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A study of the psychological and social factors of twelve boys under the custody of Child Welfare Services, who were detained at the Rhode Island Training School for Boys during 1952.

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY  
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A STUDY OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL FACTORS OF  
TWELVE BOYS UNDER THE CUSTODY OF CHILD WELFARE SERVICES  
WHO WERE DETAINED AT THE RHODE ISLAND TRAINING SCHOOL  
FOR BOYS DURING 1952

A Thesis

Submitted by

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(B.S., University of Rhode Island, Kingston, Rhode Island, 1938)

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for  
the Degree of Master of Science in Social Service

1953

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CHAPTER I  
INTRODUCTION

Title

A study of the psychological and social factors of twelve boys under the custody of Child Welfare Services, who were detained at the Rhode Island Training School for Boys during 1952.

General Purposes

In a broad sense the writer endeavored to study the psychological and social factors in the lives of twelve boys, who had originally been committed to the care of the State on a charge of neglect or dependency, in order to gain some insight into the causes of their subsequent delinquency. Some of the general questions that the writer attempted to answer are as follows: 1). Were the delinquent careers of these boys deeply rooted in their past of parental rejection and deprivation? 2). What indications in the personalities of the boys could have been utilized toward the possibility of preventing delinquency? 3). What indications in the home situation of the boys could have been utilized toward the possibility of preventing delinquency? 4). Was their adjustment at the Center or in a foster home prognostic of a later delinquent career?

It is the writer's purpose to utilize, to the extent that is possible, the Gluecks' and Deutsch's criteria of delinquents. However, the writer cannot make full use of these criteria because of the limitation of his material, namely, lack of information derived from psychiatric data and Rorshach tests.

### Scope

The writer selected the cases of all the boys, under the custody of Child Welfare Services, who during the year of 1952, had been returned to their own homes and subsequently detained at the Rhode Island Training School for Boys by order of the Juvenile Court. These cases numbered twelve out of a total number of thirty-two who had been sent to the Training School from the Center or a foster home during 1952.

### Methods

The writer studied the case records of the boys and their families, utilizing, with the use of a schedule, such information as the kind of a home, personality of parents, relationships with siblings and parents, length of time at Children's Center or foster home, etc.

The writer was interested in the various factors utilized by the Gluecks in their prediction tables, based on social background, such as the affection of the parents for the boy, discipline of boy by father, supervision of

boy by mother, and the cohesiveness of the family. Also the writer was alerted to the eight elements in Deutsch's profile of a juvenile delinquent as he proposed to apply both Deutsch's and the Gluecks' criteria to the cases.

In as many instances as possible the writer discussed the cases with the worker or workers who had personal knowledge of the boys. This procedure was especially helpful where lack of recording failed to reveal desired information.

## CHAPTER II

## CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

Laws and Policies:

This chapter will include the history, laws and policies, and functions of the Rhode Island Child Welfare Services. This agency consists of two divisions, the child placing unit and the children's center.

In 1884 the Rhode Island Legislature passed an act that established a State Home and School. The ages of the children to be admitted to this school through the court were from three to sixteen.

In 1882 a committee endeavoring to establish an institution for dependent and neglected children under the custody of the State recommended:

The establishment of an institution which shall be both a school and a home, entirely separate from all association with any places of a penal or pauper character, to which no stigma of arrest, conviction, sentence or previous misconduct shall be attached and where under favorable circumstances the attempt shall be made to educate such children into a virtuous, self-respecting and self-supporting manhood and womanhood.<sup>1</sup>

The preceding quoted paragraph states the source for the original name and the purpose of the Children's Center. The purpose was written into the law in 1885 and re-stated in many changes of the law. The following quoted law changed

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1. Henry J. Crepeau, R. I.: A History of Child Welfare Planning, A Dissertation, Catholic University, School of Social Work, 1941



the responsibility for the control and maintenance of the institution from the Department of Education to a Bureau of children's care.

The control and maintenance of the State Home and School for dependent and neglected children shall be vested in the bureau of children's care, of the division of social security, within the department of public welfare. Said school shall be known as the State Home and School. The said bureau shall establish a system of government for the institution, and shall make all necessary rules and regulations for imparting instruction, and for the proper training of the children.<sup>2</sup>

In 1886 the placement of children in foster homes from the Home was begun under State auspices as a result of the crowded conditions in the School. Up to the year 1905 the population of the Home showed a gradual increase. After this year the commitments to the School increased but there was no increase in the number of placements in foster homes.

In 1912 the General Assembly passed an act allowing the payment of board for children placed in foster homes and by the end of the year there were eighteen children so cared for.

In 1918 the headquarters of the placing-out department was moved to the State Home and School and the work was placed under the direction of the Superintendent. This resulted in a larger number of children being placed in foster homes.

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2. General Laws of R. I., 1923, Ch, 114; Pub. laws, 1917, Ch. 1470, Sec. 1.

In 1925 the Children's Law Commission studied the Child Welfare needs of Rhode Island. In 1926 a state organization in which all work for children was centralized was created and known as the Children's Bureau. Its purpose was to undertake the State child placing and supervise private child caring and child placing agencies. In 1935 the Children's Bureau was given supervision of the State Home and School and it remained in this capacity until 1940. At the present time, the Child Placing Unit, its services integrated with those of the Children's Center, operates under the administrative supervision of what is now called, since 1951, Rhode Island Child Welfare Services.

The following laws illustrate the general purposes of Rhode Island Child Welfare Services:

Said bureau shall receive, in accordance with the rules by it established, such children as may be declared vagrant, truant, neglected or dependent on the public for support, as provided in this chapter, who are under eighteen years of age, and who are in a suitable condition of mind to be instructed, and may release or discharge any such child from its care and custody to the child's relatives or others whenever the deputy chief of the bureau is satisfied that the object of the commitment has been accomplished and conditions appertaining to such child are deemed to justify such release or discharge.<sup>3</sup>

It is declared to be the object of this chapter to provide for neglected and dependent children, not recognized as vicious or criminal, such influences as will lead toward an honest, intelligent, self-supporting manhood and woman-

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3. Ibid., Sec. 2.

hood, the state, so far as possible, holding to them the parental relation. But if at any time, in the discretion of the director of public welfare, this object can be better attained by placing a child in a good family of the same religious belief as the parents of such child, said director of public welfare shall have the power to do so on condition that its education shall be provided for by such family in the public schools of the town or city where they may reside, or in some other suitable public school or private school; and whenever such a course is desirable or necessary said department of public welfare may pay such amount as may be agreed upon for the care and support of such child. The director in his discretion may place any child requiring special treatment, training or oversight, in any institution controlled by persons of the same religious belief as the parents of such child, providing such special treatment, training or oversight, and may pay such amount as may be agreed upon, for the care and support of such child.<sup>4</sup>

#### Functions:

Rhode Island Child Welfare Services carries the primary responsibility for the public child welfare program of the state. In contrast to the program offered by most other state child welfare departments, it provides direct care to some 2000 children including children committed to its custody and others in need of special study or consultant services. The Division carries the usual responsibility for coordination of public and private services to children to more effectively meet the total needs of all children of the state.

Child Welfare Services offers the following types of services in its program:

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4. Ibid., Sec. 3

Foster care - Children who require long term substitute care because of the inability of their families to provide adequately for them are committed to the Division through the Juvenile Court. Some of them are provided protective and preventive service in their own homes with relatives, while others must be placed in various types of foster care. This phase of the program consumes the greater portion of service, time, and funds.

Institutional Group Care is provided at the Children's Center. It is now used primarily as a reception, study, and training institution, where the needs of the child are evaluated to determine the most suitable plan and to give direction in case work planning towards the reabsorption of the child in the community with parents, relatives, or foster care, or towards more specialized treatment.

Foster home care is provided by the child placing unit for such children as will profit from placement, and for whom homes can be found. Home finding service is offered families wishing to open their homes to children.

Protective and preventive service through federal funds is offered to families and children in nine rural towns where other children's services do not exist.

Special services - by law, all adoptions and child marriages are referred by the Juvenile Court for investigation and subsequent reporting to the court prior to hearing and decision. Inquiries from out-of-state agencies on matters relating to dependent or neglected children are handled for study and follow-up when indicated. Consultation service on any problems affecting children is made available on a statewide basis.

Licensing service - by law, the Division licenses all child placing agencies, child care institutions and day nurseries, and private homes boarding children under the age of sixteen.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, it is seen that Child Welfare Services consists of a broad and varied child welfare program.

In the field of adoption there had been progress in adoption placement work. The agency is cognizant of the

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5. Eighteenth Annual Report of the Rhode Island Department of Social Welfare, 1952, Children's Division, p. 56.

fact that adoption offers maximum security to those children who cannot look forward to the security and protection of their own family.

The preparatory work of the evaluation of adoptive homes, the selection of the right child, the preparation of the child to take this step, and the adjustment after placement is a time-consuming process.<sup>6</sup>

Child Welfare Services has a camp program and much time and effort is put into constructive camp placements for children.

The further development of the special unit of the State Mental Hygiene Services established in the Children's Center has been a big step in providing more adequate psychological and psychiatric services to a greater number of needy children. This has helped to establish the Children's Center as a study and treatment home for all children under public care. Although only a few children can receive intensive therapy, it is possible for all children under care to have psychological examinations.

The medical needs of the children are met through utilizing all available medical resources in the community, supplementing the program developed by the Division's medical staff and facilities. Hospital clinics, well baby clinics, and the state and federal health programs are available to children cared for by the Division and are used to a maximum degree. Two staff nurses are available

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6. Ibid., p.60

at all times for consultation and supervision of the health and medical problems of the children under care.

As pointed out previously Child Welfare Services is divided into the child placing unit and the Children's center. The functions of the latter can be stated as follows:

The Children's Center (formerly the State Home and School) was originally established in 1885 to care for dependent and neglected children on a long-time basis. In recent years with the development of a foster home program to care for most of the children committed to the state's care it has become a Center for temporary care, intensive study, and treatment service for children in need of group living. Most of the new children received by the Division, on commitment by the Juvenile Court, are admitted to the Center for special study and planning with the exception of infants. Children are returned to the community as soon as possible either to their own family or foster families. This study and treatment method within a group setting enables children coming from extreme neglected and broken homes to gain security and some understanding of their needs in preparation for life in the community. Children who consistently fail to adjust in foster homes are admitted to the Center for reevaluation and study.<sup>7</sup>

Perhaps the heart of the Children's Center can be said to be the cottage system. The value of group living for certain children with emotional or personality problems has been receiving greater recognition through research in the field of group therapy and group dynamics. Some children cannot accept substitute parents. Others have problems of behavior not acceptable in a family setting in a community. Through group placement, focus can be placed upon the development of the individual child and his re-

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7. Ibid., p. 66

actions in this setting. The cottage parent utilizes the group situation for care, observation and study of each child.

## CHAPTER III

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Causes of Delinquency

This chapter will review the literature in regard to the causes of juvenile delinquency, its treatment and prevention. Although this will be a general review particular attention will be paid to the classic work done by the Gluecks<sup>1</sup>, since their research into this problem was monumental in scope and detail.

The Gluecks' research into the problem was performed with two goals in mind. The first one was to discover, as nearly as possible, those factors which, on the basis of comparisons with similar factors in the lives and personalities of non-delinquents, are crucial to delinquent behavior. The second was to validate a series of prediction tables on the basis of which qualified and skilled observers can predict tendencies toward delinquent behavior at an early age.

About ten years ago the Gluecks began an intensive study of 500 delinquent boys (then at an average age of eleven years) who were carefully matched, case by case, with 500 non-delinquent boys living in the Boston area. The matching was in respect to age, general intelligence,

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1. Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck, Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency. (New York: The Commonwealth Fund, 1950).



ethnic derivation, and residence in underprivileged urban sections.

Their findings exploded some myths concerning the causes of juvenile delinquency such as comic books, more rigid discipline in education, radio, movies, alcohol, etc.

The characteristics of the delinquent and non-delinquent groups showed striking similarities. The schooling and nativity of parents as well as the alcoholic habits or mental retardation in the families of such parents were found to have little significance. Other factors that were found to have a non-causal significance were the length of time the boys lived in underprivileged areas, the kind of housing, the size of families, or the culture conflicts in their environment. The intelligence-scale ratings, and the physical health of both groups seemed also to be substantially alike.

Their conclusions as to the factors with probable causal significance were startling and revealing to the writer. The Cluecks qualify these conclusions with the explanation that in examining delinquency it was difficult to differentiate the hereditary from the environmental factors.

The delinquents as a group were distinguished from the non-delinquents in five areas:

1. Physically - essentially mesomorphic in constitution (solid, closely knit, muscular).

2. Temperamentally - in being restlessly energetic, impulsive, extroverted, aggressive, destructive (often sadistic) - traits which may be related more or less to the erratic growth pattern and its physiologic correlates or consequences.
3. In attitude, by being hostile, defiant, resentful, suspicious, stubborn, socially assertive, adventurous, unconventional, non-submissive to authority.
4. Psychologically, in tending to direct and concrete, rather than symbolic, intellectual expression, and in being less methodical in their approach to problems.
5. Socio-culturally, in having been reared to a far greater extent than the control group in homes of little understanding, affection, stability, or moral fibre by parents usually unfit to be effective guides and protectors or, according to psychoanalytic theory, desirable sources for emulation and the construction of a consistent, well-balanced, and socially normal superego during the early stages of character development.<sup>2</sup>

Albert Deutsch<sup>3</sup> in his study of the anatomy of delinquency attempts to construct a profile of the juvenile delinquent which is not consistent with the findings of the Gluecks'. The elements included in this profile are:

1. The delinquent is most apt to come from a rather large family in the low-income brackets, living in crowded quarters in a congested neighborhood.
2. He is likely to be of somewhat under-average intelligence, according to standard tests.
3. He is more apt to suffer from physical impairments, such as eye and ear defects, than does the average non-delinquent child.
4. There is about a fifty-fifty chance that his home has been broken by divorce, separation, death, disease or institutionalization of a parent or parents. When the child is living under the same roof with both parents, the family is apt to be rent by parental discord - largely conditioned, perhaps, by the pressure of unfavorable environment.

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2. Ibid., p. 281

3. Albert Deutsch, Our Rejected Children, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1950).

5. His delinquent career is likely to begin at just below ten years of age.
6. He is likely to be backward in school, and to truant rather often.
7. He is more apt to suffer from emotional disturbance than his non-delinquent contemporary.
8. In a large proportion of cases, rising in direct ratio to the seriousness of the offense, other members of the family - parents, brothers, sisters - have delinquency records.<sup>4</sup>

It is interesting to compare Deutsch's conclusions with those of the Gluecks'. Some of the elements in his profile of the juvenile delinquent are listed as non-causal by the latter. For example, size of the family and kind of housing, rent paid by father, intelligence according to standard tests, physical impairments, are listed as non-causal factors by the Gluecks' while they included as causative factors by Deutsch. Later on in this chapter the writer will include some criticisms of the methodology and findings of the Gluecks'.

Among the causes of delinquency increasing emphasis has been put upon early behavior patterns which emerge out of specific life experiences within family relationships.<sup>5</sup> Recent years have shown a trend toward blame and punishment of parents for the child's delinquent behavior. However this trend has been replaced by a more socially mature one - that which recognizes parenthood as a living

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4. Ibid., P. 185

5. Margaret B. Hodges, editor, "Juvenile Behavior Problem," Social Work Year Book, Boyd Printing Co. 1951. p. 277.

related process with problems for the parent, as well as gain for the child.

The physically separated family is no longer considered the only deteriorating influence upon a child. Also, contributing to his problem and delinquent behavior is exposure to disharmony between parents and the use of the child as a pawn between them.

Biological impetus in growth begins at puberty and is accelerated in adolescence. Where basis patterns of relationship have remained unsound and hostile in character, adolescence is hazardous for the adolescent and society.

Although adolescents may achieve physical and emotional maturity, they do not simultaneously achieve mature social and economic status. This lag is seen as one factor in the problem of delinquent behavior.

William Healy<sup>6</sup> describes the types of reaction represented by delinquency as follows:

1. Attempt to avoid, even as a temporary measure, the unpleasant situation by escape and flight from it.
2. Attempt to achieve substitutive compensatory satisfaction through delinquent activities.
3. Attempt to strengthen or bolster up the ego wounded by feelings of inadequacy or inferiority.
4. Attempt to get certain ego-satisfaction through direct and conscious or even unconscious expression of revenge attitudes - perhaps through hidden desire to punish parent or others by conduct that will make life difficult for them.

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6. William Healy and August F. Bronner, New Light on Delinquency and Its Treatment, Yale University Press 1936.

5. Attempt to gain a maximum of self-satisfaction, to inflate the ego by generally aggressive, anti-social attitudes, that is, by the exhibition of definite hostilities and antagonism to authority.
6. Response to instinctual urges felt to be thwarted.
7. The wish for punishment was clearly discernible in a few instances and suspected in others. This seeking punishment - delinquent behavior probably offering an opportunity for being punished - was always a response to a conscious or unconscious sense of guilt.<sup>7</sup>

Barnes<sup>8</sup> states that unfavorable environmental conditions should unquestionably be studied and every effort be made to eliminate them in the hope that delinquency and crime will be lessened. But he cautioned against being too optimistic. He points out that we do not know as much as we like about the etiology of delinquent behavior. In one case a broken home is the predisposing cause; in another mental defect and poverty; here we find "bad companions" and a pair of indifferent parents; there some endocrine disorder. Sometimes delinquents are asked why and how they happened to commit a certain disapproved act. Although their reasons cannot be taken too seriously, it is interesting to hear this one say "wild west movies," this one attributes it to "liquor," and that one blames "women."

Lundberg<sup>9</sup> writes that the main causes of delinquency can be divided into two groups: (1) Those immediately

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7. Ibid., p. 134

8. Harry Elmer Barnes and Negley K. Teeters, New Horizons in Criminology (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1943, p. 968).

9. Emma Octavia Lundberg, Unto the Least of These, (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc. 1947, p. 281).

associated with conditions in the home, and (2) those which may be attributed to industrial, health, and social conditions of the community. Many of the causes which may appear to relate primarily to home conditions have their source in economic insecurity and health hazards properly chargeable to community conditions.

The causes of child delinquency directly related to the lack of normal home life may be divided into four groups:

1. Deprivation of parental care through the death of both parents, abandonment, birth out of wedlock, mental or physical incapacity or imprisonment of parents.
2. Homes broken by the death of one parent, divorce, or separation, desertion, imprisonment, or physical disability.
3. Poverty, or insecurity or inadequacy of income because of unemployment, unstable employment, low wages, subnormal earning capacity, loss of property or means of subsistence through drought, floods, or other disaster, loss of income and the expenditures incident to sickness or accidents.
4. Low standards of living and bad home conditions caused by mental disturbance, subnormal mentality, ill health, instability, shiftlessness, intemperance, immorality, ignorance, or domestic discord.<sup>10</sup>

Doniger<sup>11</sup> writes that because of our failure to recognize the importance of the emotional component in most, if not all, of delinquent behavior, that all of our attempts at so-called treatment of the juvenile delinquent are so fraught with confusion and lack of insight. We

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10. Ibid., p. 282

11. Simon Doniger, "Delinquency Requires Treatment," Survey Midmonthly, Vol. LXXXIII No. 3, March, 1947, p.70

glibly say that delinquency is the result of poverty, slums, broken homes, and since we cannot do much to solve these larger problems anyway we frequently find ourselves doing nothing specific or constructive.

He goes on to say that undoubtedly broken homes, poverty, slums, and the like are contributing factors to delinquency. They can be precipitating factors or even catalytic agents as far as delinquency is concerned, but experience has shown that they cannot be charged with the specific causes of juvenile delinquency. If that were so, all children living under conditions of poverty, all children from broken homes would become juvenile delinquents.

Doniger points out that "individual studies of delinquents, instead of generalizations have shown that even a broken home, frustrating as it may be, is not pathological per se. Delinquency results in the broken home only when the adult members of the family compensate for their own frustrations by using the lives of their children as emotional outlets, preventing the children from resolving early attachments and charging every attempt at independence with such guilt and anxiety as can be allayed only by committing antisocial acts. Or delinquency occurs when parents totally reject their children because of their own infantile preoccupation with their own needs, to an extent which denies the child any semblance of familial, affectionate relationship. Thus, the influences of poverty

and of slums operate selectively and only those children whose ego-structure has been seriously weakened by a depriving, frustrating, and anxiety-producing environment succumb to its effects. The rest do not."

In exploring the vast amount of literature that has been written on the subject of the causes of juvenile delinquency, the writer feels that Doniger's interpretation is one of the most penetrating and succinct he has encountered. He clearly differentiates between the alleged causes of juvenile delinquency and the underlying causes. He states that poverty in itself is only a contributing or precipitating cause as all children in poverty are not delinquent. It is the emotional maladjustment of the parent or parents that is the underlying cause. It is at this point that the writer wonders whether our approach to the problem of juvenile delinquency through the emotional and psychiatric door is the most direct one. Doniger says that frustrated parents are so engaged in infantile preoccupation with their own needs that they cannot form an affectionate, healthy relationship with their children. But what caused the parents' emotional frustration and maladjustment? Poverty? Slums? What caused the parents' frustration and maladjustment? Again, poverty and slums? If the slums and poverty and broken homes hadn't been there in the first place, perhaps the parents themselves wouldn't have been emotionally sick and unstable so they



could not form positive relationships with their children, who were being delinquent because of the parents' emotional illness and instability. In other words the writer wonders whether poverty and emotional sickness go hand in hand or whether the one is possibly the cause of the other.

Burt<sup>12</sup> made an intensive study of two hundred consecutive cases of juvenile delinquency, using an equal number on non-delinquents as a control. In his findings no single cause was found. More than sixty special factors emerged as predominating in the group of delinquents. And even when he turned from the study of the group to single individuals, he found as many as a dozen different factors operating in each case.

From these findings he states the following:

Crime, then, in the human individual is assignable to no single universal cause, nor yet to two or three. It springs from a wide variety, and usually from a multiplicity, of alternative and converging factors. They differ in different cases, and in every instance more than one is present. Accordingly, the psychologist of today, unlike the criminologist of the past, is no longer content to invoke on all-explaining reason - inheritance, poverty, epilepsy, or an inborn defect of the moral sense. Nearly always he finds, when he looks for them, not one explanation, but half a dozen explanations for a given act of crime. This is of supreme importance for treatment. It is not enough to deal with the most obvious fact: all the subversive factors must be discovered and removed. It is not the last straw but the accumulation of straws

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12. Cyril Burt, The Subnormal Mind, London: (Oxford University Press, 1937).

that breaks the camel's back; and if the camel is to be relieved, it is not sufficient to lift away just one single blade or wisp. They must be unloaded, all of them, one by one.<sup>13</sup>

Abrahamsen<sup>14</sup> emphasizes that every factor which prevents the child from a healthy emotional growth will cause either juvenile delinquency and/or mental disturbances, or psychosomatic manifestations. For that reason, anything that curbs the healthy development of a child is cause for delinquency. Inability to read can be such a cause, though it is frequently only a surface symptom based upon emotional difficulties. Children suffering from a physical handicap may become so emotionally warped that it may lead them into crime.

All the factors which bring about delinquency are by and large unspecific strains and stresses eliciting a panic or alarm reaction which, in a potential offender, may manifest itself in a crime. What really takes place is a disturbance of the emotional equilibrium which determines emotional adjustment. And this disturbance is caused by precipitating events. Thus, the transition of a potential offender into an actual one occurs through precipitating causes. Precipitating causes are many and varied. It could be an over-protective and rejecting

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13. Ibid., p. 161

14. David Abrahamsen, Who are the Guilty? (New York: Rinehart and Co., Inc. 1952).

mother, a rejecting father or too rigid toilet training.

Abrahamsen goes on to conclude that there are no known specific factors that can start an individual into crime. From his studies, he believes that it is evident that family tension plays an enormous role in the initial development of the emotional disturbances leading into delinquency. With family tensions and dissensions come infantile fixations leading into development of symptoms that are part of the general maladjustment structure of potential as well as actual offenders.

The writer will conclude this portion of the chapter on causes of juvenile delinquency with a qualifying interpretation of delinquency by Powers.<sup>15</sup> He writes that it is not accurate to believe that delinquency is always symptomatic of personal maladjustment. These boys are not psychologically sick. They are not particularly maladjusted within their own culture. Their habits of committing antisocial acts are acquired just as the other habits common to their particular group are acquired. They are not outstandingly unhappy or neurotic compared to the non-delinquent child under the same conditions. He states:

The relatively few who advance from minor delinquencies into more serious crimes are generally those who are relatively less happy,

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15. Edwin Powers and Helen Witmer, Prevention of Delinquency, The Cambridge-Somerville Youth Study (New York: Columbia University Press 1951).

more self-centered, and less able to respond with affection. They are the ones, by and large, who spent their early years in homes where they were denied the affection and attention essential to the development of wholesome personalities and they are the ones who are most likely to constitute a large proportion of our future prison population.<sup>16</sup>

### Prevention and Treatment of Juvenile Delinquency

In this portion of the chapter on review of literature the writer will endeavor to convey some of the current, authoritative views concerning the prevention and treatment of juvenile delinquency.

In the matter of prevention and treatment the Gluecks<sup>17</sup> themselves do not appear to be overly optimistic. They have always emphasized that solution of the causal problem of delinquency was basic to effective prevention. However, they had hoped that a general, many-sided attack, although it might prove uneconomical, might produce some favorable results even before the causal elements had been fully explored. But, unfortunately, the numerous general programs of crime prevention have not been too successful to date.

The Gluecks believe, as a result of their own research, that the factors in which delinquents differ from non-delinquents offer more specific targets for both clinical and preventive programs. They believe that in

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16. Ibid., p. 256

17. Gluecks, on. cit., p. 286

consulting these distinguishing traits and characteristics, it is possible to determine the relative significance of the numerous factors and forces, which, in their dynamic interplay, make for persistent delinquency. Also it should be further possible to concentrate psychologic, psychiatric, and sociologic activities in those areas where action gives highest promise of good results, instead of blindly galloping in all directions at once.

The Gluecks concede that general difficulties in coping more effectively with juvenile delinquency must long remain. Some of the sources of etiologic pressure can be handled only indirectly. Little can be done about bodily disharmonies and dysplasias and to the extent that mesomorphic constitution and conditions antisocial behavior the problem can only be handled by directing the energy of the growing boy into socially acceptable channels. Also basic biologic problems cannot be coped with except in terms of hereditary control.

In general the Gluecks believe that social action should be concentrated in the early manifestation of maladjustment and personality defects of the child rather than when the path of delinquency has progressed as far as the courts, training schools and prisons.

It is generally accepted that delinquent behavior represents an acting-out of feeling impulses.<sup>18</sup> Such

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18. Hodges, op. cit. p. 278

impulses are frequently translated into action so quickly that the child himself is unaware of the feelings motivating his behavior. In acting out emotional conflicts, they derive substitute gains in lieu of satisfactory relationship values.

Segregation was the earliest method of dealing with delinquent children. This meant training schools with their program that ranged from punitive incarceration to rehabilitation. Most training schools are overpopulated and few have adequate facilities for diagnostic and therapeutic care of their children.

Establishment of juvenile courts was an important step in separating the juvenile and his problems from those of the adult. Emphasis, first on sociological and psychological study, followed by probation, indeterminate sentences, and parole, resulted in a loosely integrated system which has not produced continuous social treatment for the children involved.

It is generally agreed that knowledge of the delinquency problem far out-distances practice in the treatment of it. There is need for increased facilities and increased professional skills.

It is interesting to note that Lunden<sup>19</sup> in discuss-

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19. Walter A. Lunden, Juvenile Delinquency (University of Pittsburgh, Pitt., Pa., 1936).

ing program and methods of preventing juvenile delinquency included the following statement in the prologue:

In the prevention of crime there is a method so ancient that it seems modern. While it lacks much of the scientific technique of the present, nevertheless, it is sound in principle. Let every man set his own life in order. Next let him reform his own family and household. After this let the family reform the neighborhood. After all neighborhoods are changed, then remake the province. Then, finally, the nation will be remade and crime will disappear.<sup>20</sup>

And this statement was written by a supposedly scientifically-minded authority in 1936!

Deutsch<sup>21</sup> in discussing the prevention of delinquency writes succinctly and broadly that no realistic program for reducing delinquency to a minimum could possibly be complete without consideration of the need for changing our culture. He maintains that the social cesspools must be cleaned, the social swamps drained. He has little patience with those experts who stress exclusively the individual child as the focus of preventing delinquency, who are skeptical of "mass" or environmental approaches to the problem, who raise the timeworn question of why one child becomes delinquent in the same environment, poverty-stricken or otherwise, and others in the same family or in the same neighborhood do not.

Deutsch answers this by saying that juvenile delin-

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20. Ibid. p. 211

21. Deutsch, op. cit., p. 289

quency is chronically epidemic in certain areas and are usually associated with certain conditions of living; therefore, constructive action can be taken with that knowledge alone without waiting for the ultimate answers to every question or piece of research. He believes that the problem should be approached in a similar manner of the epidemiologist in public health approaches an epidemic. The epidemic will not necessarily strike down every inhabitant in that area. Some are susceptible and some are immune. Although he doesn't know the basic factors in susceptibility and immunity, he does not let this gap in his knowledge deter him from applying effectively known methods of mass protection. He drains the swamps and destroys the disease-bearing insects. With the elimination of the associative conditions, the disease disappears.

Thus, Deutsch believes, as in an epidemic, that the problem of delinquency extends far beyond the delinquent parent, beyond the delinquent community, to a delinquent society. Any nation that tolerates the social swamps that breed delinquency is rejecting the children as surely as any parent ever rejected a child.

Deutsch concludes:

We must think in terms of a better society, of replacing crime-breeding slums with low-rent housing fit for our future citizens to grow up in; of abolishing that social disease we call poverty; of creating more meaningful social values and moral



goals than the shoddy ones that possess so many of us in everyday life; of eliminating the racial and religious discriminations that produce antisocial tensions and resentments; of building community interests in terms of the society of the child as well as the society of the adult.<sup>22</sup>

Cohen<sup>23</sup> writes that traditionally the delinquent child was placed in an institution in order to remove a menace from the community. It was hoped that incarceration in an institution with its loss of freedom and emphasis on discipline might make the delinquent think twice before committing another act which would return him to this kind of existence. However, these methods have not proved successful in deterring delinquents from repeating their unlawful acts. At best they have done no more than delay a repetition of the crime for the period of incarceration.

He goes on to say that a positive approach must be substituted for a negative one; the delinquent must be encouraged to look for acceptance instead of rejection; he must be helped to understand his own problems and some of the destructive ways that he has been taking to solve them.

Lundberg stresses the all-powerful environmental factor in the control and prevention of delinquency when she states:

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22. Ibid., p. 291

23. Frank J. Cohen, Children in Trouble, (New York, W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1952)

What of the community that places the label of delinquency upon a child who plays truant because the school curriculum is not fitted to his degree of mentality, but neglects to study his mental condition and provide school work that he can profit by, or that sends a child to an institution to correct his incorrigibility when his parents are too poor to feed and clothe him properly or provide a home in a decent neighborhood? The best juvenile court, buttressed by the most adequate social agencies, cannot cope with the problem of delinquency if the community neglects its duty of providing a safe environment for children.<sup>24</sup>

### Criticisms of the Gluecks'

Since the writer has devoted particular attention to the work of the Gluecks' in this chapter, he will include two pertinent criticisms of their methods and findings by two sociologists.

Rubin<sup>25</sup> points out that the Gluecks' basic assumption is erroneous, leading to a method of work which invites challenge. The unsound method inevitable leads to an erroneous conclusion. Their apparatus for the prediction of delinquency and their "causal law" are invalid.

In discussing the methodology, he points out that the Gluecks selected 500 institutionalized delinquents and 500 nondelinquents with residence in underprivileged neighborhoods. He interprets this to mean that the attempt

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24. Lundberg, op. cit., p. 327

25. Sol Rubin, "Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency - Illusions in a Research Project Using Matched Pairs," The American Journal of Sociology, Volume LVII, Number 2, September 1951, p. 107.

was made to exclude residence in underprivileged neighborhoods as a causative source for purposes of the study.

He also states that the Gluecks were erroneous in not taking into consideration the fact that the delinquents were institutionalized and that any examination of them will provide information about institutionalized offenders and not about offenders in general.

Although the Gluecks found that Rorschach tests and psychiatric findings indicated important differences between the delinquents and nondelinquents, Rubin points out that the tests were administered in correctional institutions so that the two groups were of markedly different total social background, one group being an institutionalized group, the other with no experience in the institution.

He concludes his criticism by citing two outstanding facts that emerge from the study. Firstly, in place of a study which sought steadfastly to eliminate environmental factors as well as to eliminate them from a causal law, the force of social (or environmental) causation of delinquency proves irrepressible. And secondly, institutionalized children differ from children who have not been institutionalized.

Thus, Rubin does not believe that the Gluecks' study has explored these facts. In what ways do rundown neighborhoods cause delinquency? Why do institutionalized children

differ from children who have not been institutionalized?

Another critic, Reiss<sup>26</sup> from the viewpoint of the sociologist also (incidentally there were no sociologists among the members of the Gluecks' research staff) finds many deficiencies. He points out that while there was remarkable close agreement on I.Q. and ethnic origin between the delinquents and nondelinquents, age and neighborhood environment were less well matched.

He questions the various assumptions regarding the inevitability of delinquency as a consequence of the person's "physical and psychologic equipment."

Reiss also concludes that the inadequate sociological designs of this research does not permit the assessment of social factors as causal factors and/or as limiting conditions. He answers negatively to the question whether this study made a contribution to the scientific study of criminology since most of the elementary criteria of analysis, e.g., reliability and evaluation of the nature of the relationships have not been met. The interpretation of the data, particularly from a sociological perspective, does not follow from the data presented. However, he feels that the data could be reworked and re-evaluated.

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26. Albert J. Reiss, Jr., "Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency - An Appraisal of the Research Methods," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. LVII, Number 2, September 1951, p. 115.

CHAPTER IV  
PRESENTATION OF CASES

Out of a total of thirty-two cases of boys, who, under the custody of Child Welfare Services, were sent to the Rhode Island Training School for Boys in 1952, the writer has arbitrarily selected those boys of that total who were returned to their own homes and living in them at the time their delinquent behavior became serious enough for them to be sent to the Training School. These cases numbered twelve. The writer studied the case histories of each boy and the family, extracting such data as previously listed in Chapter I.

The twelve cases have been presented in the order that the writer studied each one.

## CASE 1

## I. EARLY HOME LIFE

Tony is a fifteen year old boy, robust and well-built, functioning at an intellectual level of borderline deficiency. He was committed along with his three older sisters to the State in 1944 on a charge of neglect.

The conditions in the home at the time of commitment were indescribably filthy and squalid. Tony and his sisters were examined at this time and were found to be suffering from filth, pediculi, and malnutrition. All of them had been truant regularly from school.

The father drank a good deal, gave little money toward support of the children and blamed the mother and children for the home conditions. When any attempt was made to place responsibility for conditions upon him, he became very antagonistic and threatening. He had a police record, including robbery and assault.

The mother appeared to be a rather helpless, inadequate, easy-going person. She displayed ambivalent feelings toward father and was obviously afraid of him.

## II. EXPERIENCE AT THE CENTER

Tony remained at the Children's Center for three and one-half years. During this time, his adjustment was poor. He constantly ran away from school, stole, and was a behavior problem when in school. He was a bed-wetter, cried easily, fought with younger children, used vile language, lied and blamed others for his difficulties.

## III. EXPERIENCE IN OWN HOME

Finally, it was decided to place Tony in his own home, although conditions in the home were not conducive to improvement. Two of his sisters had returned home from disciplinary institutions. However, placement in his own home did not prove successful for Tony. The emotional factors that had originally been instrumental in Tony's commitment were still present in the home. Father continued to work irregularly, drink, and showed little interest in the family.

#### IV. DELINQUENT ACTS

Five months after placement at home, Tony got into trouble. He and another boy who was on probation stole four cars and drove them about the city, and then abandoned them. Since this was the first time he had been in trouble, since his return home, he was not punished by the judge.

Three months later Tony was apprehended with some other boys for mistreating cows by overfeeding them and hitting them with rubber hoses. For this he was placed on probation.

Five months later Tony was arrested for breaking and entering the house of a college professor. He was brought into Juvenile Court and committed to the Rhode Island Training School for Boys until further order of the court.

There is not much doubt that Tony's delinquent behavior stemmed from his extremely unfavorable home and family conditions. The pattern of rejection and deprivation by his parents resulted in little super-ego development. As the Gluecks wrote, his parents were not "desirable sources for emulation and construction of a consistent, well-balanced and normal super-ego."

Possibly placement in a warm and understanding foster home might have altered his pattern of delinquency, but this can only be speculative. Then again it is possible that the causative elements of his delinquency were so severe at the time of commitment when he was six years old that a foster home setting would not have been of therapeutic value.

It is the writer's belief that the placement of Tony in his own home was unwise since the same conditions that caused his commitment still existed at the time of his placement. His parents were still immersed in the pool of their own neurotic conflicts.



## CASE 2

## I. EARLY HOME LIFE

Alvin is a sixteen year old boy, Protestant, well-built with somewhat higher than average intellectual ability. He was committed to the care of the State in September 1946 on a charge of dependency. There were five siblings, all girls, who were committed at the same time as Alvin.

There was always friction between the mother and father. The mother neglected the children and drank excessively. After referral to a family agency, mother was found mentally ill and was confined to the State Hospital for Mental Diseases in 1945 with a diagnosis of dementia praecox. She has remained there until this date.

The father has always maintained an interest in Alvin and his other children. Since he could not get a divorce from the mother, he has always lived with several women, a factor which has operated against his repeatedly expressed desire to have the children home with him.

## II. EXPERIENCE IN FOSTER HOME

Alvin was placed in a foster home for a short time after commitment, but an upset condition in this foster home necessitated his return to the Children's Center. He was placed in a second foster home in a matter of weeks and he remained in that home until he returned to his father in June 1951.

During his placement in this foster home, Alvin apparently made a good adjustment. He received excellent marks in school and for a time expressed an ambition to go on to college and study to be a reporter. At school Alvin had no scholastic difficulties at all, but at times he did display aggression and the school principal felt that he might have some difficulty in adjusting in junior high school.

To the various workers who had contact with him, Alvin always presented the picture of a quiet, introverted boy who expressed feelings of inferiority concerning his ability and achievements.

During this period of foster home placement, Alvin visited his father fairly regularly, although he displayed a good deal of ambivalence toward him. He took part in neighborhood athletics, attended church regularly, and went to summer camps.

### III. EXPERIENCE IN OWN HOME

Alvin returned to his father's home in June 1951 after the father's repeatedly expressed desire to have his children home. Alvin appeared somewhat indifferent about going home, but finally agreed to go home.

### IV. DELINQUENT ACTS

On October 10, 1951 Alvin was brought into Juvenile Court for having committed indecent acts in the presence of girls. At this time he was placed on probation.

In March 1952 Alvin appeared in Juvenile Court for committing an indecent attack upon a ten year old girl. Before and after the attack, he threatened to choke the girl if she screamed or told anyone about the attack. However, she had run hysterically to her parents, and they had notified the police. At this hearing Alvin was ordered detained at the Rhode Island Training School for Boys.

In Alvin's case his emotional disturbances did not manifest themselves as an overt behavior problems until he was fifteen years old. On the surface he appeared to be making a good adjustment in his foster home and in school. Inwardly, however, he was undoubtedly experiencing distorted sexual fantasies stemming from his unresolved conflicts.

Perhaps the return to his father's home might have been the precipitating factor in Alvin's aggressive sexual acts, although this is speculative. He knew his father was promiscuous with several women and when he

came home to live with his father, there was a woman living with him at the time.

However, it is probable that Alvin's sexual deviations can be attributed to his early years of deprivation and rejection. It seems evident that he needed psychiatric treatment, but since this was not possible, he was sent to the Training School to protect society, but it is extremely unlikely that Alvin himself will benefit from incarceration.

## CASE 3.

## I. EARLY HOME LIFE

Joe is a rather thin and small boy of fifteen years of age with marked Oriental features. He is Catholic and he has better than average intelligence. Fourteen years ago he was committed to the care of the State on a charge of neglect.

At the time of his commitment paternity for Joe had never been established legally and it was believed that the putative father was either Philippino or Chinese.

The mother's early history was not of any apparent significance until she reached adolescence. Her relationship to maternal grandmother was described as hostile. The grandmother was allegedly abusive toward mother whereas the maternal grandfather was usually lenient with her.

At the time of Joe's birth, he was the mother's third child born out of wedlock. The first child was a girl who died at the age of seven, and the second child, a boy, was subsequently adopted.

For a year and a half, the mother cared for Joe until it was reported to a protective agency that she was illegitimately pregnant for a fourth time and was being abusive to Joe. For two consecutive days mother would beat, curse, and threaten to kill Joe, and for a week following she refused to feed him, and upon one occasion placed his head in an oven.

Following Joe's commitment, mother served six months at the Women's Reformatory, having been charged with lewd, wanton and lascivious conduct. In December 1940 mother was transferred to the State Hospital for Mental Diseases where she remained until September 1942. She was not found to be psychotic, but was diagnosed as having personality difficulties dating back to adolescence.

In 1944 she married a Philippino, who was a chief steward in the Navy. He was the father of her last two children. In this household was another child born out of wedlock.

## II. EXPERIENCE IN FOSTER HOME

Soon after his commitment in 1939, Joe was placed in a foster home until August 1945. During these years, he enjoyed good health and made a good adjustment in the foster home. The mother always continued her interest in Joe to the extent that she would not sign an adoptive release for him. However, she did not visit Joe very frequently.

## III. EXPERIENCE IN OWN HOME

In August 1945, a year after his mother's marriage, she requested Joe's return home to her and stepfather. Separation from his foster parents proved quite traumatic to Joe who actually refused to leave the home. However, the placement was made. A year after Joe's placement with his mother, he was involved with the police for pulling a false alarm. He would go around telling people that his mother was not married and he showed a marked decline in schoolwork. Right after this period his mother gave birth to another child. Through supportive casework help, both mother and Joe were able to understand each other better, to a point where stepfather petitioned for adoption of him, and in June 1947, the case was closed since the adoption was granted.

## IV. DELINQUENT ACTS

There was no further contact with the family until November 1949 when the case was referred to Court for re-commitment of Joe. In April of that same year he had been brought to Court for setting fire to the draperies in the main dining hall of a hotel. During this court session he informed the judge that he feared his parents and did not want to return home. He said he had committed this act in order to get sent to the Training School. He was detained at the Training School for two months and later returned home although he objected strenuously to this plan. From June to November 1949 Joe was in constant difficulty at home and in the community. He had run away from home a total of ten times and was a constant truant from school. His relationship with his mother was described as one of hostility during this period and he actually was asking for separation from his family. Therefore, he was re-committed to the Children's Division and placed at the Children's Center. He remained at the Center until the following summer when both he and his mother requested his return. His adjustment

at the Center was one of complete conformity and from a pathetic, frightened child he learned to hold his own and was able to compete favorably with his age group. His school work also improved notably at this time.

Joe remained home until May 1951 when he was again returned to the Center. Up until March of this last placement, he seemed to be doing well, but then his old pattern of behavior re-appeared and from March until May he was involved in several delinquent acts, which included the following: tampering with autos, setting fires, physically abusive toward younger children, truanting, running away from home, and forging of a check. However, two weeks later he asked to return home.

During the subsequent period at the Center, several months went by without particular incident, except during a two-week period in the summer when he went home on vacation, remained a few days and ran away from his mother, returning to the Center. He could not verbalize why he had run away. On a subsequent weekend visit home, he contacted the grippe and remained there longer. When he recovered, he refused to return to the Center, and for a month adjusted fairly well until he began to be truant from school, ran away from home and ultimately broke into a furniture store taking nothing. At a court hearing he was returned to the Center. In the beginning of 1952 Joe was again in Court for stealing and pulling a knife on a cottage father, and running away after he had been refused a week's vacation at home. He was again returned to the Center where he remained until March of 1952 when he placed himself in his former foster home after repeated difficulties at the Center and in school.

During the first six months of 1952 - at times when Joe was in a state of emotional upheaval - the adoptive father had been stationed out of the state and the mother was very ambivalent in her relationship with Joe. At times she was very hostile toward the agency and the community, defending Joe completely, and at other times being equally negative about him, berating him and belittling him.

In August 1952 Joe was in court on a charge of stealing one hundred and fifty dollars. The mother borrowed to repay the money.

Later in the same month, he appeared in court again for the stealing of articles from parked cars at an amusement park. At this hearing he was sent to the Rhode Island Training School for Boys.

Joe's pattern of behavior indicated a constant need to return home, but while at home he inevitably got into difficulties. He usually became embittered in the home, ran away and committed delinquent acts in the community.

Until recently Joe had been unable to express hostility toward adult figures, especially his mother and stepfather. Apparently, his only means of freeing himself from the hostility he felt was by his overt delinquency in which he had been involved for several years. The writer feels that these delinquent acts were a way of not only punishing himself, but his mother, since he apparently would perform them just to leave his mother and return to the Center. He has revealed strongly ambivalent feelings towards his mother and also the siblings in the home. Also Joe manifested feelings of inadequacy about his being of Oriental origin in part.

Again there is no doubt in Joe's case his pattern of delinquency had its root in his severely deprived and rejected childhood. Ambivalence was the principal theme between him and his mother. They were both almost compulsively drawn to one another only to draw apart equally compulsively.

It seems that it would have been much better for Joe to have remained in his foster home where he was making a good adjustment instead of forcing him to return home when

he had actually refused to return home. This had been a traumatic experience for him. Whether or not his delinquency would have appeared if he had remained in this foster home can only be speculative. However, this writer feels that the agency was unwise in forcing him to return to a home that was not conducive for the growth and construction of a normal super-ego - one of the causative factors in the Gluecks' book.



## CASE 4.

## I. EARLY HOME LIFE

Aime is a seventeen year old boy, husky, well-built, functioning at a borderline defective level of intelligence. He is Catholic and was committed to the custody of the State in August 1943 of a dependency charge.

When mother was fifteen years of age she was committed to the Long Lane Farm in Connecticut because of inability to adjust at home or in school. During this period she became so disturbed that she was transferred to the Connecticut State Hospital for treatment. Later she came to Rhode Island and obtained worked at the State Hospital where she met father and was married in 1932. Then it was discovered that father had not been divorced from former wife by whom he had seven children. He was sentenced to prison for five years on a charge of bigamy. Mother and two children were committed to a Catholic institution where she remained until 1933. She was later sent to a hospital for observation because of erratic behavior. Her mental age was determined at nine and one-half years. Then she went to the home of her parents after which she was committed to Exeter School. Subsequently she was paroled from there and tried to establish a home for her family.

When father was six his parents were forced to place him in a children's institution. He was placed in several institutions and at the age of twelve left the State Home and School (Children's Center) to work as a cabin boy on board ship until the age of sixteen. He has held many different kinds of jobs.

At the time of Aime's and his sister's commitment the father was having difficulty in looking after the children since the mother was in Exeter. He seemed to be sincerely interested in the children's welfare and was reluctant to have them committed because of the unpleasant memories of his own institutional experiences.

## II. EXPERIENCE AT THE CENTER

Aime had been a behavior problem since commitment to Child Welfare Services in 1943. He was placed in a foster home but had to be returned in two months because of repeated complaints in school of his behavior.

### III. EXPERIENCE IN OWN HOME

In November 1944 Aime went to live with his parents and sister. During this period he was excessively truant from school, supervised a six year old boy's stealing of articles from a store, and set fires in the neighborhood. In March 1945 he was returned to the Children's Center. In 1946 he was returned to his home again where his father was able to supervise him to some extent.

### IV. DELINQUENT ACTS

In February 1950 father died. From that time on Aime's delinquent behavior became more pronounced. He was brought into court when he attempted to molest a five year old girl sexually. He was released and sent home to his mother only to be returned to court on charges of breaking and entering with several other boys. Again he was released to his mother under supervision of Child Welfare Services, but subsequently he participated in a series of some twenty-three breaks with thirteen other boys. At this hearing he was sent to the Rhode Island Training School for Boys.

Aime's unfavorable childhood was marked by the absence of his mother from the home for prlong periods due to her disturbed condition. During the periods that the mother was in the home, she was too emotionally unstable to have a healthy relationship with Aime.

After his father's death, Aime's delinquent tendencies became more pronounced. While he had been alive, the father had been able to supervise Aime and had exerted a stable influence upon him. Upon his death, it was as if a cork were released and Aime's id forces had nothing to restrain them.

It might have been better for Aime to have been returned to the Children's Center after his first delin-

quent acts after the death of his father. Whether he would have remained there and made a reasonably satisfactory adjustment is problematical. However, it would seem that there were not sufficient strengths in the mother to effectively control Aime.

## Case 5.

## I. EARLY HOME LIFE

Eugene is an eleven year old boy, a slight and small, freckle-faced boy who is slightly below average in intelligence according to psychometric tests. He is Catholic and was committed to the care of the State in May 1948 on a charge of neglect.

Eugene's mother was abandoned by her parents when she was about a year old and she was committed to the State Home and School as a result. She did not go beyond the sixth grade in school. She was a congenital syphilitic and received many "shots." Because she felt that Eugene was experiencing the same problems she did as a child, she identified with him. In June 1931 she was referred to the Bradley Home as a behavior problem. Between 1934 and 1940 she was at the State Hospital for Mental Diseases where she was diagnosed as a psychopathic personality with schizophrenic tendencies.

Eugene's father was one of seven children whose mother died while they were very young. The children were placed in foster homes. He never did make a good adjustment and was continually getting into trouble. He was admitted to the State Hospital for Mental Diseases in 1930 with a diagnosis of manic-depression. In 1932 he was discharged and re-admitted in 1936 after the death of his first wife with whom he had one child. In 1940 he married Eugene's mother whom he met at the State Hospital where they both had been patients. Four children resulted from this second marriage among whom was Eugene.

The children were committed to the care of the State because the home was unfit to live in and mother was in the hospital with a diagnosis of pelvic inflammatory disease. Although the marriage had been stormy, it had held together. The father had been in and out of work almost regularly.

Eugene had always presented more of a behavior problem than his siblings. He was born in 1942 at the State Infirmary, teethed at six months, walked at eleven months but did not talk until he was three years of age. He was seen at the Child Guidance Clinic in 1945, was unable to stand, refused to walk or feed himself and indulged in frequent temper tantrums. In 1948 he was described as hyperactive and boisterous. He seemed to be his mother's favorite.

The child of the father's first marriage was committed to the care of the State in September 1940. The four children of his second marriage, including Eugene, were committed in May 1948. At this time mother received help from the agency psychiatrist and some improvement was seen. Both parents had some insight into their own illnesses and how it affected Eugene. Mother identified with him and expressed apprehension that he might have inherited their mental illnesses. About this time her father committed suicide and this had a deteriorating effect upon her.

## II. EXPERIENCE AT THE CENTER

Eugene's adjustment at the Children's Center was very poor. He promoted fights, hit other children, displayed temper tantrums and ran away frequently. In the beginning he was shy, aloof, and covered his face when anyone came to talk to him. He had to be separated from his siblings because he might upset them. He took separation from his mother very hard.

In 1950 he was expelled from school for fighting and other episodes. He visited home frequently although his mother could not control him. He continued to manifest aggressive, almost sadistic behavior toward other children and toward cottage parents although mother commented frequently on his love for animals.

## III. EXPERIENCE IN OWN HOME

His running away increased to three or four times a week. He'd run home but his mother could not keep him. His temper tantrums became extreme and on his visits home, he'd become involved with stealing, constantly demanding money, kicked and threw stones at her.

## IV. DELINQUENT ACTS

Eugene was repeatedly returned to the Center by the worker but almost immediately he'd run away home again. Psychiatric appointments for him were impossible to keep since he ran away so often. He revealed ambivalence toward his mother, kept running away, knowing that she could not really take him. He was picked up by the police for purse-snatching and stealing from a downtown store and finally after becoming more and more frequently involved with the

police, he was detained at the Rhode Island Training School for Boys, pending exploration for the intense psychiatric treatment he needed.

It is evident that Eugene's emotional disturbances are closely connected with the deprivation he suffered since childhood. All his behavior symptoms reveal a pattern of acting out his inner conflicts. He seems to be torn between the need of being at home with his mother and yet knowing at the same time that she cannot give him the love and security he is demanding from her. The mental illnesses of both parents have undoubtedly aggravated the emotional situation. Nobody had been able to establish a strong relationship with Eugene. His aggression and sadism were defense mechanisms he set up to protect himself from the outside world which he did not trust and feared. Because of the strong tie with his mother, he could never accept foster home placement. At times he verbalized the feeling that he was alone and nobody cared for him. He sometimes expressed doubt that the illness of his mother was the reason for his commitment. He had the feeling that she just didn't want him.

## Case 6

## I. EARLY HOME LIFE

Peter is a small, thin, red-haired boy with rather weak facial features, and a dull-normal intellectual capacity. He is fifteen years old and Catholic. Both Peter and his younger brother, Paul, were committed to the State in February 1949 after having been detained at the Rhode Island Training School for Boys pending their commitment.

The father's history shows a pattern of alcoholism and imprisonment due mainly to drunkenness and disturbing the peace. He had a long record of arrests and fines on alcoholic charges. During the many periods of resulting unemployment, it had been necessary for the family to be helped by public assistance.

The mother appeared to be a weak, inadequate woman who complained constantly about the father's behavior and blamed him entirely for the poor conditions at home and the problems created by the boys' behavior. However, she herself refused to do anything about it. She related to various workers how the father broke down the doors when he was intoxicated, threw the furniture around, and created such a disturbance that she and the two boys were terribly frightened. She was extremely ambivalent toward the father, tolerating him one day and being disgusted with him the other.

At the time of commitment the family lived in a second floor three-room tenement which was deplorably filthy both inside and out while the sanitation facilities were inadequate.

There is no record of the family relationships of either the mother or father.

Before commitment to the Children's Center, Peter had been involved in a number of petty stealings with his younger brother, Paul, who was the leader. Peter had been subject to spells since 1946 and these were diagnosed as petit mal epilepsy. In a psychiatric interview at the Center, he mentioned that he had had "fits" during the night in the past. It was felt that Peter was very dependent upon his brother Paul and was very insecure and emotionally younger than his chronological age.

At the age of eleven he was enuretic and soiled his clothes. He continued to have epileptic seizures and was receiving medication for these.

## II. EXPERIENCE AT THE CENTER

Because of his epileptic fits and low intelligence, Peter made a poor adjustment at the Center. He was hyperactive, effeminate, and extremely dependent upon his parents. His epilepsy was somewhat controlled because of the close supervision he received at the Center. The mother responded much more warmly and maternally to Peter than she did to his brother, Paul.

## III. EXPERIENCE IN OWN HOME

In October 1950 Peter was returned to his home and a few months later his brother Paul was returned. For about six months he made a good adjustment in the home. His enuresis stopped and his epilepsy was controlled medically. Also he seemed to lose some of his feminine characteristics.

However, complaints were received from school that both boys were acting up and seemed to be suffering from malnutrition. Mother complained that she had no control over them and blamed conditions on father. The father was hostile and uncooperative, blaming the mother because he worked late at night and could not assume the responsibility of the children.

## IV. DELINQUENT ACTS

In January 1952 both Peter and Paul were detained at the Rhode Island Training School for Boys for rifling cars, shop-lifting, roaming the streets late at night, and attempted automobile theft.

Peter's pattern of delinquency emerged almost inevitably from the neurotic and disordered behavior of his parents. He must have been subjected to many terrible scenes of his father indulging in violent orgies of drinking and destruction. It was evident that he was over-



protected by the mother who probably had guilt feelings about not loving him. Peter's emotional disturbances were further complicated by his epileptic fits and his dependence upon his brother Paul, who was smarter and more reckless in his behavior.

Both boys were returned to a home in which previous unfavorable conditions had not changed. The father showed no interest in the boys' welfare and the mother was too weak and inadequate to do anything about it except to project the blame upon the father. Perhaps more of an effort should have been made by the agency to place Peter in a good foster home and separate him from his brother who was always a bad influence upon him. Of course at this time the mother was showing an interest in him and it is possible that he could not accept a foster home.

## Case 7

## I. EARLY HOME LIFE

Paul, the younger brother of Peter, in the preceding case, is a thirteen year old boy, small, well-developed, red-haired with roguish eyes. His intelligence level, according to tests, is of a dull normal quality. He was committed to the State in February 1949 along with his brother, Peter.

(For family background, see preceding case concerning Peter).

Before commitment Paul was at the Rhode Island Training School for Boys for stealing and sleeping in cars. It was said that his mother blamed him for all the family troubles, including the fact that his father was alcoholic and in jail.

At a psychiatric examination at the Training School before commitment, Paul was described as a well-developed and well-nourished, rather small boy with red hair and freckled face, regular features, except for malformed teeth. He showed signs of emotional instability since early life, was enuretic until the age of four years, and had the habit of finger-nail biting. He was described as a restless child who longed for excitement. Frequently, he boasted of being a good shooter and expert knife thrower, and said he belonged to a neighborhood gang who would liberate him from the Training School if they only knew where to locate him. He spoke about going to Texas, using guns and murdering people there.

## II. EXPERIENCE AT THE CENTER

When he arrived at the Center, he displayed aggression, identified strongly with his father, and hit the other children. He seemed to enjoy scrapping and all sports and in spite of his small size was an excellent athlete.

It was felt at this time that Paul had tremendous guilt feelings about all the things for which his mother blamed him, such as his father's going to jail and his brother Peter's epileptic fits.

While at the Center Paul was involved in several episodes of running away, stealing and one of fire-setting. At this time he spoke bitterly about religion and denounced it.

Attempts were made to place Paul in a foster home but these efforts were not successful as he resisted upon the grounds that if the home did not have a horse or a colt, he'd rather remain at the Center.

### III. EXPERIENCE IN FOSTER HOME

Finally in September 1950 Paul was placed in a foster home. He seemed to make an excellent adjustment in this home, was adored by the foster parents and got along with the other boys in the home. However, he was unable to get along in the parochial school and finally was excluded from there. He went to the public school and was expelled a few hours after he was admitted. He beat up several children in the class, threw a rock at the teacher, and told another teacher to go to Hell.

### IV. EXPERIENCE IN OWN HOME

In October 1950 Paul was returned to the home of his mother along with his brother Peter.

### V. DELINQUENT ACTS

Conditions did not improve for either boy at home and finally in January 1952 both Paul and Peter were sent to the Rhode Island Training School for Boys for rifling cars, shoplifting, roaming the streets late at night, and attempted automobile theft.

Paul's pattern of delinquency can be traced almost directly to the rejection he experienced from his mother and father. Not only did he experience rejection but he was laden with guilt feelings, imposed by his mother who blamed him for the father's alcoholism and being in jail, and also for his brother Peter's epileptic fits: The mother identified with his brother, Peter, and treated him more warmly and maternally than Paul.

With Paul's rejection by his parents there was little development of the super ego. He had to act out his delinquent impulses for there was no compensating love and affection by a mother or father figure to make him give them up.

Paul needed intense psychiatric treatment, in the opinion of the writer. Where he would receive this treatment posed a problem that was not successfully solved. He was sent home to his parents where the same conditions prevailed that had prevailed at the time of his commitment. A rejecting mother and an alcoholic father almost guaranteed the inevitability of Paul's acting out his delinquent and antisocial impulses.

## Case 8

## I. EARLY HOME LIFE

Edward is an eleven year old boy, small, slight and blond, with an average intelligence rating. He is Catholic and was committed to the care of the State in July 1952.

This is a family of seven children, including Edward. The oldest child, Raymond, a boy of fifteen years of age, was committed to an institution. There is no record of the family history of either the mother or father.

The father did not appear to have much affection for Edward or the other children. In the home he was cold and authoritative, showing no warmth or affection for the children. He had always berated Edward for his past mistakes and frequently reminded Edward of them. He admitted he was out of patience with Edward and felt that his placement was the only solution to his behavior problem.

The mother also seemed to lack affection for all of her children. She maintained that she treated them all the same but had been quite rejecting of Edward. She felt that he was mentally retarded despite tests administered by the child guidance clinic which revealed him to be of average intelligence. Often she expressed despair of being able to do anything constructive about him. She punished him severely and often without avail. Edward's behavior increased her anxiety and tension.

During the three or four years prior to commitment, Edward had been a severe behavior problem. Among his delinquent acts had been firesetting, stealing and truanting.

Edward's developmental history seemed normal. His birth was a breech delivery without forceps. It was a full-term pregnancy. His formula was canned milk to which he reacted favorably. There was no difficulty in feeding or bowel movements. He was considered a good baby who did not cry much and slept a great deal of the time. At four months he cut his first tooth and had five teeth at the end of the first year. He was weaned at one year and six months; he walked at the end of his first year; he began to talk at eighteen months and was toilet trained at the end of thirty months. He had no serious childhood illnesses.

At the age of five the mother said that Edward began to show "bad" behavior but she felt this was because he was

growing up. He had not been able to get along with the other children in the neighborhood and continually fought with them. Frequently he threatened to run away from home and began to steal small articles from the home.

When he was six years old, neighbors would not allow their children to play with him. At this time he began to set fires in his home and in the adjoining woods. He was continuously in trouble in the neighborhood and was blamed for causing considerable damage.

In school Edward also had difficulties. He did not like his teacher and the other children in his class and was frequently truant from school. His work was poor but he was promoted each year. It was requested that he be transferred to parochial school and this was done. He attended parochial school for one year, but because of his behavior, very poor marks, truancy, stealing, and destruction of church property, it was requested that he be withdrawn and returned to public school.

In November 1951 Edward was administered a Rorschach by the child guidance clinic. The findings in this test pointed out an impaired ego, absence of normal identification and severe feelings of rejection.

In January 1952 he appeared in Juvenile Court for setting fires and stealing in the community. At this hearing he was detained at the Rhode Island Training School for Boys for four weeks pending carrying through plans to have him admitted to the Bradley Home. At this hearing a police sergeant called him as a boy without fear. On one occasion he climbed up high on 3300 volt tension wires and came down unhurt after scaring the police. Another time, while in school, he disappeared and was found in the sewer pipes that were being laid in back of the school seventy-five feet underground.

## II. EXPERIENCE AT THE CENTER

In February 1952 Edward was admitted to the Children's Center on a temporary commitment after being at the Training School for a short time. Bradley Home refused to take him and the Court felt that his problems were because of his rejection at home and consequently released him from the Training School. He remained at the Center until April 1952 when he was returned home and placed with his parents. Except for running away frequently to his home, he adjusted fairly well at the Center. Placement at home

was not successful since he manifested his delinquent behavior at home and therefore was returned to the Center in July 1952 when he was committed to Child Welfare Services until further order of the Court.

Edward continued to be a severe behavior problem at the Center, attempting to set fire to a building. Since he was endangering the other children, the Court detained him at the Rhode Island Training School for Boys.

### III. EXPERIENCE IN OWN HOME

Edward's adjustment at the Rhode Island Training School for Boys was superficially good and he remained there until November 1952 when he was sent home to his parents under supervision of Child Welfare Services. The plan at that time had been for Edward to come to the Center frequently for psychiatric consultation while casework was carried on with him and his parents in the home.

### IV. DELINQUENT ACTS

However, Edward appeared again in Juvenile Court in January 1953 after he and another boy had entered several stores and stolen articles from them. At this hearing he was returned to the Rhode Island Training School for Boys.

Edward was rejected by both parents and was not able to identify normally with either of them. The mother punished him severely and probably vented her frustration upon him. She believed him to be mentally retarded even though tests indicated otherwise.

Here again is the situation of a boy needing intensive psychiatric treatment and not being able to secure it because of lack of facilities. Certainly the Training School does not offer it. Child Welfare Services had only limited psychiatric facilities and Bradley Home limits its intake to children that fall into certain, well-defined

categories.

Thus, Edward was shuttled about from home to Training School, to Children's Center and back home again. All this time he could not identify with his parents or any adult and impulsively and compulsively acted out his conflicts in delinquent behavior. He was returned to his home because there was no other place for him. Even though his mother rejected him, he was drawn to her in their ambivalent relationship.



## Case 9

## I. EARLY HOME LIFE

George is a fourteen year old boy, blond, of medium stature and well-developed, functioning at a borderline level of intelligence. He is Catholic and was committed to the care of the State in February 1952 on a charge of neglect. He was the second oldest of five children.

The father is partially deaf and works in a factory. He puts in long hours at his work and does not feel any interest or responsibility for the children. He felt that his working long hours was sufficient to meet his family responsibilities and showed no warmth or affection for the children. On frequent occasions he drank heavily. In 1948 he worked on Guam and was away from home for a year. This was the time that George began to have trouble in the community.

The mother also did not demonstrate any affection for the children. She blamed George for his poor adjustment and had no insight into his problems. She also blamed father for drinking habits and not giving enough money into the home.

There is no record of the early family history of the mother or father.

While in the community, George would remain away from home for several days at a time, steal from stores or younger children, and fight with smaller children. Also he had been truanting from school.

While father was in Guam living conditions in the home were very poor. The home itself was filthy and the children were inadequately dressed.

## II. EXPERIENCE AT TRAINING SCHOOL

On June 1, 1948 George was found "wayward" by the Juvenile Court and detained at the Rhode Island Training School for Boys until further order of the Court.

On June 21, 1948 George was released from the Training School as his father had returned from Guam and both parents agreed that the supervision would be more adequate.

In August 1948 George was returned to the Training School for stealing a bicycle and a sum of money. He was released in December 1948 and for a time adjusted fairly well at home, at school, and in the community.

In October 1949 he was returned to the Training School for stealing and remained there until September 1950. At the Training School, he seemed to make a reasonably good adjustment.

In June 1952, while at home, George was again involved in stealing. At a Court hearing he was committed to the care of Child Welfare Services as it was felt that the parents were too rejecting and inadequate to help him.

### III. EXPERIENCE AT THE CENTER

George was given a Rorschach test at the Center and its responses indicated a rather restricted, limited boy who was quite disturbed. There were indications of extreme hostility and aggressive impulses over which he had no control. He appeared to have hostile feelings toward his father and mother. He was striving to control his impulses in an intellectual fashion but this was not satisfactory and he had to act out these impulses in an antisocial manner.

From the time of his placement at the Center, George's adjustment was poor and he continually ran away. However, when he ran away, he would usually not go to his own home, but would wander about the city for several days at a time, visiting friends he knew before coming to the Center. He was seen several times by the staff psychiatrist who felt that his problems were caused by parental rejection. At the Center school George threw books, erased other children's work from the blackboard, fought with other children, stole from coat pockets, and on one occasion, he actually fought with the teacher. He did not participate in sports or other group activities. He did not make friends easily and was described by his cottage parents as having a sadistic streak in being cruel to animals and children smaller and less aggressive than himself.

### IV. EXPERIENCE IN OWN HOME

Because of his poor adjustment at the Center, George was referred to Court in October 1952, but the Court returned him to the Center for continued treatment. His poor adjust-

ment continued, and he was therefore referred back to the Court in November. At the recommendation of Child Welfare Services he was returned home to his parents with the understanding that he would return regularly to the Center for his treatment with the psychiatrist. This arrangement worked fairly well for several weeks, but shortly before Christmas George ran away from home and was not seen for two weeks until his father picked him up at a housing project area. He could give no explanation as to why he had run away from home and since it was apparent that he was severely disturbed and in need of close supervision, he was referred to Court, which ordered him detained at the Rhode Island Training School for Boys for further study.

It seems to the writer that George had a need to seek punishment for his acts. He frequently asked for visits home and when these were permitted, he would go home for a few hours and then disappear for long periods of time. On several of these visits, he didn't even make an appearance at home.

Again there is the pattern of rejection by both parents and the lack of identification with either parent. His sadism toward smaller children and animals can be interpreted as a defense mechanism. There is little development of a normal superego as evidenced by his compulsion to act out his unresolved conflicts.

He demonstrated great ambivalence toward his mother as shown by his need to return home to her and then having to leave home after a few hours there.

George is obviously in need of intense psychotherapy and was detained at the Rhode Island Training School for Boys pending further study.

## Case 10

## I. EARLY HOME LIFE

Nick is an eleven year old boy, small, heavy-set, dark-haired and dark skin, functioning at a dull normal level of intelligence. He is Catholic, of Italian extraction, and was committed to the care of the State in December 1951 of a charge of dependency.

The father was born in Italy. Nothing is known of his early history. The marriage with mother took place in 1926 and ended in divorce in 1948. Father was allegedly remarried and had one child by this marriage. He assumes no responsibility for the care of his children, but does maintain some contact with them. He has history of alcoholism and unstable work history.

Mother is an obese woman, who completed a grammar school education only, since she had to take care of her own mother who was ill many years with high blood pressure. She has a long history as a mill worker and assumed support of the family since her divorce from father in 1948. Even before the divorce, she had to take on much of the responsibility for the support of the family. She had considerable difficulty in her marital relationships and as a result her marriage was never a happy one. There was some question of promiscuity on her part and some doubt as to the paternity of her last child.

Nick was the seventh of ten siblings, only six of whom were in the home at the time of commitment. One brother was in Exeter School and the other older siblings were married. The entire sibling group at home seemed to have a condemning attitude toward Nick since they were abusive to him and attempted to exert much authority over him which resulted in his becoming defiant and resentful of them. He also showed hostile behavior toward the younger siblings.

The mother expressed a great deal of ambivalence toward Nick and physically abused him on many occasions. It seemed that whenever the mother suffered a financial or emotional crisis, she displaced her hostility upon Nick. Although he seemed to provoke hostility from her by his impish and destructive behavior, he wanted to remain with her and could not accept separation from her. His relationship with father was not close since their contacts with each other were rare.

In the past Nick had several automobile accidents requiring hospitalization. Mother stated that his going to the

hospital on these occasions did not seem traumatic or fearful to him.

## II. EXPERIENCE AT THE CENTER

After his commitment in December several attempts were made to help him accept placement at the Center, but he never was able to remain for more than a day without running home to mother.

He was administered a Rorshach which pointed out the following: "A very constricted chronic anxiety and as a result his emotional spontaneity is severely inhibited and there is evidence of impoverishment of creativity and a marked reduction of intellectual energy to drive for achievement. Contact with reality appears to be normal."

Nick was subject to extreme temper tantrums, severe sadism toward younger siblings, and much destruction of household furnishings.

## III. EXPERIENCE IN OWN HOME AND DELINQUENT ACTS

From the time of his commitment Nick refused to stay at the Center and refused to attend school. His behavior was characterized by stealing money, breaking articles of furniture in the home, and acting in a generally disturbed manner. He had not attended school since April 1951. Nick would visit the Center but would not attend school there or in his own neighborhood. His mother's feelings toward him were hostile and rejecting because of his behavior. However, he was closely attached to her and could not bear to be separated from her. Mother tried to placate him by giving him money, but this was of no avail. She had no control over him and her rejection of him was characterized by her loss of temper and a feeling that she would injure him. He seemed frightened and insecure. He stuttered slightly and blinked his eyes constantly.

Because he refused to stay at the Center or remain in school in his own neighborhood, Nick appeared in Court in September 1952. At this hearing he was committed to the Rhode Island Training School for Boys until further order of the Court.

Nick demonstrates his ambivalence toward mother and does not seem close to father. Although he is not able to be separated from her, while in her presence he seems to provoke a great deal of hostility from her by name calling directly to her, destruction of household furnishings and a general defiance of her authority. Thus, the parent-child relationship characterizes extreme hostility and ambivalence on the part of both. This in turn has made Nick insecure in his mother's love for him.

Besides receiving rejection from both parents and siblings, Nick is the unfortunate object of mother's hostility when she experiences a financial or emotional crisis. Being an object of such hostility from his mother undoubtedly caused Nick to have guilt feelings. He must have been blamed for all the bad luck and misfortune in the family.

Nick was an unhappy, anxious and disturbed boy, who could not accept separation from a mother who was extremely ambivalent and often hostile toward him. He had to act out his inner conflicts by extreme temper tantrums, breaking of household furnishings, and sadism toward his younger siblings. That Nick is in need of intense psychotherapy can not be questioned.

## Case 11

## I. EARLY HOME LIFE

James is a slight, well-built, sandy-haired youth, eighteen years of age, functioning at a low level of intelligence. He is Catholic and was committed to the care of the State in May 1944 on a charge of neglect.

Little is known of the parents' early life. They were married in 1930. At that time the father was 48 years old and the mother was 16. The parents were known to social agencies since the beginning of the marriage and as early as 1934 came to the attention of a children's protective agency because of a possible neglect of the children. Mother was always in poor health, refused to follow through on medical recommendations relating to a possible tuberculosis condition and suffered from a cardiac condition. Father drank excessively, worked irregularly, and from the time of his marriage to mother had been supported by public funds.

There were seven children, including James, resulting from the marriage. Until the time of the children's removal from the home in March 1944, the family lived in squalid conditions. Mother's health continued to be poor. The school age children were chronic truants from school and when present they presented to the school a problem in discipline and hygiene. Physical neglect and complete lack of training of the children were outstanding. Throughout this period father was very verbal about his right to plan in his own way for the family and defied the community to "interfere" in his affairs. It was not until the hospitalization of the mother that the children were removed from the home. Mother died in December 1945, five months after the separation.

All the children were placed except the oldest who remained with father until his marriage.

## II. EXPERIENCE AT THE CENTER

At the time of commitment James was placed with his brother, Daniel, in a cottage at the Children's Center. He manifested no depression over separation from his family, but rather appeared to be an active, comfortable child who mixed well with the other boys in the cottage and in

general seemed to deny any pain in relation to his situation. At the time of the death of his mother, he again expressed an attitude of denial of any feeling about it.

At the Center James' general adjustment was good for about a year and upon the return from summer camp in 1945 James became very aggressive and uncooperative. In Early 1946 he ran away several times, usually to maternal grandmother's home. He was completely unmanageable, showed no positive responses to attempts of institution or casework staff to help him. Father continued in his negative, antagonistic attitude and attempts to involve him in a positive way in working out plans for James were to no avail.

### III. EXPERIENCE AT THE TRAINING SCHOOL

James was involved in several incidents of fire-setting and stealing. In December 1946 he was transferred from the Children's Center to the Rhode Island Training School for Boys through court order, as a result of his having hurled a steel bookend at one of the male staff members. He remained at the Training School for nine months and made an excellent adjustment in that confined setting. While there he was converted to the Catholic faith. This was a result of an expressed wish of James and was followed through with the consent of his father.

### IV. EXPERIENCE IN FOSTER HOME

In September 1947 he was placed in a foster home where he remained for fifteen months and with a great deal of casework help made an unusually good adjustment. However, James again began to present problems - stealing (mostly bicycles), truanting, and running away to the father's home. Several subsequent attempts at boarding home placements failed because of his inability to conform and to handle his aggressive impulses.

### V. DELINQUENT ACTS

In September 1949 he broke into a small store and stole candy and cigarettes. In November 1949, in the company of several other boys, he broke into a private home and stole silverware and tools. Shortly after this, he was again sent to the Rhode Island Training School for Boys where he remained for over two years until his discharge.



in April 1952. For several months prior to discharge, he was employed at an upholstery shop while living in a foster home under agency supervision.

In the latter part of April 1952 James was involved in breaking and entering. Later in the same month he and two other boys were involved in the robbing of a 79 year old man whom one of the boys beat severely. James appeared in Court and the case was continued. Meanwhile in May he enlisted in the Marine Corps.

However, after a short time in the Marines he was discharged on a social personality disorder. Following his return he went to live with his father. Shortly after this, he was involved in a car-stealing episode and returned to the Rhode Island Training School for Boys with the recommendation that he be transferred to the Men's Reformatory.

James' early childhood experiences took place in an aura of squalor, rejection and deprivation. His mother was inadequate, physically ill and unable to give him the love and security he needed. The father was weak and alcoholic, showing no real affection for any of the children. A few months after commitment the mother died. James was unable to identify with either father or mother, and consequently was unable to identify with any adult figure. He had to act out his inner urges and conflicts and the compulsion to do so increased as time went on. The only time he was able to control these impulses was in the confined rigid setting of a training school.

James demonstrated ambivalence toward his father. Whenever he was free of the training school he would return home only to repeat his pattern of delinquency so that he would be returned to Court and subsequently to training school.

It was almost as if he were seeking punishment in his impulsive and antisocial acts.

## Case 12

## I. EARLY HOME LIFE

Robert is a fourteen year old boy of medium build, good-looking with fine features with average intelligence. He is Catholic and was committed to the care of the State in December 1950 on a charge of dependency.

Robert has two half-sisters, age twelve and eleven. He was born illegitimately fifteen months before mother's marriage to father.

Mother is a dull, apathetic-appearing woman who seemed completely dominated by the father. This was reflected in the confusion and contradictions noted in her statements regarding Robert. At one time she stated that Robert was a behavior problem in need of corrective treatment. At another time she stated that he was an intelligent, well-behaved boy with whom the father was too strict. She was ambivalent in her feelings toward Robert but basically rejected him. After she gave birth to Robert illegitimately she felt fortunate in having a husband and was fearful that any demonstrated love for Robert would cause the father to lose whatever feelings he had for her.

The father was a gruff man, a strict disciplinarian who felt that Robert was "bad" and in need of severe corporal punishment to correct his delinquent activities. He continually chided mother about Robert and reminded her that she was lucky to acquire a husband after she had an illegitimate child.

Previous to commitment, Robert was running away from home, staying out late evenings and complaining to neighbors about the abusive treatment he received at home, especially from the father. Frequently, he would not go home at all, sleep in cars and obtain food from neighbors. He was able to arouse the sympathy of several neighbors with his stories of the abusive treatment at the hands of the father. This abuse consisted of not being allowed to watch the television set and having to remain seated in the living room, and not being allowed to go out and play.

Since Robert could not remain in his home and his behavior did not seem serious enough to warrant commitment to training school, Robert was committed to Child Welfare Services with recommendation for frequent psychiatric consultations.

## II. EXPERIENCE AT THE CENTER

Robert was placed at the Children's Center upon commitment and he made a good initial adjustment in that setting. He responded well to group living and continually sought approval by adults. He remained somewhat aloof from the other children and seemed to feel superior to them.

During Robert's stay at the Center, close casework was given to the family around what was considered the basic problem of his mother's rejection of him. She continually complained about his behavior and attitude toward the family and felt that he was not grateful to the father who had given him a home.

Robert made a favorable adjustment at the Center for several months, but then he began to run away and return to his home. Since it was felt that with continued supervision and casework by the agency, Robert could make a favorable adjustment at home, he was placed there in March 1951. However, this plan failed and he began to run away and truant from school. He was returned to the Center in May 1951. The pattern of running away and returning to the Center continued for the next year with Robert running home on the average of once every two weeks. During these runaway episodes, he usually became involved in minor delinquencies, such as the stealing of food.

Robert was treated at the Mental Hygiene Unit of the Center all during his stay there. He was found to be a severely disturbed boy with a questionable prognosis.

## III. EXPERIENCE IN OWN HOME

After a series of runaway episodes, Robert was permitted to remain in the family home in March 1952. As usual, his initial behavior was good, but he soon reverted to his former pattern of behavior and began staying away from home for several days.

## IV. DELINQUENT ACTS

In January 1953 Robert appeared in Juvenile Court after being involved in numerous delinquencies over a period of six months, and was detained at the Rhode Island Training School for Boys until further order.

This appears to be a problem in rejection - rejection of Robert by both the mother and step-father. The step-father is a strict disciplinarian who resents Robert and has no insight into the fact that his rejection of the boy is a principal cause of his antisocial behavior. Robert projects all his resentment and frustration upon the step-father in turn.

The mother also rejects Robert. She has guilt feelings about his illegitimate birth and feels that he is a threat to her hold upon the father. She feels that Robert should be grateful to father for bringing him up and giving him a home, while she herself is so insecure in her relationship with father that she feels Robert could be a precipitating factor in her losing whatever the father feels for her.

Robert cannot accept the reality of not being accepted by mother at home. He compulsively returns to the home again and again, and finally is permitted to remain there only to find that he is still facing rejection - after which almost inevitably follows the pattern of acting out his conflicts in delinquent behavior.

## CHAPTER V

## THE CASES AS APPLIED TO RESEARCH CRITERIA

Although the twelve cases presented by the writer have little quantitative significance, it is interesting to apply these cases to Deutsch's profile of a juvenile delinquent and to the Gluecks' prediction scales, although the latter will have to be more limited for reasons the writer will subsequently explain.

TABLE I

## DEUTSCH'S PROFILE OF A JUVENILE DELINQUENT

Deutsch's Elements	Number of Cases
1. Large family, crowded quarters, congested neighborhood, low-income bracket	11
2. Underaverage intelligence	8
3. Physical impairments	1
4. Homes broken by divorce, separation, death disease or institutionalization of parent or parents	5
5. Delinquent career began just before ten years of age	?
6. Backward in school, and truant often	11
7. Suffering from emotional disturbance	12
8. Other members of the family having delinquent records	4

In order to see how each case is applied individually to the Deutsch profile of juvenile delinquency, see Table II on the following page.

TABLE II  
 DEUTSCH'S PROFILE OF A JUVENILE DELINQUENT

CASE NUMBER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	*
1.	X	X			?	X	X		
2.	X			X	?		X		
3.	X			X	?	X	X	X	
4.	X	X		X	?	X	X	X	
5.	X	X			?	X	X		
6.	X	X	X		?	X	X	X	
7.	X	X			?	X	X	X	
8.	X				?	X	X		
9.	X	X			?	X	X		
10.	X	X		X	?	X	X		
11.	X	X		X	?	X	X		
12.					?	X	X		

\*

1. Large family, crowded quarters, congested neighborhood, low-income
2. Underaverage intelligenc
3. Physical impairments
4. Homes broken by divorce, separation, death, disease or institutionalization of parent or parents
5. Delinquent career began just before ten years of age
6. Backward in school and truant often
7. Suffering from emotional disturbance
8. Other members of the family having delinquent records

Tables I and II reveal that three of the elements of Deutsch's profile of a delinquent are represented in most or all of the cases. Eleven of the twelve cases fall into the large family, low-income, crowded quarters bracket; twelve cases out of twelve reveal emotional disturbances; and eleven out of twelve show backwardness in school and frequent truancy.

Only one case shows a physical impairment. This is case number six - Peter, who suffered from epileptic fits. Some of the other cases may have had physical impairments to a minor degree, but they were not revealed in the records, so the writer had to conclude that they were not present.

The writer could not obtain accurate data for the fifth element of the profile since the records, as a whole, did not reveal the exact age when the delinquent career began. Many of the boys depicted in the cases were not adjudged delinquent until they were thirteen or fourteen years of age, although their delinquent behavior manifested itself many years previous to their being sent to the training school. However, the records were not precise enough for the writer to arrive at any conclusions concerning this item.

The writer will now turn to a discussion of the Gluecks' prediction tables and a limited application of the cases to these scales.



The Gluecks constructed their prediction tables for children at the point of school entrance when they would be approximately six years. The tables were based on the causative factors of delinquency discovered by the Gluecks and enumerated in Chapter III.

In reviewing the findings of their research, the Gluecks decided not to use as a basis for predictive tools the factors of differentiation emerging from the somatic data (physique and health) or from the psychological tests.

They omitted the physique factor because anthropologists have not yet determined whether this remains constant, and if it does, whether it is as yet reliably distinguishable at the age of six or seven when children normally enter school. In regard to health, they found no great difference between the delinquents and non-delinquents.

The psychological tests were omitted from the prediction tables chiefly because the Stanford-Binet and Wechsler-Bellevue tests could not be used for children under ten years of age.

Thus, the Gluecks constructed predictive tables from their other data - the social background of the boys, the Rorschach Test, and the psychiatric findings.

Since the records employed by the writer, in most instances, did not contain detailed psychiatric data or

Rorschach tests, it is impossible to apply any findings to the predictive tables employing this data.

However, the writer will endeavor to relate the cases to the Gluecks' prediction table constructed from the social background of the boys. In some cases the five factors of this prediction table are not precisely expressed in the records, but since the pattern of rejection is so strong in one or both parents, these factors can almost be logically inferred.

The application of the cases to the Gluecks' prediction table constructed from the social background of the boys is shown in Table III on the following page.

TABLE III  
 THE GLUECKS' PREDICTION TABLE  
 (CONSTRUCTED FROM SOCIAL BACKGROUND)

SOCIAL FACTORS	NUMBER OF CASES
<b>1. Discipline of boy by father</b>	
Overstrict or erratic	5
Lax	4
Firm but kindly	2
<b>2. Supervision of boy by mother</b>	
Unsuitable	5
Fair	5
Suitable	1
<b>3. Affection of father for boy</b>	
Indifferent or hostile	9
Warm (including overprotective)	2
<b>4. Affection of mother for boy</b>	
Indifferent or hostile	8
Warm (including overprotective)	3
<b>5. Cohesiveness of family</b>	
Unintegrated	3
Some elements of cohesion	4
Cohesive	5

In the first four factors of Table III it is to be noted that all twelve cases are not represented because of the death or institutionalization of one of the parents.

The writer realizes that not too much significance can be attached to the relating of the cases to the prediction table constructed from social backgrounds as shown in Table III, since the other two tables constructed from the psychiatric findings and the Rorschach Tests had to be omitted because of the lack of data in the records that the writer employed. However, the writer does feel that the Table indicates the general lack of positive elements in the child-parent relationships.

The writer applied this criteria as follows: For example, in Case 1 - Tony - the discipline of the father was to be seen as lax, the supervision of mother seemed fair, the affection of the father and mother for Tony appeared indifferent, and the family had some elements of cohesion broken by the father's serving time in prison.

In Case 2 - Alvin - the discipline of father seemed to be erratic. The supervision and affection of mother for Alvin was completely negative as she had to be confined to the State Hospital for Mental Diseases in 1945. It would appear that father was overprotective of Alvin after mother's confinement, and there were some elements of family cohesion despite mother's confinement.

In Case 12 - Robert - Father's discipline of Robert appeared to be overstrict and his affection for Robert was indifferent. The mother's supervision of Robert was unsuitable as evidenced by her basic rejection of him and

her affection for him seemed hostile. She evidenced much ambivalence toward him, motivated partly by fear of losing father. It would seem that the home had some elements of cohesion despite Robert's running away.

## CHAPTER VI

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It was the writer's purpose to study the social and psychological factors in the lives of twelve boys, who had originally been committed to the care of the State on a charge of neglect or dependency, in order to gain some insight into the causes of their subsequent delinquency. In accomplishing this study the writer arbitrarily chose all the boys, under the custody of Child Welfare Services, who had been committed to the Rhode Island Training School for Boys during the year 1952 while they were in their own family home. These cases, in which the boys were returned to their own homes, numbered twelve out of a total of thirty-two sent to the Rhode Island Training School for Boys in 1952 while under the custody of Child Welfare Services.

The writer studied the records in order to learn something of the boys' early history before commitment to Child Welfare Services, their adjustment at the Center or in a foster home, and the precipitating factors in their own home that led to their being detained at the Rhode Island Training School for Boys.

Prior to the study of the records, the writer had read authoritative literature in the field of juvenile delinquency, with particular attention to the causes,

prevention and treatment of juvenile delinquency, in order to gain a more meaningful perspective of the cases. In as many instances as possible, the writer discussed the cases with the worker or workers who had knowledge of the case.

Since there were only twelve cases employed, the writer did not see any value in grouping the cases under any particular heading, such as age, religion, education, length of time at the Center, etc. The writer felt that such grouping would have little significance, statistically or qualitatively.

The cases as applied to the Deutsch profile of a juvenile delinquent revealed them to fall heavily upon four elements of the profile; i.e., large family, crowded quarters, congested neighborhood, low income, underaverage intelligence, backward in school and truant often, and suffering from emotional disturbances. However, it must be kept in mind that the intelligence of the boys studied by the writer was arrived at by tests, and these tests may not be too reliable because of the emotional factors in the personality of these boys.

Only one case revealed a known physical defect (epilepsy) and accurate data as the age that the delinquent careers began could not be clearly determined in studying the records.

The cases as applied to the Gluecks' prediction table, constructed from the social backgrounds, showed that most of the boys were rejected by one or both parents. Data from psychiatric findings and Rorschach Tests were not obtainable from the records because they did not contain this kind of information.

With regard to casework the writer cannot make any attempt to evaluate its quality as revealed in the cases. Such an evaluation would be extremely difficult because of the limitations in recording and the fact that many workers and students were involved in most of the cases.

The writer will attempt to answer the general questions, listed in Chapter I.

1). Were the delinquent careers of these boys deeply rooted in their past of parental rejection and deprivation?

Certainly there can be no doubt that their delinquent careers were deeply rooted in their past of parental rejection and deprivation. In all the cases studied, the element of parental rejection was present. From the time of early childhood, these boys were emotionally disturbed and their subsequent delinquent acts seemed to represent an acting out of uncontrollable impulses. As a consequence of their rejection, there was little identification with either parent and little development of a normal superego.



2). What indications in the personalities of the boys could have been utilized toward the possibility of preventing delinquency?

The writer believes that the treatment plan for these boys should utilize the findings of the Gluecks', especially in regard to their prediction tables. While the boys were at the Center or in a foster home, their behavior symptoms could have been carefully noted, and if these symptoms appeared to be of a pre-delinquent nature, as they usually did, increased psychiatric consultation and Rorschach tests could have been administered. Prediction tables could have been constructed from this data along with the prediction table constructed from social background, and consequently, the agency would have some indication of the probability of later delinquency.

The facilities for obtaining the necessary data already exist at the agency and greater selectivity could be used to insure the best utilization of the psychiatric and psychological units.

3). What indications in the home situations of the boys could have been utilized toward the possibility of preventing delinquency?

In this area, the Gluecks' prediction table constructed from social background, would be of great value in

determining the probability of delinquency. For example, it would be well within the caseworker's area of activity to ascertain the relationships of the boys with their parents. With this information a prediction table from social background could be constructed, and this in conjunction with the prediction tables constructed from psychiatric data and Rorshach tests, could be utilized to predict the later delinquency of the boys. The value of all three tables used together as a predictive instrument would be enormous.

For example, if the prediction tables had been applied to the cases used by the writer, it would have been possible to distinguish those boys who could be helped from those it would be more difficult to help. Let us suppose that one of the boys had a high chance of potential delinquency as determined by the factors of his social background, but a low chance as derived from the factors of his basic character structure (Rorshach) or his personality make-up (psychiatric), this would indicate that the chances of early preventive treatment would be excellent if casework were directed toward improving the family interrelation; i.e., working with the parents and their attitudes and feeling toward the boy.

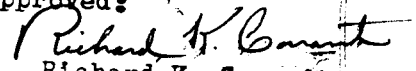
However, if the opposite were true; namely, that the boy's chances of delinquency were low in accordance with the social prediction table, but high in accordance with either or both the Rorschach and psychiatric prediction tables, this would indicate a very disturbed boy, the prevention of whose delinquent career might be extremely difficult and involve basic reorganization of his character structure and temperamental constitution.

4). Was the adjustment of the boys in the institution or foster home prognostic of a later delinquent career?

In itself, their adjustment, although generally poor, could not be considered necessarily prognostic of a later delinquent career. However, the writer believes that if prediction tables had been constructed at this time from the aforementioned data, these tables would have constituted a predictive instrument for use in the total treatment plan.

In conclusion, the writer can do nothing more than urge the agency's use of the Gluecks' prediction tables as an instrument in determining a boy's chance of eventual delinquency. It would seem that the agency would not be working blindly, would be utilizing psychiatric and psychological help more selectively and more meaningfully, and equally important, it would give the caseworker direction in his own area of activity.

Approved:



Richard K. Conant

Dean

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## SCHEDULE

1. Name, Age, Religion, I.Q.
2. Commitment, kind and date.
3. Kind of home and neighborhood.
4. Personality of parents.
5. Relationship with siblings.
6. Length of time in Children's Center or foster home.
7. Adjustment previous to commitment and admittance to Children's Center.
  - a. Family
  - b. Health
  - c. Personality behavior
  - d. Education
8. Adjustment at Children's Center and/or foster home.
  - a. Family
  - b. Group Behavior
  - c. Personality
  - d. Health
  - e. Education
  - f. Recreation
  - g. Relationship with institutional staff, casework staff, foster parents.
9. Adjustment in own home after leaving Children's Center or foster home.
  - a. Family
  - b. Health
  - c. Education
  - d. Relationship with Caseworker
10. Precipitating factors in being sent to the Rhode Island Training School for Boys after being in own home.
  - a. Relationship of these factors that caused commitment to Child Welfare Services.