

SELECTED RELATIONSHIPS OF PARENTS ON
INCIPIENT JUVENILE
DELINQUENCY

Thesis for the Degree of M. A.
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
Theodore A. Rottman
1956

SELECTED RELATIONSHIPS OF PARENTS ON
INCIPIENT JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

by
Theodore A. Rottman

AN ABSTRACT

Submitted to the College of Science and Arts
Michigan State University of Agriculture and
Applied Science in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Sociology and Anthropology

1956

Approved Charles R. Hoffer

7/24/52
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ABSTRACT

In order to investigate the potential impact of the family situation on the origin of juvenile delinquent behavior, a four year sample (1951-1954) of alleged delinquency cases was studied. These cases represented the entire number of boys and girls whose first and only court contact was before the Ingham County Juvenile Division of the Probate Court.

The general hypothesis of this study directed attention to the relationship between selected parental areas of relatively great potential conflict and selected juvenile characteristics that reflected the incipient aspect of anti-social behavior. The major parental areas selected were: (1) marital home structure, (2) nativity, (3) religious affiliation, and (4) formal educational attainment. For each area, a specific hypothesis was tested, namely that a situation of basic difference rather than basic similarity between the parents, as a relatively great potential conflict situation, would coexist with manifestations of incipient juvenile delinquency. Indices of incipient delinquency regarded as most significant were: (1) female sex, (2) relatively young age, and (3) reasons for referral reflecting a disturbed parent-child relationship within the home. Thus, a disproportionate concentration of juvenile cases that were of female sex, relatively young age, or

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home conflict reasons for referral, if concentrated in a parental area of broken home, mixed nativity, mixed religious affiliation, or different levels of formal educational attainment represented evidence in support of the general hypothesis. If, on the other hand, such incipient delinquency cases were found to be disproportionately concentrated in the parental area of unbroken home, similar nativity, similar religious affiliation, or similar level of educational attainment, such data tended to refute the general hypothesis.

Of the four major parental areas tested for each of the three juvenile characteristics, a Chi-square test applied to measure the impact of precipitating home factors on incipient delinquency revealed significance (5 per cent level) in four instances. One of these tended to support the mixed religious affiliation hypothesis (according to reason for referral). Two others tended to support the broken home hypothesis (for sex and reason for referral). A more specific breakdown of the broken home area and the formal educational attainment area was also conducted. In the former, the one statistically significant relationship tended to refute the hypothesis (by age).

While not statistically significant, the percentage difference for all major parental areas (as well as for two

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of three sub-areas) was directionally consistent. Percentage differences for the parental areas of broken home, mixed religious affiliation, and different formal education level tended to favor all three characteristics of incipient delinquency without exception. Conversely, the parental area of mixed nativity tended to refute the hypothesized relationship for each of the three incipient juvenile delinquent characteristics.

In general, the consistency of direction found in this research should contribute to any study of the descriptive and definitive nature of juvenile delinquency that seeks to determine the impact of the family institution on initial manifestations of deviant behavior.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to express his appreciation to Dr. Orden Smucker, whose valuable supervision was responsible, to a great extent, for this study. He also wishes to extend special thanks to Dr. Charles R. Hoffer for his general interest and pertinent suggestions which were a constant source of guidance and stimulation. His untiring assistance was never lacking. To Dr. Joel Smith the author is indebted for advice pertaining to statistical matters. Grateful acknowledgment is likewise given to Dr. Charles P. Loomis, Head of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, and to all other members of the department who, in ways too numerous to mention, contributed considerably to this project.

Sincere thanks and appreciation are extended to the Honorable Judge John C. McClelland and to County Agent Byron Fodor, not only for the initial permission to study the Ingham County Juvenile Court case records, but also for the efforts they and their cooperative staff extended in making uniform and complete investigation possible.

The author also wishes to express his gratitude and general indebtedness to his wife, Ellen Vander Brug Rottman, without whose abiding devotion, patience, and at times forbearance, this study could not have been finished.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Nature and Description of Problem

The general aim of this investigation is to describe and define incipient juvenile delinquency as related to certain parental areas of conflict within the institutional setting of the family.

The very enduring nature of the family has been an historic testimony of its prominent place in the life of mankind. The analogy has been made that

Even as the cell is the unit of the organic body, so the family is the unit of society. The ultimate harmony is the harmony of the enduring individualities joined in the unity of a common frame of reference.¹

The significance of this social institution as an influence upon man's behavior has been recognized by scientist and layman alike. Mere acknowledgment of the importance of the family, however, must not obscure the wide variations that exist within its structural and functional areas. Although limitations imposed by cultural relativity rendered invalid any sweeping generalizations concerning

¹Ruth Anshen, The Family: Its Function and Destiny. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949, p. 3.

the impact that the family, per se, might have on social behavior, it remained advantageous to conduct a carefully delineated study of the family from an intra-cultural viewpoint. Such an approach allowed for a study of deviation from, as well as conformity to, socially defined behavior patterns.

The family institution presented a common ground for such an analysis. Within it, deviation from cultural norms and standards has been the focal point for many significant studies of human behavior. This has been especially true for the deviant behavior of adolescents. Such behavior represents not only external expression in the home situation, but also internal socialization of behavior patterns.

Neumeyer's observation might be taken as representative of the faith that social scientists in the United States have displayed regarding the family's socialization potential. He stated:

The condition of the family and what goes on in family life are of great importance to a growing child. The life organization and character of the person take their first and often permanent form under the impress of the family culture heritage. The family is the first great training school in behavior or misbehavior. It is the chief socializing agent, but it may produce antisocial traits.²

The character and quality of home life is hard to define objectively because it has many and varied facets of

²Martin H. Neumeyer, Juvenile Delinquency in Modern Society. Philadelphia: D. Van Nostrand Co., Inc., 1949, p. 112.

influence upon the child. The broad inclusive aspect of parent-child relationships has been regarded as an influential determinant of juvenile behavior.³ Noting the possible conflict inherent in such a relationship, Davis specifically associated juvenile behavior with this area when he stated that "since sociological differences between parent and child are inherent in family organization, they constitute a universal factor potentially capable of producing conflict."⁴

Yet, parent-child emphasis alone leaves the origin of the learning experience undefined and unclarified in terms of the socializing effects of the home on a juvenile delinquent. A more critical investigation of possible conflict aspects within the family organization is required to see if juvenile delinquency can be traced beyond parent-child conflict to possible conflict areas between parents. The legitimacy for such an investigation of sociological dif-

³For a review of the empirical contributions to the sociology of parent-child interaction see Ivan Nye, "Adolescent-Parent Adjustment--Socio-Economic Level as a Variable." American Sociological Review, 16 (June, 1951), pp. 341-342. A more socio-psychological analysis is contained in (James S. Plant, Personality and the Cultural Pattern. New York: The Commonwealth Fund, 1937, Chap. 7, pp. 163-197.)

⁴Kingsley Davis, "The Sociology of Parent-Youth Conflict." American Sociological Review, 5 (August, 1940), p. 529.

ferences between parents in a study of juvenile behavior was seen by Groves. She reasoned that "since parents affect their children by the serenity or confusion of their own adjustment to each other, it is time well spent to try to arrive at the husband-wife understanding and tolerance which brings peace of mind to all family members."⁵

Review of Relevant Literature

The marital relations approach to family problems has been viewed from numerous perspectives, many not directly related to juvenile delinquency. Angell, in studying the possible effects of a decrease in occupational income upon the family, constructed isolated family types with characteristic qualities of reaction by which to measure the possible social effects of the depression.⁶ More specifically concerned with parent-parent relationships were Terman,⁷ Burgess and Cottrell,⁸ and Locke.⁹ Although their approach

⁵Gladys H. Groves, Marriage and Family Life. Cornwall, New York: Cornwall Press, 1942, p. 336.

⁶Robert C. Angell, The Family Encounters the Depression. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936.

⁷Lewis Terman and associates, Psychological Factors in Marital Adjustment. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1938.

⁸Ernest W. Burgess and Leonard S. Cottrell, Predicting Success or Failure in Marriage. New York: Prentice-Hall, 1939.

⁹Harvey J. Locke, Predicting Adjustment in Marriage: A Comparison of a Divorced and a Happily Married Group. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1951.

could not be termed a strictly sociological one, they included many social background factors in their attempt to predict future marital success and happiness for specific partners. Briefly stated, their study procedure consisted of initially selecting criteria for success in marriage. On the basis of an analysis of sample cases they chose items assumed to be predictive of adjustment or maladjustment in the marriage relationship.¹⁰ Jacobson, in another context, sought to analyze empirically differences in the attitudes toward marital roles between spouses. He took into account differential attitudes expressed by married couples on the one hand and divorced couples on the other hand. On the basis of a constructed attitude scale he attempted to measure the difference in the attitudes of the husband and the wife toward their marital roles. Statistically significant differences were found to be related to both sex and marital status.¹¹

Many studies of marital relations have been conducted that are concerned more directly with juvenile delinquency.

¹⁰Later, Weeks included marital factors in an attempt to predict juvenile delinquency. By means of predictive tables he tried to indicate the probabilities of juveniles' becoming delinquent when certain social factors are present in their backgrounds. See H. Ashley Weeks, "Predicting Juvenile Delinquency," American Sociological Review, 8 (February, 1943), pp. 40-46.

¹¹Alver H. Jacobson, "Conflict of Attitudes toward the Roles of the Husband and Wife in Marriage," American Sociological Review, 17 (April, 1952), pp. 146-150.

A survey of the early empirical studies that have been conducted revealed a predominant, almost exclusive, concern with the physical, external phenomenon of the broken home apart from any possible influences that may have been operative within the marital structure. These statistical studies paralleled the origin and growth of the juvenile court movement in the United States. Already in 1903, only four years after the legislature of the state of Illinois enacted the first juvenile court law, Breckinridge and Abbott made a study of the marital situation of the parents of children brought before the Cook County Juvenile Court on delinquency petitions.¹² Similar studies, although differing in the selection of a control group and the definition of juvenile delinquency, were conducted by Slawson,¹³ ~~Healy and Bronner,~~¹⁴ Shideler,¹⁵ ~~Sullenger,~~¹⁶ Bushong,¹⁷

¹²Sophonisba Breckenridge and Edith Abbott, The Delinquent Child and the Home. New York: Charities Publication Committee, 1912.

¹³John Slawson, The Delinquent Boy. Boston: The Gorham Press, 1926.

¹⁴William Healy and Augusta Bronner, Delinquents and Criminals. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1926.

¹⁵E. H. Shideler, "Family Disintegration and the Delinquent Boy in the United States," Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology, 8 (January, 1918), p. 715.

¹⁶T. Earl Sullenger, Social Determinants in Juvenile Delinquency. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1936.

¹⁷Eugene M. Bushong, "Family Estrangement and Juvenile Delinquency," Social Forces, 5 (September, 1926), pp. 79-83.

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and numerous others.¹⁸ All believed that the broken home was the chief cause of juvenile delinquency. Viewed as a whole, the ~~six~~ studies listed above show a concentration of delinquents from broken homes in a ratio that ranges from 2:1 to over 3:1 when the experimental groups of delinquents studied were compared to non-delinquent control groups.¹⁹ The actual percentage of broken homes in the delinquent groups varied from 43.3 per cent to 50.7 per cent, the mean being 46.9 per cent.²⁰ The results of the English study by Burt added cross-cultural significance to the broken home aspect of juvenile delinquency studies.²¹ Even though he delved more deeply into the numerous possible converging and contributing causes of juvenile delinquency, the broken

¹⁸A large number of studies concerned with the social effects of the broken home on juvenile delinquency have been reviewed by Manuel C. Elmer, Family Adjustment and Social Change. New York: J. J. Little and Ives Co., 1932, pp. 173-199.

¹⁹Such a variation in broken home rates can be explained, at least in part, by the differences in the way the delinquent population was delimited. For instance, Shideler studied institutionalized delinquents while Bushong used juvenile court cases for his study group. The latter found a much greater percentage of broken homes, as might be expected from a study that did not exclude neglect or dependency cases. Such cases, by their very nature are often the direct consequence of the broken home.

²⁰Here again, at least part of the variation can be explained by selective factors, as seen by the different control groups that were used. These varied from census estimates to matched control groups.

²¹Cyril Burt, The Young Delinquent. New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1925.

home statistics of his study stand out. Almost two and one-half (2.4) times as many children from the delinquent population as from the non-delinquent control group came from broken homes. In fact, 57.9 per cent of the experimental group came from homes that, for one reason or another, were structurally incomplete. These findings must be tempered with the fact that the structurally incomplete home included the "only child" as one of its legitimate categories.

In later years, researchers have become increasingly aware of the inadequacy of any one factor analysis of juvenile delinquency--even within the external marital structure area. The work of Shaw and McKay was primarily responsible for minimizing any absolute importance previously attributed to the externally broken home.²² While not negating the pioneering efforts of previous students of the problem, Shaw and McKay de-emphasized the social significance of the broken home on delinquency except as it embraced underlying social factors. The basis for their study was a comparison of 1,675 adjudged delinquent boys from Cook County, Illinois, with a like number of boys

²²Clifford R. Shaw and Henry D. McKay, "Social Factors in Juvenile Delinquency," in Report on the Causes of Crime, No. 13, Vol. II, Washington, U. S. National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement, 1931.

matched for age, race, and nationality from 29 Chicago public schools. The broken home rate was computed for each group from previously collected data giving the incidence of broken homes among 7,287 unselected school boys. Their findings led them to the conclusion that it is not so much the break in family membership as it is the cumulative effect of internal tension and discord that operates as a causative factor in delinquency.²³

As methods of scientific inquiry are constantly becoming more refined, increasingly social scientists become hesitant in attributing unqualified significance to the externally broken home or to any other one variable as an explanation of juvenile behavior.

Such qualification did not nullify the significance of the relationship between the broken home and juvenile delinquency. On the contrary, it necessitated a more intensive investigation within the broken home area. Shulman, in a discussion of Shaw and McKay's study, stated the necessity of maintaining socially distinct and separate subcategories within the broken home if its true significance was to be established.²⁴

²³Ibid., p. 285.

²⁴Harry M. Shulman, Discussion of "Are Broken Homes a Causative Factor in Juvenile Delinquency?" Social Forces, 10 (May, 1932), pp. 529-530.

Theoretical concern for a more intensive analysis of the different socially influential conflict components that make up the broken home category was stressed by Kvaraceus.²⁵ He saw as crucial to the proper understanding of the relationship between the broken home and the delinquent behavior of its members, an analysis of differential influences presented by diverse types of broken homes. Goode,²⁶ Shulman,²⁷ and Neumeyer²⁸ likewise have given verbal support for including these intra-broken home variables in a study of juvenile delinquency. Their concern in the broken home area represented but one aspect of their overall concern with juvenile delinquency as related to the home structure, irrespective of external or legal characteristics. Although ~~these~~ and other writers reached a general consensus of opinion concerning the varied family influences upon juvenile delinquency, their concepts of normalcy and marital compatibility differed. Consequently, many divergent opinions were expressed regarding the amount of emphasis that

²⁵William C. Kvaraceus, Juvenile Delinquency and the School. Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York: World Book Co., 1945.

²⁶William J. Goode, "Social Engineering and the Divorce Problem," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 272 (November, 1950), pp. 86-94.

²⁷Harry M. Shulman, "The Family and Juvenile Delinquency," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 261 (January, 1949), pp. 21-31.

²⁸Martin H. Neumeyer, op. cit., pp. 118-119.

should be placed on the external break in the home relationships per se. One of the first extensive empirical studies which recognized the broken home factor, and at the same time sought to analyse different parental influences within it, was the Gluecks' One Thousand Juvenile Delinquents.²⁹ Previous to this study, in 1925, Lumpkin³⁰ began an intensive study of the distribution of Wisconsin institutionalized girl delinquents from both broken and unbroken homes. She concentrated her investigation on the marital status of the natural parent in custody of the child at the time of its institutionalization. Homes characterized by remarriages were assumed to have a different environmental influence on the children within them than were those in which the custodial parent had never remarried (which in turn were assumed to be different from those which were never broken). Merrill's later work³¹ is added evidence of the increasing significance with which students of juvenile delinquency held remarriage situations and other relatively hidden influences at work within the broken home.

²⁹Sheldon and Eleanor T. Glueck, One Thousand Juvenile Delinquents. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1934.

³⁰Katharine Du Pre Lumpkin, "Factors in the Commitment of Correctional School Girls in Wisconsin," American Journal of Sociology, 37 (September, 1931), pp. 222-230.

³¹Maud A. Merrill, Problems of Child Delinquency. Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1947.

A more recent study of the Gluecks, Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency,³² included numerous broken and nonbroken home variables in a multi-causal approach to juvenile delinquency. It has shown that the broken--nonbroken home dichotomy may be retained, but only as one aspect from which to penetrate into the "more subtle aspects of the under-the-roof environment."³³

Reiss' observations on the marital status of parents of recidivists in delinquent populations³⁴ penetrated the marital structure differences, yet did not emphasize them to the exclusion of more subtle marital differences. Although he found that "delinquents from families where there is a formal break in the structural unity tend to be recidivists more often than delinquents where parents are living together," absence of such a break "does not necessarily mean that the socio-psychological unity of the family is intact."³⁵ Lack of socio-psychological unity, as measured by the character of the marital relationships between par-

³²Sheldon and Eleanor T. Glueck, Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950.

³³Ibid., Chapter VIII, "Home Conditions of Delinquents When Selected for Research," pp. 79-92.

³⁴Albert J. Reiss, Jr., "Delinquency as the Failure of Personal and Social Controls," American Sociological Review, 16 (April, 1951), pp. 196-207.

³⁵Ibid., p. 198.

ents was found to be associated more closely with recidivism than with an open breach in the marital structure.³⁶

Theoretical contributions have helped to clarify the nature and significance of cultural change and conflict. Among those which held that cultural factors have greater impact on socialization and deviancy than the external broken home situation were the works of Mowrer,³⁷ Waller,³⁸ Truxal and Merrill,³⁹ Groves and Groves,⁴⁰ Nimkoff,⁴¹ and Burgess and Locke.⁴²

Purpose of Study

Although the institution of the American family has been studied recurrently in relation to the incidence of juvenile delinquency, empirical findings revealed a general

³⁶Loc. cit.

³⁷Harriet R. Mowrer, Personality Adjustment and Domestic Discord. Chicago: American Book Co., 1935.

³⁸Willard Waller, The Family: A Dynamic Interpretation. New York: Dryden Press, 1938.

³⁹Andrew G. Truxal and Francis E. Merrill, The Family in American Culture. New York: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1947.

⁴⁰Ernest R. and Gladys H. Groves, The Contemporary American Family. Chicago: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1947.

⁴¹Meyer F. Nimkoff, Marriage and the Family. Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1947.

⁴²Ernest W. Burgess and Harvey J. Locke, The Family. New York: American Book Co., 1953.

lack of clarity or unity regarding family influence. Especially was this true in the area of marital relations where, in the search for cause, the definitive background seemed lacking.

This thesis represents an attempt to clarify and redefine certain parental relationships that have been established empirically, either directly or indirectly, as influential in juvenile delinquency. All possible family causes of juvenile delinquency were not investigated. As Reckless and Smith have recognized, it is impossible to include all relevant home factors in any such study. They pointed out that

Not all children are adjusted similarly to home and social laws. Not all homes have their standards matched to the standards of society. Some children are adjusted to "unsatisfactory" homes. Some are unadjusted to "satisfactory" homes. To account for all delinquency on the basis of the character of the home, adjustment would have to vary.⁴³

The general significance assigned to the externally broken home in almost every detailed study of delinquency demanded its inclusion in this study. Its relationship to juvenile delinquency served as a launching point from which to search more deeply into parental differences, and not as an area of unqualified innate significance. For "broken threads in the tangled skein of family relationships are as

⁴³Walter Reckless and Mapheus Smith, Juvenile Delinquency. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1932, p. 129.

important as, if not more important than, physical breaks in family structure, are usually antecedent to physical breaks, and contribute largely to delinquency."⁴⁴

With the external nature of the broken--nonbroken home dichotomy in mind, an attempt was made to penetrate it by relating juvenile delinquency to the theory of cultural conflict as manifested in certain relationships between the parents of the delinquents. Such factors were assumed to be more intrinsically related to the real problem of juvenile delinquency than the surface factor of the broken home. Burgess has noted that "divorce and juvenile delinquency are only symptoms of underlying disturbances and conflicts in family relations. They are the legal evidence of the instability of the modern family and of the discord and unhappiness of its members."⁴⁵ Too often studies have been made of the differences in background between spouses without reference to the cultural significance of the conflict involved. What then would a statistical intra-group study of alleged juvenile delinquency reveal in terms of social conflict within the areas of parental marital status, na-

⁴⁴Harry M. Shulman, "The Family and Juvenile Delinquency," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 261 (January, 1949), p. 28.

⁴⁵Ernest W. Burgess, The American Family. Menasha, Wisconsin: George Banta (Unit 7 of the National Education Association publication, "Problems in American Life"), 1942, p. 10.

tivity, religious affiliation, and formal educational attainment? Although there has been general consensus that these areas of possible parental conflict are somehow related to the incidence and nature of juvenile delinquency, few attempts have been made to relate this conflict to specific differences that might exist in the alleged delinquent population.

The present investigation was based on the theory that juvenile delinquency was caused, at least in part, by the home environment. While an attempt was made to relate delinquency to specific causal elements, the primary purpose remained; namely, to uncover associations and constellations that help define the relationship between situations of possible parental conflict and juvenile delinquency. To accomplish its purpose, such a study should aid in the establishment of a basis upon which causal studies can be conducted in a more orderly manner.

To express the purpose of this delinquency study as an attempt primarily at description and clarification was not to render it devoid of sociological significance. On the contrary, the writer deemed an intra-group investigation of delinquents necessary in order to uncover certain real and apparent relationships between parental home environment situations and juvenile characteristics. As indicators of the frequency and concentration of similarities as well as

differences that existed within specific areas of possible home conflict, the sex, age, and reason for referral of each alleged delinquent was analysed in terms of its incipient nature.

In summary, then, the purpose of this thesis was to make an analysis of alleged juvenile delinquents in Ingham County, Michigan, in terms of their home environment. To do this it became necessary 1) to make an analysis of the variations, and hence potential conflict, that existed between the parents in the areas of home structure, nativity, religious affiliation, and education, and 2) to determine the relationships of these variations to such juvenile characteristics as the sex, age, and reason for referral to juvenile court.

Delimitation of Study and Definition of Terms

It now became essential to see in what way the stated purpose aided in the delimitation of a legitimate area of investigation. Since etiology was not the primary concern of this study, research methods were at variance with those usually employed in causal analysis. For example, no strict control group of non-delinquents was employed for the alleged juvenile delinquent population on which this study was based. None was needed to clarify the areas of possible conflict within the alleged delinquent population. Thus any

conclusions made on the basis of this investigation can be viewed as primarily definitive and not explanatory. The nature of the study universe negated the significance that any strict control group might have. It is important to note that characteristics of alleged delinquents were not thought of as being diametrically opposed to those of non-delinquents, other factors being held constant. Rather, their incipient nature was viewed only in terms of possible future consequences; namely, that this initial contact with the law was an indicator of continued delinquent behavior.

In a study of 1,000 boys alleged to be delinquent by the Boston Juvenile Court, the Gluecks stated that

In respect to many of the features of this picture, data regarding the general population are not available for comparison. This does not, however, affect the need of taking the unwholesome background of our delinquent boys into account in defining the task which faces the clinic, court, and social agencies.⁴⁶

This did not deny the fact that perhaps the chief obstacle to etiological studies has been the absence of reliable comparable data.

A more basic reason for not using a control group was precisely to yield more knowledge concerning the factors that many control groups have sought to hold constant in causal studies. The Gluecks, for instance, recognized the

⁴⁶ Sheldon and Eleanor T. Glueck, One Thousand Juvenile Delinquents. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1934, p. 83.

limits imposed by a control group, even though they necessarily selected a rigid one in their causal study, Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency. They noted that "a comparative study of delinquents who have been paired with non-delinquents in respect to certain factors can throw little light on the very factors that have been controlled."⁴⁷

Rigid limits to the present investigation were set up before any attempt at clarification or redefinition of the incipient characteristics of the intra-group study was made. Therefore it was necessary to set the boundaries of inquiry regarding the problem at hand. This was done by setting up the parental categories of marital status, nativity, religious affiliation, and formal educational attainment.

To attempt delimitation for an area as illusive in nature as juvenile delinquency presented many problems. To be sure, it was possible to attack the problem from only a limited perspective at any point in time. The present study concerned itself with sex, age and behavioral characteristics of alleged juvenile delinquents (as associated with the assumed socially significant marital status, nativity, religious, and educational relationships of their parents). These may be thought of as juvenile delinquent

⁴⁷Sheldon and Eleanor T. Glueck, Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950, p. 15.

subgroups as the Gluecks have defined them in Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency:

It may be well to emphasize that in the present volume we view delinquents as well as non-delinquents as a unitary class. This does not mean that we fail to recognize that there may be clearly definable subgroups among both delinquents and non-delinquents.⁴⁸

All statistical studies of juvenile delinquency possess certain intrinsic problems. Data contrasting delinquents who have been apprehended with the rest of the population of comparable age should not be superficially interpreted.⁴⁹ Barron, in summarizing the major shortcomings that critics of delinquency statistics see, classified them as follows:

1. Ambiguity and lack of uniformity in legal definitions.
2. Variables in the exposure, detection, and apprehension of children.
3. Variables in police administration.
4. Variables in court practices.
5. Variables in institutional intake.⁵⁰

Robinson,⁵¹ after an attempt to establish a statistically

⁴⁸Loc. cit.

⁴⁹Raymond G. Kuhlen, The Psychology of Adolescent Development. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952, p. 363.

⁵⁰Milton L. Barron, The Juvenile in Delinquent Society. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1954, pp. 42-44.

⁵¹Sophia M. Robinson, Can Delinquency Be Measured? New York: Columbia University Press, 1936.

significant causal relationship between family background characteristics and a group of delinquents from New York City, went so far as to question seriously whether juvenile delinquency will ever be satisfactorily measured.

Every study must be controlled by specific definition and delimitation, resulting from a purpose that is congruent with the methods used in attaining it. Possible selectivity factors must also be kept well in mind.

A juvenile delinquent, as defined by this study, was a minor under seventeen years of age against whom the first petition, alleging him to have committed some legally defined delinquent act in Ingham County while a resident there, was filed in the Juvenile Division of the probate court sometime within the years 1951 through 1954; and that such allegation carried sufficient evidence in the eyes of the agents of said court to justify the petition.⁵² Thus

⁵²This excluded all unofficial court cases (those in which either the judge or some other legal official, such as a probationary or police officer, adjusted the case). The unofficial cases for which there were written records were, as a rule, kept in separate files. The others were easily identifiable. Cases excluded from the official court case files were done so for the following reasons: "Petitioner withdrew own petition" (5 cases), "Petition waived to county of jurisdiction" (5 cases), "Boy's Vocational School pre-release investigation" (12 cases), "Supervision for agency or court outside of county" (2 cases), "Waived from other counties" (1 case), "Insufficient evidence to substantiate allegation" (4 cases), and "Allegation proved false" (3 cases). The following cases were retained although data for them were incomplete: "Situation straightened itself out" (3 cases) and "Age waiting period" (2 cases).

the term "juvenile delinquency" as used in this research was not viewed in an absolute sense but rather in the sense of a problem as defined by Fuller and Myers: "A social problem is a condition which is an actual or imagined deviation from some social norm cherished by a considerable number of people."⁵³

Kvaraceus has made the observation that

Most studies of juvenile delinquency are based on "adjudged delinquents." This fact has constituted a serious obstacle in delinquency and criminological research. Many scholarly research projects have had to qualify their findings because they were based upon the study of selected groups of delinquent children, and hence perhaps not representative of delinquent or pre-delinquent children in the mass.⁵⁴

His statistical investigation of certain characteristics of children who were referred to the Passaic Children's Bureau, on the other hand, gave him the "opportunity of accumulating facts about children on the 'fringes' of delinquency as well as about those whose conduct may be said to represent the 'core' of the delinquency problem."⁵⁵

Barron agreed that court statistics were superior to institutional statistics as a basis for an index of juvenile delinquency, even though cases could not be counted so

⁵³Richard C. Fuller and Richard R. Myers, "Some Aspects of a Theory of Social Problems," American Sociological Review, 6 (February, 1941), p. 25.

⁵⁴William C. Kvaraceus, op. cit., pp. 30-31.

⁵⁵Loc. cit.

easily or accurately. His reason was that, "the value of a crime or delinquency rate as an index decreases as the distance from the acts of crime or delinquency themselves, in terms of procedure, increases."⁵⁶

In this study, cases of alleged delinquents were used to indicate certain delinquency characteristics of an incipient nature. The home was regarded as a chief socializing agent,⁵⁷ and as such should have an effect upon the children within it. Sutherland has stated that "homes in which delinquents are reared are in an extra-ordinary degree situations in which patterns of delinquency are present."⁵⁸ Regarding non-delinquents, on the other hand, Merrill found that

their relationships with their parents with respect to parental discipline and affection were less critical and resentful, and their attitudes toward home, evaluated in terms of home-centered interests and activities, showed significantly greater tendency to find their satisfactions at home.⁵⁹

The transition from a discussion of the significance of parental conflict to a method of its measurement was a

⁵⁶Milton L. Barron, op. cit., p. 44.

⁵⁷See any standard Family textbook for an elaboration of the significance of the home as a transmitter of socially acceptable and non-acceptable behavior patterns.

⁵⁸Edwin H. Sutherland, Principles of Criminology. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1947, p. 158.

⁵⁹Maud A. Merrill, op. cit., p. 72.

difficult one. Such was easier when the conflict was viewed first in its social setting, apart from persons or personalities.

The scheme of social processes and distances, central in the theoretical works of von Wiese, presented conflict as the most extreme process of "dissociation" (as contrasted with "association").⁶⁰ As such, it not only signified the greatest social distance between parties, but also implied an "increase of definitely antagonistic activity."⁶¹ Although von Wiese believed open conflict to be the most extreme and distinct form of dissociation, he did not limit by any means all conflict processes to this evident form.⁶²

To bridge the gap between the knowledge of the existence of conflict and an index of its actual degree in any specific situation, von Wiese would agree, was impossible. He saw the difficulty of trying to classify concrete inter-human relationships into one category or another, because

⁶⁰For a theoretical treatment of von Wiese's major works, the reader's attention is directed to J. Milton Yinger, Chap. XII, "The Systematic Sociology of Leopold von Wiese: The Origin and Structure of Interhuman Relations," in Harry Elmer Barnes (Ed.), An Introduction to the History of Sociology. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948, pp. 274-284.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 278.

⁶²Ibid., p. 279.

to him the processes were primarily analytic devices not intended to correspond directly to empirical reality.⁶³

Although the exact amount or intensity of conflict contained in any parental relationship could not be established precisely for this research, specific areas of possible conflict between parents were studied. It was believed that a comparison of these areas would provide a relative measure of potential conflict for the home situation.⁶⁴ A transition to the meaning of this conflict for juvenile delinquency could not be stated in absolute terms of causal relationship. Positive findings could help only to define a given relationship as a relevant area from which to do subsequent causal research and analysis.

Although not explicitly evident, psychological assumptions were made recurrently throughout this study. The significance of parental conflict to the child, for instance, as well as the existing degree of adjustment or

⁶³Ibid., p. 277.

⁶⁴Although any lack of completeness in the choice of significant home environment factors may have affected the comparability of the findings in specific terms, it did not invalidate them. There was sufficient empirical evidence to support this. In fact, regardless of the significant indices selected, all previous studies have found that similarity of cultural background factors between parents has favored marital adjustment, while dissimilarity, if pronounced, disposed them toward maladjustment. For empirical documentation of this point, see Ernest W. Burgess and Leonard S. Cottrell, op. cit., Chap. VI.

maladjustment between the parents themselves, was dependent on a psychological as well as sociological explanation.

No attempt was made to measure actual socio-psychological unity. To find indicators for this was not even attempted except where explicit and uniform criteria afforded at least tentative direction. In the marital status area, for instance, the actual breach in family structure was viewed as an expression, however superficial it might have been, of the existence of social conflict. All areas of possible parental conflict included in the present study were viewed from an interdisciplinary viewpoint regardless of research limitations. However, the main emphasis remained; namely, to reveal the social significance that certain parental relationships had for the juvenile within the home.

Reiss' observations on the marital status of parents of recidivists in a delinquent population were viewed as a caution against undue subjective interpretation. His attempt to classify all the families in his study according to their degree of absolute psychological unity⁶⁵ left much room for unreliable interpretation. He considered families to be psychologically impaired when there was an open breach or gross incompatibility. While relative agreement

⁶⁵Albert J. Reiss, Jr., op. cit., pp. 198-99.

might possibly be maintained that this impariment "can be measured by separation, desertion, divorce, or appearance in a court of domestic relations," it would probably be more difficult to establish reliable observation that gross incompatibility "can be measured by frequent and persistent disagreement and conflict." Likewise, to characterize the psychologically intact family as one having "relatively strong affectionate ties between spouses" seemed to encourage subjective interpretation.

A criticism of one method of measuring psychological unity, however, was not viewed as a denial of its significance. That the dichotomy between sociological and psychological investigation is a false one has been attested to by Mowrer who gave reason to believe that one's point of departure as well as end purpose must define the legitimate area of study. "All conflict," she stated, "may be thought of as essentially cultural since all patterns of behavior reflect the cultural form" ⁶⁶

On the assumption that parental conflict situations had socialization potential as manifested in the characteristics of children within the home, the following hypotheses were tested:

1. The absence or presence of certain influential differences between parents as social conflict

⁶⁶Harriet R. Mowrer, op. cit., p. 191.

patterns in such areas as marital status, nativity, religious affiliation, and formal educational attainment co-exist to a greater extent with a like absence or presence of allegedly delinquent cases which are of the female sex, than is true for cases of the male sex.

2. The absence or presence of certain influential differences between parents as social conflict patterns in such areas as marital status, nativity, religious affiliation, and formal educational attainment co-exist to a greater extent with a like absence or presence of allegedly delinquent cases which are of a relatively young age, than is true for cases of a more advanced age.
3. The absence or presence of certain influential differences between parents as social conflict patterns in such areas as marital status, nativity, religious affiliation, and formal educational attainment co-exist to a greater extent with a like absence or presence of allegedly delinquent cases in which reasons for referral give such evidence of home conflict.⁶⁷

These hypotheses demanded a discussion of the logic of the relationship between the theory of juvenile delinquency as embraced in the parental home conflict setting and the indices used to measure its incipient nature. The indices are discussed in the order in which they appear in the above hypotheses.

In regard to sex, all available statistics revealed a much greater concentration of male than of female cases in

⁶⁷Reasons selected as giving direct evidence of parent-child home conflict were "Incorrigibility," "Disobedience," and "Running away." Those reasons, on the other hand, that did not lend themselves to a parental conflict theory of juvenile delinquency but by their elusive nature demanded analysis of their socialization origin outside the home included "Stealing," "Truancy," "Sex offense," and related reasons.

the juvenile delinquent population.⁶⁸ For instance, juvenile court statistics for Michigan in the four year span covered by the present study revealed a slightly greater than four to one ratio in favor of the male cases (80.8%: 19.2%).⁶⁹

Yet, in the area of incipient juvenile delinquency and parental conflict an increase in the relative number of female cases was expected by the investigator. In fact the female, rather than the male cases (to which the female cases were compared), were used as an index of incipient juvenile delinquency for the present study. Support for the

⁶⁸National figures available for this characteristic were highly comparable. Thus, statistics for 1944 showed that boys outnumbered girls in the delinquent population about four to one. See U. S. Children's Bureau, Federal Security Agency, "Juvenile Court Statistics, 1944 and 1945," supplement to Vol. II, The Child, 1946, as cited in Raymond G. Kuhlen, op. cit., p. 361.

Lest one place too much faith in national statistics, it must be remembered that they are based on incomplete and not necessarily representative information. It is probable that these national estimates are inappropriate to any refined study. Since there can be no assurance that the courts which happen to be reporting represent the juvenile population as a whole, the inclusion of national statistics in a study of this nature must wait until at least a sound national sample has been made. For an account of such an attempt, see State of Michigan, Department of Social Welfare, Michigan Juvenile Court Reporting, 10th Anniversary Issue, 1954, Chap. 1, "Juvenile Court Reporting."

⁶⁹State of Michigan, Department of Social Welfare, Michigan Juvenile Court Reporting, 7th through 10th Annual Issues, 1951-1954. Each issue represents a compilation of relevant statistics from all of Michigan's 83 probate courts.

relatively greater influence of the home environment in female as compared with male cases was suggested by the folkways and mores of American culture whereby different standards of behavior appropriate to each sex are known to exist. Kvaraceus has observed that since

. . . the amount of time spent at home by girls . . . is substantially greater than the amount of time spent at home by boys, it seems plausible to assume that any inadequacy in the home itself is more directly harmful to the girls who spend their leisure there or who are kept there than it is for boys, who traditionally are allowed more freedom to roam and make contacts, good, bad, or indifferent, away from home.⁷⁰

On the basis of empirical evidence, Sullenger concluded that "the girl's life is more closely related to the home and more deeply involved in its culture" than is true for the boy's life.⁷¹

When the age factor of the juvenile delinquent population was considered, statistics showed that the incidence of delinquency increased with increased age. Thus, statistical reports from Michigan's probate courts revealed a general preponderance of cases in the older age bracket. For the years 1951 through 1954, over three-fourths (76.0%)

⁷⁰William C. Kvaraceus, op. cit., p. 27.

⁷¹T. Earl Sullenger, Social Determinants in Juvenile Delinquency, New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1936, as cited in H. Ashley Weeks, "Male and Female Broken Home Rates by Types of Delinquency," American Sociological Review, 5 (August, 1940), pp. 601-602.

of the cases referred as delinquents were 14 years of age or above. Such a concentration represented a more than three to one ratio when compared to the cases that were 13 years of age or below.⁷²

Even though general statistics indicated that a heavy concentration of cases came from an older rather than a younger age group, the latter group was selected as an index for the present study. Cases in the relatively young age group were selected rather than those from the relatively older age group, because it was reasoned by the investigator that they were more indicative of incipient juvenile delinquency.⁷³ Such an index of incipient juvenile delinquency was selected in accordance with the theory of inverse relationship between the age of the child and the degree of home influence upon his behavior.⁷⁴

⁷²State of Michigan, Department of Social Welfare, Michigan Juvenile Court Reporting, 7th through 10th Annual Issues, 1951-1954.

⁷³The alleged nature of all 495 cases, together with the fact that none of these cases had any previous court experience rendered support to the investigation of the incipient element in the juvenile delinquent population. Such an investigation was the primary purpose of the study, with only indirect concern being given to ultimately hardened delinquents.

⁷⁴For a discussion of the declining importance of the home to the socialization of the child as he grows older, and the greater consequent influence of other social institutions upon his behavior, see Ruth S. Cavan, The American Family, New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1953, or any other basic family textbook.

Empirical support for the inclusion of this index was indirectly given in the Gluecks' latest work, Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency. Analysis by age of the 500 delinquents that were included in the study revealed that the first court appearance was made at an average age of 12.4 years. Over one-fourth of the subjects (28.4%) made their first court appearance before they were 11 years of age. Nearly one-half of the subjects (45.8%) were alleged at the age of 11, 12, or 13 years. Only one-fourth of the subjects (25.8%) were summoned at the age of 14 years or above.⁷⁵

Concerning the reasons for which the juveniles had been alleged delinquent, a four year survey of the Michigan juvenile court statistice (1951-1954) showed that 13.7 per cent of the cases gave indications of parent-child conflict, that is, were referred for "Incorrigibility," "Disobedience," or "Running away." Of the remaining reasons not so characterized, "Stealing" comprized 43.5 per cent of the total delinquent universe, "Truancy" 9.4 per cent, "Sex offense" 5.0 per cent, and all other reasons (including those not specified) 28.4 per cent.⁷⁶

⁷⁵Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck, Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950, p. 27.

⁷⁶State of Michigan, Department of Social Welfare, Michigan Juvenile Court Reporting, 7th through 10th Annual Issues, 1951-1954.

If it is true that the home is society's primary agent of socialization, its influence upon the allegedly delinquent children within it is probably manifest in their behavior. For conflict patterns and other anti-social behavior (as well as socially approved behavior) may be learned through home socialization. On these grounds, it was assumed by the writer that the alleged juvenile delinquents who came from homes giving evidence of parent-parent conflict would be referred more often for incorrigibility, disobedience, running away, and like reasons directly indicative of parent-child conflict than would those whose home conditions revealed no such conflict situation. Referring to the reasons for referral of institutionalized delinquents that were indicative of parent-child conflict as "minor offenses," Lumpkin found that for them deleterious home influences assumed larger proportions than was true for "major offenses."⁷⁷ The latter category included those offenders who were institutionalized for flagrant sex offenses, stealing, forgery, and certain other types of behavior considered to be crimes of adults. Even for institutionalized delinquents then, it was found that unfavorable social conditions within the home acted as a significant factor in the juvenile commitment of minor offenders.

⁷⁷Katharine Du Pre Lumpkin, op. cit., pp. 228-230.

The hardened institutionalized delinquents, on the other hand, more often committed acts that overshadowed or at least concealed the direct home relationship and its socialization potential. It was for this reason that the indices of "Incorrigibility," "Disobedience," and "Running away" have been selected as the reasons most directly indicative of parent-child conflict.⁷⁸

Methodology

The source material upon which this study was based consisted of 495 juvenile court case records from the Ju-

⁷⁸Here again it can be seen how the purpose of this study delimited its area. For instance, a strictly causal analysis of juvenile delinquency per se would necessitate an appropriate research design that would insure the collection of relevant data in accord with its stated purpose. While such a design might be deviant and confusing to a study of the incipient factors of juvenile delinquency, it is highly appropriate in terms of its stated purpose. Thus, the Gluecks in their introductory chapter in Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency stated that "in order to arrive at the clearest differentiation of disease and health, comparison must be made between the unquestionably pathologic and the normal." In accord with their purpose, "delinquency refers to repeated acts of a kind which when committed by persons beyond the statutory juvenile court age . . . are punishable as crimes . . . except for a few instances of persistent stubbornness, truancy, running away, associating with immoral persons, and the like." See Sheldon and Eleanor T. Glueck, Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950, pp. 13-14.

Diametrically opposed to the selectivity or limitation of relevant cases to those which showed persistent delinquent behavior was this present investigation. Its purpose was to arrive at the incipient nature of juvenile delinquency. Consequently, it became necessary to analyze cases of juveniles who had only been alleged delinquent--and that for the first time.

venile Division of the Ingham County Probate Court. These written records represented the total number of officially alleged delinquents, both male and female, for whom legitimate petitions were filed during the four year period of 1951 through 1954.

Each record represented a personal investigation by a case worker, who received his assignments either directly from the Judge of Probate or through the county agent. Uniformity of case reporting was insured to a great extent by means of a statewide official summary report blank, the "Juvenile Face Sheet and Statistical Report."⁷⁹ One of these was filled out for each individual by the court official assigned to the case. These sheets provided the main source of data for this study. Especially valuable were the entries describing not only the juvenile's alleged delinquent behavior and other personal characteristics, but also the character of the domestic environment from which he came, including such information as the marital situation, nativity, religious affiliation, and education of the parents.

In addition to this main source of information, a wealth of both personal and legal data was available for most cases. The following supplementary legal documents

⁷⁹See Appendix, p. 135.

helped to clarify and support the main source of evidence:

1. "Juvenile Court Ledger"--A chronological account of the official court action that had taken place in regard to the individual, complete from the day the petition was filed to his current standing in the eyes of the court.
2. "Juvenile Court Petition"--A statement of the source, reason, and date of allegation, giving the name, date of birth, and parentage of the alleged delinquent.
3. "Notice to County Agent"--A memorandum from the judge to inquire into and make a full investigation of the facts and circumstances alleged in the filed petition.
4. "Report of Investigation by County Agent"--A preliminary acknowledgment of investigation, prior to submitting the "Juvenile Face Sheet and Statistical Report."
5. "Juvenile Court General Order for Disposition"--A statement of legal action taken subsequent to the hearing.

This research project began with an intensive analysis of a test sampling of cases, in order to estimate their research value in terms of a preliminary investigation of the literature that dealt with the family structure as related to juvenile delinquency. After being assured that the data were relevant to the problem at hand, a numerical coding system was worked out to insure uniformity of compilation. Beginning with the case number assigned to each alleged delinquent, all relevant information was recorded on prepared I.B.M. data sheets. Great care was taken to maintain uniformity of procedure. Added caution was necessary whenever reference had to be made to source material other than that

contained in the "Juvenile Face Sheet and Statistical Report."⁸⁰ Any information regarding sex, age, or reason for referral of the alleged delinquent which could not be obtained directly from the principal source of data was established by the following procedure: First, the actual "Juvenile Court Petition" was studied. If ambiguity or lack of information remained, reference was made to the "Notice to County Agent." If lack of clarity still persisted, the "Report of Investigation by County Agent" was consulted.

All data referring to the parental situation, on the other hand, were taken exclusively from the "Juvenile Face Sheet and Statistical Report." While this procedure meant a sacrifice of completeness it was deemed necessary in order to insure a unified body of data from which meaningful parental differentials could be computed. Therefore, in the case of all parental differences, the most recent marital union constituted the relationship from which computations were made. The educational area may be used as a

⁸⁰In those cases for which the available records did not parallel the research aim, the information that was presented made it evident that "deficiencies" were often purposive. It must be kept in mind that a major function of the juvenile court was to readjust its referrals to socially acceptable behavior with a minimum of hostility on the part of the child. Therefore, strict compliance with any set form of recording, in the case of an individual minor, might have been either useless or harmful in terms of effective treatment.

case in point. In the case of intact marriages the difference in education was computed by comparing the educational attainment levels of the natural parents. For any natural parent no longer living with the first spouse it was computed on the basis of the educational attainment of the first spouse unless the parent in custody of the child had remarried. In cases of remarriage, the education of the spouse in custody of the child was computed on the basis of the educational attainment of the new marriage partner.⁸¹ The investigator was careful to make no exceptions to this approach even though it necessarily included the influence of both voluntarily and involuntarily broken homes in the same category.⁸²

After all the data had been transferred from the individual case records to the I.B.M. data sheets, it was recorded on individual I.B.M. cards. Mechanical tabulations were then made for the 495 cases in the study universe as guided by the writer's hypotheses, after which statistical

⁸¹This selective interpretation of the remarriage relationship ignored the possible significance of a prior educational difference between the natural parents. The approach selected, however, was considered more relevant since present environmental factors were assumed to be more influential in the home life of the child than were past environmental factors.

⁸²A study of both voluntarily and involuntarily broken homes as they were associated with certain characteristics of the alleged juvenile delinquents has been undertaken separately in Chapter II, "Parental Home Structure."

percentages were computed and tested for statistical significance.

CHAPTER II

PARENTAL HOME STRUCTURE

Relevance to a Study of Juvenile Delinquency

The present chapter deals with the marital structure of the home from the standpoint of the juvenile within it. Although many students of juvenile delinquency have acknowledged the significance of the home structure, their contributions generally have been unrefined. In fact, many investigators have not refined their studies beyond the "Broken-Nonbroken" home dichotomy. Although the discrete, external nature of such a dichotomy was an aid to the reliability of statistical findings, this reliability has often been at the expense of of a more intensive investigation. Numerous family authorities have noted that many marriages have been kept from divorce because of expense, lack of knowledge of its complicated legal process, social disapproval, and other related reasons. Abrams saw beyond the legally broken home to the significance of more subtle influences when he said:

If we were to add to the divorce rate the desertions, the separations, and those who would like to sever the marriage bonds but for one reason or another do not, the disorganization would be at least two to

three times that represented by the divorce statistics.¹

That the more subtle disorganizational influences in parental home structure which are significant and dynamic to any interpretation of juvenile behavior probably have received more emphasis by way of verbal agreement than actual empirical investigation is suggested by the following quotations:

It is necessary to understand that the mere absence of overt conflict is no criterion of the satisfactory quality of a marriage.²

. . . the actual unity of family life has its existence not in any legal conception, nor in any formal contract, but in the interaction of its members.³

The "worst" marriages do not necessarily end in divorce nor do the "best" marriages necessarily continue unto death.⁴

It is significant to note that the broken home is not an isolated phenomenon. Family disorganization is a process and the disrupting factors that lead to a broken home may have more telling effects on children than the actual break, such as divorce or desertion. Furthermore, even though the home may not be broken,

¹Ray H. Abrams, "The Concept of Family Stability," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 272 (November, 1950), p. 5.

²Willard Waller, The Family: A Dynamic Interpretation. New York: Dryden Press, 1938, p. 340.

³Ernest W. Burgess, "The Family as a Unity of Interacting Personalities," The Family, 7 (March, 1926--February, 1927), p. 5.

⁴Andrew G. Truxal and Francis E. Merrill, The Family in American Culture. New York: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1947, p. 653.

the family may be disintegrated because of a variety of conditions. . . . So whether the home is broken or structurally complete, it is necessary to take into consideration unsatisfactory home conditions in order to appraise properly the effects of the home on the children's behavior.⁵

The actual divorce or separation of the parents may not be so important a factor in the life of the child as the emotional conflicts which have resulted in the break in the family relationships. It is apparent in the study of behavior problems among children there is much need for a better understanding of the more subtle and intangible processes which constitute the dynamic life of the family group. . . .⁶

It was the purpose of this chapter to penetrate beneath the surface factors of marital structure in order to analyse parental differences that existed within the home situation. In the case of a broken home, a need to study the nature of and reason for the original break was seen, but not at the expense of bypassing the marital situation that existed in the home of the parent or parents in legal custody of the child at the time of allegation.

While the chief concern of this study was the possible conflict differences that existed between the parents of the child, it was necessarily contingent on the effects

⁵Martin H. Neumeyer, Juvenile Delinquency in Modern Society. Philadelphia: D. Van Nostrand Co., Inc., 1949, p. 122.

⁶Clifford R. Shaw and Henry D. McKay, "Social Factors in Juvenile Delinquency," in Report on the Causes of Crime, No. 13, Vol. II, Washington, U. S. National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement, 1931, p. 285.

that parental relationships had upon the child. In terms of marital status, Nye found that the proportion of broken homes was significantly associated with the level of adolescent-parent adjustment.⁷

Within the parent-parent level of broken home studies most students of juvenile delinquency have focused their attention solely upon the nature of the break, that is, the actual historical reason for the severance of the matrimonial ties by the natural parents of the delinquent. Such studies usually differentiated between homes broken by death on the one hand, and those broken by divorce, desertion, or separation on the other hand. Those broken by death were generally assumed to be less indicative of conflict than the others.⁸ Truxal and Merrill observed that

The different ways in which a family is broken evoke different definitions depending on the real or punitive threat to social values. Death is a process that evokes sympathetic understanding. This is an "act of God" with no possible implications or moral turpitude involved. The surviving spouse is permitted by the mores to marry again after a decent interval. Desertion and separation involve the mores but the attendant secrecy often means less condemnation than an open breach in the symbolic pattern. . . . Divorce is by definition an avowal that a family

⁷Ivan Nye, "Adolescent-Parent Adjustment--Socio-Economic Level as a Variable," American Sociological Review, 16 (June, 1951), p. 345.

⁸See William C. Kvaraceus, Juvenile Delinquency and the School, Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York: World Book Co., 1945, p. 173, as an example of this theory set in an empirical framework.

has ceased to exist and hence receives the full force of public condemnation.⁹

The child was often spared facing these threats to social values if family relationships were not disrupted and the home remained intact. Reiss pointed out that

The family exercises contra delinquent social control over the child's behavior when the family milieu is structured so that the child identifies with family members who represent roles of conformity with non-delinquent norms and accepts the norms and rules embodied in these roles. Such families are a socio-psychological unity oriented toward the establishment and maintenance of non-delinquent behavior for its members.¹⁰

Concerning the initial breach in the family situation, Davis conducted a study of statistics dealing with the broken home. He found that "the steady rise in the divorce rate has given it the dubious distinction of displacing death as the chief home breaker."¹¹ Empirical evidence has shown that divorce and related reasons for a broken home were more associated than was death with a disparity of attitudes toward marital roles¹² and a more highly emotional

⁹Andrew G. Truxal and Francis E. Merrill, op. cit., pp. 631-632.

¹⁰Albert J. Reiss, Jr., "Delinquency as the Failure of Personal and Social Controls," American Sociological Review, 16 (April, 1951), p. 198.

¹¹Kingsley Davis, "Statistical Perspective on Marriage and Divorce," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 272 (November, 1950), p. 9.

¹²Alver H. Jacobson, "Conflict of Attitudes toward the Roles of the Husband and Wife in Marriage," American Sociological Review, 17 (April, 1952), pp. 149-150.

state brought about by social conflict.¹³ Such studies suggested that "divorces . . . are the outgrowth . . . of maladjustment between husband and wife."¹⁴

The influence of divorce and related reasons was especially evident in the present study of 495 cases of alleged juvenile delinquency from Ingham County for the years 1951-1954 inclusive. Of the 227 cases that came from broken homes, more than two-thirds (68.7%) represented voluntary breaches. The "Voluntarily Broken" home in contrast to the "Involuntarily Broken" home,¹⁵ was characterized by divorce, desertion, or separation. The "Involuntarily Broken" home, on the other hand, was characterized by the death or permanent institutionalization of one or both of the spouses. In terms of the present study, the "Voluntarily Broken" home was assumed to be more related to conflict between

¹³For a succinct analysis of this point, see Andrew G. Truxal and Francis E. Merrill, op. cit., p. 696.

¹⁴Mabel A. Elliott, "Divorce Legislation and Family Instability," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 272 (November, 1950), p. 146.

¹⁵These distinguishing categories were employed by H. Ashley Weeks in his empirical study of "Male and Female Broken Home Rates by Types of Delinquency" which first appeared in the American Sociological Review, 5 (August, 1940), pp. 601-609. While in the final analysis, most sociologists might agree that the nature of all broken homes is involuntary, for lack of more precise descriptive nomenclature Week's twofold classification has been maintained throughout this study. For, although inadequate in sociological description, the essential distinctive nature of each of the categories persists.

parents and therefore more contributory to incipient juvenile delinquency than the "Involuntarily Broken" home. A number and percentage breakdown of all the cases according to the marital status of the natural parents follows:

Status	Number	Percentage
Living together	268	54.1
Voluntarily broken	156	31.5
Involuntarily broken	71	14.4
Total	495	100.0

Bypassing the historical nature of the parental break, Bossard's theory was that the most significant family influence upon the child in the home was the most recent marital situation of the custodial parent or parents. He gave the following reasons for believing that the child might be led into delinquent activity through recent influences on parental relationships:

(a) There is always a memory of a marital past.¹⁶

(b) Remarriage tends always to be on the defensive, even in the mind of the spouses.¹⁷

(c) An ever increasing percentage of marriages are of those previously divorced. The children, in addition, must

¹⁶James H. S. Bossard, Parent and Child. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1953, p. 133.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 133.

adjust to step-parents while their real parents are still alive.¹⁸

(d) A cultural complex of general attitudes and conceptions concerning step-parents is built up in the popular mind through the years.¹⁹

Although it is sometimes argued that divorced persons try a great deal harder in their second marriages, Waller has made the statement that the "divorced person is on the whole a poorer marriage risk than a person who has never married." He supported his assumption by stating that "the divorced person has learned from his experience, but that what he has learned is not the sort of thing which will contribute to the success of his second marriage."²⁰

Lumpkin's work represented one of the few empirical attempts to get behind the mere nature of the marital break to the significance of the marital structure situation of the home at the time the child was adjudged or ascribed delinquent. In her study of institutionalized girl delinquents she made the distinction between the children from broken homes who were living with only one parent when committed to the correctional school, and those who were re-

¹⁸Ibid., p. 135.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 143.

²⁰Willard Waller, op. cit., p. 567.

siding in homes containing a step-parent at the time of commitment. She found that of the 160 cases representing broken homes approximately 50 per cent came from each of the two broken home categories.²¹

Later the Gluecks' work, Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency, took into account the most recent marital status of the parents. The whereabouts of each of the 500 delinquent boys immediately prior to his institutionalization was found to be distributed in the following proportions:²²

Boy Living With	Number	Percentage
Both of his own parents	251	50.2
One of his own parents	173	34.6
One own parent and one step-parent	40	8.0
Two step-parents, or foster parents, or relatives, or brothers and sisters	36	7.2
Total	500	100.0

When compared to the Gluecks' study, the present investigation stood in substantial agreement that the delinquent population consisted of approximately one-half the

²¹Katharine Du Pre Lumpkin, "Factors in the Commitment of Correctional School Girls in Wisconsin," American Journal of Sociology, 37 (September, 1931), p. 223.

²²This breakdown represents an adapted form of Table VIII-15, "Parental Make-up of Home," as it was presented on p. 88.

cases in which the natural parents have remained in custody of the child (50.2%:54.1% respectively). There remained no such congruency, however, when specific broken home categories were compared. For instance, more than one-third (34.6%) of the Gluecks' cases came from homes represented by only one parent, while less than one-quarter (22.6%) of the Ingham County cases came from this category. Moreover, cases of remarriage comprized less than one-tenth (8.0%) of the Gluecks' study group, while they constituted nearly one-fifth (19.0%) of the present study population. Following are the exact numbers and percentages for the 495 cases presently studied, as they revealed the marital situation of the natural parent or parents in custody of the juvenile at the time of his referral to court:

Marital Situation in Home	Number	Percentage
Intact	268	54.1
Broken but not remarried	112	22.6
Broken and remarried	94	19.0
Child placed elsewhere*	21	4.3
Total	495	100.0

*This category is comparable to the last category of the Gluecks, although it included those cases placed in agencies in addition to the other placements there listed. It was assumed that the Gluecks included like cases, if they existed, in the same category.

Returning to a comparison of data in the present study to those compiled by the Gluecks, a large deviation was found in the relative percentage of cases in which a step-parent situation existed. This may be explained in part by the nature of the study group, namely the juvenile delinquent population, which was delimited differently in both cases. The composition of the Gluecks' group were exclusively male institutionalized, and therefore adjudged delinquents. The present study encompassed alleged juvenile delinquents of both sexes. Therefore, if it may be assumed that a step-parent situation is an area of possible parental conflict that has its effects upon the child in the home, the more than 2:1 ratio of incidence in the alleged as over against the adjudged population seems to legitimize it as a study area into the incipient nature of juvenile delinquency.

The present study showed further reason to believe that the status of the original marriage, in and of itself, was incomplete to a study of juvenile delinquency. This reason was based on a follow-up study of the originally broken home cases for which recent data pertaining to the present marital status of the spouse in custody were available.

There were 216 cases in which it was possible to compute the marital status of the natural parent at the time

the child was referred, on the basis of the original nature of the break. Of the 72 cases in which the marital union was broken originally by death or institutionalization (Involuntarily Broken) more than two-fifths (41.9%) of the surviving spouses remarried. An even greater percentage, in fact nearly one-half (47.2%), of the 144 cases in which the marital union was broken by divorce, desertion, or separation (Voluntarily Broken) had remarried. Thus, both parental situations seem to warrant a careful study of the sex, age, and behavioral characteristics of the alleged delinquents.

The hypothesis of this chapter, restated, was that broken homes characterized by either 1) the voluntary nature of the break, or 2) a consequent remarriage, as areas of potential parental conflict, would reveal a disproportionately high percentage of juvenile delinquent cases in the female, relatively young, and "minor" offender categories.

Sex of Alleged Delinquent

Of the 495 alleged juvenile delinquents who comprised the present study, 149 (30.1%) were females and 346 (69.9%) were males. A comparison of the nonbroken with the broken homes from which they came (Table I) revealed an 8.7 per-

TABLE I

PARENTAL HOME SITUATION; BY SEX OF ALLEGED JUVENILE
DELINQUENTS IN INGHAM COUNTY 1951-1954

Sex	Nonbroken		Diff.	Broken	
	No.	Pct.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Female	70	26.1	8.7	79	34.8
Male	198	73.9		148	65.2
Total	268	100.0		227	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 4.024 - .05 > p > .02$$

centage shift. This percentage difference²³ represented an increase of female cases in the "Broken" home category when compared to the "Nonbroken" home category (26.1%:34.8%). Conversely, it represented an identical percentage of decrease for male cases within the "Broken" home category when compared with the "Nonbroken" home category (73.9%:65.2%). Thus in support of the hypothesis, the percentage difference revealed a preponderance of cases of incipient delinquency (females) in an area of high potential parental

²³The Difference in Percentage, utilized throughout this study in both the text and the tables, was used also as a tool for analysis of similar factors by Sheldon and Eleanor T. Glueck, Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency, passim. In this study, it was used to signify the difference in percentage that existed between two parental areas when specific juvenile characteristics were held constant.

conflict (broken homes). Furthermore, this relationship was found to be statistically significant.²⁴ This finding pointed to the desirability of making a statistical breakdown of sex differences within the broken home area.

Numerous studies have shown higher percentages of broken homes to exist for female than male juvenile delinquency cases. Shulman, after an intensive analysis of successive reports of the United States Children's Bureau statistics, reported a consistently higher percentage of broken homes among female than among male juvenile court cases. In 1936, for instance, 36 per cent of the boys' cases and 50 per cent of the girls' cases taken from the records of 64 courts came from broken homes.²⁵ Bushong's study of 1,000 alleged delinquents who appeared before the Marion County, Illinois, Juvenile court during the years 1921 through 1923 revealed 41.6 per cent of the boys' cases to be from broken homes, while 66.0 per cent of the girls' cases were from broken homes.²⁶ Kvaraceus, in a later

²⁴The Chi-square measure of significance was used at the .05 level. This level of significance was the one employed throughout the study, unless otherwise indicated.

²⁵Harry M. Shulman, "The Family and Juvenile Delinquency," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 261 (January, 1949), p. 24.

²⁶Eugene M. Bushong, "Family Estrangement and Juvenile Delinquency," Social Forces, 5 (September, 1926), p. 80.

study of cases from the Passaic, New Jersey, Children's Bureau, found more conservative figures for the broken home; namely, 42 per cent for the girls and 30 per cent for the boys.²⁷ The findings of the present study were in substantial agreement with prior investigations. The broken home was manifest in 53.1 per cent of the girls' cases and in 42.8 per cent of the boys' cases.

Weeks, in a study of 515 alleged juvenile delinquents from Spokane, Washington, also found females to be from broken homes in greater percentage than males, namely 68.1 per cent as compared with 39.6 per cent.²⁸ He attempted to explain this "apparent" difference on the bases of the types of delinquency for which the juveniles were apprehended, by showing how these reasons for referral differed by sex. Weeks found broken homes to be more frequently associated with cases referred for ungovernability, running away, and immorality and less frequently associated with cases referred for property offenses and the like. The former offenses were those in which girls were assumed to be more characteristically involved, whereas the latter were assumed to more frequently involve boys.²⁹

²⁷William C. Kvaraceus, op. cit., pp. 73-74.

²⁸H. Ashley Weeks, "Male and Female Broken Home Rates by Types of Delinquency," American Sociological Review, 5 (August, 1940), pp. 602-603.

²⁹Data to support this position can be found Edward E. Schwartz, "Statistics of Juvenile Delinquency in the United

The incipient nature of the present study did not deny the relationship that possibly existed between sex factors and the types of delinquency. Yet, was it not possible that both sex and type of delinquency were related directly to the broken home factor? While sex differences, in part, may have given evidence of a selectivity factor in reporting to the court and the policy of the law enforcement agencies with respect to court referrals, the writer maintained that this very selectivity may have indicated that home conflict was more influential for one sex than it is for the other. Reckless indirectly hinted at this possibility when he said that "boys are accorded greater latitude of movement outside the home than girls and have more chance to get into trouble."³⁰ Therefore, if girls constituted the majority of the cases of incorrigibility and running away as possible evidence of a home conflict situation, it may have been precisely because the existing cultural values that created this difference.

States," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 261 (January, 1949), pp. 14-15. In this analysis of the Children's Bureau reports of court cases extending from 1938 through the war years, types of referral indicated that theft and other offenses against property were the most common among males, while running away incorrigibility, and sex offenses were the most common among females.

³⁰Walter C. Reckless, The Crime Problem. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1950, p. 195.

To differentiate more clearly the sex composition within the broken home, Table II presents an analysis of the nature of the breach in the home structure for the male and female alleged delinquents. While 38.1 per cent of the "Involuntarily" broken homes were comprised of female cases, 33.3 per cent of the "Voluntarily" broken homes were so comprised. The identical 4.8 shift in percentage for males, on the other hand, indicated a decrease in their concentration within the "Involuntarily" broken home category (61.9%) when compared to the "Voluntarily" broken home category (66.7%). Such a percentage shift, although not statistically significant, was contrary to the hypothesized relationship between female cases and "Voluntarily" broken homes (as indicative of incipient delinquency within a domestic conflict situation).

TABLE II

NATURE OF BREACH IN HOME STRUCTURE; BY SEX OF RELEVANT
ALLEGED JUVENILE DELINQUENTS IN INGHAM COUNTY
1951-1954

Sex	Involuntarily Broken		Diff. Pct.	Voluntarily Broken	
	No.	Pct.		No.	Pct.
Female	27	38.1	4.8	52	33.3
Male	44	61.9		104	66.7
Total	71	100.0		156	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 0.292 \sim .7 > p > .5$$

Table III shows the sex composition according to the marital disposition of the natural parent, who had legal custody of the child at the time he was alleged to be delinquent. When the male and female percentages in the "Not Remarried" category were compared were compared with those in the "Remarried" category, a percentage shift of 10.0 was found. Although not statistically significant, this difference decreased the concentration of female cases in the "Remarried" category (36.6%:26.6%) and thereby increased the concentration of male cases within this category (63.4%:73.4%).

TABLE III

MARITAL STATUS OF NATURAL PARENT IN CUSTODY^a OF JUVENILE
AT TIME OF HIS ALLEGATION; BY SEX^b OF RELEVANT
ALLEGED JUVENILE DELINQUENTS IN INGHAM COUNTY
1951-1954

Sex	Not Remarried		Diff. Pct.	Remarried	
	No.	Pct.		No.	Pct.
Female	41	36.6	10.0	25	26.6
Male	71	63.4		69	73.4
Total	112	100.0		94	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 1.901 - .2 > p > .1$$

^aFor 21 cases, no natural parent had assumed custody. Rather, the juvenile was in the custody of relatives or social agencies as the result of parental indifference, neglect, or death.

^bEight of the "Not in Custody" cases were males, 13 were females. No attempt was made to explain this disproportionately high concentration of female cases (62.0%:38.0%), although a chi-square comparison of this distribution with that of the sample group as a whole revealed statistical significance.

Thus, it was revealed that for the cases of remarriages (Table III), and to a lesser extent voluntarily broken homes (Table II), male rather than female cases revealed percentage increases when compared to broken home areas assumed to be less indicative of parental conflict. Although neither relationship was statistically significant at the five per cent level, this contrary evidence in terms of the original hypothesis concerning incipient juvenile delinquency and home conflict, directed the investigation of the broken home to other characteristics of the alleged juvenile delinquents.

Age of Alleged Delinquent

The age distribution in the present study compared favorably with that generally found in other studies. Nearly four-fifths (79.6%) of the cases were 14 years of age or older,³¹ the remaining one-fifth (20.4%) being from a younger age group.

Concerning the relevance of an investigation of age composition in regard to the broken home, Shaw and McKay

³¹As defined by the Michigan Probate Code, the Juvenile Division had exclusive original jurisdiction concerning any child under 17 years of age. It could be granted jurisdiction over children under 19 years of age if such was deemed necessary for the welfare of the child. Ten cases in the present study were 17 years of age or older at the time of their referral to the juvenile court.

believed that no adequate study of the broken home and juvenile delinquency could be conducted without taking the age factor into account.³² In their study, they found that the percentage of broken homes increased with the increased age of the delinquents.³³

When nonbroken and broken homes were viewed according to the age distribution of the 495 cases of alleged delinquents within them (Table IV), it was found that the majority of cases for both home categories existed in the older age group (14 years and above). Of the "Nonbroken" home cases, 215 (80.2%) had already attained their fourteenth birthday; 179 (74.9%) of the "Broken" home cases had done likewise. While such a concentration left only 19.8 per cent on the "Nonbroken" home cases in the group less than fourteen years of age, 25.1 per cent of the "Broken" home cases were from this relatively young age category. This 5.3 percentage difference favoring the younger age group within the "Broken" home category, although not statistically significant, raised the question as to what specific elements within the broken home may have coexisted for specific age spans.

³²Clifford R. Shaw and Henry D. McKay, "Are Broken Homes a Causative Factor in Juvenile Delinquency?" Social Forces, 10 (May, 1932), p. 519.

³³Loc. cit.

TABLE IV

PARENTAL HOME SITUATION; BY AGE OF ALLEGED JUVENILE
DELINQUENTS IN INGHAM COUNTY 1951-1954

Age	Nonbroken		Diff.	Broken	
	No.	Pct.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
13 and below	53	19.8	5.3	48	25.1
14 and above	215	80.2		179	74.9
Total	268	100.0		227	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 0.074 - .8 > p > .7$$

When the "Involuntarily" and the "Voluntarily" broken home categories were divided into two overall age spans, a statistically insignificant difference in percentage of 2.1 was found to exist in favor of the "Voluntarily" broken home for all those 13 years of age and below (19.7%:21.8%). An identical decrease was found in the "Voluntarily" broken home for those 14 years of age and above (80.3%:78.2%). A more complete age breakdown is presented in Table V. This further age breakdown revealed large percentage differences between specific age segments of the "Involuntarily" and "Voluntarily" broken homes which the major age divisions concealed. Thus, although the "Voluntarily" broken homes favored the overall younger major age division by only 2.1 percentage points, the youngest age group--those 11 and below, were found solely within this area, comprising 5.8

TABLE V

NATURE OF BREACH IN HOME STRUCTURE; BY AGE OF RELEVANT
ALLEGED JUVENILE DELINQUENTS IN INGHAM COUNTY
1951-1954

Age	Involuntarily Broken		Diff. Pct.	Voluntarily Broken	
	No.	Pct.		No.	Pct.
<u>13 and below</u>	14	19.7		34	21.8
11-below	0	0.0		9	5.8
12-13	14	19.7		25	16.0
			2.1		
<u>14 and above</u>	57	80.3		122	78.2
14-15	35	49.3		95	60.9
16-above	22	31.0		27	17.3
Total	71	100.0		156	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 1.227 - .3 > p > .2$$

per cent of the 156 total cases. Conversely, even though the "Involuntarily" broken home favored the overall older major age division by 2.1 percentage points, the oldest age group--those 16 and above, were found nearly twice as frequently in the "Involuntarily" broken home category as they were in the "Voluntarily" broken home category (31.0%: 17.3%).³⁴

³⁴A statistically insufficient number of cases in a cell made it impossible to test the significance of this relationship between two extreme age groups. For conditions governing the significance of the chi-square test see Elmer B. Mode, The Elements of Statistics. New York: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1941, pp. 358-359.

When the major age breakdown of the alleged delinquents whose natural parent had remarried were compared with like cases whose parents had not remarried (after the initial marital breach) a large and statistically significant difference was evident. As shown in Table VI, a 13.6 percentage difference was concentrated in the "Not Remarried" category for the younger alleged delinquents (28.4%:14.9%) and in the "Remarried" category for the older alleged delinquents (71.5%:85.1%).

TABLE VI

MARITAL STATUS OF NATURAL PARENT IN CUSTODY^a OF JUVENILE
AT TIME OF HIS ALLEGATION; BY AGE^b OF RELEVANT ALLEGED
JUVENILE DELINQUENTS IN INGHAM COUNTY 1951-1954

Age	Not Remarried		Diff.	Remarried	
	No.	Pct.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
<u>13 and below</u>	32	28.5		14	14.9
11-below	7	6.2		2	2.1
12-13	25	22.3		12	12.8
			13.6		
<u>14 and above</u>	80	71.5		80	85.1
14-15	62	55.4		58	61.7
16-above	18	16.1		22	23.4
Total	112	100.0		94	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 4.766 - .05 > p > .02$$

^aSee footnote a, Table III.

^bThe percentages for the overall age divisions in the "Not in Custody" category very closely approximated those of the "Remarried" category. Three cases were 13 years of age or below (14.2%) and 18 cases were 14 years of age or above (85.5%).

A further analysis of specific age groups revealed that the greatest difference in percentage between the "Not Remarried" and "Remarried" areas was in the 12-13 age bracket, where the increase favored the former (22.3%: 12.8%). In fact, the percentage of those 13 and below was higher for the "Not Remarried" than for the "Remarried" category for each specific age bracket, while the opposite concentration held true without exception for those 14 and above. Such a consistent concentration of relatively young alleged delinquents within the "Not Remarried" rather than the "Remarried" category was a finding that tended to negate, rather than support the hypothesized relationship between characteristics of incipient delinquency (in this instance, relatively young age) and parental situations containing relatively great potential conflict (in this instance, "Remarried").

Reason for Referral of Alleged Delinquent

Within the alleged delinquent population of this study, 22 per cent of the juveniles were referred for reasons that primarily were indicative of parent-child conflict; namely, incorrigibility, disobedience, and running away. The remaining 78 per cent were referred for reasons of a different character.

A comparison of the "Nonbroken" with the "Broken" homes by the reason for referral for each of the 495 alleged delinquents from Ingham County (Table VII) revealed an increased percentage in the latter home category who were referred to the court for parent-child conflict reasons (17.9%:26.9%). A decrease of like percentage existed in the "Broken" home category when reasons not directly indicative of parent-child conflict were considered (82.1%:73.1%). This statistically significant percentage difference of 9.0 in favor of the relationship between broken homes and parent-child types of alleged delinquency demanded further analysis.

TABLE VII

PARENTAL HOME SITUATION; BY REASON FOR REFERRAL OF
ALLEGED JUVENILE DELINQUENTS IN INGHAM COUNTY
1951-1954

Reason for Referral	Nonbroken		Diff. Pct.	Broken	
	No.	Pct.		No.	Pct.
Home conflict primarily evident	48	17.9	9.0	61	26.9
Home conflict not primarily evident	220	82.1		166	73.1
Total	268	100.0		227	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 5.223 - .05 > p > .02$$

Table VIII presents percentage differences between "Involuntarily" and "Voluntarily" broken homes that existed with different reasons for referral. While 35.2 per cent of the former broken home type was found to be composed of cases involving running away, incorrigibility, or disobedience, only 23.1 per cent of the latter broken home type was so composed. Conversely, 64.8 per cent of the "Involuntarily" broken home cases were for reasons not primarily portraying home conflict, while 76.9 per cent of the "Voluntarily" broken home cases were for similar reasons. This 12.1 percentage difference favoring the coexistence of the "Involuntarily" broken home with reasons indicative of parent-child conflict, although statistically insignificant, was contrary evidence to any hypothetical explanation of incipient juvenile delinquency as influenced by the nature of the break within the home structure.

All sub-categories in Table VIII were consistent in portraying a greater percentage of home conflict reasons for the "Involuntarily" than for the "Voluntarily" broken homes. Of those reasons in which home conflict was not directly evident, all except stealing had the higher percentage in the "Voluntarily" broken home category. While the percentages of those referred for stealing were almost identical when the two home categories were compared (36.6%:36.5%), cases of truancy were nearly twice as fre-

TABLE VIII

NATURE OF BREACH IN HOME STRUCTURE; BY REASON FOR REFERRAL
OF RELEVANT ALLEGED JUVENILE DELINQUENTS
IN INGHAM COUNTY 1951-1954

Reason for Referral	Involuntarily Broken		Diff. Pct.	Voluntarily Broken	
	No.	Pct.		No.	Pct.
<u>Home conflict</u>					
<u>primarily evident</u>	25	35.2		36	23.1
Incorrigibility or					
disobedience	20	28.2		32	20.5
Running away	5	7.0		4	2.6
			12.1		
<u>Home conflict not</u>					
<u>primarily evident</u>	46	64.8		120	76.9
Stealing	26	36.6		57	36.5
Truancy	9	12.7		32	20.5
Sex offense	5	7.0		15	9.6
Others ^a	6	8.5		16	10.3
Total	71	100.0		156	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 3.159 - .10 > p > .05$$

^aIncluded miscellaneous referrals, such as traffic violation, carelessness and mischief, assault and injury, forgery, and drinking intoxicants.

quent in the "Voluntarily" as in the "Involuntarily" broken home category (12.7%:20.5%).

Concerning the marital structure situation within the home at the time the juvenile was alleged delinquent, it can be seen from Table IX that the "Not Remarried" and "Remarried" categories had very similar percentages when major reasons for referral were compared. The slight and

TABLE IX

MARITAL STATUS OF NATURAL PARENT IN CUSTODY^a OF JUVENILE
AT TIME OF HIS ALLEGATION; BY REASON FOR REFERRAL^b OF
RELEVANT ALLEGED JUVENILE DELINQUENTS
IN INGHAM COUNTY 1951-1954

Reason for Referral	Not Remarried		Diff.	Remarried	
	No.	Pct.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
<u>Home conflict</u>					
<u>primarily evident</u>	30	26.8		25	26.6
Incorrigibility or					
disobedience	26	23.2		22	23.4
Running away	4	3.6		3	3.2
			0.2		
<u>Home conflict not</u>					
<u>primarily evident</u>	82	73.2		69	73.4
Stealing	39	34.8		34	36.2
Truancy	26	23.2		12	12.7
Sex offense	9	8.0		9	9.6
Others	8	7.2		14	14.9
Total	112	100.0		94	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 0 \quad p = 1$$

^aSee footnote a, Table III.

^bAlthough reasons reflecting home conflict were somewhat more highly concentrated in the "Not in Custody" category than they were in either of the other categories, a chi-square analysis of this category in terms of the total sample of cases represented in the table failed to reveal statistical significance. A breakdown by specific reason for referral of the seven cases (33.3%) that reflected home conflict and of the 14 remaining cases (66.7%) not so characterized was made even though the case frequencies were insufficient to permit refined analysis. As compared to the percentages of the other two broken home categories, a disproportionately large percentage of cases was referred for stealing (52.4%). On the other hand, no cases were referred for 'others' (miscellaneous reasons). The percentage of cases referred for incorrigibility or disobedience (23.8) was nearly identical to the other two broken home categories; all other specific reasons were highly similar.

statistical insignificant difference in percentage of 0.2 that was found to exist was contrary to the hypothesized concentration of characteristically incipient delinquency cases within an area of great potential parental conflict.

When the "Not Remarried" and "Remarried" categories were compared as to specific types of delinquency, a high degree of similarity was evident for incorrigibility or disobedience (23.2%:23.4%), running away (3.6%:3.2%), stealing (34.8%:36.2%), and sex offense (8.0%:9.6%). Truancy, however, was nearly twice as highly concentrated in the "Not Remarried" as it was in the "Remarried" category (23.2%:12.7%), while other miscellaneous reasons for referral were more than twice as prevalent in the latter as they were in the former category (7.2%:14.9%).

Summary

A survey of differences in the marital home structure that existed for the 495 juveniles who were alleged to be delinquent in Ingham County during the years 1951 through 1954 showed that:

(1) There was a tendency for cases to be disproportionately concentrated in broken rather than nonbroken homes in a percentage difference of 8.7 for those of the female sex; 5.3 for those of a relatively young age; and 9.0 for those referred for reasons giving evidence of parent-child conflict.

(2) A statistically significant relationship existed between the broken home and these selected character-

istics of incipient juvenile delinquency with the exception of age.

Such coexistence necessitated a breakdown within the broken home category. It was hypothesized that the "Voluntarily" to a greater extent than the "Involuntarily" broken homes would contain cases of juveniles of the female sex, of a relatively young age, and alleged for parent-child conflict reasons. Likewise, these same characteristics of incipient delinquency were believed to exist in greater proportions within a broken home structure in which the natural parent had remarried than one in which there was no remarriage. Neither of the above hypotheses concerning the different types of broken homes was supported by the data. In fact:

(1) A tendency as revealed by a percentage difference showed a disproportionate concentration of cases in the "Involuntarily" rather than the "Voluntarily" broken home category of 4.8 for those of the female sex and 12.1 for those referred for reasons indicative of parent-child conflict. On the other hand, a 2.1 percentage difference favored the "Voluntarily" broken home category in terms of those of relatively young age.

(2) None of these relationships, however, proved to be statistically significant.

(3) There was a tendency for the cases of the female sex, of a relatively young age, and referred for reasons indicative of parent-child conflict to exist disproportionately within the "Not Remarried" rather than the "Remarried" broken home category as measured by percentage differences (10.0; 13.6; and 0.2 respectively).

(4) Only the relationship between age and parental home situation was statistically significant.

Thus, it may be concluded that, contrary to the positive relationship found between characteristics of juveniles assumed indicative of incipient delinquency within the broken home area as compared with the nonbroken home area, an intra-broken home comparison by diverse types failed to reveal a positive association between characteristics of incipient delinquency and those broken home situations assumed to have the greater conflict potential.

Assuming the intra-broken home data to be representative of the incipient delinquent study population, an alternative explanation might account for the foregoing unexpected relationship. That is, the matter of parental control or lack thereof may exert as crucial and significant an impact on incipient delinquents as potential parental conflict. Such a condition might allow for a concentration of incipient juvenile delinquent cases within parental areas of "Involuntarily" broken and "Not Remarried" by exerting more influence upon incipient than upon more "hardened" delinquents.

CHAPTER III

NATIVITY¹ OF CUSTODIAL PARENTS

Relevance to a Study of Juvenile Delinquency

In exploring potential parental conflict areas in terms of juvenile delinquent behavior, it was reasoned that the definitive probing nature of this study could best be accomplished by a comparison of juvenile characteristics within as well as between parental areas of relationship. It was assumed that these areas differed as to the amount or degree of cultural conflict within them.

If it is true that in a second generational context, "immigrants who have failed to assimilate American culture comprize a large proportion of our inadequate families,"² would it not be probable that this inadequacy would break out into manifest conflict if one of the parents was foreign born and the other was native born? More specifically, such questions as the following were asked: (1) Did the difference or similarity in parental nativity coexist

¹Caution must be taken to distinguish between 'Nativity' which has reference to one's country of birth, and 'Nationality' which has reference to one's extraction.

²Ernest and Gladys Groves, The Contemporary American Family. Chicago: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1947, p. 409.

disproportionately with specific characteristics of juvenile delinquency? (2) In specific terms of the hypothesis, did the marital situation in which one of the parents was foreign born and the other was native born, in contrast to the marital situation in which both parents were either native or foreign born, reveal a significantly higher percentage of alleged delinquents who were (a) of the female sex, (b) of a relatively young age, and (c) of a parent-child situation in which the reason for referral indicated home conflict?

A direct concern with nativity of parents and juvenile delinquency was manifest in the Gluecks' Five Hundred Criminal Careers, although no clear differentiation was maintained between "Same" and "Mixed" parental relationships. It was found that there were two and one-half times as many delinquents who were native born of foreign or mixed parentage as there were in the general population.³

Kvaraceus, however, was not so quick to assign great significance to this parental area. On the basis of a study of 8,000 cases from the Passaic Children's Bureau, an uncritical analysis rendered

. . . confirmation of the widely held belief that parents newly resident in the United States are not well equipped to prepare children for life here. . . .

³Sheldon and Eleanor T. Glueck, Five Hundred Criminal Careers. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1939, p. 119.

Nearly two-thirds of all the delinquent children had parents one or both of whom had been born in Europe. But on comparing this figure with the data concerning the national origin of the child population 7-15 years of age in Passaic, it was found that nearly two-thirds of Passaic's children in the age span in which delinquency tends to occur were of foreign or mixed foreign-native white stock.⁴

The Gluecks' Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency revealed a greater association of mixed parental nativity cases among the non-delinquent control group than among the delinquent population of the study. Although 30.5 per cent of the non-delinquents had parents who were born in different countries, this was true for only 22.8 per cent of the delinquents. The association persisted even for those cases in which neither of the parents were born in the United States.⁵

The general lack of agreement among the experts as to the significance that could be attached to nativity differences in a study of juvenile delinquency was in part responsible for its inclusion in the present study of 495 alleged delinquents. Of the 394 cases for whom the parental nativity was known, 372 had parents both born in the same country. The remaining 22 cases were of parents one of

⁴William C. Kvaraceus, Juvenile Delinquency and the School. Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York: World Book Co., 1945, pp. 80-81.

⁵Sheldon and Eleanor T. Glueck, Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950, p. 95.

whom was foreign born and the other native born. Information could not be obtained for 101 of the cases. The small number of cases for whom a "Mixed" parental nativity was known to exist (4.4% of the study universe), combined with the relatively large number of cases for whom no information was available (20.4% of the study universe) compels one to use extreme caution when comparing percentages of the "Same" nativity category with those of the "Mixed" nativity category. Therefore, a major dichotomy of juvenile characteristics rather than a more refined breakdown was used throughout this chapter.

Sex of Alleged Delinquent

In the study of relationships between possible conflict in the home, as might have been affected by a parental nativity difference, and the sex composition of the alleged delinquents, it was found that 29.0 per cent of the cases which gave evidence of "Same" parental nativity were female cases. In the "Mixed" parental nativity category, on the other hand, 22.7 per cent of the cases were females. An identical 6.3 percentage difference was found to oppose rather than favor a concentration of male cases in the "Same" as compared with the "Mixed" nativity category (71.0%:77.3%). This contrary evidence in terms of the hypothesized relationship between the juvenile characteris-

tic of female sex and the parental "Mixed" nativity category was statistically insignificant, however.⁶ Table X summarizes the above findings:

TABLE X
NATIVITY OF CUSTODIAL PARENTS^a; BY SEX^b OF ALLEGED
JUVENILE DELINQUENTS IN INGHAM COUNTY 1951-1954

Sex	Same ^c		Diff.	Mixed	
	No.	Pct.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Female	108	29.0	6.3	5	22.7
Male	264	71.0		17	77.3
Total	372	100.0		22	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 2.335 - .2 > p > .1$$

^aFor 101 cases, no information was available. This reduced the total number of relevant cases to 394.

^bSixty-five of the "No Information Available" cases were males, 36 were females. In comparison with the cases for which information was available, there was a relatively great concentration of female cases (35.7%). However, chi-square analysis of the "No Information Available" category as might be related to the total sample group failed to reveal statistical significance.

^cIncluded four cases in which both parents were foreign born. All others were both native born.

⁶Extreme caution must be exercised when analyzing such a finding because of the small number of cases that existed for certain of the categories. Each cell frequency should preferably be much larger than 5. See Elmer B. Mode, The Elements of Statistics. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1941, p. 358.

Age of Alleged Delinquent

When the ages of the alleged delinquents were analysed in terms of parental nativity (see Table XI), a percentage difference of 6.0 was found to exist between cases of "Same" and "Mixed" nativity. While 19.6 per cent of the cases within the former category were of children 13 years of age and younger, 13.6 per cent of the cases within the

TABLE XI

NATIVITY OF CUSTODIAL PARENTS^a; BY AGE^b OF ALLEGED JUVENILE DELINQUENTS IN INGHAM COUNTY 1951-1954

Age	Same ^c		Diff.	Mixed	
	No.	Pct.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
13 and below	73	19.6	6.0	3	13.6
14 and above	299	80.4		19	86.4
Total	372	100.0		22	100.0

^aSee footnote a, Table X.

^bThe "No Information Available" category contained 25 cases from the younger age group and 76 cases from the older age group. The 24.8 percentage concentration in the relatively young age group for this category was somewhat larger than the 19.6 and 13.6 young age concentration for the "Same" and "Mixed" nativity categories respectively. A chi-square test of the difference between this "No Information" category and the total cases for which information was available ("Same" and "Mixed" categories combined) failed to reveal statistical significance.

^cSee footnote c, Table X.

latter category were of the same age division. Although 80.4 per cent of the "Same" nativity category were cases from the older age group, 86.4 per cent of the "Mixed" category were. The foregoing evidence tended to negate the hypothesis that cases of a relatively young age would be concentrated disproportionately in the "Mixed" parental nativity category.⁷

Reason for Referral of Alleged Delinquent

An investigation of the reasons for referral of the juveniles in regard to parental nativity (Table XII) revealed identical percentages and percentage differences, as did the investigation of the age factor of the juveniles in relation to parental nativity (Table XI). Likewise, the relationship found was contrary to the hypothesis that juvenile characteristics indicating incipient delinquency (in this instance, the reasons for referral giving evidence of home conflict) would be found predominantly within the "Mixed" rather than the "Same" parental nativity category.⁸ Thus, Table XI and Table XII both contained 73 cases in the "Same" nativity category (in each instance constituting

⁷Cell frequency was not great enough in all of the categories to permit a chi-square analysis.

⁸See footnote 7.

TABLE XII

NATIVITY OF CUSTODIAL PARENTS^a; BY REASON FOR REFERRAL^b
 OF ALLEGED JUVENILE DELINQUENTS IN INGHAM COUNTY
 1951-1954

Reason for Referral	Same ^c		Diff.	Mixed	
	No.	Pct.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Home conflict primarily evident	73	19.6	6.0	3	13.6
Home conflict not primarily evident	299	80.4		19	86.4
Total	372	100.0		22	100.0

^aSee footnote a, Table X.

^bThe "No Information Available" category contained a relatively great concentration of cases that revealed incipient juvenile delinquency. Thirty-three (32.6%) of the cases contained therein revealed evidence of home conflict by reason for referral. Sixty-eight cases (67.4%) could not be so characterized. When a chi-square test was applied to the "No Information Available" category as possibly related to all cases for which information was available, it was found to be significant. This difference may have been due, at least in part, to less complete reporting to the court for the cases which were referred for such reasons as running away, incorrigibility, and disobedience than for those referred for stealing, truancy, and the like. It was conjectured that the former reasons (parent-child conflict reasons) were infractions that usually originated in the home situation, and were therefore generally reported to the court voluntarily. It was highly probable that the court, on the other hand, did not demand as complete information regarding the parental background of such cases as it did for cases of stealing, truancy, and related reasons that required legal apprehension and investigation into the case.

^cSee footnote c, Table X.

19.6 per cent of the total) for which the juvenile characteristics were most indicative of incipient delinquency (the younger age group and reasons indicating parent-child home conflict). The percentage of like juvenile characteristics was found to be 6.0 lower in each instance for the "Mixed" nativity category.

Summary

A search for possible cultural conflict within the home environment as might have been coexistent with certain characteristics of alleged juvenile delinquents was conducted in the parental nativity area. Of the 495 alleged delinquents who were referred to the Ingham County court, only 22 cases were found in which both parents were not born in the same country. The hypothesis that these 22 cases of "Mixed" parental nativity would show a greater preponderance of juvenile characteristics assumed to be related to incipient juvenile delinquency (such as female sex, relatively young age, and reasons for referral giving evidence of parent-child conflict) than cases of the "Same" parental nativity was not supported in any instance. Rather, the "Mixed" parental nativity category showed a greater percentage of cases that were males (6.3 percentage difference), that were from a relatively old age group (6.0 percentage difference, and that were referred for reasons not

primarily indicative of home conflict (6.0 percentage difference). None of the relationships could be shown to be statistically significant, however.

Thus, it must be concluded that the assumed potential conflict area of "Mixed" parental nativity contained no accrued concentration of alleged delinquency cases that had incipient characteristics. Such unexpected results might lead one to an alternate explanation, namely that those children with incipient characteristics (especially female sex and young age) are afforded more protection from the home, and therefore might be expected to be concentrated in an area of parental compatibility rather than of conflict,-- a conflict which is cultural as well as domestic. Conversely, a home situation lacking such a protective character might be more predisposed to child-society conflict.

CHAPTER IV

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION OF CUSTODIAL PARENTS

Relevance to a Study of Juvenile Delinquency

The domestic discord that cultural conflict may engender in its penetration of the family institution has been considered significant by most authorities of the family. Cuber grasped the significance of a differential value background in the marital context when he stated that "husbands and wives frequently have had different value backgrounds which seemed unimportant before or at the time of marriage." "These values," he noted, "are not only markedly different, but sometimes basically incompatible."¹

The area of religion has been considered a legitimate one in which to study the possible effects that different cultural value backgrounds have on marital relations. Barber, in a discussion of family stability, pointed out that "the sense of oneness with the family group, together with the bond of shared unity makes a very strong combination"² The contributions of other family experts lend

¹John F. Cuber, Sociology. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1951, p. 447.

²Ray E. Barber, "Sociological Differences in Family Stability," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 272 (November, 1950), p. 37.

additional support to the preceding statement:

While some cultural conflict may appear in all situations of intermarriage, one would expect it to be more exaggerated where marriage occurs between two individuals belonging to groups with wide cultural differences. . . .³

. . . religious faith . . . is important to the success of a marriage, for two persons whose values conflict will find adjustment in marriage difficult.⁴

Differences in religion constitute one of the most obvious phases of cultural conflict in marriage.⁵

If a predominantly sacred-minded person marries a predominantly secular-minded person, the great divergencies in their attitudes and values are almost certain to lead to conflict.⁶

There existed a general lack of consensus among family experts, however, as to the relative significance of certain specific areas of value background, especially when these indices were studied from the marital relations point of view. A case in point was the lack of consensus that existed among those interested in background items as predictive of marital happiness and adjustment.⁷ Reckless and

³Harriet R. Mowrer, Personality Adjustment and Domestic Discord. Chicago: American Book Co., 1935, pp. 192-193.

⁴Andrew G. Truxal and Francis E. Merrill, The Family in American Culture. New York: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1947, p. 595.

⁵Ibid., p. 607.

⁶Ernest W. Burgess and Harvey J. Locke, The Family. Cambridge: American Book Co., 1953, p. 521.

⁷For instance, in regard to the significance attributed to the premarital item of church membership, Burgess

Smith rendered a plausible explanation for such a lack of convergence when they stated for a religion, "the use of formal definition is meaningless and the essence of religion is so subtle and subjective that no adequate index is at hand."⁸ Shulman showed a more direct concern with the socialization of family members as related to religious values when he stated that "we have come to recognize that differences in ethical training and differences in ethical definition . . . contribute to culture conflict and to juvenile delinquency itself."⁹

What characteristics of incipient juvenile delinquency, at least partially, may be indicated by or associated with differences in the religious affiliation of parents? To attempt an answer to this and related questions, the 495

and Cottrell listed neither differences or similarities in the parental area as being of any significance to prediction. Locke, on the other hand, included the item of similar church membership as a crucial one in predicting adjustment in marriage. In so doing, he left reason to believe that a difference would be of consequence to both spouses. Other investigators regarded certain aspects of church membership to be more significant than others. For a detailed comparison of these and other studies done in terms of specific predictive items, see Ernest W. Burgess and Harvey J. Locke, *op. cit.*, Chap. 15, "Predicting Marital Adjustment," pp. 396-442.

⁸Walter C. Reckless and Mapheus Smith, Juvenile Delinquency. McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1932, p. 150.

⁹Harry M. Shulman, "The Family and Juvenile Delinquency," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 261 (January, 1949), p. 26.

cases of alleged juvenile delinquency were analyzed. Of the 412 cases for which the parental religious affiliation could be attained,¹⁰ 381 did not manifest a difference between parents. Although only tentative conclusions could be based on the evidence of the 31 remaining cases (6.3% of the total study universe), the number was sufficiently large in most instances to permit a statistical breakdown by characteristics of the alleged juvenile delinquent population. No information could be obtained for 83 cases (16.8% of the total study universe).

Sex of Alleged Delinquent

Table XIII contains the results of the inquiry that was conducted into the areas of similarity and difference in parental religious affiliation according to the sex characteristic of the alleged delinquents. An analysis of the table revealed a 7.4 percentage difference. This difference favored the male cases in the "Same" religious af-

¹⁰Actually, 'religious affiliation' was viewed in a broad inclusive sense. Similarities and differences in religious affiliation were computed according to the major position in which each parent placed himself in terms of a philosophy or conviction concerning life--be it a major religious faith, or lack of one. Thus, "None" was included as a legitimate religious category as well as "Protestant" and "Catholic" (no other major religious faiths were represented in the study). This chapter, then, does not represent an attempt to analyze religion, per se, or even religious practices. Rather, it represents an attempt to analyze verbal religious affiliation or lack thereof in parents as a possible indicator of certain characteristics of alleged juvenile delinquents.

TABLE XIII

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION OF CUSTODIAL PARENTS^a; BY SEX^b
 OF ALLEGED JUVENILE DELINQUENTS IN INGHAM COUNTY
 1951-1954

Sex	Same		Diff.	Mixed	
	No.	Pct.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Female	107	28.1	7.4	11	35.5
Male	274	71.9		20	64.5
Total	381	100.0		31	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 0.435 - .7 > p > .5$$

^aThere was no information available for 83 cases. This reduced the total number of relevant cases to 412.

^bIn comparison to parental categories containing cases for which information was obtained, the "No Information Available" category contained a preponderance of female cases. The 31 female cases comprized 37.3 per cent of the total number of cases in that category, while the 52 male cases made up the remaining 62.7 per cent. A chi-square analysis of the "No Information Available" cases as related to the total number of relevant cases for which information was obtained, did not reveal statistical significance.

filiation category, and the female cases in the "Mixed" religious affiliation category. While only 28.1 per cent of the cases in the former category were females, 35.5 per cent of the latter category were females. The male cases, on the other hand, constituted 71.9 per cent of the former, but only 64.5 per cent of the latter category. This finding was support for the previously stated hypothesis, namely, that female cases would be disproportionately concen-

trated in an area characterized by potential parental conflict between the spouses (in this instance, "Mixed" religious affiliation). The relationship was not a statistically significant one, however.

Age of Alleged Delinquent

When the ages of the alleged delinquents were studied in relation to parental religious affiliation (Table XIV), it was found that juvenile cases of a relatively young age group were less concentrated (percentagewise) in the "Same" religious affiliation category than they were in the "Mixed" religious affiliation category. While 19.5 per cent of those 13 years of age and below were found in the former category, 25.8 per cent of the same age group were found in the latter category. This difference in percentage of 6.3 favoring parental intermarriage and the relatively young alleged delinquents was shown conversely by an imbalance in the percentages of those 14 years of age and older. While the "Same" category was made up of 80.5 per cent of this relatively old age group, 74.2 per cent of the "Mixed" category was so composed. The above data rendered support for the hypothesis that cases of a relatively young age would be found concentrated in the "Mixed" rather than the "Same" category of parental religious affiliation, because of the potential conflict of such an area on the ju-

TABLE XIV

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION OF CUSTODIAL PARENTS^a; BY AGE^b
 OF ALLEGED JUVENILE DELINQUENTS IN INGHAM COUNTY
 1951-1954

Age	Same		Diff.	Mixed	
	No.	Pct.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
<u>13 and below</u>	75	19.5		8	25.8
11-below	19	4.9		0	0.0
12-13	56	14.6		8	25.8
			6.3		
<u>14 and above</u>	306	80.5		23	74.2
14-15	207	54.5		16	51.6
15-above	99	26.0		7	22.6
Total	381	100.0		31	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 0.367 - .7 > p > .5$$

^aSee footnote a, Table XIII.

^bFalling between the extremes set by cases of the "Same" category on the one hand and the "Mixed" category on the other, was the relative incidence by age of the cases for which no information was available. The 18 juvenile cases that were of the relatively young age group (13 years and below) made up 21.7 per cent of this "No Information Available" category. The remaining 65 cases of the older age group (14 years and above) accounted for the remaining 78.3 per cent of the "No Information Available" category. In comparison with the total number of cases for which information was available, a chi-square test failed to reveal significance. With few minor exceptions, age specific percentages in the "No Information Available" category fell between the limits set by the two categories for which information was available.

veniles within the home. This relationship between potential parental conflict and an incipient aspect of juvenile delinquency (young age), while positive in tendency, was not statistically significant. A more refined age breakdown revealed that the greatest percentage difference between "Same" and "Mixed" parental religious affiliation was in the 12-13 age bracket (14.6%:25.8%). An exception to the higher percentage in the latter parental category for those of a relatively young age was found in the 11-below age bracket (4.9%:0.0%). Of the cases 14 and above, percentages were consistently higher for the "Same" than they were for the "Mixed" category. With one exception, then, an intensive age analysis by percentage lent support to the previously hypothesized relationship between incipient juvenile delinquency and differences in parental religious affiliation.

Reason for Referral of Alleged Delinquent

It can be seen from Table XV that the percentage of cases giving evidence of home conflict in reason for referral was only one-half as large for the "Same" parental religious affiliation as it was for the "Mixed" parental religious affiliation category (19.4%:35.5%). In terms of the cases for which the reasons were not primarily indicative of home conflict, a much greater percentage was found

TABLE XV

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION OF CUSTODIAL PARENTS^a; BY REASON
FOR REFERRAL^b OF ALLEGED JUVENILE DELINQUENTS
IN INGHAM COUNTY 1951-1954

Reason for Referral	Same		Diff.	Mixed	
	No.	Pct.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
<u>Home conflict</u>					
<u>primarily evident</u>	70	18.4		11	35.5
Incorrigibility or					
disobedience	55	14.4		9	29.0
Running away	15	4.0		2	6.5
			17.1		
<u>Home conflict not</u>					
<u>primarily evident</u>	311	81.6		20	64.5
Stealing	150	39.4		9	29.0
Truancy	77	20.2		5	16.1
Sex offense	29	7.6		1	3.3
Others	55	14.4		5	16.1
Total	381	100.0	4.273	31	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 4.273 - .05 > p > .02$$

^aSee footnote a, Table XIII.

^bThe "No Information Available" category contained 28 cases for which home conflict was primarily evident and 55 cases for which it was not. The former cases represented 33.7 per cent of the category, whereas the latter cases represented 64.5 per cent of the total cases for the category. Thus, the percentage of cases for which no information was available closely approximated those of the "Mixed" category, while falling between the extremes set by this and the "Same" category. A chi-square test of the difference between the "No Information Available" category and the total cases for which information was available was significant. For an attempted explanation of the cause or causes for such a concentration of home conflict reasons in the "No Information Available" category see footnote b, Table XII, p. 78. When the "No Information Available" category was analyzed according to specific reasons for referral, the percentages of all but two reasons fell between or closely approximated the "Same" and/or "Mixed" categories. The reasons for which relatively great percentage deviations existed were 'truancy' (24.1%) and 'others' (3.6%).

100
64
10
2
3
4
1



in the "Same" category than in the "Mixed" category (81.6%: 64.5%). In support of the hypothesis, these statistics left a divergence in percentage between the two parental religious affiliation categories of 17.1 in favor of home conflict reasons as they coexisted with the "Mixed" category. This relationship was statistically significant. An analysis of specific reasons for referral upheld the major findings presented above. Without exception, higher percentages were found in the "Mixed" category for reasons indicative of home conflict. In the "Same" category, percentages were found to be consistently higher for all specific reasons for referral not indicative of home conflict. Only in the miscellaneous 'others' classification was there a reversal of this percentage trend.

Summary

Parental religious affiliation was studied as a possible area of cultural conflict related to incipient juvenile delinquency. By comparing the cases of parents who had the "Same" religious affiliation (an area of relatively little potential conflict) with those who had "Mixed" religious affiliation (an area of relatively great potential conflict), it was found that the latter category included higher percentages for all three juvenile characteristics previously hypothesized to be directly related to incipient

juvenile delinquency. Thus, from the 495 cases studied, the 31 cases within the "Mixed" category revealed consistently higher percentages for female cases, for cases of a relatively young age, and for cases referred for reasons giving indications of parent-child home conflict. The remaining 381 cases of "Same" religious affiliation, on the other hand, revealed a greater preponderance of male cases, of cases within a relatively old age group, and of cases that were referred for reasons not primarily indicative of parent-child home conflict. The percentage differences between the parental categories for these three juvenile characteristics were 7.4, 6.3, and 17.1 respectively. Only the relationship between the parental categories and the reasons for referral was statistically significant, however.

Thus, the conclusion can be made that the parental area of "Mixed" religious affiliation, as one of high potential conflict, contained a disproportionate concentration of alleged delinquency cases which had characteristics of an incipient nature.

CHAPTER V

FORMAL EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF CUSTODIAL PARENTS

Relevance to a Study of Juvenile Delinquency

The general hypothesis, that potential conflict relationships between parents within the home would be indicative of certain characteristics of incipient juvenile delinquency, was tested by examining the differences in educational attainment of custodial parents.

Few observers of the American scene deny that education, as represented by formal attainment, has high positive value attachment in American society. Equally evident is the fact that its meaning has changed concurrently with historical changes in other American institutions.¹ Groves believed that a great deal of change could be looked upon as the result of science and the greater intellectual freedom that follows after science.² While technological

¹One must be careful not to attribute a moral connotation to cultural change as being either "good" or "bad." This is not the task of the sociologist. Rather, it is his task to describe and analyze this change, not thinking of status quo and stability as synonymous terms. It remains for others to evaluate any change in the folkways or mores; a specific change must always be evaluated on its own grounds.

²Ernest R. Groves, "Social Influences Affecting Family

change has occurred with an "accelerating rate of increase," the adaptive culture (folkways and mores) has changed at a slower rate, as it is functional to some degree in producing stability.³ For the American family, social change has been evident in its transition from a colonial institution to one in the setting of an industrial society.⁴ As a result, the modern marriage partnership is fraught with many possible conflicts, for rapid social change is often accompanied by a cultural lag. In 1925, Groves saw the significance of cultural lag and its relationship to potential resultant conflict in the home situation. In fact, he recognized the educational sphere as a major causal area of cultural lag leading to marital conflict. He stated:

Today men and women are sharply at odds. Especially does this seem to be true of the educated young man and woman. The former sees in his possible wife the general likeness of his mother. Although he expects a home different from that of his boyhood, he still pictures his wife in the helpmate character of his mother--a new home, but an old-fashioned type of wife. As he lets sentiment and desire turn him backward, so the woman he marries

Life," American Journal of Sociology, 31 (September, 1925), p. 227.

³Meyer F. Nimkoff, Marriage and the Family. Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1947, p. 594.

⁴For a complete historical account of change and its significance for the Family throughout many generations, see Meyer F. Nimkoff, Marriage and the Family, Part I, "Introduction," Chaps. 1-3, pp. 3-82.

has been forced by her social experience to look forward. They marry with ideals separated by a whole generation. The result is too frequently that marriage becomes an experiment in which toleration or conflict becomes its very essence.⁵

On the basis of the foregoing quotation, one should not conclude that all parental conflict is solely cultural. Truxal and Merrill considered family conflict in two general senses. Whereas personal conflicts "arise primarily out of the personality differences of husband and wife," social conflicts "arise beyond the inner relationship and impinge upon the family group from without. Because of the social nature of personality, these two forms of conflict are not mutually exclusive."⁶ Nimkoff included the probability of personal conflict, but in addition to it, stated that "the fact that man has culture complicates the picture, because the culture may help to facilitate adjustments or maladjustments, depending on its teachings and the demands it makes."⁷ It remains true that some phases of marriage relations are cultural in a more restricted sense than others. Mowrer attributed differences in education predominately to cultural conflict. "Conflict in this

⁵Ernest R. Groves, op. cit., p. 231.

⁶Andrew G. Truxal and Francis E. Merrill, The Family in American Culture. New York: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1947, p. 585.

⁷Meyer F. Nimkoff, op. cit., p. 598.

realm," she stated, "grows out of differences in folkways and mores of the groups in which the individuals grow up. These differences give rise to conflict largely because they symbolize obstacles to, or lack of, identification of the individuals concerned."⁸ Burgess and Locke contended that the majority of conflicts within the family must be understood as "differences in the conceptions which members have of their roles within and outside the home."⁹

Historically speaking, there is reason to believe that domestic conflicts are currently more numerous and influential on the behavior of family members than they have been in the past. Certainly, the modern American family is subject to a greater variety of influences than existed for the earlier colonial family. Burgess and Locke have summed up this point best by noting that, "in a society in transition from an agricultural to an urban civilization characterized by heterogeneity and cultural conflicts, there is not the same uniformity in family integration as is found in a homogeneous society."¹⁰ This growing complexity increases the chances for deviations from expectations, as

⁸Harriet R. Mowrer, Personality Adjustment and Domestic Discord. Chicago: American Book Co., 1935, pp. 191-192.

⁹Ernest W. Burgess and Harvey J. Locke, The Family. Cambridge: American Book Co., 1953, p. 538.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 312.

the more heterogeneous folkways and mores give rise to different definitions of family roles.¹¹

Role differences between husband and wife are capable of affecting not only the relationship to the marital partners involved but to the children as well. Burgess gave expression to this dual tendency when he claimed that "many of the current problems within the family are to be explained by the resulting conflicting conceptions in expectations and roles of husbands and wives and of parents and children."¹²

The coexistence of certain characteristics of the alleged juvenile delinquent population with differences in parental educational attainment does not completely establish the fact of causal relationship between incipient delinquency and parental role conflict. Yet the urgency to investigate the less evident parental relationships in terms of incipient delinquency remains. Both Abrams and Baber have pointed to the relevancy and necessity of study in such areas. To quote:

¹¹See Ernest W. Burgess and Harvey J. Locke, op. cit., p. 475, where the statement is made that "instead of common definitions of family roles entrenched in tradition and crushing all variation by sheer weight of universal conformity, our modern American society presents what at first glance seems to be a chaotic conglomeration of every conceivable pattern of family organization and roles. . . ."

¹²Ernest W. Burgess, "The Family in a Changing Society," American Sociological Review, 13 (May, 1948), p. 419.

The various attempts to work out objective and statistical indices of family stability have been largely in terms of the symbols of our culture--the divorce rate and the outer manifestations that society thinks necessary for marital success. However . . . the inner stability of the family life is in a different area of values and measurements. Stable families are not necessarily those that remain together. The relationships between the individuals themselves must enable them to promote their own happiness¹³

It is difficult to say just how stable or unstable an institution is at any given time; that is, just where to draw the line on the continuum from stability to instability. But society does not usually become concerned until it is apparent that the continuity of function is in danger. By that time corrective effort is more difficult than it would have been earlier, but seldom can social scientists get the necessary following in such an effort until maladjustments are apparent to the public.¹⁴

Fuller and Myers have expressed the opinion that "we can learn very little about social problems by considering only such scientific data as lie outside the pale of moral judgments."¹⁵ They believed that the sociologist should not be deterred from studying social values because of the danger of subjectivity, for,

¹³Ray H. Abrams, "The Concept of Family Stability," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 272 (November, 1950), p. 7.

¹⁴Ray E. Baber, "Sociological Differences in Family Stability," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 272 (November, 1950), p. 30.

¹⁵Richard C. Fuller and Richard R. Myers, "Some Aspects of a Theory of Social Problems," American Sociological Review, 6 (February, 1941), p. 15.

. . . if he leaves them out he has not a complete concept 'social problem'; he is dealing with only fragmentary and partial data. He must bring these value-judgments into the arena of scientific study before it can be said he is obeying one of the first laws of science, which is to study all, and not part, of the evidence pertinent to his problem.¹⁶

Baber concerned himself directly with the question as to whether or not the amount of education by years of school completed was a suitable index of the stability of family life. The answer to such a question, he noted, was nearly impossible without taking into account regional differences and factors of mobility. These tempering influences could best be controlled, he claimed, by holding constant the geographical dimension.¹⁷

Of course, absolute value cannot be assigned to a specific level of education on the part of a spouse. For marriage is an interactional relationship, the interpretation of which transcends any mere trait analysis of the members of that relationship. Marriage is not a conglomeration of isolated personality or societal traits that might make it possible to assign an absolute value to certain select quantities of formal education. Rather, educational differences must be viewed as significant and meaningful because in our culture dominant social attitudes and values are associated with education.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 16.

¹⁷Ray E. Baber, op. cit., p. 34.

Actual studies of the relationship between unequal parental education and marital compatibility have been conducted. In his Research in Marriage (1929), Hamilton found that "where the husband and wife had an equal amount of education, the couples were above the average for happiness," but that "superior education made those men and women unhappy whose mates did not have it" ¹⁸ Kirkpatrick, in a comparative study of well adjusted and poorly adjusted married couples, concluded that "similarity in schooling of husband and wife is somewhat more characteristic of well adjusted couples." ¹⁹

Since empirical findings seldom have either comparability or validity unless the elements to be studied have been defined rigidly, levels of formal educational attainment were set up for this study. These levels (or categories) have been maintained more or less traditionally by societal attitudes: ²⁰

0 to 4th year	Primary school level
5th to 8th year	Grade school level
9th to 12th year	High school level
13th to 16th year	College level
17th year and over	Graduate school level

¹⁸Cited in Ernest W. Burgess and Harvey J. Locke, op. cit., p. 539.

¹⁹Clifford Kirkpatrick, "Factors in Marital Adjustment," American Journal of Sociology, 43 (September, 1937), p. 283.

²⁰These levels excluded nursery and kindergarten experience.

Successful completion of the upper extreme of any category designated one as a member of the next advanced level. Differences in parental levels of attainment, it was assumed, represented socially significant differences in one's conception of marital role. These differences could have led to domestic conflict. The socialization potential of such conflict on the 495 alleged delinquents who were studied in this thesis was analyzed in terms of the following hypothesis: Cases manifesting a difference in the educational attainment level between parents would coexist to a greater extent with juvenile characteristics assumed indicative of incipient delinquency than would cases manifesting no such difference in parental educational level.

Of the 495 cases of alleged juvenile delinquents from Ingham County, 167 had a difference in educational level between parents. Of the 328 remaining cases, 200 were known to have similar educational level, while the other 128 contained incomplete educational data.

Sex of Alleged Delinquent

Table XVI shows the numerical and percentage difference in the sex composition of the alleged delinquents in its relation to parental education. From it one can see that there existed a 1.1 percentage difference between the two educational attainment categories for which information

TABLE XVI

FORMAL EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT LEVEL OF CUSTODIAL PARENTS^a;
 BY SEX^b OF ALLEGED JUVENILE DELINQUENTS
 IN INGHAM COUNTY 1951-1954

Sex	Same Level		Diff.	One or More Levels Diff.	
	No.	Pct.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Female	60	30.0	1.1	52	31.1
Male	140	70.0		115	68.9
Total	200	100.0		167	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 0.016 - .9 > p > .8$$

^aThere was no information available for 128 cases.

^bThe sex ratio for the "No Information Available" category was very similar to that of the total sample of available cases. The 37 female cases within it represented 28.9 per cent of its total and the 91 male cases comprised the remaining 71.1 per cent. The relationship of the "No Information Available" category to the total sample was not a statistically significant one.

was available. Tenuously in support of the previously stated hypothesis, this difference, although statistically insignificant, favored a concentration of female alleged delinquency cases within a parental area or relatively great potential conflict, namely "One or More Levels Difference."

Age of Alleged Delinquent

A study of the age composition of the alleged delinquents by parental educational attainment levels revealed a 3.5 percentage difference between cases for which parental education was on the "Same Level" and those for which existed "One or More Levels Difference." This difference favored juveniles 13 years of age and below in the latter category (18.0%:21.5%) and those 14 years of age and above in the former category (82.0%:78.5%). Such a finding rendered support for the hypothesis that cases of a relatively young age would be found concentrated in a parental area of potential conflict--in this instance, formal educational attainment of "One or More Levels Difference." The relationship was not statistically significant, however. A more complete breakdown of the cases is presented in Table XVII. This refined age breakdown revealed that the percentage differences gave support to the previously stated hypothesis with one exception. This inconsistency occurred in the 14-15 age bracket, an age which was represented predominantly in the "One or More Levels Difference" category (57.5%:53.0%).

Reason for Referral of Alleged Delinquent

When reasons for referral were compared in terms of parental educational attainment levels (for this, see

TABLE XVII

FORMAL EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT LEVEL OF CUSTODIAL PARENTS^a;
 BY AGE^b OF ALLEGED JUVENILE DELINQUENTS
 IN INGHAM COUNTY 1951-1954

Age	Same Level		Diff.	One or More Levels Diff.	
	No.	Pct.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
<u>13 and below</u>	36	18.0		36	21.5
11-below	8	4.0		9	5.4
12-13	28	14.0		27	16.1
			3.5		
<u>14 and above</u>	164	82.0		131	78.5
14-15	106	53.0		96	57.5
16-above	58	29.0		35	21.0
Total	200	100.0		167	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 0.508 - .5 > p > .3$$

^aSee footnote a, Table XVI.

^bThe relative incidence by major age divisions of the cases for which no information was available was very similar to that of the "One or More Levels Difference" category. The 29 cases of relatively young age comprised 22.6 per cent of the "No Information Available" category and the 99 cases of relatively old age made up the remaining 77.4 per cent of the category. Such a proportion lacked statistical significance when compared to the total sample of available cases. Age specific percentages in the "No Information Available" category for all relatively young cases very closely approximated those found in the "One or More Levels Difference" category. Those of the relatively old cases more closely approximated the specific percentages found in the "Same Level" category.

Table XVIII), those directly indicating home conflict were less concentrated in the "Same Level" category than they were in the "One or More Levels Difference" category (17.0%:23.4%). For reasons not directly indicative of home conflict, the identical percentage difference of 6.4 was found to favor the former rather than the latter parental category (83.0%:76.6%). Such a difference represented support for the hypothesized relationship between reasons for referral reflecting home conflict and differential attainment for formal education between the parents (as a facet of potential conflict). The tendency was not statistically significant, however. A complete breakdown of reasons for referral according to parental educational attainment levels follows in Table XVIII. With two minor exceptions, all percentage differences between the two parental categories by specific reasons for referral supported the hypothesized relationship between home conflict reasons for referral and parental educational differences. Both of the exceptions were for reasons not directly indicative of home conflict that were more highly concentrated in the area of parental educational similarity (Stealing, 38.9%:37.0%, and Sex offense, 7.2%:7.0%).

In summary, a positive (although statistically insignificant) association was found to exist between each of three juvenile traits (female sex, relatively young age,

TABLE XVIII

FORMAL EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT LEVEL OF CUSTODIAL PARENTS^a;
 BY REASON FOR REFERRAL^b OF ALLEGED JUVENILE DELINQUENTS
 IN INGHAM COUNTY 1951-1954

Reason for Referral	Same Level		Diff.	One or More Levels Diff.	
	No.	Pct.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
<u>Home conflict</u>					
<u>primarily evident</u>	34	17.0		39	23.4
Incorrigibility or					
disobedience	24	12.0		33	19.8
Running away	10	5.0		6	3.6
			6.4		
<u>Home conflict not</u>					
<u>primarily evident</u>	166	83.0		128	76.6
Stealing	74	37.0		65	38.9
Truancy	44	22.0		30	17.9
Sex offense	14	7.0		12	7.2
Others	34	17.0		21	12.6
Total	200	100.0		167	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 1.923 - .2 > p > .1$$

^aSee footnote a, Table XVI.

^bThe concentration of cases in the "No Information Available" category was rather 'atypical' as compared to the reasons for referral of all cases for which information was available. Thus 36 (28.1%) of the cases contained within it were referred for reasons for which home conflict was primarily evident. The remaining 92 cases (71.9%) could not be so characterized. When these concentrations were compared to those for which parental educational information was available, the chi-square test failed to reveal significance, however. (For selectivity factors that may have been operative in rendering significance between the two populations, see footnote b, Table XII, p. 78.) Concerning specific reasons, distortions from the concentrations in parental categories for which information was available were relatively great for the reason of incorrigibility and disobedience, for which 32 cases existed (25.0%), and for other miscellaneous cases for which there existed nine cases (7.0%). All other specific reasons in the "No Information Available" category fluctuated no more than 0.1 per cent from one of the parental categories for which information was available.

and a reason for referral reflecting home conflict) assumed to be indicative of incipient juvenile delinquency and a difference in the formal educational attainment level between the father and the mother. On the basis of this evidence, it seemed legitimate to conduct a more intensive investigation of the 167 cases that manifested a divergence in parental educational attainment. To this end, the remainder of the chapter is directed.

Relevance of Difference by Sex to a Study of Juvenile Delinquency

Burgess and Locke have revealed that "within the family, tensions centering around status tend to appear with any change in roles."²¹ If it be true that the traditional role of the husband has been undermined in contemporary American culture, is it not possible that the characteristics of incipient juvenile delinquency might have coexisted especially with those cases in which the educational attainment level of the female parent was higher than that of the male parent? On the basis of this observation, the investigator selected the educational attainment level of parents as an indicator of the changing roles manifested in contemporary marital relationships in this society.²²

²¹Ernest W. Burgess and Harvey J. Locke, op. cit., p. 522.

²²See John F. Cuber, Sociology, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1950, pp. 571-572, for a succinct

That a change in societal definition of marital role has occurred might be concluded from the following citations, which seem to trace an historical trend in the family role concept:

Colonial America was a man's world When a woman married she lost her separate legal status and became, as it were, a ward of her husband.²³

As the family ceased to be a co-operative unit in economic production the male lost some of his great authority that had developed.²⁴

In the patriarchal family the role of the wife is sharply defined by custom. In the modern family the woman may play any, or perhaps all, of a number of conflicting roles²⁵

But the male spouse was not easily reconciled to losing his traditional family prerogatives--hence the potential conflict of values. The development away from the antecedent European and early American patriarchal family, Cuber maintained, was evident in the educational institution as well as in others.²⁶ Using education as an ex-

analysis of traditional roles and how their "breakdown" is not necessarily a reflection of social disorganization but rather may be evidence of a lack of familiarity with the roles which shape up for tomorrow's society as compared with the familiarity with roles which have come out of the past.

²³Meyer F. Nimkoff, op. cit., p. 78.

²⁴Ibid., p. 90.

²⁵Willard Waller, The Family: A Dynamic Interpretation. New York: Dryden Press, 1938, p. 323.

²⁶John F. Cuber, op. cit., p. 435.

ample, Nimkoff stated that

A fundamental cause of domestic difficulties is mal-adjustment between the different parts of culture due to the fact that one part changes faster than another. The picture of the ideal wife which the husband carries in his mind is often fashioned after his mother. But times have changed, and have produced a new type of wife who may be wedded to an old-style husband. The cultural change is, then, the cause of divergent conceptions of the wifely role which results in conflict.²⁷

A wealth of information concerning differential marital role positions has indicated that a threat to marital stability was greater and therefore more significant when the female's, rather than the male's, status was enhanced.

Theoretical statements, such as the following, lent support to the social significance of the rapidly changing role of the wife as it threatened the husband's status in society:

. . . discord may result if the domination role of the wife runs counter to cultural expectations. The tradition of masculine domination has a stronger place in our culture than the modern ethical conception that equality "ought" to characterize relationships between the sexes.²⁸

Under the influence of conflicting conceptions of family life, the modern husband and wife often have different conceptions of the parts which they have to play in their family. In as much as the husband's role as traditionally defined has been superordinant, he will probably tend under the impress of modern social changes toward minor modifications of tradi-

²⁷Meyer F. Nimkoff, op. cit., p. 14.

²⁸Ernest W. Burgess and Harvey J. Locke, op. cit., pp. 252-253.

tional roles. Since the role of the wife as traditionally defined has been subordinate, under the impress of the same social changes she will tend toward greater modifications of traditional roles.²⁹

. . . there exists a cultural definition to the effect that what divergencies exist should be to the advantage of the man.³⁰

That this socially significant rise in the status of the wife may have personal consequences in terms of marital adjustment was taken into consideration by Gladys H. Groves more than three decades ago! She noted that whether or not he personally subscribes to the point of view that woman is improving her lot at man's expense,

. . . a man is conscious of it and knows that he is liable to be open to criticism if his wife is largely independent. This fact makes special demands on the man and tends to increase his sensitiveness if he feels that in any way he is not successful in his traditional masculine role. Such a cultural lag as this is always troublesome during the generations required for it to get straightened out.³¹

Ernest R. Groves believed that causal significance could be attached to the educational institution in terms of family roles and cultural change. His statement follows:

One social change that influences the home in both its marriage and parenthood elements is the passing of man's dominance. The family has been a masculine affair. Science is rather generally agreed

²⁹Ibid., p. 303.

³⁰Ibid., p. 433.

³¹Gladys H. Groves, Marriage and Family Life. Cornwall, New York: Cornwall Press, 1942, p. 334.

that this has been a characteristic of the family as far back as we can unravel by deduction and past experience. The home has reflected the desires of the male. Not in every home, not everywhere to the same degree, has masculine dominance existed. It has been, however, based upon social mores of the firmness of granite. And now the basic principle has cracked. The cause is not hard to find. Education destroys submission and subservience; it limits exploitation and creates a hunger for equality and satisfaction.³²

Terman's empirical study gave evidence that wives whose husbands were markedly superior to them in education showed low marital happiness scores.³³ A similar study by Burgess and Cottrell revealed that the wife's education made more difference than the husband's in affecting the chances for a high marital adjustment score.³⁴ Such findings suggested that for a man to marry a woman with more formal education than he has is a greater risk to marital happiness than is the opposite educational relationship.

For the present study, it was assumed that although equality of formal education may no longer be looked upon with general disdain, the male is the last of the two marriage partners to assume a subordinant or submissive role

³²Ernest R. Groves, op. cit., p. 230.

³³Lewis M. Terman and associates, Psychological Factors in Marital Adjustment. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1938, p. 191.

³⁴Ernest W. Burgess and Leonard S. Cottrell, Predicting Success or Failure in Marriage, New York: Prentice-Hall, 1939, as presented in Meyer F. Nimkoff, op. cit., p. 456.

in terms of marital status. On this basis, formal education differences that existed in the wife's favor were viewed as possessing a greater potential conflict than was true of the reverse situation. Therefore, it was hypothesized that such a conflict situation would manifest itself disproportionately among those alleged juveniles who could be best characterized as incipient delinquents, namely those who were of the female sex, who were of a relatively young age, and who had been referred for reasons indicating home conflict.

A breakdown of the 167 cases in which the educational attainment of the parents was separated by one or more levels revealed that in 110, or nearly two-thirds of the cases (65.9%), the mother rather than the father had the superior formal education. In only 57, or slightly more than one-third of the cases (34.1%), was the father superior. The possible significance of this unequal sex distribution to a study of incipient juvenile delinquency became increasingly apparent when it was compared to general population statistics. Although it is true that the census analysis may have concealed certain specific relationships,³⁵ current statistics were adequate in revealing the more general

³⁵For instance, not only married people but single people as well were included in the analysis. Also, formal educational attainment was measured in terms of actual grade completion rather than by level.

1961

1960

1959

1958

1957

1956

1955

1954

1953

1952

1951

1950

1949

1948

1947

1946

1945

1944

1943

1942

1941

1940

1939

1938

1937

1936

1935

1934

1933

characteristics and composition of the population. Most recent Michigan census data revealed a slightly greater percentage of males than females 25 years of age and older who had finished their formal education at the grade school level (22.8%:21.0%) as well as at the college level (6.1%:4.4%). On the other hand, there was a greater percentage of females than of males who had successfully completed the high school level (24.7%:19.0%). In terms of the median school years completed, there was great similarity between the sexes. The difference that existed favored the female element of the population (10.2 grades completed as compared to 9.5 grades completed for the male).

The excessive concentration of female parents in this study who had attained a higher educational level than their male spouses (as compared to general census data) indicated that certain selectivity factors were operating. It seemed tenable to assume that one such selectivity factor of great significance was the common denominator of alleged juvenile delinquency for each home. A detailed breakdown of educational attainment levels in terms of the sex of the educationally superior parent follows (in Table XIX) for the 167 relevant cases.

Close analysis of Table XIX revealed that the concentration of cases involving the mother became even more pronounced as the educational difference increased. Thus,

TABLE XIX

DIFFERENCES IN EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT LEVELS BETWEEN
CUSTODIAL PARENTS OF ALLEGED DELINQUENTS;
BY SEX OF SUPERIOR PARENT

Superior Parent	One Level Difference		Two or More Levels Diff.	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Mother	91	63.6	19	79.2
Father	52	36.4	5	20.8
Total	143	100.0	24	100.0

while in the "One Level Difference" category the cases of alleged delinquency in which the mother was the educationally superior parent nearly doubled that in which the father was superior (63.6%:36.4%), in the "Two or More Levels Difference" category the percentage favoring the mother almost quadrupled (79.2%:20.8%). Such an increase in the concentration of cases for which the mother rather than the father had attained the higher level of educational achievement as the divergency increased was added reason for analyzing parental educational differences in terms of the characteristics of incipient juvenile delinquency.

Sex of Alleged Delinquent

From Table XX it can be seen that a 9.9 percentage difference was concentrated in the female cases of alleged de-

TABLE XX

EDUCATIONALLY SUPERIOR PARENT AS MEASURED BY FORMAL
ATTAINMENT LEVEL; BY SEX OF RELEVANT ALLEGED
JUVENILE DELINQUENTS IN INGHAM COUNTY
1951-1954

Sex	Father Superior		Diff.	Mother Superior	
	No.	Pct.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Female	14	24.6	9.9	38	34.5
Male	43	75.4		72	65.5
Total	57	100.0		110	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 1.311 - .3 > p > .2$$

linquency for which the father had the superior education (34.5%:24.6%), and in the male cases of alleged delinquency for which the father had the superior education (75.4%:65.5%). Such a tendency, although not statistically significant, supported the hypothesized relationship between delinquency cases of an incipient nature (those of female sex in this instance) and the social situation in the home most likely to lead to parental conflict (that is, the educational superiority of the female rather than the male parent).

Age of Alleged Delinquent

A study of the age composition of the alleged delinquents in terms of superior parental education failed to reveal any distinctive trends. In fact, almost identical percentages were found to exist between the "Father Superior" and the "Mother Superior" categories. As Table XXI indicates, there was a difference of only 0.7%. This slight percentage differential in favor of the hypothesized relationship between relatively young age and the superior education of the mother was evidently not statistically significant. An analysis of specific age brackets failed

TABLE XXI

EDUCATIONALLY SUPERIOR PARENT AS MEASURED BY FORMAL
ATTAINMENT LEVEL; BY AGE OF RELEVANT ALLEGED
JUVENILE DELINQUENTS IN INGHAM COUNTY
1951-1954

Age	Father Superior		Diff. Pct.	Mother Superior	
	No.	Pct.		No.	Pct.
<u>13 and below</u>	12	21.1	0.7	24	21.8
11-below	1	1.8		8	7.3
12-13	11	19.3		16	14.5
<u>14 and above</u>	45	78.9		86	78.2
14-15	31	54.4		65	59.1
16-above	14	24.5		21	19.1
Total	57	100.0		110	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 0.006 \quad p > .9$$

to reveal any consistent trend in percentages that might either support or nullify the previously stated hypothesis.

Reason for Referral of Alleged Delinquent

Table XXII reveals a slight preponderance of cases indicative of parent-child conflict within the "Mother Superior" when compared to the "Father Superior" category. This positive tendency (1.8 percentage difference) in support of the hypothesized relationship between home conflict

TABLE XXII

EDUCATIONALLY SUPERIOR PARENT AS MEASURED BY FORMAL
ATTAINMENT LEVEL; BY REASON FOR REFERRAL OF
RELEVANT ALLEGED JUVENILE DELINQUENTS
IN INGHAM COUNTY 1951-1954

Reason for Referral	Father Superior		Diff. Pct.	Mother Superior	
	No.	Pct.		No.	Pct.
<u>Home conflict</u>					
<u>primarily evident</u>	14	24.6		29	26.4
Incorrigibility or					
disobedience	12	21.1		25	22.7
Running away	2	3.5		4	3.7
			1.8		
<u>Home conflict not</u>					
<u>primarily evident</u>	43	75.4		81	73.6
Stealing	22	38.5		36	32.7
Truancy	5	8.8		27	24.5
Sex offense	5	8.8		6	5.5
Others	11	19.3		12	10.9
Total	57	100.0		110	100.0

$$\chi^2 = 0.006 \quad p > .9$$

reasons for referral and educationally superior female parents failed to show statistical significance. While the percentages for all specific reasons that revealed home conflict were very similar when the educational categories of "Father Superior" and "Mother Superior" were compared, there were some rather large differences for reasons in which home conflict was not primarily evident. Truancy, for instance, was nearly three times as prevalent in the category representing those cases in which the mother rather than the father had attained the superior educational level (24.5%:8.8%). Miscellaneous reasons ('others'), on the other hand, were nearly twice as prevalent in the latter as they were in the former category (19.3%:10.9%).

Summary

Parent conflict in the area of educational attainment was studied in relation to incipient juvenile delinquency. Of the 495 cases of alleged delinquents that were referred to the Ingham County Probate Court in the years 1951 through 1954, 167 had parents who manifested a difference in formal educational attainment level of at least one school year. When the percentages for these cases were compared with those of the 200 available cases for which both parents had attained an identical educational level, the former group was found to be more related than the lat-

ter with selected juvenile characteristics assumed to be associated to incipient delinquency. Thus, in support of the hypothesis, it was found that:

- (1) Among the cases represented by a difference in the formal educational attainment between parents (an area assumed to contain relatively great potential conflict), the percentage of alleged delinquents who were of the female sex, who were of a relatively young age, and who were referred for reasons indicative of parent-child conflict (characteristics assumed to reflect the incipient nature of delinquency) was higher in each instance than for those cases in which the formal educational attainment level for both parents was identical. The percentage differences for the sex, age, and reason for referral characteristics were 1.1, 3.5, and 6.4 respectively.

- (2) None of these tendencies were statistically significant.

The initial investigation led to a more intensive analysis, exclusively concentrated in the area of parental differences in education. This was done in order to focus attention upon the potential significance of cultural change in parental role definition on the problem of incipient juvenile delinquency. Initially the writer assumed that the marital conflict which accompanied both a personal and cultural change in how the specific parental roles were perceived would manifest itself, to a great degree, in parental differences of formal educational attainment. Keeping in mind that the male's traditional family role of authority and prestige has been increasingly threatened and undermined by that of the female partner, the writer hy-

pothesized that domestic conflict, and consequently characteristics of incipient juvenile delinquency, would be especially prevalent in those marital situations in which the female parent occupied the higher level of educational attainment. To that end, a study of the 167 cases that manifested a difference between the formal educational levels of the parents according to the sex of the superior spouse was conducted. The results showed that:

- (1) Only 34.1 per cent of the alleged delinquents had educationally superior fathers, while the remaining 65.9 per cent had educationally superior mothers.
- (2) The percentage difference increased as the amount of difference in educational attainment between parents increased.
- (3) A general tendency (disproportionate percentages) favored all characteristics of incipient delinquency when the mother rather than the father possessed the superior formal educational attainment. Thus, the percentage differences in the "Mother Superior" educational attainment category favored alleged delinquents who were of the female sex (9.9), who were of a relatively young age (0.7), and who were referred for reasons indicative of parent-child home conflict (1.8).
- (4) None of these relationships were statistically significant.

Thus, the conclusion can be made that not only was there a positive relationship found between characteristics of juveniles assumed indicative of incipient delinquency for the parental area of different levels of formal educational attainment as contrasted with similar attainment,

but within the parental area of educational difference itself a positive association was revealed between characteristics of incipient delinquency and the educational situations in which the female parent, in contrast to the male parent, possessed the educational advantage.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The empirical basis for this study of incipient juvenile delinquents was the data that pertained to the 495 boys and girls who were alleged to be delinquent in Ingham County from 1951 through 1954. The data were obtained from official records of the Ingham County Juvenile Court. An investigation of these cases was undertaken in order to provide a descriptive and definitive characterization of incipient juvenile delinquency as it related to the home situation of the alleged delinquents.

Since the fundamental steps of a delinquent career seem to originate in the socialization process of the home, the investigator assumed differences between parents in certain selected areas of potential parental conflict to have had an influential impact upon the alleged delinquent in such a home environment that contributed to delinquency in its incipient form. The selected areas were parental home structure, nativity, religious affiliation, and formal educational attainment. As sensitive measurements of incipient juvenile delinquency (as influenced by parental home environment), the three characteristics of the alleged

delinquents selected were female sex, relatively young age, and reason for referral indicative of a disruptive parent-child relationship. Briefly stated, the general hypothesis tested was that the characteristics of incipient delinquency would coexist disproportionately within areas of parental relationships that gave evidence of a basis difference rather than similarity between the two parents.

When specific characteristics of the alleged delinquents were compared with specific parental areas and sub-areas, a total of 21 disproportionate percentage concentrations were revealed. Thirteen of these comparisons had percentages that tended to support the general hypothesis that there would be a disproportionate concentration of alleged delinquent cases in areas of great potential parental conflict as related to incipient characteristics of the delinquents. Eight tended to refute the hypothesis. Tests of statistical significance revealed that, of the 21 concentrations four were significant, three of the four favored the hypothesis, and one was contrary to it. See the Data Summary Sheet which follows for these and other characteristics of the analysed relationships.

Certain rather distinct directional patterns in the percentage of cases revealing incipient delinquent characteristics were revealed when each area of potential parental conflict was analysed separately. Thus in the broken

DATA SUMMARY SHEET

DIFFERENCE IN PARENTAL RELATIONSHIPS; BY INCIDENT CHARACTERISTICS OF ALLEGED JUVENILE DELINQUENTS IN INGHAM COUNTY 1951-1954

Area of Potentially Great Parental Conflict	Female Sex	Dir. of Changea	Relatively Young Age	Dir. of Changea	Home Conflict Reason for Referral	Dir. of Changea
Broken Home (rather than Nonbroken)	8.7 ^b	+	5.3	+	9.0 ^b	+
Voluntarily Broken (rather than Involuntarily Broken)	4.8	-	2.1	+	12.1	-
Remarried after Initial Break (rather than Not Remarried)	10.0	-	13.6 ^b	-	0.2	-
Mixed nativity (rather than Same)	6.3	-	6.0 ^c	-	6.0 ^c	-
Mixed Religious Affiliation (rather than Same)	7.4	+	6.3	+	17.1 ^b	+
Different Formal Educational Level (rather than Same)	1.1	+	3.5	+	6.4	+
Mother Superior Formal Educational Level (rather than Father)	9.9	+	0.7	+	1.8	+

^aA plus (+) shows that the data tended to support the hypothesis. A minus (-) shows that the data tended to refute the hypothesis.

^bStatistically significant at the .05 level.

^cAn insufficient number of cases existed, thereby not permitting a test of statistical significance.

home area for all three juvenile characteristics, a consistent (and in two instances statistically significant) pattern was revealed in support of the association between this area of potential parental conflict and incipient juvenile delinquency. But for parental sub-categories within the broken home, the incipient-delinquent hypothesis was rather consistently refuted (with the exception of the Voluntarily broken home area by age of the alleged delinquent). For each of the remaining parental areas (including the educational sub-area of "Mother Superior" Formal Educational Level), all three juvenile characteristics revealed a consistent direction. Thus, all percentage differences in the parental nativity area tended to refute any positive relationship between potential parental conflict as revealed by mixed nativity and incipient juvenile delinquency. Although statistical significance could not be computed, the trend was a stable one. For religious affiliation, on the other hand, a consistent tendency (statistically significant in one instance) supported the hypothesis that differences in this area of potential parental conflict would be associated with incipient juvenile delinquency. Similarly, all six comparisons made in terms of parental education suggested a consistency of relationship (although not statistically significant in any instance) supporting direc-

tionally the association between this area of potential parental conflict and incipient delinquency.

Although the percentage differences for incipient characteristics revealed a great deal of fluctuation when analysed by specific parental area (with the exception of the nativity area) a generally stable tendency persisted. (The percentage difference was greater than 5 for two-thirds of the tests that were conducted.)

Even though statistical significance was not found to penetrate all characteristics for any given parental area, the consistency of direction within specific areas allows for certain statements of significance to be made. As Peters¹ and Chapin² have stated, increased confidence can be placed in prevailing test differences that are directionally consistent, even when not statistically significant, perhaps to a greater degree than can be placed in one test result of high statistical significance. With this in mind, it can be said that, while it remains for more intensive investigations to clarify further the relationships between the home environment and incipient juvenile delinquency, this study has uncovered evidence revealing the

¹Charles C. Peters, "Note on a Misconception of Significance," American Journal of Sociology, 39 (September, 1933), p. 234.

²Stuart F. Chapin, Experimental Designs in Sociological Research. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947, p. 107.

significance of the broken home, the parental area of nativity, religious affiliation, and formal educational attainment as having bearing on incipient juvenile delinquency.

Once again it must be stressed that this investigation represents a pioneering attempt to define possible relationships, to describe and to delimit broad general areas of potential significance of the home environment in terms of incipient juvenile delinquency. Even if one were assured that sex, age, and reason for referral were valid and sensitive indices of incipient juvenile delinquency, it could not be concluded that these relationships in themselves cause delinquency. Other factors are also important. This qualification does not detract from the significance of the findings here presented, both positive and negative.

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APPENDIX

A. COUNTY OF **B. CASE NUMBER** **C. DATE OF REFERRAL** **WORKER**

CHILDREN. List, first, children specified in the complaint and check them in the second column; list, next, the other children in the home in order of age.

[illegible]

STATISTICAL ITEMS. Circle one number for each item. Under items I or J two may be encircled if two codes apply.

CHILD(REN'S) ADDRESS

*Write good, fair, or poor.
†Write regular, occasional,
or no attendance.

I. Child(ren) Living With

- 1 With both parents
2 With mother only
3 With father only
4 With mother and stepfather
5 With father and stepmother
6 With relatives
7 With foster family
8 In child care institution
9 Independent living arrangements
10 Elsewhere (specify) _____

**J. Marital Status of Child's Own Parents
(Not Step Parents)**
Report adoptive parents if adoption is completed.

- 1 Unmarried
2 Married, living together
3 Marriage intact, not living together
4 Divorced, separated, or deserted
5 Father dead
6 Mother dead
7 Both parents dead
8 Mother's husband not father of child

K. Race of Child(ren)

- 1 White
2 Negro
3 Mexican
4 Indian
5 Other (specify) _____

Source of Referral (Where two sources refer a child, select the one making the referral first.)

- 1 Officer of Juvenile Court
- 2 Juvenile Court, other county
- 3 Circuit Court
- 4 Law enforcement officer
- 5 Parents or relatives
- 6 Local public welfare agency
- 7 Individual
- 8 M. C. I., B. V. S., or G. T. S.
- 9 State Dept. of Social Welfare
- 0 School
- 1 Health Department
- 2 Private social agency
- 3 Other (specify) _____

name of referring Person

PARENTS

OWN PARENTS

Step Parent

PARENTS		Step Parent	
Full Name	Father	Mother	
Address			
Age			
Birthplace			
Extraction			
Religion			
Education			
Time in county			
Marriage date			
Marital status			
Occupation			
Weekly income			
Employer			
If dead, date			

RELATIVES AND OTHERS INTERESTED IN CHILD(REN)[illegible]

M. REASON FOR REFERRAL. Report actual offense, not legal description of offense.

[illegible]

N. Type of Case

- 1 Official case (active petition on file)
- 2-a Unofficial case, retained after completion of investigation
- 2-b Unofficial case, closed upon completion of investigation
- 3-a State ward case, retained after completion of investigation
- 3-b State ward case, closed upon completion of investigation

O. Detention or Shelter Care

- 1 No overnight care
CARE OVERNIGHT OR LONGER IN
2 Boarding home
3 Detention home
4 Other institution
5 Jail or police station
6 Other place

AGENCIES AND OTHERS INTERESTED

NAME	Date of latest contact	NAME	Date of latest contact

ROOM USE ONLY

Date Due

Aug 22 '57

Mar 20 '58

~~Apr 15 '58~~

Aug 11 '58

~~21 May '59~~

DEC 10 1954

~~APR 24 1955~~ RD

~~MAY 11 1955~~ 50

~~MAY 11 1955~~

Demco-293

