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**WORKING FOR DISCIPLINE  
in  
THE CLASSROOM**

**A THESIS  
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## PREFACE

Throughout my teacher training program in the Darien public schools, I was concerned about the problem of social control in the classroom. As I observed other teachers handle difficult children, I wondered, "Would I have handled the situation in the same way?". True, I had managed my own three children when the need arose, but, here, it usually meant dealing with only one child in a familiar setting. Would the same methods be reasonable in a room with thirty or more youngsters? Had my course-work prepared me to handle the individual behaviors that gradually would emerge from the September faces?

The answers to these questions were important to me as a beginning teacher. I checked the library for references to "classroom discipline" to see what techniques other more experienced teachers recommended. As I furthered my reading, I realized that this day-to-day problem had implications both for the child as well as for the teacher. I solicited more teacher experiences by distributing a short questionnaire. This was mimeographed and sent to three separate school systems. They were as follows: 1) A Stamford, Connecticut junior high school, 2) a Darien, Connecticut elementary school and 3) Richmond, Indiana elementary and junior-senior high schools. A copy of the questionnaire will be found in the appendix.

I hoped to get a sampling of the proportion of difficult children in a classroom, kinds of misbehavior handled most frequently, and helpful techniques for dealing with misbehavior. Fifty questionnaires were submitted to the principals of the schools for distribution. Of those responding, sixteen were elementary school teachers, one a high school teacher, and twenty-two were junior high school teachers. The average teaching experience was 10.92 years with a range of from less than one year's experience to thirty-five years. With regard to the question, "What per cent do you consider difficult to handle?", 34.3 per cent of the teachers said 1 per cent or less were difficult; 20.0 per cent had more than 1 per cent but less than 5 per cent; 8.6 per cent had more than 5 per cent but less than 10 per cent; and 40.0 per cent had more than 10 per cent that were difficult.

The above results indicated clearly to me that "classroom discipline" was not unique with beginning teachers. Results also showed that misbehavior existed at just about all age levels. Most teachers in my survey felt that school policies were clearly defined by the school administration, but most of the disciplining was left to the teacher.

This paper is not intended primarily as a behavioral study nor is it intrinsically on classroom management. It must, of necessity, combine both viewpoints to include the actions of the individual and their effect on others in the group and the teacher's responsibility in guiding this behavior so that

learning may take place. The ideas set forth in this thesis are intended as guides for the teacher so that he may have a workable foundation on which to base his decisions for wise handling of misbehavior that will enable the child to grow in the power of self-discipline.