THE PUBLIC DILEMMA OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS

by

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Submitted to the Department of
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ABSTRACT

Numerous public education policy proposals, such as tuition tax credits and vouchers, aim to stimulate competition between public and private education by encouraging enrollment in private schools. This competition, based on the quality of education, is thought to force public schools to raise the level of education they provide.

This study evaluated the assumption that the public and private sectors of education operate in a competitive relationship. The historical tradition of public and private education, social policies evolving from that tradition and empirical data from 91 Massachusetts communities provided the information for the analysis. The results suggest that the assumption of a competitive relationship is not warranted. The level of participation of community residents in public or private schools does not appear to be a significant factor in the strength or quality of the "competing" institution.

Historical tradition and social policy support the idea that education is currently valued more as a private than a public good and, consequently, becomes a desirable item for which individuals are willing to compete. Those able to compete successfully have used the public institution to obtain a high quality education. Implicit social policies such as tax deductions have rewarded the successful competitors by distributing further benefits from public resources.

Thus, dividing the educational institution into public and private sectors distorts the reality of how educational benefits are distributed. Rather, wealth facilitates admission to both high quality private and high quality public schools. The current policy proposals do not appear to be founded on reasonable assumptions and, therefore, are unlikely to produce the intended outcomes.

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Title: Associate Professor of Urban Studies and Planning
I. Introduction

In a seemingly abrupt reversal, public education, the solution to the problem of the 1960's has evolved into the problem of the 1980's. Two beliefs are commonly expressed: (1) public schools are inadequate; and (2) private schools offer a better quality education.

Observers recite a litany of deficiencies in the public schools. The recurrent problems of low test scores and poor basic skills among public school students have dominated discussions of public education. The public perceives that students lack basic skills, that illiteracy is increasing, and that the atmosphere in which public education occurs is chaotic, undisciplined and, in some cases, unsafe. The needs of the high technology economy of the 1980's are thought to surpass the ability of the public schools to meet them. In particular, the shortage of mathematics and science teachers seems to confirm the fear that, in its current state, public education will be inadequate to the task of preparing students for life in the high technology era.

These concerns have apparently reached the crisis point. The 20-year decline in test scores now serves as supporting evidence for the conclusion of the report by the President's Commission on Excellence, that "If an unfriendly power had attempted to impose on Americans the
mediocre educational performance that exists today we might well have viewed it as an act of war.¹

The belief that a poor quality public educational system has placed the country "at risk"² should result in discussion about how to define the education problem before considering what remedies are appropriate, since the particular definition of the problem tends to incorporate an implicit remedial policy. For example, to those who see the problem of public education as a lack of rigorous standards, the obvious solution is to raise standards. Basic skills and competency testing programs evolve from this construction of the public education problem. Another frequently offered explanation of the "failure" of public education is the poor quality of teachers. Critics offer several reasons for the decline in teacher performance: The existence of better opportunities in other careers, particularly for women; union pressure on issues such as seniority; and problems with teacher training programs. Dismantling or weakening the seniority rights and proposals for implementing merit pay structures appear frequently as policy prescriptions for the problem constructed in this way. In addition, reassessment and even radical overhaul of teacher training programs are occurring in many states. Higher standards for students preparing to teach are advanced to address the "problem" of incompetent teachers.

A more global explanation of the public school problem
centers on the attempts made in the 1960's and 1970's to improve equality of educational opportunity. The belief that emphasizing equality in public education necessarily reduces rigor and excellence is an element of most policy analyses and proposals. Some view the conflict as insurmountable. "The aim of the common schools is egalitarian. That, to many is its virtue. It is also its downfall in terms of educational quality."³ Even reformers who devoted their energies to promoting the equitable distribution of educational services are willing to articulate concern over the tension between equality and excellence. Walter Garms, a school finance reformer for over 20 years, recently stated:

> We have come a long way toward our goal of increasing equity. In the process, however, we may have neglected other values and tasks to too great an extent. It is time to look more closely at these other dimensions, and attempt to achieve a better balance among them.⁴

Opposition to busing programs and affirmative action, calls to increase academic requirements and to reduce vocational and work study programs and competency testing as a promotion or diploma requirement are manifestations of a shift in emphasis toward excellence and away from equality. Even the progress in providing educational services for handicapped students has been criticized because the resources required for such programs prevent their allocation for academic programs.
The current dissatisfaction with public schools is not a new phenomenon. The history of public education can be told as the story of perceived problems, solutions to these problems and new problems often originating as solutions to the old ones.\textsuperscript{5} Thus, the existence of criticism should not seem unusual. The problem defined in the 1960's - inequality of access to educational services - generated solutions to eliminate the inequality. To a large extent these remedies succeeded. In terms of the equality-of-access criterion, the performance of public education between 1965 and 1980 was outstanding. In 1979, 74\% of the 17-year-olds graduated from high school, a substantial increase over 1910 when only 9\% earned a diploma.\textsuperscript{6}

However, solutions that succeed in that magnitude are likely to become problems themselves. The increase in school population expanded the range of students in high school programs. Consequently, curriculum revisions were produced to accommodate these students, some would say to the detriment of academic standards and quality of output. Thus, the schools' "solution" to the problem of inequality was a major contributor to the current "problem" of poor quality.

As noted, one important dimension of the quality issue is the general perception that private education is "better." The annual Gallup poll shows a continual decline in confidence in public education over the past five years.
The same survey indicates that 45% would choose to attend private schools if they could. The popular press--to the extent that it reflects public attitudes--also indicates the tendency of the population to prefer private education.7

Perhaps for the first time, the current discussion of remedies to the problem of poor quality education emphasizes solutions involving private schools. The most frequently discussed policy proposals at present involve tuition tax credits or vouchers. Both are designed to facilitate private school enrollment by individuals and will affect public schools only if a competition effect operates. Except for a few proposals to improve education programs to meet the needs of high technology, very little effort is being made to devise policies directly aimed at public education improvement.

Although different interpretations have existed at various times in history as to the purposes and effects of education in the United States, there has been a trend toward expansion of the public school institution. Thus, the current lack of interest in pursuing remedies within the public sector marks a significant departure from the past.8 The President's response to his own Commission's report was, "I am more convinced than ever that passage of tuition tax credit legislation is needed now."9

Proposed federal educational policy explicitly aims
to expand private school enrollment at the expense of the public schools. The tuition tax credit legislation proposed in 1982 provided for a $500 federal contribution (in the form of tax credits) for each private school student. Federal appropriations for each public school student amount to only $200. A 1983 bill proposes that the Title I allocation, the largest federal educational program, be converted to a voucher system. Undoubtedly more of that money would end up in private schools under that system.

Thus, the solution in good currency, at least in some circles, rests on a belief in the ability of competition between public and private schools to improve the quality of education. Although reliance on the virtues of competition is certainly not new to education, public policy to stimulate this competition by strengthening private schools is. In particular, the absence of any parallel policy to strengthen public schools, except in limited ways, seems surprising in the context of the traditional American faith in public schools.

Thus, the unusual direction of current education policy, even in the face of a now recognized crisis, deserves further investigation. Since an important assumption in many policy proposals is that the relationship between public and private schools is characterized by competition, it seems reasonable to
examine whether that relationship does indeed rest on competitive elements involving education quality.

Three areas of information are likely to provide evidence useful in assessing the nature of this relationship. Examination of historical patterns in the evolution of public and private education, the character of policies for both educational sectors and empirical evidence on current patterns should provide information with which to test the hypothesis that competition does characterize the relationship between public and private education.

Little effort has been made to evaluate whether the assumption that competition between the two sectors is occurring. Policy debates rarely address the fundamental idea on which tuition tax credits or vouchers rest. Nor does the research community concentrate on this issue. Rather, most research involves efforts to conduct comparative quality assessments of public and private schools, attempting to answer the question, "Are private schools better?" and occasionally, "Why are they better?" The relationship between the two does not receive more attention than this and, often, the true emphasis is on the private rather than the public sector.

Thus, this study departs from the usual debates on the issue of what is appropriate policy for public and private schools. Instead, the goal is to examine the relationship
between the public and private educational sectors, using historical and empirical evidence, to determine whether the existence of a competitive relationship is obvious. If such a relationship does operate, perhaps policy proposals are correctly formulated; if it does not, a reevaluation of their purposes and effects seems necessary.

II. Historical Analysis

Before embarking on the analysis of the evidence, it is essential to discuss two beliefs that help to frame the direction of the study. First is the belief that the educational institution in the United States consists of two distinct sectors: public and private schools. This distinction is thought to be clearly marked by the different sources of control and funding for each sector. Public schools, according to this belief, are now and have always been supported by public funds, controlled by elected public officials, and available to all at no cost to the students. Private schools, in contrast, come from a tradition of private support, and tuition fees for students and private control. Many believe that the history of this model of education parallels the founding of the nation.

An additional characteristic of the public/private distinction is based on the non-sectarian nature of public education. Most believe that a long-standing constitutional separation of church and state clearly prohibits any
involvement of the government in religious private education. This prohibition is often thought to have existed since the earliest days of the republic. Generally, Americans regard this dichotomy as clearly defined and applicable to the similarly clear distinction between public and private education.

The second important idea derives from that fact that education has played a prominent role in many social reform movements that have occurred throughout the history of the United States. The reliance on education to accomplish social change stems from the belief that, as David Cohen describes it, "Education...is in many respects the nearest thing we have to a faith." As a result, education is relied upon to support and produce a wide variety of public benefits, resulting in a shifting definition of the purpose of education. Initially, the reliance of a democracy on its educational institutions to provide an informed electorate served as an important justification for the creation of an educational system. When pressed, Americans can generally recite a reasonable facsimile of this explanation of the purpose of education.

The political purpose of education shifted somewhat as the goals of the nation changed from establishing its political system to achieving industrial power. The underlying justification for the educational institution evolved into providing the trained individuals essential,
not necessarily for a democracy, but for an industrial giant.

Despite their substantially different contents, both the political and economic justifications for education recognize the public benefits of education. Today, the economic justification has come to dominate as America worries about its ability to compete in international markets. Public belief in the economic justification for education is thus a powerful element of the present version of faith in the religion of education.

A third theme operating within the idea that education is essential to a democracy rests on its ability to improve the degree of equality in the society. History records any number of examples of the link between education and equality. Faith in the ability of education to achieve an equitable society explains why:

[I]t is no accident that the longest, hardest and most unending battles in the...movement for black civil rights occurred around schools, rather than lunch counters, public parks, or voting booths—even though the latter were surely more important in purely instrumental terms.13

Indeed, American faith in the power of education has remained strong throughout the 200 years of the country's history. The fundamentality of this belief leads to another strongly held notion—that a clear consensus of support for public education has a long history in the United States. An institution so obviously essential to so
many social benefits must have evolved with little controversy (although the definition of which benefits to pursue may well have caused conflicts).

These two beliefs contribute to an understanding of the meaning of social phenomena related to education and, in particular, the public-private school relationship. In order to get at that meaning, the historical context of the evolution of these ideas is useful to explore. In addition, the historical pattern of the relationship between public and private schools helps to understand the nature of the relationship today. The importance of an historical perspective stems from the idea that:

[T]he institution and culture of schools today are in many respects simply the cold and hardened organizational results of myths and rituals believed and cultivated several generations ago.14

A. The Distinction Between Public and Private Education

The concept of public education has, in fact, shifted over the course of American history. Originally "public" education had a meaning very different from what the notion defines today. For example, the charter of Philips Andover Academy asserts the intention to establish a "public free school or academy."15 Since today many regard Philips Andover as the quintessential private school, the definitional shift seems clear.
In the Colonial period no formal school organizations existed. Rather, as Carl Kaestle summarizes:

Elementary education among white Americans was accomplished through parental initiative and informal local control of institutions. In a few cases, New England colonial legislatures tried to ensure that towns would provide schools or that parents would not neglect their children's education, but these laws were weakly enforced. Education was defined as a private responsibility; parents were assigned the role of arranging for their children's schooling.

At various times and in various regions, schooling took different forms. One type involved the hiring of a private master by an individual family, a group of families or a community. Private venture schools, established by a teacher who "tried to make a living by selling his instructional wares for a fee," often provided rudimentary skills. Another educational form was the endowed school established by gift or bequest. This model existed in Connecticut as early as 1657. Typically the control of the endowment was given to local public officials, a practice which changed significantly after the colonial period.

Variations of these models evolved in different regions and differences emerged even among towns in the same area. As Lawrence Cremin describes the situation:

It is difficult to generalize with any degree of precision about the extent of schooling in provincial America, largely because of the phenomenal variation in types and modes of
instruction and the consequent difficulty of determining exactly what to call a school. We do know...that there were individual teachers of reading, writing, ciphering, grammar, bookkeeping, surveying, navigation, fencing, dancing, music, modern languages, embroidery, and every conceivable combination of these and other subjects; that these teachers taught part time and full time, by day and by evening, in their homes, in other people's homes, in rented rooms, in churches and meeting houses, in abandoned buildings, and in buildings erected especially for their use; that they were self employed and employed by others (acting as individuals or through self-constituted, self-perpetuating or elected boards); and that they were paid with funds obtained from employees, patrons, subscriptions, lotteries, endowments, tuition rates and taxes. The combinations and permutations were legion, and the larger and more heterogeneous the community, the greater the latitude and diversity of the arrangements.20

Clearly, any attempt to categorize colonial education offerings into public and private using today's distinctive characteristics seems inappropriate. In some cases, private funds donated to establish schools were controlled by public authorities. In other instances, public money was allocated to institutions controlled and generally funded by private groups. The present assumption that public education should be entirely free to all who attend did not exist in early educational practice. As Kaestle points out, "Nowhere was schooling entirely tax-supported..."21 and, therefore, nowhere was it entirely free to those attending. Tuition fees provided support for almost any type of school.

Further, the interpretations given to school labels such as "public," "private," "free school" and "academy"
were by no means consistent. Historians continue to debate how colonial Americans defined these terms, which were used frequently and inconsistently in records of the proceedings of colonial towns. For example, according to Cremin, quoting from a study of the Massachusetts Bay Colony:

[In Roxbury, the terms 'free' meant free to the children of subscribers, in Salem free to all poor children, in Ipswich free to a limited number of children and in Dedham, free to all children...]

The concepts of "public" and "private" also present problems of definition. One perspective defined private education as occurring individually rather than in a group, much along the model of a private tutor. Another view saw a private school "as a school run for profit of the teacher as a business venture." The term "public school" or "town school" sometimes meant that the school enrollment was not restricted to a particular group; anyone had the right to enroll. However, this did not imply that tuition would be free. In other usage, moreover, almost all types of schooling, including private tutoring, were considered to be public because they served the public interest.

The sectarian dichotomy is also irrelevant to the colonial educational experience. All education included religious instruction among its primary purposes and, since religious beliefs were more homogeneous than today, conflicts about religious content of schooling tended to be
intra-denominational.

The diverse educational offerings established in the colonial era provided a number of different models from which the educational system of the new nation would evolve. Most historians find little change in these models as a consequence of the Revolutionary War. The early 19th century, however, was to produce substantial changes in American education. Many view this period as having given rise to the public school in the contemporary sense—publicly supported and controlled and free to all. Others do not agree, however, that this development was complete by that time. One study has concluded:

[T]he public elementary school even in the New England States is of late origin, since tuition rates were not abolished universally until after the Civil War and, in some areas of the South, it would arise much later since general local taxation for free elementary education was firmly established only in the late 19th or early 20th century.

Another work, undertaken in 1875, states that "Previous to 1868, there were in the State of Pennsylvania, some twenty-four districts which had refused or neglected to supply public schools." These two observations contradict the general assumption that the framework for a free public education system was in place by 1850. Kaestle and Vinoskis, in describing the educational system in Massachusetts during this period, state that "Generally various levels and types of school were offered to a
greater or lesser degree by means of a combination of parental and governmental initiatives."\textsuperscript{31}

Although regional differences certainly existed, most 19th century urban schooling fit into two categories: charity schools, sometimes in the form of Sunday schools; and non-charity schools, which could also be termed "pay schools." Charity schools in major urban areas developed from the concern that a rudimentary education should be provided for those unable to pay tuition fees. Philanthropic efforts on behalf of the poor existed even during colonial times, often provided by churches to their members. By the beginning of the 19th century, however, these efforts had expanded to non-denominational schools for the urban poor.

Both sectarian and non-sectarian versions of charity schools received subsidies from the government. In some cases, government subsidy was available only to charity schools. For example, Pennsylvania's constitution and subsequent legislation allowed public support of schools for the poor only.\textsuperscript{32} New York City allocated public monies to denominational charity schools until 1825 when the Free School Society persuaded the State to assign the entire responsibility for the education of the poor to one non-denominational organization, which evolved into the Public School Society.\textsuperscript{33} Even in Boston, charity schools played an important role. Prior to the decision to offer free
primary schools so that all would be eligible to attend the
public grammar schools, denominational charity schools
filled the education gap for the poor. As Schultz
comments, "For many poor children the charity schools
offered the only available means of instruction." 34

Non-charity urban schools offered education on a
tuition basis for most of those who attended school. A
variety of these schools operated in the free market.
Because of the tuition charges common to these schools,
contemporary observers classify them as private. However,
research into the enrollment patterns of these schools has
led some to conclude that this classification is not
appropriate. First, the rates charged were not high and,
therefore, the enrollment was not exclusively affluent. 35
Second, these schools were eligible in some areas to
receive government subsidy. 36 Clearly the blurred
distinction between public and private continued into the
19th century. The system of charity and pay schools in
urban areas cannot be said to correspond to the present
distinction between public and private education. Indeed,
Kaestle describes both the pay and the charity schools of
New York as "the public school system." 37

Provision for schooling followed a very different
pattern in rural areas. "[I]n small towns and rural
villages there was relatively little independent
entrepreneurial schooling...." 38 Size and density of the
population typically supported only a single school, sometimes called a town or a district school and, at another level, an academy. Such schools incorporated elements of both public and private schools. The chief source of financial support was the rate bill, a user fee assessed on the basis of the number of days of a student's attendance. In addition, academies received some governmental subsidy and made scholarship aid available to the poor. Incorporated academies were chartered by the state and were thus considered to be public in that they were created by public policy or a decision.39

The academies flourished during the time between the Revolution and the Civil War. One estimate made by Henry Barnard reported 6000 academies in the United States in 1850.40 This is not to say that academies were a uniform educational institution. They existed in a wide variety of forms and did not encompass any well-defined phase of educational development.41 When their dominance began to wane, some converted into colleges (Mt. Holyoke, for example) while others became public high schools.42

The position of the academies in the 19th century again points out the inappropriateness of attempting to impose current distinctions between public and private schools on the past. Americans in the 1800's were apparently satisfied to give a small amount of support to their schools; to allow them to charge tuition, which
provided the bulk of their funding; to grant control to a private, self-perpetuating group; and then to consider the school public.

Although the academy was often accepted as a public school, that acceptance was not strong enough to counter the efforts of the reformers who sought to establish a free, state-controlled education system. The academy, financed by rate bills and privately controlled, did not satisfy their goals. Thus, in part due to the success of men like Horace Mann, the academies declined as the contemporary public school system evolved. However, in some rural areas, the academy system continued, even after rate bills were abolished.43

From this rather complicated set of educational arrangements, a general system of public education emerged by some point in the late 19th century. However, the public education system continued to rely on private initiatives to solve particular problems. Two educational innovations--kindergarten and vocational education--illustrate that the distinction between public and private education was not entirely clear even by the 20th century.

Pre-school education was a topic of controversy from the early stages of the development of American education. Rural district schools often enrolled children as young as three.44 Educators throughout the reform period debated the relative merits of various school starting ages.
Eventually, the proponents of early education lost out. In the late 1800's, however, interest in pre-school education was cultivated by the impact of the philosophy of Hall from Germany. Initially, kindergartens, following the child-study theories of G> Stanley Hall, were established primarily for the affluent because of their rather substantial tuition charges ($60 - $100 per year).45 Urban reformers seized on the kindergarten concept as an ideal way to counteract the negative effects of the poor environment of the slum child. However, the public schools were not eager to accept the additional burden of a longer public education career. Thus, kindergartens for the poor were established as charity institutions. In Boston, "preschooling before 1887 remained almost exclusively a philanthropic-social settlement activity..."46 Eventually, as in the case of the earlier charity schools, the public institution took over the responsibilities of funding and controlling pre-school education. Similar patterns of public assumption of philanthropic endeavors occurred in other Massachusetts towns.

A virtually identical trend appears in the development of manual education. The first instances of education of this sort were supported by charitable agencies outside the public schools. Philanthropic funding of manual education schools was widespread throughout Massachusetts. Lacking a clear ideology to support public responsibility for all
educational programs, and suffering from financial constraints, cities and towns were eager to accept the contributions of wealthy benefactors. An example was the Manual Training High School, located in Cambridge, Massachusetts and funded by Frederick Rindge. Despite the seemingly obvious private character of this school, the Cambridge School Committee definitely viewed the institution as public, as is clear from their 1895 report:

> Although the manual training school is supported by private munificence and the mechanical work is carried on under the direction of a superintendent responsible only to the founder, it is, nevertheless, in its essential features, a part of the public school system. All who take the regular course are enrolled as pupils of the English High School and their academic work is carried on under the direction of the principal of that school.47

The school existed within this framework for ten years before the School Committee assumed complete responsibility in 1899.

Fletcher Swift lists nine different funding sources for education that were employed during the early 19th century: (1) appropriations; (2) rate bills; (3) local tax on real and personal property; (4) taxes on banks; (5) licenses fees and taxes on occupations and on commodities; (6) lotteries; (7) land rates; (8) gifts and bequests; and (9) permanent funds.48 States and localities used a combination of these methods to support schooling. Clearly, 19th century Americans did not distinguish between public and private sources of funding. Gifts and bequests
were considered legitimate ways to fund schools as were lotteries and property taxes.

Although some instances of general taxation for education existed in the Colonial period, the practice did not become a well-engrained feature of public education until well after the Civil War. Other methods of funding played substantial roles in supporting education. For example, rate bills, a form of private support, supplied more revenue than all public monies in New York State prior to 1840.\textsuperscript{49} When rate bills were finally abolished in Connecticut in 1868, officials estimated that 6,000 students had been kept out of school due to insufficient funds.\textsuperscript{50} Further, this type of funding remained in effect across the United States for much longer than is commonly assumed. Although Massachusetts abolished rate bills in 1827, Utah continued to allow them until 1890.\textsuperscript{51}

Implicit in the reformers' quest for a free public education was a more systematized, stable funding mechanism. Rate bills, by definition, were dependent on the number of students and the number of days they attended. They were, therefore, not reliable sources of funding. Some states established more or less permanent state school funds at various times, but the impact of this type of support was not large. In 1839, Massachusetts' state fund provided only 1.6\% of school expenditures.\textsuperscript{52} However, in the view of some, the state funds were
instrumental in bridging the gap between the haphazard primarily private system of funding and the system of general taxation which has become an essential component of American public education. One observer describes the situation in Indiana in 1851:

[I]t was this fund that sustained public schools and gradually mollified and molded public sentiment until a law permitting local taxation for all classes of school expenditures, a law at one time declared unconstitutional, was passed a second time and sustained.  

Establishment of the principle and practice of funding education by general taxation thus was a very gradual process. This process usually included three stages, although time frames for each differed widely. First, members of a community instituted a local tax to fund, in part, their educational endeavors. Second, a provision for general taxation by communities was made at the state level. Finally, taxation to support schools became compulsory under state law. In Massachusetts, step two was accomplished by 1647, however, compulsory taxation was not instituted until 1827.  

Prior to the establishment of free education supported by general taxation, the majority of students attended private schools which would toady be considered private, in part because schools with the characteristics of today's public schools existed only for the poor. The following table provides available statistics for the percentage of
school enrollment in several cities, using current definitions of "public" and "private":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% Private</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salem, MA</td>
<td>1820</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston, MA</td>
<td>1817</td>
<td>61.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York, NY</td>
<td>1829</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milwaukee, WI</td>
<td>1845</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
<td>1857</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Private schools were clearly the dominant educational institution in these cities at these particular times. Charity schools served only the indigent; all others had to find the means to provide education individually. Even in Boston, the home of one of the most prominent reformers, Horace Mann, the nature of the public education system presented serious obstacles that prevented many students from attending. Boston has received substantial recognition for establishing a public education system as early as the Colonial Period, and the city did offer a free grammar school education pursuant to the Education Act of 1789. However, the grammar schools required that students be able to read and write before entering. Thus, because no free primary schools existed to provide training in these skills, this requirement "effectively made private schooling in one form or another an adjunct to public education." Primary schools, tax-supported and free to all, were not provided until 1820.
Thus, even in places with a reputation for high levels of government initiative, serious gaps in available education existed. In towns without such a tradition, the schooling offered was even less extensive. The town of Boxford took 16 years and required prodding by the General Court to establish a school in the town, after a statute was enacted requiring it do so.\textsuperscript{59} Clearly, the 19th century was characterized by only a gradual evolution of support for the public school.

A dramatic change occurred in private enrollment figures around the time when provisions for free schooling were made in each area. The following figures illustrate this pattern:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salem, MA</td>
<td>1875</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston, MA</td>
<td>1826</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston, MA</td>
<td>1850</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York, NY</td>
<td>1850</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milwaukee, WI</td>
<td>1848</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although clear cause-and-effect relationships are difficult to determine, the link between the establishment of free schooling and these enrollment changes seems strong. For example, the decline in private enrollment in Boston between 1817 and 1826 from 61.8% to 32.5% is likely related to the 1820 provision of free primary schools to teach the skills required for admission to the free grammar
schools. The strong efforts of reformers to reduce private enrollment could account for the further decline by 1850. In Salem, the effect of free high schools on academy enrollment could similarly explain the drop in private enrollment from 1825 to 1875.

Regions outside New England established both public and private schools at later dates, but their enrollment trends indicate a similar pattern. Kaestle explains the New York City enrollment shift as "due to the successful competition of the public schools with the lesser pay schools." It seems reasonable to assert that the existence of free public schools produced a decline in the proportion of students attending private institutions. The U.S. School Census of 1850 shows that over 90% of the nation's students were enrolled in public institutions.

However, this large shift from private to public education in the middle 19th century did not constitute the end of the issue. The establishment of parochial, primarily Catholic, education caused another substantial shift in the public/private enrollment balance. At the beginning of the 20th century, many Massachusetts cities, particularly those with a large immigrant population, had high private school populations. Of the private school enrollment, the overwhelming percentage attended parochial schools. For example, private school enrollment across the state of Massachusetts increased from 10% in 1870 to 16% in
Enrollment figures\textsuperscript{64} in several cities showed a much larger parochial enrollment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge</td>
<td>1905</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Bedford</td>
<td>1910</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawrence</td>
<td>1915</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eventually, parochial enrollment stabilized and private school enrollment showed little substantial change.

The history of public education, however, suggests that the rate of private school attendance might not be as critical as the class of people from which this enrollment came. In the early 19th century, only children whose parents had declared themselves to be paupers were permitted to attend the charity schools.\textsuperscript{65} A statement of this nature proved to be a significant obstacle to school attendance among the poor. In Boston, attempts to establish philanthropic charity schools received an indifferent response. "While the number of impoverished families increased, those willing to have their children considered objects fit only for charity did not."\textsuperscript{66}

Such an attitude extended to other regions as well. The Pennsylvania law restricting government education aid to the poor "immediately stigmatized any person who took advantage of public schools as one unable to provide for himself and his family."\textsuperscript{67} The pauper stigma would eventually contribute to the sense that private education is to be prefer, as the charity schools evolved into
contemporary urban public school systems.

However, the stigma associated with the charity schools involved more than the simple fact that they were populated by the poor. Faced with the problem of educating large numbers of students with limited funds, those operating charity schools seized upon an educational innovation that would allow large numbers of students to receive an education at a very small cost. The Lancasterian or monitorial system required a single teacher who would oversee the instruction given by monitors, chosen from the ranks of the students. Thus, the method involved the poor teaching the poor, with the teacher supervising to the extent possible. The system claimed to be capable of handling ratios of one teacher to 500 students. 69 Although other elements of the system were also appealing, the low cost and the efficiency of the Lancasterian method matched extremely well with the needs of those attempting to educate the large number of the urban poor. As Carl Kaestle observes, "the speed and breadth of its adoption in American cities was remarkable." 70

The implementation of the monitorial system was not without some opposition. Even at the time, some questioned its educational merits. Nonetheless, its widespread use in urban charity schools created a second stigma for those who had to attend them. Not only were they labelled as paupers, but the method of instruction they received was
also clearly considered as suitable only for the poor. In addition, it was obvious that one teacher for 500 students was significantly different from the individual tutoring that only the very wealthiest individuals could afford. Thus, both in the affluence of its students and in the quality of its instruction, the charity school occupied a lower rank in the hierarchy of schooling in the early 19th century.

The stigma associated with charity schools would not be of such importance today if these schools had not evolved into contemporary the public schools in a large number of cities. In Boston, the charity primary schools eventually became part of the government-provided grammar school system. In New York, the Quaker organization which controlled all government subsidy for charity education after 1825, renamed itself the Public School Society, and started accepting non-indigent students. The typical pattern of this change began with:

...consolidation of various charity schools under one organization, obtained increased governmental aid, developed procedures for supervision and attempted to expand the schools' clientele beyond the poor to include all children. 71

However, the development of these institutions into public schools did not eliminate the stigma associated with pauperism and the Lancasterian system. Thus, the tradition of public schools in this country has, at its roots, characteristics that would cause many to view them as
inferior.

Ironically, the pay schools (private by today's standards) exhibited a more evenly distributed range of students than the charity schools. Although no claim can be made that the range of students in non-charity urban schools represented the entire socio-economic sector, Kaestle's data indicate that the schools did serve a reasonably broad group of students. In addition, he finds evidence that some form of scholarship aid, consisting of reduction or elimination of fees by the masters, was given to poor students (arguably without the same degree of stigma attached to charity school attendance).

Kaestle has concluded that, during the era of pay and charity schooling in New York, the pay school system was not limited to the wealthy. Examining records for a charity and a free school that included fathers' occupations and tax assessments, he found that "attendance at these schools (the pay schools) was common to the children of families with a broad range of income." This is not to claim that the independent pay school system was the solution to the problem of inequality in America. Kaestle also recognizes that poor children were very likely underrepresented in these schools and that families with the greatest wealth often employed private tutors or enrolled their children in boarding schools. However, it does seem legitimate to
conclude that, if these schools are defined as private, they did not possess the same sense of exclusiveness in 1779 that the term connotes today.

An educational system with both public and private sectors has the potential to perpetuate divisions based on wealth rather than to eliminate them. With the origins of public education located in stigmatized charity schooling, a strong possibility existed that the privileged classes would not wish to participate in "tainted" forms of education. The switch from private to public education precipitated by the establishment of free public education heightened interest in this issue. For example, Horace Mann exhibited a substantial concern over whether the wealthy participated in common schools. In his first report, he argued that:

> Perhaps a majority of the wealthier persons in the state patronized private schools...and that practice drew off from the public schools some of the best scholars and the support of their influential parents.\

This report was written at a time when private school enrollment in Massachusetts was 13.8% and would decline to 8.4% by 1880. Yet the concern over the enrollment of the wealthy in private education pervades the reform period.

To some extent, the reformers' emphasis on this issue was legitimate. Apparently, the affluent did not wish to receive their schooling in the common schools for a variety of reasons. In New York, "the public schools attracted
children predominately from working-class families.... The wealthy want to increasingly expensive private schools."\(^{77}\)
The overall effect of the establishment of public schools stigmatized by their pauper character and Lancasterian instructional method, was that:

> [W]hile the rich continued to provide private education for their children, those with more limited resources gradually lost their alternatives to the public schools when the middle-priced private schools, both independent and corporate, became more exclusive and closed.\(^{78}\)

In Massachusetts, a similar assessment of Mann's efforts is made:

> [W]hat occurred was not then, a victory over separate elite schooling, as Mann would have liked, but a conversion of low-priced pay schools, local academies, and subscription schools into town-controlled, tax-supported schools.\(^{79}\)

Nor did the affluent feel the need to disguise their attitude. Edward Everett Hale, in his account of his childhood, stated that "there was no public school of any lower grade to which my father would have sent me any more than he would have sent me to jail."\(^{80}\) The Boston Latin School alone met the requirements of this family's schooling needs. As others have noted, the Boston Latin School was uniquely able to entice the children of the wealthy to attend. Occasionally, other schools were credited with similar abilities. For example, one visitor to the United States noted that:

34
The high schools of Boston, supported by the state, are now so well managed, that some of my friends, who would grudge no expense to engage for their sons the best instructors, send their boys to them as superior to any of the private institutions supported by the rich at great cost. 81

However, it is not clear how act this observation was and, certainly this effort was less successful in other areas. As early as 1806, a school committee member in Salem recognized the difficulty the free public school was having in attracting upper class students. The free schools "are admirably supported but the many private schools draw away all the children of the best families." 82 The pattern extended to areas outside the Northeast as well. An Ohio school official noted that "a better class of families would not send their children to public schools." 83 Thus an unanticipated effect of common school reform appeared to be the addition of a sense of exclusiveness to private school attendance.

Complicating the effort to improve the quality of public schools was the fact that private school enrollment took resources from public schools. In the midst of the battle to win general taxation for public schools, reformers eyed the amount of money spent on private education and reasoned that, if it were allocated to public schools, as they felt the wealthy were resisting, the quality of public schools would be sufficient to attract the affluent into the public schools. John Pierce saw a
direct relationship between expenditures on private
education and expenditures on, and therefore the quality
of, public education. "In those towns where private
seminaries have been located and well sustained, the free
schools will be found, without exception, to be in a
miserable condition." The belief was strong that, with
sufficient resources, public schools could offer an
education of high enough quality to induce the affluent to
participate.

However, an alternative cause and effect relationship
can be suggested. In his study of the development of free
education in Connecticut, Arthur Mead asserts that
"inadequate public funding of the school system which
necessitated rate-bills drove the wealthy out of the school
system." He concludes that an important result of the
abolition of rate bills was the decrease in private
schools.

In part, this argument sees the process as circular:
Low public support produced low quality education; the
affluent, thus unwilling to attend public schools, opted
for private education; and, as a result, they were not
interested in supporting public education. Although the
view was not well-formulated in the 19th century, it
clearly operated in the minds of some advocates of free
public education.

Thus, the public assumption of the responsibility for
education was a long process, involving conflicts and disputes with strong opinions on all sides. As Cremin has noted, "One of the most bitter struggles in securing public common schools was the struggle for public support." Eventually this formulation of the issue dominated the debate. However, the reduction of the conflict to this fiscal issue should not lead to the conclusion that the only problem was how to pay for something that everyone agreed the country needed. Disagreements about the importance of education did not spring up only when funding became an issue.

Thus, an historical overview of the development of the public and private educational institutions suggests two primary conclusions. First, the current definitions of public and private education do not have a strong historical tradition. Even into the 20th century, the record shows a great deal of uncertainty, tension and redefinition surrounding notions of public and private schools. Second, the various sectors of education that did exist exhibited some aspects of a competitive relationship, particularly between charity and pay schools, which was founded, to some extent, on quality.

B. American Faith in Public Education

The belief in public education as a means of producing public benefits has served as a powerful philosophical
foundation for public education. David Cohen views the
events in this evolution

...partly as outgrowths of the old and abiding
American enthusiasm for education.... Americans
undertook public education in part because
education had always been an American passion.
And when America became a political democracy,
dependent upon an informed citizenry, passion
became faith. 87

The belief has adapted to changing circumstances, but still
retains some fundamental ideas. For example, it logically
supports the sense that public education enjoys a consensus
rare in American history. Granting that some disagreement
over the purposes and effects of education would naturally
occur, the belief suggests that opposition to public
education comes very close to opposition to democracy.

Yet, even in the early colonial period, divergent
ideas about the institution of education were clear. These
differences were reflected in two responses made by the
Governors of Virginia and Connecticut in reply to the same
question. The governor of Virginia stated, "I thank God
there are no free schools or printing presses, and I hope
we shall not have, these hundred years." In contrast, the
governor of Connecticut answered, "One fourth the annual
revenue of the colony is laid out in maintaining free
schools for the education of our children." 88 Thus, from
the earliest beginnings of the country, individuals
disagreed about the appropriate role of public education.

Further, as the struggle to secure funding by general
taxation indicates, support for public education has not been consistently strong. Certainly no public consensus existed that a system of tax support for schools was essential. As Sizer points out:

The American was for many things, but he was not for being taxed.... [H]e believed strongly enough in education to dignify a private venture with a charter and to set it on its way with an initial grant of money or more usually, of land.

Nor should the strength of this opposition be underestimated. Many historians have pointed out that "public sentiment respecting the establishment of free schools ranged all the way from indifference, disbelief and contempt, to open hostility." Often when state funds were available on a matching basis to communities, towns would decide not to participate and, therefore, neither receive nor allocate funds for the provision of education. The free public education system thus appears not to have been a fundamental tenet of American democracy.

One way to analyze the differences in beliefs about education is within the framework of the public and private benefits assigned to education and public and private responsibility for providing education. The two ideas are not necessarily complementary. W. Norton Grubb and Marvin Lazerson describe the source of the conflict:

The public responsibilities are vast: developing human capacities, creating a common set of values, preparing a literate and critical citizenry, providing equality of opportunity,
moving children and youth from their families into the larger social world, and serving as the prime avenue to occupation, income and status. In their managerial roles, however, parents have assumed that public schooling should be used for private ends: to ensure their own ethnic or religious values, to reaffirm childrearing as a familial rather than a social responsibility, and above all to ensure the success of their own children.92

In the early history of the country, for example, although education was often perceived to have primarily public benefits, the responsibility for its provision was primarily private. Today, in contrast, it can be argued that the private benefits of education dominate, but that the responsibility is assigned to the public.

Differences in notions about education have surfaced throughout the country's history. Even during the reform period, and perhaps particularly then, individuals and communities expressed widely divergent beliefs. At that time, while one observer was noting that "the common school system of New England is its pride and strength; and the public schools of Boston are the richest jewel in its crown,"93 the Town of Boxford provided only the barest minimum of an education at public expense.94 Clearly such an accolade did not apply to this town.

Regional differences were no less significant. In 1829, a letter to a Raleigh, North Carolina newspaper contained advice to the legislature:

[I]t is possible, but not very likely I confess, that you may be solicited to take some steps with regard to the establishment among us of common
schools. Should so ridiculous a measure be propounded to you, you will unquestionably, for you own interest, as well as that of your constituents, treat it with the same contemptuous neglect which it has ever been met heretofore. Gentlemen, I hope you do not conceive it at all necessary, that everybody should be able to read, write and cipher.  

So much for democratic ideals of an educated citizenry and equality! Evidence such as this may not be proof of invidious rejection of the principles upon which this country was supposedly founded, but it does show that such principles were not so clearly at the foundation of the nation.

Despite different constructions of the problem and different justifications, many groups settled on publicly funded common schools as a remedy for their selected social problem. As the purpose of education passed beyond the religious and moral goals, advocates of expanding the public institution identified many benefits schooling could arguably provide. David Cohen has explored the unlikely combination of those advocating education as a form of social control with those who, in support of common schools, viewed the institution as a means of liberation.  

Whether the benefits being advocated by those groups and others were thought to be public or private was not entirely clear. As discussed previously, public and private distinctions were changing and, in some cases, the benefits described could fit into either category. However, the public interest to be served by an expanded
The common school is a preventive and an antidote.... [E]xpanded to its capabilities, let it be worked with the efficiency of which it is susceptible, and nine-tenths of the crimes in the penal code would become obsolete; the long catalogue of human ills would be abridged, men would walk more safely by day, every pillow would be more inviolable by night; property, life and character held by a stronger tenure; all rational hopes respecting the future brightened.98

A slightly different notion of the public interest focussed on the expanding presence of the immigrant poor, and expressed the public benefit goal of education "to train up all the children, within its jurisdiction, to be intelligent, virtuous, patriotic American citizens."99 In this way, the desire for social stability was linked with the political justification that an educated population is essential to a democracy (a notion based on Jefferson's educational plan--one never approved by the Virginia legislature).100 Francis Adams, in 1875, summarized the same principle, "In a government where every citizen has a
voice, education must be co-extensive with universal suffrage. The writings of the reformers and other supporters of public education abound with grand statements about the public good to be served by providing education.

However, without great difficulty, it is possible to assess such statements as expressing private rather than public benefits. Daniel Webster's view of education, "as a wise and liberal system of police, by which property, and life, and the peace of society are assured," lists two rather private benefits first and mentions the societal goal last. Stanley Schultz, in discussing those who petitioned for the establishment of free primary schools in Boston in 1820, commented, "The signers of the petition were not completely benevolent in motive. They were concerned as much with their private tranquility as with public duty." The emphasis on public benefits, nonetheless, clearly dominated evaluation of the reformers' efforts. Two often-cited types of private educational benefits were virtually absent from the arguments: personal economic gain and intellectual improvement.

Francis Adams has observed that, "the gauge of public interest in the system is the burden of taxation which the people are willing to bear for its maintenance." Using this measure, the record indicates that the interest was not strong:

To assert the social importance of formal education was one thing, to believe that the
schools were important enough to make them a public responsibility, funded by tax dollars, was quite another.106

Nonetheless, many asserted the public duty associated with education, recognizing that private responsibility was not adequate to the task:

The education of the people is regarded in the United States as the first and most important interest of society, and as a work too gigantic for private capital, too momentuous for the mischances of private judgment.... Accordingly, it has been founded upon the most permanent and immovable basis, instead of being left to the shifting ground of private benevolence or caprice or even to that self-interest which is so strong a motive power in modern society.107

Ironically, for a good part of the nation's history and, to some degree, even when this comment was written in 1875, education was left to "private benevolence" and "self-interest."

Thus, in general, the advocates of education expressed belief in the importance of the public benefits schooling produced and the need for the public assumption of the responsibility for providing it. Even though closer examination indicates that these public benefits have somewhat private aspects and that, despite the reformers, public assumption often stopped short of general taxation, the superficial content of these arguments supports the conclusion that public benefits and responsibility were dominant.

In the late 19th century, an increased emphasis on
education as a means to economic gain developed. In this new perspective, education was seen as providing both public and private economic benefits. According to David Cohen, this view was reflected in:

...studies of the money value of schooling, an avalanche of high school vocational courses, and the rapid replacement of apprenticeship by schooling in any number of professional fields. There was virtually a religious commitment to the idea that formal schooling held the key to success in an increasingly technological civilization.108

The influence of economic gains on social policy for both public and private education would be substantial from the beginning of the 20th century to the present, where it appears to be the primary justification for either public or private investment in education.

Another strain of the arguments for public assumption of education was the concern over the gap between rich and poor and the potential of education to narrow it. In some instances, the specific focus of this "egalitarian" argument was not technically the establishment of public schools but rather the disestablishment of private schools, considered to be bastions of the wealthy and the elite. According to this view, private schools for the wealthy would harm not only the democracy and the society, but the public schools as well. In addition, a great deal of comment and concern was evoked over the extent to which it was the wealthy who opted for other than the public schools. Horace Mann summed up his view of this situation
in his First Report:

Opposed to this class, who tolerate from apathy, a depression in the common schools, there is another class who affix so high a value upon the culture of their children, and understand as well the necessity of a skillful preparation of means for its bestowment, that they turn away from common schools, in their depressed state, and seek, elsewhere, the help of a more enlarged and thorough education. 109

The private benefits of education seem to prevail in Mann's assessment. In many ways, the debate could be transplanted to the present with little adjustment of detail.

The scope of this argument extends over a number of issues. First, the existence of private schools was argued to inhibit the levelling of rich and poor which education was thought to accomplish. As a minister in Medford, Massachusetts, stated:

I want to see the children of the rich and the poor sit down side by side on equal terms as members of one family.... The different classes of the community will love and honor each other, when they come to remember these intimate associations of their childhood. 110

Others expressed a similar notion but in less moralistic terms:

The child is taught, from infancy, in a private school, to look upon certain classes as inferior, and born to fewer privileges. That is not republican. This is not allowing all as far as possible, a fair start in the world. 111

The sense of equal opportunity to be provided by education seems to have been clear by this time. Almost every group involved in this debate articulated some version of this
point.

Other issues went beyond a simplistic statement of the capability of private schools to perpetuate class stratification. A second point, found in the writings of labor groups of the 1820's and 1830's, indicates awareness of the adverse impact of the unequal distribution, not of access to education, but of knowledge. The Working Man's Party in Philadelphia in 1830 published a report that criticized the curriculum in the public schools (which were attended only by the poor) because it "extends, in no case, further than a tolerable proficiency in reading, writing and arithmetic, and sometimes to a slight acquaintance with geography." Their conclusions extended to a description of the kind of education that should be offered, stating that, "It appears, therefore, to the committees that there can be no real liberty without a wide diffusion of real intelligence...." Concerns about the differential type of education offered to different classes corresponds to more recent concerns over such issues as tracking.

Two other issues regarding the effect of private schools on the public institution were articulated by the Working Men and the reformers: funding and quality of the public schools. These two elements were seen to be related. Perhaps implicitly acknowledging the private benefits of an education, those involved in the struggle recognized, that for public education to attract the
affluent, the quality would have to be high. The labor
groups also saw that the stigma associated with public
schools was a result of their initial establishment for
paupers and their instructional method. Both of these facts
presented serious obstacles to achieving the quality
needed.

Much of the effort on this point was undertaken by
Robert Owen, a socialist reformer. His proposals involved
radical changes in the provision of education, including a
public boarding school system. However, he clearly
outlined the need to overcome the stigma of public
schooling:

...not schools of charity, but the schools of the
nation; to the support of which all contribute;
and instead of being almost a disgrace, it would
become an honor to have been educated there.¹¹⁴

Others argued as strongly for an improvement in the quality
of common schools:

The Common School is Common, not as inferior, not
as the schools for poor men's children, but as
the light and air are common. It ought to be the
best school because it is the first school.¹¹⁵

Regardless of the specific argument used by different
factions, those who advocated free public education
presented a rather united position on the public benefits
of education and the need for public responsibility for its
provision. This is not to suggest that private benefits
were thought to be non-existent. A reasonable description
of the development of the present educational system could
involve the story of a gradually shifting balance in favor of private over public benefits of education. To a small extent, as noted, some of this was evident during the reform era. However, at the same time, the public benefits of public education were an important basis of the arguments of its advocates.

It cannot simply be concluded, however, that those opposed to the public assumption of schooling did not value these public benefits, and were opposed to public support out of anti-egalitarian, undemocratic values. Such a conclusion relies more on the ideas that have since developed about public education than on the evidence. In general, it appears that those opposed to public education well recognized the importance of its public benefits, but were not convinced of the appropriateness of public responsibility for its provision. As Cremin points out:

[M]any of those opposed readily admitted, for instance, that everyone in a republic ought to be educated, but they steadfastly maintained that only paupers should attend school at public expense. 116

Like the proponents, opponents of public education represented a wide range of viewpoints, some of which have been forgotten as other issues came to dominate. For example, one criticism of public education concerned the type of government its establishment was seen to represent. In 1880, Nathan Matthews, making a presentation in support of private schools, accused public school advocates of
proposing socialism. Later in the same argument, Matthews expressed dissatisfaction with the Prussian-like nature of public education and warned that it could lead to tyranny. Although these concerns are not of critical importance at present, a similar perspective occasionally emerges. In 1980, Stanley Blumenfield described attempts to establish public education as "the first step to be taken toward a socialist society." The effects of opinions in this vein should not be overestimated. On the other hand, the recurrence of similar views indicates they do occupy at least a small portion of the minds of some Americans.

Another reason for opposition to public schools was based, in essence, on the public benefits of private education. In the same way that some saw public education as necessary in a democracy, others viewed private education as fulfilling the same function--responding to the promise of a democracy. The freedom to choose--in this case, a mode of education--were thus synonymous with a free society. Pluralism and religious freedom were critical components of the democracy, and the ability to choose the kind of education a person desires confirmed that these components existed and functioned in the society. Expansion of state-controlled education and the effort to encourage withdrawal from private schools caused some to fear that these components were eroding.
The issue of whether education produced public or private benefits does not seem to have distinguished the two sides of the debate over the responsibility for schooling. The question of the extent and character of the public assumption of this responsibility, however, certainly did divide the viewpoints. Arthur Mead has attempted to describe the positions of those opposed to public education:

[S]ome were opposed because of added expense; others were opposed because they desired to patronize private schools and did not want to pay taxes for public schools; still others, because they did not want to pay taxes which would be expended in another county (referring to state taxes); and finally, a few believed that secondary education could not, and should not be supported by taxation.

As noted, some individuals strongly believed that free education should be provided only to the poor, not an uncommon attitude in the history of American education. Predictably, others simply felt the expenditures required would be too great. Another perspective was that requiring some monetary support from those benefitting individually from the institution was the best way to ensure their continued interest in education and in their children. Charles Bulfinch expressed this view in 1817 in the debate over whether to provide free primary schools in Boston. Schultz summarizes his argument for private responsibility:

[H]e claimed that primary schools were unnecessary because most parents who sent their children to private tuition schools did not look upon the expense as a burden; they paid the cost
cheerfully out of love and a sense of duty. This in turn made them better parents.\textsuperscript{121}

The same thought recurs often in discussions over educational policy. In 1858, a Michigan educator stated a similar view, "If education costs nothing, it will be estimated accordingly."\textsuperscript{122}

By far the strongest feelings arose over the issue of whether general taxation for public education violated property rights. In one analysis, two principles of a democracy were seen to be in conflict: the right to own property and the need for universal education. Although the motivation of some was likely derived from a selfish refusal to pay for the education of others, the argument was also built on principles of justice and liberty. For example, one proponent of this view argued:

Our present constitution recognizes this principle by expressly providing that the property of the individual cannot be taken from him without his consent, except for public purposes, and then only by giving an adequate compensation. To allow the majority to say that the minority shall part with their property in the shape of taxes to defray the expense of the education of others, who are able to bear such expense is a palpable blow at this well recognized principle, and is not the less odious because being submitted to the people it should meet the approval of a majority of them.\textsuperscript{123}

The preservation of private property rights, in the view of these opponents of universal public education, outranked the public benefits generally agreed to be associated with educated masses. The advocates of education attempted to respond to this position by arguing
that public education supported by taxation would produce private benefits or, at least, public benefits in which propertied individuals would share. As Thaddeus Stevens explained:

"It is for their own benefit, inasmuch as it perpetuates the government and ensures the due administration of the laws which they love, and by which their lives and property are protected." 124

Egalitarian ideas were also presented in the debate. To a few, the point was not so much that public support of education should be limited to the poor, but that general support of education by taxation would result in a large number of individuals paying for the education of the rich. In a sense, the existence of public education was considered to be an income transfer from the less well off to the wealthy. For that reason, public education should be opposed. This idea was generally not precisely articulated, but a sense of it was conveyed by the remarks of a correspondent to a New York newspaper, "Justice frowns upon compelling one man to pay towards the education of the children of his rich neighbors." 125 Although studies of this issue comment on this belief only occasionally, some contemporary historians have introduced the interpretation that public education—particularly, high school—was an imposition on the majority by a more elite group. This view is supported by the fact that only a very small proportion of the school age population benefited from a
Substantial progress toward a resolution of the conflict over the extent of public responsibility for education occurred in the 19th century. With a general recognition of its public benefits, the population accepted the principle of supporting free public education for all by general taxation. However, the tension surrounding the issue has not disappeared, and it resurfaces particularly as circumstances alter the way public and private benefits are assigned to education. The consensus of support for public schools has hardly been constant and, indeed, the entire rationale for public education can be turned on its head. For example, an 1895 address in support of academies drew the following conclusion:

In the home or local system of schools, the aim is really private education, and for ends more or less personal, though it be obtained at public expense. In the academical or collegiate system of schools, the aim is a true public education, though it may be obtained by means legally private, that is, such as furnished by individuals or corporations.

In a debate where there is no agreement on which system provides private benefits and which public, no consensus of opinion can be expected. Rather, a tension between the public and private sectors of education has sexisted throughout the nation's history and continues today.

The traditional American faith in public education, the history suggests, did not produce a unified consensus of support for a particular model of public education.
Rather, the evolution of the current public school system involved any number of rather bitterly fought conflicts. A related conclusion to be drawn from the historical analysis is that the strong faith in public education resulted in the assignment to the education institution of responsibility for achieving many different public benefits. However, the historical evidence also indicates that recognition of private benefits contributed to some aspect of that faith as well.

Thus, the historical analysis does not support the idea that a competitive relationship between public and private schools has always been characteristic of American education. However, competitive elements of the provision of schooling certainly cannot be dismissed as totally absent from the historical record. The "pauper" characteristics of public schools established a hierarchy among types of education. In addition, many involved with educational institutions recognized the potential educational stratification between the rich and poor. The ability of the public schools to reduce this stratification by providing educational quality high enough to attract the wealthy from more exclusive schools became the basis of many debates.
C. Current Manifestations

Faith in the power of education and the belief in sharp distinctions between public and private schools remain strong influences on how the problems of, and solutions for, public education are constructed. The notion that public education is distinguished by its public control and funding and its non-sectarian character establishes clear criteria by which to distinguish the two institutions. However, even with the funding element, it is not clear that the distinction is as sharp as the definition promises.

Despite the heated controversy generated by proposals to give public funds to private institutions, the evidence shows that this transfer of money is relatively common. Government data for 1970 recorded that 83% of the private schools in the United States receive some sort of public money.128 Not every plan to channel public money to private schools has won acceptance, but the statistics show the amount of funding is not insignificant. The proponents of support for private schools have, by and large, convinced the public of the merits and appropriateness of such expenditures. Even if individuals are aware of the support, it is unlikely that the public acknowledges the blurring of distinctions between public and private education that it represents.

Another element of the belief in the distinction
between public and private schools assumes that the one inviolate principle of public education is that it is free to all who attend. Americans have been particularly immune to the evidence that this is not entirely the case. Yet, in Massachusetts, after the implementation of Proposition 2 1/2, a tax-cutting measure adopted by referendum, almost a third of the school districts instituted user fees for some school services.\(^\text{129}\) Despite the importance Americans supposedly place on free education, little broad-based criticism was heard. Trends of this nature are particularly surprising in a state in which the law carefully defines what a free public education means. Other states, with less clear definitions, allow more extensive fees to be charged to those attending public schools. In Kansas, almost all school districts charge fees for textbooks.\(^\text{130}\) A study of a county in southwestern Ohio found that the mean compulsory fees charged in 1978 amounted to $12.98 in kindergarten and $9.27 in sixth grade. Seventy-eight percent of the school systems reported that they charged first graders an average of $6.53 for workbooks alone. Secondary students paid compulsory fees in as many as 20 subject areas. Charges for extracurricular activities were even more extensive.\(^\text{131}\) Similarly, a 1968 study found that academic expenditures for Georgia high school students ranged from $62.75 to $635.45, with an average cost of $192.25.\(^\text{132}\)
Nor are the charges necessarily for non-essential education luxuries. A large number of states give districts considerable discretion in determining whether to supply free textbooks to all public school students. For example, Kentucky law requires free textbooks for students in grades 1 through 8. High school students, however, may be required to purchase their texts, as well as supplies.\textsuperscript{133} Other states require provision of free books to indigent students only (a clear extension of the pauper stigma).\textsuperscript{134}

The impact of user fees for educational services is difficult to measure. A report by the Children's Defense Fund in 1974 cited the example of one Kentucky family with an income of $2200 that faced textbooks fees of approximately $50 for high school students. All of the family's nine children had dropped out of high school for financial reasons when they reached high school age. In the same county, 21\% of the children who were not attending school cited inability to pay school fees as the cause of their dropping out.\textsuperscript{135} The report concluded that educational fees act as a substantial barrier to school attendance, especially in areas where median income is low, where poverty is common and where families are large.

Similarly, public schools do not necessarily exhibit a pure separation of church and state. Carl Kaestle
summarizes the situation, "The idea of separation of church and state with regard to education did not spring full-blown from the United States Constitution."\textsuperscript{136} The definition of a non-sectarian education still remains an item of intense controversy, eliciting extremely strong opinions even from the President of the United States. The forum for the debate has moved into the courts and, to some extent, in textbook selection hearings. In addition, communities in which such activities are widely approved often allow a religious element in public education that escapes the attention of those who would oppose it. A recent suit in Virginia, for example, challenges the constitutionality of Bible classes that have been held in a public school system for 41 years and involve 98% of the students in the district.\textsuperscript{137}

The faith in the power of education, although still a strong belief, has undergone a rather substantial change. Where this idea once emphasized the importance of public benefits, the current focus depends on education to provide private benefits, particularly economic ones. Surveys indicate that parents feel the primary goal of education is to ensure that their children will obtain the skills necessary to get "good jobs" or to gain admission to "good" schools (with the expectation of future economic benefits).\textsuperscript{138} Although the public economic benefits produced by education are also viewed as important, this
interest in pursuing private benefits with respect to education seems to be an expanding component of education discussions. "Schooling has become essential as a means of access to occupations and learning itself is prized almost exclusively for its economic benefits."139

In order to understand the nature of the public/private school relationship, the translation of these ideas and their complicated history into action in the form of social policies for education should be examined. An evaluation of the assumption of a competitive relationship between the two sectors requires an investigation into the intentions, parameters and outcomes of various policies established for both public and private education.

III. Social Policy for Public Education

With some exceptions, a consensus of support for public assumption of the responsibility for schooling was established by the beginning of the 20th century. The social policy that evolved from that consensus contains at least two elements that are relevant to today's policy questions: the concepts of parens patriae and egalitarianism.

During colonial times, responsibility for children and their education was assigned broadly to the community as a
whole, even though funding may not have come from community sources. Marvin Lazerson comments:

[C]olonial communities (like some communitarian groups today) were more inclined to think of children as the responsibility of the whole community. Churches, schools, and other community institutions were active participants in rearing children, and town fathers and other public officials could enter homes to observe and correct family life. They could warn parents, publicly or privately, about too much or too little punishment, about inattention to religious instruction, unclean homes and ill-kept children. In extreme cases, town fathers would place children in other families who would exercise parental responsibilities more diligently; in Massachusetts, for example, the 1735 assembly ordered children found "in gross ignorance" placed in other families that would not neglect their instruction. Children were frequently sent by their own parents to live and work in other families, another indication that childrearing was not solely the responsibility of parents.

This assumption of responsibility did not prevail, however:

By the mid-nineteenth century, the decline of public responsibility and the enlargement of private responsibility became rationalized by a domestic ideology that declared the family independent of other institutions and parents superior to all other influences on children. Ever since, childrearing has been presumed to be the responsibility of the "private" family.

Formulation of responsibility in this way operates as a barrier to government involvement in the provision of education: parents are clearly responsible, and their actions, it is assumed, will be in the best interest of the child. Within this framework, some other justification for state intervention was necessary. A minister in New Jersey, as early as 1838, provided a clear statement of the rationale that would be devised:
It is in vain to say that education is a private matter, and that it is the duty of every parent to provide for the instruction of his own children. In theory it is so. But there are some who can not, and there are more who will not, make provision.\textsuperscript{142}

Thus, the argument went, the state and the community, would assume responsibility, through the provision of public funds, for those children neglected by their parents. This doctrine of parens patriae, rather than affirming broad public responsibility for the welfare of children "has taken on the negative cast of intervention only in exceptional cases of parental failure."\textsuperscript{143}

Most often, poverty was recognized as the primary indicator that neglect was present. As a consequence, expenditures of public funds for education were often limited to the poor. In a similar vein contemporary social policies for education, as well as in other social welfare areas, are increasingly based on identification of the "truly needy" - a clear manifestation that parens patriae concepts continue in operation today.

Limiting the scope of public responsibility in this way logically results in other notions that have important consequences for education. Social policy designed within the framework of parens patriae is a "response to the sense that the welfare of some members of society has fallen to below a minimum level of decency."\textsuperscript{144} The policy, then, seeks to provide this minimum level of
service, which is limited to those most at risk and aims only to raise them up to a minimal level.

Social policies for public education have always fit this description to some degree. Early charity schooling required a declaration of pauperism and provided a clearly inferior, but inexpensive, education to the poor. Even the compensatory programs of the 1960's, although certainly not inexpensive, implied the "condemnation of the poor." The impact of social policy characterized by these views lies in the evolution of a stigma attached to those receiving public services. The stigma is much more visible in other social welfare policies. For example, public housing symbolizes the failure of parents to provide for their families, and the nature of housing available generally represents a minimum level of acceptability. "Public housing thus partakes of the character of a last resort rather than the character of modest decency." The stigma inherent in social policy for American education may be less visible but is certainly no less powerful. Head Start, vocational education and Title I are examples of policies implemented in the public education institution which, although designed to "help," attached a stigma to those receiving the benefits.

The egalitarian aspect of social policy for education evolved within the framework of parens patriae. In its pure form, egalitarian ideology is incompatible with parens
patriae and a minimalist objective. The intention to reduce the degree of inequality in society cannot be fulfilled if the remedy is applied only to those below the policy minimum, and the strategy is to bring this group only up to that minimum. In addition, a private enterprise economy, with an unequal income distribution, does not permit extensive radical public interference to correct the disparity.

Yet social policy, even when dominated by parens patriae and minimalism in its implementation, has often been justified by egalitarian rhetoric. For example, beginning early in the 20th century, state funding for education commonly existed in the form of foundation grants, given to each school district, regardless of need, in order to bring their level of expenditures up to a minimum level. David Cohen and Walter Haney point out that even the name "foundation grant" implies the concept of minimalism. However, the policy came under frequent attack over the years because of its negative impact on improving equality in expenditures among districts. This clearly minimalist policy could not possibly help to remedy inequality. Nonetheless, its detractors evaluated its impact as if it were designed specifically to address the equity issue.146

Much of the uncertainty surrounding education policy decisions evolves from the incompatibility of minimalist
and egalitarian goals. Some critics regard this as the fundamental contradiction in American education: "It aspires to use public resources to enhance egalitarian goals, but those in privileged positions are unwilling to allow public responsibility to threaten their own--often insecure--positions."\textsuperscript{147} One analysis of the resolution of this incompatibility is that the egalitarian component of educational policy does not allow any improvement in the distribution of benefits. Rather, the effect of "egalitarian" programs is merely to shift the whole distribution upward, preserving the same relative positions. Historical evidence seems to support this interpretation. As elementary education became widespread, largely due to public support, the demand for high school education increased. The same phenomenon occurred as a high school diploma became commonplace: the increase in college enrollment and stratification within higher education (particularly with the community college) helped to preserve the hierarchy.

Another response to the conflict in goals has been the redefinition of "equality" as "equal opportunity," with opportunity allocated according to merit. Such a sorting mechanism, legitimized by faith in the power of testing, allows a broader provision of public education and little actual change in the degree of inequality. Further, the promise of opportunity, with the only limitation being an
individual's ability, preserves the private aspect of the responsibility for education.

The private benefits education provides lead to another dimension of social policy for public education. The focus of educational policy on the private benefits of education alters the nature of the public responsibility. Thus, the private economy, the belief in meritocracy, and the focus on the private, economic benefits of education combine to define education as an item of competition. If the private benefits are to be forthcoming, the quality of the education offered must be adequate. When public education is burdened by the doctrines of parens partiae and minimalism, it will find it difficult to maintain this quality. Consequently, the wealthy, implicitly attempting to preserve their advantage, will seek out a higher level of quality in private education, withdrawing support from public education.

Concern over such a two-tiered system worried the 19th century reformers. One response was to attack the elite, undemocratic nature of private schools in the hopes of attracting the wealthy and their support back to public education. However, imploring the wealthy to recognize and act on the public benefits of public education was not often a sufficient incentive for them to sacrifice their private benefits. Other policies were necessary to encourage attendance by the upper classes in public
schools. Early on, the importance of quality schools in accomplishing this goal was clear, but the dilemma of how to provide quality with inadequate resources seemed serious.

One particular solution, devised in the 19th century, has evolved into a critically important way of allowing some to recruit the public institution to the purpose of providing their private benefit. In Boston, in 1821, the School Committee established a school, deliberately located in an affluent neighborhood and specifically designed to compete with private schools. A former Superintendent, describing the school, stated that it was located in a "territorial district...cut off from the rest of the city [without] one poor dwelling in it." Thus, the school was composed "wholly of pupils drawn from homes of culture, wealth, luxury and refinement." In assessing the comments of the speakers at the school's opening, Lazerson concluded, "It was, all the speakers agreed, the city's finest example of the strength of the public system and the only means whereby the system could compete with the private schools." 150

This sort of policy (and Boston was not unique in developing such schools) can be seen as the precursor to the policies that today facilitate residential sorting and the ability of affluent districts to operate high quality schools for their homogenous populations. The social
policies, often in the form of tax regulations or funding mechanisms, do not operate as explicitly as the programs of compensatory education. Yet they have facilitated the provision, within the public sector, of private benefits equivalent to those available in the private sector.

Thomas Vitullo-Martin has examined tax policies within this framework and found support for at least three conclusions about the operation of tax regulations. First, the federal tax system has evolved from a simple device to raise revenue into a complicated mechanism to encourage the behavior of taxpayers. From this perspective, tax deductions function as government subsidies for the purchase of deductible items, whether they be restaurant meals, office furniture or education. The "purchase" of education is subsidized by allowing the deduction of state and local taxes (the cost of public education) from the federal tax bill. Arguably, this policy has a greater impact than any other on the characteristics of the educational institution.

Second, the analysis shows that tax subsidies of this kind offer significantly greater benefits for the affluent than for the poor. Several factors contribute to this result. A tax deduction system provides a greater amount to wealthy individuals in higher tax brackets. In addition, wealthy communities are able to spend high amount per pupil with a reasonable property tax effort due to
their superior tax base and lower public service expenses. Adding a subsidy by means of tax deductions to this situation serves to benefit residents of wealthy communities to an even greater degree.

Vitullo-Martin's comparison of New York City to an affluent Westchester County suburb, Pocantico Hills illustrates the extent of the impact of these tax policies. The expenditures and federal aid figures for each district are as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Expenditures</th>
<th>Appropriations</th>
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<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>$3200</td>
<td>$300,000,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pocantico Hills</td>
<td>$9500</td>
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Assuming a 50% tax bracket for Pocantico Hill and a 15% rate for New York City residents, the estimated tax system for Pocantico Hills amounts to $6200 of the $9500 the town spends for each pupil.152 The New York City benefit from this source comes to approximately $560 per student. Various adjustments in the assumptions are required since, for example, approximately 90% of New York residents use the standard deduction and, therefore, would not obtain any benefit from increased local taxes. Vitullo-Martin concludes that:

Through the tax system, Pocantico Hills receives eleven times the aid per pupil that New York City receives. Even counting all federal aid together, we find that Pocantico Hills receives more than six times the aid per pupil than is given to New York.153

Yet the large difference in the amount of direct federal
aid given to each community leads to the opposite conclusion in assessing the focus of federal support for the provision of education.

The third point supported by Vitullo-Martin's analysis concerns the school-related outcomes of these tax policies. He finds:

[T]he most exclusive schools in America are suburban public schools. Enrollment in them is determined strictly by stringent economic criteria, that is, by the family's having enough capital to buy a house in a high-income school district.154

In addition, tax policies that allow mortgage interest deductions effectively subsidize wealthy homeowners' cost of residence. Vitullo-Martin argues further that tuition expenses of private schools are by no means as high a requirement and that, unlike private schools, affluent suburban districts do not offer scholarships to low-income students living outside the district.

Thus, in assessing the effects of tax policy on American education, the study draws the following conclusion:

As policies now stand, we encourage in public and private schools the opposite of what democratic ideology holds should be the role of schools in a democratic republic. There is no justifiable basis for providing a free education to wealthy families in economically and racially segregated schools, but our taxation policy goes further and offers an incentive to the wealthy to use these schools.155

The pursuit of private benefits, although not obvious in
explicit education policies, thus dominates the implicit, but not ineffective, policies that influence education.

The system of providing education should insure that students have equal access to elements that contribute to good quality.\textsuperscript{156} Although many of these factors are difficult to identify and arguably impossible to regulate, equal access to public resources should be fundamental to the system. However, the method of funding public education fosters large disparities with suburban communities able to offer high quality schools with a relatively small tax effort. Reliance on property taxes to support education produces a system whereby affluent communities, with a small sacrifice, can spend a large amount per pupil. For example, Lincoln, Massachusetts, spends over $4,400 for each public school pupil (not very different from private school tuition) with a tax rate of only $17.00 per $1000 valuation, well below the average for the Boston metropolitan area. Stoughton, in contrast, manages to generate only $1774 per pupil, despite its higher tax rate ($2 2.80).\textsuperscript{157}

Even where the system of school funding is "reformed" by adjusting state aid formulas to provide greater equality in school spending, those benefiting from prior inequalities often manage to preserve their advantage. For example, Massachusetts' state aid system was revised in 1978, but a "hold-harmless" provision was included in the
reform package, so that districts were guaranteed that their aid would not be reduced. Today, 335 of 405 districts in the state continue to receive their state aid under the old formula, pursuant to this provision. The inequality that prompted the reform thus still exists to a large extent. The irony of the funding mechanism is that public education is frequently argued to provide the public good of eliminating the inequality produced by an unequal distribution of income. The funding system, however, is based on this inequality and thereby preserves the inequality that the institution is supposed to rectify.

These elements of social policy for education operate to various degrees at different times. The interplay among them, however, generally results in differential outcomes for the rich and the poor. The myth of the meritocracy is that talent and ability will be the only sorting mechanisms in American society. Arguably this is true for some individuals. However, at a more aggregated level, clear indications of differences in educational outcomes for rich and poor students are evident. Much criticism along these lines has been directed toward tracking systems by which different versions of a "common" education are provided to students ostensibly of different ability levels. The extent to which affluence or social class correlates with the assignment of students to different educational formats obviously affects the degree to which the institution...
transcends class stratification. Even within a single building or school, class differences can be accentuated, rather than overcome by public education.

Class differences among school districts are perhaps even more striking. In homogeneous, affluent communities, social policy for public education produces outcomes quite different from that suggested by the underlying policy themes applicable elsewhere. The provision of education in towns of this type is not minimalist in character. Rather, public schools in many rich communities rival prestigious private institutions in their reputation for quality. Further, the concept of parens patriae does not apply; it would be difficult to argue that a population, such as that of Weston, Massachusetts, with a median income in excess of $50,000 living in homes with a median value of $150,000 are ever "at risk." Consequently, apart from any hierarchy that exists within the town, no stigma is attached to those attending the public school.

Residents of affluent communities have obviously learned to use the public institution for their own gain--to achieve a high quality education for their children at public expense. As in the past, members of the community benefit from the existence of a good educational system. The benefits thereby produced do not include the maintenance of social control and tranquility, public benefits which would probably be present even without
schools. Rather, the benefits of such schools are principally private in nature. Indeed, because a good school system may be critical in preserving property values for community residents, it is in the private interest of everyone in the community to support a quality public educational system, whether they participate in it or not. Since the funding system allows this to occur with a small tax sacrifice, the residents receive a variety of benefits for little effort. The cumulative outcomes of these policies represent a significant transfer of benefits from the poor to the rich.

Thus, the nature of the operative educational policy in suburban communities departs from the principles that guided its evolution. These principles, however, are very much in evidence when examining the outcomes of educational policies for the poor. The inability of the poor to use public institutions for their private gain results in educational outcomes that are minimalist and burdened by notions of parens patriae. In school systems populated by the poor, the quality of education is typically low (ignoring the problem of measuring quality and using, instead, the criteria "would the middle class be willing to enroll its children in such schools?"). Many would argue that the poor do receive a substantial portion of public money. However, whether the allocation to the poor is substantial relative to expenditures in other areas, these
funds are intended to serve the public good under the
doctrine of parens patriae, not produce private gain for
the poor. In this way, the use of public policy has very
different results for the rich and poor: the rich may use
the system for individual aggrandizement; the poor cannot.

The explicitness of policies for the poor make them
susceptible to criticism. Direct, visible allocations
symbolize "handouts" to much of the American public. As a
result, the "effectiveness" of making such allocations
undergo "scientific" evaluation, and various types of
stigma are associated with receiving the benefits. On the
other hand, the policies for the rich are not visible, but
are tucked away in tax laws and real estate purchases.
Little evaluation of the costs, benefits or effectiveness
of these policies occurs, and there is certainly no stigma
attached to deducting mortgage interest from taxable
income.

Occasionally concern develops for a more equitable
approach to educational policy. Two particular issues have
dominated the past 20 years: equality of access to schools
and equity in school finance. Within the framework
described above, neither one will be completely realized.
As Cohen has explained, the pursuit of equality often
means raising the minimum level provided, but usually
implies also that the maximum will go up correspondingly.
Pure equality is not achieved until the minimum equals the
maximum. Thus, while minimum educational attainment has gone up dramatically during the 20th century, the expansion of higher education has allowed relative positions to be preserved. School finance reform has also suffered from the inequity inherent in the basic policy. For example, after eight years of attempting to reduce funding inequalities, pursuant to court order, in the state of New Jersey, the situation is more unequal today than it was when the effort began. Proposals that attempt to limit the maximum permissible expenditure on public schools, and to redistribute the funds thereby made available to make the minimum and the maximum closer, have been soundly defeated. Policies of this type violate the principle that education is essentially a private responsibility. American unwillingness to pay for the education of the children of others remains strong, as long as the interest in obtaining private benefits increases:

Equality of opportunity has fallen before the pressure of parents seeking advancement for their own children. At the same time that we look to the schools for collective solutions to social and economic problems, individual parents work to make sure the schools serve primarily their own children.

Social policy for public education, therefore, reflects contradictions, compromises, and differential outcomes stratified by class. Apart from isolated attempts to improve school effectiveness, no coherent policy or even proposals exist to address these problems. Americans seem
satisfied that the system is properly framed. However, they are not satisfied with the quality of that system. Even in affluent districts, with high quality schools, concern over the quality of education is substantial. Having likely obtained the maximum benefit from the public system as it exists, the citizens in such communities switch their focus to private education. Within the framework that "private is better," parents view the private benefits of a private education to be more desirable than those they receive from the public institution. When this occurs, the use of public means to gain a private school education becomes an element of educational policy.

IV. Social Policy for Private Education

Other than the direct public subsidy of private education that existed when the distinctions between public and private schooling were not so strict, implicit or explicit policies for private education date from the establishment of the modern version of public education in the 19th century. The adverse effects of private enrollment on the ability of public schools to provide a common education experience were well understood at this time, so that policies aimed at public schools served indirectly as policies for private schools. Occasionally, concern over attendance in non-public schools
was the explicit motivation for education policy. However, even when the private sector was the focus of the policy, remedies were implemented primarily in the public school system. Creating exemplary schools to attract the affluent to the public schools and even the establishment of general taxation to support public education were examples of policies designed to affect private institutions, despite their deployment in the public sector only. As the two educational systems evolved, direct public policy involvement in private schools was generally avoided.

The contemporary version of the issue of the appropriate relationship between public and private educational systems centers on the question of funding. The role of public funds in supporting private schools has been a major education issue for at least 30 years. During this time, however, the parameters of the funding issue have changed dramatically. In the late 1960's, for example, there was a strong sense that private schools were on the brink of financial collapse. The cost of education was increasing markedly, and many private (particularly Catholic) schools were closing, because of these increasing costs and declining enrollments. Public educators feared the serious impact on public schools if they were forced to absorb a large number of private school pupils.

As late as 1964, the possibility of a widespread collapse of the private schools seemed remote. The post-
The war peak for private high school enrollment occurred in 1965 and, in that previous year, elementary and overall private enrollment recorded the second highest figures of the period since 1948. The first federal policy prescription to provide funding to private schools was included in the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Incorporating a child-benefit concept in order to avoid constitutional obstacles, the Act funneled public money to children attending private schools. Ironically, this infusion of federal funds into private schools was followed by precipitous declines in private school enrollments. By 1970, the figure had dropped to 10.5%, down about one-third in just five years. Moreover, despite federal funding, the financial position of private schools began to erode. The ability of private schools to fund their operation became an issue of top priority. The implicit remedy to the problem framed this way was clear: allocate additional public money to private schools.

The rationales for such a solution drew on traditions from as far back as the colonial era. Private schools were said to represent an important public good because they allowed the pluralism and free choice that were essential to a democracy. John F. Gardner's essay, "Towards a Truly Public Education," written in support of aid to private schools, stated:

A truly public education would support the right
of every individual child to a good education—as judged by his parents, and perhaps a fair panel of educators. It would establish and finance not schools, but the parental right of choice among schools.164

By 1972, the Report of the President's Panel on Non-public schools concluded that only two courses of action were reasonable even to consider: (1) stand by passively while non-public schools decline and accept the inevitable consequences of further increased taxes occasioned by the transfer of students from private to public schools; or (2) act on the premise that wise public policy requires intervention at critical points to sustain a system which educates over 5 million youngsters, involves a multi-billion dollar private investment, and provides for parental choices.165

The only aspect of the relationship between public and private schools considered in the 1972 Report was the cost of increased public school enrollments that would be caused by the closing of private schools. However, this problem definition and its implicit remedy were more directly focussed on the private sector than in any previous era. In retrospect, the absence of any discussion of the relative quality of public and private education seems suprising. In just five more years, that issue would become the overriding concern of the public and the policy makers. In 1972, however, even though some of the remedies being proposed—vouchers and tax credits, for
example—were similar to those advanced today, the problem being addressed was the decline of private schools.

By 1977, the problem had switched to the decline of public schools. The focus of the debate still centered on the funding issue but within the context of "failing" public institutions. Critics, from both ends of the political spectrum, advocated policies that would use public funds to facilitate enrollment in private schools.

The present formulation of the conservative argument in support of a pure voucher system was first articulated by Milton Friedman. His basic position is that the government should finance, but not manage, education. The public benefit of a minimum level of schooling makes government funding reasonable; however, educational services should be supplied by private enterprise. A voucher system would allow parents to express their preferences for various kinds of education. This philosophy stresses the importance of the private benefits of education and views a virtually unregulated marketplace as the best way to distribute them.166

More liberal critics in the early 1970's also proposed voucher-type systems, but with an entirely different rationale. In their view, the element missing from the existing public system was not necessarily quality, nor market competition, but choice. A voucher system can therefore be an appropriate remedy to allow choice of the
type of education a person desires. The greatest departure from the Friedman model was in the regulation of the voucher marketplace. Where the conservatives supported an "invisible hand" approach, the system proposed by the liberals incorporated complicated mechanisms designed to assure equitable outcomes. Selection of applicants by lottery, quotas for low income and minority students, and a sliding scale of voucher value were proposed to ensure that the system would not increase inequality.167

Another reform effort also seized upon the voucher idea as the solution to a third problem. Part of the school finance reform movement emphasized "taxpayer equity," the idea that equal effort by taxpayers should generate the same amount of revenue for schools. Some proponents of this idea have devised a reform of the public school system that emphasizes family choice. The thrust of this reform is to extend the ability to "escape" public schools to a larger segment of the population by allowing them to spend the public money allocated to each child's education at a private school more suited to his or her needs. In order to participate, private schools would have to agree to follow certain regulations set down by a publicly controlled board. In essence, this plan would create a new system of schools which, in the designers' view, would result in a more "public" system than that which presently exists.168
None of these ideas has achieved a significant level of legislative success. The family choice plan was defeated in California referenda in 1979 and 1982. An early 1970's voucher experiment in Alum Rock, California, produced mixed results and did not lead to any more demonstrations. Instead, interest seems to have shifted to a related policy proposal--tuition tax credits.169

One analysis has concluded that vouchers represent too radical a change for Americans and, thus, are unlikely ever to win broad-based approval. An alternative perspective is that the change from voucher to tuition tax credit proposals parallels the increasing strength of the belief that private education is superior and that the private benefits of education are paramount. Voucher proposals, in contrast, reflect some degree of interest in preserving the public benefits of education. Also, the belief that the resulting system would be more public was strong, even in the family choice plan. Neither version incorporated the idea that the public sector should be declared a failure and that public funds would be better spent in private education.

Tuition tax credits rank high with the present administration, as an appropriate federal education policy. This policy, however, is not an invention of President Reagan. In 1978, the House approved a version of the policy (the Senate defeated the bill, but 41 Senators
voted approval). The 1980 Republican platform endorsed tuition tax credits as "a matter of fairness, especially for low-income families..." Despite the failure of the 97th Congress to pass a tax credit bill, the proposal continues to reappear and still commands administration support.170

In addition to representing a shift in policy emphasis from public to private schools, tuition tax credits reflect support for the assumption that the public-private relationship is based on competition and that this competition will produce higher quality public education. The idea of competition appears in proposals for merit pay, magnet schools, and differential pay for teachers of certain disciplines, and clearly provides the foundation for tuition tax credits. Reliance on competition is a component of the complex idea of the free market, and the effectiveness of competition in improving quality holds widespread support. Many Americans would agree with President Reagan who summarizes the idea, "I have remarked before that without a race there can be no champion; without competition to excel in our educational system we will not have excellence."171 The present climate, with its emphasis on private benefits, is very receptive to policies incorporating competition as a solution.

V. Research and Policy
The increased reliance on the device of competition between public and private schools as a basis of remedial policies for public education presents a challenge to the research community. Substantial research is required to provide adequate information to support an explicit social policy for private education, since the private sector has not been studied to a great extent.

While few large-scale inquiries into private schools have ever been undertaken, the general interest in private education has generated a number of such efforts in recent years. Most of these studies seem to focus on one or more of three major questions. First, a substantial portion of the research has been devoted to comparing the educational outcomes of public and private schools. Primarily using standardized test scores and statistical methods to control for variations in student characteristics, researchers have amassed data attempting to determine which sector produces higher achievement. For example, one of the most recent studies, High School Achievement, by James Coleman and others has this form. A related element of this inquiry attempts to identify what characteristics of the school experience relate to high achievement, at least by noting what is common about the schooling that high achieving students receive.172

A second major element of current research tries to
determine what reasons underly the decisions to enroll in private schools. An alternative formulation of this question seeks to identify the characteristics of individuals who choose private education. Finally, a third component seeks to analyze the effects of various policy proposals on existing enrollment patterns. Such research seeks to evaluate such assertions as that only the rich would benefit from tuition tax credits or, alternately, that the poor would enroll in private education at a higher rate. Although the assumptions necessary to draw conclusions of this type are large, some studies are involved in attempting to provide estimates of what the patterns would be.

The focus of current research on these three areas reflects the formulation of the issue as a competition between public and private schools. In this context, questions such as determining which sector offers better quality education are reasonable to pursue. However, research directed in these ways is not useful to address the issue of whether the assumption of a competitive relationship is warranted. In addition, the conclusions supported by research framed in this way are vulnerable to criticism that is likely to weaken their ability to inform the policy debate.

One problem is the difficulty of measuring the quality of an education. No satisfactory consensus has ever
developed around a legitimate way to measure quality. One opinion is that output measures, such as standardized test scores or the percent of graduates attending college, are a reasonable approximation of school quality. An opposing opinion is that easier-to-standardize input measures, such as per-pupil expenditures are a better surrogate. Regardless of which proxy measure is used, the conclusions of the study will be subject to dispute.

Moreover, no current measure of school effectiveness can determine the value-added component of educational output. Thus, for example, if a school system manages to graduate affluent students with reasonable test scores and admissions to selective colleges, the school may well be judged very effective, using output measures. Certainly it would be rated more effective than a school that helps disadvantaged individuals to score slightly below average on standardized tests, and sends many of them directly into the work force. Yet, the extent to which the latter school has added to its students' ability to perform may be greater. Some legitimate way to consider and compare the value-added benefits of schooling would therefore be illuminating. However, in the absence of such a method, studies that rely substantially on quality measures are likely to be subject to criticism. Research attempting to determine the quality difference between public and private schools, thus, is particularly vulnerable to the
measurement of quality problem.

Second, the assumption that public and private educational sectors can be considered and understood in the aggregate does not account for the substantial differences that exist in each sector. For example, a belief that "private schools are better" implicitly equates the education offered at fundamentalist Christian private schools with that provided by Catholic schools and the prestigious, non-denominational boarding schools. Clearly, one would be unlikely to express the idea that a Catholic and a fundamentalist private education are substantially the same. Nevertheless, most research into private education proceeds as if private schools were a singular institution. Distinctions relating to region, to cost differences, to populations served and to type and characteristics of schools are generally minimized.

Nor do researchers often differentiate among public school systems. Although the distinctions within the public sector are of a different nature, they receive treatment similar to the differences within the private sector. Wealthy suburban school systems offer a strikingly different education from that of struggling, inner-city schools. However, both are grouped under the general rubric, "public education."

This reservation extends to the other research questions noted above as well. For example, the reasons
for choosing to enroll in a private school are complex and certainly very different for different categories of private schools. The reasons an inner-city parent opts to enroll his non-Catholic child in a Catholic school likely differ radically from the reasons that a fifth generation graduate of a prestigious boarding school elects to send his son to his alma mater. Yet the design of many research studies treats these two decisions as equivalent.

One result of these problems is that the evaluation of current research is often reduced to a methodological debate. Criticism of the Coleman report, for example, has focussed principally on the assumptions and methods used in the statistical analysis. For example, the appropriateness of comparing the performance of private school students, virtually all of whom are preparing for college, with that of a sample drawn from the full range of students attending public schools has been questioned. One critic has argued that, if only college-bound students within public schools were compared with private school students, any achievement differences noted by Coleman would disappear. Whether this conclusion is any more useful than Coleman's in the current policy debate remains a question.

Thus, the current research framework is not appropriate to address the question of whether the relationship between public and private schools is competitive. In the absence of relevant research
findings, policy discussions and the opinions of the
general public often are based on assumptions about
relationship between the two institutions. One pervasive
belief is the sense that the low quality of public
education causes parents to choose private schools for
their children. If this is true, communities with inferior
schools should have a correspondingly high proportion of
students attending private institutions. To some extent,
this idea provides the foundation for much of the
discussion about the problems of, and remedies for, public
education today. Another belief is that enhancing the
ability of parents to select private schools over public,
by providing financial subsidy of some kind, will establish
a competitive situation whereby the public schools will
have to improve their quality in order to survive. The
logical extension of this idea is that the quality of the
public schools will eventually improve. However, it is not
clear whether this means that communities with high quality
public schools should show a high or a low percentage
attending private schools.

Other theories operate in this arena as well. For
example, one belief is that, since private schools are
exclusive and require above average income to attend,
"rich" communities will send a large proportion of students
to private schools. The quality of the public school is
not an important causal factor in this view. Another
belief is that communities that have a high proportion of students attending private schools are likely to spend a low amount on public education because of the desire to avoid "double" payment for education. The inconsistencies and contradictions inherent in these beliefs do not prevent their concurrent use.

In a sense, each view represents a separate stage in a complicated swirl of events in the relationship between public and private schools. For example, those who expect communities with a high private enrollment to have small expenditures on public education concentrate on a different portion of the scenario than those who assert that competition improves public school quality. In addition, both perspectives tend to ignore the cause and effect relationship. It is not clear whether a high private school enrollment causes a loss of financial support for public schools and, thus, leaves the public institution with inadequate resources to offer a reasonable education or if an inferior public education drives people to seek private alternatives. Whether the "abandonment" or the "improved quality" model serves as the basis, most theories assume the existence of a competitive relationship between public and private education. Currently, these beliefs have become prominent in devising remedies for the "problem" of education.
VI. Empirical Analysis

The current belief in the competitive relationship between public and private education would lead one to assume that private school enrollment is increasing. Many believe that widespread dissatisfaction with public education has resulted in desertion to private education throughout the nation. In today's climate, it is difficult for an individual to believe that the trend could ever operate in the opposite direction—from private to public education. Thus, the seemingly logical conclusion is that the proportion of private school enrollment must be increasing. The figures, however, do not confirm this belief.

In 1948, private schools enrolled 9.5% of the nation's students; in 1979, the figure was 9.8%. During this 30-year span, the proportion ranged from a low of 9.3% to a high of 14.7%. Data from 1889 record 9.3% attending "private" schools. Clearly the variation over 90 years has not been extraordinary. Generally, private education involves about 10% of the nation's students.

In the last two years, private enrollment has increased by 1.1%. This change certainly does not justify sweeping declarations of mass desertion from the public sector. Further, 1982-83 figures show a 2.2% drop in Catholic school enrollment. Private school enrollment in 1981 (10.8%) was, in fact, lower than it was in 1965.
The irony in these figures resides in the realization that the percentage was at its highest when expenditures and faith in public education were relatively high. Today, when the situation is one of retrenchment in both funding and confidence, a smaller proportion opts for private education. However, this type of information does not prohibit even well-regarded studies from assuming great increases in private enrollment.

Despite the rather stable percentage of students who enroll in private education, many insist on studying the fluctuations in enrollment that appear. Interpreting enrollment trends and attempting to find causal explanations occupies a great deal of research effort. Studies find it legitimate to search for the meaning behind the increase from 9.8% to 10.9% between 1979 and 1981. By employing different methods or perspectives, quite different conclusions can be supported by the same numbers. For example, in assessing Dennis Doyle's conclusion that the enrollment patterns provide evidence of dissatisfaction with public education. Laura Salagnik takes the same data and concludes that "from the viewpoint of total enrollment since 1900, the public sector is not atypically weak now." Looking at figures showing a fall-off in Catholic school enrollment, Salagnik questions arguments that explain this drop as due to school closings. In her view, an equally reasonable conclusion is that the decline is due
to changing preferences for types of schooling. Attempting to find causal relationships to explain fluctuations in the trend does not illuminate the issue significantly, particularly when, in the last century, private school enrollment has never exceeded 15%.181

On the other hand, the stability of over-all public school enrollment in the last decade masks the shift in the distribution of private school pupils. Catholic schools in the Northeast saw their enrollment drop by 44% during this period. This decline was balanced by a sharp increase in the number of students enrolling in fundamental schools in the Southwest.182 The aggregate analysis does not show these, perhaps important, changes. In addition, average figures downplay the occurrence of relatively high private school enrollments in certain communities. For example, in 1970, the cities of Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Cleveland and Albany all sent more than 30% of their students to private schools.183 The question of why non-public enrollment is so high in these communities is a reasonable one to pursue, particularly when seemingly comparable cities record very different attendance rates. An inquiry into community-specific differences, therefore, makes much more sense than trying to explain national trends that gloss over localized differences.

One significant departure in research design might results that are more readily useful in evaluating the
existence of a competitive relationship between public and private schools. Rather than focussing on the individual, research should define the community as the appropriate unit of analysis. Decisions to attend private schools typically weigh two possibilities: should the student enroll in the public school provided by the community in which he or she lives, or should the student select a reasonable private school alternative? The assessment of the public schools in the community, therefore, arguably plays an important role in the decision process. Apart from any assumptions about the effects of competition on either institution, what exists at the community level is likely to be critical to the decision.

Traditionally, the community is the unit that determines the character of the available public education. The perceived quality of public education systems is most often assigned on a community basis rather than school by school. The public recognizes, in a general way, whether or not a town has "good" schools. Thus, the pattern of enrollment in each particular community would be a very useful phenomenon to examine.

Several questions that might prove relevant could be examined in such a community-based research design: What type of communities are characterized by a high enrollment in private schools? What measurable relationship exists between private school participation and public school
support within a community? Such a focus legitimately ignores the quality issue as it is usually framed and thus avoids the associated measurement problems. Similarly, individual achievement does not prove useful in examining these questions. Achievement aggregated across one community might produce some useful information, however. For example, what kinds of communities are associated with high achievement?

The important difference in this approach is that the analysis concentrates on community characteristics. The state traditionally delegates the responsibility for providing education to the cities and towns. Thus, it is legitimate to assume some degree of homogeneity within public education in a given community. It is not reasonable to assume sufficient homogeneity within any larger division. Certainly state level analysis will not yield interpretable results. Expansion of the inquiry to the entire public or private sector appears to make little sense. Yet the majority of research has exactly that level of aggregation.

A second reason for concentrating on the community level is that a general increase in the national proportion of students attending private schools will have only a small statistical impact on the average community. Thus, if private school enrollment increased by 500,000 students, and that increase were distributed evenly among the 50
states, the average state public education system, without weighting for population, would lose 10,000 students. In Massachusetts, if those students were drawn equally from the 351 cities and towns, each district would transfer 30 students to private schools. The aggregate proportion of private school enrollment would change from 10.9% to 12.1%, but the local community would likely not notice the impact. However, if those 10,000 students were withdrawing disproportionately from some districts, the effect could be a more serious concern. Thus, the variation of public and private school participation among communities becomes important to determine which communities have a strong tradition of private school enrollment and are, therefore, likely to see a loss of support for their public schools. The public schools in a town with a current 2% enrollment in private schools will not suffer a great effect even if its private school pupils doubled to 4%. On the other hand, a community in which 30% attend private schools will experience a dramatic change if such a doubling occurred there. Knowing when private enrollment is high can help to predict the impact of policy proposals and allow informed speculation on what the causal link might be.

Determining what relationships actually exist in communities can help in assessing the appropriateness of the common assumption of competition. To this end, a study of the patterns of public and private school participation
in 91 Massachusetts communities examined two questions: (1) What are the characteristics of communities that provide good or high quality public education? and (2) what kinds of communities enroll a high proportion of students in private education? The intent of the analysis was to compare the two sets of characteristics to provide information about the relationship between public and private schools in communities.

One strategy of the study was to investigate whether competitive interaction between the two sectors (resulting in abandonment or improved quality, for example) is supported by the data. For example, the results should be able to address the question of whether offering a high quality public education has any relationship to the percentage of students enrolling in private school. Conversely, the same data should show whether a high private school enrollment influences the quality of the public schools.

A second strategy of the analysis was to identify what kinds of communities do offer a high quality public education. Although some argue that the quality of the public education system in a given community is a matter of community preference, other factors may prove to be more important. Further, these characteristics can be compared to the characteristics of those towns enrolling a large proportion of students in private education. This kind of
information can help to clarify the relationship between
the two sectors further and to evaluate the impact of
policy proposals on particular communities.

Each of the basic questions addressed in the study
presented problems in the selection of measures. As noted,
no satisfactory measure of educational quality has yet been
devised. Still, some choice among the available proxies
had to be made. This is a major obstacle in any study of
this type, since, as Robert Reischauer comments:

Although most public concern has correctly
focussed on the disparities in the quality of
education children receive, it has proven
difficult if not impossible to measure and
compare the quality of schooling provided by
different districts.\footnote{185}

In addition:

[T]he problem is compounded by the difficulty
of separating the effect of the schools from
the influences of native ability, home
environment, peer group pressures and other
factors that seem to affect achievement, but
over which the school system has little
control.\footnote{185}

Even the Coleman report received substantial criticism on
this point.

Although the experts have devoted substantial effort
to the problem of a legitimate quality measure, the public,
it can be argued, has no similar problem recognizing "good"
and "bad" schools. Without any scientific data, most
people likely have strong opinions about whether the
school system in their own community is "good," and
probably whether the schools in surrounding towns are "as good". Further, the differences among individual perceptions might well not be very large.

Thus, rather than attempting to solve the problem of measuring school quality, the study used two admittedly imperfect proxies: expenditures per pupil and the percentage of graduates enrolling in four-year private colleges. These two measures represent an input and an output characteristic, each of which matches reasonably well with the ideas of the experts and those of the public, as to what is needed for, and constitutes, "good" education.

Expenditures per pupil, despite its many problems, commonly serves to represent educational quality. Although the effect of an additional $100 expenditure per pupil on the quality of education that a student receives is certainly questionable, few school systems spending in the top 10% would be considered to have poor quality schools. Nor would any of the systems ranking in the bottom 10% be judged to have good schools by any measure of quality. In addition, because the goal of this analysis is to evaluate the principles underlying the current policy discussions, per pupil expenditures must be considered, since the spending decisions in a community may be important in defining the relationship between public and private schools.
The rationale for using the percentage of graduates enrolling in private colleges is that this variable corresponds closely to the opinions about school quality held by the public, despite its likely correlation with such factors as income and social class (or perhaps because of it). Since the public can assign a general label of quality to school systems, some factors must be producing that general sense. High average test scores do not have the broad-based impact on the public necessary to influence opinion. To the extent that private colleges are considered to be more selective and academically prestigious (perhaps this is true only in New England), a high percentage of graduates attending such schools may well convince people that the school and, therefore, the community provide a good quality education. Thus, while the objections to these two measures cannot be disputed, they are, nevertheless, appropriate to this analysis, particularly since its intention is to evaluate existing beliefs, rather than to formulate new principles.

The second area of analysis—determining the characteristics of communities that enroll a large proportion in private schools—is not as problematic. The major issue arises from using the total number of students attending all private schools, rather than using figures for different categories of private schools. As noted previously, dividing enrollment figures among categories of
private schools often results in small sample sizes and uninterpretable results. In this study, however, the important item of investigation is the relationship between the two institutions, not enrollment patterns in various types of private schools. Thus, the dependent variable in this case, percent enrolled in private schools, matches the goal of the analysis.

The study employed ordinary least squares regression analysis to develop models to determine which of a number of independent variables affect the dependent variables of percentage of private school enrollment, percentage of graduates attending private colleges and expenditures per pupil in each community. Several categories of independent variables were considered a priori. The general hypothesis was that wealth, revenue and demographic factors influence the nature of the public education in a community and its relationship to the private sector. Population variables, based on the 1980 U.S. Census of the Population, included the dependency ratio (relating the total school age population to the total population) and the percentage of the population that belongs to a minority group.

1980 Census Data also provided several measures of community wealth. The median value of owner occupied housing and the median family income were used to describe the affluence of a community. Another wealth variable, derived from the mean per capita income, was the amount of
income available per pupil in a given community.\textsuperscript{186} This variable arguably measures the resources available to send an individual student to a private school and, therefore, might influence the proportion of students enrolled in private education.

The revenue category incorporated 1982 fiscal data on equalized tax rates and equalized assessed valuation collected by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue. Equalized assessed valuation, converted to a per pupil measure, and the equalized tax rate, were combined to form a measure of the total tax levy available per pupil. Somewhat analogous to the income per pupil variable, the tax revenue each community has to spend on each pupil gives an indication of the fiscal resources that public education might use.\textsuperscript{187}

School factors, used as both independent and dependent variables, included the per pupil expenditure, the percentage of graduates attending private colleges and the proportion of students enrolled in private schools. Massachusetts' Department of Education data for the 1982-83 school year provided information on the expenditure and private school variables, while the figures for attendance at private colleges come from data on 1981 graduates.\textsuperscript{188}

The sample included 91 communities selected from the 351 municipalities in Massachusetts. Originally, all municipal units comprising the Boston SMSA were included.
The Boston SMSA was chosen because a substantial number of private schools operate within this geographical area. In other sections of the state, in contrast, the availability of private schools varies a great deal. In addition, the variation among Massachusetts communities in the variables chosen precluded using all communities in the sample. The degree of homogeneity among the towns of the Boston SMSA with regard to educational characteristics relevant to this study thus made it the most suitable choice.

One adjustment was made to the sample. The city of Boston was excluded because it represents, in terms of the variables selected, a very atypical community. Boston faces radically different educational issues than do the other cities and towns in the SMSA. The political, social and economic factors influencing this public system are not to be found anywhere else to that degree. Therefore, any results of a study which included Boston would have to be qualified with a separate explanation for the city.

The following table lists descriptive information on the towns in the sample computed from the variables used in the analysis:
The following general model was fit to determine the effects of the independent variables on expenditures per pupil:

\[ Y = B_0 + B_1(Q) + B_2(R) + B_3(S) + B_4(T) + B_5(U) + B_6(V) + B_7(W) + B_8(X) \]

where \( Y \) = expenditures per pupil ($),

\( Q \) = median family income ($),

\( R \) = income per pupil ($),

\( S \) = median house price ($),

\( T \) = levy per pupil ($),

\( U \) = dependency ratio.
\[ V = \text{percent minority population} \]
\[ W = \text{percent attending private colleges} \]
\[ X = \text{percent attending private elementary and high schools} \]

The best model developed from this analysis included the variables levy per pupil, median family income and the dependency ratio. All coefficients were significant at .01 and the \( R^2 \) was .823. The results were as follows:

\[
\text{Per pupil expenditure} = 1517.224 + 0.167(\text{levy per pupil}) + 0.055(\text{median family income}) - 49.331(\text{dependency ratio})
\]

This model shows that higher dependency ratio result in a lower per pupil expenditure. If the community has a higher proportion of children being supported by a smaller proportion of adults, the total amount available is likely to be smaller and more pupils will have to share it. Also, communities characterized by higher family incomes spend more per pupil on education. The positive coefficient for the revenue variable--levy per pupil--indicates that towns that have a larger amount of tax revenue compared to the number of students to educate will allocate a higher amount of education expenditures per pupil than towns with a low ratio.

The relationship this model specifies confirms the belief that wealthy towns with good fiscal capacities and a small number of students in relation to the total population tend to spend a high amount on each student's education. To the extent that per pupil expenditure is a
surrogate for school quality, towns of this type are likely to have high quality schools.

These variables constitute a very good model, explaining over 82% of the variation in expenditures among the communities in the sample. The inclusion of these particular factors does correspond to prevalent notions about what influences school expenditures. According to the model, wealth, revenue and demographic factors have an important impact on the amount allocated to education. However, what did not prove to be important does raise questions about the appropriateness of some commonly held beliefs. School factors, and particularly private school enrollment, did not prove to be the most useful predictors of public school expenditures. The private school enrollment variable was insignificant when added to the best model. Further, no model including this variable explained more of the variation that the model selected. These results suggest that the private school enrollment in a community does not have as powerful an effect on the condition of the public schools as do other factors. Thus, neither the improved quality theory nor the abandonment theory is verified by the analysis.

The best model predicting the other quality variable—percent of graduates attending private colleges—utilized two of the same factors. Median family income and the levy per pupil combined to explain 66.5% of the variation in the
sample ($R^2$ was .665). The dependency ratio proved to be an insignificant factor. The estimated coefficients were as follows:

Percent attending private colleges = \(-21.379 + .003(\text{levy per pupil}) + .001(\text{median family income})\)

Again all coefficients were significant at .01.

Thus, the two measures of public schools quality--per pupil expenditures and the percentage of graduates attending four-year colleges--relate to similar sets of community characteristics. Both indicators are predicted by the same wealth and revenue variables, showing that wealthy communities with a good tax base are more likely to provide high quality schools. Affluence and the revenue generating ability of a community determine the quality of education offered to public school students. Analysis of the public school sector does not support either the abandonment or the improved quality hypotheses concerning the public and private school relationship.

Attempting to identify a comparable model to predict private school enrollment did not result in such clear conclusions. The following general model was fit:

\[ Y = B_0 + B_1(Q) + B_2(R) + B_3(S) + B_4(T) + B_5(U) + B_6(V) + B_7(W) + B_8(X) \]

where $Y = \text{percent of students attending private schools}$

$Q = \text{median family income} ($)

$R = \text{income per pupil} ($)

$S = \text{median house price} ($)
\[ T = \text{levy per pupil} \ ($) \]
\[ U = \text{dependency ratio} \]
\[ V = \text{percent minority population} \]
\[ W = \text{percent attending private colleges} \]
\[ X = \text{per pupil expenditure} \ ($) \]

None of the independent variables combined in any way to explain a substantial amount of the variation. The model that achieved the best results included three variables - median family income, dependency ratio and the tax rate.

The estimated coefficients are as follows:

\[
\text{Percent private school enrollment} = 10.910 + .000(\text{median family income}) - .861(\text{dependency ratio}) + .210(\text{tax rate})
\]

The variables included in this model are similar to those important in predicting public school quality. However, these wealth, revenue and demographic factors only explain 34.7\% of the variation in the private school enrollment figures. Other factors account for over 65\% of the differences among communities in the private school enrollment rates. No other model proved useful.

Evaluating the model chosen to predict expenditures in the public sector as a predictor of private school enrollment showed that the characteristics that affect the latter are not useful in explaining the former. This model, with levy per pupil, median family income and the dependency ratio, explained only 29.8\% of the variation, and the levy per
pupil variable was not a significant factor.

The quite different results obtained in the two main sections of the analysis suggest several conclusions. First, little confirmation was found for the principles at the foundation of much current discussion. Low expenditures on public education do not relate to high participation in private schools. Nor did high private school enrollment affect the measured quality of public schools. Thus, a competitive relationship does not seem obvious from these data. Second, the data support the idea that affluent and property-rich communities offer better educational opportunities than poor and fiscally strained towns. Third, the two elements of a community's educational system—the public and the private sector—are influenced by quite different aspects of the community. The public institution, the data show, can be directly related to measurable characteristics of the community: demographic, fiscal and wealth factors. In contrast, decisions to participate instead in the private sector do not evolve from these elements. Rather, the proportion of the school-attending population that elects private education in a given community depends on factors that escape measurement. Communities, it seems, have cultural components that result in private enrollment patterns that do not fit a general model.

Examination of some specific examples from the data
illustrate this situation. Two contiguous towns, Lincoln and Sudbury, that are relatively homogeneous in many ways and, in fact, share the same high school, record private school enrollment rates of 17.46% and 6.78% respectively. Dover and Sherborn, two other towns in a similar situation, show 19.35% and 11.38% rates of private school enrollment. Even two communities with generally recognized high quality schools, Newton and Lexington, do not have similar figures. Newton sends 16.33% to private schools while Lexington sends only 7.11%. The community in the SMSA with the highest percentage attending private schools is not Boston, the system that, many would argue, offers the lowest quality public education. Nor is Stoughton, the community with the lowest per pupil expenditure, as the abandonment theory would predict, or Lincoln, the town with highest expenditures, as the improved quality theory would predict. Rather, the town of Milton, with almost one third of its students in private schools, ranks first. No explanation of Milton's percentage is obvious, particularly when Belmont, a town that also has a prestigious private school within its borders, reaches only just over a 10% figure.

Consideration of other characteristics illustrates more of the complexity of the situation. The town that has the highest median income and spends the second highest amount per public school pupil (Weston) also participates in private education actively—19.15% of its students are in
private schools. Stoughton, spending the smallest amount per pupil, has a private school rate of only 4.04%. Two communities, both with below average median income and house prices, Everett and Revere, differ by 100% in their private enrollment figures.

The inability of these results to define clear relationships in communities between public and private schools does not terminate pursuit of at least some understanding of the observed differences. Communities are likely much more than the sum of their quantitative characteristics. This aspect of a town, identified as its culture, consists of beliefs, myths and values that serve to guide behavior among community members. Development of the elements of a town's culture may be influenced by observable factors, but, in many instances, the culture, although possible to describe, cannot be explained adequately. Communities are simply different and this difference shows up in the private school enrollment patterns.

Differences of this kind are obvious to those who "know" the town. With cultural knowledge of a community, it is not difficult to predict, for example, whether the private school enrollment rate will be high or low. Despite the inability of statistical analysis to provide answers, observors of the culture do not find it impossible to explain why Belmont's figures are so much lower than
Milton's. Once the explanation is formulated, it is probably possible to find some data which confirm the distinction. However, preferences for the public or private sector are largely community-specific decisions evolving from the culture of each particular locality. Perhaps because of the resulting complexity, the beliefs that operate in the relationship of public and private schools are inconsistent and contradictory. Even if a theory provides a reasonable explanation for a single community, none apply generally. The importance of this conclusion is that each of these beliefs serves as part of the basis for the policy proposals directed toward the private sector. Acknowledging the influence of cultural factors in the variable of interest implies the need for a reevaluation of these proposals.

VI Conclusion

The data presented do not indicate the obvious truth of any of the commonly held beliefs about the relationship between public and private schools. Even in the absence of supporting evidence, however, those who believe in the benefits of competition do not waiver. The exaltation of competition as a remedy for public institutions requires an underlying acceptance of a market philosophy and its application to educational services. Strong belief in the market model replaces the "scientific" evidence usually required to support educational policy. Terrell Bell
articulated this reasoning when, in response to sharp questioning by Senator John Chaffee during hearings about the existence of evidence to support the claim that competition will result in educational improvement, he stated, "The President is simply expressing his belief in the marketplace and how it gives an incentive to excel." \(^\text{189}\)

The question of whether education is a suitable area in which to apply market principles did not originate with the current administration. The use of competition to improve education was an issue in Massachusetts in 1840 between those advocating increased state involvement in education, led by Horace Mann, and a group opposed to increased state responsibility, led by Governor Marcus Morton. A legislative committee report on a bill to abolish the state department of education stated strong support for a free market approach to education. In commenting on the academy system, the report asserted, "There is a high degree of competition existing between these academies, which is the best guaranty for excellence...." \(^\text{190}\) The committee described the framework in which educational institutions should operate:

> It is greatly to be feared, that any attempt, to force all our schools and all our teachers upon one model, would destroy all competition, all emulation, and even the spirit of improvement itself.\(^\text{192}\)

Nor was the belief in the importance of competition confined to Massachusetts. The identical issue arose in
the debate over sectarianism in publicly provided schools which led to the establishment of a separate Catholic School system. According to Carl Kaestle, the inefficiency of a public school monopoly and the benefits of competition were used by various sides of the issue to attack the Public School Society, which controlled all public funds allocated to the charity schools.192

The reappearance of a market framework today corresponds to the shift in the view that education is essential to the country's welfare. Although, for many, the belief in the virtues of competition does approach the level of religion, appropriateness of applying a free market philosophy to education can be analyzed in a relatively systematic fashion. Careful evaluation of this application is important because the use of a market framework continues to grow and the uncritical acceptance of its philosophy could lead to misguided policy. For example, a recent article by James Coleman, the author of the study of private and public school achievement, concludes that tuition for private education operates as a tariff, protecting an inferior product (public education) and harming those at the bottom of the income distribution the most.193 Others incorporate a consumer-producer framework, advocating, for example, that public schools adopt a "marketing plan" for the 1980's if they are to remain competitive.194 Clearly, the market metaphor has
invaded the education policy arena. The data examined suggest that the generally accepted perceptions concerning education are not necessarily accurate; the relationship between public and private schools does not seem to be a simple one. Further analysis, then, is necessary to determine whether any aspect of a market philosophy is appropriately applied to educational institutions.

Two types of evaluations of the market model frequently appear with respect to its application to education. One approach relies on an economic framework. Typically, this analysis discusses whether the conditions required for a market to function exist in the educational arena. The conclusions of these studies, however, do not often have an impact on either policy or the beliefs that operate in its formulation. Despite the agreement of the studies that the conditions for a market do not exist with education, policies based on the market concept continue to appear, and public faith in competition remains strong.

A second view of this issue avoids rigorous economic analysis, concentrating instead on speculating what would be the likely outcomes of implementing an educational marketplace. With little empirical evidence upon which to base conclusions, those pursuing this line of reasoning often rely on comparisons with other institutions in which a market system operates.

Most of the first type of evaluation conclude that
almost all of the fundamental assumptions necessary for a market system are violated with respect to education. First, the nature of the output of the education process presents several problems. As Daniel Sullivan points out, "education is a very diverse and varied item." In particular, because the output of education is a service rather than a commodity, its measurement is very difficult, even apart from the educational problems already mentioned. Sullivan also presents two other important ideas. The measurement of the quality of the educational service is further complicated by the relationship of the input or the consumer (the student) to the output. Judging education by the level of student performance is thus analogous to judging the quality of surgeons by the survival rate of their patients, ignoring how seriously ill they were when their physician started treatment. Further, the inability to define the outcome of the education process precisely makes it impossible to argue that education "products" are homogeneous.

In addition, the absence of a well-specified production function for education suggests that a market metaphor is not appropriate. Producers do not have the ability to control education production. As noted, the consumer (student) plays an important role in the process. Further, the teaching process is neither clearly defined nor scientific. Learning theories, much like educational
policy, are often contradictory. These characteristics also lead to another violation of the market assumption: the need for complete and accurate information. At several different levels, the need for good information is not met in an educational marketplace. The process of acquiring necessary information is likely to be slow and costly to consumers. Consumers also typically know even less than producers about the nature of the education product. More important is the fact that neither the producer nor the consumer knows a great deal about the process of education. Jane Hannaway describes the situation:

> Professional education [producers] know more about what goes on in schools, but the former are usually unable to predict either the effect of their efforts or the best way to proceed with production.  

If a market were to operate in this situation, inefficiency would be the predictable result.

A basic assumption of any model employing competition as a motivating force is that those participating in the market will exhibit profit maximizing behavior. Two deviations from this pattern exist in the educational institution. Many private schools operate on a non-profit basis and, therefore, are unlikely to use price adjustments to respond to increased or decreased demand. Indeed, many private institutions admit the same number of students each year, without regard for changes in the demand for
admission. Although many explanations are possible, the desire to maintain the exclusiveness of private schools may well rank higher as a motivating force than any interest in showing a profit.\(^{199}\)

The second area in which a utility function may not operate is in the nature of the benefits produced. Whether the benefits of education at any given time are principally private or public is a complicated question to answer. The definitions of public and private, the problems of measuring benefits that are clearly public and the interrelationship of public and private benefits result in the labelling of education as a "mixed good," with little agreement as to how the mixture is structured.\(^{200}\)

Several of the characteristics of a hypothetical educational marketplace suggest the likely conflict between efficiency and equity. For example, the inability of the poor and the poorly educated to obtain the information necessary for efficient choices prevents the market from operating efficiently for those people. Thus, existing inequities will probably be duplicated. Some argue that the efforts of the public schools to increase equity will be undermined by any policy attempting to institute market allocation:

Like anything else, relying on a market mechanism for the distribution of educational resources will surely result in more diversity among institutions, (but probably less within them) and may also lead to greater efficiency within the educational sector as a whole. But with reliance
on external forces, the issue of equity...will be slighted.... The social function performed by common public schools is too important to be jeopardized on the faint hope that we might make education more cost-effective....

Thus, those who advance this argument against the market system for allocating educational services are elevating the importance of the public, rather than the private, benefits of education.

Thus, the debate over the legitimacy of the assumptions underlying the use of a market mechanism in the education sector seems one-sided. Very few of those advocating market remedies for the "problems" of education address the issue of whether the necessary assumptions are valid. Despite an often rigorous economic paradigm, many studies implicitly assert belief in the existence of competition and neglect the responsibility to subject this underlying assumption to a similarly demanding scrutiny.

Investigations into the potential outcomes of market-based policy proposals separate into two categories. One type of study, within the framework of the market assumptions, attempts to determine how education consumers and producers will respond to market forces. For example, Martha Jacob's study examined existing patterns of private school enrollment by region, race and family income concluded that Northern, white, wealthy individuals would be most likely to benefit from tuition tax credits.

Besides ignoring the appropriateness of the
assumptions, this type of research suffers from a lack of empirical evidence upon which to base conclusions. It can be argued that no implementation of a market system has occurred in the provision of education in recent history. (The Alum Rock, California, experiment involving educational vouchers included a high degree of regulation that made extrapolation extremely difficult. Further, the small degree of success encourages many to ignore this example\textsuperscript{203}. Therefore, attempts to predict the behavior that would result if any such system were enacted can only be speculative. Further, any specific conclusions are likely to be based on a significant number of faulty assumptions about the appropriateness of a market framework.

A second approach to the question of what would happen if education were allocated by market mechanisms is to draw analogies. This approach frequently leads to conclusions about the likely negative consequences of market policies. Because of the failure of economic arguments to focus on the assumption of competition that underlies market proposals, this approach could arguably be more effective. For example, without conducting an exhaustive evaluation of the assumption, George LaNoue pinpoints a fundamental contradiction in it when he comments:

But which of the great American industries would be a suitable model for the educational marketplace? The "free enterprise" transportation industry? Lockheed or Penn
Central? How about the medical industry, now financed in part by Medicaid vouchers, which do not seem to have done much to improve the overall health of Americans or even the fiscal solvency of hospitals, though some doctors are doing very well?  

Although some situations have changed since 1971 when this comment appeared, the examples could easily be replaced today by Chrysler, Amtrak and the National Football League. Very few would argue that the system proposed for education exists in pure form in other business sectors.

The emphasis of arguments of this type falls on the public benefits of education and, in particular, the degree of equity in the outcomes of education service delivery. While acknowledging that "the public sector has failed the poor in the efficient production and allocation of social services," Henry Levin provides two specific examples that illustrate that the private market does not exhibit any better record. First, he cites two studies that demonstrate that the same goods purchased in a poor neighborhood cost 60% more than their price in a general market. "The failure of the market to give rich and poor access to privately produced goods and services should, in itself, make us skeptical about applying it to education." A second related point is that, in a market system, education producers establish schools in response to the demand. Despite a likely demand for education in poor neighborhoods, few producers of "high quality" educational services will locate in low income areas.
Levin's analogy makes the point rather dramatically, "Not only is there no Saks Fifth Avenue in Harlem; there is no Macy's, Gimbels, Korvettes or Kleins." Levin also cites the experience in Prince Edward County, Virginia, when, in 1959, the county abolished its public schools and provided each student with a tuition grant to attend private schools. "While a system of private schools did emerge to serve the needs of white students, no private alternative became availability to black pupils." Clearly the market system operated as badly as its critics would predict; public benefits were ignored and only those possessing the greatest resources were able to obtain the private benefits.

The Alum Rock experiment does provide some support for the argument that negative effects result from implementation of market remedies for education. In particular, the emphasis on private benefits and the neglect of public benefits was revealed in the voucher demonstration. David Cohen views this as a predictable consequence of allocating education by a private market:

[T]hey encourage competitive rather than collective behavior. Consumers of most goods and services, if they concentrate on anything at all, concentrate on getting the best deal for themselves. In the case under discussion here, that would mean ensuring good education for their own children, because under market competition consumers would perceive the limited supply of good schools. They would be most unlikely to spend time organizing to assure a good education for everyone else's children.
As the production of private benefits becomes the dominant objective of education, those with money and choice will be better equipped to win the competition for these private goods.

One dimension of the consequences of a market policy that receives very little attention is the long-term effects of tuition tax credits and other market-oriented policies. Assuming that the argument advanced by proponents are legitimate, the intended effect of such policies is improved quality of public schools due to the necessity of competing with private schools for students. If that effect were achieved, the question arises as to what will happen after the quality gap is closed. Logically, as the quality of public and private schools becomes more equal, more students will tend to choose to attend public schools, due to its lower price. Once that shift takes place, what is the next step? The equilibrium situation in this model is difficult to describe. Perhaps that is the reason so few advocates or critics attempt to articulate the possibilities. It is possible that the entire framework, based on illegitimate assumptions, will break down in the long run.

Thus, strong doubts exist as to the appropriateness of employing the elements of the economic paradigm in education policy. The economic assumptions required are not valid; analogous situations do not predict acceptable
outcomes; and the Massachusetts data suggest the relationship between public and private schools is not defined by competition. Yet the idea of the benefits of competition continues to command strong support.

Perhaps one explanation for the persistence of this belief is that competition does operate in the education institution, but in a way very different from the usual understanding. Because of the current focus of interest in the economic purpose of education, the interest in pursuing the private benefits of education has also increased. Education has become a good for which people are willing to compete. Clearly there are two sides competing in the race for educational benefits. However, these two sides are not the public and private sectors of education, as is usually assumed. First, these two sides are not as separate and distinct from each other as many perceive them to be. Further, within each sector, large variations exist around the type and quality of education. Second, some analysis indicates that, within communities, these two institutions are not in competition. At least, the existence of competition is not obvious. Third, the two types of education are not distinguished by the "quality" of their output. The current belief that "private is better" does not hold up under critical analysis. Indeed, even the Coleman report, the most commonly quoted conclusion of which was the superior achievement of private school
students, recognizes that some public schools do match the achievement levels of private schools. The identification of this sub-sector of public education helps to delineate the actual sides of the education competition. High-performance suburban high schools in wealthy communities show substantial similarities to private schools. What appears to be happening is that the competition for educational benefits occurs between the rich and the poor, with the poor, "lacking mobility, education, income and access to capital" predictably losing the race. The tradition of local provision of schooling, combined within an implicit encouragement, by public policy, of residential sorting, has allowed the rich to employ the public institution to gain private benefits. This situation, although it has its roots in past practices, such as the charity schools, results from the evolving emphasis over the past few years on the private, rather than public benefits of education. As one observer has noted: "While all parents struggle on behalf of their own children, middle-income and white parents are better able to press their interests (both in schools and in the political arena) than are lower-income and minority parents. Middle-income and white parents can more readily "exit" from a school they dislike, moving to a new neighborhood or placing their children in private schools...."
However, the question still remains as to why tuition tax credits and similar proposals appeal to some when the system described above allows an individual with sufficient resources to obtain a high quality education at public expense. It is possible that many feel that maximum private benefits have been extracted from the public institution as it exists. One perspective on this question is that efforts to improve the equality of education in the 1960's and 1970's raised doubts "that the middle class and the poor could both be served by the public school." Whether the symptoms of "declining quality" in these high quality public systems are real or perceived, the interest in tuition tax credits becomes a logical extension of the competition for private benefits. Believing that private schools are now "better," individuals attempt to procure the benefits of a private education. With the long tradition of using public means to acquire private benefits, it is reasonable to attempt to establish yet another public policy that will allow the rich to obtain more private benefits with public funds. Once again, the policy represents a wealth transfer from the poor to the rich.

Thus, the current debate about the relationship between public and private schools seems to be irrelevant. If public schools can simply be described as the "schools of the people" and private schools as the "schools of some
people," the need for a redefinition of the debate becomes clear. The "some people" who obtain high quality education are primarily the rich, and their education occurs in both public and private institutions (using more traditional definitions). The schools that enroll the remaining students, the poor, are also both public and private. For example, inner city "private" schools that once served immigrant Catholics now provide education for minority populations. The argument can be made that these private schools offer a higher quality education than the public schools otherwise available to their students. However, the education they provide, with their limited resources, certainly does not equal that received by students in prestigious boarding schools or even in suburban Catholic schools. Attempting to define the category of "some" people by including all those students participating in "private" education does not seem legitimate from this perspective. What does seem reasonable to assert is that some students receive a "good" education and those students are more often rich. The insistence on determining whether that education is public or private serves only to mask the wealth disparity that is a systematic characteristic of education in the United States.

Policy proposals that fail to acknowledge the critical importance of the competition between rich and poor and
concentrate instead on the imagined competition between public and private education do not address the fundamental problem of American education. As a result, such proposals are unlikely to produce improvement in the overall performance of all schools.
Notes


2. Ibid.


13. Ibid., p.134.


17. Ibid.


19. Ibid., p.111.


24. Butts and Cremin, p.86.


27. Ibid., p.23.


32. Butts and Cremin, p.249.


36. Kaestle, Pillars, p.34.

38. Kaestle and Vinovskis, p.16.


40. Butts and Cremin, p.239.

41. Ibid.

42. Gabel, p.326.

43. Sizer, p.42.


46. Ibid., p. 57.

47. Ibid., p. 114.


49. Kaestle and Vinovskis, p. 16.

50. Adams, p. 79.

51. Swift, p. 27.


54. Ibid., p.300.

55. Kaestle and Vinovskis, p.18,52; Kaestle, *Pillars*, p.76; Gabel, p.179.

56. Schultz, p.22.

57. Ibid., p.29.

58. Ibid, p.44.

59. Kaestle and Vinovskis, p.144.
60. Ibid., p.18; Kaestle, Pillars, p.76.
63. Lazerson, p.17.
64. Ibid.
65. Schultz, p.25.
66. Ibid.
69. Keastle, Pillars, p.27.
70. Ibid., p.27.
71. Ibid., p.71.
73. Ibid., p.42.
74. Ibid., p.41
75. As quoted in Kaestle and Vinovskis, p.34.
76. Ibid.
77. Ibid., p.89.
78. Kaestle, Evolution, p.73.
79. Kaestle and Vinovskis, p.34.
80. As quoted in Kaestle, Pillars, p.34.
81. As quoted in Cremin, p.61.
82. As quoted in Kaestle, Pillars, p.39.
83. As quoted in Ibid., p.77.
84. As quoted in Ibid., p.76.
85. Mead, p.46.

87. Cohen and Rosenberg, p.120.

88. As quoted in Adams,p.19.

89. As quoted in Sizer, p.21.


91. Ibid.


93. Schultz,p.71.


97. As quoted in Everhart,p.xxi.

98. As quoted in Schultz, p.260.

99. As quoted in Ibid.,p.258.

100. Butts and Cremin, p.199.

101. Adams,p.46.

102. As quoted in Cremin, p.92.

103. Schultz, p.31.

104. Grubb and Lazerson, p.132.


106. Schultz, p.31.


109. Kaestle and Vinovskis, p.188.
110. As quoted in Cremin, p.58.

111. Ibid.,p.60.

112. Ibid.,p.35.

113. Ibid.

114 Ibid.,p.40.

115. Ibid.,p.54.


118. Ibid.,p.18.


120. Mead, p.151.

121. Schultz, p.35.

122. Mead, p.140.


124. As quoted in Ibid.,p.78.

125. As quoted in Ibid., p.204.

126. Kaestle, Pillars, p.79.

127. Sizer, p.137.


131. Charles Foutch, "Your Student Fees May Be Pricing Some
132. Ibid.


137. Alex Heard, "Backers of Public School Bible Classes Prepare for Court Battles in Bristol, Va.," Education Week (February 23, 1983), p.4.


139. Grubb and Lazerson, p.293.

140. Ibid., p.45.

141. Ibid.

142. As quoted in Cremin, p.77.

143. Grubb and Lazerson, p.46.


145. Ibid., p.17.

146. Ibid., p.2.

147. Grubb and Lazerson, p.131.

148. Ibid., p.137.

149. Lazerson, p.18.

150. Ibid.


152. Ibid., p.437-439.
153. Ibid., p. 439.
154. Ibid., p. 444.
155. Ibid., p. 467.
156. Ibid., p. 429.

157. For data sources see notes 185, 186, 187.


159. For data sources see notes 185, 186, 187.


161. Grubb and Lazerson, p. 130.


163. Ibid.


182. Ibid., p. 3.


184. Ibid., p. 60.

185. Ibid.


188. Data obtained from Bureau of Data Collection, Massachusetts Department of Education.


190. Ibid., p. 227.


196. Ibid. p. 48.

197. Ibid.


199. Ibid., p. 73.

200. Sullivan, p. 47.


203. Cohen and Farrar.


206. Ibid.

207. Ibid.

208. Cohen, p. 441.


210. Levin, p. 34.

211. Grubb and Lazerson, p. 144.

212. Ibid., p. 151.

213. Thomas James, "Tuition Tax credits and the Pains of a Democracy," Phi Delta Kappan, 63, No. 9 (May, 1982).