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Community Composition, Family Structures, and the Juvenile Justice System

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COMMUNITY COMPOSITION, FAMILY STRUCTURES,
AND THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

By

David J. Ross

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

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1975

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LIFE

The author, David Jan Ross, was born March 10, 1951 in Chicago, Illinois. His elementary education was obtained in a variety of schools and secondary education at St Ignatius High School, Chicago, Illinois where he graduated in June 1969.

In September, 1969, he entered the University of Rochester where he spent his freshman and sophomore years. He transferred to Loyola University of Chicago in September, 1971 where he received his degree of Bachelor of Arts with a major in sociology in June, 1973.

In September, 1973, he was granted a research assistantship at Loyola University of Chicago in sociology on a National Institute of Mental Health Grant.

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INTRODUCTION

The question of juvenile delinquency has long attracted the attention and investigation of behavioral scientists for most of the existence of the fields. Theorists from many if not all behavioral disciplines have attempted to explain the causes and consequences of delinquency in terms of the individual and general society. At the same time, empirical research into the verification or falsification of these approaches has generated a deluge of information, snow-balling in quantity with every issue of the journals, and varying to the extremes in quality of intellectual thought and precision.

An area of particular interest in the approach to juvenile delinquency has been an attempt by theorists and researchers to influence policy decisions of the institutions of society.¹ The application of theoretical and empirical conclusions are viewed by the behavioral scientist as directions which the institutions should follow if they truly desire solutions for social ills. These scientists, then, necessarily place themselves in an active role in service to the social system.

One presentation of the state of policy research today is the Task Force Report on Delinquency and Youth Crime published in 1967. The credentials of the contributors demonstrated the inter-disciplinary nature of the area as well as the span of years during which delinquency had been studied.

¹For a better understanding of policy research, the reader is referred to articles by James Coleman (1972) and Morris Janowitz (1971).

The Report reviewed pertinent theories and research into the question of delinquency with emphasis on the recommendations of institutional action by the Justice Department and general public which might solve, in some way, the social ill of delinquency.

The Report approached the solution from two distinct directions: the administration of the juvenile justice system and the implementation of social and psychological treatment programs. This separation was not indicative of the division of the problem. Rather, it was a reflection of divisions often existing in the funding of such solutions. Treatment programs cannot function outside of the influence of the institutions of juvenile justice since youth officially sent to or at least youth who fulfill the appropriate description of the institutions make up the clientele of these programs. Extensive overlap between the two approaches is further developed in the context of the influences of society. Social and psychological determinants directly control the support systems, with the institutions reflecting the value structure of society and treatment programs succeeding or failing under the prescribed definitions of the social order. This atmosphere, then, conditions the functioning of both approaches to the question of delinquency.

The Report generates an exhaustive list of reference material in the area of juvenile delinquency. Thus, some specification of the approach is necessary in order to limit the scope of the analysis and enhance the clarity of presentation of materials. The focus here is primarily on the administration of the juvenile justice system. Policy implications drawn from this approach will be pertinent to avenues of action which might be adopted by the juvenile justice system in an attempt to more fairly administer justice and possibly resolve some aspects of the social ills of juvenile delinquency.

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The analysis for this work was performed by first choosing variables which were possible indicators of the actions of the juvenile justice system and variables which indicated the predominant social and psychological determinents of behavior in a community. It was felt that the institutions of the juvenile justice system would act according to these prevalent attitudes in the community which it served. Next, using multiple regression analysis, variance in the variables representative of the juvenile justice system was explained by those variables chosen to indicate the prevalent social and psychological typologies existing in a community. Finally, policy implications were drawn from the conclusions of the analysis.

SOCIAL MILIEU OF A COMMUNITY

The conceptualization of typologies in a community has a strong foundation in the behavioral sciences. Emile Durkheim (1964) focused on the "collective conscience" of a community as responsible for the establishment and maintenance of the moral order. The conduct of the individual was socially defined by the community and the definitions were known by him in his role as a member of that community (Bellah, 1959). Max Weber (1958) developed a concept of communal action which was based upon the individual's sense of belonging to a collectivity for common actions. Men need an order within which they can locate themselves for the functions of cohesion, continuity, and justice (Shils, 1965). The expression of this order is the formation of communities. Georg Simmel (1955) envisioned the formation of communal groups as a necessary response of the individual to common dangers threatening his preservation, be it a physical destruction or emotional disintegration of the community. The communal formation also results from social differentiation in society. Functional patterns of defined behavior are developed through this process which influences the behavior of the individual (Abel, 1959). Thus, all individuals join collectivities based on similarity of thoughts, actions, and reactions. The result of this unification is a definition of proper and improper behavior in all social situations.

Adherence to the norms provides a common reference point for individuals to reaffirm their participation or separation from the community. This point has been supported in much of the research on small groups. Youth

from collectivities incorporate normative behavior into their personality (Sherif and Sherif, 1964) and these groups can exert pressures which stress attractiveness of adherence to the norms (Hare, 1962). Once the individual's membership has been acknowledged by the group, he closely identifies with the roles which conform to the established norm (Bales, 1945).

The function of norm adherence was investigated with regard to deviance by Kai Erikson and Robert Dentler (1959) in the context of small groups. Groups tended to include, sustain, and permit deviant behavior in order to maintain their equilibrium. Definitions within the group of certain actions as deviant served a functional service to the existence of the group. Erikson later applied this approach to the community level in his work, Wayward Puritans (1966). Through historical documents, he concluded that the "witch-hunts" of colonial New England were attempts to promote the social solidarity of the community by specifying the boundaries of social thought which the normative structure permitted. Attitudes which were "beyond" the limits were defined as heresy and publically sanctioned. It became clear to the members of the community what appropriate behavior entailed and the majority supported this solidarity movement. Thus, the community maintained the definitions held by individuals within its area of influence.

Environmental conditions which are prevalent in a community may also influence the behavior of individuals. This "ecological" approach in sociology developed into what became known as the Chicago School. Through the works of Robert Park, Ernest Burgess, R. D. McKenzie and others, the contention that life patterns of the individual were related to spatial and environmental conditions of a community was established (Park and Burgess, 1925). Communities in the metropolis were investigated for their influences

and social behavior was found related to these areas regardless of the individuals occupying them over time. This "natural area" was based upon the function it played in the context of the entire urban area. The "zones" which developed radiated from the central city and differentiated the social order of each of the communities they encompassed.

The ecological determination of individual behavior was applied to the area of juvenile delinquency by Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay in their studies of crime rates in Chicago (Shaw and McKay, 1942). They found that the distribution of official delinquency followed the patterns of natural areas, with the highest rates in the inner zones and decreasing rates in moving to the outer zones. Their contention was that these differences were the result of the level of social organization present in the communities. The areas which exhibited a high juvenile delinquency rate were traditional areas of population transition which failed to develop permanent community organizations (i.e., community groups, involvement in projects, schools, churches, etc.). The rates of juvenile delinquency declined in areas with an increase in the social organization of the community.

In the socially disorganized community, the norms of the society which were imposed by the institutions of social control were poorly developed, and thus only partially understood or adhered to. Socially organized communities permitted more effective transference of the moral values of the society, or at least a clearer image of appropriate behavior as defined by the control institutions.

The ecological approach to the understanding of juvenile delinquency has been substantiated in a number of other works. Chilton (1964) compared three urban areas for their distribution of juvenile activity and found that the measurements of social disorganization in the community were the deter-

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mining factor in all of the cities. Bloom (1966) noted further support of this position using measures of "disruptive conditions." Galle and his colleagues (1972) replicated the original Shaw and McKay work and verified their original findings for Chicago.

There are still certain limitations with the ecological approach both in its general application and specific implications. Freedman (1967) noted that there were inconsistencies in the measurements used to determine social disorganization. Vold (1958) noted that the differences of rates may have resulted from different actions by police and courts based upon economic conditions of individuals rather than the area of residence specifically. Finally, Martindale (1958) commented that although the field of sociology owed much to the development of the ecological approach, the limitations caused by physical restrictions of areas reduced human actions and interactions to an overly simplistic level.

The patterning of behavior within a community, however, was a useful concept for a sociological approach. This concept became the foundation for Edwin Sutherland's theoretical examination of crime, "differential association." All behavior develops through a learning process. Both criminal and non-criminal value systems are dependent upon the predominant socialization processes existing in a given community. If there are more favorable attitudes existing in a community for violation of the law than obedience to it, the probability that the individual will commit a crime is greatly increased (Sutherland, 1947). The type of criminal activity is also a result of the learning process in a community. Sutherland (1946) demonstrated that the professional thief did not experience the same learning process as a white-collar criminal (Sutherland, 1949). Thus, the community establishes the supportive environment which determines the behavior of individuals

within its sphere of influence. The models of action which the delinquent follows are part of the community's environment and supportive systems.

Support of the individual activity within a community may also be the result of a different milieu existing in the area than that found in the general society. Albert Cohen developed a theory of "delinquent subculture" which stated that lower class communities developed criminal activity as a result of their rejection of middle class value systems (Cohen, 1956). Walter Miller (1961) argued a similar position in that the subculture which existed in certain communities resulted from supportive systems of non-normative behavior. The value structure in both theoretical approaches focused upon an attitude that the community was both responsible for and supportive in the development of deviant behavior, at least deviant from the standpoint of the general society. Thus, criminal activity was a normal development within the context of each of the communities and any attempt to alter such behavior would necessarily be focused on the lower class communities.

The placement of a community in this lower class status may have been the result of unequal distribution of the means to obtain the societal goals. The cause of this distribution often is traceable to class distinctions which differentially affect ready access and control of the wealth and power (Marx, 1969). The relationship of this unequal distribution can lead to deviant behavior by those who are limited from obtaining what they feel are their rightful rewards (Bonger, 1938). An alternative description of the unequal distribution was presented by Robert K. Merton in his discussion of the social structure in the United States. He noted that lower class members had little access to legitimate means in their striving for societal goals. They were thus more likely to seek illegitimate means for goal at-

tainment (Merton, 1938). His approach was further developed by Cohen (1965) to be more applicable to actual data and redefined to include aspects not originally found in Merton's model by Harary (1966).

Though Merton did not directly apply his theoretical position to the community effects on the individual, Cloward and Ohlin successfully based their approach to delinquency and opportunity on Merton's work (Cloward and Ohlin, 1960). The community in which the individual was a member determined the opportunities available for the societal goals. Lower class areas offered fewer legitimate opportunities when compared to the middle or upper class communities. Thus, illegitimate behavior in individuals grew out of the community's position in the social structure. This position itself would be represented by the members of the community and could be measured by both the macroscopic indices of community position and prevalent life patterns.

Finally, the community values of rewards and punishments are expressed and implemented through the primary institutions of social control (Kobrin et al., 1972). The status position and functional utility of the individual is defined by the community and is based on the normative structure existing in society (Weber, 1958). Thus, the regulatory function of the control institutions are a clear expression of the norms of a society at a given time in a given community (Kobrin et al., 1972).

One implementation of an institutional norm is the definition of appropriate behavior (Durkheim, 1964; Erikson, 1962). This leads to the clarification of deviant behavior in a community. The reaction by an institution to act in its sphere of influence becomes of greater importance than the act itself. This phenomenon was first discussed by Frank Tannenbaum (1939) and further clarified by theorists in the 1950's and 1960's.

The interaction of the individual with the institutions of a community was presented by Edwin Lemert as a process of "secondary deviation"; this is a process by which community-defined responses are elicited from the individual who becomes socialized to this definition. He views himself as deviant and his life patterns and identity becomes organized around this definition. The "cost" incurred by the individual were he to alter the deviant identity is increased and his commitment to this life pattern becomes complete (Lemert, 1951).

Thus, the role of the community definition of deviance by its representative institutions becomes critical if a labeling process is to function. This does not imply that the commission of a crime is limited only to those acts officially recognized; self reported criminal acts have demonstrated that this is not the case (Gold, 1966; Nye and Short, 1957). But the interaction of the individual with the social control institutions may exemplify the patterns of what type of criminal activity and individual traits are related to the official sanction being imposed.

The importance of dealing with those individuals labeled deviant by the representative control institutions in society has been presented by a number of researchers in their investigations. Harold Garfinkel empirically supported this process in his consideration of the judicial system in the United States. He concluded that the community imposed a process of "degradation ceremony" on the individual resulting in his devaluation of self (Garfinkel, 1956). Jerome Skolnick (1966) studied the labeling process employed by the police in their daily work. The policeman's response to an "offender" followed patterns of definition which expressed the attitudes of the community of which he was a part. These biases were not peculiar to the individual policeman nor were they only the expression of the institution;

they were definitely the same biases held by the community for which he was a functionary (Skolnick, 1966; Hagan, 1972).

The labeling process appears to be occurring in the criminal justice system. However, there are a number of difficulties with the labeling approach. Gibbs (1966) criticism states that labeling theory may not be a theory at all, but a description of certain observable facts which leads to little constructive analysis. Reiss (1970) found difficulty in the labeling approach when he attempted to apply the theory to premarital sex. He found that although public attitudes concerning teenage sex were very strong, the "offenders" failed to adhere to a commitment that such actions were deviant. Finally, Akers (1973) commented that the greatest fault of labeling theory lies in the fact that the label does not create the behavior which may in fact insult the conscience of any society.

As the criticism has pointed out, the initial criminal act occurs without the initiation of a label. Yet subsequent criminal acts may be greatly affected because of the label imposed by the juvenile justice system. In his study, performed in Philadelphia over a 10 year period, Wolfgang (1972) followed a youth cohort through the ages of greatest susceptibility to the juvenile justice system and noted all official contacts that they had. He found that the severity of the criminal act greatly increased after the first official interaction of the youth with the juvenile justice system; he argued that the intervention after the first official sanction was vital in the diversion of youth from further or at least more serious criminal activity. Thus a possible relationship may exist resulting from the interaction of the youth with the social control institutions, although precise proof for this fact was not established by Wolfgang.

The position that the community milieu affects behavioral patterns of

individuals is definitely a sociological perspective. The expression of the community's values occurs both publicly, through its institutions for the preservation of the normative structure and privately, in the individual's acceptance of the role imposed upon him by community action.

PSYCHOLOGICAL MILIEU OF A COMMUNITY

The psychological approach to the existence of a community milieu has also been developed. Certain personality developments resulting from the environment and models of interaction are appropriate in a discussion of the community effects.

A number of psychological theories focus on the prevalent environmental conditions existing in a community. The psychoanalytic models of environmental effects find support in the work of August Aichorn (1965) who was a student of Freud. He developed an approach which stated that all actions of the individual are modified by a "reality principle" in their strivings to maximize pleasure and minimize punishment. This principle is the socially defined limits of appropriate action. Thus, the type of actions the individual performs will be within the boundaries of a realistic understanding of the community norms (Aichorn, 1965).

Other psychoanalytic models have followed a similar path to Durkheim's functional approach to crime. Robert Eissler (1949) pointed out that individuals may well be enticed by a community to commit crime so that their deviance will serve as a target for the community's aggressive urges. Karl Menninger (1968) developed the theme that the present "mishandling" of the criminal justice system is actually the community's expressed desire to maintain the level of criminal activity and to satisfy the general desire to exert punishment. Thus, programs designed by researchers to alter the present situation may be contrary to the wishes and needs of the community and will face stiff opposition by an otherwise helpful community. Alexander

and Staub (1956) further supported this position, adding that the demand for public punishment serves the inner needs of the members of a community to constructively express its aggression. This might in part explain the dogmatic support of capital punishment.

Unifying the psychoanalytic approaches, it appears that the community functions as a guiding force in directing the inner drives for maximization of pleasure and permitting acceptable avenues for the release of aggression. While there are a number of severe limitations to the psychoanalytic approach (Hall and Lindzey, 1970), one possible expression of inner drives may be found in marijuana prohibition. The use of alcohol is a socially permitted pleasure behavior even though it goes against many of the same "protestant ethic" values of self-control as marijuana (Becker, 1963). Yet marijuana use is strictly and often vindictively prohibited. Those using it are perhaps in a position which gives them little influence in the power structure of a community and thus they are least able to establish their position as the socially acceptable norm. But through this difference in enforcement for acts which appear to go against a commonly held value, the community can permit its pleasure principle and have a ready outlet for its aggressive tendencies.

Another approach to the psychological effects of the community comes from the ecological approach established by the Chicago School. The community could be viewed as the generating source of mental illness depending on its position in the social structure. Robert E. L. Faris and H. Warren Dunham developed this approach in their ecological study of schizophrenia in Chicago (Faris and Dunham, 1939). They found that rates of schizophrenia were high in areas which had high delinquency rates; i.e., the zones of transition. However, they concluded that the two rates were not similar in

that the personality types involved in delinquency were in no way similar to schizoid personality. The significant element in the generation of schizophrenia was the separation of the individual from intimate and sympathetic communications. This isolation was forced upon him due to the social disorganization of the community. Thus, the explanation of mental illness was based on individual experiences occurring in a particular social setting and varied according to the degree of isolation in a community.

Verification and clarification of the ecological approach followed in Schroeder's (1942) work which dealt with a number of urban areas. Dunham (1965; Dunham et al., 1966) later specified his position within the context of the nature of schizophrenia occurring within a class context which limited the opportunities of the individual. Faris (1955) qualified his position in stating that the measurement of official schizophrenics did not exactly specify the actual amount of psychopathology existing in an area.

Problems still persist with the ecological approach. Both the general criticism (Martindale, 1958) and those specific to the ecological approach to mental illness (Clausen and Kohen, 1954) remain. But this criticism does not invalidate the approach that a community may generate mental disorders, especially those officially recognized. The alienation or separation of the individual within a community may have a number of sociological sources. Gibbs (1962) concluded that official isolation (i.e., institutional commitments) increased in communities which had a high rate of social and cultural aliens. These were individuals who failed to fit into the prevalent social structure of a community, such as transients or low status persons in a high status community. Weschler and Pugh (1967) found that individuals with a particular personality characteristic who lived in a community where that characteristic was rare demonstrated higher rates of psychiatric hospit-

alization than those with "normal" community traits. Rushing (1971) measured the effects of explicit societal reactions to individuals through the court commitments to mental institutions. The community action through involuntary admissions was based on the social status of the individual in the community rather than his mental capacity to function. Thus, the institutions expressed the acceptable definitions of mental disorders of a community.

Finally, the labeling theorists have also dealt with the problem of mental illness. Erving Goffman presented his impressions of mental institutions in the light of their function of mortification and deculturation. The individual became defined by the institutions as deviant and through the control of the closed environment, he assumed the role in his attitudes and actions (Goffman, 1961). Scheff (1966) found empirical support for this notion in his study of mental institutions. The patients effectively assumed the role of mentally disturbed and maintained this attitude in the institution and out.

A number of authors have found some difficulty with the psychological approach to labeling theory similar to the sociological disagreements. Gove (1970) responded directly to Scheff's position, concluding that the labeling process of mental patients did not lead to a prolonged career of mental illness and may actually result in a healthier family environment for the recovery of the patient. Nettler (1974) further pointed to the fact that the definitions utilized in labeling theory failed to account for the possibility of a mental disorder existing outside of the definitions of society. Both of these criticisms have been answered by Scheff in later articles (Scheff, 1974; 1974a) emphasizing that the subject hardly appears settled.

Thus, the psychological determinants of behavioral patterns in a community exhibit a development similar to the social milieu of a community.

The creation and preservation of mental disorders in a community appears to be the result of the prevalent psychological definitions imposed by the institutions of social control and the environmental influences that determine such institutional actions.

UNITS OF ANALYSIS

The previous discussion has established a basis for the use of community in understanding deviance. But what do we mean by this specification of a unit of analysis? Are we interested in a neighborhood such as "Cornerville" (Whyte, 1943) or the comparison of nations in the political, social and economic community (Rummel, 1973)? The "best" unit of analysis will be dependent upon the availability of pertinent information, its consistency among the units, and a unit of analysis which will permit policy implications.

For these criteria the county in a state is a good unit of analysis. The first two conditions are concisely documented by Kobrin in his research of the criminal justice system in California (Kobrin et al., 1972). In this study, offence and disposition records were available on the counties permitting consistent units of analysis. This was the smallest unit of analysis obtainable without the loss of information or comparability.

In Illinois, a similar situation exists. The county is the smallest unit of analysis which permits concise evaluation and comparison. Information on the juvenile justice system in Illinois was collected in 1972 by a special survey of all the counties by Southern Illinois University under the direction of the Illinois Law Enforcement Commission. A researcher went into each county and "counted" the number of cases before the police, courts, and probation departments, thereby providing a comprehensive data source.

A third condition, a sound base for policy implications, is also met

by the use of county as the unit of analysis. The development of the theoretical understanding of the community constantly emphasized the role of the representative institutions of social control. They express, maintain, and reinforce the normative standards of the local social value structure (Skolnick, 1966; Wechsler and Pugh, 1967; Rushing, 1971; Kobrin et al., 1972). Differences in the application of justice in different counties may be an expression of the prevalent attitudes of the communities within its borders. At worst, we have an indication of the official actions of the existing legal system and at best we have an accurate measurement of the communities' desires within a geographic location on which we may base policy considerations. Since the actions of these institutions may also be based upon a very general perception of the values existing in a community, the author feels that the focus on the county as the unit of analysis can present a useful source of information and a pertinent foundation for an understanding of institutional actions.

The data base used for the analysis in the study consisted of thirty-nine of the one hundred and two counties in Illinois. Though some social information and all juvenile justice system statistics were available on all the counties, certain social and psychological information was only available on 39 counties. This extra information was from a survey of youth conducted by the Institute for Juvenile Research in 1972 and thus its inclusion into the analysis resulted in the reduction of cases. It was felt that the inclusion of this information enriched the analysis and that the counties chosen by the Institute for Juvenile Research were "representative" of all 102 counties in Illinois.

The information was acquired from three different sources in an attempt to obtain different perspectives on the same unit of analysis. The

survey information was collected by a self-administered questionnaire given to youth, ages 14 to 18, during the summer of 1972 by the Institute for Juvenile Research. Most of this information was recorded on Likert-scales of varying ranges (i.e., a response of '1' equivalent to 'never' and a response of '9' equivalent to 'always'). Each question was crosstabulated with the county and a description of the responses given in each unit of analysis was acquired. For each county, a mean value was calculated based upon the response pattern demonstrated. Thus, a variable which had a Likert range of '1' through '9' which had a mean response of 3.2453 for county 'A' indicated that the prevalent responses of youth in the county tended toward the lower range of the scale. The direction of the relationship of each of the variables is also noted (i.e., whether a higher value means greater agreement or less, and so on).

The information obtained by the survey of the juvenile justice systems in Illinois (ILEC) consisted of rates of arrest, court appearances, and incarcerations. The rates were calculated per ten thousand youth under the age of 18 years old. This was an attempt to localize the population parameter to what might be considered the affected population. Though the range may have been further specified, it was felt that both changes in the population base (which is based on the 1970 Census) and differences in the range of youth brought before the institutions (sometimes as young as age 9) would possibly overload or understate the rates of juvenile criminal statistics.

The Census information was obtained from the 1970 United States Census and the Illinois Fact Book 1972. Rates or percentages of the population were calculated for each of the variables. The information was taken 'as is' without any attempt at linear or other interpolation. Such attempts to update the information were thought unwise because of the variations which

might exist in growth and other changes within the 39 units of analysis within the state.

The analysis consisted of eight measurements of the juvenile justice system and 42 measurements of the social and psychological indicators of each community. A complete listing of the variables and the rationale behind their selection can be found in APPENDIX A of this work.

The choice of the community as the unit of analysis limits the approach to a discussion of the prevalent climate in a community and not the specific attitudes of its members. To equate correlations of communities to those of individuals would create an 'ecological fallacy' (Robinson, 1950). However, it may be possible to infer that the actions resulting from social processes in a community are the result of an aggregation of individual attitudes (Hammond, 1973). Since the juvenile justice system reflects the prevalent social and psychological milieu of a community, then its actions are expressions of the aggregation of attitudes and may present a useful picture in the understanding of the function of the institutions in the community.

METHOD OF ANALYSIS

As stated in the introduction, the paper will attempt to explain variation in the indices of a community's juvenile justice system using the tool of regression analysis. A justification seems appropriate for why variance explanation is important, the logic involved in 'ordering' of variables in the explanation, and the rationale for regression analysis instead of other statistical approaches to the problem of variance explanation.

A glance at the information available will quickly convince one that there are large ranges of values between the counties of any state. Population parameters, ethnic composition, criminal activity and so on demonstrate wide 'variability' among the units of analysis. The first question the researcher asks is whether or not certain variables 'vary' together; i.e., do the values of two or more variables increase, decrease, or some increase-some decrease together. This relationship can be statistically established by use of measurements which determine the amount of covariation and the significance of it. The significance is the determination of whether or not findings could have occurred by chance or whether or not the relationship does show a strong predictable result.

The second question the researcher asks is whether or not a 'causal' ordering of the variables can be determined. Is it possible that as one variable changes values another variable also changes (A causes B), yet the reverse case (B causes A) cannot or does not occur (Stinchcombe, 1968)? If the values of a community are expressed through the juvenile justice system, then it appears that the causal ordering of the milieu of the com-

munity affects the actions of the institutions. Thus the independent variables are those which characterize conditions of the community and the dependent variables are the measurements of actions of the juvenile justice system.

Finally, there are a number of statistical approaches frequently used by researchers for explaining variation.² The appropriate method of analysis is determined by the type of information available, the number of possible information sources, and the 'goals' of the investigator. The last condition raises some interesting questions. Do we find what we are looking for only because we seek it or does the validity remain in spite of the approach? The reader must settle this quandary himself, although the author believes that the development and conclusions of the present work demonstrates the method's validity.

Multiple regression analysis fits the conditions for an appropriate method of analysis. The data base on each community consists of interval measurements on the indicators of the juvenile justice system and the social and psychological conditions. Regression permits the association of more than one explanatory independent variable with a dependent variable and thus it is possible to determine multiple indices from different data sources on a single dimension. Finally, the 'goals' of explaining variance in the indices of a community juvenile justice system in terms of the prevalent social and psychological conditions of a community are met by this approach.

²The present discussion of statistical approaches to the research problem was developed through the author's familiarity with the following: Kerlinger (1962; 1973), Draper and Smith (1966), Van de Geer (1971), Nie et al. (1975), and classnotes taken with Norris Larson at Loyola University of Chicago.

Multiple regression analysis is a method for analyzing the effects of one or more independent variables on one dependent variable. We mathematically hypothesize that a linear model exists, with the independent variables 'causing' or explaining variance in the dependent variable. Then the actual data is fit to the model curve and statistically tested for closeness of fit. The more accurately the actual data is fitted into the model, the larger the amount of variance explained (Kerlinger, 1973).

A stepwise procedure was followed in this paper. In following this procedure, independent variables are entered into the equation by calculating their partial correlation coefficients with the dependent variables. A t-test is performed to determine whether or not each independent variable makes a significant contribution to the explanation in the dependent variable. If not, the variable is removed from the equation (Draper and Smith, 1966).

The values of Multiple R and the Beta Weight are presented as the pertinent measurement of the regression equation. Multiple R^2 is the amount of variance so far explained in the model. It is thus a cumulative measurement representing the amount of variance so far explained by the inclusion of the Nth variable. For example, the first variable may explain .37 of the variance in the dependent variable and the first and second variable explain .47. The second variable explains an additional 10 percent of the variance in the dependent variable.

The Beta Weight is the standardized partial coefficient. This is determined as an indicator of comparability among variables based upon different ranges of responses. The Beta Weight is also an indicator of the directionality effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. That is, a positive Beta Weight indicates that as the independent variable

increases, so does the dependent variable. Conversely, a negative Beta Weight indicates a decrease in the dependent variable as the independent variable increases.

The simple correlation of a single independent variable with the dependent variable is also presented. In multiple regression, this statistic has little importance to the interpretation and is presented only as an indicator of the singular importance of the variables to the dependent variables and not as an indicator of the importance of the model in explaining variance.

RESULTS

The calculations for the regression analysis were performed with the REGRESSION routine of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (1970) version 5.01 at Loyola University using the stepwise option of the program.

The dependent variables of the juvenile justice system will be presented in three parts: the Police, Court Hearings, and Court Disposition. Within each of these levels of the juvenile justice system a decision is made which leads to the release of the youth, referral of the youth to another authority (Family Planning, Health Care, etc.), or a continuation of the youth in the system. The severity of the sanction imposed and the possible labeling of the youth as deviant also increases if he continues past the initial police contact to final disposition in the courts (Kassebaum, 1974).

Another reason for looking at the three parts of the juvenile justice system separately is that each institution of social control imposes its own sanctions on the youth dependent upon that institution's perception of inappropriate behavior (Kobrin, et al., 1972). The explanatory variables of each of the decision points may function as indicators of the different prevalent community attitudes which each institution responds to. By looking at the parts of the juvenile justice system, then, it is hoped that certain community indicators which effect all the levels can be determined as well as those which have specific effects on its parts.

The discussion will focus on the independent social and psychological

variables which are associated with each of the dependent variables. The differences between each of the three parts of the juvenile justice system will also be discussed.

In presenting the results of the step-wise regression, the variables are presented in order of descending explanatory power. Variables are included into the analysis if the Multiple R change between the Nth variable and the N+1th variable is greater than .05 or until a minimum of .75 of the variance is explained.

The juvenile justice system variables will be discussed in terms of singular explanatory community indices such as 'social class' and multiple indices such as 'unemployment' and 'income.' The latter example is a combined indicator of poverty in a community. Although these multiple relationships have not been statistically specified through factor analysis or high intercorrelation coefficients, their combination results from 'common sense' interpretation of the explanatory variables.

The actions of the police in a community are indicated by the variables of station adjustment rate (STAT72), official arrest rate (ARRATE72), and the average number of self-reported arrests (PARREST). The self reported arrest variable is probably a combination of station adjustment and arrest, since the questionnaire did not ask the respondent to distinguish between the two legal definitions. These variables are not indices of the actual amount of deviance in a community since much of the criminal activity may go undetected or unenforced by the police. However, these variables do reflect the institutional function of the police and the moral structure of the community it represents.

The model expressed in the first equation of Table 1 accounted for .99 of the variance in the community variable of station adjustment. A

TABLE 1

REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF COMMUNITY VARIABLES OF THE POLICE
WITH
SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL INDICES OF A COMMUNITY

		MULTIPLE R	BETA WEIGHT	SIMPLE R
DEPENDENT	STAT72 Station adjustment rate			
INDEPENDENT	SOUTH	.726	.518	.726
	MUNEMP	.869	.435	.713
	FATHOCC	.960	.678	.388
	LONGHERE	.995	.309	.074
DEPENDENT	ARRATE72 Arrest rate			
INDEPENDENT	DEFY	.824	-.808	-.824
	REASONS	.896	.626	.453
	FATHOCC	.955	.441	-.048
	FARMS	.996	-.290	-.327
DEPENDENT	PARREST Average self-reported arrests scale			
INDEPENDENT	SOCCLASS	.435	.147	.435
	MALSCH	.548	.621	.330
	LIVPAR	.597	.520	.116
	RESIDE	.646	-.083	-.069
	FATOCST	.668	.432	.212
	DIVORCE	.696	-.466	-.255
	RACECOMP	.731	1.347	.116
	MOTOR	.763	-.962	.106

high rate of station adjustment was explained by community indices of increased poverty (SOUTH, MUNEMP) and average occupational success (FATHOCC). The association of both poverty and occupational success may indicate the urban nature of a community or possibly a conflict existing in the community's power structure.

The second model accounted for .76 of the variance in the community variable of official arrests. A high arrest rate was explained by community indices of a lower average parental concern for youthful defiance (DEFY) and parental attempts to explain punishment to youth (REASONS). Though these variables are not indices of the specific behavior of youth arrested, they indicate a higher average number of such situations occurring in a community. A prevalent milieu of permissiveness and poor communication may lead to weak internalization of community norms (McCord and McCord, 1958) or understanding of the norms (Hirschi, 1969).

Other community variables explaining a high community arrest rate are high average occupational status (FATHOCC) and a low percentage of farm-related business in a county (FARMS). These variables may indicate the urban nature of the community variable of high arrest rates.

The third model accounted for .99 of the variance in the community variable of average number of self reported arrests. A high average of arrests was explained by community indices of increased poverty (MALSCH, RESIDE, RACECOMP) and average social class (SOCCLASS, FATHOCCST). Again, poverty and social class are explanatory variables on actions of the police. The community variable of arrests is also explained by a lower incidence of familial disruptive conditions (LIVPAR, DIVORCE).

Thus, the number of police actions in a community are explained by community indices of poverty, urbanism, poor familial relations and fewer

familial disruptive conditions. The first two explanatory areas express the environmental conditions of a community and the variables of the family structure relate to the prevalent milieu of the youths' relations with parents.

The hearings of the juvenile court are indicated by the variables of average number of self reported unofficial hearings (UNOFHEAR), average number of self reported official hearings (OFICHEAR), and the official juvenile court appearance rate (JUV COURT). There are differences in the severity of offenses associated with the two levels of action by the court. Unofficial hearings are often employed by the courts in cases where the arrest itself was felt to be enough of a deterrent to the youth. On the other hand, the official hearing involves the court's decision that further processing is needed for the deterrent of the youth from criminal activity. Thus, differences between these two levels of severity may indicate the attitudes which the court expresses in enforcing the stricter approach in a community.

The model expressed in the first equation of Table 2 accounted for .76 of the variance in the community variable of average number of self reported unofficial hearings. A high average of unofficial hearings was explained by community indices of less severe juvenile criminal activity (BREAKIN, SIBTROB) and a lower incidence of familial disruptive conditions (LIVWITH). This association indicates that juvenile delinquency may be perceived as a growing-up process of youth (Bloch and Neiderhoffer, 1958) or as action which can be easily deterred by a minor sanction (Festinger, 1962). This perception of juvenile delinquency is less threatening to the community and leads to the less severe actions of the court. The reason the youth are before the court may be indicated by the demeanor of youth in the community

TABLE 2

REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF COMMUNITY VARIABLES OF COURT HEARINGS
WITH
SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL INDICES OF A COMMUNITY

		MULTIPLE R	BETA WEIGHT	SIMPLE R
DEPENDENT	UNOFHEAR	Average self-reported unofficial hearings scale		
	SIBTROB	.418	-.681	-.418
	BREAKIN	.558	-.621	-.261
	LIVWITH	.617	-.180	-.158
INDEPENDENT	TRUSTPOL	.653	.446	.252
	POLUNFAR	.729	-.486	.021
	OVCROWD	.759	-.453	-.119
DEPENDENT	OFICHEAR	Average self-reported official hearings scale		
	MALSCH	.379	.148	.379
	EXPECGAP	.486	.354	.209
	CRITIC	.578	.662	.337
	PARFAIR	.624	.485	.046
INDEPENDENT	DIVORCE	.659	.090	.044
	SIBTROB	.704	.107	.026
	MUNEMP	.731	.095	-.075
	MALWRK	.762	-.107	-.176
DEPENDENT	JUVCOURT	Juvenile court appearance rate		
	LESSPOV	.504	2.541	.504
	MAALONG	.573	.081	-.232
	GANGFIT	.625	-.862	-.172
INDEPENDENT	EXPECGAP	.669	.656	.231
	INFMORT	.712	.245	.423
	POLUNFAR	.749	.109	.198
	MUNEMP	.769	.616	.157

(TRUSTPOL, POLUNFAR) rather than a threatening milieu existing in a community.

The second model accounted for .76 of the variance in the community variable of average number of self-reported official hearings. A high average of official hearings was explained by community indices of increased poverty (MALSCH, EXPECGAP, MUNEMP, MALWRK), poor familial relations (CRITIC, PARFAIR), and a higher incidence of familial disruptive conditions (DIVORCE). As with police arrests, indices of poverty and familial relations are explanatory community variables of a higher incidence of severe court actions. There is a difference, however, in that familial disruptive condition is positively associated with a higher incidence of more severe court actions.

The third model accounted for .77 of the variance in the community variable of official juvenile court appearances. A high court appearance rate was explained by community variables of increased poverty (LESSPOV, INFORT, MUNEMP), poor familial relations (MAALONG), and more severe juvenile criminal activity (GANGFIT, SIBTROB).

Thus, there are different community variables which explain the different community indices of court hearings. The community variable of unofficial hearings was explained by indicators of a reduced 'threat' perceived by the community from juvenile delinquency. The community variables of official hearings were explained by community indices of a greater threat to the community due to poverty, family relations, and disruptive family conditions.

The final area of consideration is the disposition of youth convicted by the juvenile courts. The two indicators of disposition are official parole rate (PAROL72) and the official juvenile commitment rate (OFF2).

The case dismissal rate was not included because in some counties it did not exist. Juveniles who could have been found 'innocent' left the juvenile court by referrals to other agencies, release pending disposition and no disposition ever imposed, or by continuance under supervision. Thus, youth who 'made it' to the final disposition were a small percentage of those initially arrested.

Similar to the court hearings, the disposition of the court has two levels of severity. Parole places the youth back into the community under the supervision of the court whereas commitment to a juvenile institution removes the juvenile from the community and places him outside of the community for rehabilitative or punitive reasons. Thus, different explanatory community variables may indicate what prevalent social and psychological conditions existing in a community influence the court's decision.

The model expressed in the first equation of Table 3 accounted for .99 of the variance in the community variable of parole. A high parole rate was explained by community indices of stable residency of the population (LONGHEAR, RESIDE) and low average social class (SOCCLASS). The courts may perceive a stable community as an effective environment for the rehabilitation of youth and make greater use of the parole option. The lower class indicator of the community may represent the youth who 'make it' this far in the juvenile justice system.

The second model accounted for .93 of the variance in the community variable of juvenile incarceration. A high juvenile commitment rate was explained by community indices of poor familial relations (DEFY), increased poverty (MUNEMP, INCFAM), more severe juvenile criminal activity (FORCE), and a higher incidence of familial disruptive conditions (DIVORCE). As with the court hearings, community indices of poverty, juvenile criminal

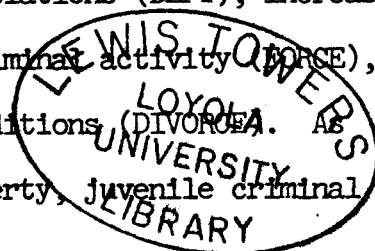


TABLE 3

REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF COMMUNITY VARIABLES OF COURT DISPOSITION
WITH
SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL INDICES OF A COMMUNITY

		MULTIPLE R	BETA WEIGHT	SIMPLE R
DEPENDENT	PAROL72 Parole rate			
INDEPENDENT	LONGHERE	.761	.809	.761
	SOCCLASS	.981	-.624	-.585
	RESIDE	.997	.186	.086
DEPENDENT	OFF2 Juvenile commitment rate			
INDEPENDENT	DEFY	.704	-.965	-.704
	MUNEMP	.793	.482	.256
	INCFAM	.835	.371	.015
	FORCE	.873	-.277	-.165
	RESIDE	.890	-.244	.129
	DIVORCE	.930	.504	.142

activity (FORCE), and a higher incidence of familial disruptive conditions (DIVORCE). As with the court hearings, community indices of poverty, juvenile criminal activity, and familial disruptive conditions may explain the more severe actions of disposition. The courts may interpret these environments as threatening to the community and not conducive to the rehabilitation of the youth. Incarceration is then employed for the protection of the community and the betterment of the youth.

Thus, the community indices of the three decision levels of the juvenile justice system demonstrate diverse explanations and some interesting consistencies. The more severe actions of the police, court hearings and court disposition were explained by community indices of poverty and poor familial relations. The severe actions of the court are also explained by indices of 'threat' to the community, i.e., indicators of familial disruptive conditions. This perception occurs inversely in the case of the police action, where a high arrest rate is explained by a low incidence of familial disruptive conditions.

Severe actions of the court are also explained by indices of more juvenile criminal activity. The perception of a threat may be an accurate one of the court in viewing more serious delinquency as a threat to the community. It is interesting that the community variables of juvenile criminal activity are not explanatory to the actions of the police. Indices of the youth's demeanor are explanatory of the police actions as well as the less severe actions of the court hearings, suggesting that the prevalent demeanor of the youth in a community may result in a higher incidence of official police response (Piliavin and Briar, 1964).

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The objective of the work has been to establish a social and psychological framework for a better understanding of the relationship between a community milieu and the juvenile justice system of a community. The application of a behavioral scientist's perspective to social action can present a sound information basis from which policy implications can be formulated (Coleman, 1972).

It appears that the courts base their findings on the prevalent family structures in a community. The police criteria for arrest follows a different pattern; community indices of a high arrest rate are explained by fewer single parent households and a lower divorce rate. Though the family structure variables are not measurements of separate families, the courts have information on the family life not available to the police at the time of arrest. If the community perceives family disruptive conditions as a 'threat' to its normative structure and the courts assume the prevalent attitudes of the community, then the courts may base their decisions on its perception of the community's attitudes and not on the equity or accuracy of the administration of justice. Therefore, the use of this information by the courts may be inappropriate, at least under conditions which do not permit more extensive investigation into the familial relations which are related to all the more severe actions of the police and the courts.

Another area for possible social action was youth-parent relations. Community indices of poor familial relations were the explanatory variables of each of the more severe actions of the juvenile justice system. This

suggests that a possible avenue of action may be the establishment of community services aimed at handling youth-parent relations. This service could be utilized by the police and the courts as a referral agency and by the community at large.

Finally, the juvenile justice system appears to react officially when there is a perceived 'threat' existing in a community. A greater incidence of police action was explained by the dichotomy of poverty and occupational success. Community indices of official court actions were explained by community indicators of gang activity, multiple offenders in families, and more single parent households. The community indicator of incarcerations was explained by community indices of poor parental relations, greater use of force and more single parent households. The less serious actions of the courts were explained by community variables which were less of a 'threat' to the community.

Thus, the entire juvenile justice system of an area appears to react more strongly when it perceives that the community is threatened by economic inequality, unstable family structures, and gang membership. The accuracy of this perception is crucial since the official sanctions of a community are based upon them. In the case of single parent households, the court's accurate perception is in question. A final implication of this work, then, is to call for further investigation of these perceptions and the validation or rejection of them in a community.

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APPENDIX A

Juvenile Justice System Variables

Police	STAT72	Station adjustment rate (ILEC)*
	PARREST	Average value on scale measuring arrests (IJR)*
	ARRATE72	Arrest rate (ILEC)
Court Hearings	UNOFHEAR	Average value on scale measuring unofficial hearings (IJR)
	OFICHEAR	Average value on scale measuring official hearings (IJR)
	JUVCOURT	Official juvenile court appearance rate (ILEC)
Court Disposition	PAROL72	Official parole rate (ILEC)
	OFF2	Official juvenile commitment rate (ILEC)

The variables at each level of the juvenile justice system represent two indices of severity: STAT72, UNOFHEAR, and PAROL72 indicate less severe actions whereas PARREST, ARRATE72, OFICHEAR, JUVCOURT, and OFF2 indicate more severe actions. Differences in the explanatory variables may indicate environmental conditions which the institutions of social control adhere to.

(ILEC) indicates information collected from the Illinois Law Enforcement Commission

(IJR) indicates information collected by the Institute for Juvenile Research

Social and Psychological Variables

Urbanism	POPSQ	Population per square mile (CEN)*
	OVCROWD	Units with gross overcrowding per 1000 units (CEN)
	RENTMO	Medium monthly rent for tenant occupied housing (CEN)
	FARMS	Percent of county business farm-related (CEN)
	MOTOR	Motor vehicles per 100 people (CEN)

Many studies (Chilton, 1964; Turner, 1969; Galle, et al, 1972) have equated indices of urbanism with criminal behavior. These variables are frequently used as such measurements (Boggs, 1965; Kasarda & Janowitz, 1974).

Poverty	LESSPOV	Percent of families with income less than the poverty level (CEN)
	RACECOMP	Percent of the population non-white in a county (CEN)
	SOUTH	Percent of the population born in southern states (CEN)
	INFMORT	Infants' deaths under 7 days old per 1000 live hospital births (CEN)
	INCFAM	Average family income (IJR)
	INCOME	Total personal income per capita (CEN)

Indices of poverty may result in the development of a subculture supporting criminal behavior (Cohen, 1956; Miller, 1958). The percent of the population non-white, southern born, and lower income may indicate poverty in a community (Schuessler, 1962; Chilton, 1964). A high infant mortality rate may indicate poor medical facilities which has been associated with poverty areas (Chilton, 1964).

(CEN) indicate the information collected from the 1970 U.S. Census of the Population

Opportunity	MUNEMP	Percent of male unemployment in a county (CEN)
	MALWRK	Percent of 16-17 year olds males in labor force (CEN)
	FMALWRK	Percent of 16-17 year olds females in the labor force (CEN)
	MALSCH	Percent of the 16-21 year olds males not in school or the labor force (CEN)
	PWCOFEMP	Percent of unemployment white collar (CEN)
	EXPECTGAP	Average difference between self-reported desired educational achievement and self-reported expected educational achievement

The opportunities present in a community may determine whether or not youth become delinquent (Cloward & Ohlin, 1960). The employment prospects (Bloom, 1966), the increased numbers of males without jobs or in school (Elliot, 1966), and the perceptions of educational possibilities (Hirschi, 1969) measures the opportunities present in a community.

Population Stability	OWNHOME	Percent of housing owner-occupied (CEN)
	RESIDE	Percent of population living in same house since 1965 (CEN)
	LONGHERE	Average number of years in residence in same house (IJR)

The stability of a community has been associated with indices of social organization and criminal activity (Karsarda & Janowitz, 1974; Boggs, 1965).

Social Class	SOCCLASS	Average social class (IJR)
	FATHOCC	Average occupational status of father (IJR)
	FATHOCCT	Average occupational status of family (IJR)

Social class has been associated with different treatment by the different levels of the juvenile justice system (Clark & Wenninger, 1962; Boggs, 1965).

Familial Relations

- FAALONG Average value on scale measuring relationship of youth with father (IJR)
- MAALONG Average value on scale measuring relationship of youth with mother (IJR)
- CRITIC Average value on scale measuring criticism of youth by parents (IJR)
- PARFAIR Average value on scale measuring the frequency of parental enforcement of rules (IJR)
- REASONS Average value on scale measuring the frequency of parents explaining reasons for punishment to youth (IJR)

These are imperfect indices of the prevalent milieu existing in a community. Poor relations and communications between parents and youth has been associated with a higher incidence of delinquent activity (McCord & McCord, 1958; Hirschi, 1969).

Familial Disruptive Conditions

- LIVPAR Percent of under 18 year olds living with both parents (CEN)
- DIVORCE Number of divorces per 1000 marriages per year (CEN)
- MALHEAD Number of households with male head (CEN)
- LIVWITH Average number of youth living with both parents (IJR)

Single-parent households have been considered a disruptive environment for adolescent youth (Bloom, 1966; Chilton, 1972) and may indicate cultural disorganization (Monahan, 1965; Goode, 1968).

Demeanor of Youth

- DEFY Average value on scale measuring parents' reaction to youthful defiance (IJR)
- TRUSTPOL Average value on scale measuring youthful trust of police (IJR)

POLUNFAR Average value on scale measuring if youth believe the police are unfair (IJR)

The demeanor of youth in a community may establish a prevalent milieu to which the juvenile justice system responds (Piliavin & Briar, 1964).

Juvenile
Criminal
Activity

TROUBLE Average value on scale measuring youth in trouble with police (IJR)

FISTFIT Average value on scale measuring youth in fisfights (IJR)

WEAPON Average value on scale measuring use of weapons (IJR)

BREAKIN Average value on scale measuring breakins by youth (IJR)

GANGFIT Average value on scale measuring gang activity (IJR)

FORCE Average value on scale measuring use of force by youth (IJR)

SIBTROB Average value on scale measuring criminal activity of a youth's brothers and sisters (IJR)

Studies have indicated that a greater extent of juvenile activity and greater severity of such activity may lead to greater response by the juvenile justice system to contain this 'threat' to a community (Goldman, 1963; Terry, 1967; Kassebaum, 1974)

APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by David J. Ross has been read and approved by the following members of his Committee:

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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 by the Committee with reference to content and form.

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

May 15 1975
date

Richard Block
Richard Block, Chairperson