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## Religious Control and Delinquent Behavior: An Analysis of the Religious Orientation of a Group of Delinquent Catholic Boys

Thomas Michael Gannon  
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RELIGIOUS CONTROL AND DELINQUENT BEHAVIOR:  
AN ANALYSIS OF THE RELIGIOUS ORIEN-  
TATION OF A GROUP OF DELINQUENT  
CATHOLIC BOYS

by

Thomas Michael Gannon, S.J.

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School  
of Loyola University in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts

June

1961

## LIFE

Thomas M. Gannon, S.J., was born in Chicago, Illinois, on October 19, 1936.

He attended Loyola Academy, Chicago, Illinois, where he graduated in June, 1954. He entered the Society of Jesus at Milford, Ohio, in September, 1954 and began undergraduate studies at Xavier University, Cincinnati, Ohio. While at Xavier he was awarded the Athenaeum Prize Key for his contribution, "The Secret of Gerard Manley Hopkins," to the University's literary quarterly. In 1958 he transferred to West Baden College, West Baden Springs, Indiana and continued undergraduate work at Loyola University, Chicago, where he received the degree of Bachelor of Arts in June, 1959. He received the degree of Licentiate in Philosophy from West Baden College in June, 1961.

The writer began his graduate studies in sociology at Loyola University in September, 1959. In addition, he has published approximately twenty-five articles to date both in scholarly journals and popular magazines.

## PREFACE

"A problem," writes Gabriel Marcel, "is something which I meet, which I find complete before me, but which I can lay siege to and reduce. But a mystery is something in which I myself am involved, and it can only be thought of as a sphere where the distinction between what is in me and what is before me loses its meaning and its initial validity."<sup>1</sup> Few social scientists today would affirm that social progress has moved us beyond religion, or that scientific knowledge has made religion useless. Nevertheless, the question: "What is it that religion does for human society and human behavior," poses a variety of subtle and complex difficulties. Much of the difficulty seems to arise from a failure to recognize the importance of the distinction, alluded to by Marcel, between the notion of "problem" and that of "mystery."

For religion essentially is a mystery, a mystery which envelops man, society, and culture, so that in a true sense it becomes meta-problematical. Not that religion is a phenomenon incapable of being understood; but religion is a mystery which must be regarded as bearing most completely and intimately on one's personal life so as to make scientific analysis all the more trying. Still the area of religion must be confronted honestly and forthrightly if we expect to find positive answers to the perplexing question of why people act

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<sup>1</sup>Gabriel Marcel, Being and Having, trans. Katherine Farrer (Boston, 1951), p. 100.

the way they do.

Any examination of the effects of religion on different individuals, as well as the specific relationship of religion to delinquency and crime, raises a number of highly complex issues relative to the nature of religious experience, the meaning of personality and human motivation, and the reciprocal interaction of these factors on the total human experience and the social structure. These problems would surely take us beyond the scope of the present study; yet it is precisely on these topics that we have such limited information. When E. J. Cooley, one of the foremost early authorities on probation, states that "the most vital force in the upbuilding of the character of youth is the influence of religion and the church," it must be recognized that this assertion can neither be proved nor disproved.<sup>2</sup>

It is because of the paucity of data in this area that the present study was undertaken. Its scope is necessarily limited; the substantive analysis is not complicated. At the outset, it would seem probable that simply because of their present situation religion had exerted little effective control on the attitudes and behavior of delinquents. The purpose of this study is to investigate such a supposition in order to discover how religion has failed, if it has failed. Consequently, information must be sought as to delinquent religious values and practices as well as the sociological backgrounds of these attitude and behavior patterns. A relatively small group of delinquents have been studied and, strictly speaking, our conclusions are only applicable to

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<sup>2</sup>Probation and Delinquency (New York, 1927), p. 14. Also, as Murray and Flynn point out in their analysis of American social problems, "There is no scientific evidence regarding the effect of religion as such on crime." (Social Problems, New York, 1938, p. 471).

them. In the light of the initial conceptual scheme set up in the first chapter, in addition to the qualifications and specifications of this framework offered in the conclusion, however, indications will be given of the lines which further research of this type might follow.

The author gratefully acknowledges his indebtedness to the many individuals both at Loyola University and at the Arthur J. Audy Home for Boys who inspired and assisted in the present study. Special thanks are due to Gordon C. Zahn, Reverend Joseph F. Wulftange, S.J., and Albert K. Cohen for helping to clarify the problems and sharpen the analysis by their many discussions and correspondence; and to Jerome J. Burns, director of the Intake Department of the Audy Home for his cooperation and encouragement. But as with all research the burden of responsibility rests with its author. Obviously much of the work, particularly the theoretical analyses, is unoriginal and derives greatly from the writings of Talcott Parsons and Robert K. Merton. The parts of the argument which suppose most relative originality are its general form and the various conclusions and hypotheses.

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## CHAPTER I

### THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Juvenile delinquency: few subjects have been so discussed by people at all levels; few problems have been so commonly shared. The task of successfully guiding youngsters through the pitfalls of early misbehavior, past the temptations of adolescent life and into self-reliant adulthood is an ever-present challenge. "There is no such thing as a bad boy," or "These children aren't bad, they never were bad; they are just victims, just neglected youngsters," are attitudes quite praiseworthy among those working to help the delinquent, but such slogans do not necessarily deepen our understanding of the problem.

This study is an attempt to understand, to grasp the meaning of some of the complicated interactions of the social world as they affect the juvenile delinquent. It focuses on the place of religion in the attitudes and behavior of these youngsters, and is based primarily upon questionnaires and interviews with a limited and accessible group of boys drawn from among those held in the Intake Department of the Arthur J. Audy Home for Boys, the juvenile detention home for Cook County, Illinois. The study is essentially an exploratory analysis of religious influence patterns; figures summarizing our materials are cited in every chapter, but these are often more heuristic than demonstrative in character. They serve chiefly to indicate the sources of interpretative

hypotheses which await more detailed, systematic inquiry.

The initial substantive aim of the study was fourfold: (1) to select at random a sample of boys that officially had been judged seriously delinquent; (2) to relate, as far as possible, patterns of religious influence to the delinquent's attitudes and conduct; (3) to gain clues to the chief avenues through which religion came to exercise or not exercise influence; (4) to set out hypotheses for more systematic study of the workings of religion and its relationship to patterns of delinquency. The body of this report, then, is divided into three parts: a brief theoretical inquiry into the nature of our problem and the methods used in its investigation, the presentation and analysis of the data gathered, and the conclusions derived from the research. But before beginning discussion of the problem, it should be of interest to glance at some of the factors which motivated the present project.

Few sociologists have ever minimized the social importance of religion. Wherever one looks — in a primitive village, a commercial town, a modern metropolis — he finds religion woven deeply into the fabric of social living. Systems of belief, worship, religious organization are all items that vary enormously within a given social system. But no society lacks them.

This importance of religion was well understood by the founders of sociology, and although they differed widely in personal conviction, each understood that the exploration of religious behavior was one of the main tasks of the student of society. Comte's "law of three phases," Spencer's "animism," Durkheim's distinction between the "sacred" and the "profane," Pareto's "logico-empirical residues" and his treatment of non-rational action, Weber's insistence on the reciprocal impact of religious and secular values, all attest to

this concern.

It is surprising, then, that so little has been done to study the vitality of religious influence in the lives of juvenile delinquents.<sup>1</sup> Not a single paper, for instance, is listed under religion in the 1947 or 1948 Yearbooks of the National Probation and Parole Association — volumes dedicated to Redirecting the Delinquent and Bulwarks Against Crime.<sup>2</sup> The Gluecks include "religion and ethical instruction" among the means that must be used if we are to make much progress in delinquency prevention, yet they all but ignore even the striking evidence of their own findings that such a need does exist. They prefer instead to give us an exquisite array of physical measurements in their study of deviant youth.<sup>3</sup>

Even more striking, however, is the study proposed and financed by the late Dr. Richard Clarke Cabot under the banner of the Cambridge-Summerville Youth Study. This experiment employed eighty-four investigators in all over a period of nine years, and resulted in a record 22,000 single-spaced, typewritten pages. Dr. Cabot hoped to test his theory that: "In every case of reform known to me, someone has once come to know the man in so intimate and friendly a way that he comes to a better understanding of himself and to a truer compre-

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<sup>1</sup>Most sociologists who have treated this problem have contented themselves with some general observation like that of Paul W. Tappan: "The actual role of contemporary religion in delinquency prevention is not easy to evaluate. Its potential role is tremendous, but the fulfillment of that potential depends on the vitality of a religion in the lives of its professants." (Juvenile Delinquency, New York, 1949, p. 512).

<sup>2</sup>See, Pauline V. Young, Social Treatment of Probation and Delinquency (New York, 1952), p. 445.

<sup>3</sup>Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck, Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency (New York, 1950), pp. 445, 287.

hension of the world in which he lives."<sup>4</sup> Could not, then, Dr. Cabot asked, such a "sustained ego-ideal for boys in trouble" turn them from delinquency? The authors of the study are inclined to conclude that Dr. Cabot's theory failed to be verified. But he had stipulated that religion be a central factor in the preventive treatment used, a stipulation that was almost completely ignored, it seems, during the nine years of the test. Only a single counselor followed his directive and her success was a highlight of the experiment.<sup>5</sup> Otherwise, as one boy remarked, "They taught us the names of snakes, what to do in case of fire, how to make a boat, and how not to steal and hop trucks."<sup>6</sup>

Even those studies which do purport to treat religion explicitly concern themselves for the most part with tabulations of church affiliations and church attendance records. Attitude and value scales have been left almost exclusively to the psychology journals, and these, in turn, usually limit themselves to the interpretation of attitude tests, and consequently to a somewhat unfortunate superficial level of analysis.<sup>7</sup> Such poverty of information and technique makes the present study quite challenging if not more difficult, and accounts for naming it exploratory.

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<sup>4</sup> Edwin Powers and Helen L. Witmer, An Experiment in the Prevention of Delinquency (New York, 1951), p. vi.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pp. 569-70.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 154.

<sup>7</sup> See in this connection, Lowell J. Carr, Delinquency Control (New York, 1940), p. 374; William Healy, The Individual Delinquent (Boston, 1915), pp. 174-75; Clement S. Mihanovich, Principles of Juvenile Delinquency (Milwaukee 1950), p. 19; Herbert A. Bloch and Frank T. Flynn, Delinquency: The Juvenile Offender in America Today (New York, 1956), 229-30; Sister Mary Dominic, R.G.S., "Religion and the Juvenile Delinquent," ACSR, XV (October 1954), 257.

In his introduction to Sociology Today, Robert K. Merton clearly distinguishes three principal components in the progressive formulation of a sociological problem:<sup>8</sup> the "originating question" — an initial statement of what one wants to know, the "rationale of the question" — a statement of why one wants to have his original question answered, its "case" in the scientific court of opinion, and the "specifying question" — that more limited question that points the way toward possible solutions to one's original query in terms that satisfy the rationale and in turn open the mind to gain higher and more significant insights. Following this precedent, the originating question of the present study can most simply be put: "Is there something within the framework of our social system that allows for juvenile delinquency, some weakness or inadequacy, some over-exaggeration or pressure that can in some way account for the existence of this social phenomenon?"

Two things should be noted about this question from the beginning: first, it is sociological and not psychological; second, it is deceptively simple. The sociologist interested in delinquency asks about the larger social environment where delinquency is found; he is interested in the effect society has on human behavior and behavior on society; he emphasizes the social structure, the interaction of individuals, and individuals with their environment within that structure. The psychologist, on the other hand, wants to know about such things as: "How did this individual get to be the way he is; what constitutes his personality and is there something about his personality that would account

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<sup>8</sup> Sociology Today, ed. Robert K. Merton, Leonard Broom, and Leonard S. Cottrell, Jr. (New York, 1958), ix-xxxiv. See also, John Dewey, Logic: The Theory of Inquiry (New York, 1938), Part II; Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J., Insight (New York, 1956), esp. Chap. 18.

for his delinquent activity?" Certainly both viewpoints contribute much to understanding any given social problem, and to choose one or the other is in no way meant to signify the superiority of either; it is merely to indicate that there is a difference which must be recognized. Second, our originating question is deceptively simple. To study delinquency in its relation to the larger social system of which it is a part is a complicated task. Theoretical divergencies, the scientific ineptness of the term "juvenile delinquency," the preliminary state of research at which we find ourselves are only a few of the obstacles that clutter our path.

The rationale and specific question of the present study will be taken up shortly. Suffice it to say here that we are not in any way attempting a new theory of juvenile delinquency. Given our general sociological orientation to the problem, the question naturally arises as to the part religion plays in a delinquent's life. It was to begin an answer to this question that our investigation was undertaken.

#### JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AND THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Juvenile delinquency is not a new phenomenon. It is and has been for some time an explosive and complex problem, but not an insoluble one. If someone were to count only the postwar studies of delinquency, they would number several hundred. And although there is neither space nor inclination to review them here, it does seem desirable to indicate where the aims and assumptions of the present undertaking parallel or depart from the major theoretical schemes of past and continuing research on the subject.

The better known and accepted theories of delinquency can be grouped into five categories: social disorganization, subcultural, "means-ends," cultural



conflict, and personality maladjustment. "Social disorganization" implies a lack of consensus on social norms and a consequent weakness of social control and socialization. Social disorganization theories would account for delinquency rates as a function of this kind of social breakdown, for under such conditions social control and even socialization may become quite ineffective. And if the individual is personally involved in groups with conflicting norms, the conflict is likely to become internalized with resulting delinquency and even personality disorganization.<sup>9</sup>

The "delinquency sub-culture approach" describes the phenomenon as a cultural tradition: delinquency is a way of life, and gangs with their distinctive personnel, goals, norms, attitudes and social controls are a permanent part of this delinquent subculture. Delinquency, then, results from a preponderance of contacts with delinquent behavior and attitudes, and in this way the permanent existence of the group or subculture is ensured.<sup>10</sup>

There is also the theory that delinquency results from a heavy cultural emphasis on certain established goals — material gain or social status, for example — and a relative indifference to the means whereby these goals are attained. As a result, when a goal is presented as attractive and obtainable while the licit means to reach it are either unavailable or too difficult, a con-

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<sup>9</sup>See, Clifford Shaw, The Jack Roller (Philadelphia, 1951), Shaw and Henry D. McKay, Brothers in Crime (Philadelphia, 1952), Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas (Chicago, 1942), Carr, Delinquency Control, Shaw, Delinquency Areas (Chicago, 1929).

<sup>10</sup>Albert K. Cohen, Delinquent Boys, The Culture of the Gang (Glencoe, 1955), Edwin H. Sutherland, The Professional Thief (Chicago, 1937), Thorsten Sellin, Culture Conflict and Crime (New York, 1938).

conflict arises which triggers deviant behavior. Most stress, presumably, would be felt by the lowest income groups who could not legitimately achieve high material goals.<sup>11</sup>

The "culture conflict" approach would attribute delinquency to the confusion and disorganization that ensues when host and immigrant cultures meet, minority and majority groups cross values, and so on. At times this theory might well be combined with that of social disorganization, since this is one of the principal sources of such disorganization; at other times the approach seems quite close to the cultural transmission theory referred to above. But more often it has distinctive emphasizes that merit for it a separate classification.<sup>12</sup> The "personality maladjustment" theory also shares some assumptions with the subculture theory, but this explanation views delinquency explicitly as the incidental result of disturbed emotions. The kleptomaniac steals not because he wants the object but because he feels insecure or rejected.<sup>13</sup>

The relationship of the present study to these delinquent theories can be limited to the following dimensions. Implicit in all the explanations we have discussed are several or all of these assumptions: (1) delinquency must be studied as an interaction process between the individual and his socio-

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<sup>11</sup>Merton, "Social Structure and Anomie," Social Theory and Social Structure (Glencoe, 1957), 121-61.

<sup>12</sup>Sutherland, Principles of Criminology (Philadelphia, 1947), pp. 208-14, Milton L. Barron, "Juvenile Delinquency and American Values," ASR, XVI (April, 1951), 208-14, Frederic M. Thrasher, The Gang (Chicago, 1927), William F. Whyte, Street Corner Society (Chicago, 1937).

<sup>13</sup>Healy and Augusta Bronner, A New Light on Delinquency and Its Treatment (New York, 1936).

cultural milieu; consequently, to understand delinquent behavior one must focus not merely on the individual nor the social structure, but on their point of contact; (2) delinquent behavior arises as a response to strain which arises in turn because of some conflicting situation; (3) delinquency can be defined most simply as any kind of norm-violating behavior; (4) delinquency is the result both of positive learning and the absence or inadequacy of certain social controls.

When Mrs. Smith remarks, for example: "My Jimmy is really a good boy, but he got to running around with the wrong crowd and now he's always getting into trouble; he's doing poorly in school, he stays out late at night, he never goes to church any more — I just don't know what to do with him," she is making a statement whose set of propositions and assumptions which, if spelled out and systematized, would constitute the position explained above. She is affirming that Jimmy's conduct violates certain norms and expectations she and others have of him, that this behavior occurs in the face of some difficulty the boy is experiencing, that delinquency is not an inborn characteristic or a defect in her child's personality, but that it is learned, that it is frequently the activity expected of a member of a given group, that often it is just "the thing to do," and unless some kind of control has an influence over Jimmy's actions there is little reason for him not to continue the way he has begun.

Since these notions form the basis of our present study, some explanation of them is in order. For the sake of clarity, we will employ the fourfold classification listed above as the point of departure.

The first common element in the more prominent theories of delinquency was the idea that delinquent behavior must be studied as an interaction process

between the individual and his socio-cultural milieu. What people do, after all, depends upon the problems they have to contend with, and such problems are not only what perplex individuals and bring them to the psychiatrist, but are also such common situations as whether or not to accept a dinner invitation, which of two suits to buy, or how to get along with one's neighbors. Human behavior does not occur in a vacuum; consequently, if we want to explain what people do, we must realize that every problem has two components: the actor's frame of reference and the "situation" he confronts. All problems arise and are solved through changes in one or both of these elements. The corollary of this is, of course, that human action, since it is often a response to some problematic situation, can only be understood insofar as one takes account of both the psychodynamic and sociological factors as well as their point of contact and interaction.

Another characteristic common to most delinquency theory is the fact that delinquency seems to be the response to some sort of conflict — the conflict between culture goals and institutionalized means, value conflicts between classes in the social system, conflict between different cultural groups, conflict within one's personality. Why such conflicts occur in the process of everyday living is not difficult to understand. Human problems are not evenly distributed among the roles that make up our social life. The immediate milieu, our present state of mind, our needs and desires all force us to choose, to adjust, to integrate the various facets of our life into a coherent whole. If we attempt to reduce strain or solve a problem of adjustment in a way that conforms to the accepted modus vivendi we are rewarded by acceptance, recognition, and respect. If we break with the routine and the institutionalized we

are deviant. Thus Cohen defines deviant behavior as "behavior which violates institutionalized expectations — that is, expectations which are shared and recognized as legitimate within a social system,"<sup>14</sup> behavior which itself is a response to strain and conflict which he later characterizes as "ambivalence to institutionalized expectations."<sup>15</sup>

The third item in our frame of reference is the definition of delinquency. There seems to be little need to emphasize the point that juvenile delinquency is an ambiguous and much overused word, that it has taken on many accretions above and beyond its original meaning, and so has come to mean different things in different places and to different people. The concept is almost completely useless for research purposes.<sup>16</sup> Without entering into a lengthy discussion of this problem, it is clear from the outset that when one considers the kinds of behavior that might be termed "delinquent" (stealing a car, pulling a knife, truancy from school, stealing items from a drug store, running away from home, driving without a license, getting drunk, gambling, sex offenses, swearing, etc.) that each one of these acts represents norm-violating behavior. In each instance a rule or regulation of the home, school, or legal system has been broken or transgressed. But every one breaks rules or violates norms at one time

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<sup>14</sup>"The Study of Social Disorganization and Deviant Behavior," in Sociology Today, p. 462.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 468.

<sup>16</sup>See in this connection, Merton, Social Structure and Social Theory, pp. 177-78; W. C. Kvaraceus and W. H. Miller, Delinquent Behavior (Washington, D.C.) 1959), p. 42; J. A. Mack, "Juvenile Delinquency Research: A Criticism," Soc. Review, III (1955), 49-63.

other. Obviously some criteria of the severity of norm-violating behavior must be employed. The seriousness, that is, the specific nature of the offense, the form the delinquency takes and the way such actions are viewed by the community, the frequency of such delinquency, the relationship of the act to prior behavior and the individual's personality are some of the factors that must be examined in this connection.<sup>17</sup> Suffice it to say here that the definition of delinquency used in this study will be any kind of norm-violating behavior that has come to the attention of some legitimate authority. The reasons for this last qualification will become clearer as we proceed.

The last common note to be considered is the fact that practically all delinquency theory takes delinquent behavior to be the result both of positive learning and the absence or inadequacy of certain social controls. For implicit in any explanation of delinquency is one or the other of two assumptions: either something makes people commit delinquent acts or something prevents people from committing them. In other words, deviant behavior either is "produced" by certain variables under study or it occurs in the absence of certain controls. It does not seem, however, that these two elements can be validly separated within a given pattern of delinquency. Can delinquent conduct be "produced" by association with a gang, for instance, while at the same time familial or community controls function effectively? Or inversely, when controls are weak is there automatic delinquency? It seems rather that these two facts are together, even if at times unequally, involved in delinquent conduct, that deviance results from a combination of positive learning and ineffective social

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<sup>17</sup>Kvaraceus and Miller, pp. 42-50.

control.

In the light of the above analysis it should not be difficult to grasp the importance of exploring the relationship of religion as an element of society to patterns of deviant behavior among youth. After all, when one begins to reflect on juvenile delinquency as a distinctive pattern of social interaction, the question quite naturally arises whether or not this activity represents a rejection or flaunting of contemporary value and behavior patterns in an attempt to adjust to a conflicting or difficult situation, or does it represent an over-acceptance of them, distorting them, carrying them to their "logical" extreme of application? This question has been raised explicitly by one sociologist at least and offers another serious reason for inquiring into the relationship between religion and its influence in the lives of delinquents.<sup>18</sup> Our effort here, remember, is not to set up a new theory of delinquency in addition to the ones discussed above, but rather to highlight a particular structural and functional relationship which must be taken into account in any adequate theory, something which up to now has been insufficiently done. Some brief consideration of the place of religion in the social structure will be necessary, therefore, in order to complete the theoretical framework we have begun to construct.

#### RELIGION AND SOCIAL CONTROL

The social role of religion has been repeatedly observed and interpreted over the span of many centuries. And, as Merton remarks: "the hard core of

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<sup>18</sup>Gordon C. Zahn, "In Our Image," Commonweal, 72 (June 19, 1959), 302-06. See also, Barron, The Juvenile in Delinquent Society (New York, 1954).

continuity in these observations consists in an emphasis on religion as an institutional means of social control, whether this be in Plato's concept of 'noble lies,' or in Aristotle's opinion that it operates 'with a view to the persuasion of the multitude,' or in the comparable judgment of Polybius that 'the masses. . . can be controlled only by mysterious terrors and tragic fears'."<sup>19</sup>

The first question that must be met in a discussion of the consequences of religion for human behavior is precisely what is meant by religion. The work of Talcott Parsons as a student and continuator of the tradition of Max Weber is typical of much of contemporary sociology of religion, and as such offers us an apt point of departure. In his approach, Parsons relates religion to two elements: the problem of meaning and to the variability of social structures and possibility of personality types in various societies. The problem of meaning concerns both situations of uncertainty and situations of morality. Comments Parsons: ". . . correlative with the functional need for emotional adjustment to such experiences as death is a cognitive need for understanding, for trying to have it 'make sense,'"<sup>20</sup> Moreover, "if we can speak of a need to understand ultimate frustrations in order for them to make sense, it is equally urgent that the values and goals of everyday life should also make

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<sup>19</sup>Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure, p. 42. This emphasis on religion as a social control is only to be expected, since religion, whatever its origin, eventually becomes bureaucratized in some form, in that almost always it is organized around some form of hierarchy. Nevertheless, religion can be studied quite apart from its external control function as Weber did in his Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (New York, 1930) and Merton in Science, Technology, and Society in 17th Century England (Bruges, Belgium, 1938).

<sup>20</sup>Parsons, Essays in Sociological Theory, rev. ed. (Glencoe, 1957), pp. 207-8.



sense."<sup>21</sup> It is in religion, therefore, that we find the integration of these two attempts after meaning. Weber and Parsons also see the different institutional structures of various societies as corresponding in important respects to differences in religious doctrine. Thus religion not only plays an integrative role for individuals and for societies, but also enters into the distinctive shaping of social institutions and through them into the formation of human personality. On a broad scale, then, we can define religion as a social mechanism for reinforcing the sentiments, the definitions of situations and human conduct which are most essential to the integration of society. And it is precisely on the basis of this adjustive significance and functional importance that religion comes to exercise social control.<sup>22</sup>

As has already been suggested, social control is to be found within the normal processes of interaction that go to make up society. Certainly the various types of control society employs are many, but the basic concept underlying them all seems to embrace four classifications: formal, informal, external, and internal control. Formal control is imposed from without by means of restriction and punishment; informal control is exercised from within and is related to affectional identification with parents, friends, teachers, etc. External control comes from without in terms of sanction and group expectation; internal control is exercised within the framework of social norms and values and most frequently operates through conscience. It is hardly feasible that

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 208.

<sup>22</sup> See, Thomas F. O'Dea, "The Sociology of Religion," ACSR, XV (June 1954), 73-103. Much of the preceding analysis was derived from O'Dea's stimulating treatment. See also, J. Milton Yinger, Religion, Society and the Individual (New York, 1954).

any single control mechanism will fit neatly into one compartment to the exclusion of any other. In fact, the reverse seems to be true. Punishment for instance, is a formal control imposed from without, but it certainly affects values and can be external in a very real sense. The classifications, then, are merely useful for heuristic purposes.

When we reflect on the controlling effect of religious doctrine and practice we find that religion exercises influence in all four areas of social control. First, it functions as an internal control. A society's common value system — its morality or "moral solidarity" — is always connected with and to a degree dependent upon a shared religious orientation. More precisely, among the common values of a society are those referring to more "ultimate concerns," rather than, say, values relating different aspects of role-behavior in particular networks of social interaction. For example, Jewish monotheism enduring for centuries, the Roman Catholic position on artificial contraception, the conviction that all men are created equal and possess certain God-given inalienable rights would be illustrations of such "ultimate values." Because such ultimate values are shared by a group and generally are considered of great importance to the group's welfare, norms concerning them invariably arise. And associated with these norms are shared ways of perceiving the behavior of others and common ways of feeling about them. (Of course, when such values and norms are related to religion they are supported not only by popular consensus but by definite beliefs which, in turn, rest on specific judgments of the truth of one's religion and its teaching as well as on the compelling drive to act consistently with what one knows to be true.) Therefore, in this sphere of internal control — beliefs, values and norms — religion exercises perhaps

its strongest and most effective influence. There can be no question that, in terms of human activity, what one thinks and what one values are the most dominant determinants of his conduct).

Second, religion exercises external control. In his classic work on the sociology of religion, Joachim Wach lists three principal ways where religion — which he considers to be essentially a matter of personal, incommunicable experience of God — manifests itself. The first area of external religion is some type of belief system which would consist mostly in theoretical propositions and speculations about God and His relation to man; the second external trait of religion is its practical expression of these beliefs, i.e. its system of worship; the third manifestation of religion is its social organization and system of social relationships. The element of belief has already been discussed under internal control; it would appear, however, that in the area of worship and social organization religion should especially exercise external control.<sup>23</sup>

"Worship," declares Wach, "is not merely an accident but a genuine and essential expression of religion which likes to penetrate the totality of the human life in making not only its spiritual and personal but also its material side a vehicle and mediator of its effects."<sup>24</sup> Certainly this expression of religion through worship is closely related to a framework of belief, for whatever is formulated in the theoretical statement of faith and believed in by the individual is done in religiously inspired acts. In a wide sense, then, all

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<sup>23</sup> The Sociology of Religion (Chicago, 1944).

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., pp. 25-26.

actions which flow from and are determined by religious experience are practical expressions of religion. Normally, however, we limit such practical expression to the area of worship, and so such questions as church attendance, participation in liturgical services, organizations and activities, in addition to prayer, penance and other aspects of an individual's devotional life have reference here.

The other area of religion's external control is its social organization. It should not be difficult to understand why the theoretical and practical aspects of religion are complemented by its social structure. Every religious act is simultaneously an individual and a social act, and the phrase "Unus Christianus, nullus Christianus" is in a very true sense applicable to all religions.<sup>25</sup> Whether it is the hierarchical order that exercises its authority and stabilizes the religious group or merely the members of that group who together act as a stimulus to one's own attitudes and behavior, it cannot be denied that we live our lives in reference to such external manifestations. The pressure to conform to the norms and values of those with whom we live is one of the strongest factors determining the solutions we take to our problems. And it is perhaps the most important criterion of the validity of our frame of reference which motivates and justifies our conduct. Few Roman Catholics, for example, would eat meat on Friday and fail to make an impression on those with

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<sup>25</sup> we are told, for instance, that Greek religion was a matter of social groups like the family or tribe or the state long before it was a matter of the individual. The growth of the concept of individuality on Roman soil was even retarded by the excessive degree to which the social idea was developed. The individual existed merely for the state, the family, or the clan. See in this connection, Fustel de Coulanges, Ancient City, trans. Willard Small (Boston, 1901), Books II and III.

whom they ate, just as many fallen-away Catholics still continue to attend Mass or certain other church services, even though they cannot really participate in them since they are not in the state of grace.

Thirdly, religious control is informal, that is, it exercises its control through other institutions of society. Religion, insofar as it is concretized in a social group, can be considered in several ways: it is a secondary, not a primary social group; moreover, it can be one's membership group, reference group, or both. A membership group is one to which a person is recognized as belonging, such as the family, a political party or religious organization. A person, then, shares the norms of his membership group not only because he is recognized by others as belonging to this particular group, but also because he finds some degree of satisfaction and security in accepting and following these norms. It often happens, however, that a person also learns to use the norms of groups of which he is not an organized member. Consequently, the term reference group can include both membership and non-membership groups. Primary groups, on the other hand, are those which are characterized by more or less continued, face-to-face contact between the members, while any other type of group is a secondary group. It is the primary groups to which everyone at one time or another has belonged and which are most notable for the extent of their influence. The family, of course, is the most obvious example of the primary group; religious, racial, and class groups are familiar examples of the secondary group.

It should be expected, therefore, that religion, insofar as it is a secondary reference or membership group, would not exercise as great an influence as a primary group like the family. But since primary groups do not live in soli-

tary isolation but share norms with larger secondary groups of society like religion, social class, nationality, and so on, these secondary groups exert their control through primary ones. Religion, for instance, is "filtered" through the family, and the fact that parents quite frequently exert their own distinctive power -- in terms of prejudice, selection, false perception, etc. -- all contribute to the difficulty of properly assessing the influence of any one reference group like religion.

The last classification of social control is formal control. As regards religion there is little difference between its function as a formal control and as an internal control; we include it as a separate category mainly in order to provide the foundation for the other classifications of control. Religion, as has been noted, influences individuals both internally and externally in terms of its structuring of a personal relationship between the individual and God, its stress on sin, guilt, the consequent alienation from God and from the Mystical Body of Christ (at least for the Catholic), and the need for reparation. The difficulty in assessing religion in its function of formal control lies in the fact that so much of this control remains hidden in the individual's personal religious experience, his own relationship with God. As Gordon Allport observes: "The conclusion we come to is that the subjective religious attitude of every individual is, in both its essential and non-essential features, unlike that of any other individual. The roots of religion are so numerous, the weight of their influence in individual lives so varied, and the forms of rational interpretation so endless, that uniformity of product is impossible."<sup>26</sup> The reality of sin, its meaning to the individual, the need for repentance are all contained within the belief system of any given religious

group, but the power they exert over human attitudes and actions entirely depends upon the degree to which they are internalized. This internalization or internal control rests, in turn, upon the idea each one has of God and the nature of this relationship between the individual and God, viz., upon religion as a formal control. (Ultimately, then, this formal control is grounded in a response to something intrinsic to the human person; it is, in Otto's phrase, a "mysterium tremendum et fascinosum," a genuine I-Thou relationship, a fundamental commitment to the person of God.) One to whom none of these terms are intelligible would do well to eschew the sociology of religion as a field of endeavor. He will never know what he is looking at.<sup>27</sup>

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS

Before closing this chapter and turning attention to the methodological problems of the present study, it should help the reader to appreciate the backdrop we have attempted to construct in the preceding pages and against which any future discussion will be projected, if we gather together the threads of the foregoing analysis into a list of general propositions. It is readily admitted that this general form resembles more a road sign than a highway map, but there should be little need to insist that transition to any more specialized precepts of social organization and control which will be made later can take place only through an understanding of this more generalized orientation.

1. Society is a social system characterized by processes of individual and group interaction. Therefore, any pattern of social behavior such as con-

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<sup>26</sup>Allport, p. 26.

<sup>27</sup>O'Dea, p. 87.

formity or deviance occurs within the framework of this interaction and cannot be studied apart from it.

2. Conformity typifies that behavior which harmonizes with "institutionalized" expectations existing within society or any organized group. Deviant behavior, on the other hand, is a violation of these same sanctioned expectations and norms which comes about as a response to strain or tension that arises in a conflicting situation.

3. It is not necessarily deviance itself, then, that constitutes the particular problem, but the ailment within the social fabric which caused the conflict to arise and thus initiated the delinquent response. In other words, our focus of attention is not limited to the individual personality who finds himself "out of step" with the rest of his group, but must include the structure of the group or of society as a whole within which this pattern of behavior occurs.

4. It follows logically from these three points that if the social system is to maintain itself with maximum proficiency and progress forward to higher levels of social integration and organization, it must possess a definite set of control mechanisms which operate in certain areas of patterned and unpatterned behavior to foster conformity and discourage deviance. (The corrolary of this is, of course, that deviant behavior is not merely the result of an interaction process between individuals and individuals and their socio-cultural milieu and so a behavior pattern that is learned, but that it is also the result of an absence or inadequacy of certain social controls.)

5. What the present study is not attempting is to construct another theory of delinquent behavior. At present the better known explanation in terms



of social disorganization, subcultural reaction-formation and transmission, illicit means, and culture conflict seem to meet the demands of existing data. What we are attempting, then, is an analysis of one element of the social structure — the religious reference group — which must be taken into consideration by any current theory.

6. Religion from the viewpoint of the total situation is a social mechanism which functions to reinforce the definitions of situations, the sentiments, and actions which are most essentially bound up with society's integration process. More specifically, it can be defined as the binding of man to God by means of a personal encounter through faith, which arises because of man's driving need to discover complete meaning in the situations of life. It is precisely on the basis of this adjustive significance that religion exercises social control.

7. Social control, considered in a general way, can be classified into four types: formal, informal, internal, and external. Applying these notions to the social influence of religion, we find that religion, both as a secondary membership group and a reference group, exerts control in the following way. Formally, it controls in terms of the individual's personal relationship to God, the doctrine of sin, guilt, alienation from God and from the Mystical Body, and the need for repentance. Informally, it acts through other institutions of society — the family, school, social class, etc. These two types of influence can, in turn, be specified according to internal and external social control: internally religion acts through its system of beliefs, common values and social norms; externally, through its system of worship and social organization.

Briefly put, these are the main lines of the present chapter. It will be remembered that the original question with which we began our theoretical inquiry was this: "Is there something within the framework of our social system that allows for juvenile delinquency?" In the light of the rationale put forth in the preceding pages this question can now be specified to read: "Could the ineffectiveness of religious beliefs and attitudes be something which accounts for delinquency in society?" Parsons has remarked: "The two most general functions of theory are the facilitation of description and analysis. The two are most intimately connected since it is only when the essential facts about a phenomenon have been described in a carefully systematic way that accurate analysis becomes possible at all."<sup>28</sup> It is with this idea in mind that we attempted here to set down the array of concepts, assumptions, and basic propositions to be followed in the present study. "If true art consists in concealing all signs of art, true science consists in revealing its scaffolding as well as its finished structure."<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Parsons, Essays, p. 213.

<sup>29</sup> Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure, p. 14.

## CHAPTER II

### PROBLEMS IN METHODOLOGY

Scientific methodology basically refers to the approach the scientist takes in collecting and analyzing a certain number of facts. The term implies that one's concrete study is being scrutinized as to the procedures it uses, the underlying suppositions it makes, the modes of explanation it considers satisfactory. This, in turn, makes necessary a fundamental distinction between scientific methodology properly so called and scientific procedures and techniques. Insofar as one is dealing with the application of the fundamentals of science, examining the logic of one's approach he is a methodologist, and methodological analysis in this sense provides the elements from which a future philosophy of the social sciences may be built. But if one treats of the specific procedures by which the scientist gathers and orders his data prior to their logical or statistical manipulation, he is a technician, and his main task is the continuous adaptation of more generalized sociological methods to concrete research situations. Consequently, methodology is an elliptical term and somewhat more complicated than might first appear.

Since the preceding chapter dealt with the general approach, conceptual framework, and theoretical suppositions underlying the present study, this chapter will take up several specific problems encountered as the investigation progressed. None of these questions involved any radical refocusing of the

precise point of the study, the relationship of religious control to delinquent behavior, but several obstacles did involve some procedural detours which, in the long run, made actual investigation quite different from the initial pilot study.

#### SELECTING THE SAMPLE

The study, it will be recalled, is based primarily upon questionnaires and interviews conducted with a sample of delinquent Catholic boys drawn from among those detained at the Intake Department of the Cook County detention home. Since we were treating not merely general religious orientation as the intervening variable, but more specific attitudes and religious practices, it was not feasible to include Protestant, Catholics, and Jews in the same study. Different questions would have to be directed at each group, and although the general framework set down in the preceding chapter could handle all three groups, more particular considerations that would be necessary for sufficient interpretation could not be generalized to such an ecumenical level. Consequently we initiated the research with Catholics and limited this report to an analysis of this data alone.<sup>1</sup> It is also true that the writer's own religious commitment and status made this choice more immediately practical.

The reasons for the location of the study, however, are not so evident. Why choose the Intake Department instead of the detention home itself? Or why focus upon an institutionalized group, rather than the more general and normative juvenile population? It has been suggested by Cohen, Nye, Kvaraceus and

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<sup>1</sup>Some research was conducted among non-Catholic and Jewish delinquents, but this has been slight and done quite unsystematically. Hence, there is no mention of it in the present report.

others that what delinquency research desperately needs, in addition to comparative studies in other cultures and societies, is more investigation of non-institutionalized delinquents, i.e. delinquent behavior in the general adolescent population.<sup>2</sup> That such procedures are desirable and could shed considerable light on the problem is unquestionable. On the other hand, if one were to rank any group of adolescents along a delinquency scale and then proceed to match this continuum with a parallel one of institutionalized delinquents, he would discover that the least delinquent cases on the general scale obviously never appeared on the institutional scale. But more importantly, the most serious delinquent cases might rarely, if ever, appear on the general scale. In other words, an investigation of non-institutionalized delinquents might tend to miss the serious and frequent offender.

To accept institutionalization as the criterion of delinquency, of course, is to endanger the reliability of one's investigation, for there are definite biases present in any institutionalized population. Repeated studies have shown, for instance, that lower-economic individuals are more likely to be arrested, convicted, and institutionalized for a given offense than are persons of middle and high-socio-economic strata.<sup>3</sup> This bias can take subtler form. It has long been recognized that there are disproportionate numbers of children from broken homes in reformatories and detention homes, and there can be little doubt that only the more serious and habitual delinquents are institutionalized.

<sup>2</sup> Cohen, Delinquent Boys, p. 170; F. Ivan Nye, Family Relationships and Delinquent Behavior (New York, 1958), pp. vii-viii; Kvaraceus, The Community and the Delinquent (New York, 1954).

<sup>3</sup> E.g. Cletus Dirksen, Economic Factors in Delinquency (Milwaukee, 1948), Shaw and McKay, Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas, Cohen, pp. 36-43.

Consequently, a solution was sought which would at the same time minimize bias, include the more serious delinquents, and provide us with an accessible group.

The reason why including the more serious delinquents was desirable should be clear. If delinquency is some type of norm violating behavior that cuts against institutionalized expectations, much of the "delinquency" one would encounter in the general adolescent population is not delinquency; no one would consider swearing, petting, drinking a bottle of beer delinquency, unless such actions were disturbing to others, extreme, or habitual. Similarly one would not find a large number of car thieves, strong-armed robbers, and sex deviants in an ordinary school. There would be some, to be sure; but unless the study were located at a continuation school or a special school like the "600" schools in New York City, the number would probably be minimal. Moreover, we wanted an accessible group. It is, however, precisely because accessibility usually limits one's study to a reform school, detention home, or an average school (all three of which were, in the light of the discussion, objectionable), that the Intake Department of the Cook County detention home was selected. Here there was an accessible group, serious delinquents would be included in the sample, and because of the department-policy the problem of bias would be considerably minimized.

The Intake Department was established in 1937 as a result of the overcrowded conditions at the detention home for the explicit purpose of screening each child's need for detention, and whenever possible to provide alternatives to detention. Inevitably detention must follow for many of the referrals to Intake (usually between 50% and 65%); but this occurs only when every possible resource or procedure alternative to detention has been considered, and it is

determined that the delinquent's stay will be more than a few days.<sup>4</sup> Then the child is transferred to the Audy Home proper, where provision is made for a program geared to longer detention.

The advantages in selecting the Intake Department as the location of this study were many. The range of delinquency was wide, spanning first offenders, habitual offenders, those merely riding in a stolen car, truants, runaways, incorrigibles, those involved in robberies of varying kinds, sex delinquents, reform school escapees, those implicated in assaults with a deadly weapon, grand larceny, and murder. Biases that would naturally be present in a strictly institutionalized population were reduced. The socio-economic status of the delinquents remained low, but after all, the bulk of known delinquency occurs in this class;<sup>5</sup> there were many delinquents from physically broken homes, but as the statistics reveal, the number was not disproportionate.

Obviously it was impossible to interview all the delinquent Catholic boys received during the six-week period allotted for the study; thus a random sample of them was chosen. Since the research was being conducted at the Intake Department, there was a continual flow of youngsters — some being processed, others being released to await their court hearing at home under their parents' supervision, the rest being transferred to the detention home itself. At that time it was department policy to hold a boy at Intake no more than two days,

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<sup>4</sup> In 1955-57, for instance, the total Intake admissions numbered 7,353, 8,432 and 8,777 respectively. Of these 4,253, 4,004 and 3,774 were referred to the Audy Home.

<sup>5</sup> Kvaraceus, Juvenile Delinquency and the School (New York, 1945), p. 98; Thrasher, pp. 5-25; Cohen, pp. 40-42.

although there were exceptions. Then too, no one could predict how many delinquent Catholic boys would be there on any given day. Clearly the majority of these were fourteen to sixteen years old (after July, 1959, delinquents in Illinois lost their "juvenile" status as they turned seventeen); and after many preliminary conversations with staff workers and boys themselves, it became apparent that the youngsters of this age bracket possessed more clearly defined attitude and behavior patterns than their younger companions. Thus, in terms of the key variables of sex, age, and religion, the study was limited to a sampling of Catholic boys, 14-16 years old, coming to the Intake Department between July 1 and August 15, 1960. It was decided to interview every other boy as the names appeared on the admission list, thus drawing up a completely random sample of about seventy-five delinquents out of approximately 195 expected cases during the same period.

#### HOW THE INTERVIEWING WAS DONE

At the beginning of the pilot study (conducted during the same six-week period the preceding year), it was thought that the use of a questionnaire did not seem appropriate, since most adolescents are unaccustomed to questionnaires. Instead, a structured interview schedule was set up and the interviewer wrote down the answers of his respondents. This led to several difficulties. In order to establish satisfactory rapport with the boys it was necessary to approach the interview in a relaxed, nondirective manner; once this rapport had been established it was extremely difficult, if not impossible, to pick up a pencil and begin taking notes, let alone the difficulties in obtaining a verbatim report. The limited scope of the study and the costs involved made



use of a recording machine prohibitive. Without verbatim reports the dangers of subjectivism and unreliability were severe; for the interviewer to lessen or lose the confidence of those he interviewed would be to run the risk of invalid data. The solution seemed to be to put the pencil into the delinquent's hand and to center this questionnaire in the middle of an interview situation. (Non-directive interviewing seemed best suited to this plan, for it encouraged the boys to express their feelings freely, not to be afraid of any recriminations, and to put in their own words their convictions, doubts, and problems. The actual questionnaires form the substance of the study, although data from the total interview is used to gain insights and assist interpretation.)<sup>6</sup>

Most of the delinquents showed real acceptance of the interview and the questionnaire. A number of them commented quite spontaneously on the whole idea. For instance, a husky black-haired lad of 16, arrested for stealing cars and two attempted robberies, remarked toward the end of the interview:

You know, sir, I've never talked to anybody like you before. Nobody's ever asked me questions like this; nobody's ever been that interested, I guess. I'm telling you things I've never told anybody else about before and it's really good.

But there were exceptions. One sophisticated fifteen-year-old, three-time loser and ex-reform school product commented:

Why the hell do you want to talk to me? Who are you anyway? What's your racket? I don't want to be a "case." I'm normal. Just leave me alone. I don't want to tell you nothing.

This latter response was regarded as a "refusal" since no questionnaire was completed and, therefore, does not constitute part of the official sample. Throughout the course of the study there were only eight such "refusals". Some

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<sup>6</sup> A copy of the questionnaire is provided in the Appendix.

interviews started off badly, but remarkably improved so that in the end the lad was more than responsive. Occasionally the boys were dull or suspicious characters. But on the whole, an atmosphere of trust and friendliness was usually established.

#### THE PROBLEM OF QUANTIFICATION

Clearly some sort of arithmetical treatment of the interview was necessary, if they were to be summarized and compared. Except for two standardized sections of the questionnaire (L. L. Thurstone's "Scale of Attitude Toward God," Form D, and an adaptation of F. Ivan Nye's "Scale of Delinquent Behavior"<sup>7</sup>), the remainder of the questions were structured and ranked according to the attitudes expressed, e.g., "Always, Usually, Seldom, Never," "Completely agree, Mostly agree, Mostly disagree, Completely disagree," etc. Other subjects that come up in either the questionnaires or interviews, such as why one usually prays, one's idea of God, and so on, certainly bear on the main question of the study, but for simplicity's sake we did not treat them quantitatively in the analysis of variance. Attitude scaling is not perfect, but if we are aware of its pitfalls, it is thoroughly worth attempting.

As for reliability, one can never be certain that his scales and analyses give the same results consistently and would result in the same conclusions if the study were undertaken by another interviewer. It is more difficult to know this in the absence of precise tests for such reliability (with the exception of several sets of interlocking questions) and because of the privacy of the

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<sup>7</sup>See, Nye, pp. 12-14.

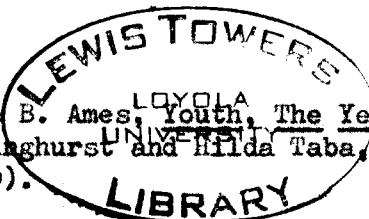
interview. However, the interview protocols and questionnaire data are available and can be inspected by others. The question of validity — did the interviews and questionnaires validly measure religious orientation, religious control and delinquent behavior — can only be answered at the conclusion of the study.

The over-all observations of this research cover the period of two summers — 1959 and 1960 — at the Cook County detention home in Chicago. In addition we have explored the history of the problem theoretically and substantively as it appears in the more representative monographs and articles. Nevertheless, the essential facts were sought at a limited time and place. Strictly speaking, then, these findings are not safely applicable to other times and places.

Some general principles, conclusions and directions about religious control and delinquency, however, can still be made. The attitudes and feelings of the delinquents do not constantly change — be it summer or winter; and the findings of any such study are of more than momentary value. Young people build their attitudes through many experiences. They change, of course, but one is still able to set up relatively firm limits for specific ages, so that within the adolescent population as a whole, attitude changes are rather predictable. Summer time does bring a slight increase in delinquency and the prevalence of car thefts and joy riding as opposed to truancy, but these are not such as to affect the subject of our present research.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> See, Arnold Gessell, Frances L. Ilg, and Louise B. Ames, Youth, The Years from Ten to Sixteen (New York, 1950); Robert J. Havighurst and Hilda Taba, Adolescent Character and Personality (New York, 1949).



Nor are the peculiarities of place overly restrictive. Certainly in the Chicago detention home there are certain leadership personalities, a large number of intake referrals, a tendency to be over-crowded and at times understaffed; none of these variables will be exactly replicated in the Louisville detention home, for instance, where there are different personalities, less referrals, a newer plant, and so on. But there are also more important variables rather common to large city detention homes: intake processing before transfer or release, a wide range of delinquent violations, a less biased sample than would be found in the detention home itself or the state reform school.

With proper caution and awareness of limitations in time and place, then, we can still find a genuine transfer value in such a study as this. Many of the conclusions are valid chiefly as suggestions for further research. For as independent studies are gradually added together and analyses of their common conclusions made, we build up a body of substantive theory that has genuine validity, since it is based on real familiarity with delinquent boys, with their thoughts and feelings.

#### THE QUESTION OF RELIGIOUS BIAS

Since the social scientist, by the very nature of his pursuit, is constantly striving for objectivity, he attempts as far as he is able to remove his own biases and prejudices not only in the complicated processes of analyzing research data and evaluating conclusions, but also at the sources of information — the collection of data.<sup>9</sup> One can legitimately ask about any research,

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<sup>9</sup>See in this connection this discussion on "How to Minimize Bias," in John Madge, The Tools of Social Science (New York, 1953), pp. 233-48.

then, whether or not the investigator in any way affects the data he obtains. If he is a cleric should he or should he not wear the typical clerical garb and so identify himself, for instance, as a Catholic clergyman? The decision was made in the present study that the researcher not wear the clerical garb. Since the subject of the interview and questionnaire was religious attitudes and beliefs, it seemed far safer not to identify oneself as a clergyman, and in this way remove as much possible bias.

There are studies which appear to back this decision. Cantril showed in the Memphis Study in 1942 by the National Opinion Research Center that white interviewers get responses from Negro respondents different from those obtained by Negro interviewers.<sup>10</sup> Stouffer also pointed out that Negro and white interviewers obtained different responses from Negro enlisted men in the army.<sup>11</sup> In both of these cases, however, questions dealt with opinions concerning the treatment of Negroes, so naturally the race of the interviewer and the racial connotations of the questions caused biased replies. A similar problem appeared when gentiles were asked questions about anti-Semitism by gentile, Jewish or Jewish-looking interviewers.<sup>12</sup>

Admittedly, the question of religious bias is somewhat different. If a Catholic priest were interviewing Protestants about religious beliefs, attitudes

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<sup>10</sup> Hadley Cantril, Gauging Public Opinion (Princeton, 1944), p. 115.

<sup>11</sup> Samuel Stouffer et al., The American Soldier (Princeton, 1949), p. 720.

<sup>12</sup> D. Robinson and S. Rhodes, "Two Experiments with an Anti-Semitism Poll," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, XLI (April 1946), 136-44.

and practices, there would be more similarity to the cases cited above. When Catholic interviews Catholics, the danger is that he will get a rosy picture, a muddy one, or simply an evasive answer. But to be consistently falacious, ambiguous, or hypocritical it is necessary that the person be aware of his feelings, sentiments, and the demands of the present situation explicitly, and this to an extent which few people can achieve; otherwise, there is constant danger that the disguise will not be complete or convincing.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, studies by Fichter in parish sociology and by Purcell in labor and management relations openly attest that they could find no substantial difference in replies which could be directly traced to the clerical role of the researcher.

Thus, the evidence on this point is not very definite; and it is hardly to be expected that adolescents could have so grasped the situation as to be able to consistently act the saint or the devil and successfully disguise their feelings and sentiments. Although such conclusions might tempt one to throw out the assumption of bias if the clerical garb were worn as unverified, it was decided to test the hypothesis in the present study. During the pilot study, half of the interviews were conducted with the clerical garb, half of them in lay garb; the results confirmed Fichter and Purcell's findings: there appeared to be no significant difference in replies.<sup>14</sup> It would be absurd, of course, to assert that the boys were unaffected by the Roman collar. Undoubtedly they polished

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<sup>13</sup>Cf. Fritz J. Roethlisberger and William J. Dickson, Management and the Worker (Cambridge, 1947), pp. 276-77.

<sup>14</sup>See, Joseph H. Fichter, S.J., "Priests as Interviewers," Social Order, IX (June 1959), 275-80; Theodore V. Purcell, S.J., The Worker Speaks His Mind on Company and Union (Cambridge, 1953), pp. 293-95.

up their language compared with the way they might talk on the street corner; but this does not mean distortion. A boy's attitude can be perceived whether or not he uses his full complement of adjectives and exclamations. There was no evidence of resentment to a clergyman talking to these delinquents; indeed it seemed that the clerical role put the researcher in a position of confidence and neutrality which facilitated rather than hindered conversation. But since there is always danger that bias will creep in, that the clergyman will be given the answer he would like to hear and not realize that he is being deceived, particularly when discussing religion, it was decided that no clerical garb should be worn and that the researcher never identify himself as a Catholic clergyman.

These were some of the methodological problems encountered in the study and the solutions with which they were met. The stage is set, the backdrop is in place; we turn, then, to the substantive part of our report.

## CHAPTER III

### FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS

As a boy or girl begins adolescence, each enters an entirely new world of relationships with his own sex, the other sex, the church, the school, the occupational world, and law enforcement agencies. The boy especially begins activities and develops attitudes which will eventually lead him into a life dominated by an occupation and the creation of his own family. Few would deny that the adolescent's family and its position in society — particularly its socio-economic status — are among the principal factors which structure this adolescent world.<sup>1</sup> And, from the standpoint of religious orientation, it is precisely within this family and socio-economic framework that religion exerts much of the influence it has. We have elected to begin our analysis of religious orientation here, then, because it seems logical to assume that few other extrinsic factors play a more fundamental role in religious orientation than family and socio-economic status.

Most attempts to demonstrate the relationship between juvenile delinquency and socio-economic status indicate that officially noted delinquency is primari-

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<sup>1</sup>See, Cohen, pp. 66-67, 109-119; Havighurst and Taba, pp. 47-61; August B. Hollingshead, Elmstown's Youth (New York, 1949), pp. 66-82, 459; W. Lloyd Warner and Paul S. Lunt, The Social Life of a Modern Community (New Haven, 1941), p. 427; Margaret Mead, And Keep Your Powder Dry (New York, 1942), p. 197.



ly a phenomenon associated with lower economic strata.<sup>2</sup> These studies, for the most part, have used court records, police files, and other such records of delinquency. And while it is true that there are both drawbacks and limitations to any inference drawn from such records of official delinquency, we tend to agree with Cohen that "if many delinquencies of upper-class children fail to find their way into the police and court records, the same is apparently true also of many delinquencies of working-class children, and conceivably even more true."<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, acceptance of these conclusions should in no way be taken as an endorsement of the position that delinquent and criminal behavior is limited to the lower economic groups. For even though available evidence supports the traditional and popular conception of the distribution of delinquency in the class structure, there are an increasing number of studies which produce findings that there is no significant difference in delinquent behavior of boys and girls in different socio-economic strata.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Ernest W. Burgess, "The Economic Factor in Juvenile Delinquency," Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology and Police Service, XLIII (May-June, 1952), 29-42; Cletus Dirksen, Economic Factors in Delinquency (Milwaukee, 1948); Earl R. Moses, "Differentials in Crime Rates Between Negroes and Whites in Comparisons of Four Socio-Economically Equated Areas," ASR, XII (August, 1947), 411-420; Shaw and McKay, Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas (Chicago, 1942); William W. Wattenberg and J. J. Balistrieri, "Gang Membership and Juvenile Delinquency," ASR, XV (December, 1950), 744-52; Paul Wiers, Economic Factors in Michigan Delinquency (New York, 1944).

<sup>3</sup>Cohen, p. 41.

<sup>4</sup>Austin L. Porterfield, Youth in Trouble (Fort Worth, 1946); Fred J. Murphy, M. Shirley, and H. L. Witmer, "The Incidence of Hidden Delinquency," American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, XVI (October, 1946), 636-96; James S. Wallerstein and C. J. Wyle, "Our Law abiding Law-breakers," Probation, XXV (April, 1947), 107-12; F. Ivan Nye, Family Relationships and Delinquent Behavior (New York, 1958).

The present analysis shows that in the Audy Home sample, the relationship between socio-economic status and commitment to the detention home is similar to that shown by the studies relating delinquency to the lower-class groups. As Table I reveals, a disproportionate number of these delinquents come from the lower socio-economic categories. In measuring the socio-economic level of the delinquent and his family, the occupation of the father (or mother, if there was no father) was utilized as the index. Hollingshead's occupational scale was employed in categorizing the data.<sup>5</sup> Recent research in social stratification lends support for using occupation as a measure of socio-economic status, and although more elaborate techniques give a more complete status-profile,<sup>6</sup> there were several distinct advantages for using occupation alone in the present study. First, occupation correlates highly with other criteria of class and status position, such as subjective class affiliation or class ratings, income, educational level, and others. Second, the father's occupation so permeates the lives of every member of a family that it is related not only to income, but to values and attitudes as well. This was important for the present study, since the principal factor under investigation was not status but religious orientation. Lastly, data on the father's occupation are generally more accurately obtainable from adolescents than are such things as income, rental, school training of the parents, etc., with which the adoles-

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<sup>5</sup>Hollingshead, "Two Factor Index of Social Position," Mimeographed, 1957, pp. 3-8.

<sup>6</sup>See, Raymond B. Cattrell, "The concept of Social Status," Journal of Social Psychology, XV (May, 1942), 292-308; Joseph A. Kahl and J. A. Davis, "A Comparison of Indexes of Socio-Economic Status," ASR, XX (June, 1955), 317-25.

TABLE I  
SOCIO-ECONOMIC DISTRIBUTION  
OF THE RESPONDENTS

Socio-economic Level	Number	Per cent
1		
2		
3	7	9.3
4	10	13.3
5	22	29.3
6	28	37.3
7	8	10.7
Total	75	99.9

cent may not be familiar.

Since the mother's occupation (or the one in place of the parents) was given when there was no father and because any insufficient information on the questionnaire was clarified in the interview, all the respondents could be classified in terms of socio-economic level. The levels (1-7) listed above include the following types of occupations: (1) Higher executives, proprietors of large concerns, major professionals; (2) Business managers, proprietors of medium sized businesses, and lesser professionals; (3) Administrative personnel, small independent business-proprietors, and minor professionals; (4) Clerical and sales workers, technicians, and owners of little businesses; (5) Skilled manual employees; (6) Machine operators and semi-skilled employees; (7) Unskilled employees and the unemployed. It was concluded, therefore, that the

findings were not biased by the exclusion of any non-classified group.

We turn now to the structure of the family in terms of its size, composition (broken or unbroken), and the relations within the family as reported by the respondents. The present point of view is that the structure of the family itself does not cause delinquency: actual attitudes and relationships affecting control are among the crucial factors in the rise and continuance of delinquency.<sup>7</sup> Certainly the fact that a home is broken or that one of the parents is dead is important, but not necessarily causal in delinquency. It simply means that it is more difficult for a single parent to provide for family needs, direct controls, and manage the other elements of family life.

Birth order has frequently been considered an important factor in delinquency. If a child is the first or the only child, he experiences somewhat different relationships to his parents. The oldest, in addition, often has to play a semi-adult role in that he exercises control over and, to some extent, is responsible for his younger brothers and sisters. If a significance by birth order is found, these differences would seem to have some effect on a child's behavior. In the present study the youngest and the "only child" are less frequently represented than the oldest and the intermediate. In this connection, Nye and his associates, found little support for the popular belief that "only children" are problem children;<sup>8</sup> although our study shows fewer delinquents to be "only children," the type of investigation undertaken here

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<sup>7</sup>See, Cohen, pp. 78-84, Nye, pp. 34-35, Parsons, "An Analytical Approach to the Theory of Social Stratification," in his Essays, pp. 69-88.

<sup>8</sup>See, Nye, p. 37.

TABLE II  
BIRTH ORDER OF THE RESPONDENTS

Birth Order	Number	Per cent
Oldest	19	25.3
"In between"	38	50.7
Youngest	12	16.0
Only child	6	8.0
Total	75	100.0

does not allow of more generalization on this point. It should be indicated, however, that the proportion of "only children" found in the present sample (8%) is considerably lower than the proportion of only children in the general population (21.9%).<sup>9</sup>

In this same area of family composition there is considerable theory and research related to family size. "Family sociologists have come to believe," Nye observes, "that interaction and emotional involvement are more intense in smaller families. Closer parental-child affectional ties should, in turn, result in more effective indirect controls and, perhaps, more effective internalization as well."<sup>10</sup> As Table III reveals, the majority of the delinquents in this sample, come from medium-size families, thus modifying Nye's theory. This

<sup>9</sup>All national averages indicated in the present study are taken from the Statistical Abstract of the United States 1958 (Washington, D.C., 1958) and are used here and elsewhere for comparative purposes.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 37; see also, Nye, "Parent-Child Adjustment: Sex, Sibling, Number, Broken Homes, and Employed Mothers as Variables," Marriage and Family Living, XIV (November, 1952), 327-32 or the Gluecks' Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency, p. 120.

TABLE III  
SIZE OF FAMILIES OF THE RESPONDENTS  
AND NATIONAL AVERAGE OF FAMILY SIZE

Number of children in family	Number	Per cent	National average of family size
1 or 2	19	25.3	21.3
3 to 5	37	49.3	9.4
6 or more	19	25.3	5.8
Total	75	99.9	

finding becomes more noteworthy when compared with the national averages of family size. For while 49.3% of the present delinquent sample came from medium sized families, these medium sized families make up only 9.4% of the total family population.

In considering the element of family composition, sooner or later we come face to face with the problem of broken homes. In some minds, both professional and lay, there is a close connection between broken homes and delinquency. For others, broken homes appear to be a sufficient explanation of delinquency causation. Criminologists are generally agreed that adolescents from broken homes are more likely to be delinquent than are the children from unbroken homes.<sup>11</sup> But, as Goode has indicated, children from psychologically broken (quarrelling

<sup>11</sup> See, Gordon H. Barker, "Family Factors in the Ecology of Juvenile Delinquency," Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology, XXX (January-February, 1940), 681-91; Glueck and Glueck, Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency, pp. 123-25. Barker found a high statistical relationship between broken homes and delinquency ( $r = .79$ ), but was cautious in assigning etiological significance. The Gluecks, on the other hand, feel that this is an etiological factor of great importance, precisely because it produces emotional instability.

and disunified) families have few if any advantages over those from families legally and physically broken.<sup>12</sup>

Now it has been suggested that the relationship between broken homes and delinquency is suspect because law enforcement agencies are more likely to institutionalize adolescents from broken homes.<sup>13</sup> There is certainly something to be said for this opinion, as well as for the observation that parents or neighbors may make complaints to the police with less provocation if they know the children come from broken homes, or that another source of bias lies in the relation of broken homes to socio-economic status.<sup>14</sup>

In the present study, the differences in the delinquent sample do not favor the broken homes — broken in the sense that the parents are divorced. As Table V indicates, 41.3% of the delinquents come from broken homes, while 58.7% come from unbroken homes. Broken homes, then, cannot explain the delinquency of the whole group, especially when one adds to this the fact that 20% of the delinquents come from homes where one parent is deceased. Looking at national averages, however, we find that the incidence of broken homes in the general popula-

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<sup>12</sup>Goode, After Divorce (Glencoe, 1956), pp. 329-30. See also, James S. Plant, "The Psychiatrist Views Children of Divorced Parents," Law and Contemporary Problems, X (Summer, 1944), 807-18.

<sup>13</sup>See, Ashley Weeks, "Male and Female Broken Home Rate by Type of Delinquency," ASR, V (August, 1940), 601-609. Weeks found that broken homes were closely associated not only with certain complaints in juvenile courts, but specifically, with charges of incorrigibility and sex offenses. Also, this same supposition of the bias connect with all institutional delinquent populations underlies Nye's entire analysis. With regard to Weeks' point, however, it is not immediately clear that this evidence reflects a differential attitude because of broken-home background or merely a higher incidence of these particular offenses.

<sup>14</sup>Statistical Abstract 1958, p. 47.

TABLE IV  
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS  
FROM BROKEN AND UNBROKEN HOMES

Boy lives with	Number	Per cent
Original parents	31	41.3
Mother — step-father	17	22.7
Father — step-mother	7	9.3
Mother only	12	16.0
Father only	3	4.0
Other	5	6.7
Total	75	100.0

tion is only 25.2%.<sup>15</sup> the almost doubled incidence in the present sample clearly indicates that the (44%) coming from broken homes) broken homes remain an important contributing factor. And a question of equal importance, hinted at before, is whether children are more delinquent in legally and physically broken homes or in psychologically broken but legally and physically intact homes. Since it was not to our purpose to elaborate on the relationship between family structure and delinquent behavior but only to set up in more general terms the framework within which religion influenced these delinquents, any further analysis of this and related points was omitted. Parents who had not remarried after the other's death were excluded from the tabulation of broken homes in Table V, so that both Tables IV and V must be taken together in order to interpret this aspect of family composition.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.



TABLE V  
PROPORTION OF BOYS FROM BROKEN HOMES  
IN ENTIRE DELINQUENT SAMPLE

Family Status	Number	Per cent
Unbroken	31	41.3
Broken	24	32.0
One or both parents deceased	20	26.7
Total	75	100.0

One more aspect of family structure remains to be analyzed before turning to the various internal relationships which would have a bearing on the child's religious orientation, viz., employed mothers. In the general population almost forty per cent of all women whose children are of school age are employed.<sup>16</sup> And this proportion must be expected to increase as the physical labor involved in more jobs is reduced, and as household appliances, factory food processing, and the standard of living increase. What is not so certain, however, is what precise effect a mother's employment has on her children.<sup>17</sup>

In the present study, the association between the employment of the mother and the child's delinquency is above the national average (40% versus 53.3%).

<sup>16</sup>The National Manpower Council, Womanpower (New York, 1957), p. 3.

<sup>17</sup>See, Mirra Komarovsky, Women in the Modern World, (Boston, 1953); Harvey J. Locke and Muriel Mackenprang, "Marital Adjustment and the Employed Wife," AJS, LIV (May, 1949), 536-38; Nye, pp. 53-59. It is interesting also that the Gluecks' do not consider this factor in their classic Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency, nor is it included in Sheldon Glueck's The Problem of Delinquency (Boston, 1959) nor in Block and Flynn's Delinquency: The Juvenile Offender in America Today.

TABLE VI  
EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS' MOTHERS

Employment status of mother	Number	Per cent
Employed <sup>a</sup>	40	53.3
Not employed	35	46.7
Total	75	100.0

<sup>a</sup>Full time and part time are combined in this score. Preliminary analysis indicated seven (9.3%) were employed part time and thirty-three (44%) were employed full time.

It is not clear what this tells us. Role theory, for instance, would lead us to expect a number of consequences from such an attempt to balance these two roles. Confusion and conflict in the husband-wife relationship could be expected as wife and husband adjust and readjust their duties, responsibilities, privileges. The working mother in most cases cannot be expected to be home when the children return from school, or perhaps even when they leave in the morning. She has less time both to help and to supervise her children. Loss of direct control appears inevitable, and this would anticipate more frequent delinquent behavior. But neither this study nor any other one known to the writer has brought significant and sufficient evidence to test this hypothesis.

Turning now to some internal factors in the family structure, we can group most of the following observations and analyses under the rubric of parent-adolescent relationships. Until recently, most social scientists who treated of parent-child relationships were preoccupied with the attitudes of the parent

toward the child, and the effect of this relationship on delinquent behavior.<sup>18</sup> But as Kingsley Davis has pointed out, in any heterogeneous, open-class society like ours, the critical evaluation of parents by adolescents can be expected.<sup>19</sup> The motivation for this evaluation lies in the crucial role that the parent plays in the life of the adolescent — meeting his need for food and clothing, affection, and security; helping or hindering the adolescent's adjustment to his group, school, and the community at large; determining his socio-economic status; and equipping him with a set of attitudes and values for interaction outside the family. And the result of this evaluation process is the placement of the parent on both specific and general attitude continua.

The most general evaluation that the adolescent makes of his parents concerns whether or not they are happy. The Gluecks have shown that marital adjustment of parents is much more closely related to delinquent behavior than is the fact that the marriage involves original or subsequent marital partners.<sup>20</sup> (Thus, one general approach has been that in a quarreling home the child feels insecure because the home may be psychologically broken and his needs not met.) To test this, we asked two questions: the child's evaluation of the general happiness of the home; the frequency of parental quarrelling; the data as shown

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<sup>18</sup> Glueck and Glueck, Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency, pp. 107, 115-16, 133; H. C. Wilson, "Juvenile Delinquency in Cardiff, British J. of Delinquency, IX (1958), 94-105; George E. Gardner, "Separation of the Parents and the Emotional Life of the Child," Mental Hygiene, XL (1956), 53-64; M. E. Bonney, "Parents as the Makers of Social Deviates," Social Forces, XX (1941), 77-87.

<sup>19</sup> Davis, "The Sociology of Parent-Youth Conflict," ASR, V (August, 1940), 523-34. See also, E. B. Reuter, "The Sociology of Adolescence," AJS, XLIII (November, 1937), 414-27.

<sup>20</sup> Glueck and Glueck, Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency, pp. 123-25.

TABLE VII  
THE RESPONDENTS' EVALUATION OF  
THEIR PARENTS' MARITAL HAPPINESS

Happiness Rating	Number	Per cent
Completely happy	25	33.3
Generally happy	33	44.0
Somewhat unhappy	12	16.0
Very unhappy	2	2.7
Do not know	3	4.0
Total	75	100.0

in Tables VII and VIII, however, fail to establish any association. It is noteworthy that Nye's sample of delinquents and non-delinquents also showed no significant association between delinquency and the general adolescent evaluations of parental happiness and quarrelling.

Parental attitudes toward and practices of discipline obviously constitute an important element in the adolescent's evaluation of his parents.<sup>21</sup> Since we are considering family structure chiefly in its function of determining the context within which religion influences the adolescent (influence in the sense of its being an agent of social control and behavioral referent), three dimensions were analyzed: the respondent's description of disciplinary techniques, the respondent's evaluation of its fairness, and the extent to which the respondent ascribes a relationship of religious sanctions or motivations to disciplinary

<sup>21</sup>Glueck and Glueck, p. 113; C. Burt, The Young Delinquent (London, 1944).

TABLE VIII  
PARENTAL QUARRRELING  
REPORTED BY THE RESPONDENTS'

Frequency of quarreling	Number	Per cent
Very often	10	13.3
Often	13	17.3
Seldom	35	46.7
Never	15	20.0
Do not know	2	2.9
Total	75	100.0

practices.

There has been considerable speculation concerning the most effective punishment techniques: these vary from "Spare the rod and spoil the child" to admonitions against any punishment.<sup>22</sup> But from the vantage point of social control, there are no techniques believed "most effective." As Nye remarks: "If punishment is justly and appropriately applied it should have some deterrent effect. If its application is indiscriminate, its effects are likely to be ne-

<sup>22</sup> Elsworth Faris, for example, opposes all punishment as unnecessary, provided certain family relations are present (his pamphlet, Discipline Without Punishment, Salt Lake City, 1952); a more moderate anti-punishment position has been taken by Maurice Levine, Psychotherapy in Medical Practice (New York, 1944) chapter 10; or again the hypothesis developed by Henry and Short that "love-orientated techniques of discipline are associated with strong super-ego formation and high guilt while techniques of punishment not threatening loss of love are associated with inadequate super-ego formation and low guilt." (Andrew F. Henry and James F. Short, Jr., Suicide and Homicide, Glencoe, 1954, Chapter VII).

TABLE IX  
PARENTS' DISCIPLINARY TECHNIQUES  
AS REPORTED BY RESPONDENTS

Disciplinary technique	Number	Per cent
Parent nags	16	21.3
Parent scolds	23	30.7
Parent withdraws love	3	4.0
Parent uses corporal punishment	2	2.7
Parent doesn't punish but discusses the matter	31	41.3
Total	75	100.0

gative because of damage to the indirect controls exercised by the parent."<sup>23</sup> Certainly the disciplinary atmosphere of the home is important in terms of religious influence. For the moral imperatives and sanctions of the church are not unlike the obligations set upon the adolescent by his parents: it is extremely unlikely that his reactions to one differ greatly from his reactions to the other.

As indicated in Tables IX and X, the most frequently reported disciplinary technique was scolding, the least frequent, corporal punishment; interesting, though, was the number (41%) who reported that their parents seldom punished them any more, but discussed their misbehavior with them. With regard to the delinquent's attitude to the "fairness" of their parents' disciplinary patterns, the data showed that the majority of boys felt that such discipline was usually

<sup>23</sup>Nye, p. 86.

TABLE X  
DELINQUENTS' EVALUATION OF PARENTS'  
DISCIPLINARY PRACTICES

Punishment	Number	Per cent
Always fair	32	42.7
Usually fair	30	40.0
Sometimes fair or seldom fair	10	13.3
Never fair	3	4.0
Total	75	100.0

just.

In the present study therefore, we found no support for the common opinion that delinquency is associated with corporal punishment techniques; nor was it found that the delinquent felt that parental discipline signified a withdrawal of love. Working on the supposition that strict discipline is a characteristic of effective parental control, as long as it is enforced adequately without becoming a substitute for other types of control, it can be inferred that direct parental control of these delinquents was not strict and not effective. Scolding and family discussion are certainly the less strict forms of control, and since 72% of the adolescents report this as the usual disciplinary technique, that either punishment was substituted by another type of control or that control was generally ineffective. Since the boys had been "institutionalized" because of delinquent behavior, the inference of ineffective disciplinary control seems justified.

The third dimension of our analysis of parental discipline was its rela-

TABLE XI

PARENTS' RELIGIOUS MOTIVATION IN DISCIPLINE  
AS EVALUATED BY RESPONDENTS

Parents use of religious motivation in discipline	Number	Per cent
Always used religious motivation	16	21.3
Usually used religious motivation	25	33.3
Seldom used religious motivation	17	22.7
Never used religious motivation	17	22.7
Total	75	100.0

tion to religious motivation, viz., when correcting or punishing did the parents tell the adolescent that what he did was a sin or that God was offended? Here too, the evidence was inconclusive, as it was in considering the element of fairness.

Closely allied with disciplinary patterns is the parents' attitude toward adolescent freedom, and the adolescents' reactions to this attitude. The amount of freedom allowed by parents was explored in three items: choice of companions, the time the boy was expected to be home at night, and church attendance. The importance of investigating the delinquent's attitude toward his parents' control on his freedom is that it should reflect the adolescent's general perception of the role these items play in meeting his needs.

Regarding regulations on curfew and church attendance, the parents left little doubt in their children's minds as to what their attitudes were; this is also true about choice of companions, although the data show slightly more leniency here (19% "seldom" reports as opposed to 4% and 2.8% "seldom" answers



TABLE XII

DESCRIPTION OF DELINQUENTS' AMOUNT OF FREEDOM  
PERMITTED BY PARENTS

Regulations on	Always		Usually		Seldom		Never	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Curfew	40	53.3	30	40.0	3	4.0	2	2.7
Choice of companions	41	54.7	17	22.7	14	8.7	3	4.0
Attending church	50	66.7	19	25.3	3	4.0	3	4.0
Total (avg.)		58.2		29.3		8.9		3.6

about curfew and church attendance regulations). (With the exception of parental regulation on companions, the delinquents showed a generally favorable reaction to curfew and church attendance regulations). It can be concluded that the adolescent feels much more opposition to parental interference in his choice of companions than in the other two areas, and it is significant that in this same category the parents' attitudes are less strict than in the others. Pro-attitudes regarding church attendance are strongest in both parents and adolescents.

Two observations can be made about these results. First, given the double difference in the attitude of the delinquents and the parental regulations regarding companions, on the one hand, and curfew and church attendance on the other, plus the fact that the actual church attendance of parents and adolescents are not consistent with their attitudes on the subject, the hypothesis begins to emerge that freedom in choice of companions is perceived by the adolescent to be far more important and restriction more distasteful than regula-

TABLE XIII

THE DELINQUENTS' ATTITUDES  
TOWARD FREEDOM PERMITTED

Attitude toward freedom permitted	Completely agree		Mostly agree		Mostly Disagree		Completely Disagree	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Curfew	22	29.3	35	46.7	16	21.3	2	2.7
Choice of companions	13	17.3	32	42.7	23	30.7	7	7.3
Attending church	37	49.3	28	37.3	1	1.3	9	12.0
Total (avg.)		31.9		42.2		17.8		7.0

tions regarding curfew and church attendance. The fact that there is a legal curfew would seem to give more reason for the adolescent's willingness to cooperate with his parents' curfew. Both these factors plus the actual church attendance reported<sup>24</sup> lead to the conclusion that for the adolescent, church attendance might be considered verbally important, but actually less important in meeting his present needs. Second, given the more critical reaction to companion-restriction and the parallel attitude on the part of the parents (more lenient than in the other two categories), plus the conclusion from our previous analysis of discipline patterns, a significant structural element within these families is beginning to appear: ineffective control.

The data do not allow, however, any overstressing of this element, since

<sup>24</sup>Cf. Chapter V.

close control is frequently not possible during adolescence, nor necessarily as effective as indirect, internal control. For the adolescent is entering new territory, as has already been noted; landmarks are few. Such a situation requires sufficient freedom to allow for adaptation and solution to these difficult problems. For of the thirty cases who "mostly" or "completely" disagreed with their parents' regulations on companions, only eleven reported that their parents "always" or "usually" interfered in their choice of companions, while of the ten who "mostly" or "completely" disagreed as regards church attendance regulations, eight reported that the parents "always" or "usually" insisted on attending church. All of which supports the above observations.

The last item for analysis in investigating the internal structure of the family is the delinquent's evaluation of his parents' knowledge of religion. Two tests were made: one on the delinquents' evaluation of their parents' knowledge of religion, the other on the frequency of religious discussion with their parents. With regard to the parents' knowledge of religion, thirty-nine (52%) of the boys felt that their parents knew a good deal about religion, thirty-one (41%) felt they knew a little, three (4%) felt they knew nothing, and two did not know how much their parents knew about religion. It was to be expected that the mother would be more approachable for religious discussion than the father. In the case of the mother, forty-six (61%) felt that if they wanted help on religion they could talk it over with her very easily, nineteen (25%) not so easily, ten (13%) not at all. For the father, twenty felt they could talk over religious problems very easily with him (27%), twenty-five (33%) not so easily, and thirty (40%) not at all.

The interviews revealed that these attitudes pointed not so much to an

evaluation of the parents' approachability on religious matters, as to a general reticence to talk about religion at all; a significant number remarked, in addition, that they could not think of any time they had in the past or would in the future have any questions about religion. As far as the general approachability of the parents was concerned, other questions revealed that if given the opportunity, only twenty-nine (39%) of the boys would enjoy being home for an evening with their parents, while thirty-four (45%) would not care either way and twelve (16%) would positively dislike it. Along with that, thirty-seven (49%) would enjoy going to the movies or ball game with their fathers, while eighteen (24%) would not care either way and twenty (27%) would not want it at all. Forty-five of the boys (60%), however, would very much enjoy going to the movies with his mother, twenty-four (32%) would not care either way, and only six (8%) would not like to do so.

#### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The entire preceding analysis has shown that the majority of the delinquents studied came from the lower socio-economic strata, and were either the youngest child or the intermediate in a medium-size family. The theory that there is a close association between physically or legally broken homes and delinquency was supported not by the incidence of these within the sample coming from broken homes, but by the almost doubled proportion of broken homes as compared with the national average. The number of employed mothers within the present sample was also higher than the national average.

On the level of internal familial relations, the delinquents considered their parents to be generally happy, fair in their regulations and disciplines

(with the exception of those pertaining to choice of companions). Correlatively, the parents' regulations on companions were less strict than those on curfew and church attendance (although, actual church attendance of both parents and children are inconsistent with their reported attitude). Information, advice, and companionship of parents was viewed primarily as facilitating the satisfaction of the delinquent's needs; the data reveal that there was little consultation of the parents about religious matters, although the delinquents thought that their parents generally knew something about religion. The reason appears to be that the delinquent rarely thought about religion or when he did he did not feel that there was any need to question or discuss the matter. Moreover, about half of the boys did not especially relish the idea of spending an evening at home with their parents; more would have liked to go to the movies with their mothers than to the movies or ball game with their fathers.

Most of these conclusions, as indicated, do support existing theory on family relationship and delinquency. In general, the direction of the reported familial relationships moves away from the more startling and dysfunctional to the behavior patterns of the "normal" family. For instance, recent studies in social class differences in family structure are beginning to give us a rather elaborate profile of the middle-class and lower-class families. The fact that the delinquents of this sample display an unmistakable loyalty to their parents even in extreme conditions, reflect their parents' values yet at the same time show less intimacy and apparent cohesiveness in their relations with their families; the fact that their social groups are not so closely supervised by their parents or that there is more distance between the adolescent and his fa-

ther than with his mother are all supported by these findings.<sup>25</sup> Any generalizations concerning child-rearing and family relations in terms of an entire social class, however, is dangerous. As Havinghurst and Davis have commented, any number of other factors such as cultural differences, religious differences, nationality background and different occupational groups are equally important variables that must be considered and analyzed before any effective and accurate inference can be drawn.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, the present study has investigated only the delinquents' evaluation of such items as parental attitudes toward discipline, marital happiness, etc., and not the attitudes or happiness themselves. One must not ignore the crucial difference that lies between objective fact and the respondents' evaluation of a particular fact, especially in the interview situation.

This chapter has presented background information for the study of the religious orientation of these delinquents. Religion is helped or hindered in its influence by these socio-economic and family factors: it cannot be indifferent to them. Some of the more evident conclusions we have suggested above.

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<sup>25</sup> See Allison Davis and Robert J. Havinghurst, Father of the Man (Boston, 1947); Davis, "Socialization and Adolescent Personality," in T. M. Newcomb and E. L. Hartley, ed. Readings in Social Psychology (New York, 1947); Carson McGuire, "Family Life in Lower and Middle Class Homes," Marriage and Family Living, XIV (1952), 1-6; Eleanor E. Maccoby and Patricia K. Gibbs, "Methods of Child Rearing in Two Social Classes," in Readings in Child Development, ed. W. E. Martin and C. B. Stendler (New York, 1954); Bernard Barber, Social Stratification (New York, 1957), pp. 267-280.

<sup>26</sup> Havinghurst and Davis, "A Comparison of the Chicago and Harvard Studies of Social Class Differences in Child Rearing," ASR, XX (1955), 438-42.

Other inferences will be drawn as the analysis proceeds.

## CHAPTER IV

### OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

The structure of the family in terms of its composition, internal relations, and socio-economic class constituted the matter of the previous chapter. Three other environmental factors remain to be considered before turning our attention to the more direct forms of religious orientation: school attendance, residential mobility, and gang affiliation.

The type of school we are concerned with here is the Catholic parochial school. The reason is obvious: Catholic boys made up the sample, Catholics are expected as far as is possible to send their children to the Catholic school, and the focus of attention in this study is religious orientation. Now the primary function of the Catholic school is twofold: educational and religious formation. It imparts knowledge, intellectual and reasoning skills; in addition it imparts knowledge of the faith, the workings of religious truths in everyday life, and the relationship of one's life to one's religion. Certainly the school is secondary to the family, and it is limited in its function to certain types of formal procedures usually applied in mass fashion. As such it may be of only slight assistance in helping a child to overcome his emotional and behavioral problems. But one should not underestimate its influence. It is here that the child must meet the test of acceptance by his peers and the test of competition before people who, unlike his parents, are not biased in his



favor.

Past research has clearly demonstrated that school maladjustment — ranging from attention-seeking misbehavior to truancy and vandalism — is a frequent precursor of more serious delinquency.<sup>1</sup> In the present study, however, we were not concerned with the adolescent's general school attitudes and behavior, but in the amount of Catholic school training he had received and the effect this training apparently had on his religious attitudes and behavior.

The data reveal that fifty-three boys (77%) had received some formal Catholic school education; but sixty-two (83%) had received some public school education. The breakdown of these gross figures is given in Tables XIV and XV.

(From the distribution of schools attended it can be seen that 67% of the delinquents attended a total of from three to five schools, while of these 70% had attended from none to two Catholic schools.) Carrying the analysis further, the average number of years in attendance at a Catholic school for the entire sample was  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years, and this usually in the primary grades. Consequently, the formal Catholic education of the adolescents studied was slight. Thus it must be assumed that whatever formal training they received in religious matters came from the home primarily, from the religion taught in the primary grades, from sermons in Church, and from released-time catechism lessons. Regarding these catechism lessons, of the sixty-two boys claiming some public school attendance, thirty-three (55%) reported that they always were released and attended the catechism lessons, nine (14.5%) reported they usually attended,

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<sup>1</sup>See, for instance, Glueck & Glueck, Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency, pp. 135-54, W. C. Kvaraceus, Juvenile Delinquency and the School (New York, 1945), Edward H. Stullken, "The Schools and the Delinquency Problem," J. Crim. L., Criminology, and Police Service, XLIII (1953), 567-74.

TABLE XIV  
DEGREE OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION  
REPORTED BY RESPONDENTS

Number of Schools attended	Catholic schools	
	Number	Per cent
None	17	23
One	26	35
Two	9	13
Three	13	17
Four	6	8
Five	4	5.5
More than five	0	0
Total	75	99.5

five (8%) seldom, and fifteen (24.2%) never went.

The fact that the largest number of delinquents reported attendance at between two and four schools leads to the question of the effect of residential mobility on delinquency. Was the change of schools due to study or behavior problems or to a problem of mobility? The fact that 29 (39%) of the boys reported that they had never been placed on school probation or expelled from school and thirty-nine (52%) report one or two such occurrences led to the suspicion that residential mobility might play a significant part in the lives of these adolescents. It must be assumed that residential mobility decreases indirect controls exercised by the adolescent's peer group as well as by adults

TABLE XV  
TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOOLS ATTENDED  
BY THE RESPONDENTS

Number of schools attended	Total Number of Schools	
	Number	Per cent
None	0	0
One	6	8
Two	10	13
Three	20	27
Four	17	23
Five	13	17
More than five	9	12
Total	75	100

outside the home. We should point out, however, following Nye's observation, that there is a distinction "between the adolescent who expects to be continually mobile and the one who regards the new community as a new home."<sup>2</sup> The latter would seem to be receptive to the controls within the new community. Also, the mobility may possess advantages for others, for a new community, to a degree, affords another opportunity to the adolescent who has found himself in an unpleasant situation. But these advantages would seem to be limited by

<sup>2</sup>Nye, p. 62. See also Walter Reckless and M. Smith, Juvenile Delinquency (New York, 1932), p. 137; P. A. Sorokin, Social Mobility (New York, 1927), Chapter I.

the fact that the individual normally approaches the new situation with the same attitudes and behavior patterns, the same frame of reference.

The postulated loss in social control suggests, then, that somewhat more delinquency should occur among residentially mobile adolescents. Our data indicate a foundation for this postulated association in that fifteen boys (20%) reported that they had attended school in one community, thirty-five (47%) reported attendance in two to four communities, and twenty-five (33%) reported five or more communities. There is little doubt that the group under study was a mobile group; but there is no indication whether the effects of this mobility were similar or whether the relationship between delinquency and mobility might be explained by differences other than, but related to mobility.

Gang affiliation presents a different picture. There has long been a fascination about teen-agers who form groups which challenge society. And popular interest is manifested by the avid consumption of highly dramatized articles on gang life and gang warfare. But scientifically there is a problem to be solved: how can we account for those youngsters who seemingly make fine social adjustment among their peers, yet get in trouble with the larger social organizations? W. C. Kvaraceus found, for instance, that of a group of 761 delinquents referred to the Children's Bureau of the Passaic Board of Education only 23% of the boys and 33% of the girls engaged in solitary misdemeanors. Similar studies have shown similar findings.<sup>3</sup>

There would have been no purpose served in the present study by investigating in great detail the problem of gang affiliation. It was judged sufficient

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<sup>3</sup>Kvaraceus, Juvenile Delinquency and the School (New York, 1945), pp. 94-96. See also Wattenberg and Balistrieri, pp. 744-48.

to discover the amount of solitary and group misdemeanors and the affiliation with any recognized recreational activity. With regard to the first category, the data showed unmistakable association between delinquency and gang-affiliation (there was no distinction made in the study between a loosely organized gang and an elaborately formalized gang organization) thus supporting the theory. Only eight boys (11%) reported solitary delinquency, half of them institutionalized for running away from home.

The only recreational activity tested was that of the parish teen-age club. Here forty-nine boys (65%) did not belong to or attend the teen-age club. The twenty-six (35%) who did belong included eleven (15%) who reported attending every week, twelve (16%) who attended once or twice a month, and three (4%) who attended once or twice a year. The interviews indicated that very few of the boys belonged to any other organized recreational activity.

Wattenberg and Balistrieri found that those boys who belonged to gangs differed from non-gang members in showing evidence of coming from easy-going homes and living in socio-economically low neighborhoods. Here, too, although no absolute conclusion can be drawn from the present study, our research has tended to substantiate these findings.

It may be said, therefore, that in the present sample, three other environmental factors have come under consideration. (The group as a whole had attended between two and four schools, had a low amount of Catholic parochial school education, was characterized by fluid residential mobility, and their delinquency was gang-affiliated rather than solitary.) When we add these elements to those described in the preceding chapter we begin to get a rather consistent picture of environmental characteristics which are certainly undramatic and

could seem to be disappointing. However, the supposition underlying this entire study is that we are dealing with socio-cultural and not psychiatric delinquency, that most delinquents are clinically normal people, and that their delinquency arises as the solution to a problem of tension and adjustment to the conflicting pressures from the gang, the family, and the larger society. Delinquency, in other words, is the result of a process of interaction and must be explained in terms of this interaction, with its particular set of social controls and learning processes. It is, in overall summary, a phenomenon of culture, society, and socio-cultural experience. Members of the several social classes are socialized, but there is different content in the socialization which makes delinquency a more acceptable solution to problems than lawfulness. In this sense, then, delinquency is not a negative thing. It is not the result of the breakdown of society, nor of the failure to curb criminal instincts, nor of the failure of the family, the church, the school.<sup>4</sup> The same set of concepts, the same social processes, and the same set of logical assumptions account both for delinquency and lawfulness. Seen from this point of view the environmental factors presented so far take on meaning. It remains to indicate whether or not the more direct manifestations of religious orientation continue to verify such a frame of reference.

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<sup>4</sup>We do not wish by this point to deny the "negative polarity" of delinquency stressed both by Cohen and particularly by Yinger (J. Milton Yinger, "Contraculture and Subculture," ASR, XXV, October 1960, p. 632). Rather, we are holding the position that despite definite negative characteristics, delinquency is essentially a positive result of social interaction. For an example of the overemphasis of the positive to the denial of the negative, however, see Frank Hartung's review of Cohen's book, ASR, XX (December 1955), 752.

## CHAPTER V

### RELIGIOUS WORSHIP AND BELIEF

The Catholic religion is not a system which automatically enforces compliance with its principles; it is not a charm or a spell whose mere contact or label necessarily evokes response to its constructive potentialities. Just like other religions, it is of no efficacy to a man unless he himself becomes imbued with its principles and decides to make it a governing force in his life. It employs supernatural authority, numerous professional personnel; and insofar as it is part of the general Christian framework within a generally Christian society, Catholicism employs the general sanction of society. It strives to keep each person within the rules and regulations of society and in this way facilitates and contributes to social control, even though this is not its principal function in society.

In addition, however, the Catholic religion professes specific doctrines of love of God and of one's fellow men, merit for good actions and punishment for bad, and profound bonds of union with God, especially through the Mass, the Holy Eucharist, and the rest of the sacramental system. These would be expected not merely to inhibit destructive impulses, but to set up positive norms for social and personal living as well. Adolescent needs, moreover, are at least partially met within formal and informal church groups.

One of the principal ways in which the Catholic exercises his religious

worship and belief is by church attendance. Regular attendance, then, is not merely a type of conventional behavior related to general acceptance of the mores (either of the Catholic or the larger Christian community), but is an indicator of the Catholic's fundamental attitude to his religion. Not only does he sin seriously by failing to attend Church every Sunday; he has been taught that the Mass is the greatest act of worship possible to man, the act most acceptable to God. Hence, to "miss Mass" is to pass by his greatest opportunity to worship God, and by putting himself in the state of serious sin, the Catholic forfeits the right to efficaciously participate both in the Mass and in the other sacraments.

For adolescents, however, regular church attendance is probably most directly related to their general conforming behavior. Parents and adult associates provide the conforming models in this instance and whatever control is exercised by parents in church attendance is in a conforming direction. Parent attendance, then, is undoubtedly related to adolescent attendance.

As is indicated in Tables XVI and XVII, attendance both by parents and by adolescents is related to delinquent behavior. For parents, it was decided to inquire about church attendance in general, Catholic or non-Catholic, rather than differentiate between Catholics and non-Catholics. Since the supposition was that in their attendance or non-attendance at church parents acted chiefly as conformity-models, regular Church attendance of any kind would achieve the same result. The majority of the parents, however, were Catholic (80% of the mothers and 67% of the fathers). For adolescents, there appear to be only two meaningful patterns of attendance: regular and non-regular attendance. The precise meaning of these categories is that regular church attendance for the



TABLE XVI

PARENTAL CHURCH ATTENDANCE  
AS SEEN BY THE RESPONDENTS

Church Attendance	Mothers		Fathers	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
None	8	10.7	19	25.3
Once or twice a year	11	14.7	13	17.3
Once or twice a month	20	26.7	21	28.0
Every Sunday	36	48.0	22	29.3
Total	75	100.1	75	99.9

Catholic adolescent means weekly (Sunday) attendance. Anything less than this would be "irregular." Such a criterion obviously would be different for other religions. From Table XVII there appears to be little association between Church attendance and delinquent behavior, with thirty-nine boys (52%) reporting regular attendance, and thirty-six (48%) reporting irregular attendance. Parents in this instance were shown to be less regular than their children, as is apparent from Table XVII, with sixty-one per cent of the parents reported as attending irregularly and thirty-nine per cent attending regularly.

It is clear from Table XVI alone that parents did not offer the adolescents conforming models for regular church attendance. And since whatever control is exercised by parents in this area is by a conforming direction, little actual control was provided. (This is, moreover, in sharp contrast to the reported attitudes of parents to church attendance expressed in the previous chapter. It is surprising, then, that the children should report themselves to be

TABLE XVII

PERSONAL CHURCH ATTENDANCE  
REPORTED BY THE RESPONDENTS

Church Attendance Frequency	Number	Per cent
None	9	12.0
Once or twice a year	6	8.0
Once or twice a month	21	28.0
Every Sunday	39	52.0
Total	75	100.0

more church-going than their parents.)

The association between church participation and delinquent behavior would, of course, be anticipated from theory.<sup>1</sup> And even though more of the delinquents live up to Catholic obligations on church attendance, this does not imply that a 52%-48% ratio is no worse than the pattern which would be revealed for Catholic adolescents in general. More immediately crucial would be the question: have the values generated in the adolescent by his parents' regulations on church attendance stronger influence over him than his parent's conduct? If such were the case, it would seem that commitment to these values would have to be strengthened from another source if they were going to withstand conflicting pressures. In this connection, we find that of the thirty-nine delinquents (52%) who attended church weekly, 63% have parents who were

<sup>1</sup>See Nye, p. 35-6, Block and Flynn, pp. 228-232, Wattenberg and Balistrieri, pp. 744-45.

TABLE XVIII

## THE RESPONDENTS' RECEPTION OF THE EUCHARIST

Frequency of reception	Number	Per cent
None	16	21.3
Once or twice a year	15	20.0
Once or twice a month	29	38.7
Every Sunday	15	20.0
Total	75	100.0

equally faithful to their obligations; while of the fifteen delinquents who seldom or never attended church, only five of them had parents who set this example. In both instances, however, the values of the parents regarding regular Church attendance as reported by the delinquents were considerably higher: 91% and 82% respectively.

Second only to church attendance as a basic indicator of religious worship and belief is the reception of Holy Communion. This is not to undermine the obviously significant factor of keeping the Commandments; this element will be taken up in the following chapter in more detail. But here our interest focuses what might be termed the basic Catholic manifestations of what we have already called one's "experience of God." The data in Table XVIII reveal a surprising relationship between reported reception of Holy Eucharist and delinquency. Forty-four boys (58.7%) reported that they received Holy Communion at least once or twice a month.

In general, a lower frequency of Eucharist-reception was expected. If the majority of parents were not regular church-goers, they would perhaps be fre-

quently unable to receive Holy Communion, thus depriving the adolescent with a conforming model. Also, frequent communion, although recommended is not demanded by the Catholic Church, whereas regular church attendance is. Consequently, there is hardly any direct religious control involved in the reception of the Eucharist, and as other studies have shown, the normal communion frequency among practicing Catholic is generally less than their attendance at Mass.<sup>2</sup> (It is striking, then, that the delinquent's pattern of reception should be so high.)

Another prime indicator of the delinquent's worship and belief is his pattern of prayer, specifically private prayer. "Prayer in this wide sense [of every kind of inward communion or conversation with God], " remarks William James, "is the very soul and essence of religion."<sup>3</sup> Prayer, in other words, is religion in act, that is "something is transacting" between the soul and its God.

Of the sample studied, only two boys (2.7%) reported that they never prayed; twenty-seven (36%) that they prayed seldom, and thirty (40%) often. It would appear, then, that the majority of boys fluctuated between praying often and seldom and so ranged themselves about the middle of the continuum. In terms of religious values, however, mere indication of praying patterns need only imply minimal commitment to religion, so that in this matter it is neces-

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<sup>2</sup>For example, Joseph B. Schuyler, S.J., Northern Parish (Chicago, 1960), pp. 197-215, 230; or Fichter, "The Marginal Catholic," Social Forces, XXXII (1953), 167-73.

<sup>3</sup>William James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, (London, 1928) p. 351.

TABLE XIX  
PURPOSE OF PRAYER  
AS UNDERSTOOD BY RESPONDENTS

Reasons for praying	Number	Per cent
Help and guidance	43	57.3
Forgiveness	14	18.7
To get out of trouble	6	8.0
Don't know	10	13.3
Do not pray	2	2.7
Total	75	100.0

sary to ask people why they do what they do.<sup>4</sup> Is it merely out of habit or because of necessity that these boys pray? In some instances their motives may be natural, and it could well be that this is the case more often than they suspect. As indicated in Table XIX, the reason given by most of the boys who prayed was the need they felt for help and guidance. The second choice, lagging a good bit behind the first, was the desire for forgiveness. Seven boys (9.3%) mentioned the motive of giving thanks, but since this was included with one of the other categories in their replies (the question was not structured, but open end), it is not listed separately in the table.

As would be expected, more boys prayed more since they had gotten into

<sup>4</sup>For the importance of this on a larger scale, see Fichter, Southern Parish, pp. 2-3, Schuyler, "Religious Behavior in Northern Parish: A Study in Motivating Values," ACSR, XIX (June 1958), 134-44, Will Herberg, Protestant-Catholic-Jew (New York, 1955), pp. 14-15, 276.

trouble than before: forty-four (59%) said they prayed more often than before, eight said they prayed less (11%), and twenty-three (31%) reported no change. To test the intensity of the delinquent's experience of prayer, the question was asked whether they ever made up their own prayers, ever just "talked things over" with God. Consistently, two boys reported that they never prayed, so here obviously they never made up their own prayers. Of the remainder, sixteen reported that they often made up their own prayers (21%), thirty-five (47%) replied that they sometimes did, and twenty-two (29%) said they never did. Again, in accordance with what was expected, forty-four boys reported that they had learned to pray from their parents (59%), twenty-six (34.3%) said that the nuns and priests at school and church had taught them and not their parents, and five (6.7%) reported that no one had taught them. The number not taught at home (52%) which would support the characteristic beginning to emerge that the parents felt strongly that their children should go to church on Sundays, but this was practically all they thought about religiously. (Little else would seem to explain the deficient amount of Catholic education as well as the poor example of church attendance that the parents set for the adolescents).

Certainly at the root of one's prayer life is the particular concept the individual has of God. For the young person of sixteen years, for example, Gesell, Ilg, and Ames found that "Sixteen shows belief in a divinity more than at any preceding age. The great majority . . . believe in some sort of power greater than man. But the Deity is conceived as being less human-like in form than earlier. Some define God simply as "a spirit," but the largest number give a more complex definition, involving some kind of power, force, feeling,

TABLE XX  
RECOGNITION OF GOD AS A PERSON  
BY THE RESPONDENTS

Delinquents' responses	Question A <sup>a</sup>		Question B <sup>b</sup>	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Completely agree	19	25.3	30	40.0
Mostly agree	12	16.0	27	36.0
Mostly disagree	8	10.7	12	16.0
Completely disagree	36	48.0	6	8.0
Total	75	100.0	75	100.0

<sup>a</sup>When Christ died on Calvary, He did not really die for me personally, but for all men. In other words, I didn't mean anything special to Him then. Do you: (1) Completely agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Mostly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Mostly disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Completely disagree \_\_\_\_\_?

<sup>b</sup>Jesus Christ knows you by name. Do you: (1) Completely agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Mostly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Mostly disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Completely disagree \_\_\_\_\_?

'intangible Being,' or 'something eternal.'"<sup>5</sup> Since the preliminary pilot study revealed that a direct question about the delinquents' "concept of God" was too ambiguous and misleading to require an answer in writing, the question was asked in the interview. Our findings square exactly with those of Gesell, Ilg, and Ames. None of the boys in the sample came up with the initial idea of God as a Person or as One who is personally interested in them individually.

This personal notion of God was touched upon in several other questions, as Table XX shows, but the answers remained substantially the same. These find-

<sup>5</sup>Gesell, Ilg, and Ames, p. 502.

ings were not expected, for when confronted with a specific and structured question, the Catholic should respond favorably and spontaneously to the personal notion of God. Such a concept is stressed continually in the literature as well as in the dogma of the faith, it is included in the Catechism series used in the grammar schools, and in the sermon schedules of the Archdiocese. What did seem important, also, was the absence of this notion when the adolescent was faced with an open-end question in the interview. Even when the notion was put before the delinquent about the personal concern of God for his well-being and behavior, it was obvious to the investigator that this had little operative significance. The idea seemed never to fail to catch the delinquent's attention and leave an impression, causing the researcher to wonder how fully this idea had been presented to the boy before.

Up to this point we have been considering some basic indicators of the delinquent's belief and worship, namely, church attendance, reception of Holy Communion, and personal prayer. One might question, then, what precisely were the attitudes of the group on these topics as related to their practices. This factor will be more thoroughly investigated in the following chapter, so we will limit analysis to the three items discussed so far in the present chapter.

The data indicate that while fifty-two per cent of the delinquents attended church every Sunday, fifty-seven per cent (forty-three boys) felt strongly that they should attend every Sunday and twenty-one per cent (sixteen boys) felt they should attend, but did not show such a strong attitude in this regard. Six boys (8%) did not think they should attend every Sunday and ten (13%) were not sure what they should do.

The frequency of receiving Holy Communion was lower than Mass attendance.



TABLE XXI

## THE RESPONDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD THE EUCHARIST

Expressed attitude	Importance of the Eucharist <sup>1</sup>		Belief <sup>2</sup>	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Completely agree	8	10.7	51	68.0
Mostly agree	10	13.3	17	22.7
Mostly disagree	20	26.7	4	5.3
Completely disagree	37	49.3	3	4.0
Total	75	100.0	75	100.0

<sup>1</sup>Some people say that it is not too important to go to Holy Communion. Do you: (1) Completely agree\_\_\_\_\_ (2) Mostly agree\_\_\_\_\_ (3) Mostly disagree\_\_\_\_\_ (4) Completely disagree\_\_\_\_\_?

<sup>2</sup>Some people think that Christ is in the Blessed Sacrament. Do you: (1) Completely agree\_\_\_\_\_ (2) Mostly agree\_\_\_\_\_ (3) Mostly disagree\_\_\_\_\_ (4) Completely disagree\_\_\_\_\_?

Similarly, the attitude about the importance of Holy Communion was not as strong as the attitude on Church attendance, even though, as seen in Table XXI, the majority of the boys believed that Christ was actually present in the Eucharist. Consequently, the attitudes manifested regarding church attendance, reception of the Eucharist and belief in the presence of Christ in the Eucharist was entirely consistent with the behavior practices in these same areas, the only striking relation being the disparity between belief in the Eucharist and the boys' attitudes toward its importance in their lives as indicated by their actual behavior.

Closely allied in Catholic teaching and behavior to the reception of Holy

Communion is the practice of Confession. Confession is the normal and frequently necessary preparation for receiving the Eucharist. Consequently, one would expect a close relation between the delinquent's attitude toward Confession and his attitude toward and practice of receiving Communion. However, where thirty-seven boys (49%) felt very strongly about the importance of receiving Holy Communion, only twenty-seven (36%) had similar attitudes about Confession. Fifteen (20%) felt that Confession was more than merely a matter of personal whim, but a relatively large number (thirty-two boys, 43% of the sample) thought that one had to go to Confession only when he felt like it.

Therefore, as one moves along the continuum of religious commitment from external church attendance to attitudes about Mass, Communion, Confession, and prayer, there is a significant lessening of intensity only in the area of Confession. This will have to be investigated further in the following chapter. Nevertheless, even at this point the question suggests itself, given the external religious conformity of the group, whether the depth of their religious convictions and attitudes is certain. Religiously, either these boys seem to be in the midst of change or possess at least questionable and merely surface commitment. Given such a situation, it is doubtful that religious motivation could exercise much control over the behavior of these adolescents. At best it would be a somewhat mysterious factor which comes into play only when all other supports (gang, family, etc.) are removed, and so would hardly play a determining role in their day-to-day decisions.

Will Herberg has said that the "religiousness characteristic of America today is very often a religiousness without religion . . . a way of sociability or 'belonging' rather than a way of re-orienting life toward God."<sup>6</sup> Not only

is the present study of these delinquents' religiousness leading us to realize the truth of this proposition, but other studies of non-delinquent adolescent religiousness, such as they exist, have come to much the same conclusion.<sup>7</sup>

It proved profitable in this connection to select from the present sample those who reported that they attended Mass every Sunday and received Communion once or twice a month and pray "very often," and to compare their answers on the questions concerning one's personal idea of God, reasons for praying, and parental models with the other extreme — those who never or rarely attended Mass, never received Communion, and never prayed. The first group totaled twenty-four delinquents; the second, two. The two delinquents, as might be expected, had no personal idea of God whatever; they never prayed since they had no reasons for praying, and while their parents did attend church occasionally, they provided no consistent conforming models for the boys. (The twenty-four boys of the first group, however, presented a different picture. Seventeen had a relatively clear idea that Christ died for them personally, and that Christ "knew their names"; the other seven were uncertain about these points. Each of the group reported that they prayed either "for help and guidance" or "for forgiveness.")<sup>8</sup> Fifteen stated that their parents attended church regularly; the other nine indicated irregular church attendance for their parents. Thus the majority of the delinquents who attended Mass every Sunday, received Communion

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<sup>6</sup>Herberg, p. 276.

<sup>7</sup>See in this connection, Gordon Allport, The Individual and His Religion (New York, 1950), pp. 32-36, Gesell, Ilg, and Ames, pp. 487-502; Warren C. Middleton and Robert R. Wright, "A Comparison of a Group of Ninth and Tenth Grade Delinquent and Non-Delinquent Boys and Girls on Certain Attitude Scales," The Journal of Genetic Psychology, LVIII (1941), 139-150.

once or twice a month, and prayed "very often" answered favorably to the other categories of religious belief and worship. But to what extent these attitudes and practices influenced their everyday values and behavior patterns remains to be seen.

## CHAPTER VI

### RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES IN PRACTICE

Judged by adult standards the adolescent's world is peculiar. It is not that what he experiences is so different from the adult's sensations, pains, and pleasures, but the interpretations he places on them are wholly his own. Since religion involves meaning and interpretation at every step, it must be conceded at the outset that the religion and religious attitudes of adolescence are of a very special order, perhaps having little in common with the religion of adulthood. About this religion of adolescence Allport has observed:<sup>1</sup>

Usually it is not until the stress of puberty that serious reverses occur in the evolution of the religious sentiment. At this period of development the youth is compelled to transform his religious attitudes — indeed all his attitudes — from second-hand fittings to first-hand fittings of his personality. He can no longer let his parents do his thinking for him. Although in some cases the transition is fluent and imperceptible, more often there is a period of rebellion.

From the various ways in which attitudes could be tested we selected two. The first of these was the Thurstone scale for the measurement of one's attitude toward God (Form D); the second consisted in individually structured questions concerning specific attitudes toward God which were designed to be indicative of the intensity of the adolescent's religious conviction and commitment. (Previous research on values and delinquency led us to expect that although the

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<sup>1</sup>Allport, p. 32.

adolescents would subscribe to religious and other social values in general, there would be considerable inconsistency of values on a more specific level.<sup>2</sup> This finding has led Barron, for example, to call for hypotheses which will ". . . explain the relation of inconsistent values held by the delinquent to inconsistency in the delinquent's behavior."<sup>3</sup> The present study did not attempt to establish any hypotheses of this sort mainly because there was not enough information on delinquents' religious attitudes available in anything more than a very general form.

Working on the supposition that religious attitudes are closely related to indirect and internal control, it would seem clear that if the parents offered conforming models and values which were internalized by the adolescent, religious control is increased and would be manifested in the religious attitude expressed. If the religious attitude was low, one could conclude that either the internalization, the conforming models, or both were relatively absent. In accordance with the usage of the Thurstone test, a favorable attitude is indicated by a low numerical score. As can be seen in Table XXII, the majority of the boys (69%) showed positive attitudes toward God, twelve per cent were entirely noncommittal, and fourteen boys (19%) revealed a negative attitude toward God. The group mean, however, was 4.2, which meant that the group as a whole was "slightly affected by the idea of God." They were one step above the noncommittal.

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<sup>2</sup> Milton L. Barron reviews most of the previous research on the subject in his article, "Juvenile Delinquency and American Values, ASR, XVI (April 1951), 208-14.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 213.

TABLE XXII

## THE RESPONDENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARD GOD

Attitude score	Number	Per cent
0 - 2.9 (Strong religious attitude toward God)	24	32.0
3.0 - 3.9 (Definite recognition of God affecting Conduct)	15	20.0
4.0 - 4.9 (Slightly affected by idea of God)	13	17.3
5.0 - 5.9 (Noncommittal, neutral, or agnostic attitude)	9	12.0
6.0 - 6.9 (Disbelief but attitude not yet strongly set)	6	8.0
7.0 - 7.9 (Definite denial of God influencing conduct)	2	2.7
8.0 - 11.0 (Strong atheistic attitude)	6	8.0
Total	75	100.0

Using Thurstone's scale for measuring the reality-of-God-attitude, Middleton and Wright found that both their delinquent and non-delinquent adolescent group showed a positive belief in God (two steps above the neutral attitude). Since different scales were used no comparison can be drawn between the slightly different attitudinal levels revealed; what is significant for present purposes, however, is the similarity between the scores of the delinquents and non-delinquents. There was no significant difference in the mean-scores of the two groups. As the authors themselves summarized the data: "High school boys [the non-delinquents] are more favorable in their attitudes toward the law and the church than are delinquent boys; there is no difference in their attitudes toward the reality of God."<sup>4</sup> For the present delinquent group, their attitudes

<sup>4</sup>Middleton and Wright, p. 149.

TABLE XXIII

ATTITUDES TOWARD SEX  
AS REPORTED BY THE RESPONDENTS

Attitude Statement	Completely agree		Mostly agree		Mostly Disagree		Completely disagree	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
"It's all right to have sex relations with a girl if she agrees and isn't married."	10	13.3	18	24.0	12	16.0	35	46.7
"It's all right to have sex relations with a girl if she agrees even if she is married."	6	8.0	7	9.3	11	14.7	51	68.0
"Some people say that as far as sex goes, it is all right for a boy to play with himself."	2	2.7	9	12.0	20	26.7	44	58.7

toward the law were not directly tested; but their attitudes toward the church were somewhat more favorable than their attitudes toward God.

As regards specific attitudes and their religious content, four areas were investigated: sex, stealing, fighting, and the general perception of the adolescent about his gang's reaction to his religious attitudes and ideals.

Adolescence is pre-eminently a period of rapid and intense physical growth; sex becomes more of an individual and social problem and its control more difficult. The present-day emphasis and dominating concern of sex intensifies the normal adolescent problem. And the fact that the Church's attitude toward sex is a strict one does not simplify the problem. None of the boys in the present study reported that they were ignorant of the Church's position on sex (such



TABLE XXIV

## THE RESPONDENTS' REPORTED SEXUAL PRACTICES

Sexual Practice	Never		Once or twice		Three times		Four times		Five times		More than five times	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Had sex relations with girls or women?	36	48.0	16	21.3	2	2.7	4	5.3	4	5.3	13	17.3
Ever masturbated?	12	16.0	15	20.0	16	13.3	7	9.3	8	10.7	23	30.7
Had sex relations with boys or men?	66	88.0	6	8.0	0	0	0	0	1	1.3	2	2.7
Ever take part in a "gang" sex party?	64	85.3	8	10.7	1	1.3	1	1.3	0	0	1	1.3

items as petting were not considered, but only the larger categories of masturbation, fornication, and adultery), and of the total number, twenty-seven delinquents (36%) considered that the Church's position was too strict, while forty-eight (64%) agreed with the Church's regulations. The attitude toward specific sex acts was somewhat different, as indicated below:

Comparing these attitudes toward sex with the actual sexual practices reported by the delinquents give us the results indicated above. The most common sexual practice, despite the reported negative attitude to the act, is masturbation. This was expected and, in this sense, normal.<sup>5</sup> Formal homosexuality and "gang sex parties" were more infrequent. Fornication, however, was rather widespread with thirty-nine boys (52%) having performed the act at least once. Na-

<sup>5</sup>See, Gesell, Ilg, and Ames, pp. 289-90.

TABLE XXV

BREAKDOWN OF SPECIFIC SEXUAL PRACTICES  
AND RESPONDENTS' RELATED SEXUAL ATTITUDES

Specific sexual practices	Number who "mostly" or "completely" disagreed with these practices	The reported practice of those who strongly disagreed with the practice		
		Never	Once or twice	Three or more times
Homosexuality	70	63	5	2
Masturbation	64	12	14	38
Fornication	47	26	10	11

bitual fornication was low (17%) only in comparison to masturbation practices. Consequently, there seems to be a rough consistency between the delinquent's sexual attitudes and his sexual behavior. This consistency is not verified, however, when we probe into more specific actions-attitudes relationship, as indicated in Table XXV. For even though the majority of those strongly opposed to homosexuality, masturbation, and fornication indulged in the action only once or twice, or not at all, the number of those indulging in the practice three or more times is nevertheless surprisingly high, when it is remembered that all of these delinquents expressed strongly or totally negative attitudes toward these same actions. Of the sixty-four boys strongly opposed to masturbation, thirty-eight (59%) had practiced it three or more times; and of the forty-seven with clearly negative attitudes toward fornication, eleven (28%) practiced it three or more times.

The second specific attitude tested was the delinquent's attitude toward stealing. When discussing various general notions about delinquency in the

first chapter, it was noted that the nature of a delinquent offense is largely a matter of cultural definition, and is a result of varying standards of community pressure and practice. Despite variations in standards from community to community, however, and despite the ambiguity with which delinquent behavior is generally defined, there is a discernible pattern in the character of the offenses most typical for the greater number of communities. Reports to the United States Children's Bureau, confirmed by many local surveys and studies, indicate that the primary offense among boys is stealing, followed by what the tenuous wording of many statutes describes as "general acts of carelessness or mischief."<sup>6</sup>

As the data compiled in Table XXVI indicate, only a small fraction of the delinquents felt that stealing was all right. The majority showed little hesitation in establishing the rightness or wrongness of the act. When reporting on actual stealing, however, the picture was not as favorable. Except for things of large value (over \$50.00), the majority of the delinquents had stolen; this was especially true as regards "stealing" cars, the most frequent offense for which the adolescents were put in the detention home. Although not specifically tested on the questionnaire, attitudes toward car-theft as revealed in the interview presented a problem. (While many boys felt quite definitely that stealing was wrong, they admitted just as readily that they stole anyway)

From a comparison of Tables XXIV and XXV<sup>7</sup> it becomes clear that in the area

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<sup>6</sup>Block and Flynn, pp. 40-43. See also, Social Statistics, II, The Child, U. S. Department of Labor, Children's Bureau (Washington, 1946), p. 11.

<sup>7</sup>See pp. 87, 88.

TABLE XXVI

ATTITUDES TOWARD STEALING  
REPORTED BY THE RESPONDENTS

Attitude toward	General Stealing <sup>1</sup>		Car-theft <sup>2</sup>	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Completely agree	5	6.7	6	8.0
Mostly agree	5	6.7	5	6.7
Mostly disagree	12	16.0	13	17.3
Completely disagree	53	70.7	51	68.0
Total	75	100.1	75	100.0

<sup>1</sup>Stealing is all right as long as you don't get caught. Do you:  
 (1) Completely agree\_\_\_\_\_ (2) Mostly agree\_\_\_\_\_ (3) Mostly disagree\_\_\_\_\_  
 (4) Completely disagree\_\_\_\_\_?

<sup>2</sup>Going for a joy ride in a car I find open is all right as long as I don't get caught and don't keep the car. Do you: (1) Completely agree\_\_\_\_\_  
 (2) Mostly agree\_\_\_\_\_ (3) Mostly disagree\_\_\_\_\_ (4) Completely disagree\_\_\_\_\_?

of stealing there also is a significant inconsistency between attitude and practice. This becomes even more apparent when we select from the sample those who "mostly" or "completely" disapproved of stealing and compared this attitude with their actual practice. As Table XXVIII<sup>8</sup> reveals, sixty-five delinquents generally disapproved of stealing, but of these twenty boys (30.8%) stole items worth less than \$2.00 several times, twenty-four (36.9%) stole items worth over \$50.00 once or twice, twenty-eight (43%) of the delinquents "borrowed" cars once or twice and ten (15.4%) "borrowed" them very often.

<sup>8</sup>Cf. p. 92.

TABLE XXVII

## THE RESPONDENTS' REPORTED PRACTICES OF STEALING

Reported practice	Items worth less than \$2.00		Items worth \$2.00-\$50.00		Items over \$50.00		General "worthless" items <sup>1</sup>		Car-theft	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Very often	4	5.3	5	6.7	3	4.0	1	1.3	16	21.3
Several times	24	32.0	10	13.3	4	5.3	8	10.7	10	13.3
Once or twice	27	36.0	29	38.7	28	37.3	31	41.3	30	40.0
Never	20	21.7	31	41.3	40	53.3	35	46.7	19	25.0
Total	75	100.0	75	100.0	75	99.9	75	100.0	75	99.9

<sup>1</sup>Have you ever taken things that you really didn't want and that did not belong to you? Very often \_\_\_\_\_ Several times \_\_\_\_\_ Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_ Never \_\_\_\_\_?

The question of gang fighting does not necessarily fall under such strict religious regulations as sex offenses and stealing. Fighting, after all, is not intrinsically evil. And although gang fighting, as it is normally carried on today, is unjust, any moral guilt imputed to these fights has to be judged on individual grounds. Consequently, it is not a strictly moral attitude that we are testing here, as much as a specific adolescent value, namely, the respect for the lives and well-being of others, as well as the rights of others (in the ethical, rather than the moral theological sense).

It has been observed by many writers on delinquency that what precisely makes the present-day problem most pressing is not the quantity but the quality

TABLE XXVIII

BREAKDOWN OF SPECIFIC STEALING PRACTICES  
AND RESPONDENTS'  
RELATED ATTITUDES TOWARD STEALING

Specific stealing practices	Number of those who "mostly" or "completely" disapproved of stealing	The reported practices of those who strongly disapproved of these practices			
		Never	Once or twice	Several times	Very often
Items worth less than \$2.00	65	17	25	20	3
Items worth from \$2.00 to \$50.00	65	28	27	7	3
Items worth over \$50.00	65	36	24	2	1
General "worthless" items	65	32	27	5	0
Car-theft	64	18	28	8	10

of delinquent behavior.<sup>9</sup> Cohen has pointed to the widespread "negativism" of the delinquent; Zahn, of his utter disregard of the intrinsic worth of human life and human rights. It is this attitude of disregard and its practical application that concerns us.

The reported attitude of the delinquents toward fighting followed the trend of the sex and stealing attitudes. Fifty-eight boys (77%) said that it was certainly wrong to fight or to beat someone up if "you wanted to get something or wanted to get even." Ten boys (13%) thought there was nothing wrong with such

<sup>9</sup>Cohen, 21-48; Zahn, p. 303; Harrison Salisbury, The Shook-up Generation (New York, 1958), pp. 36-48, to mention only a few.

TABLE XXIX  
PURPOSELESS FIGHTING  
AS REPORTED BY THE RESPONDENTS

Frequency of occurrence	"Beat up" on kids who hadn't done anything to you.		Hurt or inflicted pain on someone just to see them squirm.	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Very often	1	1.3	0	0
Several times	5	6.7	4	5.3
Once or twice	18	24.0	7	9.3
Never	51	68.0	64	85.3
Total	75	100.0	75	99.9

activities, while five approved of the action, but not too strongly. The values the delinquents lived by (not the ones they proclaimed) also followed the same pattern of inconsistency seen in the sex and stealing practices. Only twelve had never gotten into a fist fight (not in the sense of self-defense, but aggressively to "get even" or "show this guy who's boss.") Fifteen (20%) had fought very often; thirty-six (48%) several times; and eighteen (24%) only once or twice. Few of the delinquents, however, fought other fellows merely "for the fun of it" and hardly any had inflicted pain on someone "just to see them squirm."<sup>10</sup>

Values, of course, are never created nor applied in a vacuum. In their function as criteria for the importance of persons, goals, one's surroundings

<sup>10</sup>Cf. p. 96.

TABLE XXX  
REPORTED ATTITUDES OF THE GANG  
VERSUS THOSE OF THE INDIVIDUAL RESPONDENT

Attitude statement	Always		Usually		Seldom		Never	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Do the fellows you pal around with think religion is important?	20	27	15	20.0	33	44.0	7	9.3
Would the fellows you pal around with at home expect you to go to Church?	12	16	11	14.7	27	36.0	19	25.3
Would the fellows make fun of you if they thought you went to Mass, Communion, and Confession regularly?	6	8	7	9.3	12	16.4	50	68.1
If the fellows wanted you to go along with them, would you do something you knew was wrong or sinful?	18	24	36	48.0	18	24.0	3	4.0

and pattern of activity, values nonetheless appear as relatively stable fittings of an individual or group frame of reference. Since values function within the context of social interaction, they are conditioned in great measure by the people with whom one associates, the background, personality, and needs of the individual. This is just another way of saying that just as values exist within and without the social person, the source of these values is both external and internal to the social person.

In this light it becomes increasingly important to investigate the relationship between the values existing among the members of the delinquent's "gang"



TABLE XXXI

FURTHER DATA ON  
ATTITUDES OF THE GANG  
VERSUS THOSE OF THE INDIVIDUAL RESPONDENT

Attitude statement	Always		Usually		Seldom		Never	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Have you ever stopped doing something or refused to do something that you knew was wrong because it was a sin?	13	24.0	28	37.0	23	31.0	6	8.0
If the fellows wanted you to go along with them, to do something you knew was wrong or sinful, would you refuse?	18	24.0	36	48.0	18	23.0	3	4.0
Have you ever gone against the fellows because what they wanted you to do was wrong or sinful?	8 <sup>a</sup>	10.7	25	33.3	29	38.7	13	17.3
Suppose the fellows wanted you to go stealing with them. Would you refuse?	7	9.4	13	17.0	47	63.4	8	11.0
Suppose the fellows wanted you to go "sexing" with them, would you go along?	15	20.0	11	15.0	14	19.0	34	45.0

<sup>a</sup>The actual category under which this answer belongs is not "always" but "very often." The terms were changed to facilitate tabulation.

and his own values. Although recognizing the significance of these inquiries, the present study limited its investigation to certain of the religious attitudes considered so far. As can be seen in Tables XXX and XXXI, four areas were

covered by these questions: the gang's sinful delinquency and the delinquent's attitude toward it, the gang's attitude to the delinquent's church attendance and church participation, and the delinquent's response to the gang's invitation to go stealing or "sexing" with them.

As far as general church attendance and religious commitment is concerned, the delinquent's "gang" is mostly indifferent; and the majority of the boys feel sure they would not be made fun of for participating in church activities. The same situation does not hold true, however, for the gang's invitation to delinquent behavior. Here the adolescent's response shows more of an underlying commitment to the gang and its expectations than to the moral expectations of his religious affiliation. This finding was to be expected. Studies by Cohen, Bloch and Niederhoffer, Short and others set forth quite clearly that delinquency is basically a problem of conformity to deviant values which are held by some group more immediately crucial to the adolescent than the more distant and abstract "Society," "Church" or even "Family."<sup>11</sup> Such a basic commitment to gang values also explains the contradiction in the delinquents' responses to the fourth item of Table XXX, and the second and third items in Table XXXI. For while 72% of the delinquents stated that if the fellows wanted them to go along to do something they knew was wrong or sinful they would "always" or "usually" refuse, and 28% of the delinquents claimed that they would "seldom" or "never" do something wrong or sinful with the gang, still 44% "usually" or "always" had

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Cohen, 121-37, Herbert A. Bloch and Arthur Niederhoffer, The Gang (New York, 1958), Cohen and Short, "Research in Delinquent Subcultures," Journal of Social Issues, XIV (1958), 20-37.

gone against the fellows because what they wanted them to do was wrong or sinful.

The relationship between religious attitudes and delinquent practices has now been explored sufficiently to reveal certain significant trends. The scores of the Thurstone attitude scale, "Attitude Toward God," show a slight, marginal commitment to religious belief and values. In this the individual delinquents share the same religious attitudes that they report for their companions. There appears, then, to be little conflict arising from a type of "dual allegiance" of the boy to his group and to his church. The depth of commitment made, in addition to factors of status, approval, security, etc., suggest that religious values will have controlling influence only if strongly supported by these other factors more immediately important to the delinquent. Thus, with the exception of car-theft, the delinquent has no doubt about the morality of his actions, the sin and consequent betrayal of his religious values which his action entail. It would have been indeed surprising, not to say methodologically disturbing, if adolescents with the shallow religious commitment indicated by the Thurstone test, reported behavior consistent with their general and specific religious attitudes.

The particular items of sex, stealing, fighting, and gang values were selected for individual analysis because the content of those values appeared to be logically related to delinquent behavior. There were no specific questions relating delinquents' attitudes toward the values and practices of the larger society. We recognize the possible significance of this type of inquiry. Our present study, however, was limited to one aspect of value and only certain types of delinquent behavior patterns.) What implications these limited conclu-

sions might have on this larger question is the topic for the following chapter.

## CHAPTER VII

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The specific question which has concerned us in the present study is this: "could the ineffectiveness of religious beliefs and attitudes be something which accounts for delinquency in society?" Grounding this question is the theory that deviant behavior is not merely the result of an interaction process between individuals, between individuals and their socio-cultural milieu (as such it is a behavior pattern that is learned), but that deviance is also the result of an absence or inadequacy of certain social controls. According to the original formulation, religious influence was anticipated to be ineffective in its function as a social control in the values and behavior of delinquents. The large majority of relationships tested in this study have led to the conclusion that while external religious conformity and reported religious attitudes are consistent with Catholic belief and expectations, the internal religious commitment is weak, ineffectual, and so exerts little significant influence on the values the delinquents live by and the behavior they report.

The importance of this conclusion becomes more apparent when viewed in its consequences for the theoretical framework constructed at the beginning of the study. Following Cohen, defined deviant behavior as a violation of "institutionalized expectations" — that is, expectations which are shared and recognized as legitimate within a social system. The central idea behind this defi-

nition is socially structured strain, an ambivalence relative to these institutionalized expectations. Deviance itself, then, does not necessarily constitute the basic problem to be studied, but rather the elements within the social system which caused the conflict to arise and initiated the consequent delinquent response.<sup>1</sup> In this sense, both deviant behavior and conformity are kinds of behavior that evolve in the course of an interaction process. But as Cohen warns:

When we say that deviant behavior is an attempt to reduce strain or to solve a problem of adjustment, we do not mean that an actor finds himself in an awkward spot, considers a number of alternatives, and then makes a choice. The break with the routine and the institutionalized is more typically half-conscious, tentative, and grouping. Ambivalence motivates exploratory but noncommittal gestures.<sup>2</sup>

Thus when the gestures elicit from others a response which tends to reduce the original strain, the individual commits himself and the outcome of such commitment is a cumulative, collective product, the result of an interactional system and not merely of the actor who happened to author the act. Obviously the action pattern that follows is not necessarily deviant; any deviant action or series of actions, however, are produced precisely in this way. And what it is that gives the deviance meaning is the strain or conflict which the new action is trying to resolve.

In line with this conceptual scheme, the data of the present study clearly

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<sup>1</sup>In addition to the more sociological viewpoint of Cohen, Merton, and Parsons, all of whom emphasize the conflict factor, the same emphasis has been made psychologically by Healy and Bronner, Thorsten Sellin, Culture Conflict and Crime (New York, Social Science Research Council Report #41, 1938) and was employed successfully as a frame of reference in Gunnar Myrdal's An American Dilemma.

<sup>2</sup>Cohen, "The Study of Social Disorganization and Deviant Behavior," p. 467.

revealed an inconsistency between religious values the delinquent proclaimed and the values and behavior he lived by. But what is significant, as both questionnaires and interviews attest, is that this inconsistency did not appear as inconsistency to the delinquent; in other words, there was no apparent conflict in the adolescent's mind between his religious attitudes and values and his behavior. What appeared to the researcher as inconsistent or as the source of conflict and strain seemed to be neatly compartmentalized by the delinquent — religious values applying in some situations and other values applying in other situations. This was brought out forcefully, for instance, in the analysis of the delinquents' attitudes toward sex and his sexual practices, as well as in the breakdown of his attitudes and actions as regards stealing. Even those with the most strongly negative attitudes toward either offense revealed high degrees of stealing and sexual behavior. As one graduate of England's famous Borstal system pointed out in a semi-biographical account in later years, Borstal "to some extent revived the school-boy values of fair-play and team spirit but their application remained limited to play and teams. Crime . . . remained as attractive as ever."<sup>3</sup> This appears quite parallel to the delinquent's experience in the present sample.

It must be noted that there is no question of the intellectual grasp of religious values by the adolescent. The data indicate in almost every instance that the delinquent understood what was right and what was wrong, what as a Catholic he believed and what practices were expected of him; and he agreed with these norms. But he lived by another set of standards in practical day-to-day

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<sup>3</sup>Mark Benney (pseud.), Angels in Undress (New York, 1937), p. 216.

experiences. The contradiction between the delinquents' attitudes against sinful gang behavior (72%) yet his conformity to the gang's activity, even if it was wrong or sinful (66%) are evidence of this. Healy and Bronner have observed in the same connection that the delinquent is often "fully able to express his conscious belief that delinquency represents wrong conduct, but evidently his feeling about wrongness has not been sufficiently strong to function as a preventive."<sup>4</sup>

Consequently, what might at the outset appear to be commonplace, namely, the actual ineffectiveness of religious control, when viewed against the background of strain and conflict which characterizes our initial conceptual system becomes quite problematical. Why is there no tension between religious values and the adolescents' "unofficial" or private values? What is the nature of the religious commitment made by these delinquents? How can this level of commitment be raised to an operative level where religious values are meaningful and effective determinants of action? To point toward answers and the directions possible answers might take would lead us beyond the actual data of the present research, to be sure. But since the conclusions reached in this study and certain relationships found to be important occasion many of these questions, we might consider in somewhat scatter-shot fashion a few of the areas and possible hypotheses that, in the light of this study, would seem profitable to investigate further. Such further research will have to be undertaken before any satisfactory answer to the specifying question of this study can be given.

The first question that logically arises in the light of our conclusions

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<sup>4</sup>Healy and Bronner, p. 11.



about the absence of conscious conflict between religious and other values concerns the reasons why there was no apparent strain when such a manifest inconsistency of attitude and behavior did exist. Although this particular question was never raised in the present study (precisely because the finding was not anticipated), the data analyzed do give support for the following observations. The delinquent's religious commitment was shallow. In fact, in view of the attitude scores one can hardly call the delinquent's religious attitude a rational and personal commitment in any sense of the word. It would seem that the attitude would be more accurately termed a "commitment by default."<sup>5</sup> A commitment by default is a commitment made without the realization that it has been made; it can arise through a series of acts no one of which is crucial but which taken together constitute for the individual interests of such magnitude that he is unwilling to lose them. A business man's commitment to his organization can follow this pattern rather closely. Or a commitment by default can arise through an act or series of acts made by another person in my name; religion is an apt illustration here since one's initial commitment was made by his parents and god-parents and reinforced by home environment, schooling, church attendance and is only fully realized by him at a later date, during a time of spiritual crisis, annual retreat, a novena, etc. If then, the delinquent's commitment is a commitment by default, it is clear why there would be no apparent tension between such nominal values and the values of gang life and adolescent recognition, approval and security. The former are intellectually grasped as true; the latter are emotionally grasped as desirable.

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<sup>5</sup>Cf. Howard Becker, "Notes on the Concept of Commitment," AJS, LXVI (July 1960), p. 38.

Moreover, as Goode has pointed out, since commitments are social acts they are supported by social rewards and censures.<sup>6</sup> (Regarding religious values, we have already noted that the individuals are weakly committed; the data also reveal that the persons with whom the delinquents associate are equally apathetic and non-committal toward religion: it is not that they are anti-religious but simply a-religious — whether or not members of their group go to church made no difference to the gang, it was outside their concern.) In addition to weakly committed individuals and weakly demanding groups, we found in this same sphere of religious values, generally non-censuring, related outsiders (parents who provided ineffectual conformity models religiously, for example). All of these factors contributed to the weak commitments displayed in the attitude tests, even though they are not wholly explanatory.

We come somewhat closer to an explanation of the fact that the delinquents studied have not made the transfer from commitment by default to personal decision and religious conviction when we recall the nature of religious control. Religion exerts its strongest influence by means of the religious experience, the personal relation of the individual with the Person of God. This was developed at some length in our initial frame of reference. Certainly the data of both the questionnaire and the interviews reveal no such inter-personal relationship between the delinquent and God as consciously present to the adolescent. This is understandable, of course, when we remember the lack of parental religious influence, the limited amount of Catholic education (the average a-

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<sup>6</sup>Goode, "Norm Commitment and Conformity to Role-Status Obligations," AJS, LXVI (November 1960), 246-58.

mount was three-and-a-half years of grammar school), the negligence in religious practice. But these items should not be exaggerated. The parents did "require" church attendance; they did use religious motivation in their disciplinary practices, even though they did not provide actually effective conforming models of religious participation. The delinquents went to Mass on the average of several times a month. The formal training they received by means of the catechism and Sunday sermons was strongly intellectualistic and moralistic, and this was faithfully reflected in their accurate, though nominal, religious beliefs and values.

What appears to be missing in the delinquent's attitudes -- personal realization of the influence of God -- is precisely what appears to be lacking in their religious orientation -- emphasis on the personal, "experimental" element of religion.<sup>7</sup> If a re-study of the present project were to be undertaken, an important area for analysis would be the effect of Catholic education as it is now carried out on the attitudes of those who have had eight to twelve years of such training in relation to the attitudes of the delinquents in the present sample. This type of research would reveal the importance of the fact of Catholic education in relation to its content.

There is little question that the Church has long recognized the functional importance of an underlying emotional religious commitment: it has always been more indulgent to the sinner than to the heretic. And as the interviews revealed the delinquents' "commitment by default" was not entirely a matter of

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<sup>7</sup>Cf. The parish Program of Instruction published by the Archdiocese of Chicago (especially those from 1950-1959) and the Baltimore Catechisms used until last year in Chicago grammar schools for confirmation of this point.

"not caring" what the demands of the Church were in this or that situation, or not caring if the delinquent found himself in a state of serious sin. As the questions probed deeper into the adolescent's notion of God and religion, he could be brought to see the inconsistency of his actions, the fact of his actual religious commitment; he could be deeply impressed by the fact (not familiar to him, his reactions would seem to indicate) that God has a personal interest in him individually. This only intensifies the problem as to how to raise this initial nominal commitment to the level of emotion and conviction. As Goode indicates, few if any specific techniques can be used to sanction an individual's failure in emotion alone, for the normal techniques of socialization — shame, punishment, anxiety, etc. — do not aim at action or emotional conformity as separable goals.<sup>8</sup>

Here, then, we are back to the point made in the preface to this study, that the principal difficulty in assessing the effectiveness of religion is similar to that encountered in evaluating any institutional factor: what we are really studying is the problem of human motivation and, as we have seen, motivation is a devious and complex affair involving a multitude of psychological and sociological variables. The futility of mere correlation of statistics in this area is indicated by the tendency to establish relationships between such objective evidence as church attendance or religious affiliation and the extent of delinquency. These are frequently of little help in assessing the effectiveness of an emotional experience, although as Durkheim showed long ago, these also cannot be studied independently of a wide variety of other variables, such as

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<sup>8</sup> Goode, "Norm Commitment and Conformity to Role-Status Obligations," p. 257.

family structure, age-levels, economic conditions, and ethnic composition. Therefore we must examine the part the institutional patterns of religion play in the entire interwoven fabric of American social life.<sup>9</sup>

For religious motivation, like any other type of motivation, depends upon the internalization of standards during the critical formative years of childhood, and is developed through close identification with parents, family members, and other significant primary groups. Much of this motivation is acquired unconsciously and depends in large degree upon behavioral examples rather than on precept. Only later does it reach the level of conscious decision and personal commitment. If these supporting behavioral agencies are missing, it simply means that the Church has encountered a difficulty in coping with agencies in modern life that tend to neutralize or vitiate the fundamental tenets of religious teaching. It means also that the Church, as Bloch and Flynn suggest, will have to develop a new dimension to its teaching, particularly for the young, and that it will perhaps have to learn to assume a wider community responsibility in reinforcing its teaching.<sup>10</sup> As Zahn has observed:

The terror that stalks our streets has been fashioned in our image; not an image buried in the night depths of subconscious fears and evil urges, but an image blazoned forth in headlines, on billboards, everywhere we turn. Until we correct our value system (the one we live by, not the one we proclaim), until we destroy the deadly germ from which the poison growth of delinquency has sprung, it is a hopeless challenge that we face.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Robin Williams, American Society (New York, 1951), pp. 323-71.

<sup>10</sup> Bloch and Flynn, p. 230.

<sup>11</sup> Zahn, p. 304.

Such are some of the conclusions and questions which the present study raises. Many of them might have seemed obvious before we began and some of them have been said before; it seemed to this researcher that they took on sharper meaning and significance in the light of the facts this study uncovered. We must be careful not to carry our conclusions beyond the data given in the preceding pages. Continued research is needed on this question of religious control before its significance to delinquent behavior will be known.

## APPENDIX

### RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

**Directions:** Read each question carefully once, then answer it.  
Place an X squarely in the blank by your answer.

#### Section A.

1. In your family are you (1) The oldest \_\_\_\_\_ (2) In between \_\_\_\_\_ (3) The youngest \_\_\_\_\_ (4) The only child \_\_\_\_\_
2. Do you have any brothers and sisters? (1) No \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Yes, one \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Yes two \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Yes, three \_\_\_\_\_ (5) Yes, four \_\_\_\_\_ (6) Yes, five \_\_\_\_\_ (7) If more than five, how many \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many brothers and sisters live at home with you? (1) None \_\_\_\_\_ (2) One \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Two \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Three \_\_\_\_\_ (5) Four \_\_\_\_\_ (6) Five \_\_\_\_\_ (7) If more than five, how many \_\_\_\_\_
4. Where in town do you live?  
Section \_\_\_\_\_ (for example, South side)  
Street \_\_\_\_\_ (for example, S. Hoyne Avenue)  
Block \_\_\_\_\_ (for example, 1800; don't put the exact house number)
5. With whom do you ordinarily live? (1) Original father and mother \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Mother and Step-father \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Father and step-mother \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Mother only \_\_\_\_\_ (5) Father only \_\_\_\_\_ (6) If none of these, with whom do you live \_\_\_\_\_
6. Is your mother living? (1) Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (2) No \_\_\_\_\_  
Is your father living? (1) Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (2) No \_\_\_\_\_
7. Are your parents divorced or separated? (1) Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (2) No \_\_\_\_\_  
If they are divorced or separated, how old were you when they last lived together? (1) 5 or younger \_\_\_\_\_ (2) 6-11 \_\_\_\_\_ (3) 12-16 \_\_\_\_\_
8. From what you have observed would you say that your parents were (1) Completely happy \_\_\_\_\_ (2) More happy than unhappy \_\_\_\_\_ (3) More unhappy than happy \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Completely unhappy \_\_\_\_\_

9. My parents quarrel (get mad) with each other (1) Very often\_\_\_\_  
(2) Often\_\_\_\_ (3) Seldom\_\_\_\_ (4) Never\_\_\_\_
10. What is your father's ordinary job?\_\_\_\_\_
11. Does your mother (or step-mother) ordinarily work at a job for money?  
(1) No\_\_\_\_ (2) Yes, part time\_\_\_\_ (3) Yes, full time\_\_\_\_
12. If your mother does work at a job for money, what does she do?\_\_\_\_\_
13. When my father or mother punishes me they are "fair" about it (1) Always  
(2) Usually\_\_\_\_ (3) Seldom\_\_\_\_ (4) Never\_\_\_\_
14. With regard to disciplining me or correcting me, my parents tell me that  
what I did was a sin or that God is hurt when I act this way (1) Always  
\_\_\_\_ (2) Usually\_\_\_\_ (3) Seldom\_\_\_\_ (4) Never\_\_\_\_
15. When I do something my parents don't like they usually (1) Nag me\_\_\_\_  
(2) Scold me\_\_\_\_ (3) Make me feel they don't love me\_\_\_\_ (4) Spank,  
whip, or hit me\_\_\_\_ (5) Don't punish me, but discuss the matter with me  
\_\_\_\_\_
16. Is your mother Catholic? (1) Yes\_\_\_\_ (2) No\_\_\_\_ (3) I don't know\_\_\_\_  
Is your father Catholic? (1) Yes\_\_\_\_ (2) No\_\_\_\_ (3) I don't know\_\_\_\_
17. Does your mother go to Church? (1) No\_\_\_\_ (2) Once or twice a year\_\_\_\_  
(3) Once a month\_\_\_\_ (4) Two or three times a month\_\_\_\_ (5) Every  
Sunday\_\_\_\_ (6) Several times a week\_\_\_\_
- Does your father go to Church? (1) No\_\_\_\_ (2) Once or twice a year\_\_\_\_  
(3) Once a month\_\_\_\_ (4) Two or three times a month\_\_\_\_ (5) Every  
Sunday\_\_\_\_ (6) Several times a week\_\_\_\_
18. If you wanted help on religion do you think you could talk it over with  
your father? (1) Very easily\_\_\_\_ (2) Not so easily\_\_\_\_ (3) With a lot  
of trouble\_\_\_\_ (4) Not at all\_\_\_\_
- If you wanted help on religion do you think you could talk it over with  
your mother? (1) Very easily\_\_\_\_ (2) Not so easily\_\_\_\_ (3) With a lot  
of trouble\_\_\_\_ (4) Not at all\_\_\_\_
19. Do your parents ever tell you what companions you should or should not go  
out with? (1) Always\_\_\_\_ (2) Usually\_\_\_\_ (3) Seldom\_\_\_\_ (4) Never\_\_\_\_
- Do you agree with them in this? (1) Completely agree\_\_\_\_ (2) Mostly agree\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ (3) Mostly disagree\_\_\_\_ (4) Completely disagree\_\_\_\_
20. Do your parents think you should be home at night by a certain time?  
(1) Yes\_\_\_\_ (2) No\_\_\_\_



Do you agree with them? (1) Completely agree\_\_\_\_ (2) Mostly agree\_\_\_\_  
 (3) Mostly disagree\_\_\_\_ (4) Completely disagree\_\_\_\_

21. How important does your mother and father think it is to go to Church on Sunday? (1) Very important\_\_\_\_ (2) A little important\_\_\_\_ (3) Not so important\_\_\_\_ (4) Not important at all\_\_\_\_

Do you agree with them? (1) Completely agree\_\_\_\_ (2) Mostly agree\_\_\_\_  
 (3) Mostly disagree\_\_\_\_ (4) Completely disagree\_\_\_\_

22. How much do you feel your parents know about religion? (1) Very much\_\_\_\_  
 (2) A little\_\_\_\_ (3) Nothing\_\_\_\_

23. I enjoy being home for an evening with my parents (1) Very much\_\_\_\_  
 (2) A little\_\_\_\_ (3) Not at all\_\_\_\_

24. I would enjoy going to the movies or a ball game with my father. (1) Very much\_\_\_\_ (2) A little\_\_\_\_ (3) Not at all\_\_\_\_

25. I would enjoy going to a movie with my mother. (1) Very much\_\_\_\_ (2) A little\_\_\_\_ (3) Not at all\_\_\_\_

26. I am more interested in what my parents think of me than what the fellows I pal around with think of me. (1) Completely agree\_\_\_\_ (2) Mostly agree\_\_\_\_ (3) Mostly disagree\_\_\_\_ (4) Completely disagree\_\_\_\_

27. In how many communities have you attended school? (1) One\_\_\_\_ (2) Two\_\_\_\_  
 (3) Three\_\_\_\_ (4) Four\_\_\_\_ (5) Five\_\_\_\_ (6) More than five\_\_\_\_

28. How many schools have you attended? (1) One\_\_\_\_ (2) Two\_\_\_\_ (3) Three\_\_\_\_  
 (4) Four\_\_\_\_ (5) Five\_\_\_\_ (6) If more than five, how many\_\_\_\_

29. How many of these schools were Catholic? (1) None\_\_\_\_ (2) One\_\_\_\_  
 (3) Two\_\_\_\_ (4) Three\_\_\_\_ (5) Five\_\_\_\_ (6) Four\_\_\_\_ (7) If more than five, how many\_\_\_\_

30. If you attended a Catholic school, how many years in all were you there (i.e. the total number of years you attended Catholic school)?\_\_\_\_

31. Did you ever attend a public school? (1) Yes\_\_\_\_ (2) No\_\_\_\_  
 If yes, when you went to a public school, did you get out of school some time each week to attend catechism lessons? (1) Always\_\_\_\_ (2) Usually\_\_\_\_  
 (3) Seldom\_\_\_\_ (4) Never\_\_\_\_

/ Section B.

Directions: Put an X before the answer that best shows how you feel about the statement made.

1. I try to do everything as I think God would want me to do it. (1) Agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Strongly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Strongly disagree \_\_\_\_\_
2. I make all my statements about God as vague as I can; in fact, I rarely talk about him at all. (1) Agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Strongly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Strongly disagree \_\_\_\_\_
3. I have a much better time living a day at a time without worrying about God. (1) Agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Strongly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Strongly disagree \_\_\_\_\_
4. Whenever I make a decision to do something I think about what God would want me to do. (1) Agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Strongly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Strongly disagree \_\_\_\_\_
5. I don't worry about any foolish ideas about what is God's will. (1) Agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Strongly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Strongly disagree \_\_\_\_\_
6. Everytime I see someone in need I think about God and think He wants me to help out. (1) Agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Strongly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Strongly disagree \_\_\_\_\_
7. Only fools and phonies talk about God influencing them. (1) Agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Strongly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Strongly disagree \_\_\_\_\_
8. I find that I think less and less about God influencing me and watching what I do. (1) Agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Strongly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Strongly disagree \_\_\_\_\_
9. God is a really important person in my life and I adjust all my life to this fact. (1) Agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Strongly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Strongly disagree \_\_\_\_\_
10. I get all my kicks out of just living as I please and I'll enjoy it as fully as I can without God. (1) Agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Strongly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Strongly disagree \_\_\_\_\_
11. The idea of God neither helps nor hurts me in trying to live a good life. (1) Agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Strongly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Strongly disagree \_\_\_\_\_
12. Because I believe in God I want to see the world get better and be a better place for everyone to live in. (1) Agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Strongly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Strongly disagree \_\_\_\_\_
13. If I could get any satisfactory idea of God, I think it would make a difference in the way I live. (1) Agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Strongly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Strongly disagree \_\_\_\_\_

14. I don't have any faith in God. I live as I please and I'd like to see any God get in the way of my having a good time. (1) Agree\_\_\_\_\_ (2) Strongly agree\_\_\_\_\_ (3) Disagree\_\_\_\_\_ (4) Strongly disagree\_\_\_\_\_
15. I never trust anyone who denies that he believes in God. (1) Agree\_\_\_\_\_ (2) Strongly agree\_\_\_\_\_ (3) Disagree\_\_\_\_\_ (4) Strongly disagree\_\_\_\_\_
16. I feel that none of the ideas of God influence a person's living in any way. (1) Agree\_\_\_\_\_ (2) Strongly agree\_\_\_\_\_ (3) Disagree\_\_\_\_\_ (4) Strongly disagree\_\_\_\_\_
17. I am far more careless about my duty toward God than I ought to be. (1) Agree\_\_\_\_\_ (2) Strongly agree\_\_\_\_\_ (3) Disagree\_\_\_\_\_ (4) Strongly disagree\_\_\_\_\_
18. I believe that one has to play fair and square with God if one wants to get anywhere in this life and really be happy, and I act the way I believe. (1) Agree\_\_\_\_\_ (2) Strongly agree\_\_\_\_\_ (3) Disagree\_\_\_\_\_ (4) Strongly disagree\_\_\_\_\_
19. I have given up the idea of God, but I really can't stop thinking of Him altogether. (1) Agree\_\_\_\_\_ (2) Strongly agree\_\_\_\_\_ (3) Disagree\_\_\_\_\_ (4) Strongly disagree\_\_\_\_\_
20. I find every day full of chances to do good and to enjoy life without ever thinking about God. (1) Agree\_\_\_\_\_ (2) Strongly agree\_\_\_\_\_ (3) Disagree\_\_\_\_\_ (4) Strongly disagree\_\_\_\_\_
21. I love God, but I am too selfish to love my neighbor as myself. (1) Agree\_\_\_\_\_ (2) Strongly agree\_\_\_\_\_ (3) Disagree\_\_\_\_\_ (4) Strongly disagree\_\_\_\_\_
22. I have given up my idea of God and I'm getting along all right. (1) Agree\_\_\_\_\_ (2) Strongly agree\_\_\_\_\_ (3) Disagree\_\_\_\_\_ (4) Strongly disagree\_\_\_\_\_

### Section C.

1. When you are at home, do you go to Church? (1) No\_\_\_\_\_ (2) Once or twice a year\_\_\_\_\_ (3) Once a month\_\_\_\_\_ (4) Two or three times a month\_\_\_\_\_ (5) Every Sunday\_\_\_\_\_ (6) Several times a week\_\_\_\_\_
2. Do you go to teen-age club (or other) meetings at your home parish? (1) No\_\_\_\_\_ (2) Once or twice a year\_\_\_\_\_ (3) Once a month\_\_\_\_\_ (4) Two or three times a month\_\_\_\_\_ (5) Every week\_\_\_\_\_
3. When you are at home, do you go to Holy Communion? (1) No\_\_\_\_\_ (2) Once or twice a year\_\_\_\_\_ (3) Once a month\_\_\_\_\_ (4) Once or twice a month\_\_\_\_\_ (5) Every Sunday when I go to Mass\_\_\_\_\_ (6) Several times a week\_\_\_\_\_
4. When you are at home, how often do you go to confession? (1) Never\_\_\_\_\_

(2) Once or twice a year \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Once a month \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Once or twice a month \_\_\_\_\_ (5) Every week \_\_\_\_\_

5. What prayers do you say most frequently? (Check all the answers that fit you.) (1) Our Father \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Hail Mary \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Act of Contrition \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Apostles' Creed \_\_\_\_\_ (5) None \_\_\_\_\_

6. Do you usually pray (1) Very much \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Often \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Seldom \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Never \_\_\_\_\_

If you do pray, when do you usually pray? (Check all the answers that fit you.)

At Church \_\_\_\_\_

Before I go to sleep \_\_\_\_\_

Before meals \_\_\_\_\_

When I want something \_\_\_\_\_

When I get the "feeling" that I should \_\_\_\_\_

7. Do you ever make up your own prayers? (1) Yes, often \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Yes, sometimes \_\_\_\_\_ (3) No, I only use prayers I was taught \_\_\_\_\_ (4) No, I never pray \_\_\_\_\_
8. Since you've gotten into trouble, have you prayed (1) More \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Less \_\_\_\_\_ (3) The same as before \_\_\_\_\_
9. If you pray, why do you usually pray? \_\_\_\_\_
- 
10. If you pray, who taught you to pray? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Do you have any personal friends who are priests, brothers, or nuns?

IN THE NEXT FEW QUESTIONS CHECK THE ANSWER WHICH BEST SHOWS HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT THE STATEMENT THAT IS MADE

12. Some people say a priest can't help you out when you get in a touch spot. Do you: (1) Completely agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Mostly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Mostly disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Completely disagree \_\_\_\_\_
13. Some people say there is no need to go to Mass every Sunday. Do you: (1) Completely agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Mostly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Mostly disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Completely disagree \_\_\_\_\_
14. Some people say that it is not too important that you go to Holy Communion. Do you: (1) Completely agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Mostly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Mostly disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Completely disagree \_\_\_\_\_
15. Some people think that Christ is in the Blessed Sacrament. Do you: (1) Completely agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Mostly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Mostly disagree \_\_\_\_\_

(4) Completely disagree \_\_\_\_\_

16. Some people say you only have to go to confession when you want to. Do you: (1) Completely agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Mostly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Mostly disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Completely disagree \_\_\_\_\_
17. "When Christ died on Calvary He did not really die for me personally, but for all men. In other words, I didn't mean anything special to Him then." Do you: (1) Completely agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Mostly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Mostly disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Completely disagree \_\_\_\_\_
18. "Stealing is all right as long as you don't get caught." Do you: (1) Completely agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Mostly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Mostly disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Completely disagree \_\_\_\_\_
19. "Going for a joy ride in a car I find open is all right as long as I don't get caught and don't keep the car." Do you: (1) Completely agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Mostly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Mostly disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Completely disagree \_\_\_\_\_
20. "It's all right to have sex relations with girls." Do you: (1) Completely agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Mostly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Mostly disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Completely disagree \_\_\_\_\_
- "It's all right to have sex relations with a girl if she agrees, and isn't married." Do you: (1) Completely agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Mostly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Mostly disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Completely disagree \_\_\_\_\_
- "It's all right to have sex relations with a girl if she agrees, even if she is married." Do you: (1) Completely agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Mostly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Mostly disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Completely disagree \_\_\_\_\_
21. "No one has to listen to what a priest tells him about this or that being a sin unless he agrees with the priest." Do you: (1) Completely agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Mostly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Mostly disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Completely disagree \_\_\_\_\_
22. "It is all right to fight or beat someone up if you want to get something or want to get even." Do you: (1) Completely agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Mostly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Mostly disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Completely disagree \_\_\_\_\_
23. Some people say that as far as sex goes, for a boy to play with himself it is all right. Do you: (1) Completely agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Mostly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Mostly disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Completely disagree \_\_\_\_\_
24. Some people think that the Catholic Church is too strict on sex. Do you: (1) Completely agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Mostly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Mostly disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Completely disagree \_\_\_\_\_
25. Have you ever thought God was watching you? (1) Very often \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Often \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Seldom \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Never \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever stopped doing something because you thought God was watching you? (1) Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (2) No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, give some examples \_\_\_\_\_

26. Do the fellows you pal around with think religion is important? (1) Very important \_\_\_\_\_ (2) A little \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Not at all \_\_\_\_\_
27. Would the fellows make fun of you if they thought you went to Mass, Communion, and Confession regularly? (1) Always \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Usually \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Seldom \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Never \_\_\_\_\_
28. If the fellows wanted you to go along with them, to do something you knew was wrong or sinful, would you refuse? (1) Always \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Usually \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Seldom \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Never \_\_\_\_\_
29. Have you ever stopped doing something or refused to do something that you knew was wrong because it was a sin? (1) Very often \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Often \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Seldom \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Never \_\_\_\_\_
30. Would the fellows you pal around with at home expect you to go to Church? (1) No \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Wouldn't think about it either way \_\_\_\_\_
31. Have you ever gone against the fellows because what they wanted to do was wrong? (1) No \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Seldom \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Often \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Very often \_\_\_\_\_
32. When you are at home, do your parents expect you to go to Mass on Sundays? (1) Always \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Usually \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Seldom \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Never \_\_\_\_\_
33. Jesus Christ knows me by name. Do You: (1) Completely agree \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Mostly agree \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Mostly disagree \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Completely disagree \_\_\_\_\_
34. Suppose the fellows wanted you to go stealing with them. (1) Would you refuse \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Would you go along \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Would you try to get out of it \_\_\_\_\_
35. Suppose the fellows wanted you to go "sexing" with them (1) Would you refuse \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Would you go along \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Would you try to get out of it \_\_\_\_\_

#### Section D.

HAVE YOU EVER:

1. Driven a car without a driver's license or permit? (Don't include driver training courses.) (1) Very often \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Several times \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_

2. Skipped school without a legitimate excuse? (1) Very often \_\_\_\_\_  
(2) Several times \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_ (4) No \_\_\_\_\_
3. Disobeyed your parents? (1) Very often \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Several times \_\_\_\_\_  
(3) Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_ (4) No \_\_\_\_\_
4. Had a fist fight with some other person? (1) Very often \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Several times \_\_\_\_\_  
(3) Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_ (4) No \_\_\_\_\_
5. Told a lie? (1) Very often \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Several times \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_  
(4) No \_\_\_\_\_
6. "Run away" from home? (1) Very often \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Several times \_\_\_\_\_  
(3) Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_ (4) No \_\_\_\_\_
7. Been placed on school probation or expelled from school? (1) Very often \_\_\_\_\_  
(2) Several times \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_ (4) No \_\_\_\_\_
8. Defied your parents to their face? (1) Very often \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Several times \_\_\_\_\_  
(3) Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_ (4) No \_\_\_\_\_
9. Driven too fast or recklessly in an automobile? (1) Very often \_\_\_\_\_  
(2) Several times \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_ (4) No \_\_\_\_\_
10. Taken little things (worth less than \$2.00) that did not belong to you? (1) Very often \_\_\_\_\_  
(2) Several times \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_ (4) No \_\_\_\_\_
11. Taken things of medium value (between \$2.00 and \$50.00) that did not belong to you? (1) Very often \_\_\_\_\_  
(2) Several times \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_ (4) No \_\_\_\_\_
12. Taken things of large value (over \$50.00)? (1) Very often \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Several times \_\_\_\_\_  
(3) Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_ (4) No \_\_\_\_\_
13. Taken things that you really didn't want and that did not belong to you? (1) Very often \_\_\_\_\_  
(2) Several times \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_ (4) No \_\_\_\_\_
14. Taken part in "gang fights"? (1) Very often \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Several times \_\_\_\_\_  
(3) Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_ (4) No \_\_\_\_\_
15. Taken a car for a ride without the owner's knowledge? (1) No \_\_\_\_\_  
(2) Once \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Twice \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Three times \_\_\_\_\_ (5) Four times \_\_\_\_\_  
(6) Five times \_\_\_\_\_ (7) More than five times \_\_\_\_\_
16. "Beat up" on kids who hadn't done anything to you? (1) Very often \_\_\_\_\_  
(2) Several times \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_ (4) No \_\_\_\_\_

17. Bought or drank, beer, wine, or liquor (not counting drinking in someone's home with his or your parents)? (1) Very often \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Several times \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_ (4) No \_\_\_\_\_
18. Hurt or inflicted pain on someone just to see them squirm? (1) No \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Once \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Twice \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Three times \_\_\_\_\_ (5) Four times \_\_\_\_\_ (6) Five times \_\_\_\_\_ (7) More than five times \_\_\_\_\_
19. Purposely destroyed or damaged public property or private property that did not belong to you? (1) Very often \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Several times \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_ (4) No \_\_\_\_\_
20. Used or sold narcotic drugs? (1) No \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Three times \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Four times \_\_\_\_\_ (5) Five times \_\_\_\_\_ (6) More than five times \_\_\_\_\_
21. Used marijuana? (1) No \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Three times \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Four times \_\_\_\_\_ (5) Five times \_\_\_\_\_ (6) More than five times \_\_\_\_\_
22. Used heroin or similar drugs? (1) No \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Three times \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Four times \_\_\_\_\_ (5) Five times \_\_\_\_\_ (6) More than five times \_\_\_\_\_
23. Ever masturbated? (1) No \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Three times \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Four times \_\_\_\_\_ (5) Five times \_\_\_\_\_ (6) More than five times \_\_\_\_\_
24. Had sex relations with boys or men? (1) No \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Three times \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Four times \_\_\_\_\_ (5) Five times \_\_\_\_\_ (6) More than five times \_\_\_\_\_
25. Ever had sex relations with girls or women? (1) No \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Three times \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Four times \_\_\_\_\_ (5) Five times \_\_\_\_\_ (6) More than five times \_\_\_\_\_
26. Ever taken part in a "gang" sex party? (1) No \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Three times \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Four times \_\_\_\_\_ (5) Five times \_\_\_\_\_ (6) More than five times \_\_\_\_\_
27. Ever been caught by the police before? (1) No \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Once or twice \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Three times \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Four times \_\_\_\_\_ (5) Five times \_\_\_\_\_ (6) More than five times \_\_\_\_\_
28. Ever been in the detention home before? (1) No \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Once \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Twice \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Three times \_\_\_\_\_ (5) Four times \_\_\_\_\_ (6) Five times \_\_\_\_\_ (7) More than five times \_\_\_\_\_
29. Ever been in the reform school before? (1) No \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Once \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Twice \_\_\_\_\_ (4) Three times \_\_\_\_\_ (5) Four times \_\_\_\_\_ (6) Five times \_\_\_\_\_ (7) More than five times \_\_\_\_\_



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Approval Sheet

The thesis submitted by Thomas Michael Cannon, S.J. has been read and approved by a board of three members of the Department of Sociology.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

June 7, 1961  
Date

Gordon O. Fala  
Signature of Adviser (PK)