern. But, where the decline in a woman's family duties could be plausibly offered as an explanation of the tapering off of the drop-out figures among members of that sex, no such "natural" explanation appeared in the case of a similar finding for men. This led to our speculating that the observed decline in drop-out among middle aged and older men perhaps represented a fundamental change in the type of activity considered appropriate for a man to engage in. Could it be that we observe here indications of a shift in socially permissible

role behavior whereby the man who has reached middle age is allowed to devote more of his time to leisure pursuits and cultivation of the "mind"?

As previously noted, the social structural sources of withdrawal from Great Books considered above probably operate similarly for a wide range of organizational activities quite different from that characteristic of the discussion program. The social positions described just happen to be more or less vulnerable to competing activities and socially recognized values. Two social categories examined would seem to be somewhat more closely related in their ramifications for Great Books participation as a particular kind of activity. The first of these, sex, considered in itself, represents one of those situations where the absence of a correlation represents a rather interesting finding. Thus, it was observed that sex was not associated with drop-out. This, in turn, seemed to dispel the notion that the program appealed in any selective fashion to the values or interests of men or women.

Educational differentials represented another case of a structural factor clearly relevant to the content of activity embraced by a Great Books discussion program. Here, the data indicated that a college degree was positively associated with retention. In view of the highly cerebral character of the program this certainly came as no great surprise. What was involved here was, obviously enough, adequacy of intellectual background and the acquisition of skills for coping with materials of a rather high level of abstraction. There was no difference observed between members with only a high school education, however, and a partly

completed college education, and this led to the hypothesis that another element to be considered in connection with the possession of a college degree was just plain "stick-to-it-ness." The intellectual dilettante might be eager to join, but chances of his staying are somewhat poorer in these cases.

Status was another social structural factor of some interest. As indicated earlier, this attribute revealed a rather consistent pattern of association with our key variable, lower status members tending to drop out somewhat more than higher status members. Education and status were, however, intercorrelated and it was advisable to control for this fact. Despite the presence of some interactions between these two factors, the results indicated that neither could be accounted for in terms of the other.

In the remaining sections of this chapter we shall examine a wide range of factors related to drop-out. Our procedure, in most instances, will be to utilize one or more of the relevant attributes considered here both as a means of throwing into clearer relief the social structural incidence of the relationships, and as means of holding constant one important set of potentially confounding factors.

Intellectual Characteristics and Drop-Out

The analysis thus far has, for the most part, viewed the Great Books member in terms of factors that appear rather extrinsic to the activity involved in studying, analyzing and discussing the classics. We turn now to the consideration of a set of factors that may be loosely designated as "intellectual characteristics."

Unlike some of the other problems we have focussed upon, it seems immediately and abundantly obvious that a member's intellectual capabilities, as these derive from the interplay of natural endowment and environmental conditions, constitute a key variable in predicting withdrawal from a program such as Great Books. Reference here is to a variety of elements going beyond "raw intelligence" to include such things as methods for coping with intellectual materials, background of knowledge, fundamental organizing schemes, etc.

Attention has already been devoted to the relationship between education and drop-out. Persons characterized by more education tended to stay with the program to a greater extent, while those with comparatively less education were higher on drop-out. Exposure to varying degrees of education presumably involves a number of different experiences, among which are included the acquisition of such skills as are indicated above. Accordingly the analysis of the role of intellectual skills in relation to drop-out also represents an opportunity to attempt to isolate some of the interrelations between education and intellectual factors.

The measures of intellectual skills and knowledge to be used in the analysis have all been encountered in earlier phases of this report. They include a score on the quiz intended to tap intellectual preparation in the area of the liberal arts, a score on the music test, and a score on the poetry test. First we examine quiz scores in relation to drop-out.

To begin with, we know that quiz scores are highly correlated with length of exposure to the program. Members with less

exposure tend to be considerably lower on the test than members who have attended for longer periods of time. In addition, drop-out is disproportionately high in the first year of membership. Accordingly, in order to draw any reliable conclusions about the relationship between quiz scores and drop-out we first intend to examine this relationship taking account of the respondents' exposure to the program.

Table 9

Quiz Score, Exposure and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Exposure Years Completed	Quiz Score	
	Low	High
0	48 (348)	43 (241)
1 and 2	25 (244)	23 (268)
3 or more	25 (126)	20 (265)

When this is done, quiz score is observed to relate to drop-out quite apart from exposure. The difference is small, but consistent. In fact, the importance of background in the liberal arts as measured by the test is greatest in the earlier periods. If the relationship could, in fact, be accounted for in terms of exposure there would, of course, be no such differences when this factor was controlled.

Exposure has been taken into account in examining the relationship between quiz score and retention. Education and age are also correlated with both the independent and dependent variable, and it is therefore important to control for these factors as well.

Table 10

Quiz Score, Age, Education and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Age	Education	Quiz Score	
		Low	High
Under 35	Less than AB	50 (127)	26 (53)
	AB and more	39 (145)	33 (260)
35 and over	Less than AB	35 (255)	28 (181)
	AB and more	28 (237)	25 (340)

Within each age-education category low quiz scores are correlated with drop-out. The difference is more pronounced among those without an AB degree, and is especially strong among those combining this characteristic with youth. Throughout our analysis the young, less educated members reveal radically divergent patterns of withdrawal depending upon the factor of quiz score. At the other extreme the difference is rather small among older persons who have a college degree.

Looking at the figures another way, let us examine the relationship between age and drop-out, and education and drop-out, controlling for quiz score. It appears that quiz score serves to qualify somewhat both relationships. Among those high on the quiz and less educated, the difference between the age categories is slightly reversed; similarly the difference between educational categories is reversed considerably among young people high on the quiz. These statements are of course merely different ways of stating that young, less educated persons with high quiz scores are very likely to remain with the program. Perhaps these are

persons who were highly qualified for college work in terms of intellectual capabilities, but due to various conditions beyond their control were forced to discontinue their formal education. Given the opportunity to continue their education through the Great Books program a disproportionate number of such persons remain. On the other hand, young persons who have not received a college degree and are also low on quiz score are doubly handicapped. They do not bring to their Great Books activity the intellectual capabilities for adequately coping with the materials they encounter. Furthermore, they lack the benefits, other than those presumably reflected in quiz score, that derive from full exposure to a college education.

Quiz scores are somewhat less important among older persons, but the general picture remains the same. Up to this point at least, the conclusion would be that intellectual capability in the area of liberal arts, as measured by scores on the quiz, is one of the most important correlates of drop-out.

Quiz scores are, however, also intimately associated with musical sophistication and to a lesser degree with poetic appreciation. Let us now examine the independent contributions of each of these individual characteristics to the Great Books drop-out problem. But for the benefit of those who are unfamiliar with the first report on the Great Books program perhaps we should first explain a little about the measures utilized for tapping these two substantive areas. The measure of musical sophistication is a Guttman scale composed of four items. These items consist of classical music selections chosen so as to cover a range of musical sophistication running from "lower-middlebrow" (The

1812 Overture) through "upper-middle brow" (Beethoven's Archduke Trio). Respondents were asked to rate each of the musical compositions presented to them in terms of their familiarity (very familiar, familiar, less familiar, unfamiliar) and on the basis of their answers were eventually classified into two categories, "low" and "high" musical sophistication.

The measure of poetic appreciation is based on an instrument developed by Trabue and Abbott.⁹ These authors collected a number of classic poems and constructed damaged versions of brief selections from each. They developed for the poems: (a) a sentimentalized version, (b) a version which was flattened to make it "matter-of-fact," and (c) a metrically damaged version. Refinement of the components lead to a set of poems in both original and damaged form which could be used to test a respondent's ability to distinguish: a poem of acknowledged excellence from a vulgarized version.

Table 11

Music, Age, Education, Quiz Score and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Age	Education	Quiz Score	Music Score	
			Low	High
Under 35	Less than AB	Low	50 (103)	45 (20)
		High	23 (26)	27 (26)
	AB and more	Low	37 (109)	42 (31)
		High	31 (106)	33 (147)
35 and more	Less than AB	Low	39 (142)	29 (55)
		High	28 (79)	31 (83)
	AB and more	Low	29 (147)	35 (60)
		High	25 (155)	23 (173)

⁹M.R. Trabue and Allen Abbott, "A Measure of Ability to Judge Poetry," Teacher's College Record, Vol. XXII, March, 1921.

Focussing now upon quiz score and drop-out controlling for musical sophistication, age and education we observe that the association between quiz score and drop-out holds up. Those low on the quiz continue to show a higher rate of drop-out than members scoring high on this test.¹⁰ The relationship, moreover, remains most powerful among the younger, less educated members. Turning to the relationship between musical sophistication and drop-out, holding quiz score, age and education constant, there does not appear to be any consistent pattern. Musical sophistication is not correlated with drop-out.

Table 12

Poetry, Age, Education, Quiz Score and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Age	Education	Quiz Score	Poetry Score			
			Low		High	
Under 35	Less than AB	Low	54	(91)	39	(36)
		High	28	(32)	24	(21)
	AB and more	Low	40	(110)	34	(35)
		High	31	(169)	36	(91)
35 and more	Less than AB	Low	36	(204)	31	(51)
		High	24	(129)	38	(52)
	AB and more	Low	28	(179)	27	(58)
		High	23	(225)	29	(115)

Next we examine poetry, quiz score, age and education in relation to withdrawal. The relation between quiz score and drop-out generally holds up when poetry, education and age are held constant. There are, however, several exceptions. The relationship does remain intact among the young less educated members,

¹⁰There is one slight reversal between those 35 years and over, less educated and high on musical sophistication.

and this follows the findings arrived at when age and education alone are held constant. Looking at poetry in relation to drop-out we observe an even more interesting pattern. On the one hand, those who do poorly both on the quiz and on the poetry test tend to drop out somewhat more than others. Yet those who do well on both of these tests also drop out. This suggests the following interpretation. Those who are weak both in liberal arts background and poetic appreciation are probably ill-prepared for the program. Those who have a strong background in the humanities and reveal relatively high poetic appreciation and taste may very well be somewhat too intellectual or "high brow" for the program. We shall have occasion to pursue this last possibility somewhat further in succeeding pages.

Reviewing the principal findings strongly suggests that, at least for the young, less educated members, the more one knows about the liberal arts and the classics the more likely one is to continue with the program. Background knowledge and skills in the area most immediately relevant to Great Books is an important factor in retention. Without such a background the younger member who has not received a college degree is extremely vulnerable to drop-out. Perhaps worthy of equal emphasis is the somewhat restricted character of this generalization. Interestingly enough, the findings appear to indicate that such a background is really important in predicting retention among a limited category of members and for a particular period of participation. Drop-out among members 35 years and over and among the better educated is hardly affected by this consideration, and even among those

who are affected, the impact occurs only in the first two years of attendance. In short, where it operates, liberal arts background is very important for retention; yet given certain countervailing considerations, e.g., a completed college education, optimum position in the age cycle, advanced years of participation, inadequacies in preparation are definitely surmountable.

Turning to measures of intellectual skills and knowledge somewhat less directly related to the study and discussion of the classics, we found that musical sophistication does not have important ramifications in drop-out behavior. Poetical appreciation represented a somewhat different situation. In itself this factor was not consistently correlated with drop-out. When examined in conjunction with knowledge of the liberal arts, however, an interesting pattern emerged. Members who were weak in both liberal arts background and poetic appreciation tended to drop out; while those high on both of these counts also tended to drop out. One interpretation of these findings viewed the former persons as definitely too unintellectual or "low brow" for the program, and the latter persons as perhaps somewhat too intellectual or "high brow" to be challenged by the level of the program.

The evidence on intellectual background and knowledge has been reviewed. Next, we concern ourselves with several other important factors of an intellectual character. These include, first, the member's reported self-conception as this relates to intellectualism. The reader will remember that the members studied were requested to respond to the following question.

Which of the following comes closest to the way you think about yourself?

- ___ 1. I don't like the phrase particularly, but I guess you'd have to call me an "intellectual."
 ___ 2. I consider myself an educated person, but not really an "intellectual."
 ___ 3. I haven't had too much education, so I can't really call myself either an "intellectual" or an "educated person," but I am pretty serious in my approach to things.
 ___ 4. I guess I'm sort of a "low-brow" when it comes down to it.

Interest in this question mainly revolved around determining the proportion of Great Books members who thought of themselves as intellectuals. As it turned out only a small minority of the members did so. The majority thought of themselves as well educated or serious persons. Those who considered themselves intellectuals were somewhat more likely to be college graduates and high on quiz scores. In this chapter we are interested in examining the relationship between intellectual self-conception and drop-out. Are those who report thinking of themselves as intellectuals more likely to remain with the program? Table 13 presents the data, controlling for age, education and quiz score.

Table 13

Intellectual Self Conception, Age, Education,
Quiz Score and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Age	Education	Quiz Score	Intellectual	
			Yes	No
Under 35	Less than BA	Low	- (5)	50 (119)
		High	- (9)	28 (40)
	BA and more	Low	- (10)	41 (133)
		High	32 (65)	33 (182)
35 and over	Less than BA	Low	- (9)	35 (232)
		High	52 (29)	24 (147)
	BA and more	Low	30 (23)	29 (199)
		High	20 (87)	27 (246)

It is certainly difficult to discern any consistent rela-

tionship between intellectual self-conception and drop-out. Thus it not only appears that Great Books members seldom consider themselves as intellectuals, but that those who do are generally no more likely to stay than the non-intellectuals. This may come as something of a surprise to many. Another interesting finding is observed when we focus specifically on those persons high on the quiz, 35 years and over, and low on education who consider themselves intellectuals. Such persons show a very high rate of drop-out. This finding, anomolous as it may appear at first inspection, ties in with a series of findings to be reported subsequently. That is to say, it relates to a line of analysis indicating that at least certain persons with a strong background in the liberal arts, as well as reading habits and interests of a very high level, tend to drop out of the program.

This brings us directly to our next concern: the relationship between reading preferences and practices and retention. First, we have data on the respondents' evaluation of recent "worthwhile" books. These data were classified along two somewhat different dimensions. The first axis of concern differentiated members preferring non-fiction from those preferring fiction. An examination of the correlation between this factor and withdrawal, controlling for quiz score, age and education, provides the following picture.

Table 14

Worthwhile Books Preference, Age, Education,
Quiz Score and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Age	Education	Quiz Score	Worthwhile Books			
			Fiction or Mixture		Non-Fiction	
Under 35	Less than BA	Low	55	(53)	47	(30)
		High	41	(27)	0	(15)
	BA and more	Low	44	(48)	39	(31)
		High	34	(118)	33	(75)
35 and older	Less than BA	Low	43	(69)	24	(58)
		High	39	(56)	21	(63)
	BA and more	Low	45	(55)	16	(68)
		High	25	(123)	28	(114)

We find that non-fiction preference is definitely correlated with continuance, while taste for fiction is associated with withdrawal. The pattern is very strong among older members with the exception of those high on quiz score and high on education.¹¹ Here the association is actually slightly reversed. This would seem to be a special instance of a rather typical and recurrent finding. Members who possess at least two characteristics very favorable to retention - in this case a college degree and a strong background in the liberal arts as measured by quiz score - are not affected by their characteristics on additional variables which relate to drop-out.

Thus it appears that when a member is especially vulnerable by virtue of educational experience and liberal arts background, his relative appreciation of works of fiction and non-

¹¹Note as well that no difference appears among younger members high on education and the quiz.

fiction becomes an important factor in his staying with the program. If his taste runs strictly to non-fiction, a weakness on educational experience and liberal arts background becomes less important. This is especially true for older members. Conversely, the vulnerable member designating a work of fiction as his most worthwhile book, either alone or in combination with non-fiction selections, is more likely to drop out.

The distinction between fiction and non-fiction considered immediately above is quite separate from the issue of "level" of reading appreciation. Quite obviously, a work of fiction may be of the highest level, while a work of non-fiction may be rather low brow in character. Accordingly, the worthwhile book selections classified in terms of intellectual level were also examined for their relevance to drop-out behavior. For this purpose it was useful to distinguish three intellectual levels: highbrow, high-middle brow, and middle brow. Controlling once more for quiz score, age and education, the following results were obtained.

Table 15

Reading Level, Age, Education,
Quiz Score and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Age	Education	Quiz Score	Reading Level		
			High Brow	Hi-Middle	Middle Brow
Under 35	Less than BA	Low	68 (19)	44 (18)	48 (46)
		High	- (10)	21 (24)	- (8)
	BA and more	Low	35 (23)	23 (22)	59 (34)
		High	40 (50)	32 (77)	30 (66)
35 and older	Less than BA	Low	24 (21)	18 (39)	48 (67)
		High	41 (41)	19 (37)	27 (41)
	BA and more	Low	21 (19)	22 (41)	37 (63)
		High	23 (57)	23 (96)	33 (84)

Despite the fact that the pattern becomes somewhat irregular in spots, this table contains some rather interesting trends. First let us note that high brows are not at all the most likely type of member to stay with the program. They are for the most part more likely to drop out than the high-middle brows. The latter presumably find the program most congenial. The middle-brow, finally, also tends to be high on drop-out. This suggests that level of reading appreciation is related to drop-out in the following ways. Those who are very high brow bring with them tastes that would appear to be unsatisfied by the readings and the discussion. They are presumably not stimulated sufficiently by the program and as a result tend to drop out rather heavily. The middle brows represent the opposite extreme. Their intellectual interests are keyed at too low a level to enable their continued participation. For such persons the program appears to be somewhat too demanding. In contrast to both of these groups, the members with high-middle brow tastes are most likely to find the program both stimulating and satisfying.

Still another measure of Great Books members' intellectual interests is represented by the previously described Reading Quality index. This measure is a combined index of both magazine and book reading. For purposes of the analysis, the index may also be trichotomized into high, medium and low. Controlling for quiz score, age and education, it appears that a high level of reading quality is associated with increased likelihood of staying only among those low on quiz score, and even there, not among persons under 35 years of age and low on education. Among members

who are high on the quiz, it makes little difference if one is high, medium or low on reading quality. If anything, those low on the scale tend to be slightly less likely to drop out.

Table 16

Reading Quality, Age, Education,
Quiz Score and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Age	Education	Quiz Score	Reading Quality				
			High	Medium	Low		
Under 35	Less than AB	Low	56 (36)	40 (35)	57 (37)		
		High	26 (31)	- (11)	- (6)		
	AB or more	Low	26 (42)	41 (39)	53 (45)		
		High	33 (116)	34 (82)	28 (29)		
35 and older	Less than AB	Low	22 (55)	44 (61)	44 (103)		
		High	34 (71)	23 (43)	26 (43)		
	AB or more	Low	22 (54)	32 (75)	31 (74)		
		High	24 (141)	27 (103)	26 (50)		

Let us briefly draw together some of the main threads of analysis relating to intellectual qualities and reading preferences.

1. A good background knowledge in the classic literature of the liberal arts is definitely a strategic factor in retention. Familiarity with the great thinkers and the principal problems to which they addressed themselves is associated with continued affiliation with the program, while the relative lack of such familiarity is associated with drop-out. The possession of a prepared mind is especially important in the case of members who are vulnerable to withdrawal on the basis of age, educational background or other characteristics.

2. Musical sophistication is not an important factor in relation to drop-out.

3. Poetic sophistication does not appear to be associated in any consistent manner with drop-out. In conjunction with liberal arts background as measured by quiz score, however, this factor appears to take on a degree of importance. Where the member is simultaneously low on quiz score and low on poetry, there seems to be little that can save him. Interestingly enough, if the member is both high on quiz score and high on poetry he is also likely to drop out. In the former case he is decidedly too un-intellectual in background for the program; in the latter situation we encounter one of the several indications that members who are too well prepared are also somewhat poorer risks.

4. The member who stays is more likely to be "serious" in his reading tastes and interests. If he is low on the quiz, non-fiction is decidedly his "meat"; generally speaking a taste for fiction is not congenial to retention. Secondly, members who are relatively high brow in their reading preferences and actual reading habits are more likely to stay than those who are middle brow.

5. The evidence thus far supports the generalization that the well prepared member is more likely to stay, while the less prepared member is more likely to drop out. This applies to the area of intellectual interests as well as intellectual skills and knowledge. Great Books is generally not for the person who is inadequately prepared by background and interest for a relatively high level of intellectual activity.

6. While this is the dominant picture, there are grounds for pointing out a qualification of some interest. A search for a relationship between very high level preparation and interest and drop-out was employed. The results indicate that some persons

presumably do drop out as a consequence of insufficient stimulation or challenge from the program. These people appear to be high on the quiz, very high brow, and interestingly enough, low on education. The data also suggest that such persons are, unlike the majority of Great Books members, especially likely to think of themselves as "intellectuals." The fact that they are often persons without a college degree also suggests that they are "self-taught," and perhaps especially "individualistic" in their style of intellectual life. Perhaps the most important fact to bear in mind regarding this group of persons is that they constitute a very small minority of the total sample. The larger picture sketched above should be recognized as the fundamental one as far as most of the members are concerned.

7. A second qualification, perhaps of greater significance, is the recurrent finding that members' intellectual preparation and interests are quite often of little or no significance for drop-out, provided the individual is not vulnerable in terms of his position in the social structure.

Group Activities and Attachments in Relation to Drop-Out

The present section investigates the role of group affiliations and activities in affecting a participant's chances of remaining with the program. To begin with we shall examine the findings on membership in voluntary associations. For this purpose we make use of a classification of the Great Books participants into "joiners" and "non-joiners," the "joiners" consisting of persons reporting membership in two or more organizations.¹²

¹²Organizations attached to a particular religious congregation were excluded from the count of organizational memberships but unions and professional associations, if listed by name were included.

The relevant data on the association between membership in voluntary organizations and drop-out is contained in Table 17. Since it is a fairly well established fact that such membership is also correlated with age and social status, these factors are held constant in the table.¹³

Table 17

Participation in Voluntary Organizations,
Age, Status and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Age	Status	Participation	
		High	Low
Under 35	Low	32 (103)	46 (224)
	High	27 (88)	32 (158)
35 and older	Low	30 (324)	31 (260)
	High	24 (225)	27 (116)

Here we see that being low on associational membership is correlated with dropping-out of the program, but that this relationship holds for the most part among the young, lower status members. That is to say, the lower status "non-joiners" drop out rather heavily. There is no correlation among the lower status members who are 35 years and older, and while it is present among both high status categories it is rather small in both cases. We should note in passing that the relationship between age and drop-out, and status and drop-out holds regardless of associational participation.

¹³Charles R. Wright and Herbert H. Hyman, "Voluntary Association Memberships of American Adults: Evidence from National Sample Surveys," American Sociological Review, June, 1958, Vol. 23, No. 3, pp. 284-94.

Despite the fact that the relationship between membership in voluntary associations and drop-out has been observed to hold primarily among young, lower status members, the findings remain of considerable interest. This is due in good measure to the manner in which the findings seemingly run contrary to expectation. At least on the surface, one would be inclined to hypothesize that people with a large number of organizational commitments would be more likely to discontinue the program. This is based, of course, upon a conception of competing activities and obligations. Given a presumably limited amount of time and interest, the more occupied the individual participant is with other organizations, the more likely it would be for him to drop out of Great Books. It is quite clear, however, that other organizational affiliations are favorable for remaining with the program especially if the individual is properly located in the social structure. If anything, it is the person with few attachments of this type that drops out. Presumably, among persons who are likely to feel rather strongly the pressures of work and household commitments - young, lower status members - the one who has the capacity to take on numerous activities is most likely to stick with Great Books. The member in this position with little time for other organizational activities has little time for Great Books.

Thus far we have considered the importance of formal organizational activity for drop-out. The focus of attention is now shifted to a concern for informal group activities relevant for our study. Informal group life encompasses, of course, a wide range of complex phenomena. Our survey enables us to present information on the operation of two specific aspects of this

rather extensive web of relations. The respondents were requested to report, first, on the extent of informal visiting with friends, family and acquaintances, and second on the extent of social contacts with fellow discussion members outside of the program meetings. One question we ask is this: are Great Books members devoting a relatively large amount of time to social visiting exceptionally likely to withdraw from the program? Following that, we ask if outside contacts with fellow discussion members serve to reinforce a participant's connections with the program.

Table 18

Informal Visiting, Age, Status, and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Age	Status	Informal Visiting	
		Low	High
Under 35	Low	37 (131)	44 (190)
	High	29 (104)	33 (138)
35 and older	Low	32 (317)	26 (247)
	High	26 (183)	24 (140)

Table 19

Outside Contacts, Age, Education and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Age	Education	Outside Contacts	
		Low	High
Under 35	Less than AB	44 (130)	47 (43)
	AB and more	37 (280)	27 (113)
35 and older	Less than AB	31 (334)	35 (93)
	AB and more	28 (383)	20 (176)

Actually, the findings indicate that both informal visiting and outside contacts with fellow discussion members have differential consequences for drop-out, depending upon the individual's position in the social structure. For example, a high frequency of informal visiting among younger members, primarily those of lower status, leads to a somewhat greater probability of withdrawal. Yet, among older members, again primarily those of lower status, a high frequency of informal visiting leads to a reduced probability of dropping out.

A parallel situation exists regarding outside contacts with fellow discussion members. College graduates who see quite a bit of other members outside of the meetings tend to stay with the program; less educated persons who do the same tend to drop out.

The first thing we would conclude from these findings is that neither extent of informal visiting nor outside contacts with fellow discussion members are, in and of themselves, related to retention. This seems to follow from the fact that in both cases, diametrically opposite consequences flow from similar conditions depending upon the social background of the individual. On the other hand, it may be fruitful to think of informal visiting and outside contacts with fellow discussion members as channels of influence linking the individual more or less intimately with particular social environments. This would render quite understandable the differential import of ostensibly similar conditions. Frequent informal visiting would constitute a strong link with one's immediate status and age peers.

We do have certain information about the recruitment and retention of persons from various social categories. Older persons are both heavily (but not disproportionately) attracted to the program and somewhat more likely to remain once they have joined. The opposite holds, of course, for younger persons. Accordingly, it is reasonable to expect that older members who frequently visit informally with their peers - that is to say are well integrated in informal networks - will be somewhat likely to receive social support for remaining with the program. Younger members who are integrated, on the other hand, would be expected to receive social support for dropping out. Although the differences are quite small with regard to status, the same interpretation is applicable here. That is to say, the person of lower status who is well integrated in informal relations will, if anything, be influenced to drop out, while the higher status member will be influenced to stay.

This emphasis upon examining the social context or social environment of the member in order to explain the differential effect of an ostensibly similar condition is also capable of accounting for the complicated findings on outside contacts with fellow discussion members. Since the informal group in this case includes Great Books members, its relevance as a source of social influence regarding drop-out behavior seems even more obvious. How natural it would be for members who get together informally to be governed in their decision to remain or drop out by the behavior and views of their friends. The possibility of a joint or mutual decision is, of course, also great. At the same time, it seems that we have to make one additional assumption uncalled

for in the previous interpretation. This is the assumption that members maintain outside contacts for the most part with others of similar background - in this case educational background. Granting this much, we can proceed directly to point out that among better educated members seeing a good deal of other members outside the meetings results in exposure to social influences favorable for remaining with the program. (We know that better educated members are more likely to stay.) For the less educated, on the other hand, influence stemming from outside contacts would tend, if anything, to reduce chances of staying.

Formal and informal group affiliations and activities have been examined in their significance for the problem under consideration in this chapter. We turn now to still another dimension of "group" attachment: an individual's relations to more distant and diffuse social realities. As part of its concern for various modes of "reference group" behavior, recent work in the social sciences has placed renewed emphasis upon the role of such relations in conditioning the life of modern man.

One specific form of this kind of behavior incorporated in our investigation concerns the individual's attachment to the community wherein he resides. Since persons presumably identify with their community in varying degrees, we can proceed to ask what differences appear in this regard as far as withdrawal is concerned. Are there any differences in retention between members who do, and members who don't feel special attachment to their community?

A somewhat separate mode of reference group relationship is represented by the distinction between local and cosmopolitan orientation in the area of civic and public affairs.¹⁴ The essential distinction involved here is between persons primarily interested in public affairs at the local community level, and persons primarily interested in public affairs at the national or international level. In this connection we would like to know if Great Books is more likely to hold on to members oriented toward cosmopolitan rather than local public affairs. However, since only a small minority of the members studied were classifiable as "pure" locals it was necessary to utilize a somewhat different method of comparison. This involved distinguishing between members who reported a high interest in affairs at the local level (either alone, or in combination with a high cosmopolitan interest), those who reported only a high interest in national and international affairs, and those who were low in interest generally. This enabled us to compare the drop-out rate of pure cosmopolitans with each of the other two types.

¹⁴The distinction between local and cosmopolitan orientation has been utilized in a wide variety of contexts. Let it be emphasized that our treatment of the problem is limited to the area of public affairs. C.f. Robert K. Merton, "Patterns of Influence: Local and Cosmopolitan Influentials" in Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure (rev. ed.). Glencoe, Ill: Free Press, 1957, pp. 387-420.

Table 20

Attachment to Community, Age, Education, Quiz
Score and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Age	Education	Quiz Score	Attachment to Community			
			High		Low	
Under 35	Less than AB	Low	52	(61)	47	(66)
		High	33	(18)	24	(34)
	AB and more	Low	37	(60)	40	(83)
		High	28	(82)	36	(169)
35 and older	Less than AB	Low	29	(167)	45	(82)
		High	32	(112)	20	(66)
	AB and more	Low	28	(159)	29	(76)
		High	20	(214)	32	(123)

The findings with regard to community attachment indicate that there is no relationship between this attribute and withdrawal. Those who identify strongly with their local community and those who lack such a feeling of identification do not differ essentially in their pattern of drop-out. In earlier sections of this report a good deal of emphasis was placed upon the finding that Great Books members were, generally speaking, surprisingly likely to report that they identified with their community - that they "felt like real members of their community." This was one of several points at which the "ivory tower" notion - the view that Great Books members were recruited from among persons somewhat estranged from the world of everyday affairs - was refuted. At this juncture it can be further added that members who remained with the program were, once again, decidedly not those who feel alienated from their moorings in the local community.

Turning to the comparison of local and cosmopolitan orientation we again find no relationship with drop-out. On the

basis of these findings, it appears that the locus of interest in the world of public affairs has no consequence for our problem.

Table 21

Local-Cosmopolitan Interest, Age, Education,
Quiz Score and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Age	Education	Quiz Score	Local	Interest Cosmopolitan	Other
Under 35	Less than AB	Low	52 (31)	43 (67)	61 (28)
		High	- (10)	42 (26)	- (17)
	AB and more	Low	37 (30)	36 (70)	41 (44)
		High	19 (53)	40 (152)	24 (54)
35 and older	Less than AB	Low	29 (85)	37 (99)	38 (58)
		High	37 (54)	26 (86)	23 (35)
	AB and more	Low	31 (101)	21 (70)	34 (62)
		High	17 (109)	28 (148)	27 (81)

Conclusions on Group Attachments and Activities
in Relation to Drop-Out

1. There is certainly little evidence that a high level of formal organizational participation has deleterious consequences for retention. In fact, it was found that younger members active in associations tended to stay with the program somewhat more than others.

2. The informal activities of members as represented by the frequency of visiting and the extent of outside contacts with fellow discussion members proved to be related in rather complex ways to drop-out. An interpretation of these findings in terms of variations in the social influences to which the member was exposed as a consequence of such informal activities was advanced to account for the findings.

3. The individual's linkage with distant social realities as represented by his identification with community and locus of interest in public affairs was found to be uncorrelated with drop-out.

4. Aside from the last mentioned factors, the member's group affiliations and activities were found to be of appreciable importance for our problem. This represents another bit of evidence for the view that drop-out is a function of diverse social as well as purely intellectual factors.

Values and Beliefs in Relation to Drop-Out

We shift our attention to the role of values and fundamental beliefs in relation to retention and withdrawal. Specifically, we shall, in turn, examine general life values, religious beliefs and political ideology as they prove relevant to our problem.

The measures of fundamental life values employed for this purpose were the familiar Morris "Ways to Live" items described in detail earlier in the report. The reader will remember that each respondent was asked to indicate his relative preference or dislike for each of four highly generalized value or philosophical positions. These included four basic positions rather accurately described as: "Hedonism," "Groupyness," "Activity," and "Contemplation." The first position holds in a phrase that "life is something to be enjoyed - sensuously enjoyed, enjoyed with relish and abandonment." "Groupyness" implies that "a person should merge (himself) with a social group, enjoy cooperation and companionship..." He who agrees heartily to "Activity" as a way to live

believes that "a person must stress the need of constant activity - physical action, adventure, the realistic solution of specific problems as they appear, the improvement of techniques for controlling the world and society..." Finally, approval of the "Contemplative" life involves agreement with the notion that "the rich internal world of ideals, of sensitive feelings, of reverie, of self-knowledge is man's true home..." Now that we have refreshed our memories as to the content of these fundamental value positions let us examine the findings.

TABLE 22

MORRIS VALUES, AGE, EDUCATION, QUIZ SCORE AND DROP-OUT

Per cent dropping out

AGE	EDUCATION	QUIZ SCORE	MORRIS "WAYS OF LIFE"											
			GROUPYNESS		ACTIVITY		HEDONISM		CONTEMPLATION					
			Like	No	Like	No	Like	No	Like	No				
Under 35	Less than AB	Low	57 (47)	44 (77)	47 (34)	49 (89)	46 (24)	50 (101)	38 (29)	52 (94)				
		High	-- (9)	26 (43)	-- (12)	22 (40)	33 (18)	24 (34)	-- (11)	25 (40)				
35	AB and more	Low	40 (57)	38 (87)	44 (52)	36 (92)	34 (29)	40 (115)	38 (16)	39 (128)				
		High	23 (81)	37 (174)	31 (78)	34 (177)	28 (69)	35 (187)	41 (51)	30 (203)				
35 years and over	Less than AB	Low	36 (124)	32 (105)	36 (98)	34 (125)	36 (55)	32 (172)	26 (43)	36 (179)				
		High	33 (87)	22 (89)	24 (55)	29 (120)	16 (56)	32 (117)	24 (45)	29 (129)				
35 years and over	AB and more	Low	29 (134)	27 (96)	32 (96)	26 (133)	21 (47)	30 (181)	37 (38)	26 (187)				
		High	22 (161)	27 (173)	22 (99)	26 (236)	29 (93)	23 (237)	28 (54)	24 (279)				

The simple truth of the matter appears to be that no correlation exists between the Morris "Ways to Live" and drop-out. We must confess that we had several interpretations handy in the expectation that the results would be different. Now we conclude that general value positions of the type considered are not significant for retention and drop-out. We also suggest that this is possibly due to the wide range of ideas presented for reading and discussion in the program. Whatever one's general life values there is something that will prove congenial. Furthermore, in Great Books there is no attempt to impose particular positions upon the members. In fact, a guiding principle of the program is precisely to encourage independence of judgment rather than conformity to any "party line." Under these circumstances, then, the failure to find a relationship between the value positions indicated above and withdrawal appears somewhat more understandable. Finally, we shall note that in two years of analysis of these data by five survey analysts, these items have never correlated with any important aspect of Great Books participation.

Religion and Drop-Out

Despite the fact that we live in a relatively secular age, religion remains a central form of group membership in contemporary American Society. While authorities find it difficult to appraise the significance of such indices of increasing religious interest as growing church attendance, it is generally conceded that membership in one or the other of the religious groupings leaves its imprint upon a wide variety of the individuals

behavior and values. Especially where ethnic membership becomes a relatively less important form of group identification, religion seemingly takes its place as one of the principal modes of inter-society differentiation. Accordingly, we wish to inquire into the possible ramifications of diverse religious affiliations for a Great Books member's continuing with the program.

The problem under investigation is this: do we find differentials in withdrawal among members of diverse religious affiliation? The answer to this query is contained in Table 23, where drop-out is cross tabulated by religion, controlling for age and status.

Table 23

Religion, Age, Status and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Age	Status	Religion				
		Prot.	Cath.	Jew	Other	None
Under 35	Low	43 (174)	47 (41)	45 (44)	- (2)	41 (41)
	High	33 (126)	31 (32)	32 (41)	- (1)	26 (31)
35 and more	Low	34 (355)	30 (46)	20 (79)	- (9)	24 (81)
	High	17 (210)	17 (24)	61 (51)	- (4)	27 (37)

We find there are no differences in drop-out among the religions for Great Books members under 35 years of age. The only small exception is the somewhat lower drop-out rate among persons reporting no religion in the high status category. The picture is somewhat different, although far from consistent, among persons 35 years of age and over. Protestants and Catholics show little or no difference here. Lower status Jews and Nones, on the other hand,

are appreciably low on drop-out; while in sharp contrast, Jews are extremely likely to discontinue among the higher status members over 35 years of age. Note, there is no difference to speak of between Protestants and Catholics in any of the age-status categories. The real differences to take note of relate to the Jews. Interestingly enough, we find that the rates of drop-out among members of this religion run contrary to the general trend. Among low status Jews, 35 years and over, drop-out is lower than the equivalent figure for other religions. Among the high status, 35 years and over, a category generally low on drop-out, the rate for Jews reaches a very, very high figure - 61%.

The figures hardly indicate any over-all differentials between the religious affiliations and withdrawal from the program. The more limited associations involving the comparison of Jews and non-Jews have been indicated. It is interesting to point out in this connection that these findings do not support any simple notions of specific religious groupings being either more or less intellectual or scholarly in their cultural emphasis. At least there are no indications of such a pattern in the drop-out rates which we have examined. The rather unusual pattern encountered among older Jews certainly warrants further examination, and we intend to pursue this line of analysis in the following section where religious values can be included as possible interpretations for these findings.

The specific religious affiliations of the Great Books members have been found, with but one exception, to be unimportant for retention. But members of any particular religion also differ in terms of their "religiosity." Some take their religion quite

seriously, while others do not. We wish to turn to this matter now and inquire if members who appear to be on the more religious side are especially vulnerable to drop-out.

Table 24

Frequency of Church Attendance, Age,
Status and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Age	Status	Frequency of Attendance	
		High	Low
Under 35	Low	50 (161)	65 (162)
	High	68 (123)	71 (119)
35 and older	Low	66 (325)	74 (266)
	High	83 (189)	66 (154)

Let us begin this line of inquiry with an examination of the association between frequency of church attendance - considered as an index of religiosity - and drop-out. Taking account of differences in age and status we find that frequent church attendance is, indeed, a correlate of our dependent variable. This holds, however, only for lower status members. The question presently before the house is this: do more religious members tend to withdraw from the program? We suggest that these findings indicate that they do. Our reasons for holding this position will become clearer when we examine the findings on a second body of data relating to the problem of religious devotion and retention: religious beliefs or congenialities.

These religious congenialities will be dealt with from two points of view. First, a number of particular religious positions will be examined, e.g., Fundamentalist Protestantism,

Liberal Protestantism, Thomism, Orthodox and Reform Judaism. Following this, the level of abstraction will be raised somewhat and we shall attempt to compare members who are congenial to only one traditional religious faith with those who are either congenial to diverse traditional religions or congenial to at least one non-traditional or unconventional religious orientation such as Mysticism, Agnosticism, Buddhism and Atheism.

We start with the findings relating to Fundamentalist and Liberal Protestantism. The drop-out picture for members reporting their congeniality for each of these positions is presented below controlling for religion, social status and frequency of church attendance.

Table 25

Preference for Liberal Protestantism, Religion,
Status, Church Attendance and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Religion	Status	Church Attendance	Preference for Lib. Prot.			
			Most		Least & Neither	
Protestant	Low	High	38	(281)	42	(81)
		Low	23	(123)	47	(30)
	High	High	24	(174)	10	(41)
		Low	24	(82)	15	(27)
Catholic	Low	High	-	(9)	36	(70)
		Low	-	(1)	-	(0)
	High	High	-	(8)	18	(40)
		Low	-	(10)	-	(4)
Jewish	Low	High	-	(7)	-	(9)
		Low	30	(37)	33	(66)
	High	High	-	(13)	-	(0)
		Low	51	(37)	50	(38)
Other	Low	High	-	(2)	-	(4)
		Low	-	(2)	-	(3)
	High	High	-	(2)	-	(1)
		Low	-	(1)	-	(1)
None	Low	High	-	(1)	-	(1)
		Low	27	(44)	30	(67)
	High	High	-	(5)	-	(3)
		Low	-	(21)	27	(33)

Table 26

Preference for Fundamentalist Protestantism,
Religion, Status, Church Attendance
and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Religion	Status	Church Attendance	Preference Most	for Fund. Neither	Prot. Least
Protestant	Low	High	48 (75)	39 (190)	30 (101)
		Low	- (6)	23 (90)	30 (60)
	High	High	24 (33)	23 (105)	18 (77)
		Low	- (15)	24 (58)	22 (36)
Catholic	Low	High	60 (10)	33 (52)	40 (20)
		Low	- (0)	- (1)	- (0)
	High	High	- (4)	14 (37)	- (7)
		Low	- (0)	- (3)	- (3)
Jewish	Low	High	- (0)	27 (11)	- (7)
		Low	- (2)	32 (68)	33 (33)
	High	High	- (1)	- (7)	- (5)
		Low	- (0)	51 (43)	50 (32)
Other	Low	High	- (0)	- (3)	- (3)
		Low	- (0)	- (3)	- (2)
	High	High	- (0)	- (1)	- (2)
		Low	- (0)	- (1)	- (1)
None	Low	High	- (0)	- (1)	- (0)
		Low	- (2)	32 (50)	25 (59)
	High	High	- (0)	- (2)	- (5)
		Low	- (2)	32 (28)	25 (28)

Among lower status Protestants who attend church frequently, congeniality to Fundamentalist Protestantism is associated with dropping out of the program. Among the remaining Protestants and non-Protestants, either the number of cases is too small to enable comparison or else the differences themselves are unimportant. When congeniality to Liberal Protestantism is examined, we find that high status Protestants who are most congenial to this position are more likely to drop out. There is no indication here, however, that the pattern is limited to frequent church attenders.

Once more the relationship is of significance only among Protestants.

These findings considered together suggest that Protestants who are most congenial to the faith appropriate to their social status tend to drop out of the program. Thus, we know that a more conservative or Fundamentalist Protestantism is associated with lower status. Therefore it is reasonable to believe that, on this level, the selection of this position, in fact, reflects a strong and meaningful adherence to it. The problem remains as to why this pattern should be observed only among frequent church attenders. Here we would suggest that frequency of church attendance in this context is probably an index of seriousness of faith. Quite obviously, unless the person is serious about his religious position, it will not make much difference for retention.

Since Liberal Protestantism is associated with the higher status levels of our society, it in turn seems plausible that the report of congeniality to this faith will reflect a strong and meaningful conviction, primarily at that level. Liberal Protestantism, at the same time, does not stress formal practices such as church attendance as much as matters of inner faith, and this could well account for the fact that the relationship here is not limited to frequent church attenders. It appears, in short, that among Protestants, closeness to the religious system appropriate to the member's social position, is somewhat likely to be associated with dropping out of the program.

When the findings for Jews and congeniality to Orthodox and Reform Judaism are examined the picture appears quite similar.¹⁵

¹⁵The differences among non-Jews are rather insignificant. See tables below.

Table 27

Preference for Reform Judaism,
Religion, Status and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Religion	Status	Preference for Ref. Judaism	
		Most	Least
Protestant	Low	63 (133)	65 (387)
	High	71 (103)	80 (233)
Catholic	Low	- (13)	64 (78)
	High	- (10)	80 (46)
Jewish	Low	76 (94)	52 (31)
	High	49 (76)	69 (16)
Others	Low	- (4)	- (7)
	High	- (0)	- (5)
None	Low	- (17)	68 (109)
	High	- (14)	69 (55)

Table 28

Preference for Orthodox Judaism,
Religion, Status and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Religion	Status	Preference for Orth. Judaism	
		Most	Least
Protestant	Low	61 (23)	65 (497)
	High	81 (16)	78 (309)
Catholic	Low	64 (33)	64 (50)
	High	75 (20)	77 (34)
Jewish	Low	59 (32)	73 (88)
	High	59 (17)	50 (72)
Others	Low	- (1)	- (10)
	High	- (0)	- (5)
None	Low	- (8)	71 (110)
	High	- (0)	73 (67)

In this case it is not necessary to consider frequency of attendance at place of worship since the vast majority of Jewish members report relatively infrequent attendance. Social status, once more, plays a key role in ferreting out the relationships that exist between the Jewish religious positions and retention.

Among lower status Jews, congeniality to Orthodox Judaism is associated with leaving Great Books, while adherence to Reform Judaism is not. Among higher status Jews, on the other hand, adherence to Reform Judaism is very strongly associated with drop-out, while Orthodox Judaism is not. Again we point out that religious denominations are associated with status levels. Thus, Orthodox Judaism finds its strongest hold primarily among lower status Jews, while Reform Judaism is more closely associated with higher status. Here we may not be dealing as much with strength of religious conviction - witness the fact that only a small minority of Jewish members report frequent attendance at place of worship - as with the factor of relative participation in religious associational life. That is to say, in the light of the status linkages noted above, we would expect that lower status Jews would be more active in an Orthodox congregation, while higher status Jews would be more active in a Reform congregation. Unlike other types of organizational participation, official capacities in religious affairs might well be especially demanding in time and loyalty.

Let us point out at this time that the differential drop-out rate among older, lower and higher status Jews encountered in the examination of religious affiliation can very possibly be

interpreted in these terms. While lower class Jews most congenial to Orthodox Judaism drop out excessively, it so happens that the majority of lower class Jews in our sample report being most congenial to Reform Judaism. This majority, we would suggest, is not very likely to hold official positions of importance in their congregations. Their drop-out rate, in turn, is quite low and this can account for the general finding that lower status Jews are low on drop-out. The strong tendency for higher status Jews to drop out can, on the other hand, be explained by the fact that the overwhelming majority of Jews of this status in the sample are most congenial to Reform Judaism. This, of course, is the status level where Jews most congenial to Reform Judaism dropped out very heavily.

A third specific form of religious belief we shall want to consider is Thomism. This belief system has particular interest in view of a charge that is on occasion directed at the Great Books discussion program in general. We refer to the contention that the program emphasizes, or is dominated by, a Thomist bias in the reading selections and the problems discussed. While a disinterested examination of the readings and topics for discussion would hardly bear out this position, the matter cannot be dismissed on this basis. The drop-out behavior of members could well be affected by the fact that they believe that such a bias inheres in the program. Accordingly, the congeniality of members for Thomism as a religious belief system can now be examined in order to determine if any significant differentials in drop-out behavior, which might well flow from this fact, do actually appear.

Our procedure in this line of analysis will be to examine members who are most congenial to Thomism and members who are least congenial to Thomism, taking account of the individual's religion and his social status.

Table 29

Preference for Thomism, Religion,
Status and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Religion	Status	Preference for Thomism		
		Most	Least	Neither
Protestant	Low	56 (59)	32 (254)	37 (207)
	High	29 (31)	21 (190)	20 (104)
Catholic	Low	38 (76)	- (3)	- (4)
	High	24 (50)	- (3)	- (1)
Jewish	Low	- (4)	29 (80)	33 (36)
	High	- (2)	51 (69)	- (18)
Others	Low	- (3)	- (4)	- (4)
	High	- (0)	- (5)	- (0)
None	Low	- (12)	29 (80)	23 (26)
	High	- (10)	33 (43)	- (14)

To begin with, only Protestants have enough cases in both the most and least congenial categories to allow for a comparison. In the case of other religious preferences we shall have to rely upon the interpretation of either the least congenial or the most congenial percentage. On the basis of what we already know about the problem, the relative magnitude in these instances, however, is not difficult to perceive. Looking first at the Protestants we find, interestingly enough, that on both status levels, those who are less congenial to Thomism are in fact more likely to remain with the program than those who are congenial to Thomism.

Certainly there is no evidence here that Protestants are dropping out because of their aversion to Thomism. Turning to the Catholics, we find that virtually all of them are most congenial to Thomism, only a bare handful reporting themselves otherwise. Focussing upon those Catholics who are most congenial at either status level, indicates that these people are not unusually likely to stay with the program. When we look at the drop-out among Jews and persons reporting "none" as their religious preference a different picture is observed, at least among those of higher status. Higher status Jews and nones, especially the former, who are least congenial to Thomism drop out heavily. With regard to the Jews, then, this represents another explanatory factor useful in explaining their drop-out rate.

These findings do not indicate that members with a positive attitude toward Thomism are more likely to stay than others. They do suggest that in at least one significant group of persons, higher status Jews, a negative orientation toward Thomism is associated with leaving the program. This group, it is true, is not a very large one. It is important to bear in mind, however, that this leaves completely untouched the possible relationship between such attitudes and initial willingness to join the program. It may well be that a reputation for Thomist bias serves even more significantly to repel members of particular convictions differentially. Evidence on this matter could be obtained only from a study including both persons who have joined the program and those who have heard about the program, considered joining, and finally rejected the idea.

A number of specific religious belief systems have now been considered. Regarding the Protestant and Jewish religious belief systems, our principal effort was directed at clarifying somewhat an earlier finding with regard to religious affiliation in relation to retention. Thus, while Protestants were, as a group neither especially prone to stay or drop out, evidence was presented showing that certain Protestants, adhering to specific religious convictions were somewhat more likely to do so. The reasoning was that in those particular cases the member's religious beliefs were sufficiently salient to play a significant role in his response to the Great Books program. Next, the Jewish systems were examined in an effort to interpret the originally observed drop-out patterns among Jewish members of the sample. Most recently, the orientations of members toward Thomism as a system of religious thought were examined in their relevance for retention.

In each of these instances interest centered upon specific religious systems. Now we propose to look at the members' congenialities to such systems in a somewhat more general way. Since each respondent was requested to select the three religious positions to which he was most congenial, it was possible to classify individuals on the basis of the types of combination selected.¹⁶ For the purposes to be described shortly, the various concrete combinations were divided into three general categories. First, there were those combinations that included selections from only

¹⁶ Although not all of the respondents reported three selections, those reporting only 2 or 1 were still easily classifiable within the system to be described. The initial detailed classification upon which this part of our analysis is based is the work of Lathrop Vickery Beale and we wish to acknowledge her contribution at this point.

one conventional religious tradition, i.e., Protestantism, Judaism or Catholicism. Second, there were those combinations that included multiple traditions but only conventional religious systems. Third, were combinations that included at least one of the unconventional systems, i.e., Agnosticism, Atheism, Mysticism, Mohammedanism and Buddhism.

In making these distinctions we are concerned with distinguishing members who are of varying degrees of "open-mindedness" when it comes to religious beliefs and thought systems. The first category, those restricting selections to one conventional religious tradition represent, according to this interpretation, the "closed-minded" individuals. Members who select either multiple conventional traditions or unconventional religious systems can be considered as "open-minded." The closed-minded member would, according to our hypothesis, be somewhat less tolerant of free inquiry into the area of fundamental religious beliefs, and hence, more likely to be offended by the readings and discussions that raise problems in this area. Such a member would be expected to drop out more frequently than the open-minded individual for whom the subject is considerably less sacrosanct.

We are interested in the relationship between religious "open-mindedness" and retention. In accordance with our usual approach, this relationship will be examined controlling for several other relevant variables. Thus, we will look at the relationship controlling for age and education, education and quiz scores, and status and frequency of church attendance.

Table 30

Religious Open-Mindedness, Age,
Education and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Age	Education	Religious Open-Mindedness	
		Close-minded	Open-minded
Under 35	Less than AB	51 (63)	29 (86)
	AB and more	38 (96)	33 (250)
35 and older	Less than AB	38 (161)	29 (224)
	AB and more	26 (140)	23 (347)

Holding constant age and education, we indeed observe that open-minded members stay more than close-minded members. The association is very strong among younger persons without a college degree, and is consistently reduced as one moves from this category to older persons without a college degree, to younger persons with a degree, and finally, to older persons with a degree. Among the latter, the difference drops to three percentage points, since, even the closed-minded tend to stay in considerable number.

Table 31

Religious Open-Mindedness, Quiz Score,
Education and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Quiz Score	Education	Religious Open-Mindedness	
		Closed-Minded	Open-Minded
Low	Less than AB	46 (164)	31 (147)
	AB and more	35 (132)	31 (190)
High	Less than AB	27 (48)	28 (130)
	AB and more	33 (129)	26 (402)

Turning to the relationship controlling for education and quiz score, we do not find the picture quite as neat and simple. The relationship holds most strongly for members low on education and low on quiz score. Surprisingly enough, it is also considerable among members high on both education and quiz score, reducing somewhat more among members high on education and low on quiz score, and totally disappearing among those both high on quiz score and low on education. The last mentioned individuals have been encountered before. They seem to be people who are very much interested in compensating for their failure to complete a college education by means of a full exposure to an adult education program such as Great Books. Factors that generally interfere with the continuance of other types of people seldom have much impact for them.

Table 32

Religious Open-Mindedness, Status, Church
Attendance and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Status	Church Attendance	Religious Open-Mindedness	
		Close-Minded	Open-Minded
Low	High	44 (230)	26 (204)
	Low	35 (63)	26 (303)
High	High	24 (121)	32 (34)
	Low	23 (146)	33 (207)

Table 32 shows our basic relationship controlling for status and church attendance. Here we find that religious open-mindedness is associated with retention only among members of lower social status. Furthermore, the association holds most strongly among frequent church attenders.

On the basis of the findings reviewed, it can be stated

that there is indeed an association between religious open-mindedness and continuing with Great Books. The member who is relatively more closed-minded in this regard, as indicated by the selection of religious congenialities limited to a single tradition, is usually considerably more likely to sever connections with the program. This finding is not accounted for in terms of age, education, status, quiz score, or frequency of church attendance. It is, however, limited to members of lower social status. Furthermore, the pattern is especially prominent among members who are less educated, low on quiz score and tend to be frequent church attenders. Age does not significantly alter this general picture.

The vulnerability of members who are low on both education and quiz score has been consistently noted in the report. This specific case represents but another instance of the general pattern. The limitation of the finding to lower status persons, especially frequent churchgoers perhaps calls for special comment, however.

Students of the sociology of religion have uncovered findings suggesting that seriousness of religious feelings may well vary with class position.¹⁷ This seems to have direct relevance for our problem since it gives us some grounds for offering the hypothesis that religious outlook, as we are interested in it here, varies with social class. Specifically, we would suggest that among higher status members the indicators of devotion to a

¹⁷See Charles Y. Glock, "The Sociology of Religion" in Sociology Today, edited by Robert K. Merton, Leonard Broom and Leonard S. Cottrell, pp. 171-72.

single religious tradition are somewhat more likely to be conventional in character; reflecting to a somewhat greater degree a form of stylized conduct expected of persons of this social position. Among lower status members, on the other hand, these same indicators may be rather firmly rooted in fundamental values and beliefs of real significance for conditioning an individual's readiness to delve rationally into religious issues. Just such a status differential could, of course, explain the observed findings.

Before closing this section on fundamental values and beliefs, let us take note of a final topic in this area: political beliefs. The typology forming the basis for analysis, at this point, has been described in detailed fashion earlier in the report. No doubt, the happy phrase "18th Century Liberal," will strike a familiar note. Accordingly, we will proceed immediately to the findings. These are presented in the following table.

Table 33

Political Ideology, Age, Education,
Quiz Score and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Age	Education	Quiz Score	Political Ideology			
			18th Cent. Liberal		Non-Liberal	
Under 35	Less than AB	Low	39	(44)	54	(70)
		High	27	(30)	28	(18)
	AB and more	Low	35	(63)	41	(73)
		High	32	(149)	34	(99)
35 and older	Less than AB	Low	33	(101)	38	(119)
		High	28	(94)	27	(73)
	AB and more	Low	24	(109)	33	(115)
		High	24	(179)	24	(146)

Comparing respondents classifiable as "18th Century Liberals" with all others reveals that these "liberals" are somewhat more likely to remain with the program. The relationship holds, however, only for those low on cartoon score. It is especially strong among young members without a college degree, but also among older members with a degree. Among those members high on cartoon score this factor is not of any significance whatsoever.

The Great Books Experience as Intellectual Activity:
The Effects of the Program

Thus far our problem has been approached from rather distant vantage points. Emphasis has been upon the characteristics an individual might "bring with him" to the program. In other words, these characteristics, generally, did not flow from the member's experiences in Great Books, but rather they preceded them. Now we shift attention to the subject of participation in the program and its consequences for drop-out. First, we will examine the role of factors linked to the program as an intellectual activity. Following this we will focus upon Great Books participation as an arena for sociable interaction. In both instances relevant factors that the members "bring" to the program will be utilized as controls.

The Great Books member studies and discusses some of the outstanding intellectual contributions of our civilization. For purposes of this investigation, members were asked to report the "effects" of this intellectual experience upon various aspects of their life. Changes in the evaluation of different "schools" of intellectual thought constituted one area of such inquiry.

Changes in the utilization or application of understandings derived from the program to community problems were a second such area. Finally, the respondents were given the opportunity to report their general appraisal of the impact of the program upon themselves. Utilizing the appropriate measures described earlier in the report, let us proceed to examine the ramification of these program "effects" for continuance or withdrawal.¹⁸

Let us begin with the effects of the program upon the respondent's understanding of community problems or his activity with regard to them. Those who report that they have found Great Books helpful in their efforts to cope with community problems are considerably more likely to stay than those who do not. This holds perfectly, controlling for quiz score, age and education. The implication of this finding would appear to be that persons who relate the knowledge and understanding gained from their participation in Great Books to problems of their daily life - in this case, community problems which interest the member in his capacity as citizen - are more likely to remain with the program.

¹⁸ Actually these are but several items selected from among a number of effect or change areas that indicate a similar general relationship with drop-out. They are used as examples of a larger category of diverse effects.

Table 34

Effect on Problem I, Age, Education,
Quiz Score and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Age	Education	Quiz Score	Effect on Problem I			
			Yes	No		
Under 35	Less than AB	Low	34	(35)	55	(38)
		High	27	(22)	-	(12)
	AB and more	Low	28	(29)	36	(58)
		High	22	(65)	33	(110)
35 and older	Less than AB	Low	37	(59)	39	(62)
		High	24	(82)	36	(39)
	AB and more	Low	16	(77)	40	(75)
		High	15	(133)	27	(115)

Inquiring next into the consequences of changes in the member's evaluation of representative schools of thought, we find that the pattern is quite similar to the one we have just considered. Members reporting a change in their acceptance of intellectual viewpoints are generally more likely to continue with Great Books.¹⁹ Enough is already known about the program members to recognize that they have generally joined the program because they have the desire, and quite often the capabilities, for expanding their intellectual horizons. Under these circumstances we would certainly expect that those persons who remain with the program would be especially likely to have experienced new insight into the significance of important intellectual traditions.

¹⁹Exceptions to the pattern occur among younger college graduates.

Table 35

Favorable Change in Schools, Age,
Education, Quiz Score and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Age	Education	Quiz Score	Favorable Change in Schools			
			Yes		No	
Under 35	Less than AB	Low	39	(18)	55	(88)
		High	14	(14)	35	(31)
	AB and more	Low	41	(22)	38	(113)
		High	34	(68)	34	(170)
35 and older	Less than AB	Low	25	(51)	40	(154)
		High	23	(69)	33	(79)
	AB and more	Low	21	(153)	30	(151)
		High	15	(108)	28	(195)

Finally, we have the member's own over-all appraisal of the program's effect or "impact" upon him. This is really the most general measure of effect we have worked with, since it presumably reflects the member's awareness of a wide range of effects, and is not limited to the more specific area considered above. The findings certainly indicate that those reporting high impact remain more than the others.

Table 36

Impact, Age, Education, Quiz Score and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Age	Education	Quiz Score	Impact			
			High		Low	
Under 35	Less than AB	Low	39	(51)	56	(68)
		High	22	(27)	29	(24)
	AB and more	Low	50	(40)	34	(99)
		High	28	(76)	35	(179)
35 and older	Less than AB	Low	30	(129)	40	(111)
		High	25	(107)	32	(107)
	AB and more	Low	17	(82)	35	(147)
		High	17	(154)	31	(182)

problem of retention.

One might expect that frequency of attendance at Great Books meetings would be a very useful index of a member's propensity to drop out of the program. However, investigation of the matter leads to a somewhat more complicated picture of the situation.

Table 37

Frequency of Attendance, Age,
Status and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Age	Status	Frequency of Attendance	
		Low	High
Under 35	Low	40 (188)	42 (137)
	High	32 (149)	29 (96)
35 and older	Low	35 (325)	25 (272)
	High	29 (194)	18 (153)

Older members who attend meetings frequently, are more likely to remain with the program. This conforms to the expected relationship. But, among younger members, frequency of attendance is completely useless as a predictor of retention. While this finding appears puzzling at first inspection, one plausible interpretation for it might be the following. In so far as older members are relieved to a somewhat greater extent from the obligations of family rearing and work, they may devote more of their time to "leisure" activity. Time devoted to Great Books is less likely to interfere with the practical, day-to-day activities of older persons. The member in the prime of life, deeply embedded in household and occupational duties, on the other hand, probably

experiences greater conflict between his practical activities and participation in Great Books. For the older person it is perfectly natural for interest in the program to manifest itself in terms of frequent attendance. The younger member, however, attending meetings very frequently soon finds his Great Books activity interfering considerably with other commitments, and under these circumstances is quite prone to drop out altogether. The younger member who takes a more flexible approach to program activities, attempting to find a workable compromise between time devoted to the discussion group and time devoted to his other obligations finds it somewhat easier to continue. Adopting this procedure, we would suggest, lessens the possibility that Great Books activity will interfere with his personal affairs to such a considerable extent that dropping out offers the best solution to the problem. If this interpretation of the findings is in fact the correct one, there may be important implications for program policy flowing from it. Perhaps somewhat less than perfect attendance on the part of younger members should not necessarily be viewed as a sign of lack of interest and pending withdrawal; but rather as a means of coping with a difficult situation that in fact makes it more likely that the member will continue with the program.

Turning next to the difference in drop-out between discussion group leaders and non-leaders, we observe a more expected pattern.

Table 38

Discussion Leadership, Age,
Education and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Age	Education	Discussion Leadership	
		Current Leader	Non-Cur. Leader
Under 35	Less than AB	52 (23)	43 (162)
	AB and more	25 (85)	38 (318)
35 and older	Less than AB	22 (85)	36 (365)
	AB and more	20 (166)	28 (420)

Leaders are generally more likely to remain with the program than non-leaders. Furthermore, this is not at all due to the fact that leaders tend to be older and better educated individuals. One glaring exception to this pattern is itself of some additional interest. We refer to the negative correlation found among young, less educated members. Here, it is the leaders who are more likely to drop out. The magnitude of this reversal is seen most clearly when one compares the percentages among leaders. The contrast between the drop-out for leaders of all other age-education groups is obviously considerable. This certainly suggests that the young leader without a complete college education is lacking in the qualities necessary for successfully coping with his or her task. The figures seem to indicate that the stable leader, usually possesses either certain ascriptive attributes - possibly the mature appearance and demeanor that comes with age - or certain achieved attributes - advanced education and the intellectual qualities associated with it.

Without either of these qualities, the discussion leader is probably handicapped in adequately performing his official

tasks, and this in turn leads to dissatisfaction both on the part of other members and, the leader himself. Seemingly, then, the leader who lacks these qualities is a rather poor risk. It is interesting to note that the number of leaders in this vulnerable category is quite small, indicating perhaps that program administrators responsible for assigning leaders are already aware of this relationship.

Elsewhere in this report the problem of discussion group activity is extensively examined. Here we only wish to call attention to the relevance of discussion activity for retention. Since activity is also correlated with sex, leadership role and quiz score, each of these will have to be controlled for in order to obtain an accurate picture of the role of discussion activity. First, we examine sex, leadership and activity.

Table 39

Discussion Activity, Sex, Leadership
and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Sex	Leadership	Discussion Activity	
		Active	Non-Active
Male	Yes	12 (129)	35 (55)
	No	27 (210)	43 (237)
Female	Yes	23 (94)	37 (87)
	No	18 (193)	40 (684)

Discussion activity is certainly a very strong correlate of retention. Furthermore, this correlation is observed within each of the sex-leadership categories. Note also that the relationship between leadership and drop-out is specified further by

these findings. Among women leadership is not associated with retention.

Next we examine discussion activity and drop-out controlling for sex and quiz score.

Table 40

Discussion Activity, Sex, Quiz
Score and Drop-Out
Per Cent Dropping Out

Sex	Quiz Score	Discussion Activity	
		Active	Non-Active
Male	Low	21 (109)	47 (134)
	High	21 (230)	38 (156)
Female	Low	22 (119)	40 (435)
	High	18 (165)	34 (302)

Once more the relationship holds up very strongly. Shifting attention to the relationship between quiz score and retention discussed earlier we observe the following picture. Holding discussion activity constant reveals no difference in drop-out between active members high on the quiz and active members low on the quiz; among less active members, however, a difference is definitely observed. It appears from this that a member's background in the liberal arts, as measured by the quiz, operates in two ways to bind the individual to the program. On the one hand, this background leads the member to take a more active part in the discussion process, and, this much seems clear, the member who takes an active part in the discussion is considerably more likely to stay with the program. Secondly, even if a member is inactive, the benefits of his knowledge will operate independently

of his role in the discussion to increase his or her chance of staying. Quite obviously, however, the most effective contribution to retention occurs when the member's preparation leads to an active role in the discussion and the program. The independent effect of this preparation is much less pronounced. This leads to the final point. Examination of the drop-out among those who are low on the quiz but active in the discussion suggests that intellectual preparation is but one possible factor leading to active participation in the discussion. But regardless of its original source, discussion activity is an invaluable predictor of retention.

Conclusions

In the preceding pages we have examined a wide range of individual factors as they relate to the problem of retention. Since each of these has been treated in rather considerable detail we shall attempt, at this point, first, to offer a brief recapitulation of the highlights of the earlier presentation, and second, to suggest a rather straightforward scheme for at least partly integrating the somewhat disparate findings included in the body of this chapter.

The individual factors that affect retention can, for certain purposes, be classified into three types. First, we can look at a member in relation to attributes that are at once "external" and "unrelated" to the Great Books program. We refer here to those characteristics an individual brings to the program that are not alone relevant for retention in Great Books or similar groups devoted to adult higher learning, but rather apply

equally well to various types of voluntary organizations. Attributes of this type considered in the report included a member's positions within the larger social structure, as well as his diverse group affiliations and activities. Starting with the former, it was found that different positions within the social structure did, indeed, have diverse consequences for retention. Persons subject to competing life activities that might seriously limit the time and energy available for leisure pursuits tended to drop out of the program. This included especially younger men and lower status men; among women, it was the young, married, lower status and also the single of either age category who were vulnerable to drop-out. These people were quite clearly the "busy" people heavily involved in family or work routines. Moreover, these activities are presumably socially recognized as the most important and appropriate ones for persons in such social positions to devote themselves to; "business before pleasure" and "family responsibilities first" are typical of the kind of sentiment that we may reasonably assume to underlie these differentials in drop-out. In the same vein, the sharp decline in withdrawal among middle aged men suggests that the role definitions defining appropriate conduct in this period of life may well place considerably more emphasis upon "taking it easier" in one's work, and if one happens to be so inclined, devoting more time to "cultivating the mind."

Individuals located in the busier parts of the social structure find it more difficult to keep up their membership in Great Books. This might lead one to expect that members high on organizational affiliations, also subject to competing demands on

their time and energy, would contribute disproportionately to the program's losses. Such is not the case, however. Among older persons "joiners" are no more likely to drop out than "non-joiners," while among younger members they are even more likely to stay than the "non-joiners."

Why, then, should extensive activity in organizations lead to consequences for drop-out different from those observed for intensive involvement in the activities and obligations of family and work? One possibility that suggests itself goes as follows. People do not, in a fundamental sense, seek out the activities and obligations that accompany typical adult statuses. They are merely exposed to such conditions as a consequence of their being "ordinary" members of society. The bundles of activity and obligation of this type are often referred to as "ascribed" statuses. For our purposes, the important thing about such statuses is the apparent fact that they are filled, by and large, by ordinary people who possess only ordinary capacities for coping with the life demands imposed upon them. In contrast to this, active membership in organizations partakes considerably more of the element of an achieved status. Many people do not participate extensively in such organizations, at least in part, because they do not find the time and energy to do so. This, of course, also underlies the Great Books' retention problem. The "joiners" on the other hand, presumably include a greater proportion of people who somehow manage to find the time and energy to participate in organizational activities. These people seek out greater activity presumably because they are better equipped to cope with the demands of such participation. Among them, accord-

ingly, we observe, if anything, a lower rate of drop-out.

A second group of factors, examined intensively in the body of this chapter, is similar to the previous category in the sense that it refers to attributes members bring to the program. These attributes differ, however, in being considerably more relevant to the activities characterizing Great Books as an experiment in liberal adult education on a rather high intellectual level. Included here are two broad sub-categories. On the one hand, we focussed upon the intellectual characteristics of members in relation to drop-out; while on the other hand, religion, values and beliefs were examined.

Turning first to the way intellectual attributes relate to retention, we may point out important generalizations suggested by the findings. First, it appears that members well prepared, both in terms of background knowledge in the liberal arts and reading interests, are more likely to stay with the program. Members without a solid familiarity with the kind of classic literature studied in Great Books are less likely to stay, as are those whose reading preferences do not definitely run to serious materials. It is, however, necessary to qualify these generalizations in several respects. In the first place, quite like the majority of other generalizations contained in this chapter, the conclusions do not, so to speak, hold "across the board." These relationships are found primarily among those persons especially vulnerable by virtue of their social background, i.e., younger, less educated members. Among older persons they are either extremely weak or non-existent. In other words, it is clearly possible for other favorable attributes to compensate for inade-

quacies in intellectual preparation.

Another specification of these generalizations concerned the retention of members who appeared to be too intellectual for the program. There were indications that some members possessed intellectual interests keyed at too high a level, and were, as a result, perhaps insufficiently stimulated by the program. This tied in with the finding that members thinking of themselves as "intellectuals" were more likely to drop out of the program. The persons to whom this pattern applied were mostly older and less educated, and this led to the suggestion that they might be comprised of "self-educated" persons preferring to follow their own, individual road to intellectual growth. The most important fact to bear in mind in connection with this pattern is its extremely low incidence within the program. Practically speaking, it represents but a minor specification of the general relationships observed between intellectual preparation, intellectual interests, and drop-out.

One final point about this area deserves emphasis. In the earlier sections of the report, tests intended to gauge an individual's poetic and musical appreciation were examined rather intensively. The quiz score, being based on materials of direct relevance to Great Books was considered to be a rather specific measure of intellectual accomplishment in those areas of knowledge covered in the Great Books program. The member's score on the musical appreciation test, in contrast to the quiz score was especially viewed as a crude measure of "general intellectualism." Following through on these assumptions we can report that neither

poetic sophistication nor musical sophistication in and of themselves have anything to do with retention. This suggests, in other words, that the intellectual preparation needed for Great Books is not generalized or diffuse in character, but is rather a preparation immediately relevant to the specific content making up the program agenda.

Next, we turn to an overview of the more important conclusions suggested by the materials on religion and values. Differences in religious affiliation in themselves hardly seemed to be of significant consequence for predicting a member's continuation with Great Books.²⁰

On the other hand, findings suggested that a member's religiosity was quite important. In other words, we could tentatively conclude that it was not which religion you espoused, but how religious you were, that counted. Specifically, religious members tended to drop out more frequently than the less religious members. This in turn, suggested that a crucial intervening consideration might be the individual's relative "open-mindedness" in the area of fundamental religious values and beliefs. In order to test this hypothesis a measure based upon the member's willingness to report congeniality for religious belief systems other than his own or closely related systems was employed. The findings derived from this procedure supported this line of interpretation and "religious ethnocentrism" - i.e. a frame of mind not conducive to the free and untrammelled examination of fundamen-

²⁰One exception to this general conclusion existed in the case of certain Jewish members. Drop-out was unusually high among older, higher status Jews.

tal religious beliefs - was added to the list of factors related to drop-out.

In addition to these religious beliefs an attempt was also made to isolate the impact of an individual's basic life values for retention. The findings here were quite clear in showing that these considerations, as measured by our study, were of no importance whatsoever for predicting a member's retention. This, we might note, parallels the situation observed in the area of intellectual preparation or background. In both instances it is the factors more specifically related to the content and activity of Great Books rather than more diffuse or generalized considerations that make a difference.

We come now to the third and final category of factors considered in greater detail in the body of this chapter: those characteristics relating to the Great Books experience itself. First, we shall take up the differentials in drop-out between members who have and members who have not been significantly affected or changed by their participation in Great Books. This will lead us into a consideration of the various factors related to drop-out from the point of view of length of exposure, or length of membership in the program.

The conclusions to be drawn from the findings in the area of the "effects" of Great Books participation seem to be quite simple and straightforward. Three types of effect were singled out for purposes of studying their relation to drop-out. These included reported change in a member's intellectual evaluation of schools of thought; reported change in the understanding of community problems, or in activity intended to help solve them; and,

an evaluation on the member's part of the general "impact" of the program upon him. In each of these areas those reporting changes or effects as a result of participation in Great Books were more likely to stay with the discussion group. These findings take on greater significance when viewed from the perspective of length of exposure to the program.

At the beginning of this chapter findings were presented showing that drop-out was heaviest in the first year of membership. The drop-out for members who had been with the program one year or more was found to be almost one half that of the early period. The figures are presented once again, immediately below.

Table 41

Drop-Out by Length of Exposure to Great Books

Exposure	Per cent drop-out
Less than 1 year	46 (64.6)
1 and 2 years	25 (54.1)
3 years and more	22 (42.4)

Granting the relatively greater incidence of drop-out in the first year of membership, it is still possible to inquire into the differential incidence of the various factors found to be important for our problem. Do certain types of characteristics operate more strongly in one or the other of the exposure periods? Can we discern any special patterns of temporal incidence among these factors?

Table 42 contains a schematic picture of the temporal incidence of the important correlates of drop-out.

Table 42

Selected Correlates of Drop-Out by Exposure

Factor		Less than 1 year	1 and 2 years	3 years and more
I. Social Structural	Age	+	+	
	Marital Status	+	+	
	Social Status	+	+	
	Education	+		+
II. Group Activity	Organizational membership		+	
III. Religious Values	Fund. Protestant	+	+	
IV. Intellectual	Fiction - Non-fiction	+		
	Reading "brow"	+		+
	General Reading	+		+
	Quiz Score	+	+	+
V. Effects	Impact			+
	Change in Schools			+
	Problem 1			+
VI. Discussion Participation	Frequency of Attendance	+	+	+
	Leadership	+	+	+
	Activity			

A plus sign indicates the periods of heavy incidence. In some cases this includes each of the designated time periods indicating that the correlation is of approximately equal strength in each of these periods. Since each of the broad categories of correlates is set off from the others, it is possible to examine at a glance the overall patterns. Beginning with the social structural variables we observe a clustering in both the first and second years of exposure. In later years these factors, with one exception, are considerably less important for retention. Next, we see that organization membership operates primarily in

the middle period. Congeniality to Fundamentalist Protestantism appears strongest in the first two years, while intellectual characteristics appear to operate primarily in the first year of exposure and also in the later years. The next category, program effects, represents an interesting pattern to which we shall return in a moment. It can be readily seen that these effect factors go into action primarily in the later years of participation. Finally, the discussion process correlations are of approximately equal importance all along the line.

These considerations suggest that the following process may be involved. In the earlier years of exposure, drop-out results from the operation of all of the various factors considered above, with the principal exception of the effect attributes. This would seem to be a basic "weeding out" stage in which factors both remotely and closely related to Great Books participation per se are important. The second stage correlates of drop-out, on the other hand, appear to be either those immediately relevant to the content of the program or else consequences of participation. These include the intellectual, discussion process and effects variables.

The fact that the effect attributes operate powerfully in the later years of exposure is especially interesting. This suggests that position in the social structure, values, intellectual characteristics and organizational participation patterns will tend to bind an individual to the program in the initial years of exposure. By the same token, those surviving to the later period are a rather select group, ready, willing and able to benefit

from the discussion program. They have a pretty good idea of what the program can do for them. If, at this point, the member does not attach special importance to his participation in Great Books; if he does not experience his participation as contributing to his intellectual growth, to his activities as a citizen, or to some other significant aspect of his life, he will look elsewhere for stimulation. It is at this point, in short, that the program stands or falls on its own terms.

This chapter has examined a wide range of individual factors associated with retention. Each has, in turn, been examined more or less separately. Now we ask if there isn't something which these factors share in common. The section on discussion activity appears to offer clues toward the solution of this problem. There we observed the manner in which discussion activity served as the principal intervening mechanism, linking quiz score and leadership role with retention. In other words, intellectual knowledge and specialized leadership role were primarily effective in binding members to the program where they led to a high level of activity in the discussion. Where they did not lead to a high level of activity, they were much less important in accomplishing this end. Now, we suggest that this may well hold true for each of the factors we have considered. That is, it would appear that there are a wide number of factors that can lead to activity or inactivity, and regardless of the specific link in the causal chain this will have very important consequences for retention.

If our interpretation is correct, each of these may well entail different mechanisms. For example, the young married

woman may remain inactive because she recognizes the great likelihood of being forced to withdraw at an early date. The religious member may remain inactive because the character of the discussion leads into the examination of issues he would prefer to leave unexamined. The member weak in knowledge of related subject matter may lack the assurance needed for participating extensively. The member with a taste for middle-brow reading may find the readings and discussion too intellectual for his palate. Whatever the specific mechanism concerned, we would further suggest that a central element in the process is the degree to which a member becomes involved or interested in the content of the program. Discussion participation represents the overt expression of this interest. Of course, research in the area of small groups teaches us that activity is usually gratifying in itself, and quite probably serves, in the situation under consideration to reinforce the interest from which activity initially derives.

This brings to a close our examination of the individual level correlates of drop-out and retention. It is perhaps fitting that we now turn to a detailed investigation of the factor we have just suggested plays a central role in this problem - discussion activity.

Chapter 2

Individual Characteristics and Discussion Activity

The preceding chapters in this report have examined, contrasted, controlled, and sometimes contorted some dozen-and-a-half variables which are related to the retention of members in the Great Books program. Some of these characteristics appeared to operate as purely individual factors, some as properties of the discussion group, and some as both. Some of them appeared to contribute as independent factors, and some seemed to affect retention through complicated relationships with other variables. Regardless of the type of analysis, however, one variable seemed always to be of strategic importance. This is "activity," a measure of the member's contribution to the discussions, as assessed by his group.

Individual participants who were named by their friends as actives had a much better chance of continuing in the program, regardless of their position on many other indexes. Similarly, groups with high proportions of their membership designated as actives were found to have superior holding power.

It seems to follow then, that if Great Books could increase the activity levels of its groups it could reap a harvest of greater retention, doubly so because of the radiating effect of this variable. By this we mean that our data suggest that if one could raise the activity of a given member, not only will his chances of remaining go up, but he will tend to influence non-

actives favorably through what we have called a compositional effect.

Therefore, the remainder of this report will be devoted to an exploration of the factors related to activity. After discussing activity throughout our report, it is perhaps appropriate at the end to define it, and we shall do this first. Then, we shall consider in turn: 1) group factors, 2) individual intellectual characteristics and extra-group memberships, and then, 3) what turns out to be (somewhat unexpectedly) an extremely important set of variables, family roles.

The Measurement of Activity

Along with the standard demographic information, the questionnaire included many questions about the respondent's attitude toward the Great Books program, his values and attitudes, and his cultural and intellectual interests and activities. One section of the question dealt with the discussion group. The questions included in this section of the questionnaire were as follows:

- I) "In many informal discussion groups a division of labor develops, so that some participants tend to specialize in certain aspects of the discussion process. Please check each of the 'specialties' below in the appropriate column."

I tend to specialize in this aspect:

More than the of my group.	About as of- other mem- bers.	Less often than the other mem- bers.
-------------------------------	-------------------------------------	---

a) Pulling the threads of the discussion together and getting different viewpoints reconciled.

b) Joking and kidding, finding the potentially humorous implications in the discussion.

c) Providing "fuel" for the discussion by introducing ideas and opinions for the rest of the group to discuss.

d) Making tactful comments to heal any hurt feelings which might arise in the discussion.

e) Clarification, getting the discussion to the point by getting terms defined and pointing out logical problems.

II) "The same specialties are repeated below. After each, jot down the names of any members of your group who tend to perform this role frequently."

On the questionnaire six lines were placed before each specialty. Since no number was specified, the participants were free to write as many or as few names as they considered appropriate to the question.

Thus, the respondent was asked to do two things. First,

he was to rate himself on each of the roles. Then he was asked to mention, by name, the other members of his group who frequently performed a given role in the discussion process.

While the procedure is simple, the method employed eventually to obtain a role assessment index is rather unusual. The data represent the individual's self perception of his role enactment and his perception of which of his fellow group members are frequent performers of the various roles. Hence, the data give us self perception and intra-group ratings of role enactment rather than rating by outside observers.

This method has the advantage and, as we shall see, the disadvantage, of generating two types of profiles with regard to the types of roles played in the discussion group by each individual.

- (1) Subjective profile: the respondent's self perception of his role enactment.
- (2) Objective profile: the other group members' perceptions of ego's role enactment.

Within each profile a respondent may be classified as active or inactive with regard to playing each of the various roles. For the subjective profile, if a respondent has stated that he tends to perform a given role more frequently than the other members of his group, he is considered as "active."

For the objective profile, if a respondent is mentioned by two or more other members of his group on a given role, he is considered as "active" in performing that role. One mention did not appear to be a strong enough criterion, especially since 28 per cent of the sample were husband-wife couples in the same group. The one mention a given respondent receives may simply be loyalty

in naming one's spouse rather than a designation of frequency of performing a given role. By the use of two or more mentions, we obtain a social definition of a certain role rather than just one individual's viewpoint. A potential problem may be as follows. Since the groups vary in size from five to twenty-three members, is the number of mentions a person receives simply a function of the number of members in his group? A person in a group of fourteen members has a higher chance probability of being mentioned by two or more alters - for there are thirteen persons who could potentially name him - than a person in a seven member group whose number of potential namers is only six. The question here is whether the employment of two or more mentions as the operational definition of active role enactment discriminates against members of smaller groups and favors larger groups. Were this the case, we would expect that a greater proportion of the members of larger groups than of smaller groups would be classified as active role players. Were this situation to exist, we would not know whether this higher proportion of active members was due to the fact that a greater proportion of members in the larger groups were active members or that this was simply an artifact of the criterion which is being employed. The criterion of two or more mentions generates roughly the same proportion of active members for each of the roles in large groups as in small groups as the following table shows.¹

¹A complete analysis of the relation of group size and participation demands further analysis, but this is beyond the scope of this analysis. See A. P. Hars, "Interaction and Consensus in Different Sized Groups," American Sociological Review, XVII (1952), 261-67.

Table 1

Per Cent Receiving Two or More Mentions
By Size of Group Membership^a

Role	Size of Group Membership	
	Less than twelve members	Twelve or more members
Fuel	19	20
Clarification	17	15
Threads	18	14
Joking	11	11
Tact	8	7
(Number of Cases)	(746)	(1163)

^aThe average group size is around eleven members.

Hence, we may conclude that our operational definition of two or more mentions, while not perfect, is satisfactory to discriminate the active from the inactive members on the objective profile in both small and large groups.

Since the respondents rated themselves and mentioned other members of their group on all five roles, these roles all represent types of roles perceived by the respondents to be present in the discussion process. However, the relative frequency of the performance of these roles varies as the following table shows.

Table 2
 Subjective and Objective Profiles
 of the Five Roles

Role	Subjective Profile Per cent rating themselves as "more often than others."	Objective Profile Per cent mentioned by two or more other members of their group.
Fuel	23	20
Clarification	21	15
Threads	10	15
Joking	16	11
Tact	5	7
(Number of Cases)	(1699) ^a	(1909)

^aRespondents who skipped all five subjective role questions are excluded.

The Fuel, Clarification, and Threads roles, which may be classified as the task roles, are more frequently performed while the role of Joker and Tact, the social emotional roles, are less frequent. This order is evident whether one employs the objective or the subjective criterion.

The small differences in Table 2 are of some interest. It appears that people tend to over-rate their wit (the subjective proportion of jokers is higher than the objective one) and under-rate their integrative function of pulling the threads of the discussion together. However, over-all the frequencies agree with each other very well.

Given that the relative frequency of the roles is generally similar by both criteria, to what extent are the subjective and objective profiles similar for a given individual? If self

perceptions were identical with the group's perception, a perfect association of 1.00 between subjective and objective rating would occur. However, people who claim to be above average in frequency of performing a role may not be mentioned by their fellow members. Likewise, people who do not make this claim may be mentioned by their fellow participants. The problem is important beyond its ability to shed light on false modesty or over-confidence. In the first place, unless the two measures are in agreement, we will be forced to treat activity in terms of two dimensions - subjective and objective. If, however, there is high agreement we may assume that the two are measuring essentially the same thing. Secondly, if we are to be justified in interpreting activity as a measure of a group role structure which is agreed upon by the entire membership, and hence is a truly social phenomenon, we must show that the objective and subjective perceptions are concordant. The following table shows the relationship between the subjective and objective role measures; that is, the extent to which ego's self perception agrees with alters' perception of ego. Agreement is highest on the social emotional roles, Joker and Tact. The task roles, Threads, Clarification, and Fuel, have somewhat lower, but quite respectable, associations and are very similar among themselves. (See Table 3.)

The deviations from a perfect 1.00 association may be due to a number of things. Possibly since the term "more than the others" was used in the subjective question and the term "frequently perform" in the objective question, the respondents may have used somewhat differing criteria in answering these two

questions. Possibly the individual's self perception of his role playing is simply incorrect. On the other hand, the group may not be fully aware of its own specialists. Whether the individual is correct in his self perception or the group members are correct in their perceptions of what the other group members do is a question that cannot be answered by the available data because an impartial criterion, such as the ratings of the group members by outside observers, is not available.

Table 3

Association Between Subjective and
Objective Role Measures

Role	Q
Joking	.73
Tact	.68
Threads	.54
Clarification	.52
Fuel	.51
(Number of Cases)	(1909)

The question which must be raised and can be answered is whether there is a relationship between the degree of association between the objective and subjective ratings and such factors as the age and/or size of the group. The age and size of the group may be factors in the accuracy of a person's self perception and the perception of ego's role by the others in his group. If a group has met over a greater length of time, the role structure may have become more organized and defined. If so, the subjective-objective associations would be higher in older groups. However, the variations between young and old

groups appeared to be more random than patterned as the following table shows.

Table 4
Association Between Subjective and Objective Role
Measures by Age of the Group

Role	Age of the Group	
	Groups in First Year of Meetings	Groups in Second or Higher Year of Meetings
	Q	Q
Joking	.672	.745
Tact	.785	.634
Threads	.608	.506
Clarification	.408	.553
Fuel	.538	.554
(Number of Cases)	(642)	(1267)

With regard to the size of the membership, two logical expectations are possible. First, in a smaller group everyone knows everyone else and probably knows what roles the other members play. On the other hand, possibly a certain size is necessary before a clear division of labor can develop in a group. The data, as seen from the following table, do not confirm either of these expectations. Since groups vary both as to size and age, a classification of groups may be made as follows: (a) small young groups, (b) small old groups, (c) large young groups, and (d) large old groups. Do one or more of these types of groups tend to generate a higher degree of agreement between subjectively and objectively perceived role enactment? While there is some variation by age and/or size of group, no simple or consistent pattern of variation emerges.

Table 5

Association Between Subjective and Objective Role
Measures by Size of Group Membership

Role	Size of Group	
	Less than twelve members	Twelve or more members
Joking	.739	.724
Tact	.488	.783
Threads	.635	.486
Clarification	.491	.580
Fuel	.316	.617
(Number of Cases)	(746)	(1163)

Table 6

Association Between Subjective and Objective Role Measures
by Age of the Group and Size of the Group Membership

Role	Size of Group			
	Less than twelve members		Twelve or more members	
	Age of Group		Age of Group	
	First year	Second or higher year	First year	Second or higher year
Joking	.509	.752	.695	.738
Tact	.575	.517	.876	.723
Threads	.638	.632	.585	.301
Clarification	.341	.517	.561	.585
Fuel	.151	.341	.626	.649
(Number of Cases)	(181)	(565)	(461)	(702)

There are ten possible comparisons for each characteristic. In six out of ten, older groups have higher relationships, and in four it is younger groups. In terms of size, in seven out of ten the larger groups have higher associations, and in three it is the smaller. No clear pattern emerges, although, as one would expect from sociological research on group size and division of labor, it may be that in larger groups a more precise role differentiation develops. The negative finding on age is probably more interesting than the qualified positive finding on size. New groups have neither higher nor lower agreement than older groups. This suggests that this role structure, which is so important for the discussion groups, arises fairly quickly (most of our first year groups had only met on three or four occasions at the time of the first questionnaire) and does not depend on a long series of meetings. If role structure is important for Great Books, and we believe it is, it apparently does not have to be cultivated over a long growing season.

To sum up, the method employed in the questionnaire to assess role enactment in the discussion group generated two types of profiles; a subjective one representing ego's perception of his own role playing and an objective one which represents the group's perception of ego's role playing. Whether the subjective or objective profile is actually correct cannot be answered on the basis of the available data since an impartial criterion, such as the ratings of outside judges would provide, is not available. However, the associations between the subjective and objective ratings are above .5 for all of the five roles.

Furthermore, the degree of association between the subjective and objective ratings does not appear to have a consistent or clear cut relationship to the age and size of the group.

Since the interest of this analysis is in terms of roles played in the group rather than whether a particular individual has an accurate self perception of the roles he plays, we have chosen the objective criterion as our measure of role enactment. Hence, while there may be error in the objective measure (and we have no guarantee that the use of the subjective criterion would introduce less error), the magnitude of any such error is not such that it would invalidate the patterns and trends of behavior presented in the following chapters. Thus, by the social definition of role enactment, a member of the group mentioned by two or more other members of his group as frequently performing a given role will be considered as "active" in the performance of that role.

Group Factors and Activity

What could we do to raise the activity level of a discussion group? Following the theme of this report, we can consider two different ways. First, if activity is an individual level effect only, we can raise activity levels only by recruiting people with high activity potential. On the other hand, if activity is a function of group composition, we could in theory hope to increase activity levels by manipulating group composition, although, as we shall see in the summary chapter there are some (geometrical) facts of life which stand in our way here.

The problem of course is a practical one for Great Books

and, to the extent that our findings can be generalized beyond the program, for other discussion groups. It is also a theoretical problem of some interest to the sociologist, for the question amounts to asking whether patterns of interaction in small groups follow from the personal characteristics of their members, or whether the group process itself limits or facilitates participation. Put this way, the question is easy to answer. Group variables are obviously crucial, for if there were no group, no one could be named twice by another group member. Similarly, in groups composed of people, each of whom speaks a different language, no one will be named twice. Between these extremes, however, there is quite a lot of territory.

The existing research literature provides some clues. Robert F. Bales and his co-workers have worked on rather similar problems with laboratory groups over a long period of time. A large and rich research literature has come out of these studies, parts of which suggest that role structures (although not measured in a fashion which makes strict comparison to our study possible) are affected by group composition.¹ On the other hand, Fred L. Strodbeck, and his co-workers in a continuing series of studies of juries, have reported a number of correlations between personal characteristics and variables much akin to our measure of activity.² In addition, we have our own data.

¹Cf., for example, E.F. Borgatta and R.F. Bales, "Interaction of Individuals in Reconstituted Groups," Sociometry, XVI (1953), 302-20.

²Cf. F.L. Strodbeck and R.D. Mann, "Sex Role Differentiation in Jury Deliberations," Sociometry XIX (1956), 3-11, and F.L. Strodbeck, R.M. James, and C. Hawkins "Social Status in Jury Deliberations," American Sociological Review, XXII (1957), 713-21.

We shall not examine in detail each of the compositional effect analyses on activity in the style of Chapter 2 of Part I. Rather, we will begin at the end, with a summary classification, and then look in some detail at two particular groups of variables.

Chart 1 summarizes our findings in the format first seen in Chart 2, Chapter 1, Part I. We shall not repeat the rationale for this classification, referring the browsing reader to Chapter 1, which amounts to a justification of the chart.

Summary of Relationships with Activity

Linear and Monotonic

Type I Process (Individual Level Difference)	Type IV Process (differen- tial suscep- tibility)	No	Type II Process (Between Groups Effect)
		<u>Type 0</u>	<u>Type II</u>
No	No	Age	Outside Contacts (High) Local Interest (High) Joining (High)
		<u>Type I</u>	<u>Type IIIA</u> <u>Type IIIB</u>
Yes	No	Political Pref. (Democratic) Status (High) Self-Conception (High brow) Quiz Score (High) Education (High) Sex (Male) Marital Status (Married) Level of Most Worthwhile Book (?)* (Highbrow)	Effect on Problem One (Effect)
			<u>Type IVB</u>
Yes	Yes		Change in Schools (?)

Notes: The word in parentheses indicates the more favorable attribute in terms of relationship with higher activity.

* (?) indicates variables whose actual classification is somewhat ambiguous.

Non-Linear

Variable	Form	Favorable Individual Attribute
Informal Visiting Religion	Parabolic (?) Ambiguous	No consistent difference Non-Protestant

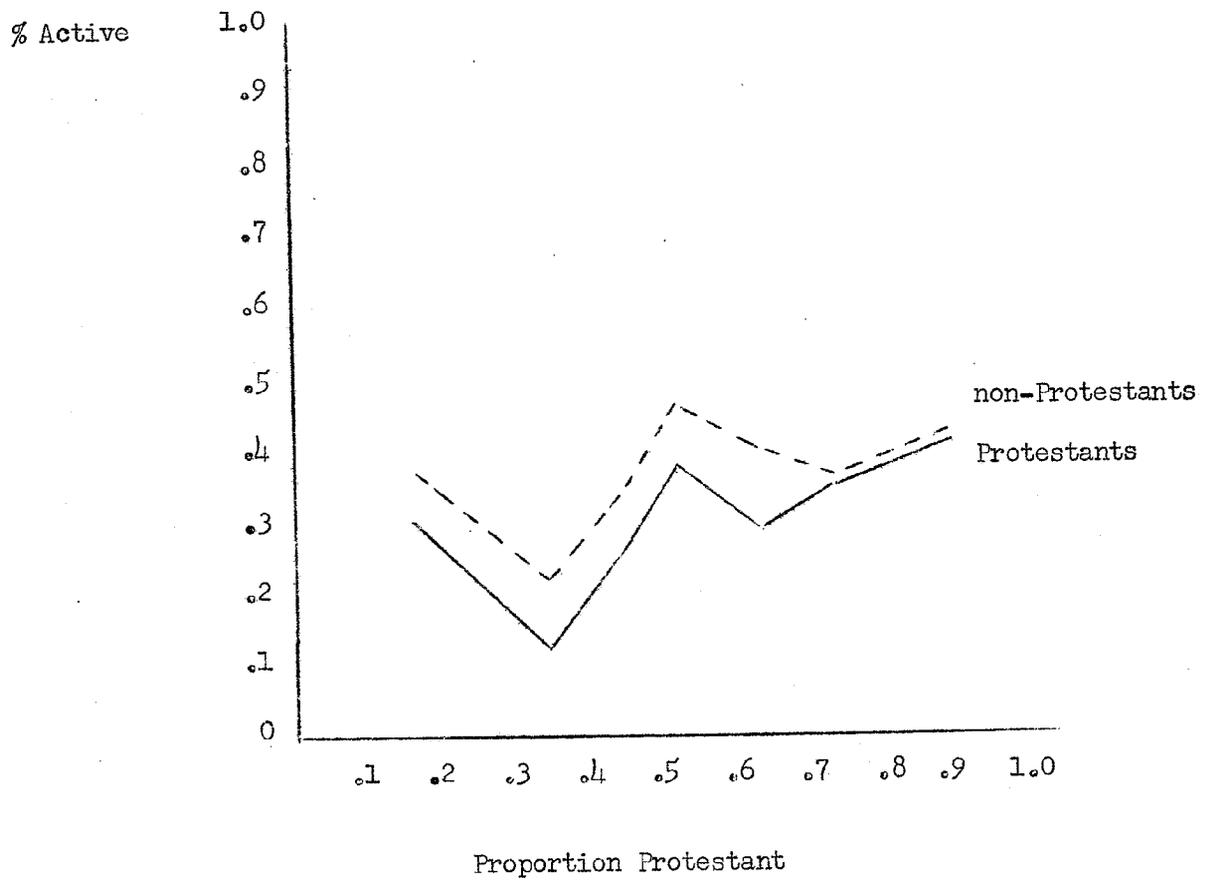
There are numerous conclusions and hypotheses to be drawn from this summary, but a few simple conclusions will meet our immediate needs.

1) It appears that, at least in comparison with the program retention analysis, there are fewer group level effects here. That is in the summary of the drop-out materials, we found 15 out of 18 variables which showed a group level effect, while here using an almost identical set of measures, we get group level relationships in only 7 out of 16.

2) The group level effects are essentially our old friends, the CAS process variables. In our previous analysis we only showed that they correlated with group level activity, but here we see confirmation of our inference that at least part of their effect is through altering the group climate, a mode of relationship which is entirely consistent with our previous analysis.

The only other group level effect is religion, and a puzzling thing it is.

Religious Preference and Discussion Activity



The dichotomy is between Protestants and non-Protestants, and P is the proportion of Protestants in the group. At first glance, this appears to be one of those reversals discussed in Chapter 1 (Type IIIB), in which activity increases with the Proportion Protestants, but within groups at a given P level non-Protestants are more active. However, our statistical criterion casts severe doubt on the linearity of the relationship, and it falls into no neat non-linear form. We note a decrease in activity as P rises to the .30-.39 range, and then a general increase, but except for that we find difficulty in interpreting the measure. However, we note that for both classes of individuals activity is greater when P is above .5 than for any point below. Hence, in spirit, if not form, we can conclude that we have netted one of the strange IIIB relationships. Why high Proportions of Protestants increase activity, when Protestants tend to be less active themselves we shall leave as a problem for future research.

Having found that the group level effects fall into two classes: one which we don't understand at all, and another set which we have already analysed in great detail in Chapter 2 of Part 1, we shall drop them at this point.

3) When we turn to the individual level differences, for once we can draw a firm conclusion. In many surveys, correlations are hard to come by, but our Great Books study is of that type in which correlations are plentiful, but their interpretations are not. By and large, the variables listed in the Type I group say simply that activity is a function of intellectual background and family role. The first is intuitively agreeable, and the second, when analysed in detail, has some interesting things to

suggest about social definitions of the role of spouse. Therefore, the rest of this chapter will be devoted to a brief exploration of the inter-relations of the intellectual variables, and a detailed analysis of family role as a correlate of discussion activity.

Intellectual Characteristics

Several of our measures (education, quiz score, self-conception as an intellectual, level of most worthwhile book) suggest that one of the distinguishing characteristics of the active participants is his (and the word is chosen advisedly) greater degree of intellectual ability and interest.

Education is a good take-off point.

Table 6

Education and Activity

Education	Per Cent Active	N
No college	27	(297)
Part college	31	(433)
Bachelor's degree	37	(414)
Graduate study or degree	43	(682)

Table 6 simply says that the greater the formal education of a group member, the more likely he is to be named as an active participant.

Since education is strongly related to scores on our measures of knowledge of the liberal arts (quiz scores), and both are related to activity, let us see what happens when we cross-tabulate education, quiz scores, and activity. Quiz scores are

divided at the median, and education is dichotomized into those with bachelor's degrees or more versus non-college graduates.

Table 7
Education, Quiz Score, and Activity
Per Cent Active

		Bachelor's Degree	
		Yes	No
Quiz	High	46 (651)*	43 (264)
	Low	34 (426)	22 (430)

*Number in parentheses is the number of individuals upon whom the percentage is based.

Both apparently contribute. On each educational level, quiz scores relate to activity, and among both levels of quiz scores college graduates are higher than non graduates. The pattern, however, suggests that the relationship is not just simple addition. Education makes more difference among low scorers than among high, and quiz scores make more difference among the less educated than among the more highly educated. Put another way, the differences among those who are high on either education or knowledge are less than the differences between these three groups and those who are low on both.

Quiz scores and education sort of measure the participant's intellectual preparation. Let us now see whether his intellectual stance, or self-conception, contributes toward activity when we control for these two variables. Self-conception is measured by answers to the question, "Which of the following comes closest to the way you think about yourself?" The respondents are divided into those who checked "an intellectual," those who denied being

intellectuals but said they were "an educated person," and those who denied both of the above and said they were either "pretty serious," or "low brow."

Table 8

Self Conception and Activity, Controlling
for Education and Quiz Scores
Per Cent Active

Quiz	Education	Self Conception		
		Serious or Low Brow	Educated	Intellectual
High	A.B.	43 (54)*	44 (421)	54 (160)
High	Less than A.B.	36 (106)	46 (102)	55 (44)
Low	A.B.	36 (59)	34 (310)	39 (38)
Low	Less than A.B.	21 (257)	23 (136)	25 (16)

*Number in parentheses is the number of individuals upon whom the percentage is based.

The differences are not astounding, but within each row, activity tends to increase with intellectuality of self-conception, and within each column, activity increases with education and quiz scores, although the educational difference in the high scoring group does vanish. The contribution of self-conception is particularly striking when one considers that we are holding constant not one, but two variables strongly related to activity and to self conception, and also when we remember that activity is an objective rating, not a self-definition. People who think of themselves as intellectuals are more likely to be seen by others as playing an active role in the discussion, regardless of their formal education or liberal arts knowledge.

We can see our intellectual variables from another pers-

pective when we compare them with another variable known to relate strongly to activity, group leadership role. To begin with leadership is strongly related to education, although not strongly related to knowledge when education is held constant.

Table 9

Education, Quiz Score, and Leadership
Per Cent Who are Group Leaders

		Bachelor's Degree	
		Yes	No
Quiz	High	30 (644)*	15 (422)
	Low	40 (243)	11 (420)

*Number in parentheses is the number of individuals upon whom the percentage is based.

Within each row there is a sharp difference in leadership between the two educational levels, but no consistent difference by quiz score within educational groups. Among the college graduates, in fact, leaders are a little lower on knowledge. When one considers that quiz scores improve with exposure to the program, and leaders tend to be advanced participants, it may even be that leaders tend to be recruited from among people with lower liberal arts knowledge.

Now, let's see the simultaneous effect of education, quiz score, and formal leadership role.

Table 10
 Leadership, Education, Quiz Score,
 and Activity
 Per Cent Active

Quiz	Education	Leaders	Members
High	A.B.	67 (196)*	36 (448)
High	Less than A.B.	68 (69)	34 (174)
Low	A.B.	54 (63)	31 (359)
Low	Less than A.B.	38 (45)	19 (375)

*Number in parentheses is the number of individuals upon whom the percentage is based.

Leadership, as one would expect is an extremely strong factor in activity. Regardless of the preparation level, leaders are much more likely to be named as actives. However, we also notice that both among leaders and among members, there is a strong relationship between our preparation index and activity. Thus, the activity of members with high quiz scores is almost equal to that of the least prepared leaders. Thus, we conclude that the relationship between preparation and activity cannot be explained by the fact that those members whose formal role in the group predisposes them toward activity have higher educations.

One should hardly be amazed to find that in a program devoted to intellectual discussion, those who are better prepared are more often named as active in the discussion. The finding is also in accordance with the results of Strodtbeck's research noted above.

One way of thinking of these results is to see them as another instance of a proposition from George Homans' theory of

small group behavior:

. . . the closer an individual . . . comes to realizing in all activities the norms of the group as a whole, the higher will be the social rank of the individual.⁴

If we accept the proposition as true, our findings suggest that, despite many opportunities for the Great Books discussions to turn into sociability groups, intellectual values have a high position in almost all groups, since it is the members who embody them who are designated as the leading contributors to the discussions.

Let us consider now, our two social structural correlates of activity: political preference and social status. To begin with political preference, let us see its relationship with our two best predictors of activity - leadership and quiz scores.

Table 11

Political Preference, Leadership, and Quiz Scores
Per Cent Democratic

		Leaders	Members
Quiz Score	High	54 (258)*	54 (629)
	Low	44 (107)	42 (744)

*Number in parentheses is the number of individuals upon whom the percentage is based.

Political party is unrelated to leadership, but Democrats (as noted in the original report on this study) tend to have higher quiz scores. Let us now see the relationship between party preference and activity, controlling for leadership and quiz score.

⁴George C. Homans, The Human Group, New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1950, 181.

Table 12

Party Preference and Activity, Controlling
for Leadership and Quiz Score
Per Cent Active

Formal Role	Quiz	Party Preference					
		Democrat		Independent		Republican	
Leader	High	66	(139)	81	(26)	66	(93)
Leader	Low	36	(47)	40	(10)	58	(50)
Member	High	41	(340)	34	(58)	30	(230)
Member	Low	27	(312)	24	(87)	21	(345)

Table 12 shows no consistent difference by party preference. It may be that among members, Democrats are somewhat more active, regardless of their quiz scores, but this does not hold among the leaders; hence, party preference is not a consistently important factor.

As for social status, Tables 13 and 14 tell a story similar to that of party preference.

Table 13

Status, Leadership, and Quiz Score
Per Cent High Status

		Leaders	Members
Quiz Score	High	59 (252)*	58 (610)
	Low	44 (102)	50 (675)

*Number in parentheses is the number of individuals upon whom the percentage is based.

Table 14

Status and Activity, Controlling for
Leadership and Quiz Scores
Per Cent Active

Formal Role	Quiz	Status	
		High	Low
Leader	High	67 (149)*	68 (103)
Leader	Low	58 (45)	42 (57)
Member	High	39 (353)	33 (257)
Member	Low	28 (337)	23 (338)

*Number in parentheses is the number of individuals upon whom the percentage is based.

Table 13 tells us that high status people have higher quiz scores, but that there is no consistent relationship between status and leadership. Table 14 indicates that when we hold constant quiz score and leadership, we get a status difference in the last three rows, but not among high scoring leaders. Therefore, status is not a consistent contributor to activity.

In general, a good part of the relationships between party preference and status and activity can be explained through the finding that Democrats and high status members tend to have higher quiz scores. These two social structural variables can not be considered consistent or striking factors in activity. Sex and marriage, however, cannot be disposed of so cavalierly, and require detailed consideration.

Family Roles and Discussion Activity

While it is not surprising that intellectual characteristics should be related to activity in Great Books discussion groups, the fact that sex and marital status are important pre-

dictors is not so obvious. Therefore, the remainder of this chapter will be devoted to an exploration of family roles as a factor in activity, and a sketch of the process by which patterns of role performance learned in the larger social structure are carried over into the Great Books discussion group.

Sex is always of interest, so we can begin with the relationship between sex and activity.

Table 15
Activity by Sex

Per Cent Active Members		
Sex	Per Cent	N
Male	53	(687)
Female	27	(1154)

Although a minority in the membership, the men are disproportionately more active participants than the women. One-half of the men are active in the discussion while only slightly more than one-fourth of the women are active. The individual characteristic of sex is a strong predictor of active participation.⁵

As for marital status, the expectation would be that the married persons are more active than the unmarried, for, generally in our culture, the married adult has a higher status than the unmarried adult.

⁵This is in accordance with Strodtbeck's finding that men, in contrast with women, have higher participation in the jury task. See Fred L. Strodtbeck, "Social Status in Jury Deliberations," American Sociological Review, XXII (1957), 713-19.

Table 16
Activity by Marital Status

Per Cent Active Members		
Marital Status	Per Cent	N
Married	40	(1419)
Unmarried ^a	23	(422)

^aIncludes single, separated, divorced, and widowed. Married is employed in the strict sense of married at the present time.

Married participants are more active than unmarried participants. Lest a combination of sex and marital status produce varying results, let us look at sex and marital status simultaneously with amount of participation.

Table 17
Activity by Sex and Marital Status

Sex	Per Cent Active Members	
	Marital Status	
	Married	Unmarried
Male	57 (562)*	34 (125)
Female	30 (857)	18 (297)

*Number in parentheses is the number of individuals upon whom the percentage is based.

Sex and marital status appear to be independent predictors of activity in the discussion.

While sex and marital status contribute independently of each other, do they contribute independently of leadership and quiz scores? To begin with, both are strongly related to our strong predictors.

Table 18

Sex, Quiz Score and Leadership
Per Cent Male

		Leaders	Members
Quiz Score	High	56 (261)*	40 (645)
	Low	43 (110)	29 (734)

*Number in parentheses is the number of individuals upon whom the percentage is based.

Table 19

Marital Status, Quiz Score, and Leadership
Per Cent Married

		Leaders	Members
Quiz Score	High	86 (261)*	77 (645)
	Low	85 (110)	72 (734)

*Number in parentheses is the number of individuals upon whom the percentage is based.

Table 18 indicates that males are both more likely to have high quiz scores and also to be leaders. Table 19 indicates that married members are more likely to be leaders, although their quiz score advantage is small.

Now, let us see the effects of sex and marital status when we control for leadership and quiz scores.

Table 20

Sex, Leadership, Quiz Score, and Activity
Per Cent Active

Formal Role	Quiz	Males	Females
Leader	High	73 (146)*	59 (115)
Leader	Low	55 (47)	41 (63)
Member	High	49 (261)	27 (384)
Member	Low	41 (209)	19 (524)

*Number in parentheses is the number of individuals upon whom the percentage is based.

Table 21

Marital Status, Leadership, Quiz Score,
and Activity
Per Cent Active

Formal Role	Quiz	Married	Not Married
Leader	High	70 (225)*	50 (36)
Leader	Low	51 (93)	29 (17)
Member	High	40 (499)	25 (146)
Member	Low	28 (532)	17 (202)

*Number in parentheses is the number of individuals upon whom the percentage is based.

Tables 20 and 21 are clear and crisp. In each case, all three variables show clear cut relationships, a considerable sex and marital status difference appearing even when one controls for leadership and quiz scores, with the leadership and quiz differences holding within each family role category.

Taken together, these four variables provide a powerful predictor of individual differences in activity, since their contributions are cumulative. Table 22 shows activity as a simultaneous function of all four variables.

Table 22

Sex, Marital Status, Leadership,
Quiz Score and Activity
Per Cent Active

Formal Role	Quiz	Male		Female	
		Married	Not Married	Married	Not Married
Leader	High	76 (133)	46 (13)	61 (92)	52 (23)
Leader	Low	56 (43)	- (4)	46 (50)	23 (13)
Member	High	52 (206)	38 (55)	31 (293)	17 (91)
Member	Low	47 (158)	23 (52)	20 (374)	15 (150)

With the sole exception of the sex comparison among high scoring leaders who are not married, each of our four variables shows an effect in every comparison. That is, each of our four variables relates to activity, whatever combination of the remaining three is held constant.

The power of these four characteristics as predictors can be seen by constructing an index of activity-proneness on the basis of these variables. We can score each participant in terms of his total number of favorable characteristics (being a leader, having a high quiz score, being married, or being a male) and look at the activity levels of members with different scores.

Table 23

Activity Proneness Index
Per Cent Active

Score	N
4	76 (133)
3	55 (354)
2	38 (583)
1	20 (530)
0	15 (150)

The range is from 15% active to 76%, and activity increases steadily with values on this index.

So far we have considered activity only in terms of its quantitative distinction between more active and less active members. The surprising importance of family role variables in accounting for quantitative differences suggests that they may also be important in the analysis of kinds of roles.

Analytically we may think of the process of group discussion as involving two kinds of work. One of these is getting the task of the group done. In the discussion groups dealt with here this would be the intellectual discussion of the various books which are on the agenda for the evening. This is the task or instrumental dimension of the group process. The second aspect of the work is commonly referred to in the small group literature as the social-emotional or expressive dimension. This is not directly concerned with accomplishing the task of the group per se, but rather with how the members relate to each other, and to the group as a whole.

A further distinction on the task dimension is suggested by the fact that the discussion process is one of give and take. On the one side, someone must start the discussion, that is assume the responsibility for initiating the discussion, i.e., "providing fuel for the discussion." But what is done must be reacted to, hence the second aspect of the task dimension may be to "answer" what has been thrown out for discussion. This part of the task is the complement of initiating the discussion, namely coordinating the discussion, i.e., "pulling the threads of the discussion together" and "clarification of the discussion."

Likewise in the expressive area, we may have on the one hand the harmonizer, someone who "makes tactful comments" and keeps peace in the group. On the other hand, there is the joker who Bales and Slater suggest may serve the function of expressing negative emotional reactions as the harmonizer expresses positive emotional reactions.

Schematically the group process may have the following dimensions:

Instrumental Dimension (a) initiating (b) coordinating
Expressive Dimension (a) harmonizing (b) joking

If a division of labor between instrumental and expressive specialization occurs among the active participants, we would expect that the roles classified theoretically as instrumental roles would be highly interrelated and likewise that the roles classified as social-emotional roles would be highly interrelated, but that there would be a low association between instrumental and expressive roles.

Table 24

Q Measure of Interrelationship for Objective Role Measure

Role	Fuel	Clarify	Threads	Tact	Joker
Fuel	. . . .	.827	.838	.548	.682
Clarify	.827	. . . .	.885	.597	.477
Threads	.838	.885	. . . .	.724	.510
Tact	.548	.597	.724	. . . .	.159
Joker	.682	.477	.510	.159	. . . .

"Providing fuel for the discussion," "Pulling the threads of the discussion together," and "Clarification of the discussion," the instrumental specialties have very high associations with each other. Clarify and Threads have the highest inter-item association as would be expected since they are both "coordinating" roles. However, since the three instrumental roles are so highly interrelated among themselves and all have lower associations with the expressive roles, there appears to be one general instrumental dimension. While the initiating-coordinating aspect of this dimension may well exist, it does not differentiate clearly on our measure. The essential factor appears to be task performance.

For the social-emotional roles, the situation is quite different. Rather than an association between the joker and the harmonizer roles, these roles seem to be unrelated. There appear to be two distinct facets of the expressive dimension; the humorous one (joking) and the harmonizing one (making tactful comments). Hence, from theory and the data, three dimensions in the discussion process may be designated.

- (1) a task dimension (instrumental): operationally defined by active role enactment on one or more of the task roles of Fuel, Clarify and Threads.
- (2) a harmonizer dimension (expressive): operationally defined by active role enactment on the harmonizer role of "making tactful comments."
- (3) a joking dimension (expressive): operationally defined by active role enactment on the joker role

Since a Great Books group is a functionally specific group with the purpose of discussing the various books on the agenda, the expectation would be that most of the role playing among the active participants would be on the task dimension and a smaller

portion of the role playing would be allocated to the expressive dimension. The relative frequency of the performance of each of these dimensions is as follows:

Table 25
Relative Frequency of Qualitative Role
Enactment Among Actives

Per Cent Performing the Role of . . .	
Type of Role Enactment	Per Cent ^a
Task	81
Joker	30
Harmonizer	20
(Number of Cases)	(669)

^aPer cents exceed 100 per cent because roles are not mutually exclusive.

We find that four-fifths of the active participants are active on the task dimension, somewhat less than one-third on the joker dimension, and one-fifth perform the harmonizer role.

In so far as boys and girls are socialized in a differing manner, the expectation would be that among the possible roles to be played in the discussion group, those with a task emphasis would be selected by the men and those with a social-emotional emphasis by the women. Qualitative type of role enactment may be looked at from two viewpoints, total membership and active membership. Since the great majority of role playing is devoted to the instrumental dimension, there is an association between being active in the discussion and performing an instrumental

role. Looking at the type of role enactment by sex based on the total membership, we find the following:

Table 26
Qualitative Role Enactment Among Total Membership by Sex

Type of Role Enactment	Per Cent Performing the Role of . . .	
	Male	Female
Task	44	21
Joker	18	7
Harmonizer	8	7
(Number of Cases)	(687)	(1154)

In this form, we could conclude that men overwhelmingly perform the instrumental role. However, considering that men are almost twice as active as women in the group discussion, we want to control for gross quantity of participation. Hence, to answer the questions about types of roles, we will employ the base of active members. This allows us crudely to hold constant gross quantity of participation and look at the more subtle differences in qualitative type of role enactment among active members.

As is shown in Table 27, 84 per cent of the men are active on the task dimension, while only 78 per cent of the women are active on this dimension. Hence, the direction is in accordance with the hypothesis; namely that men are more likely to play the instrumental role than women in a discussion group. However, a high proportion of the women play the instrumental role.

Table 27

Qualitative Role Enactment Among Active Members by Sex

Type of Role Enactment	Sex	
	Male	Female
Task	84	78
Joker	35	25
Harmonizer	15	26
(Number of Cases)	(361)	(308)

The high proportion of women who are task performers is to be expected for several reasons. The greatest amount of role playing is allocated to the instrumental task of getting the work of the group done. While the men are more likely to play the task role than the women, we would also expect that a good proportion of the women are active on the instrumental dimension, for the women are a majority of the membership, and getting the work of the group done probably demands performance of the task role by women as well as by men.

As for the expressive roles, the joker and the harmonizer, a contradiction appears here. Men are more likely than women to play the joker role, but women are more likely than men to play the harmonizer role.

The finding that men tend to perform the joker role more often than women is actually not surprising, for, to the extent to which aggression is part of expressiveness, we would expect the male sex role to be more apt to this kind of expressive facet.

Our inclination is to suggest that since the adult male and the adult female must play both instrumental and expressive roles in society at large, though not to the same extent, the humorous facet of the expressive role is a man's way of playing a social-emotional role and the harmonizing facet of the expressive role is a woman's way.

It is of interest to note that in Table 24 "Joking" is fairly closely related to "Fuel" ($Q = .682$) and "Tact" is rather closely related to "Threads" ($Q = .724$). Since "Fuel" is a role involving starting interaction and "Threads" indicates reaction to someone else, it may be that men tend to play the aggressive form of both instrumental and social-emotional roles, while women tend to perform the more passive forms of these two types of roles. While our measure does not allow us to deal with this hypothesis on the instrumental dimension, we can look at the aggressive and the less aggressive forms of the social-emotional dimension.

Now, what about marital status and quality of role playing?

We have been interpreting our findings on sex differences in terms of a carry-over into the discussion group of habits and patterns of role performance. These habits and patterns are seen as a result of growing up in a society which defines the appropriate behavior of the two sexes in different ways. Similarly, we can look at marriage as a socially patterned system of role performances, instead of from the viewpoint of law or love.

Sociological theorists have maintained that, in the nuclear family, the male adult will play the role of the instrumental leader and the female adult will play the role of the expressive leader.⁶ If so, we would expect that getting married would accentuate the sex differences we have seen, since the patterns of performance learned in one's new family will add to the differences originally learned in the parental family. However, this effect is probably different for the two sexes. For men, getting married probably doesn't affect the basic role system much, for the lives of adult middle-class men are heavily focused on their jobs (instrumental roles) before and after marriage. However, women typically work for a while before marriage, and hence shift from a heavily instrumental role situation to a much more expressive one when they take on the task of home making and child rearing. These considerations, taken together, give us the following predictions:

- 1) For men, marital status will show little relationship to role quality, but what difference there is will be for greater instrumental performance among married, as contrasted to single men.
- 2) For women, the married participants should show less instrumental and more expressive role performance when contrasted with single women.

⁶Talcott Parsons and Robert Freed Bales, Family: Socialization and Interaction Process (Glencoe, Illinois, The Free Press, 1955, p. 22).

Table 28

Qualitative Role Enactment Among Active Members
by Sex and Marital Status

Type of Role Enactment	Per Cent Performing the Role of . . .			
	Sex			
	Male		Female	
	Marital Status Married	Marital Status Unmarried	Marital Status Married	Marital Status Unmarried
Task	84	83	79	78
Joker	34	36	25	26
Harmonizer	17	5	28	19
(Number of Cases)	(319)	(42)	(254)	(54)

Let us see what Table 28 tells us about our hypotheses.

Among the men we find no difference by marital status in task or joking, but, contrary to our hypothesis, more harmonizing among married than single men. Thus, it may be that marriage, instead of adding to the sex differentiation for men, leads them to learn a somewhat more feminine role pattern.

Among the women, again, there is no difference in task and joking, but there is an increase in harmonizing for the married women.

Except in very small parts, we can hardly consider our hypotheses confirmed, the key problems being the increase in harmonizing for men, and the lack of any "de-instrumentalizing" among the women.

In short, Table 28 suggests that the effect of marriage

upon role performance is to add to the expressive role performance of both sexes, while keeping a basic instrumental-expressive difference between them. Putting it another way, the effect of marriage upon role performance may not have anything to do with the sex differentiation of family roles. Rather, it may be that whether you are a man or a woman, having to live together and adjust to the presence of another person, adds to one's role performance in the social-emotional category of harmonizing, a role which is otherwise typically feminine.

To sum up our findings so far:

- a) men tend to perform the instrumental and joker roles more often than women
- b) women tend to perform the harmonizer role more often than men.
- c) married persons tend to perform the harmonizer role more often than unmarried persons.

We can see the effect of family role on discussion activity in another light by comparing members who attend as couples with those who attend without their husbands or wives.

What might be the effects of attending group meetings with one's spouse rather than alone?⁷ All married persons have the common characteristic of membership in a family of procreation. However, for the married persons who attend the group without their spouse, their familial role would be latent since they are interacting in a non-family situation where other members of their family are not present. During the meeting time of the

⁷In this analysis only married persons will be considered. While the participation patterns of the unmarried persons would be helpful as a frame of reference, their small number and low activity do not allow this.

discussion group, they are talking only to the other members, all of whom are non-family persons. The married persons who attend the group as couples, on the other hand, are talking not only to the other non-family persons in the group, but to each other. Since husband and wife are accustomed to a division of labor in role performance between themselves in the family, the carry-over of the role specialization in the nuclear family would be greater for those members who participate in the group as couples by virtue of the fact that the spouse is present and consequently the relational system of husband-wife interaction is stronger for them. We would hypothesize that:

Men whose wives are in the same group are more likely to assume the instrumental and humorous facet of the expressive dimension than men whose wives are not in the same group.

Women whose husbands are in the same group are more likely to assume the harmonizer facet of the expressive dimension than women whose husbands are not in the same group.

Before turning to the sub-population of active married members, however, let us set the stage by inquiring whether the presence of one's spouse is related to degree of activity regardless of its quality.

Table 29

Activity by Sex and Presence of Spouse

Per Cent Active Members Among Married Participants		
Sex	Presence of Spouse	
	Spouse Present	Spouse Not Present
Male	59 (305)	53 (257)
Female	31 (311)	29 (546)

There is a tendency for men attending with their spouses to be slightly more active than men who attend without them. The presence of one's spouse may provide social support, which would tend to increase participation and might also constrain the individual to act more in accordance with his sex role. (Or, it may be that spouses tend to name each other on the question used to assess activity.)

Returning to the two hypotheses stated above, the expectation is that "spoused" husbands are more likely to play the task and joker roles than "spouseless" husbands; and that "spoused" wives are more likely to play the harmonizer role than "spouseless" wives.

Table 30

Qualitative Role Enactment by Sex and Presence of Spouse

Type of Role Enactment	Sex	Presence of Spouse	
		Spouse Present	Spouse Not Present
Task	Male	85%	83%
	Female	76%	80%
Joker	Male	36%	32%
	Female	23%	27%
Harmonizer	Male	15%	18%
	Female	38%	22%
Base N	Male	(180)	(139)
	Female	(96)	(158)

Husbands with their wives present perform the task and joker roles more and the harmonizer role less than husbands whose wives are not present. Likewise, wives whose husbands are present perform the task and joker roles less and the harmonizer

role more than wives whose husbands are not present. Consequently, for each of the three role dimensions, the role differentiation along sex lines is more evident among married persons who participate as couples than among married persons who do not participate as couples. The presence of the primary group partner tends to reinforce the continuity of role differentiation along sex lines.

We have now seen two ways in which family roles appear to affect participation in the discussion. First, there appears to be a carry-over into the discussion group of habits and patterns of talking which are associated with sex and marital status categories in the American social structure. Second, we have just seen that the physical presence of one's spouse in the group tends to accentuate these differences. We will now see a third and final way.

Although this is one of those sociological generalizations that might get reprinted in the squibs of The New Yorker, marriage is not only a social structural category but also a social relationship. By this we mean that when John Jones goes to the altar, he not only takes on a new status vis a vis the state and the income tax collector, but for some to come, he has to get along with a particular human being, Mrs. Jones. Therefore, we can expect that there are two separate effects of marriage on one's style of role performance. First, one tends to pick up the role performances which are generally associated with marriage (in our data, an increase in harmonizing). Second, one probably learns new role performances which mesh with those of a particular person, one's spouse.

Now, let us see if there is any carry over of this specific role learning into the Great Books discussion.

The idea is interesting, but the analytical problems are tricky. The strategy we adopted was that of creating "artificial" couples and contrasting them with "real" couples.

The general procedure was this. In our sample of 1909 cases, we had 270 couples, and consequently 540 people who attend with their spouse. For each of these people we drew, using random numbers, another married member of their group of the opposite sex, to create an equivalent number of "artificial" couples. This means that for each of the 540 people who attend as couples, we can compare their discussion activity with their own spouses and also with another group of people who are in the same social category but are married to someone else.

Now, if the effect of marital status on role performance is solely that of learning roles associated with a new social category, we ought to get about the same results when we compare our 540 people with artificial mates, as when we compare them with their own. Conversely, if part of the effect of marriage is modification of role performance to adjust to a particular person, then we ought to get different results when we compare the 540 with artificial mates than when we compare them with their real mates.

We can begin with activity per se and then look at qualitative differentiation in type of role played.

To begin with, activity levels are essentially the same in the population of real and artificial couples. This follows from our probability mechanism for making up the artificial couples.

Table 31

Activity by Sex Among Real and Artificial Couples

Sex	Per Cent Active Members	
	Real	Artificial
Male	59	58
Female	29	30
Number of Couples	(270)	(463)

Now, however, let's pair husbands and wives and see what we get.

Table 32

Activity of the Wife Among Real and Artificial Couples

Type of Couple	Per Cent of Wives Who are Active	
	Husband Active	Inactive
Real	44 (158)*	8 (112)
Artificial	35 (266)	25 (197)

*Number in parentheses is the number of individuals upon whom the percentage is based.

The differences in Table 32 are quite strong, and statistical tests indicate that they cannot be explained by chance fluctuations.

Let's begin with active husbands. We find for our married women that if their real husband is active in the group, they

arises in marriage is that women learn never to talk more than their husbands, in the areas of talking that tend to be the specialties of husbands.

The evidence here is all indirect. After all, we have not followed these respondents through their early socialization, nor observed the changes in interaction patterns which we assume follow from marriage. Nevertheless, from several points of view, the data here support the general idea that patterns of role performance are learned in the institutional matrix of the larger society, and to a large degree transferred into new situations such as Great Books discussion.

Summary

We are now ready to summarize our analysis of "activity" as a variable in the maintenance of membership in Great Books discussion groups.

- 1) Both as an individual characteristic, and as a group characteristic, high participation in the discussion is a major factor in program retention.
- 2) The sources of high activity lie both in group composition and in individual characteristics of the members.
 - A) In terms of group composition, activity as a form of social relationship seems to be strongly influenced by a delicate balance of the members' other social relationships. Specifically:
 - 1) Outside contacts (whether the members see each other outside of the meeting) are a very important factor in activity.
 - a) In groups with high educational levels, activity increases with outside contacts.
 - b) In groups with low educational levels, activity decreases with outside contacts.

- c) Since most groups in the program are high education groups, on the whole, outside contacts go with high activity.
 - d) In low contact groups, political diversity seems to increase activity, but it makes no difference in high contact groups.
- 2) High levels of interest in community affairs and high levels of participation in community affairs tend to lead to high activity levels within the group.
 - 3) Moderate sociability (informal visiting) increases activity, while high and low sociability tend to decrease it.
- B) In terms of personal characteristics, activity tends to be associated with intellectual preparation, formal role in the group, and family roles.
- 1) Regardless of the index used, greater intellectual interest and ability is characteristic of individuals who are named as active in the discussion.
 - 2) Leaders tend disproportionately to be named as actives, but most actives are not leaders.
 - 3) Patterns of role performance, probably learned in family situations, have a strong carry-over into the discussion.
 - a) Men are more active than women.
 - b) Among the actives men are more likely to have task and joker roles, women to have the harmonizer role.
 - c) In both sexes, married people are more likely to be active.
 - d) Among actives of both sexes, married people are more likely to be harmonizers.
 - e) Sex and marital status combine to produce two effects which we think are indicative of this transfer process.
 - (1) Sex differentiation in role performance is stronger when one's spouse is present in the group.
 - (2) The activity level and specialty of their husbands appear to set definite limits on the activity level and specialty of wives.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

All five chapters of this report have been concerned, in one way or another, with the factors which keep people in the Great Books program from one year to another, or more exactly from 1957 to 1958. The data come from a national sample of almost two thousand Great Books participants who filled out questionnaires in the fall of 1957. One year later NORC managed to establish the continuation status of over 90% of the sample, and the analysis was centered on the differences between members who continued in Great Books and those who dropped out.

Our original sample consisted of the members of 172 discussion groups selected by a probability procedure from United States counties included in NORC's national area probability sample. Just as in those trick pictures which sometimes look like two black profiles against a white background and sometimes like a white vase against a black background, our data can be viewed either as 1909 people who happen to belong to 172 discussion groups, or, alternatively, as 172 discussion groups whose members happen to be the 1909 people in our study. Part I of the report amounts to a systematic development of this theme.

Chapter 1 of Part I is devoted to methodology. It sets forth in detail the logic involved in looking at the same materials not only as group data and individual data, but trying to do this simultaneously. A technique was developed whereby each respondent received two scores on each variable in the study. For instance, each male was coded as a male (we hope), and also coded in terms of the proportion of his group who were males. By

looking at males and females separately, and then looking at males and females in groups which varied in their proportion of males, we could look for the effects of sex, and also effects of the sex composition of the groups. All sorts of logical possibilities follow from this approach. Variables can be important as individual characteristics, as group characteristics, as both, or as neither. The last part of the chapter outlines a classification of the types of relationships which might be found by our technique.

Chapter 2 of Part I is devoted to those variables which are important at the group level, the variables which show correlations between group composition and program retention. A dozen or so met our statistical criteria for compositional effects, and the bulk of Chapter 2 is devoted to an attempt to see how they fit together. It takes more than 50 pages to do this, but the upshot is this: group composition adds to program retention when a group includes 1) a high proportion of high status people and/or a high proportion of people active in community organizations, 2) people who are educationally homogeneous, 3) a slight majority of Democrats, and 4) a high proportion of members who are active participants in the discussion. The last of these three - discussion activity - turns out to be part of a chain process by which social contacts outside the meetings apparently add to activity and activity leads to program effects. This chain, in turn, is part of a web of relationships involving political preference, education, sex, sociability, and interest in local affairs.

Chapter 3 of Part I deals with leaders, leadership, and an apparent reluctance of groups to be led in ways which they do not want. It begins with the negative finding that whether or not the leaders have completed the Great Books leader training course has no relationship with drop-out rates, and proceeds from there to explore the effects of leaders' and members' opinions on what makes a good discussion. Although the evidence is not unambiguous the chapter ends by suggesting that the particular style of discussion which the leader adopts is less important than whether he is willing to give the group what it wants, no matter what it is that the group wants.

Part II shifts from the group level to the individual level, but before long the evidence tends to suggest that group phenomena are operating here too. In Chapter 1 of Part II a large number of characteristics of continuing and non-continuing members are contrasted, but three kinds of variables come to the forefront. First, a number of statistical relationships suggest, hardly unexpectedly, that intellectual background and orientation are important in program retention. Generally speaking, strong intellectual preparation, open-mindedness, and patterns of outside reading congruent with inside reading augur well for program continuation. There is some evidence that a small group of super-sophisticates find too little challenge in the program, but under-preparation appears a more serious problem than over-preparation. Second, although the extra-group lives of the members only appear above the surface of our data like that small bit of the iceberg which is above the water, Chapter 1 of Part II finds that social

structural variables (characteristics such as age, sex, and marital status, which indicate the general sort of roles we play in our daily lives) are important in program retention. From the pattern of correlations which appears, it is suggested that roles outside of Great Books create pushes and pulls which either bind the member to Great Books or draw him away from the program. Third, our now familiar variable, discussion activity, re-appears in the suggestion that many of the characteristics which discriminate among members who continue and members who drop out do so because they lead the member either toward or away from involvement and activity in the discussions, and this, in turn, is crucial for program retention.

Since, throughout the analysis, active participation in the discussion (as measured by the number of other members who name a given participant as a contributor) seemed to be a major factor in program retention, Chapter 2 of Part II is given over to an examination of the factors related to activity. It turns out that activity comes more from individual characteristics than from group characteristics, and that the activity level of a group is essentially a function of the number of people it can recruit who have high activity potential rather than a function of an optimum blend of membership characteristics. In terms of the personal characteristics involved, intellectual ability is important, but the sort of social structural variables discussed in Chapter 1 of Part II are even more important. More specifically, sex, and marital status are major predictors of a member's activity. Detailed analysis of these inter-relationships suggests that the kinds of family roles one plays have a strong carry-over

into non-family situations such as Great Books, even extending to a difference in the activity levels of married women depending on whether their husbands are in the group or not.

Conclusions

Can we now pull together in three or four crisp generalizations the major conclusions of our study? No, unless we are willing to settle for truisms, for the major conclusion of our study would be that program retention in Great Books is extremely complicated. A complete picture of the factors involved involves individual characteristics, group characteristics, characteristics which work one way at the group level and another at the individual level, characteristics which work one way in some subclasses and another way in others, characteristics whose meaning is clear but whose effects are obscure, and characteristics whose effects are clear but whose meaning is obscure.

Since, however, elaborate research efforts frequently fail even to document truisms, it may be well to list some of the themes which the reader could have told us would be important even before we began, but whose documentation involved months of complicated and laborious work.

Groups Are Important

None of the authors of this report is an expert in the sociological specialty known as small groups. Hence, we are not grinding disciplinary axes, when we conclude that throughout the analysis we have been struck by the importance of group discussion and group relationships as a factor in program retention. The

group not only provides an efficient administrative resource by which a national program can be maintained without an expensive staff of professional instructors. It also appears that in the discussion process and in the social relationships which it develops or reinforces, there is a powerful cement which binds the members together and provides a major gratification from participation. We should make it clear that nothing in this conclusion should be read as suggesting that intellectual and cerebral aspects of Great Books are unimportant. Quite to the contrary the frequency with which intellectual characteristics turn out to be important for the individual and for the group suggest that it is precisely the combination of challenging intellectual content, and group discussion as a medium which explain the vitality of Great Books groups.

Preparation is Important

Although it has never been dignified by presentation as a formal law, the one generalization which almost always turns up in surveys of intellectual matters is: "Them as has gets." That is, books on specific subjects are bought, not by people who know nothing about the subject, but by people who are already informed: programs of mass persuasion tend to reach mostly people who are already persuaded, and programs for uplift tend to reach only those who are already uplifted. Great Books is no exception to this rule, and throughout our analysis we have seen that Great Books tends to keep, not those who have needed the most intellectual growth, but those whose preparation and interest are already strong. This is not all there is to the story, for some evidence

in Chapter 1 of Part II suggests that the super-intellectuals have high drop-out rates. The true relationship is probably curvilinear, with high losses among the least prepared and among those who have little need for the program. However, the relative sizes of these two groups in our society is such that the program need hardly fear that it runs much risk of lowering retention by recruiting well prepared members.

Discussion Activity is Important

By now the typewriter keys which spell "activity" should be worn down to their roots from the frequency with which that word has appeared in this report. It is clear that whether viewed as a personal characteristic or as a group characteristic, large numbers of people who are seen by the other group members as active participants are very favorable for retention. We now know a lot about the effects of activity, and in Chapter 2 of Part II we learned a lot about where it comes from. What we don't know is what it is. Our data are unable to tell us whether this measure taps: 1) sheer decibel volume of discussion, 2) evenness of participation versus domination by a few members, or 3) whether it is an index of some subtle inter-personal characteristic such as group cohesion or integration of role structure.

Furthermore, there is a famous example in social science which indicates that off-hand speculation on a finding like this is dangerous. A set of studies by Kurt Lewin conducted during world war II suggested that personal decisions made during group discussions were more binding than those made alone.¹ These

¹These studies are summarized in Kurt Lewin, "Group Decision and Social Change," in Eleanor E. Maccoby, Theodore M. Newcomb, and Eugene L. Hartley, Readings in Social Psychology, New York, 1958, Henry Holt and Company, pp. 197-211.

findings, which have been replicated a number of times, were quickly seized upon by group dynamics partisans and applied to all sorts of practical decision situations. However, more recent experiments which have attempted to control the precise aspects of the social process involved suggest that discussion per se is not terribly important; rather, the effectiveness of discussion as a technique for influence seems to lie in such things as forcing one to come to some sort of decision and in the perception of group consensus on the issue.²

From this point of view, although activity as we have measured it appears to be the keystone in the retention process, we have not achieved a clear-cut theoretical understanding of this variable and the intervening social and psychological processes which make it so important. However, we are tempted to suggest the following interpretation, which makes a certain amount of sense to us. It seems to us that people come to a discussion either to listen or to talk or both. Now, if talking is gratifying, the more opportunities one has to talk, the more satisfying the situation would be. Conversely, if listening is gratifying, the more people who are talking the more likely it is that one will hear something interesting. Thus, it may be that the individual level advantage of the actives is related to the increased opportunities for talking, and the compositional effect is related to increased opportunities for listening. Activity from this point of view is not an aspect of the discussion process. It is the discussion process.

²Cf. Edith Bennett Pelz, "Some Factors in Group Decision" in Maccoby, Newcomb, and Hartley, op.cit., pp. 212-19.

Suggestions

It would be quite satisfying if now we could write out a simple prescription for practical advice on program retention in Great Books. However, as we have noted, the relationships discovered in this study are not such as to lead to easy rules of thumb. However, we do feel that some suggestions can be made on the basis of our findings.

First, it would seem that the status quo, in terms of member characteristics, is essentially favorable for program retention. That is, those variables which seem to characterize the Great Books member also seem generally favorable for program retention. Thus, Great Books members tend to be highly educated, and high education is a favorable sign for groups and individuals; Great Books members tend to be active and interested in their communities, another good omen; Great Books members tend toward political diversity, again a positive factor; Great Books members tend to be of high social status, a favorable characteristic; and so on. In general, Great Books tends to attract disproportionately kinds of people who have high potentialities for forming viable groups.

There are, however, three exceptions, which should be noted.

First, Great Books has a slight disproportion of females. While sex is not an independent contributor to program retention, we have seen that femininity is associated with lower activity in discussion, and that groups with high proportions of women have greater loss rates.

Second, our first survey suggested that in comparison with other college graduates Great Books may tend to attract relatively more younger adults than older adults. The analysis in Chapter 1 of Part II suggested that these younger adults are at a stage in the life cycle when other responsibilities and involvements compete with Great Books.

Third, although we have stressed the tentativeness of the conclusions, our data do suggest that the program's official leadership style may have some negative consequences. While the problems of leader training are enormously difficult, it would appear that a training program which would permit leaders greater flexibility of technique and adaptation of techniques to specific group needs might boost retention. (However, we do not suggest that hypothetical increases in retention are necessarily positive effects of this technique, un-tapped by our survey. The negative consequences are not that strong.)

Even though the status quo is essentially healthy, can we make suggestions for improvements? Returning to the logic of our compositional effects analysis, two formal possibilities arise. First, one can seek to change patterns of recruitment for the program. This amounts to changing the mean "P-level" in the population. Second, one could think of re-arranging the existing groups in such a way as to develop more effective balances of membership characteristics. On the whole, the case for the first approach is strong, the case for the second is weak. While re-arrangement has a certain intellectual elegance, two arguments can be made against it. First, it is fairly impractical, for it would require data on members and groups which are generally

unavailable (unless each new member is to be asked to fill out the NORC questionnaire), and second it can be shown mathematically that re-arrangement will only add to net program retention when there is a curvilinear compositional effect at issue. In our data, the only important curvilinear relationships are education, political composition, and informal visiting. Of these, probably only education is amenable to practical manipulation. The program might well consider taking steps to avoid the existence of groups with about 40% college graduates. Our data suggest that these groups (which are quite infrequent) would do better if the college graduates were shifted to another group.

While the re-arrangement possibilities are limited, our data do suggest some situations where careful recruiting might yield fairly durable groups. The program might well consider the following sources of new members:

1) Corporations and Business firms. If Great Books could recruit new groups from executives and managers in specific businesses or firms, a cluster of favorable characteristics would appear. Such groups would tend to be of high status, high education (particularly if one could tap their professional staffs - engineers, lawyers, accountants), have high outside contacts (since the members would know each other on the job), and have a high proportion of males.

2) Civic organizations. Since high levels of community interest and activity, high status and moderate sociability, along with outside contacts appear to be favorable characteristics, recruitment from members of existing civic organizations

such as bar associations, medical societies, civic improvement groups, businessmen's associations, etc. might well provide groups of high potential. One is tempted to add P.T.A.'s, and The League of Women Voters, except that over-femininity is not a good sign.

3) Middle Aged Couples. One way of guaranteeing outside contacts and at least 50% males would be to utilize already established groups of married couples. If, in addition, these couples were in the over-35 age group, another positive characteristic could be added. Thus, the infiltration of existing reading circles, hobby groups, and possibly bridge groups (although one has to look out for the extremely high sociability groups) might be good strategy.

A number of examples could be presented, but the general idea here is that existing groups with high proportions of males, and/or high-educated people, and/or community actives, and/or high status should all generate strong Great Books groups.

Another strategy, however, is suggested as a complement to drawing Great Books members from existing sociometric networks. We found in Chapter 2 of Part I that there was one type of group for which outside contacts were not a favorable sign. These were low education groups. Although people whose intellectual background is not strong are fairly dubious prospects from the viewpoint of retention, they apparently do better when there is a low volume of outside contacts. This suggests that for such groups recruitment through the mass media (newspapers, posters, radio, etc.) would be effective in that the members might not have common outside relationships which dampen the effects of Great Books.

In short, our data suggest two complementary strategies for forming new groups. On the one hand, it might be wise to look for extant groups of people with strong intellectual backgrounds, and, on the other, try to form brand new groups for people with weaker intellectual backgrounds. Such complementary approaches would take advantage of the complex relationships between contacts activity and retention which were spelled out in Chapter 2 of Part I.

APPENDIX I

Raw Data for Charts in Chapters 2 and 3

Chapter 2 Chart 1

Exposure and Drop-Out
Proportion Zero Exposure

		0-.19	.2-.29	.3-.39	.4-.59	.6-1.0
Zero Years	DO	18	26	12	28	233
	Stay	19	27	19	42	222
		37	53	31	70	455
One or two years	DO	66	44	14	10	21
	Stay	207	76	37	35	30
		273	120	51	45	51
Three or more	DO	67	24	7	6	6
	Stay	205	53	14	25	14
		272	77	21	31	20

Chapter 2 Chart 2

Outside Contacts and Drop-Out
Proportion with One or More

		0-.39	.4-.49	.5-.59	.6-.69	.7-.79	.8-.89	.9-1.0
One or more	DO	11	31	42	51	48	32	103
	Stay	11	55	83	91	97	84	229
		22	86	125	142	145	116	332
None	DO	49	58	56	29	24	7	14
	Stay	47	82	83	75	55	30	23
		96	140	139	104	79	37	37

Chapter 2 Chart 3

Discussion Activity and Drop-Out
Proportion Active

		0-.19	.2-.29	.3-.39	.4-.49	.5-.59	.6-.69	.7-1.0
Active	DO	16	14	29	30	24	17	21
	Stay	31	30	76	78	109	83	81
		47	44	105	108	133	100	102
Inactive	DO	242	42	71	56	34	21	7
	Stay	213	83	109	80	79	36	18
		455	125	180	136	113	57	25

Chapter 2 Chart 4

Impact and Drop-Out
Proportion Reporting High Impact

		0-.19	.2-.29	.3-.39	.4-.49	.5-.59	.6-.69	.7-1.0
Highs	DO	11	20	32	55	44	28	30
	Stay	21	33	47	85	135	81	89
		32	53	79	140	179	109	119
Lows	DO	77	74	57	79	42	22	11
	Stay	130	86	93	94	111	40	22
		207	160	150	173	153	62	33

Chapter 2 Chart 5

Effect on Problem I and Drop-Out
Proportion Reporting any Effect

		0-.29	.3-.39	.4-.49	.5-.59	.6-.69	.7-1.0
Any Effect	DO	25	29	24	21	12	2
	Stay	46	91	84	91	30	46
		71	120	108	112	42	48
No Effect	DO	231	106	53	45	12	4
	Stay	302	217	132	86	20	18
		533	323	185	131	32	22

Chapter 2 Chart 6

Change in Acceptability of Schools: More and Drop-Out
Proportion Changing

		0-.29	.3-.39	.4-.49	.5-.59	.6-.69
Changers	DO	25	24	37	12	4
	Stay	70	68	71	50	66
		95	92	108	62	70
Non- Changers	DO	298	87	50	22	9
	Stay	450	167	142	48	34
		748	254	192	70	43

Chapter 2 Chart 7

Marital Status and Drop-Out
Proportion Married

		0-.39	.4-.49	.5-.59	.6-.69	.7-.79	.8-.89	.9-1.0
Married	DO	9	19	15	47	62	82	190
	Stay	20	30	35	71	107	194	401
		29	49	50	118	169	276	591
Single	DO	38	25	22	27	17	22	12
	Stay	47	37	21	34	35	34	13
		85	62	43	61	52	56	25

Chapter 2 Chart 8

Age and Drop-Out
Proportion Young

		0-.19	.2-.29	.3-.39	.4-.49	.5-.59	.6-.69	.7-.79	.8-1.0
Young	DO	13	8	13	48	67	38	63	93
	Stay	10	17	28	47	135	68	95	114
		23	25	41	95	202	106	158	237
Older	DO	75	10	27	53	45	13	19	12
	Stay	147	64	49	69	117	49	30	19
		222	74	76	122	162	62	49	31

Chapter 2 Chart 9

Sex and Drop-Out
Proportion Male

		0-.29	.3-.39	.4-.49	.5-.59	.6-.69	.7-1.0
Male	DO	42	50	47	34	25	13
	Stay	62	69	121	90	47	11
		104	119	168	124	72	54
Female	DO	185	84	77	38	15	4
	Stay	265	140	148	69	29	15
		450	224	225	107	44	19

Chapter 2 Chart 10

Socio-Economic Status and Drop-Out
Proportion High Status

		0-.29	.3-.39	.4-.49	.5-.59	.6-.69	.7-.79	.8-1.0
High Status	DO	15	24	37	44	55	41	44
	Stay	16	42	65	108	138	99	96
		31	66	102	152	193	140	140
Low Status	DO	73	50	59	47	38	15	4
	Stay	87	79	78	85	65	35	12
		160	129	137	132	103	50	16

Chapter 2 Chart 11

Quiz Score and Drop-Out
Proportion High

		0-.29	.3-.39	.4-.49	.5-.59	.6-.69	.7-.79	.8-1.0
High	DO	20	31	38	35	85	26	32
	Stay	32	46	76	104	166	65	102
		52	77	114	139	251	91	134
Low	DO	107	77	61	36	59	10	7
	Stay	134	76	99	88	81	22	14
		241	153	160	124	140	32	21

Chapter 2 Chart 12

Level of Most Worthwhile Book and Drop-Out
Proportion Middle Brow

		0-.29	.3-.39	.4-.49	.5-.59	.6-.69	.7-1.0
Middle Brow	DO	24	23	21	40	26	37
	Stay	50	45	41	63	33	34
		74	68	62	103	59	71
High Brow	DO	106	38	20	30	9	6
	Stay	266	101	66	64	27	12
		372	139	86	94	36	18

Chapter 2 Chart 13

Education and Drop-Out
Proportion College Graduate

		0-.29	.3-.39	.4-.49	.5-.59	.6-.69	.7-.79	.8-1.0
AB	DO	8	16	44	61	61	54	85
	Stay	19	28	47	136	132	101	213
		27	44	91	197	193	155	298
AB	DO	41	32	64	60	46	17	11
	Stay	50	50	51	99	68	36	31
		91	82	115	159	114	53	42

Chapter 2 Chart 14

Political Preference and Drop-Out
Proportion Democrat

		0-.29	.3-.39	.4-.49	.5-.59	.6-.69	.7-.79	.8-1.0
Dem	DO	16	47	40	32	48	26	62
	Stay	36	56	74	105	104	68	70
		52	103	114	137	152	94	132
Dem	DO	77	80	75	25	29	16	11
	Stay	158	111	74	99	67	28	11
		235	191	149	124	96	44	22

Chapter 2 Chart 15

Religion and Drop-Out
Proportion Protestant

		0-.29	.3-.39	.4-.49	.5-.59	.6-.79	.8-1.0
Prot.	DO	16	12	17	50	99	152
	Stay	22	10	41	120	195	245
		38	22	58	170	294	397
non-Prot.	DO	80	22	26	45	49	5
	Stay	111	20	48	102	81	24
		191	42	74	147	130	29

Chapter 2 Chart 16

Local Interest and Drop-Out
Proportion Local

		0-.19	.2-.29	.3-.39	.4-.49	.5-.59	.6-.69	.7-1.0
Local	DO	9	27	19	33	32	33	26
	Stay	13	30	41	48	67	81	65
		22	57	60	81	99	114	91
Non-local	DO	93	64	37	46	26	17	5
	Stay	104	90	89	65	63	43	21
		197	154	126	111	89	60	26

Chapter 3 Chart 1

Ideal Leader: Squelch and Drop-out

Proportion Squelch

		0-.39	.4-.49	.5-.59	.6-.69	.7-.79	.8-1.0
Squelch	DO	12	31	40	93	64	82
	Stay	19	56	100	116	155	162
		31	87	140	209	219	244
Not squelch	DO	60	64	39	61	40	24
	Stay	58	88	113	95	76	46
		118	152	152	156	116	70

Chapter 3 Chart 2

Ideal Leader: Summarize and Drop-out

Proportion Summarize

		0-.29	.3-.39	.4-.49	.5-.59	.6-.69	.7-1.0
Summarize	DO	21	34	43	83	24	46
	Stay	40	43	69	93	26	30
		61	77	112	176	50	76
Not Summarize	DO	102	81	56	83	19	16
	Stay	303	141	159	129	23	17
		405	222	215	212	42	33

Chapter 3 Chart 3

Ideal Leader: Background and Drop-out

		Proportion Background					
		0-.19	.2-.29	.3-.39	.4-.49	.5-.59	.6-1.0
Background	DO	10	28	38	36	14	24
	Stay	<u>13</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>49</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>30</u>
		23	61	87	87	36	54
Not Background	DO	140	114	100	71	19	12
	Stay	<u>316</u>	<u>250</u>	<u>151</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>22</u>
		456	364	251	173	45	34

Chapter 3 Chart 4

Ideal Leader: Refrain and Drop-out

		Proportion Refrain					
		0-.39	.4-.49	.5-.59	.6-.69	.7-.79	.8-1.0
Refrain	DO	16	14	42	105	62	101
	Stay	<u>5</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>131</u>	<u>136</u>	<u>135</u>	<u>225</u>
		21	37	173	241	197	326
Not Refrain	DO	36	21	59	80	34	31
	Stay	<u>41</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>131</u>	<u>98</u>	<u>73</u>	<u>44</u>
		77	57	190	178	107	75

Chapter 3 Chart 5

Ideal Leader: Cross-examine and Drop-out

Proportion Cross-examine

		0-.29	.3-.39	.4-.49	.5-.59	.6-.69	.7-.79	.8-1.0
C.R.	DO	10	35	38	56	50	48	19
	Stay	<u>18</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>85</u>	<u>128</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>69</u>	<u>44</u>
		28	76	123	184	127	117	63
not C.R.	DO	62	87	97	66	34	23	8
	Stay	<u>118</u>	<u>116</u>	<u>133</u>	<u>154</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>12</u>
		170	203	230	220	94	60	20

Part II
 Chapter 2 Chart 1

Religion and Discussion Activity

Proportion Protestant

	0-.29	.3-.39	.4-.49	.5-.59	.6-.69	.7-.79	.8-1.0
Protestant							
DO	13	3	16	69	46	55	175
Stay	31	21	47	111	111	104	257
	44	24	63	180	157	159	432
Non-Protestants							
DO	80	10	26	72	34	19	15
Stay	138	35	52	85	52	34	21
	218	45	78	157	86	53	36

APPENDIX II
Questionnaire

NATIONAL OPINION RESEARCH CENTER
University of Chicago

Survey 408
11/57

1. When did you attend your first Great Books Discussion group meeting?

Fall 1957 _____
" 1956 _____
" 1955 _____
" 1954 _____
Other _____

2. Have you been with this group continuously since you began Great Books?

Yes ___ *No ___

*IF "NO": Did you attend another group meeting, or drop out of the program temporarily, or what?

3. How many meetings of this group have you attended, since it started this Fall?
(If your group doesn't start in the Fall, please tell us the number of meetings you have attended since September 1.)

4. Have you ever "led" a Great Books Discussion? *Yes ___ 1 No ___ 2

*IF "YES":

- 1 ___ I am the current leader or co-leader of this group.
- 2 ___ I am one of the current rotating leaders of this group.
- 3 ___ I have been the leader or co-leader of this group, but am not leading now.
- 4 ___ I have been the leader or co-leader of another group, but am not leading now.
- 5 ___ I am the current leader or co-leader of another group, but attend this one as a participant.
- 6 ___ Other _____

5. Have you ever had a Great Books Leader Training Course? Yes ___ No ___

6. How would you rate your attendance in this group?

- 1 ___ I attend every meeting
- 2 ___ I attend all but a few meetings
- 3 ___ I attend most meetings
- 4 ___ I attend some meetings, but not most
- 5 ___ I attend on occasion
- 6 ___ This is my first meeting with this group, so I can't say

Listed below are 23 "results" of participating in Great Books.

1) Please think back to the time when you decided to attend your first Great Books meeting.

In the left hand column please check any item on the list which you definitely had in mind as a reason for joining--regardless of whether or not Great Books met this expectation.

2) In the right hand column, please place a check by any of the items which you think has definitely been an effect of Great Books for you--regardless of whether or not it was a reason for joining.

Reason for Joining		Effect of Great Books
	1. Improving my reading skills.	
	2. Making new friends.	
	3. Improving my taste in fiction and poetry.	
	4. Escaping the intellectual narrowness of my occupation.	
	5. Becoming more sure of myself when talking with people of higher educational background.	
	6. Developing the ability to lead group discussions outside of Great Books.	
	7. Escaping the intellectual narrowness of my community.	
	8. Gaining insight into myself and my personal problems.	
	9. Improving my ability to carry out my job through the intellectual training of reading Great Books.	
	10. Gaining the equivalent of a college education.	
	11. Developing common interests with my spouse.	
	12. Gaining a better intellectual background for my participation in community organizations and community affairs.	
	13. Escaping the intellectual narrowness of being a housewife	
	14. To learn what the greatest minds in history have to say about the basic issues of life.	
	15. Getting a chance to express ideas I had been thinking and reading about.	
	16. Reacquainting myself with a cultural background which had become rusty.	
	17. Finding solutions to contemporary social problems.	
	18. Increasing my ability to carry out my job through improving my ability to participate in group discussions.	
	19. Supplementing an unduly narrow or technical college training.	
	20. Becoming a more effective participant in group discussions outside of Great Books.	
	21. Meeting people who are quite different from me.	
	22. Talking with people who have more intellectual interests than my usual "social" friends.	
	23. Improving my ability to analyze and criticize arguments.	
	24. Other _____ _____ _____ _____	

1. Since you began Great Books have there been any particular authors or school of thought which you once disliked, but now find more acceptable?

*Yes ___ 1 No ___ 2

*IF "YES": Which ones?

Why was there a change?

2. Since you began Great Books are there any particular authors or schools of thought which you once accepted, but now find less acceptable?

*Yes ___ 1 No ___ 2

*IF "YES": Which ones?

Why was there a change?

READING

1. On the average, about how many hours per week do you spend on the following types of reading?

- 1) For relaxation (detective stories, light fiction, sports section of the newspaper, etc.) _____
- 2) Preparation for Great Books discussion groups _____
- 3) Serious reading on your own (history, philosophy, serious novels, etc., not connected with Great Books or with your job) _____

2. Since you began Great Books, has the amount of time spent on the following changed?

	5	4	3	2	1
	Increased a Lot	Increased a Little	No Change	Decreased a Little	Decreased a Lot
1) Reading for relaxation.					
2) Preparation for Great Books.					
3) Serious reading on your own.					

3. Hours of reading aside, do you think Great Books has had any effect on your reading--aside from preparing for the discussions?

4. Do you own a set of the Great Books readings which your group is discussing this year?

0 ___ No

1 ___ No, but I intend to purchase them

2 ___ Yes

5. What book or books--outside of the Great Books readings--which you read in the last year impressed you as particularly worthwhile?

6. Following is a list of magazines. Please check each in the appropriate column.

	5	4	3	2	1
	I read it regularly	I read it on occasion but not regularly	I have seen a copy now and then, but I seldom read it	I've heard about it but I've never seen a copy of it	Never heard of this one
1) Art News					
2) The Gadfly					
3) Harpers Monthly					
4) High Fidelity					
5) New Republic					
6) New Yorker					
7) Partisan Review					
8) Reader's Digest					
9) Saturday Evening Post					
10) Saturday Review					
11) Scientific American					
12) Time					

WAYS TO LIVE

Below are listed four ways to live which various persons at various times have advocated and followed.

Indicate by numbers in the spaces below each "way to live" how much you, yourself, like or dislike each of them, using the following scale:

- 7..I like it very much
- 6..I like it quite a lot
- 5..I like it slightly
- 4..I am indifferent to it
- 3..I dislike it slightly
- 2..I dislike it quite a lot
- 1..I dislike it very much

Rate each one in terms of the kind of life you personally would like to live, not in terms of the kind of life you now lead, the kind of life you think is prudent to live in our society, or the kind you think is good for other people.

(1)

Life is something to be enjoyed--sensuously enjoyed, enjoyed with relish and abandonment. The aim in life should not be to control the course of the world or society or the lives of others, but to be open and receptive to things and persons, and to delight in them. To let oneself go, to let things and persons affect oneself, is more important than to "do"--or to "do good."

RATING OF #1 _____

(2)

A person should merge oneself with a social group, enjoy cooperation and companionship, join with others in resolute activity for the realization of common goals. Persons are social and persons are active; life should merge energetic group activity and cooperative group enjoyment.

RATING OF #2 _____

(3)

A person must stress the need of constant activity--physical action, adventure, the realistic solution of specific problems as they appear, the improvement of techniques for controlling the world and society. Man's future depends primarily on what he does, not on what he feels or on his speculations. Improvements must always be made if man is to progress. We can't just follow the past or dream of what the future might be.

RATING OF #3 _____

(4)

The contemplative life is the good life. The external world is no fit habitat for man. It is too big, too cold, too pressing. Rather it is the life turned inward that is rewarding. The rich internal world of ideals, of sensitive feelings, of reverie, of self-knowledge is man's true home.

RATING OF #4 _____

POETRY

Listed below and on the following pages are four poems. For each, three versions are given. Please check the version which you prefer as poetry.

Poem 1.

A.

Tender, tender Sea Shell,
Wilt thou sing me, please,
Of thy happy, happy home
'Neath the tropic trees?
Ah, the coral islands!
Ah, the wondrous fish!
For such a song I'd give thee dear,
Whate'er a Shell could wish.

B.

Sea Shell, please sing me a song
Of ships and sailor-men;
Of strange kinds of birds and trees
On the Spanish Main:
Of fish and seaweed in the sea,
And whatever creature there may be, --
Sea Shell, please sing me a song!

C.

Sea Shell, Sea Shell,
Sing me a song, Oh please!
A song of ships and sailor men,
Of parrots and tropical trees.
Of islands lost in the Spanish Main
Which no man ever may find again,
Of fishes and coral under the waves,
And sea-horses stabled in great green caves --
Sea Shell, Sea Shell
Sing me a song, Oh please!

Preference _____

Poem 2.

A.

Let there be Light, said God, and lo! the Light
Sprung from Tithonus' bed in darksome gloom,
Deck'd her fair form in garments rich and rare
And scattered smiles along the mournful sky.
Her chariot of the Sun not yet created,
Upon a cloud the nymph ethereal rode,
And when the cloud wept raindrops down, she flung
Comforting rainbows from her shining tent.

B.

Let there be Light, said God, and forthwith Light
Ethereal, first of things, quintessence pure,
Sprung from the Deep, and from her native east
To journey through the airy gloom began,
Spher'd in a radiant cloud, for yet the Sun
Was not; she in a cloudy tabernacle
Sojourn'd the while. God saw the Light was good.

C.

And God said "Let Light be," and there was Light
The first ethereal created thing
To being sprang, and daily from the east
Began to travel through the darksome air;
Until the golden sun should be created
She sojourn'd in a radiant, shining cloud.
God look'd upon the Light and it was good.

Preference _____

Poem 3.

A.

This was the routine they learned
Always at night when they returned
To lamps unlighted and fires gone gray
When they had been away all day.
They learned to build the fire up quick
With half a split-up kindling stick --
And knowing how the cat delights
To sleep indoors by the fire of nights,
They learned to leave the house door wide
For fear they might leave her shut outside.

B.

Always--I tell you this they learned--
Always at night when they returned
To the lonely house from far away
To lamps unlighted and fire gone gray,
They learned to rattle the lock and key
To give whatever might chance to be
Warning and time to be off in flight:
And preferring the out- to the in-door night,
They learned to leave the house-door wide,
Until they had lit the lamp inside.

C.

Always their hearts would thrill with fear
When at dead of night they again drew near
To the dismal, lonely, dark abode
Where not a glimmer of lamp-light showed.
Trembling, they turned the lock and key
With pallid face and shaking knee.
There was nothing to cause their fright,
But they felt more safe in the out-door night!
So they left the house-door open wide,
And fell in a faint on the floor inside.

Preference _____

Poem 4.

A.

Who sends the fog
so still and gray?
I fondly ask.
And Echo answers,
"E'en the same all-seeing Eye
that sends the still, gray cat."

B.

The Fog is like a maltese cat,
it is so gray and still,
and like a cat it creeps
about the city streets.
How gray it is! How cat-like!
Especially when it steals away,
Just like a cat.

C.

The fog comes
on little cat feet.
It sits looking
over harbor and city
on silent haunches
and then moves on.

Preference _____

DISCUSSION METHOD

1. How often should an "ideal" Great Books discussion leader . . .
 (Check each one)

	5	4	3	2	1
	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
1) Tactfully squelch over-talkative participants?					
2) Summarize the results of the discussion?					
3) Give a short lecture on the historical and biographical background of the reading?					
4) Refrain from communicating, even indirectly, his own opinion?					
5) "Cross-examine" a participant to clarify the discussion?					

2. On the whole, which of the following best describes your group? (If you have several leaders during the course of the year, try to estimate on the basis of an "average.") (Check one)

- 1 The leader always dominates the discussion.
- 2 The leader tends to dominate the discussion.
- 3 There is an equal balance between the leader's talking and the group's talking.
- 4 The leader seldom talks, except for a few comments and questions.

3. Some people have suggested that it would be a good idea for more decisions in business, education, and community organizations to be made on the basis of informal discussions like Great Books. Which of the following best describes your opinion? (Check one)

- 1 The discussion technique should be extended radically in business, education, and community organizations.
- 2 The discussion technique should be extended somewhat in business, education, and community organizations.
- 3 The discussion technique should neither be extended nor lessened in business, education, and community organizations.
- 4 The discussion technique should be lessened in business, education, and community organizations.

MUSIC

Let's assume that you are going to a concert tomorrow evening, and the following musical works might be on the program.

FIRST: Rate each in terms of its familiarity, as follows:

1. Very familiar--I'd recognize it if I heard it, even if the title wasn't announced.
2. Familiar--I might not know the title just from hearing it played, but it's something I've heard before and know a little about.
3. Less familiar--I don't know much about this specific work, but I am relatively familiar with the composer and the general type of music he is known for.
4. Unfamiliar--as far as I know, I've never heard this work, and I know little or nothing about the composer.

THEN: Regardless of familiarity, rate each work in terms of how much you might enjoy hearing it, as follows:

- A. I'd enjoy hearing it very much--it probably would be one of the high points of the concert.
- B. I'd enjoy hearing it, but it probably wouldn't be one of the high points of the concert.
- C. Frankly, I'd just as soon skip this one.
- D. I don't know enough about it or the composer even to guess.

	Familiarity	Enjoyment
1) Concerto No. 2 in B Flat Major for Piano (Brahms)		
2) 1812 Overture (Tchaikovsky)		
3) Missa Papae Marcelli (Palestrina)		
4) Music for Strings Percussion and Celeste (Bartok)		
5) Nutcracker Suite (Tchaikovsky)		
6) Rhapsody in Blue (Gershwin)		
7) Symphony No. 7 (Beethoven)		
8) Symphony No. 1 (Brahms)		
9) Symphony No. 2 (Ives)		
10) Symphony No. 41 ("Jupiter") by Mozart		
11) Trio No. 7 in B Flat Major ("Archduke") by Beethoven		
12) Variations on a Theme by Diabelli (Beethoven)		
13) William Tell Overture (Rossini)		

GREAT BOOKS AND THE COMMUNITY

1. What is your present street address? Street _____
City _____ State _____
2. How long have you lived in that city? _____
3. What is your emotional feeling about your community? (Check one)
 - 1__ I feel I'm a real member of the community. I'm a part of it, and it's a part of me.
 - 2__ I do like the community, but I don't feel that I'm really a part of it.
 - 3__ I rather dislike the community, and I definitely do not feel I'm a part of it.
4. For towns of its size, how does your community rate as a place to live (in terms of housing, schools, services, etc.)? (Check one)
 - 1__ Outstanding
 - 2__ Very good, but not outstanding
 - 3__ Average
 - 4__ Below average
 - 5__ Poor
5. For towns of its size, how does your community rate in terms of cultural resources (art galleries, music, libraries, theaters, colleges, etc.)? (Check one)
 - 1__ Outstanding
 - 2__ Very good, but not outstanding
 - 3__ Average
 - 4__ Below average
 - 5__ Poor

6. What would you say were the two or three most important problems facing your community today?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

7. For each of the problems you listed above, indicate below any ways in which you personally have been involved in community action to help solve them (e.g., circulating petitions, serving on committees, talking with your friends, contributing money).

Problem 1)

Problem 2)

Problem 3)

8. For each of the problems you listed in question 6, indicate below any ways in which you think your participation in Great Books has affected your understanding of the problem or your activity regarding the problem.

Problem 1)

Problem 2)

Problem 3)

9. How would you rate your interest in the following areas?

	4	3	2	1
	Very Interested	Fairly Interested	Not Too Interested	Disinterested
1) Local politics				
2) Civic organizations				
3) National politics				
4) World affairs				
5) Church activities				

10. Please list below any civic or professional organizations in your community to which you belong (e.g., PTA, Labor unions, Kiwanis, Bar Association).

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____
- 7) _____
- 8) _____

11. Have you ever held an official office in your community (mayor, member of library board, member of a city commission, etc.)?

*Yes ___ No ___

*IF "YES": Please indicate the office and dates you served.

Office	Dates
1)	
2)	
3)	

12. How do you lean in national politics? (Check one)

1 ___ I'm a Democrat.

2 ___ I usually lean toward the Democratic candidates.

3 ___ I usually split my ballot 50-50.

4 ___ I usually lean toward the Republican candidates.

5 ___ I'm a Republican.

13. Do you know of any "continuing education" programs or classes available in your community?

*Yes ___ No ___

*IF "YES": Describe them briefly.

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

14. Have you ever participated in any of the "continuing education" programs you listed above?

*Yes ___ No ___

*IF "YES": Which program was that?

Program	Date
1)	
2)	
3)	
4)	

15. About how many evenings per month (on the average) do you spend in informal visiting and entertaining?

16. What is your religious preference?

17. How often do you attend religious services?

- 1 ___ Regularly, almost without exception
- 2 ___ Fairly regularly
- 3 ___ Occasionally
- 4 ___ Seldom
- 5 ___ Never

18. Listed below are various areas of activity and interest. Please check each in terms of whether your interest and involvement has changed since you first began attending Great Books.

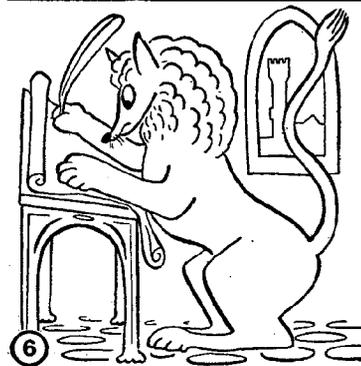
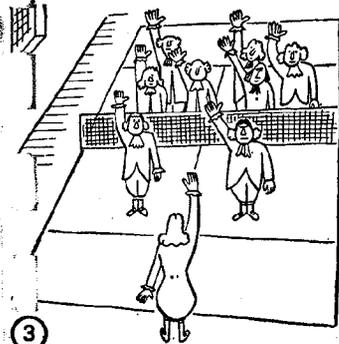
	5	4	3	2	1
	Much More Involved & Interested	Somewhat More Involved & Interested	No Change	Somewhat Less Involved & Interested	Much Less Involved & Interested
1) Civic organizations					
2) Community problems and issues					
3) Local politics					
4) National politics					
5) World affairs					
6) Continuing education other than Great Books					
7) Informal visiting					
8) Church attendance					

Each of the 32 drawings on this and the following pages should suggest something—some book, person, episode, or work of art. Please jot down next to each picture a word or phrase which identifies it. Guess if you are not certain. (The first answer has been given as an example.)

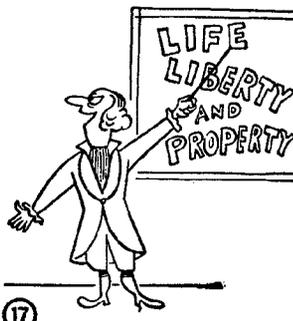
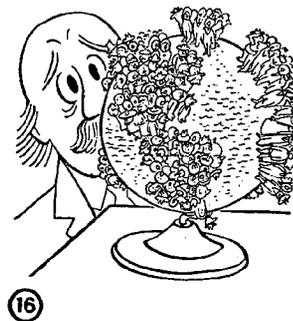
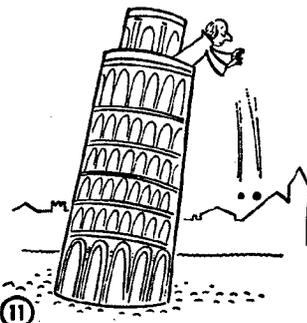
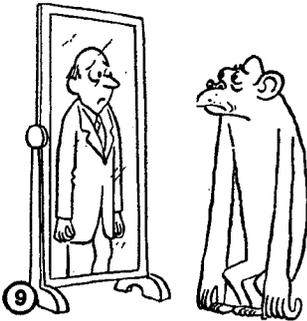
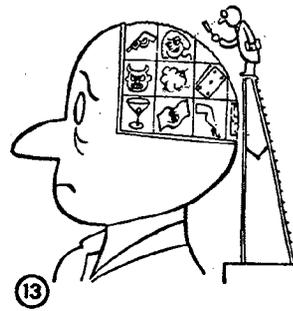


*"Sir Walter Raleigh
spreading his cape
for Queen Elizabeth"*

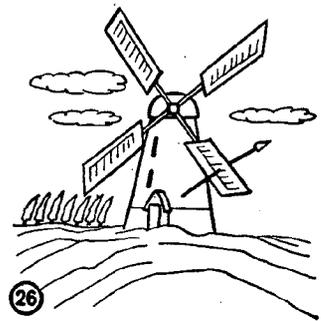
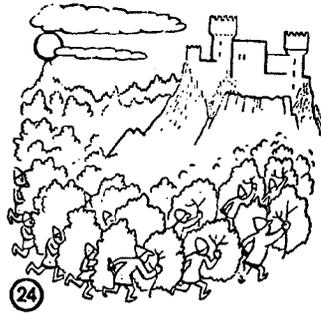
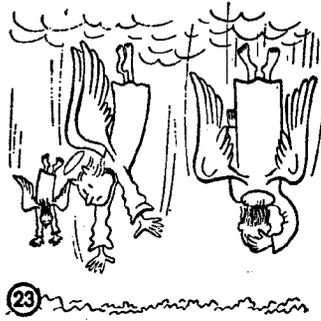
HISTORY AND POLITICS



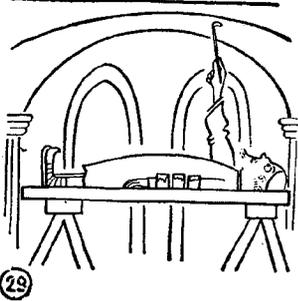
SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY



LITERATURE



MUSIC AND ART



GROUP DISCUSSION

One of the most important aspects of Great Books is the process of group discussion. The questions in this and the following two pages will enable us to understand some of the ways in which different groups go about discussing the readings.

1. In many informal discussion groups a "division of labor" develops, so that some participants tend to specialize in certain aspects of the discussion process. Please check each of the "specialties" below in the appropriate column.

I tend to specialize in this aspect.

	3	2	1
	More than the other members of my group	About as often as the other members	Less often than the other members
a) Pulling the threads of the discussion together and getting different viewpoints reconciled.			
b) Joking and kidding, finding the potentially humorous implications of the discussion.			
c) Providing "fuel" for the discussion by introducing ideas and opinions for the rest of the group to discuss.			
d) Making tactful comments to heal any hurt feelings which might arise in the discussion.			
e) Clarification, getting the discussion to the point by getting terms defined and pointing out logical problems.			

2. The same "specialties" are repeated below. After each, jot down the names of any members of your group who tend to perform this role frequently.

a) Pulling the threads of the discussion together and getting different viewpoints reconciled.

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1) _____ | 4) _____ |
| 2) _____ | 5) _____ |
| 3) _____ | 6) _____ |

b) Joking and kidding, finding the potentially humorous implications of the discussion.

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1) _____ | 4) _____ |
| 2) _____ | 5) _____ |
| 3) _____ | 6) _____ |

c) Providing "fuel" for the discussion by introducing ideas and opinions for the rest of the group to discuss.

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1) _____ | 4) _____ |
| 2) _____ | 5) _____ |
| 3) _____ | 6) _____ |

d) Making tactful comments to heal any hurt feelings which might arise in the discussion.

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1) _____ | 4) _____ |
| 2) _____ | 5) _____ |
| 3) _____ | 6) _____ |

e) Clarification, getting the discussion to the point by getting terms defined and asking about logical problems.

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1) _____ | 4) _____ |
| 2) _____ | 5) _____ |
| 3) _____ | 6) _____ |

3. How would you rate the "morale" of your group?

- 1__ Extremely high
- 2__ High
- 3__ Average
- 4__ Below average
- 5__ Poor

4. How would you rate your group in terms of the members' interest in the program?

- 1__ Almost all are very interested
- 2__ Most are very interested
- 3__ About half are very interested
- 4__ A minority are very interested
- 5__ Few or none are very interested

5. How would you rate the amount of agreement on ideas and issues in your group?

- 1__ By-and-large, almost all of the members have pretty much the same views
- 2__ By-and-large, most of the members have similar views, but there are a few who have very different points of view
- 3__ By-and-large, the members differ greatly in their points of view on most issues

6. How would you rate the intellectual "calibre" of your group's discussions?

- 1__ Almost all of the discussions are on a pretty serious intellectual level
- 2__ Most of the discussions are on a pretty serious intellectual level, but some turn into sort of "bull sessions"
- 3__ Most of the discussions are sort of "bull sessions," but some are on a pretty serious intellectual level
- 4__ Almost all of the discussions turn into "bull sessions"

7. How many of the members of your group (excluding your spouse) do you see regularly outside of the group discussions?

OPINIONS

1. In general, which of the following statements comes closest to expressing your basic position on government in the United States?
 - 1__ There is too much government control today. Governmental activities should be cut back.
 - 2__ There is a lot of government control today, but, in general, it is called for by the needs of our society.
 - 3__ We need to expand the scope of government a lot more.

2. Which of the following comes closest to your opinion on the conflicting demands of national security and civil liberties?
 - 1__ We have gone too far in the direction of national security, and have weakened our civil liberties.
 - 2__ We have struck a pretty good balance between the conflicting demands of national security and civil liberties.
 - 3__ We have gone too far in the direction of preserving civil liberties, and have weakened our national security.

3. The course of history justifies... (Check one)
 - 1__ Optimism with respect to society's future.
 - 2__ Optimism with respect to society's future in some areas, pessimism with respect to society's future in other areas.
 - 3__ Pessimism with respect to society's future.

4. The course of history is... (Check one)
 - 1__ Capricious
 - 2__ Purposive
 - 3__ Mechanistic

5. With regard to solving specific social and community problems... (Check one)

- 1___ The Great Books provide both an understanding of the problems and a key to plans of action.
- 2___ The Great Books provide an intellectual understanding of the problems, but few or no keys to plans of action.
- 3___ The Great Books are not applicable to specific social and community problems.

6. The universe is... (Check one)

- 1___ A society of selves.
- 2___ A set of material objects or energies.
- 3___ An intellectual system or structure.

7. Church going aside, religious ideas and theological problems are... (Check one)

- 1___ Extremely important to me.
- 2___ Important to me, but not extremely so.
- 3___ A matter of relative indifference.

8. Below are 12 different systems of religious thought.

In the column headed "Most Congenial" please check the three systems which you find most congenial intellectually.

In the column headed "Least Congenial" please check the three systems which you find least congenial intellectually.

	Most Congenial	Least Congenial
Agnosticism		
Atheism		
Buddhism		
Christian Science		
"Fundamentalist" Protestantism		
"Liberal" Protestantism		
"Middle of the Road" Protestantism		
Mohammedanism		
Mysticism		
Orthodox Judaism		
Reform Judaism		
Thomism (Roman Catholicism)		

9. The moral person should.... (Check one)
- 1 Follow the established moral laws.
 - 2 Judge acts as right or wrong in terms of their consequences.
 - 3 Follow his personal conscience.
10. Suppose that you are a multi-millionaire philanthropist. The following programs have been submitted for your support. Please rank them in terms of your preference. Place a "1" by the program you think is most worthy of your support, a "6" by the program you believe is least worthy of your support, etc.
- Publishing the works of young poets.
 - Establishing a commission to implement improvements in urban problems like traffic, juvenile delinquency, and housing.
 - Providing more counselors and psychologists for mental health work in the high schools.
 - Fellowships for basic research in chemistry and physics.
 - Raising the salaries of ministers.
 - Providing free chamber music concerts.
11. Which of the following comes closest to the way you think about yourself?
- 1 I don't like the phrase particularly, but I guess you'd have to call me an "intellectual."
 - 2 I consider myself an educated person, but not really an "intellectual."
 - 3 I haven't had too much education, so I can't really call myself either an "intellectual" or an "educated person," but I am pretty serious in my approach to things.
 - 4 I guess I'm sort of a "low brow" when it comes down to it.

EVALUATIONS

1. On the whole, which of the following best describes your feeling about Great Books?
 - 1__ It is a marvelous program and has had a genuine impact on me
 - 2__ It is a fine thing and I enjoy it very much, but I can't say it has changed me much
 - 3__ I have enjoyed some parts of it, but on the whole I haven't gotten much out of it
 - 4__ I haven't gotten anything at all out of Great Books

2. How do you feel about continuing in Great Books?
 - 1__ I definitely plan to continue through the year and next year too, if the program is still available
 - 2__ I definitely plan to continue through this year, but I'll have to wait and see about next year
 - 3__ I may or may not continue through this year
 - 4__ I probably won't continue until the end of the year

3. Even the most enthusiastic Great Books participant finds some things that cut down his interest in the program. Please check any of the following that might tend to decrease your interest in Great Books in the near future.
 - 1__ My health
 - 2__ Increased family responsibilities
 - 3__ The program isn't sufficiently challenging intellectually
 - 4__ My group is getting a little stale
 - 5__ I want to get into other activities to apply the things I've gotten out of Great Books
 - 6__ I've become interested in another continuing education program
 - 7__ The time or place of the meeting is inconvenient for me
 - 8__ I've gotten into other community activities which interest me more
 - 9__ I'm cutting down on all of my outside activities
 - 10__ I have to give more time and attention to my job
 - 11__ I don't get much out of the readings
 - 12__ Personality clashes in the group I'm in
 - 13__ Great Books just isn't for me
 - 14__ Other _____

4. What would you think of these possible alternatives to Great Books, in comparison with your present set-up?

	5	4	3	2	1
Keep your same discussion group, but: change the readings in the direction of more:	Definitely prefer the alternative	Probably prefer the alternative	"50-50"	Probably prefer the present arrangement	Definitely prefer the present arrangement
1) Fiction and poetry					
2) Science and math					
3) Current events					
4) Anthropology, psychology, sociology, economics, etc.					
5) Local community issues					
6) Religion					
7) Philosophy					
8) Fine arts					
9) The same content areas, but discuss the works of contemporary authors					
Keep the same readings, but:					
1) Join a different group					
2) Take a course with a professionally trained teacher					
3) Take a correspondence course					
OTHER:					

1. How old are you?

- 1__ Under 25
- 2__ 25-29
- 3__ 30-34
- 4__ 35-39
- 5__ 40-44
- 6__ 45-49
- 7__ 50-54
- 8__ 55-59
- 9__ 60-64
- 0__ 65-69
- X__ 70 and over

2. Sex 1__ Male 2__ Female

3. Your full name* _____

*Although you will not be identified in any way in the research report and your questionnaire will be treated as confidential, for the purposes of sampling, it is vitally important to have the name of every participant in the study.

4. Which of the following best describes your current situation?

- 1__ Housewife
- 2__ Employed full time
- 3__ Housewife with part time job
- 4__ Full time student
- 5__ Retired, not working at all
- 6__ Retired, working part time
- 7__ Other _____

5. What is the name and location of the last school you attended? (E.g., "McKinely High School, Smithville, Ohio" or "Wayne University, Detroit, Michigan")

6. Please check the highest grade you completed in school.

- 1__ Six grades or less
- 2__ Seventh grade through eleventh
- 3__ High school graduate
- 4__ Technical training beyond high school (e.g., business college)
- 5__ Some college, but no bachelor's degree
- 6__ Bachelor's degree
- 7__ Graduate work beyond the a.b., but no graduate degree
- 8__ Master's degree
- 9__ Doctor's degree
- 0__ Other graduate degree (Please specify _____
_____)

7. What field did you specialize in in the last school you attended?

8. IF YOU ARE CURRENTLY EMPLOYED:

a) What is your occupation? _____ - _____

b) What are the major duties of your job?

c) What sort of organization do you work for--(not the name, but the type, for instance, "a small factory" or "the public school system")?

9. Are you the chief wage earner of your family? Yes ___ *No ___

*IF "NO":

a) Who is the chief wage earner?

1 ___ My husband

2 ___ My father

3 ___ Other _____

b) Please describe the chief wage earner's job, as follows:

Occupation _____

Major duties of that job _____

Type of organization _____

10. Were you born in the United States? Yes ___ 1 No ___ 2

11. Were your parents born in the United States?

1 ___ Both born in U.S.

2 ___ One born in U.S.

3 ___ Neither born in U.S.

12. Were your grandparents born in the United States?

1 ___ All born in U.S.

2 ___ Some born in U.S., some not born in U.S.

3 ___ None born in U.S.

13. What is your "nationality background"?

14. What was your father's usual occupation? (Please describe it in some detail.)

15. Your marital status:

- 1__ Single (never married)
- 2__ Married, no previous marriage
- 3__ Married, a previous marriage
- 4__ Legally separated or divorced
- 5__ Widowed