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Juvenile delinquency: approaches and treatment

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JUVENILE DELINQUENCY:
APPROACHES AND TREATMENT

by

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Submitted in partial requirement
for fulfillment of the Senior Scholars Program

Colby College

1954
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CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

One of the most critical problems facing the American nation today is the delinquency of its children and adolescents. It is questionable whether there is a greater problem today than in the past.

The problem has been brought out in the open now through the action of our law enforcement agencies and social service organizations, while in earlier times few statistics were available concerning delinquency.

Even today, many delinquent children escape the attention of the law or are in such a favorable situation in the community that their misdemeanors are passed by. Paul Tappan states:

All, or at least the vast majority of, normal children sometimes indulge in forms of behavior that might come within the purview of the juvenile court. Whether a given child will get into trouble depends largely on the interpretation that is attached to his conduct and the willingness or ability of the parent to deal with it. 1

Apparently, there are very few model children who might be considered paragons of virtue except through parental understanding and leniency. This statement leads to the question of "what is juvenile delinquency?" Stanley D. Porteus expresses the attitude and wish that those who study delinquents should concentrate less attention on the abnormal and more on the commonplace. He feels that delinquents as a group do not fall far outside the range of normal mentality and temperament. "The large majority of delinquents are not psychopathic or mentally sick. Research

should be directed towards characteristics which are common to all of us, but which, by reason of excess or deficiency, tilt the scale towards delinquent behavior.\footnote{Stanley Porteus, "Setting the Sights for Delinquency Research," Federal Probation, June, 1953.}

In attempting to solve any problem, it is imperative to first define the terms. In juvenile delinquency, this is an area of much disagreement. Even the state statutes are vague in their definitions of delinquency.

Laws throughout the United States and in the Canadian provinces contain one class of clearly defined delinquency: any act which if committed by an adult would be a crime. Thus the violation of laws and ordinances constitute delinquency in the child. In most jurisdictions the delinquency statute also includes a wide variety of acts or courses of conduct that are not punishable if committed by an adult, generally at least eight or nine supplementary clauses being used to define these more general circumstances.\footnote{Paul Tappan, Comparative Survey on Juvenile Delinquency (New York: United Nations Publication, 1952), p.3.}

The New York statute, which is fairly typical in its substantive coverage, defines a delinquent as a child under 16 years of age who

- a) Violates any law or any municipal ordinance, or
- b) Commits any act which if committed by an adult would be a crime, except a child of 15 years of age who commits an act which if committed by an adult would be punishable by death or life imprisonment, unless the case has been removed to the children's court pursuant to a specified procedure, or
- c) Who is incorrigible or ungovernable or habitually disobedient and beyond the control of his parent, guardian, custodian or other lawful authority, or
- d) Who is habitually truant, or
- e) Who, without just cause and without the consent of his parent, guardian, or other custodian, repeatedly deserts his home or place of abode, or
- f) Who engages in any occupation which is in violation of law, or
- g) Who associates with immoral or vicious persons, or
h) Who frequents any place the existence of which is in violation of law, or
i) Who habitually uses obscene or profane language or who begs or solicits alms or money in public places under any pretense, or
j) Who so deports himself as to wilfully injure or endanger the morals or health of himself or others. ¹

It should be apparent from this one illustration that the types of behavior appearing in legal statutes are not precise. They might describe the normal behavior of the little inhibited and non-neurotic child. The most commonly employed justification of loose definitions of delinquency is that although statutes are generally a part of criminal law, they exempt the child from criminal responsibility. Their purpose is educative and corrective rather than punitive; therefore, due process considerations are irrelevant.

The most basic question in this study, then, is "what is delinquency?", yet it is the most difficult to answer. A dilemma arises in attempting to define delinquency because the majority of criminologists and sociologists disregard this basic question and answer instead the question, "what is delinquent behavior?" It is important to determine the nature of delinquency clearly because on the definition of the term rests all the differences which isolate a juvenile delinquent from an adult criminal, on the one side, and from the non-offender on the other. The delinquent child is dealt with differently from the criminal in theory and often in practice: in the conduct involved, the court and its methods employed, the philosophy, purposes and methods of treatment, and the individual's status, reputation, and civil rights in the community after adjudication. Even more important is the distinction

¹Tappan, Juvenile Delinquency (New York, 1949), f.n., p.155.
WHAT IS A DELINQUENT?

Legend:
A. All children in given area, below given age.
B. All children showing deviant behavior, whether or not anti-social.
C. All deviants committing anti-social acts as defined by law.
D. All anti-social deviants detected.
E. All detected anti-social deviants reaching any agency.
F. All apprehended anti-social deviants brought to court.
G. All court anti-social deviants "found" delinquent.

between the non-criminal youth and the delinquent. With all the stigma attached to conflict with the law, it is necessary to decide to whom those measures need be applied which may be permanently injurious to the role and status of the individual, and who justly should be exempt from them.

The problem of definition arises partly from the two contrasting views in the field of juvenile delinquency. The two general types of approach are: the legalistic view, and the non-legal or administrative view. The individual's concept of delinquency generally falls into one of these two categories, and the adjudication of delinquents reflects the basic approach.

Legal View.—The legalistic approach defines delinquency as "an act, course of conduct, or situation which might be brought before a court and adjudicated." ¹

Tappan states that: ²

the juvenile delinquent is a person who has been adjudicated as such by a court of proper jurisdiction though he may be no different, up until the time of court contact and adjudication at any rate, from masses of children who are not delinquent.

Any adjudicatable conduct, although it may be defined as delinquency in the abstract, cannot be measured as delinquency until the court has found the facts of delinquency to exist. Thus, in the legal approach, the child is not a delinquent unless the court has declared him such. A true attempt is made to treat only the delinquent with the sanctions of the state by stressing the following requirements:

1) that a specific charge be alleged against the defendant

2) that it be defined in definite terms by law

¹Tappan, Juvenile Delinquency, op. cit., p.30.
²Ibid., p.30.
3) that the offense be proved rather conclusively

4) that protection be given to the accused during trial against conviction by false, misleading, prejudicial, irrelevant, or immaterial evidence.

The young delinquent is often not subjected to full rigors of the law by reason of his youth, but the legal view, nevertheless, would preserve the test of delinquency status before applying any methods of treatment.

Administrative View.—In contrast to the strictly procedural and normative trend of legalism, the administrative approach follows a different set of values and methods. Delinquency is considered not only anti-legal behavior, but also anti-social. The aims of this view are generally therapeutic; to seek the cause and social roots of the youth's difficulties and aid in resolving his maladjustments by eradicating the conflicting elements within the individual. It attempts to deal with a wide variety of behavior problems which are usually a result of maladjustment, personally and socially. The theory behind the administrative or non-legal approach is one of behavior in contrast to the theory of law represented by the legalists.

The Dictionary of Sociology defines juvenile delinquency thus:

"The anti-social acts of children or persons under age. Such acts are either specifically forbidden by law or may be lawfully interpreted as constituting delinquency." 2 The loose definitions of delinquency in state statutes reflect the latter part of this statement.

In a booklet designed to help youth understand the problem of delinquency, a list of the characteristics of a delinquent appears. This clearly illustrates the anti-social behavioral approach of the administr-
To sum it up - the delinquent is usually a young person who:

1) does not find in his home or school or neighborhood the satisfaction he needs for a happy life,

2) does not have someone who loves and respects him through all the ups and downs of life,

3) is bored or unsuccessful in school,

4) often feels lonely and "left out" and so turns to a gang for companionship,

5) turns to drugs for escape from his problems,

6) does not find adventure and excitement in sports and games and other wholesome activities,

7) gets started on the wrong track and can't get back without help,

8) does not have a clear idea of his own good qualities and the ways to develop them. ¹

The negative aspect of these behavioral traits is very conspicuous. Many young people face these difficulties, yet they do not become delinquents. The causes for delinquency must be sought elsewhere.

Tappan states that delinquency has very little specific behavioral content either in law or in fact, other than the provision that acts which would, when committed by an adult, be considered crimes, in a juvenile are delinquency. ² Thus, in answering the question, "who is the delinquent?", it is impossible to state definite traits which characterize a delinquent youth. Stanley D. Porteus suggests that by measuring slopes or gradients in delinquent character and also the strength and direction of the delinquent impulse, we would be able to predict delinquency in a child. He feels that character gradients in people, such as their temperamental characteristics, may be employed in

² Tappan, Juvenile Delinquency, op. cit., p.30.
predicting delinquency. The difference in individuals' ability to weigh and measure adequately and find the most fitting solution leads to his opinion that a delinquent act may be deliberate rather than hasty. "The offender fits his piece of behavior into what he thinks is a satisfying pattern of common social conduct." Porteus' attitude reflects that of many others. Delinquency is not predetermined, and no one is born destined to become a delinquent. Just as good character traits are learned, delinquency is learned, and many factors enter into this learning process. Opinions vary as to the importance of these factors or causes of delinquency; some sociologists would suggest that there is only one causal factor and some profess a multiple causation theory. I shall discuss a few of these theories of causation, all of which are conspicuously theories of behavior and might be applied to any behavior problem, not just delinquency. Whether or not one is a legalist or follows the administrative view makes no difference in discussing causes of delinquency. Both approaches look to behavioral theories to discern just why a young person learns delinquency.

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1 Porteus, "Setting the Sights for Delinquency Research", op.cit.
CHAPTER II

CAUSATION

It should be evident from the previous chapter that there are two inseparable problems involved in an analysis of juvenile delinquency. Many complications arise with the dilemma resulting from an attempt to answer the question, "what is delinquency?". There is no agreement in the field of criminology as to what constitutes juvenile delinquency or crime; no distinction has been made between behavior which violates a code and the code which is violated. The legalists emphasize a specific answer to the aforesaid question, basing their approach on the legal code which is violated, but those of the administrative orientation deal, instead, with the question, "what is delinquent behavior?". When it comes to a discussion of causal factors, both approaches become entangled with theories of delinquent behavior, and a method of treatment follows from the theoretical approach to causation of delinquency. As yet, there is no theory which has a universal application; in every case exceptions may be found which discredit the use of a theory as the one, single cause of all delinquent behavior.

Although the concept of cause has been subjected to the scrutiny of logicians and students of scientific method for many years, criminologists seem to neglect this ill defined area. A few sociologists are aware of the importance of delving into the meaning of the concept of cause, but their concern with etiology does not often carry over into the field of juvenile delinquency. A sociologist writes:
Yet the criminologists have on the whole proceeded in their etiological studies without too much worry, and often with none at all, about the meaning of the word cause. In most cases it is quite obvious that the term cause is used in criminology in its popular vague sense. Here, then, is clearly a case of extensive research with the crucial term of the hypothesis ill defined or not defined at all. How can one hope to produce scientific knowledge by verifying hypotheses which propose a relationship of cause and effect without having fixed what this relationship implies and means. In this respect, from the standpoint of scientific method, the field of etiology of delinquent behavior is as yet in a very naive and raw state indeed. 1

Most individuals who are concerned with the etiology of a certain type of behavior neglect to recognize the fact that any occurrence is preconditioned by the total situation which has preceded it. They single out of this situation one or more factors and designate these as the cause or causes of the event. Since treatment is based on the assigned cause, the factor selected must be something which can be changed or altered by man. Today, man is more interested than ever in influencing the state of the society in which he lives; therefore, he proclaims the cause of delinquency to be some situation or factor which he may eliminate through his own efforts. This is the reason why the legalists, who define delinquency in non-behavioral terms, must look to behavioral theories of causation. Technically, the answer to the question, "what is delinquency?", for the legalist, lies in the structure of the state system with its laws determining the nature of delinquency. According to Aristotle's theory of cause, therefore, the formal cause of delinquency would be the laws of a society, and the material cause would be the customs and mores of that society, not the individual's behavior. However, because a reorganization of the structure of the state is an

impossible solution to the problem existing at present, even the legalists resort to an etiology which may be readily manipulated.

In order to completely understand the delinquent child, one must recognize cause as a complex and whole process involving many particular variables which interact with the individual producing some form of violative behavior. The role of these variables will differ from case to case depending on the component elements themselves in relationship with the child. Most sociologists today and in the past have misled the public in their research of criminal causation because they have based their conclusions on statistical descriptions, mere quantitative studies of the frequency of particular variables observed in connection with delinquent children. Delinquency, however, can not be attributed to a single cause. Social variables, such as the home, poverty, and leisure time, are all aspects of the situation, but they are not causes. Delinquency is a relationship within a field defined by the individual's heredity and environment, and there is no theory as yet which completely relates all the factors to an over-all principle. Each school of thought which designates a particular factor as cause is falling into a mechanistic fallacy by assuming that the factor in itself produces a result.

One must think, instead, in terms of the relative qualities and natures of the cause and the effect. For example, according to the mechanistic theory of causation, which is sometimes called the "billiard ball" theory, A strikes B causing B to strike C and so on. In the field of criminology, B would equal behavior, and the question is asked, "What is A?" Here the single factor explanations crop up which I shall try to analyze. Causation has been treated as an absolute entity, not as a trait. For example, when a stone hits a window and breaks it, people are inclined to say that the stone caused the window to break. Actually, the structure
of the window in relationship to the structure of the stone brought about the effect of breaking. If the window were made of steel, the cause would be the same, but the effect would be different. Cause is not an absolute entity; it is a relationship. Delinquency is the effect produced by the individual as a result of an interaction between him, including both his hereditary and environmental characteristics, and some causal process within the social structure.

There are two conditions to any cause: the necessary and the sufficient. The necessary cause of a disease is some kind of germ, but the sufficient cause of that disease is the interaction of the germ and an unhealthy organism. Thus, in the problem of delinquency, the necessary cause may be a broken home, but the sufficient cause will lie within the relationship of the individual to his home. This relationship may result in delinquent or non-delinquent behavior. So it is that a broken home does not always result in delinquency. This emphasis on relationships accounts for the findings from the twin studies made by Lange, and others in which two children with almost identical heredity differ in their delinquent tendencies. Sociologists frequently assume that cause is contained entirely within the individual; therefore, they offer explanations of behavior, not delinquency. I believe that an explanation of delinquency can be found only in a study of the relationships and interactions of the individual within the social structure commonly called society.

A field theory would explain delinquency as a part of the interactional process of life. An individual exists within a certain field in which there are many factors operating constantly. Whether or not one becomes delinquent depends upon the functioning of the child in relation to all the different variables in his field. The process of
becoming delinquent might be compared to the process of starting a fire. There are many necessary factors in the situation, such as the presence of oxygen, some combustible material, and a match. An interaction of the different elements within the field is necessary to start the fire. In the same manner, an interaction of the child and the many varied elements within his field may or may not produce delinquent behavior, depending on the structures of both the young person and also the factors which form the relationship.

Some of the social variables which frequently appear as causal factors in delinquency will be discussed in the following chapter.
CHAPTER III

THEORIES OF DELINQUENT BEHAVIOR

Social Variables

The family.—The most commonly designated factor among single influences is the family. Because the family is considered the basic institution of society, and the Freudian theory of psychoanalysis is centered around childhood experiences within the family, great emphasis has been placed on this one social variable. During the early years of life, the basic attitudes, norms, and values, which assert a lasting effect on the life history of the individual are established.

The family is the socializing agent for the child; therefore, if the family is weak in this function, the child may not be socialized or adhere to the values of the society in which he lives. In the home, the child learns what to expect from and concede to others. He is taught to realize that others besides himself have rights which must be respected. The family, therefore, is the source of the first training in behavior and misbehavior. It is also the most homogeneous, unified, and intimate social group to which the child is likely to belong. ¹

Thus, in this primary group, a cooperative attitude may develop, but on the other hand, because of the close relationships within the group, frictions and strong emotional tones may develop. These tend to play a significant role in the future personality of the developing child.

The family is also the means through which the child learns the cultural values which determine his future happiness in his society. Only when these values are exemplified within the family circle will they be internalized by the individual child. If the members of the family do not "practice what they preach" there is little hope that the child will learn the accepted values of his culture. Taft suggests that one of the most important personality traits which are acquired through experiences and training in the home is courtesy. True courtesy means a recognition of the rights, desires, and needs of others. This implies a social man who has so internalized the value of courtesy that it has become a integral part of his character, thus he recognizes the interdependence of man and the necessity of cooperation. Taft concludes: "There is perhaps no single personality trait which guarantees immunity from crime, but courtesy, so defined, surely is the best protection against crime. A socialized family teaches such courtesy." 1

Besides being a socializing agent, the family meets the basic needs, both psychic and biological, of the child. The most vital need which should be satisfied is the need for security. Economic security is necessary for the well-being of any individual, but even more vital is that feeling of the child that he is a member of a group and is loved in his own right. The love which the individual receives in his home is an important and effective mechanism through which social norms are firmly implanted in the character of the child. It is the means by which parents may help to mould a mature personality in the lines of character and self-control. Praise for conformity and the threat of withdrawing

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2 Ibid., p.140.
love for violation are effective means of socializing the child when he is surrounded by a sense of love.

When no standards of conformity are established by the parents, none can be appropriated by the child. Overprotection from society leads to a bewildered individual when the child is thrust from his safe little nest into a world of "do's and don't's". He is expected to conform when he has never learned conformity and has no knowledge of the society in which he must live. Only continued protection will keep him from trouble.

Taft indicates that changes in the role of the family are significant for delinquency. The home is different today from what it was formerly, and its role in shaping the destiny of the child is declining in importance. There is competition for the pattern-setting role from groups outside the family, and the uniformity of family ideals and patterns of behavior has been lost in part. The children and parents are out of the home much more than formerly; thus, the family as a group has lost its cohesiveness. This applies particularly to the mother who used to be the central figure or agent in the socializing of the child.

Many forces have played a part in weakening the stability of the home and have threatened the personal intimacy of that group. The transfer of the function of making a living within the self-sufficient family group to employment in industries has aroused interests outside the primary family circle. Cooperation has ceded to increasing competition and a "keeping up with the Joneses". Recreation has become commercialized; the home is no longer needed as the control of leisure time activity. Increased materialism in the philosophy of the nation has

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1 Ibid., p.140.
tended to lower the standards of the family to those which seem most financially profitable. Religion, care of the sick, and many other services which used to bind the family together in common interest have been taken out of the home. The spirit of cooperation which strengthened affection and reinforced the basic socializing function of the family has been overcome by an emphasis on individualism and self-expression. Taft attributes the trend of the family toward disorganization to these and other changes in the role of that institution.

In citing the possible ways in which the home influences delinquency, Taft discusses the following:

1. Through the effect of the broken home.
2. By producing conflicts of cultures.
3. As an agency of criminalistic contagion.
4. By failing to socialize the child.
5. As the scene of early emotional tensions.
6. By failing to provide sympathetic and understanding confidential relationships.
7. Through family disciplinary policies.
8. By injuring the status of the child in the community.

1. The broken home is frequently listed as a cause of delinquency, but more important to the effect on the child is how and when the home is broken and the effects on family relationships and attitudes. Taft states that delinquents come somewhat disproportionately from homes broken in ways more socially disorganizing than death. Generally, it is recognized that a break in a home which functions as the socializing agency for the child will produce a potentiality for delinquency; however, it is evident that a broken home does not always result in delinquency.

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1 Ibid., pp.142-155.
2 Ibid., p.144.
2.) In a home where the cultural values of the parents conflict either with each other or with the accepted codes of the community, it is impossible to transmit these values effectively to the child. In America, "the melting pot of the world", such culture conflicts are common, and they may be the root of maladjustment and delinquency. However, it must be realized that in many homes, cultural differences teach the child to respect and appreciate differences, thus producing a more adaptable and understanding personality.

3.) Sutherland's theory of differential association includes the third factor which Taft mentions. Delinquency has been reported to be acquired within the family circle itself either by deliberate teaching, imitation, or the acquisition of patterns of behavior leading to law violation. Generally, a family which transmits definitions favorable to law violation will produce delinquent children; however, we must remember that the individual child must be so structured as to receive the contagion. The relationship between the child and the other members of the family is extremely important.

4.) The fourth factor has already been mentioned in some detail in relation with the socializing function of the home. Although a one-child family would seem to be less favorable for socializing the individual because of the lack of contacts among a number of children, most studies of delinquents have found them coming from larger families than non-delinquents. This is not so significant as it may seem because other factors, namely lower economic status and immigrant parentage, have been found to correlate with larger families. In general, the reaction of the individual child to patterns of parental control, protection, and affection is more important than the structure of the family itself.

5.) The fifth factor which Taft mentions has psychiatric and psycho-
analytical explanations. The basic needs of the child must be met in the home; the tensions which are suffered in the absence of satisfaction may lead to delinquency. Such emotional tensions may come from the following sources:

1. They may arise out of physical deprivations.
2. They may be rooted in feelings of jealousy.
3. They may be seen in a desire for revenge because of parental injustice, real or imaginary.
4. They may be the result of quarreling between parents.
5. They may result from a sense of being unwanted or otherwise rejected.
6. Children in the family are sometimes subjected to emotional discomfort.  

Most of these statements are self-explanatory, but I shall enlarge upon the sixth one in order to show the difference in approach between the sociologist and the psychoanalyst. The emotional discomfort which the child suffers may be so great that he cannot approach it directly or overcome it; therefore, he makes an effort to repress it or put it out of his conscious mind. Strong sex interests conflicting with the rigid ideals of the family are an example of such mental conflict. The sociologist locates the source of some of these conflicts in the culture; however, the psychoanalyst finds their roots in the frustration of basic drives, namely sex and aggression. The sociologist will admit, I believe, that motivations are often unconscious and that early emotional experiences, particularly in the home, are important in shaping the personality. The psychoanalyst may also admit that the direction, strength, and control of these drives is largely derived from the culture. The source of mental conflict may be found either in the culture or within the struggle between the id and the superego. Since we are living today in a system of relativity, I would say that neither the culture nor the

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1 Taft Criminology, om. cit., p.148.
Freudian theory should be accepted as absolute. We must consider the relative influence of both elements in each individual case.

6.) Besides being relatively free from the emotional tensions previously discussed, the home, and particularly the parents, should provide sympathy and understanding when "things go wrong" outside the home. The ability to treat unfortunate events as experiences, not absolute wrongs, is one of the major qualifications for successful parenthood. The terrible sense of failure which may lead to a compensatory delinquent career can be prevented by understanding parent-child relationships.

7.) Indifference, harshness, laxity, and inconsistency in discipline when combined with other factors may have an influence on delinquency. The reaction of the child to the pattern of parental control and the emotional tone implicit in the discipline is more important than the content of the control itself. Punishment reinforced by affection is constructive, but extremes are dangerous. Inconsistency is perhaps the most harmful because it fails to provide a pattern for self-control, and also it does not give that sense of predictability necessary for security. The child has no pattern of behavior upon which to build a firm character.

8.) The family imparts a status to the child; therefore, the status of the family is significant in terms of the behavior of its members. This status is based on qualities which bring social approval in the community and upon the relative condition of the home. It is not the actual condition or characteristics of the home which are dangerous, but rather the attitudes of the neighborhood which determine the attitude of the child toward his family, and toward his role in the community. Self-respect is based on what others think of the family and the individual, and a low social status often means little self-respect, and perhaps indifference to the values and legal code of the community.
One question has plagued sociologists concerning the influence of the family. Why, of two youngsters living under the same roof, may one become delinquent and the other remain nondelinquent? Most studies do not explain any reasons for this. I would offer an explanation from the point of view of the difference in relationships of the two children. Since I have expanded this idea previously, I shall just briefly summarize the view. Each individual child is a uniquely structural personality. Although they both may share the same physical environment, their relationships within this field will differ. The home cannot be said to have the same effect on two people whose natures are not identical, although there is a probability of a similar effect. Factors such as personal experience, attitude, training, and primarily personality structure must be taken into consideration.

Poverty and Unemployment.—Poverty and unemployment as significant factors in the causation of delinquency have been discussed frequently and from conflicting viewpoints. There has been much evidence affirming a statistically close relationship, but these statistics are very often misinterpreted. To state that a certain number of criminals are unemployed at the time of crime does not necessarily mean that the unemployment is the cause of the crime. Poverty often seems to be related to delinquency and crime because of the other elements accompanying poor economic conditions which are important in shaping the character, values, and attitude of the child. Such factors as inadequate education, lack of supervision and recreational facilities, and conflict in the home are the more immediate contributors to delinquency. Poverty or unemployment may instigate very different patterns of behavior, but the resulting action depends mostly on the individual's personal make-up, or character which is formed through influences of the family and other
primary groups. This is the reason that we find delinquency in both the higher and lower economic classes. Only in rare cases does poverty, as a single factor, lead to crime in any direct manner. Of course economic factors in general are significant in seeking the cause of delinquency because poverty often breeds many of the conditioning factors of home and neighborhood which Shaw found in his "delinquency area". Tappan states it thus:

The economic influences are pivoted, but they do not function in isolation, as is shown clearly by the fact that even in neighborhoods of concentrated delinquency and in homes marked by poverty and unemployment, most individuals are law-abiding.  

The assurance of food, shelter, and clothing might tend to reduce delinquency in some families, but without the necessary emotional adjustment and socializing influences, this material security contributes little to the reduction of delinquency. Two studies of the relationship between delinquency and the various aspects of the business cycle have yielded differing conclusions. Bogen came to the conclusion that in a community such as Los Angeles, juvenile delinquency increases in periods of prosperity and decreases in periods of depression, but Reinemann tentatively concluded that delinquency is high in both extremes of the business cycle and low in a period of fairly normal economic trends. It would seem from these conflicting studies that no definite relationship can be established without further data. Comparative statistics of delinquents from poverty-stricken homes may not be accurate indices of the actual conditions because law enforcement agencies frequently show greater leniency in dealing with children from upper classes than with

1 Tappan, Juvenile Delinquency, op.cit., p.142.  
those from the lower class.

Actually, the concept of poverty and unemployment is contained within Sutherland's theory of differential association because children from economically insecure homes would have more opportunity to have contact with definitions favorable to violation of law. Socially acceptable behavior is not always inspired in a drab poverty-stricken home where unemployment abounds. Lack of adequate recreational facilities and opportunities to meet well-adjusted law abiding citizens fosters a favorable attitude in the child toward delinquency. Disorganized neighborhoods frequently attract individuals who favor law violation, and children who are so readily susceptible to prestige may try to act like the "big shots" who frequent the area.

In concluding this section, I would say that although a relationship exists between poverty and delinquency, poverty is not a direct cause. Most studies seem to reinforce this conclusion.

Leisure time and associations.—The importance of use of leisure time and delinquent associations has been stressed by criminologists. I have already discussed Sutherland's theory of differential association in which he proposes that exposure to people who favor law violation may easily spread juvenile delinquency. Everyone is exposed to such associations in varying degrees, especially in our society where minor law violations such as breaking traffic regulations are generally accepted. The way in which a particular person responds to a situation of this sort depends on his own personal traits of reaction to authority and law, most of which are learned in the home or in intimate primary groups rather than in the gang. Home influences may increase or lessen the effects of companions upon the child. Values and patterns of conduct are usually so strongly internalized that the child will tend to associate with others
whose learning has been similar.

Group associations are important and should not be overlooked, especially since delinquencies are frequently committed in groups of two or more. Acceptance and approval by one's peer group is a strong force in childhood; desire for recognition and adventure may lead to delinquency through group associations. The suggestive powers of a group may be a powerful factor in stimulating delinquent acts, but it may also be a stimuli for non delinquent behavior. Many gangs are not delinquent; they vary in function and in number. However, the delinquent gang has been much publicized, and perhaps rightly so, since it has constituted a serious problem in recent years in the larger cities of our nation.

The broad problem of leisure time and recreation has been very much overemphasized in its influence on delinquency. Certainly, children will profit from a supervised program of organized recreation, but I do not believe that the lack of such a program could ever lead to delinquency. It is an easy and simple solution to the problem, but it is not an adequate one. Since most delinquent acts occur in leisure time when a child is under no guidance, many people jump quickly to the false conclusion that lack of wholesome planned recreation is a cause of delinquency and thus treatment should follow along that line. Actually, children seem to need the opportunity to express themselves in unguided activity, and many individuals prefer to participate in undirected leisure even when carefully planned recreational programs are available.

It is true that the children of poor homes in areas of high delinquency concentration do have fewer opportunities for officially directed recreation; they are also more frequently delinquent. There is strong evidence, however, that they are not much attracted by "guided play" when it is provided, preferring their more spontaneous activities and often spurning the intervention of well-meaning outsiders. Careful studies have shown, in fact ... that delinquents are generally more interested, skillful, and active in games and sports than are non delinquents. They have been shown to
have more frequent club affiliations, even in alleged "character building agencies", and they are more adept at leadership in their group affiliations. In a real sense the delinquent is, on the average, considerably more "socialized" than are his nondelinquent contemporaries. It is partly through his group interests and activities that he gets into trouble. An easy conclusion that his salvation lies in the mere setting up of playgrounds under recreational leaders has no foundation in sound thinking.

Tappan expresses the opinion here, based on reliable data, that organized recreational facilities have no real influence on the delinquent or non delinquent actions of the child. He goes on to say that such programs may be justified for underprivileged children on the basis of general child welfare, but he makes the following generalizations in relation to play activities which should be considered realistically before becoming too enthused about single-sided sports programs which are expected to correct delinquency:

1. Being a good athlete is no deterrent at all to delinquency.
2. Experience in team play through recreation can have no significant amount of carry-over to general character traits or conduct patterns.
3. Even highly organized recreational activities do not absorb enough of the energy or time of a child to reduce appreciably his opportunities to engage in delinquency.
4. In fact a play group may itself help to stimulate its members to illegal activities, engaged in "for fun" after their games are over; the probability of this is increased when there are delinquent or near-delinquent members in the group.
5. Many of the recreational programs do not in any event reach those children who are presumed to need them most because of their problems of health or delinquency.
6. If a child is disposed toward law violation because of the influences of his family and neighborhood, his early training, his personality distortions, or his attitudes toward authority, it will require much more than games and sports to do anything effective about it.
7. Where children have come to enjoy their delinquencies as games - as commonly the case - the thrills thus provided are usually greater than those which organized recreation can provide. The latter can be urged as a substitute not for their intrinsic competitive appeal, where they are at a disadvantage, but only on social and moral grounds; this implies the need for preliminary

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1 Tappan, Juvenile Delinquency, op. cit., p.149.
or supplementary case work or education to establish them as acceptable substitutes. 1

Supervised recreational programs, then, must be justified, not as delinquency-preventative measures, but on the assumption that children are entitled to broad and varied opportunities of leisure time, of which organized play is one.

Psychological Causes

One of the main classes of causal mechanisms in the area of delinquency and crime is psychological. Since most theories of crime are an explanation of individual behavior, the psychological category includes a great many other causal theories. Lindesmith and Dunham, two American criminologists divide offenders into two classes: the "social criminal" and the "individual criminal." 2 The social criminal, a group product, is seen to be a result of the sociological influences of the community and the culture. The individual criminal, exemplified by the psychotic, is viewed as a result of individual psychological forces working within him. Healy and Bronner, on the other hand, emphasize the relationship between the internal structure of the child and the external situation in which he is placed, particularly in his immediate primary groups. 3

Throughout the psychological studies, an emphasis is placed on subjective factors in the early life history. Robert Lindner has made a division between predisposing influences on delinquency and precipitating influences. A predisposing influence may be traced to the child's developmental history while a precipitating factor is found in

1 Ibid., p.15C.
3 Tappan, Juvenile Delinquency, op. cit., p.85.
the immediate environment and experience. According to this theory, a child has within him all the potentialities of becoming a delinquent, and either a single or a group of factors in his immediate environment may force this potentiality into an actuality. The precipitating influence is like the spark which sets off the cannon that is ready and waiting to be fired.

The method of relating crime and delinquency to psychiatric disorders is prevalent today in part due to the influence of Freudian theory. Because of the psychiatric terminology which is unacceptable to students outside the field, only a part of Freud's work has been diffused into the field of delinquency. Some of his concepts have also been discarded or modified by more orthodox psychology. In brief, Freud felt that crime and immorality are a part of human nature, and the function of culture is to control perverse drives which originate in the libido.

Before I proceed further with Freudian theory, a few terms must be clarified:

1. libido - generalized source of energy
2. id - reservoir of primitive drives
3. superego - "conscience"; a primitive means of controlling the waywardness of impulse
4. ego - control and guide of the impulses of the id

These are the four mental agents or regions of the personality upon which Freud bases his psychoanalytical approach which traces behavior deviations to the repression of basic drives. In attempting to repress these basic drives such as hunger or sex, a conflict between the superego and the id is produced. The child is unaware of the source of conflict, and he seeks release from it either by some substitute such as daydreaming, or by defense mechanisms such as overt compensatory behavior which may be delinquent. "Crime thus is seen as an unconscious effort to solve an
emotional problem." The home may be and often is the scene of emotional tensions when the basic needs of the child are not met satisfactorily. Although other compensatory mechanisms leading to satisfaction of needs have social approval, the stress which is suffered by a child may lead to delinquency. Psychologists emphasize the need for identification with either personalities or groups which display socially satisfactory patterns of behavior, and delinquents are frequently children who have formed no emotional bonds with anyone thus qualified. Freud treats this identification process in what he designates as "cathexis".

The libido is invested in other objects throughout the developmental history of an individual. A learning process is connected with the stages of libidinal development, and the child and adolescent both must successfully complete a series of developmental tasks in order to be socially acceptable in both his primary and secondary groups. Freud showed that neurotic disorders could often be traced to difficulties connected with the bodily functions and pleasure strivings of infancy.

Each stage of psychosexual development is focused on a pleasure-giving zone with its special potentialities in the way of gratification and frustration. Each stage evokes from the parents a particular pattern of encouragements and prohibitions, thus giving rise to its own special forms of fixation or anxiety. The history, of each stage, finally, leaves a characteristic imprint which predisposes the person to develop in a certain way over the years to come.

Thus, Freud traces all interests and behavioral patterns back to the early years of life, and denotes pleasure as the goal of striving.

"Psychoanalysis proceeds on the assumption that the frustrations of childhood impulses result in the development of permanent personality characteristics." 3

His scheme is intra-psychic, displaying a marked neglect of situational determinants; however, it has an important place in sociological thinking today.

Healy and Bronner found emotional disturbances among delinquents as compared with non-delinquents in the general ratio of 91 to 13. In children with these emotional disturbances delinquency was found to have meaning in one of the following respects:

1. As an escape from emotional tension.
2. Because of compensatory satisfactions through delinquency, as when it brought a thrill of adventure or notoriety.
3. As a means of achieving recognition in a gang, etc.
4. Through revenge achieved on parents, etc.
5. To gain satisfaction through inflation of ego.
6. As response to urges felt to be thwarted - as desire for independence.
7. Occasionally as an expression of a wish for punishment. ¹

The emotional tension mentioned above has been discussed in detail in another section, but it is necessary to note here that aggression in various forms often is a result of such tension. This aggression may be repressed or controlled by the will of the child; however, the inability to keep it under control may be a stepping stone toward a delinquent career.

The neurotic delinquent is usually a result of overprotective parents who rigidly restrict and control their child in a manner of perfectionism and inconsistency. The child cannot successfully sublimate his impulses into socially acceptable channels, and thus commits offenses which offer release to his partly inhibited drives. Freud would suggest that neurotic delinquency evolves from a sense of guilt concerning socially unacceptable wishes. The individual may be seeking punishment to rid himself of guilt feelings. The ego unconsciously

¹ Taft, *Criminology*, op. cit., p.147.
attempts to resolve anxiety and conflict within the child by means of the defense mechanisms which I mentioned previously. R.H. White says this about defense mechanisms:

...all the mechanisms - projection, reaction-formation, isolation, undoing, intellectualization and so forth - imply a certain failure to take full account of reality, whether it be the reality of the outside world or the reality of one's inner experience. 1

Such defensive measures may interfere with future learning. In the case of the delinquent, a full appraisal of the situation and the self is lacking. He commits an act which may seem absurd to many of us because we take into full account all aspects of the situation.

Emotional disturbance and frustration are most important in the realm of psychological causes of delinquency. The child who is thwarted in his basic personality needs, may make affective responses which are socially unacceptable or even delinquent. Personal unadjustment, behavioral disorder and even delinquency may result from emotional insecurity, inferiority feelings, dominant parents or feelings of inadequacy. When the normal psychic drives and wishes of the child are not satisfied in a socialized manner, frustration may direct them toward activity in violation of the law. The demand for status and excitement in a young boy may find a very satisfying outlet in delinquency. What a child finds lacking in his gratifications in home, school, or church, may be discovered in delinquent behavior. Since the home and family usually are considered as the basic institutions in which security and emotional needs are met, I have discussed this problem in detail when I dealt with that area. However, one final statement summarizes the psychological approach very nicely.

Healy and Bronner conclude, after detailed analysis and comparison

1 Robert White, op.cit., p.314.
of their cases and controls, that the delinquents, more often thwarted, rejected, and disturbed, find substitutive satisfaction for their psychological needs in channels that lead to delinquency. The nondelinquents, less often from vicious homes and rarely disturbed emotionally, express their less distorted needs in socially acceptable ways, without excessive aggressive or escape techniques. Their greater docility and lesser gregariousness...facilitated outlets and reactive manifestations of their needs that are socially defined as moral and legal.  

The general psychological theory, therefore, maintains that delinquency is a channel for misdirected drives.

In analyzing this theory, it should be noted once again that crime and delinquency are violations of a legal code, not merely behavior; therefore, a delinquent youth must be a member of the society whose legal code he has violated. According to the psychological theory, an isolated child could be delinquent if he did not control his instinctive tendencies. Delinquency cannot exist without a social structure and interaction within the group, and in different cultures the same behavior is treated quite differently. The mores of a group determine the acceptable patterns of behavior; the child must learn to direct his responses into socially acceptable channels in the process of development.

Another point which should be mentioned in regard to the psychological approach is the matter of classification. Both nondelinquent and delinquent individuals fall into the category of neurotic and psychotic cases. If delinquency were a result of misdirected drives, why would not all such unstable people fall into delinquent or criminal careers? Psychology is dealing with a complex and often unpredictable subject—the individual. I would say, therefore, that delinquency may by a result of misdirected drives in disparate and individual cases, but so is nondelinquent behavior; therefore, no universal statement of  

1 Tappan, Juvenile Delinquency, op.cit., p.112.
the role of these drives in law violation is feasible.

Biological Determinants

The old nature-nurture debate which has concerned sociologists and psychologists for many years is found also in a study of juvenile delinquency causal factors. Since causal mechanisms are usually divided into two major categories, individual and social, a glance at the biological determinants affecting behavior is necessary to fully understand and interpret the individual causes. There is often a close relationship between the organic constitution of any person and his psychological make-up; any psychological theory should take this fact into account.

Before proceeding any further, it must be noted that there is no means of effectively controlling either heredity or environment for the purpose of accurately measuring the relative weight of each in determining delinquency. Both environment or experience and significant hereditary factors are involved in directing a child toward criminal action. Innate characteristics, although very significant, will not predetermine delinquent behavior without the force of experience. A baby is not born a criminal any more than he is born a politician or a musician; he develops his potentialities through his experience and education. The implication is that delinquents are made, not born; therefore, any child, given the proper environment and training has the possibility of becoming such an "outcast from society". In making this statement, I hope to destroy that false illusion of most upper class parents who believe that only the poor, uneducated, lower class families breed delinquent children.

Another false impression which is predominant among laymen concerns the criminality of feebleminded persons. Many people almost auto-
matically connect delinquent behavior to feeblemindedness. However, according to scientific authority, the feebleminded are not inherently or even necessarily vicious or delinquent. They are unusually susceptible to suggestion; therefore, they are more easily moulded by their surroundings, either good or bad. The feebleminded have a great potentiality for either strictly law-abiding and moral behavior or, at the opposite extreme, crime and vice. It is important, then, that society makes some provision to insure the legal behavior of such people. As Teeters and Reinemann have said,

...it is only fair to state that a very large percentage of delinquent youth is not feebleminded at all, that a very large portion is normal mentally, or ... emotionally confused or unstable.

To an ordinary person-on-the-street, any display of emotional instability may appear as a sign of feeblemindedness. Such popular misconceptions leading to mistaken adjudication are what the legalists are trying to prevent.

In considering biological determinants as an approach to the cause of delinquency, I have found the only significant factor to be the associational difficulties which affect the diseased, defective or handicapped. Neumeyer sums up this attitude very nicely:

Any disease, defect, condition of malnutrition, delayed-maturation, weakness, or excess of energy may handicap achievement, affect unfavorably one's relationship with other people, and directly or indirectly contribute to misbehavior. Usually, however, it is a combination of physical factors, especially if associated with mental conditions and unfavorable environmental influences, that causes misconduct.

The individual interacts socially as a biological organism. His unique organic structure may be directly related causally to his

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1 Teeters & Reinemann, op.cit., p.92.
2 Ibid
manner of playing a role within the social group. Teeters and Reinemann suggest that it may be possible that rather than the constitution of any one member of the group determining his attitudes toward that group, the already existent attitudes of the group predispose certain types of behavior toward, and thus from, individuals of that constitution.\(^1\) Attitudes are merely abstractions in the mind, yet frequently the object of the attitude, in this case the delinquent, is confused with the idea. We transfer the qualities and characteristics of the abstract term "delinquent" to the individual who has been classified as such by some system or other. Generally, the system of classification suits the convenience of those making the classification, and as soon as this process of classification is completed, our attitudes and conduct are to a considerable degree determined. The individual whom we call "delinquent" belongs to no class until we place him in one. The legalists attempt to guard against such false classification by insisting upon definite steps in the adjudication of criminals. A person must be proven criminal through legal procedure before he may be classified as one. The implication of the word, "delinquent", carries with it a judgement of the individual thus named. From the report that a child has been entangled with legal authorities, many people immediately and almost unconsciously climb to a higher level of abstraction and condemn the individual as a delinquent. This classification with its resulting attitudes might lead an otherwise innocent child toward a delinquent career.

Wood and Waite express the idea that physical defects and illnesses accompany poor economic and social conditions. They believe that poverty or physical disfigurement tend to produce negative social reactions which affect a person's status and may influence his criminal career.

\(^1\) Teeters and Reinemann, op.cit., p.100.
"Crimes are often motivated by the desire to compensate for inferiority feeling." ¹ If this were true, how would they account for the self-made men in our society who rose above their poverty and the negative social reactions to become leaders? Compensation, as a defense mechanism, has its place in psychoanalytic theory, but I think it is inadequate as a theory of delinquency causation.

The psychopathic personality is another great problem in the field of crime and delinquency.

The psychopathic personality is frequently a condition of emotional unbalance, which, if accompanied by a lack of social conscience, produces irresponsibility, egocentricity, and instability. It is characterized by an inability to learn from experience. The deficiency is not one of intellect, necessarily, but pertains to matters of decency, honesty, and other character traits. ²

The major problem with these individuals is the method of care and treatment. As an example, in the Augusta State Hospital there was a young girl who might be classed as a social psychopath. She desired to kill her mother, yet she was not insane. Her mental faculties were functioning perfectly, and for that reason she objected greatly to her confinement with the mentally ill in that institution. Since she had committed no crime as yet, she legally could not be committed to an institution for delinquents. There was no place to take care of the child except in the hospital, and she was receiving no treatment there. Psychopathic personalities need care and supervision to regain their emotional balance, yet there are no institutions which can help them. This is a problem which should be solved in the future, but few people are even aware of its existence.

In conclusion, the general approach toward biological determinants considers them as only part, if any, of the real cause of delinquency. Neumeyer sums it up nicely when he says:

² Ibid., p.31.
One thing is certain, delinquency as such is not inherited. The hereditary constitution of a delinquent has but an indirect effect upon his behavior. The delinquent is not by temperament or predisposition criminal in nature. However, certain characteristics of the native endowment, especially a weakness in the native equipment, sometimes predispose a child to moral lapses and to delinquency. 1

Delinquency Area Concept

In his ecological approach to delinquency, Clifford Shaw attributes cause to a cluster of pathological factors which function to promote personal demoralization and delinquency, not to the spatial influence by itself. This concept of a delinquency area which may be called "interstitial" or "transition" was developed through a study of crime rates in different areas of the city. Shaw found that the concentration of high delinquency rates was found mostly in the urban areas, and a gradual reduction of rates occurred at larger distances from the heart of the city. It is not the area alone which provokes delinquency, but the variables of social disorganization which are distributed spatially in similar patterns. Deterioration, population mobility, minority segregation, and disorganization are frequently associated together in zones where social disorganization and personal demoralization are found. Shaw and McKay tabulated data which offers specific evidence though five roughly concentric zones in Chicago of the association between social problems and spatial organization.

Most of the delinquents found in these deteriorated areas are not basically inferior to the children of more privileged neighborhoods. The unfavorable economic and social environment which surrounds the youngsters in delinquency areas, along with the lack of security and deprivation of the material and often spiritual "good things of life", leads children to delinquent action.

1 Neumeyer, op.cit., p.70.
Culture conflict is found here as various immigrant groups differing in their cultural background are forced to live closely together. Few stabilizing community forces are present; financial difficulties make it impossible to build any constructive club or recreation programs.

Teeters and Reinemann state:

Perhaps the most significant contribution of the "delinquency area concept" is its emphasis on the deterioration of the fundamentals and characteristics of social control in such neighborhoods. In other words, instead of thinking in terms of the significance of poor housing, overcrowding, low standards of living, low educational standards, and other such conditions, this approach looks upon these conditions as merely symptomatic of more degenerative processes. ¹

Delinquency, according to the "delinquency area" concept, is deeply imbedded in the basis of modern community life; the attitudes and competing values with which the growing child comes in conflict encourage him to seek a way to gain a satisfying status in the materialistic community life. Shaw and his associates feel that the solution, therefore, must come from focusing attention on the setting and neighborhoods from which these young delinquents emerge.

In criticizing the delinquency area concept, three factors have been brought out. First, that many factors may influence delinquency rates, but not influence delinquent behavior directly. Differences in laws in various states and in the policy of police organizations in enforcing the laws, in the administrative policies of courts, and in the cultural orientation of specific areas within the community all contribute to varying delinquency rates, but have little direct effect on the delinquent behavior itself. Secondly, although much delinquency, as it

is popularly known, comes from the poor areas, delinquency exists in economically favorable homes too. Official records of such delinquency are not available to such a great extent since very frequently delinquent cases are never officially reported among the upper classes. As Tappan states, "Whether or not one is officially delinquent depends not on conduct alone, but to a great extent on referral practices that obtain in the community." 1

A third criticism which is offered by those who take an individualistic approach to delinquency may be mentioned. Although the work which has been accomplished and the data obtained are valuable, they feel that attention has been diverted from the individual's maladjustment which is extremely important in any diagnosis or treatment. Shaw's ecological concept attributes cause to a simplified physical factor of spatial organization while actually there is nothing in the objective conditions themselves that predetermines delinquency. The delinquency area concept has been very useful and purposeful in helping to understand the many interrelated factors behind juvenile delinquency. The danger lies in accepting this single theory as an oversimplified cause of the problem.

Differential Association

Professor Edwin H. Sutherland expresses a theory of crime based on interactional processes. According to this idea, a person becomes criminal because of an excess of definitions favorable to violation of law over definitions unfavorable to violation of law. The probability of a youth becoming delinquent is determined by the frequency, duration, priority and intensity of his associations with both criminal and non-

1 Tappan, Juvenile Delinquency, op.cit., p.25.
criminal behavior. These factors have a tremendous influence on the final behavior. Frequency means the number of contacts the individual makes. Duration refers to the length of time spent in a criminal or non-criminal environment. Priority means that certain definitions come before other definitions chronologically. In the development of the personality, there is a chronological arrangement of criminal and non-criminal contacts, and whichever has the most priority, considered along with the other three factors, will influence the pattern of individual behavior. Intensity refers to the value symbol of the contact and its prestige. If the criminal contact is a big brother who has much prestige in the young boy's opinion, the favorable definitions for juvenile delinquency may claim another youth. Thus, the variants of frequency, duration, priority and intensity are the learning factors to be considered in the interaction of the individual and other persons in the process of communication.

Sutherland's theory is a purely individualistic thesis answering the question, "Who is the criminal?" It is based on nine statements systematically defining the process by which a particular person comes to engage in criminal behavior.

1. Criminal behavior is learned.
2. Criminal behavior is learned in interaction with other persons in the process of communication.
3. The principal part of the learning of criminal behavior occurs within intimate personal groups.
4. When criminal behavior is learned, learning includes:
   a. Techniques of committing crime
   b. Specific direction of motives, drives, rationalization and attitudes.
5. Specific direction of drives and motive is learned from a definition of the legal code as favorable or unfavorable.
6. A person becomes delinquent because of an excess of definitions favorable to violation of law over definitions unfavorable to violation of law.
7. Differential association may vary in frequency, duration, priority, and intensity.
8. The process of learning criminal behavior by association with
criminal and anti-criminal patterns involves all the mechanisms involved in any learning.

9. While criminal behavior is an expression of general needs and values, it is not explained by these needs and values, since non-criminal behavior is an expression of the same needs and values. 1

Differential association puts the problem of delinquency in a sociological context. It emphasizes the environment, social relationships, and patterns of development, eliminating the idea of crime as the behavior of a biological or mental type. However, a valid criticism of Sutherland's theory may be offered. It is an explanation of behavior in general and therefore may be used to explain any form of social behavior, not only delinquency. Another point which indicates a weakness in the theory is that it does not explain accidental crimes and crimes of passion. When a child, unknowingly, commits a legal crime it cannot be explained by any interactional process. Differential association also fails to explain the origin of crime or delinquency. Sutherland assumes a complete social structure in which both criminal behavior and noncriminal behavior exist. Someone originally had to be a criminal. A pattern of criminal behavior had to be established before the learning process involved in differential association could become evident.

Sutherland's principle integrates well with Shaw's ecological theory by presenting the method in which associational processes may lead to juvenile delinquency.

In those sections or spatial areas of the community where crime and social deterioration are prominent, the children find contact with criminal behavior readily accessible. The definitions favorable to law violation exceed the definitions unfavorable to violation of law, and thus delinquency is the result. However, the ecology and associations alone will not produce delinquency. If the cause of all law violation

were such a simplified mechanism, the community could remedy the sit-
uation immediately. A more complex cause renders such an immediate so-
lution impossible. The principle of differential association may be a
partial explanation of the problem, but we must look further for the
complete causal factors.
CHAPTER IV
TREATMENT

The varied legal practices of referral of cases make it difficult to state a specific rate of delinquency for a given community. The reported cases frequently are but a small portion of the total number of delinquencies; undetected and unreported delinquencies exist in a considerable number. 1 Figures of offenses not only suggest vast amounts of hidden delinquency, but also that legal authorities concentrate their attention on the serious offenses.

The possibility of pushing law enforcement to ridiculous lengths is also present. Without condoning any infraction of the law, it is common knowledge that the multiplicity of laws imposes new and constantly changing conditions upon modern youth. One can violate laws unwittingly simply because so many phases of life are under legal restraints. 2

Depending on the referral practices of the community, a child may be charged with delinquency when it is thought that his conduct might eventually lead to serious offenses. However, reports of waywardness or misdemeanors in the past history of college students show that such offenses were tolerated and proved little hindrance to their future conformity to legal rules and social norms. Yet, the child of the lower socio-economic class who has conducted himself similarly is usually considered delinquent and brought to court on the grounds that his conduct will eventually lead to serious offenses. From experience it is known that many such children become more deviant after they have been exposed

1 See Figure I (Research Bulletin, p.103), p.4.
2 National Education Association, op.cit., p.105.
to court and penal institutions. Also known is the fact that similar cases dealt with in the home or by unofficial social agencies do not lead to criminality.

The indication here is that wayward or minor offenses are better left to the non-court facilities, and the judicial authority's concern should be with the serious cases which clearly require it. There is a question as to the extension and aggravation of delinquency by preventative efforts on the predelinquent.

Another related problem affecting the treatment of delinquents involves the question of whose interests the court is trying to protect. Definitions of delinquency are based in part on violation of parental standards, and courts are often deemed to be acting in the role of parents. The whole question of parent-court relationship is very important since the child's adjudication may depend on whether the court feels its function be one of protecting the child or supporting the parents. Recently in some jurisdictions the practice has been to punish the parents for their children's delinquencies, usually treating the children as offenders, too. Provisions in many statutes for penalties against those responsible for, or contributing to delinquency have permitted this approach, popular in California, New York, and elsewhere. ¹ This change in responsibility is a result of changing social structure. The state took over the family's responsibility with the development of a state system and legal authority. Gradually, the responsibility seems to be shifting back to the family as is shown by the parents being held responsible for their children's actions.

As I have said previously, there are two approaches to the

¹ Tappan, Juvenile Delinquency, op.cit., p.28.
handling of delinquent cases. The legalistic approach is quite uncom-
mon today in practice. Because of the idea that the function of the
court is to protect and "save" the child rather than recondition or cor-
rect him, the practice has developed of inquiring little into what the
child has done or whether his behavior is socially dangerous. Instead,
the attention has been focused on the probable social and emotional prob-
lems of the child. Children's courts have come to be dominated more and
more by the authority of child-welfare and case-work programs which are
strongly administrative and often anti-legal in orientation.

The consequence has been that a tribunal which is socio-legal and
correctional in function has had virtually no attention in recent
years from the legal profession and very little more from social
scientists or specialists in correction. ¹

The care of children has been placed in the hands of a group
oriented almost completely to the philosophy of social work, and they
emphasize individual diagnosis and therapy for emotionally unadjusted
children. A common view now is that the nature of the child's delin-
quent behavior is important only as a symptom of his underlying emo-
tional problems, and that jurisdiction should arise out of the "child's
need for help". This need is often inferred from the child's presence
in court rather than from a legal act of delinquency. The juvenile
court, therefore, seems to be considered by some as a very general means
used by child-welfare groups to help youth in trouble. Generally
speaking, the view of case-work and child-welfare authorities who are
not connected with the courts is that the official and authoritarian
agencies should be used only very rarely, when it is essential because of
the type of problem presented.

¹ Tappan, Comparative Survey, op. cit., p.2.
There are certain situations that arise which make it necessary to invoke the authority of the state so that proper treatment may be secured or carried on. They might be listed as follows:

A. Where the child by his conduct has become, or can reasonably be expected to become, a menace to himself as well as society and commitment is needed for specialized treatment.
B. Where it is necessary to remove a child from his own home for treatment against the wishes of his parents.
C. Where the use of authority "per se", is a necessary aspect of the treatment technique to be used. 1

As a general rule, in the United States the law puts no limitations on the juvenile courts by specifying particular treatment for particular offenses. Age and sex are controlling variables in the designation of institutional treatment, but judges have broad powers of disposition of cases within the existing sources of general treatment, and they try to best meet the needs of the individual child who is adjudicated.

Observation homes are institutions where the child may be said to receive "treatment in freedom". Such homes allow the opportunity for studying the individual's personality traits and thus provide a basis for the diagnosis of suitable treatment. These observation homes are temporary provisions for the child and do not include long-term detention or treatment. There are different types of observation homes available, particularly in urban areas; detention homes and child-guidance clinics are two of the most common. There are no specialized observation homes under the federal system, but state and federal institutions have been used to study the needs of delinquent children after commitment.

There are various measures employed in the care of juvenile offenders, but the major correctional methods include probation super-

1 Ibid., f.n., p.115.
vision and institutional commitment. The majority of cases handled by the courts are dismissed or held open, and the treatment measures employed in such cases are rarely recorded.

Noninstitutional treatment measures for juvenile delinquents include the following eleven types:

1) Probation supervision.
2) Warnings or admonition; usually when the child has come before the court for a minor offense, and particularly a first offense.
3) Foster homes; under supervision of the court or a welfare agency. This measure is used more often for neglected and dependent children than for delinquents.
4) Adoption; rarely used in the case of delinquency.
5) Supervision of school authorities; a small minority of jurisdictions use this measure.
6) House arrest; rarely used by the juvenile court, but certain restrictions may be established by the court as probation conditions.
7) Supervision and treatment of public child-welfare agencies.
8) Supervision of nongovernmental child-welfare agencies; many agencies exclude children who have been to court.
9) Supervision by police officers; generally not a favorable arrangement, but it may be necessary where no specialized probation officers are available.
10) Restitution by the child for material loss or damage; usually required as a condition of probation.
11) Imposition of fines; provided by statute in some states, but federal courts do not impose fines on juveniles. ¹

In making foster home placements, certain criteria should be considered. In regard to the individual child to be placed, his behavior patterns, emotional stability, age, heredity, attachment to his own family, and intelligence should all be taken into consideration. The foster parents, too, should be carefully selected for each individual case since poor foster parents may do nothing but add injury to the already delinquent child.

One of the most important decisions which must be made in handling the treatment of a child is whether he should be supervised

¹ Ibid., pp.53-54.
in the community under relatively free conditions or removed to an institution. The ordinary man-on-the street is very likely to argue that any delinquent should be "put away" because he is dangerous to the community. Actually, the child is usually kept in his own home if an investigation shows that it is suitable. Dr. Carl Rogers, a psychologist and former director of the Rochester Guidance Clinic, has formulated a table of criteria for removal from the home, which seems to describe the general attitude toward the question of placement versus continuance in the home. Each child is an individual case, and every aspect of the situation should be studied before any decision of placement is made.

The use of private institutions for the treatment of juvenile offenders has been designated under the laws of several state jurisdictions and of the federal government. In a few jurisdictions, the needs of the child are the deciding factor in placing him in a private institution. However, the institutions usually will not accept all children. They may place restrictions based on such criteria as the seriousness of offense, personality traits, prior record, and religion. These private institutions usually establish upper and lower age limits and are either for boys or for girls. Some of them limit the proportion of court cases they will handle and thus have a basis for refusing to take court referrals. Generally speaking, the tendency is to place the child in a state institution for a serious offense, but younger children, under the age of fourteen, need the atmosphere of a home, and court officials try to avoid placing them in any institution. Youth, of the seventeen-year age who have a repeated history of delinquency and trouble-making in institutions may be placed in reformatories.

1 See Table I on next page.
TABLE I
CRITERIA FOR REMOVAL FROM HOME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conditions making placement advisable</th>
<th>Conditions making continuity in own home advisable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavior</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior difficulties of more than average seriousness, definitely associated with, and probably caused by parental attitudes, management, or behavior.</td>
<td>Behavior difficulties definitely associated with some other causes—hereditary, physical or social—rather than with parental attitudes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family Atmosphere</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child has little affection for parents.</td>
<td>Child has normal degree of affection for both parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child feels emotionally insecure at home.</td>
<td>Child feels emotionally secure with his parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child is rejected by one or both parents.</td>
<td>(The above conditions lose some of their force if the child is young, or if the parents are desirous of treatment through placement.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents' affection for child is of unwholesome type, causing too great dependence or infantile attachment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents' behavior and attitudes are such that they caused great emotional conflict in the child.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child has little loyalty to family group.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Possibility of Change</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The parental attitudes which seem to cause misbehavior are fixed, deep-seated and of long standing.</td>
<td>Parental attitudes which are associated with misbehavior are recent, or superficially held, or conditioned by factors which may be changed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled efforts to change essential attitudes of parent and child have failed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Placement Opportunity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The child possesses characteristics as to age, intelligence, stability, type of behavior, etc., which indicate better than 50% chance of success away from home.</td>
<td>The child possesses characteristics which make him a poor risk for placement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Private institutions may be operated by both sectarian and non-secular groups, but the majority of them are probably sectarian. The law usually subjects any such training school to inspection and licensing by state officials, but these superficial methods of evaluation are rather poor.

The treatment received in private institutions varies, but generally, an attempt is made to provide a wholesome, secure environment for the child.

The standards for directors and workers in such institutions also are not uniform. Regardless of the emphasis of the particular school, vocational or educational, the staff has commonly had some experience in the field of education and child-welfare work. Such institutions employ many different workers, from teachers down to psychiatrists and social workers. Medical and dental services are available, although they may be only on a part-time basis.

The main difference between private and public institutions lies in the admittance of children. Since private institutions can determine what children to accept, while public training schools must take all court committed youngsters, there is necessarily a difference in the composition of the groups at the two institutions. The private schools may construct a more homogeneous group from their charges, while this is impossible with the conglomeration the public institutions must accept. Such selection allows the private institution to choose youngsters with more promising personalities and background, leaving the less fortunate and more unmanageable to the public correctional school. A common opinion in the United States is that private institutions should concentrate their attention on new treatment techniques
still in the experimental stage, so that they may relay the benefits of their research to the institutions which must care for the majority of delinquent children.

All of the states in the United States have established institutions for the care and treatment of juvenile delinquents, and there are also some institutions established and operated by the city or county government. The administration of these public institutions is in the hands of public officials rather than other persons or groups. Although most of the institutions are of the training school type, a few states have established forestry camps, and there is a very limited number of intensive clinical-treatment institutions of a hospital type.

Very few states maintain co-educational training schools; most states have separate institutions for boys and girls. Reformatories or adult correctional institutions are only resorted to when the offense is very serious and the juvenile offender is of a certain age. Care of mentally-deficient delinquents varies with the institutional facilities available. Some are committed to specialized institutions for the mentally deficient, but others are committed to regular institutions for delinquents where they may or may not be segregated from the rest of the children.

In regard to types of accommodation in government institutions, both the congregate and cottage systems are used, but the cottages are preferred and seem to be the main trend of development. Ten to twenty children in a cottage is considered to be the most desirable, but many institutions must house many more children in one cottage. The advantages of a cottage plan are mainly a close relationship with the counsellors or cottage parents and individual attention for each child. Usually, the classification of children into specific cottages
is according to age or size of the child rather than specific educational or treatment needs, but the cottage system would provide for special classification for treatment purposes if desired. The congregate type of institution commonly employs more security measures than the cottage type. The federal juvenile institutions are of the cottage type.

For effective treatment, the size of the institutions for juveniles should be kept down to a maximum of 150 to 250 children; however, government institutions in the United States vary in size from a population of less than 100 up to about 1,000. The room arrangement differs among institutions, but dormitories are used mostly for boys while either single or double rooms predominate in the girls' institutions. Many institutions maintain a "punishment room" for segregated confinement.

The commitment of a juvenile to a treatment institution may be either for a definite or indeterminate length of time. Most laws, however, state that commitment shall be indeterminate not to extend beyond the twenty-first birthday. The New Hampshire law states:

...in the case of a delinquent child over whom the court has acquired jurisdiction hereunder said jurisdiction shall continue until said child arrives at the age of twenty-one years of age unless he is previously discharged by the court, or jurisdiction over him released to the superior court. 1

Under federal law a juvenile may be committed for either a definite or indeterminate period not exceeding minority, and may be returned to the community under supervision of parole at any time; however, there have been diverse practices on the release of a child.

STATE SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

In connection with this study on juvenile delinquency, I spent a two week period in the State School for Girls in Hallowell, Maine. During this time, I had the opportunity to talk and work with both the staff of the school and the girls who had been committed to the institution by courts throughout the state of Maine. Through such a relationship, I was able to determine in part the methods and philosophy of treatment in a public institution for girls and also the attitudes of the girls themselves.

In the state of Maine, there are two governmental institutions for juvenile delinquents: the State School for Girls, and the State School for Boys. Although I have never seen the boy's school, I imagine it would be very similar to the institution with which I had contact. The State School for Girls is located on a hill and looks very much like an ordinary private boarding school. The school spreads over quite an extensive area with much of the property being open fields and gardens. There are no visible security measures, and no obvious signs designating the type of school. The State School, therefore, physically presents very little to attract the ever-present curiosity of the public.

Commitment to the State School must be ordered by the court. Children between the ages of nine and seventeen may be committed upon the complaint of the judge, or three responsible citizens of the community may petition for removal of the child from his home and subsequent commitment to an institution. Parents may ask to have their own child committed if they feel incapable of handling her. Such was the case with one girl who was very well behaved until another child came into the family. Apparently the sibling rivalry in this situation was
so great that the parents could not manage the older girl. After eleven months at the State School, the girl was returned home in a very much improved state of mind. Sometimes an outside authority is all that is necessary to straighten out a youngster. Commitment is for the term of minority, but a girl may be discharged before that time if she appears to be well adjusted and ready to take her place in the community. A trial period of placement either in the girl's own home or in a home outside, where wages are paid, for work, is usually provided before discharge. This is to insure the readiness and preparation of the girl for the unprotected and often very independent life she must lead after discharge. The stigma attached to the word, "delinquent", is often a barrier to successful life after minority, and the trial period helps to prepare the girl for the reactions and "raised eyebrows" she may have to face later in life.

The charges on which a girl may be committed vary from a simple "juvenile delinquency" complaint to such labels as "wanton and lascivious" and "danger of falling into habits of vice and immorality". The superintendent of the school often expressed the wish that all girls could be committed on a complaint of "juvenile delinquency" since less stigma is attached to that term than to a specific charge, making it easier for the girl after release. Almost all the complaints are vague and undefined; there are very few specific charges such as larceny or forgery. My general impression was that the girls are committed legally mainly because of a tendency toward bad habits. If a child is committed illegally, either on a false or illegal complaint, she may be discharged through court procedure.

The State School for Girls in Maine employs the cottage type system of accommodation. There are three main cottages, each housing
approximately twenty-five to thirty girls, and the hospital and school building are also used to accommodate a number of girls. Each cottage has its own dining room and recreation hall. The girls have single rooms as a rule, but there are several dormitory type rooms in which some of the older ones live. The essential furniture is provided, but the girls may decorate their rooms as they wish, with curtains, bedspreads, souvenirs, pictures and so forth. This allows a personal touch to be added to what might be a drab institutional-like room, and it also gives the individual an opportunity for originality and a sense of possessiveness. The girls usually have had so little that they could call their own that even their own private room seems quite wonderful to them. It is encouraging to see how the pride of ownership affects the amount of care and attention to the room. On one occasion when I visited a cottage, several girls eagerly asked me to inspect their rooms, and even a rather insignificant remark such as "It's very nice", seemed to please them immensely.

Each cottage is supervised by a matron whom the girls call "Mother" or more informally, "Ma". This matron tries to maintain a close personal relationship with each girl, advising, consoling, and playing the role of a mother in every way possible. The woman who is in charge of the cottage kitchen is usually called "Aunt". It is evident from such an arrangement that the treatment at the State School emphasizes the home and tries to restructure home life for the children whose own homes may have been lacking in the necessary physical and emotional atmosphere of security. The girls themselves are almost completely responsible for the care and maintenance of the physical structure of the school. They scrub and polish inside the buildings, shovel snow and sweep walkways outside. In the summertime, the girls may work in the barn or the gardens, which are
located near the school. Daily tasks are not only necessary to keep the school in good shape, but also provide excellent exercise at the same time.

In this particular school, there is an emphasis on academic education for those who are mentally capable. An education is provided through the junior year of high school, and those who are qualified, may be placed in outside high schools for their senior year. Through this plan, the girls receive their diplomas from a recognized public high school, and many of them even go on to business school or nurses' training. Every girl is encouraged to complete as much schooling as she possibly can, but it is not compulsory. For those who have a limited scholastic ability or, are behind in their studies, remedial and refresher programs are available. It is not uncommon to see a seventh grade classroom occupied by individuals anywhere from the ages of twelve to eighteen or over. Many girls, because of a record of truancy, are retarded in their education, but through remedial and refresher work they may be able to progress quickly. Commercial subjects are offered which help to prepare the older group for obtaining a job when they are discharged. The classes in the school are very small, making individual attention possible. Most of the girls regard their school work very seriously and strive to succeed. The educational system is very similar to a public school except that the classroom periods are shorter and the girls go to school either in the morning or in the afternoon, leaving time free for other activities and tasks.

The school maintains a laundry and a complete stockroom in which the girls do all of the work under supervision. Some of them are assigned to kitchen duties, preparing and serving the food, while some work on "truck", as they call it, hauling trash to the dump and keeping
the grounds in order. Besides the regular daily chores, there are many activities in which individuals may participate. Among these are dancing, sewing, arts and crafts, and basketball. Arts and crafts is a beneficial leisure activity in which the girls learn many skills, such as knitting and embroidery, and have a good time doing it. There is a free atmosphere in which the girls may chat and relax while they are occupied. They all seem very proud of their handiwork and try patiently to do well.

In basketball, the girls have an opportunity to let loose their excess energy and pent-up emotion, as well as acquire the spirit of cooperation and teamwork. Much to my surprise, there was very little rough play and coarse language on the one occasion I visited the class. With so much excitement and high tension, most young people would tend to get a little out of hand, but the pressure of the group keeps the girls at this school very much controlled. They encourage each other to act properly, according to the accepted pattern of behaviour at the institution.

Just as girls have many close friends in public schools, many of those at the State School have a "best friend", except that friendship is much intensified since the number of girls is small and the emotional level is high. The staff tries to encourage more group participation and discourage close relationships between individuals.

As to dress, the State School has abolished the use of uniforms and the girls wear their own personal clothing. There seems to be a value in permitting and encouraging personal selection of clothing and good grooming. The state provides clothing for those whose wardrobes are lacking in the necessary items, but whenever possible, relatives of child are requested to provide as much as they can. It gives a girl great satisfaction and pride in her personal appearance when she is able
to display a new outfit or even a small trinket sent by a member of her
family.

The girls often have a small income, either from social security
or from working outside on Saturdays. This money is held for them in a
special account from which they may draw to purchase clothing or other
necessary items. Since I visited the School just prior to Easter, many
of the girls were preparing and planning their new outfits at that time.
If a girl has enough money in her account, she is allowed to go on a
shopping tour accompanied by a matron or a member of the staff. In this
way, they not only learn to select clothing with good taste, but also to
budget their money and recognize quality in goods. For a great many of
the girls, this is a new experience since they have never before had the
opportunity or the means of purchasing any personal article.

When placed out in a home to work, the child usually receives
about $15 a week in wages. Most of this amount is sent back to the State
School where it is deposited in the girl's account. Generally, the girl
is given a $2.00 allowance per week which she may spend as she chooses.
In this way, the juvenile is well provided for while she is working, and
still will have a small amount of money with which to start off after
discharge.

As a planned part of the treatment, each child is eligible for
a home visit after one year at the School, provided that her adjustment
in the institution has been satisfactory. Such a temporary absence from
the School may facilitate the gradual re-adjustment of the juvenile to
her home and her community; however, it may result in emotional conflict
and undue tension if the visit is not successful. An attempt is made
prior to such a visit to determine the suitability of the home and pre-
pare both the girl and the family for the visit. In one case, a girl
returned from a home visit in a very discouraged and upset condition and stated that she never wanted to go home again. The shock of seeing the contrast between life in the home and life at the School may crystallize such an attitude toward the home.

Visiting day is held once a month, and parents and relatives are encouraged to come to the School at this time. Before admittance to the cottages, the visitors must sign a paper stating their relationship to the girl they wish to see. This is a precaution against the admittance of unsuitable friends whose visit would not be conducive to the girl's adjustment at the State School. Although messages and notes are not allowed to pass out of the institution, many such communications leave via the visitors. This day is a trying one on both the girls and the staff, but it is a necessary function of the policy of the institution. There may be tears of joy at the sight of the parents in some cases, but in others, there is no desire to visit with their family. Then too, there are those girls who never have visitors. It is evident that emotions are high on visiting day; everything from extreme elation to the deepest sorrow is expressed. One girl was faced with a problem when her visitors consisted of her father and step-mother, and her mother and stepfather. Not a single pleasant word was exchanged between the parents; only accusations of neglect and indifference toward the child were evident. One can well imagine the situation the girl was facing; she probably will not look forward to another visiting day.

A wide variety of disciplinary practices are found in the State School. In extreme cases, the "seclusion room" is used. This is a small room in the hospital which has a metal door and sparse furnishings. During my stay at the institution, this room was used only once, when a young girl started behaving very much like an epileptic and was endangering
the other girls. She tried to bite a member of the staff and pounded on the door of her room, so the only place to keep her secure was in the seclusion room. A psychiatrist was sent for immediately, and the girl was then removed to the State Hospital for observation.

The director of the State School tries to fit the punishment to the individual; therefore, there is no set punitive method in use at this institution. Deprivation of privileges is the most common method employed, particularly in the case of runaways. Such cases are usually placed in the hospital building where they are under constant supervision and control. Their personal effects are removed from them for a period of time, depending on the seriousness of the offense. They also lose the privilege of being placed out in a home in the near future.

One unusual method of discipline should be noted. This was used once only, and probably would not be effective again, but it was very successful in this particular case. All the usual punitive methods had failed in regard to this particular girl who ran away constantly, so the director of the School played upon social humiliation as a means of control. The girl was called into the office and given two sets of long winter underwear and all her other personal clothing, except her coat and shoes, was removed. For two weeks she was compelled to appear at all her regular activities garbed only in long underwear. On one occasion, when late for school, her excuse was that she had had to wait for her underwear to dry since she had washed both sets the night before. As a result of this humiliating punishment, no further trouble with this girl has been experienced.

The girls are not allowed to smoke cigarettes, chew gum, or read cheap magazines. The staff feels that these restrictions are necessary for proper administration of the State School, and they are rigidly
enforced. Most of the girls comply with the rules, but a few have been found to smoke cigarettes on the sly.

The characteristics of each individual are taken into consideration, and punishment is not doled out in an offhand manner. Finding the most successful punitive measure for an individual case comes only as a result of long experience in handling children with problems.

There is a regular procedure through which a child who is committed to the State School must pass. When she arrives, which, incidentally, may be without notice at any time during the day or night, she is immediately taken to the hospital and put in isolation for a two week period. This procedure is not only to prevent the spreading of any disease she might be carrying, but it also gives an opportunity for the administration of necessary medical and psychological examinations. In this period of time, the newly committed girl also has a chance to adapt herself to her situation and become reconciled to the fact that the State School will be her home for the next year or more. A member of the staff talks with each new individual during this period, allowing her to reveal freely any problems, questions, or background information she wishes. The girl usually explains the reasons for commitment and discloses her attitude toward the situation in which she finds herself. All of these statistics are kept on record in a personal file containing commitment papers, pertinent information on the home, family, and friends, results of tests and interviews, and any other facts which may be useful in the treatment of the delinquent.

After the isolation period, the girl is placed in a cottage and either goes to school or is assigned to a particular task such as laundry.

The new girls are rarely allowed special privileges, such as attending public lectures, concerts, or plays, but the prospect of such pleasures is an incentive to good behavior. When the girls perform added
tasks voluntarily, they may be rewarded by a trip to the store or a movie, but many of them enjoy helping the staff with no reward in mind.

A few basic points have been imbedded in my mind as a result of this experience at the State School for Girls. The first and most important of these is the fact that the girls are not "problem children", but children with problems. Their commitment to the School is not a result of innate behavioral tendencies to be "bad"; it is a result of the background, experiences, and lack of opportunity they have had. An emphasis is placed on the home and associations as causal factors in the delinquency of the girls, and an attempt is made to restructure a proper home-like atmosphere and favorable associations at the School. These girls are not "bad" as so many people think; they have had little opportunity to develop in any other manner. Placed in the same situation from which many of the girls were rescued, anyone would very likely behave just as they did. Many of the girls are from broken homes or both parents work. With the lack of supervision and guidance that accompanies such situations, the juveniles may have many unresolved problems which they solve in an illegal manner, thus becoming committed to the state institution. The girls usually get along very well when they are taken out of the home, placed in the State School, and then start life anew in another home. If the child's own home is suitable, both emotionally and physically, she may be allowed to return there, depending on the individual case. Too frequently, however, such a plan dissolves all that the girl has accomplished at the State School, so that it is essential that the home situation be inspected very carefully.

The second point which is emphasized at the State School is in regard to measures of control. The key word of the staff's philosophy of treatment is "awareness". Every officer is aware of the action of
each girl at all times, but there is no obvious display of control. The girls must check with an officer whenever they leave the building for any reason. In this way, the whereabouts of each girl is known at any given moment, and she may be located immediately. Another means of control, which is perhaps the most powerful, is the pressure of the group. The girls try to help each other to adjust to life at the School and above all, to comply with the regulations. Girls who run away receive more punishment from their own friends in the form of lectures, disdain, and often rejection than they get from the staff. One of the greatest thrills and privileges which a girl may experience is that of chasing a runaway. The girls themselves are often more persuasive and forceful in returning a runaway to the school than any older person could ever be. Group pressure is also important in changing the attitude of a new girl. For example, one girl moved into a cottage with the attitude that she was much superior to the rest, and her manner was one of arrogance and display. However, in a very short time, the other members of that cottage group had succeeded in changing her attitude and deflating her egotistical outlook until she was accepted by her associates on an equal level.

To illustrate the point that these "delinquents" are girls with problems, the following are a few hypothetical cases based on actual observations.

Ginger came from a very poor family and lived in the city dump until she was placed in the custody of the state. When she was first a state child at the age of four, she could not speak, except to make gutteral noises, and she had not yet learned to walk. She was a fairly intelligent girl, and once she had learned to master the developmental tasks of childhood, such as walking and talking, she progressed rapidly.
Her mother is in a mental institution; however, there is a question if her alleged parents are her true parents. The charge on which she was committed was "danger of falling into habits of vice and immorality", but Ginger has conducted herself in a very proper fashion since she was placed out as a nurses' aide in a hospital. She is well-liked, respected, and a very good worker at the hospital; she is happy there and anxious to do well. Her new boyfriend, who is a respectable member of the community and has a good job, has encouraged Ginger in her efforts to become a fine young lady.

This girl never had the opportunity to make anything of herself since she lived in a dump with a family who apparently completely neglected her. As a child, she never had enough to eat or wear, and she probably never even heard of such a thing as legal behavior. With a background of such circumstances, she could obviously not be expected to be non-delinquent.

Beverly was committed on a habitual truant charge. She would not attend school, had undesirable friends, and left home frequently to loiter in the streets at night. Since she had no money, she was an easy prey for men. Beverly's father is a lazy drunkard, and her whole family have been town charges for fourteen years. The standard of living in the home is extremely low; there is absolutely no supervision for the eight children. Beverly is a very sensitive child with an odd disposition who wants to be a nurse. Although she was a truant, she likes school now and maintains an excellent average in her school work. She is now attending high school while living with and working for a family with several small children. Beverly has worried a great deal about her younger sister whom she wanted to be sent to the State School. She now realizes the unfavorable environment of her own home, and would like to protect her sister...
from the unfortunate repercussions of such a home which she herself experienced. With a home lacking in everything a growing child needs, who can blame Beverly for acting as she did?

In most cases, the reason behind each individual's commitment to the State School for Girls lies in her environment, rather than in her character. The children themselves are not "problems", but they have terrific problems which they are unable to solve without enlightened assistance. So, they resort to delinquency, become legally apprehended, and committed to a state institution. For many of the girls, this commitment has meant the beginning of a secure and happy life, the satisfaction of their needs, and a realization of their personal worth to the community. Those who have attained this realization should be accorded equal opportunity in their community with those of more fortunate background and should not be tagged with the undeserved label "delinquent".
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

From this study of the approaches and treatment of juvenile delinquency, it is evident that the problem involves much more than the public realizes. To the layman, statistical evidence is sufficient to prove the extent of delinquency, and no further attempt is usually made to interpret the superficial reports on the problem. However, in delving into the subject, I have realized that the problem of delinquency is very complex and as yet unsolved. True, many theories have been offered as a means of controlling this "menace", but upon analyzing a few of these, I would pronounce them inadequate solutions which are not applicable on a universal level. For the most part, such theoretical explanations have neglected to consider the basic problem of etiology, thus they are not founded on sound reasoning.

Actually, there are two interrelated problems involved in this study. The first deals with the definition of juvenile delinquency and the second concerns causation. The conflict in approaches to juvenile delinquency, which arises from the poorly defined subject matter, becomes evident in the field of treatment where a decision must be made concerning who is liable for court action. Once determined, however, penology always follows the theoretical structure of causation. For example, if the cause of the child's delinquent behavior is designated as poor or unfavorable associations, the court may attempt to remedy the situation by placing the youth in a foster home where the
The best possible associational environment is available. To determine the suitability of those people with whom the delinquent has contact, a careful investigation is made with the resultant discouragement or encouragement of friendship with contemporary associates.

Most of the causal theories which I have mentioned may be included under the broad theory of differential association, and although it has its shortcomings, this theory of Sutherland seems to be the best offered at present. Sutherland has selected a single factor from the preconditioning elements in the field of an individual, and thus he designates associations as the course of delinquency. This is a broader and more inclusive factor than the others which I have mentioned; therefore, it applies to more individual cases. However, in order to offer a universal theory of the causation of delinquency, one must consider all the risk factors, such as age, sex, race and associations, which are a part of the individual child's field.

In conclusion, therefore, I can only say that the seriousness of the problem of juvenile delinquency has been recognized recently, and attempts have been made to understand and control organized delinquency. The need for intelligent research has become apparent, and it is very encouraging to note that one human relations expert, at least, realizes that there is no "magic pellet" for delinquency.
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