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SOME SOCIAL ASPECTS OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

(The present article attempts to analyze some social aspects of juvenile delinquency in Michigan. The incidence of crime and delinquency in the state is growing at a faster rate than the population. The prospects are that these problems will continue to grow in the future. This implies that educators must expect to face the need for dealing with problems of socially unacceptable behavior, to develop understanding of such behavior, and to work with other community agents in minimizing it.)

A DEFINITION OF DELINQUENCY

Juvenile delinquency is a term with multiple meanings, and is, therefore, one which is difficult to define. To some people, delinquency is a violation of the law; to others, it is the deviant behavior of a child. Delinquency is a vague term and it may cover a wide range of anti-social behavior patterns, which may vary from the trivial to the most serious offenses.

We know that children are referred to the courts for behavior which goes from truancy to some types of stealing, or some forms of malicious mischief. Paul V. Tappan reminds us of the confusion which exists between delinquent behavior and the behavior of the emotionally distressed children¹. We must bear in mind that healthy aggressiveness of children is not juvenile delinquency; it is an important aspect of growth. It is, furthermore, part of the child's preparation for independence.

What is a juvenile delinquent? The term is a modern one derived from the latin word «delinquere», and means «neglect». The concept has gained almost general acceptance throughout the world. Legally, the delinquent is a boy or girl under a given age who commits a violation of any federal law, state statute, or city ordinance. The law defines a child in terms of age limits. Upper age limits vary in the United States from fifteen to twentyone; however, most states have eighteen as the upper limit. In Michigan, the upper limit is seventeen. New York State is one of only six states where a child is legally responsible at the age of sixteen. Although some social measures are available to judges to save a youth from record, these are not mandatory*. There is also a difference between a minor and a juvenile, usually three or four years. A minor is a person under twentyone years of age. It is interesting to observe that Jacob Schapiro, writing in the *Saturday Review*, applies our values to those of the eighteenth century, and classifies Jean-Jacques Rousseau as a delinquent. «As a youngster», writes Mr. Schapiro, «Rousseau was a juvenile delinquent, to use a current phrase. With little systematic education, going from one trade to another, a vagabond, a disloyal friend, weak and inconstant—such was Rousseau in his early years»**.

As stated before, the term juvenile delinquency means a violation of the law by a young citizen. The purpose of delin-

* See editorial, *New York Times*, August 11, 1961.

For an illustration of "hard-core" delinquency and the court's attitude toward it, see the case of Salvador Agrón, a 16 year old boy charged with slaying two boys in a West Forty-sixth Street playground in New York City, as reported in the *New York Times*, July 21, 1960, page 1, July 22, 1960, page 24, and July 8, 1961, page 8.

** SATURDAY REVIEW, 39:44-5 F 11'56.

quency laws in Michigan is to place under court control those children whose behavior may lead to later criminal acts. The offenses considered as needing court action and control are the following:

The juvenile division of the probate court shall have exclusive original jurisdiction in proceedings concerning any child under 17 years of age found within the county

1. Who has violated any municipal ordinance or law of the state or of the United States; or
2. Who has deserted his home without sufficient cause or who is repeatedly disobedient to the reasonable and lawful commands of his parents, guardian, or other custodian; or
3. Who repeatedly associates with immoral persons, or who is leading an immoral life; or is found on premises occupied or used for illegal purposes; or
4. Who, being required by law to attend school, willfully and repeatedly absents himself therefrom, or repeatedly violates rules and regulations thereof;
5. Who habitually idles away his or her time;
6. Who repeatedly patronizes or frequents any tavern or place where the principal purpose of the business conducted is the sale of alcoholic liquors; or
7. Who is repeatedly addicted to the use of drugs, or the intemperate use of alcoholic liquors; or
8. Who repeatedly associates with criminal, dissolute, or disorderly persons; or
9. Who is found of his own free will and know-

ledge in a house of prostitution or assignation of ill-fame; or

10. Who repeatedly associates with thieves, prostitutes, pimps, or procures; or
11. Who, is willfully disobedient to the reasonable and lawful commands of his parents, guardian, or other custodian and is in danger of becoming morally depraved².

As shown in the above list, juvenile offenses range from incorrigibility and truancy in the home and school to such serious offenses as robbery and burglary. Murder is very rare among children. Among boys, offenses seem to be rebellion against social rules, and larceny, while, among girls, offenses are of the personal type such as incorrigibility and sex offenses. A large number of references to juvenile courts in Michigan are for conduct which does not violate penal laws. Statistics show that ungovernability was the reason for 964, or 9 per cent, of all offenses in 1957; carelessness for 979, or 6 per cent; and truancy for 618, or 6 per cent, of all offenses³. These cases would not be crimes if committed by adults in the State of Michigan.

Criminal behavior is seen in the Michigan law as allied to the failure of society to meet the social and personal needs of people. According to the law, the state exercises guardianship over the child. Toward the second half of the 19th century, no distinction was made between an adult and a juvenile offender. Although reaction to this philosophy of crime was slow, the establishment of the first juvenile court in Chicago in 1899 initiated a new approach to juvenile delinquency. The tendency today is to treat the child, not as a criminal, but as a ward of the state. «Each child», says the Michigan law. «Coming within the jurisdiction of the court shall receive such care, guidance and control, preferably in his own home, as will be conducive to the child's welfare and best interest»⁴. Thus, society is responsible for the development of tensions and conduct by which the offender —juvenile or adult— may seek satisfaction of his needs through criminal channels. Therefore, the aim of the judicial authorities, according to the Michigan

law, is to protect and rehabilitate the child rather than to punish him. From the point of view of the court, a juvenile commitment to an institution is a substitute for home training.

CAUSES OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

In order to understand juvenile delinquency in Michigan, one needs to take a look at the problem in a nationwide perspective. Official reports tell us that about 5,000 boys and girls will violate the law in the next 24 hours⁵. Over the next few years, the number of offenses will double and present figures will look small*. This is the rate of juvenile delinquency in the United States. As one police officer pointed out, «this is what we call today our national disease».

Now, what are some of the causes of the problem?

Most of those who try to explain the delinquency of children insist in what we may call the one-sided approach. There are those who explain it in terms of drives and complexes. Others point out the family as a source of deviant behavior, while others explain it in terms of the neighborhood, usually socially disorganized areas in the city**. In general, most of those who look at the problem insist in these aspects and fall to analyze the influence of society on the youthful offender. Research findings show that delinquency is not caused by single factors. It is well for us to take a look at the impact of certain social forces in our society and see how they influence this problem***.

* A helpful source of information along these lines is *One Million Delinquents*, by Benjamine Fine, Cleveland World Pub. Co., 1955.

** DR. and Mrs. SHELDON GLUECK, of Harvard University, have five criteria to predict juvenile delinquency. These are: the father's discipline, the mother's supervision, the father's affection, the mother's affection, and the family's cohesiveness. They see the home as the great training school in behavior or misbehavior.

*** Kirson holds that the influence of groups "can not be understood adequately without seeing them in the context of growing, changing, somewhat chaotic and anonymous urban community to which delinquency is related."

See bibliography.

First of all, there has been an increase in the child population of the nation. The birth rate is now close to 25 per 1,000 inhabitants, compared with 17.4 during the 1930's. The rate of increase doubled following the postwar marriage boom. This new trend in population is continuing, as shown by the 1960 census. It has been estimated that the child population will increase by 50 per cent in the next two decades.

Secondly, trends indicate a rapid urbanization of the population. The census shows that urban and metropolitan areas have been growing more rapidly than rural areas. In 1960, urban population rose from 64 to 70 per cent of the total national population. At the same time, almost half of our population lives in metropolitan areas today. On the other hand, while suburban population is growing, population in central cities is declining. Never before in history has the nation seen such a concentration of population in urban areas.

Thirdly, American population is highly mobile. Evidence of this fact as shown by the census indicates that the increase in population of eight states accounts for 60 per cent of the national increase in population. Many American families tend to migrate from place to place and this creates emotional dilemmas in its members, especially the children. This constant relocation often provokes a feeling of insecurity because these persons have not established permanent roots. Perhaps the growth of Florida and California best illustrates this point. During the 1940-50 decade, the former increased its population by 37 per cent, while the latter increased by 50 per cent⁶.

Sociologists tell us that changes in population have social and economic implications. Crime and delinquency, as we know, are problems of urban areas. It is in large cities that slum living, and poverty are concentrated. It is here, too, that juvenile as well as adult crime is on the increase. Since World War II, children have been increasingly the victims of the problems of broken homes and poverty. One of our college professors, while lecturing on delinquent behavior, used to ask: «Can we assume that some «pervading social breakdown» is causing crime and delinquency? Will modern man survive these turbulent and insecure times of the Age of Anxiety? Crime reports seem to indicate that modern man does not fit into the city way of life, and, as Huxley suggests in *Brave*

New World, technology is responsible for all that endangers civilization.

Then, we ask, what is the size of the crime problem in big cities?

According to Cavan, «Cities with population above 250,000 have the worst crime rates. For all types of crime, the smaller cities have the lower rates, and for 6 out of 8 types, the smallest cities —those with less than 10,000 population— have the lowest rates. In proportion to the population, there are approximately twice as many cases of murder, burglary, and larceny in large cities as in small; about three times as many cases of manslaughter, rape, and automobile theft; and more than three times as many robberies and cases of aggravated assault... Crimes that net the criminal financial gain are the truly urban crimes. Cities offer many more opportunities for large gains, and the anonymity necessary for escape without recognition»⁷. Also the *New York Times* recently reported that the prospect of a nation «with numerically 40 per cent more juvenile delinquency in 1960 than it had in 1952 was given to the American Medical Association convention at San Francisco. Between 1948 and 1952 the percentage of increase in the number of delinquents was almost five times as great as the percentage increase in the child population from 10-17 years of age»⁸.

It is expected that over the next decade this trend will continue. Therefore, the number of criminal offenses committed in the near future will make present figures small unless there is an unexpected change in the scope of the problem.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

1. *Number of cases*

Let us examine now the bio-social characteristics of youthful offenders referred to the juvenile courts of the state. The following characteristics will be studied: age, sex, reason for referral to the court, disposition of case, and the marital status of parents.

During the year 1958, the juvenile courts in Michigan recorded more than 73,000 cases of children referred to them for delinquent behavior or because they were not given proper care. Of these, 38,000 were regular juvenile court cases. Most of the work of the juvenile courts is with these children⁹.

Michigan's Juvenile Court Reporting began in 1945^{*}. That year's report (see Graph 1) shows 11,000 cases referred to the courts. The number of referrals dropped in 1950. Since that year, the number has increased-reaching 14,000 cases in 1954 and almost 18,000 in 1958. Delinquency cases numbered 6,600 in 1945. This number dropped to almost 5,400 in 1948 and reached 10,800 in 1958. Another interesting datum shown by the reports is that non-delinquency cases increased three times as much as delinquency cases in the year 1958.

Furthermore, there has been an increase in court cases much greater than the child population increase. Official reports show that between 1948 and 1958 population under 19 years increased 48 per cent in this state. Regular juvenile cases referred to the courts increased 98 per cent¹⁰. The Federal Bureau of Investigation has reported a similar trend in the United States. In 1958 the population under 19 years of age increased 29 per cent while juvenile court referrals increased 68 per cent¹¹.

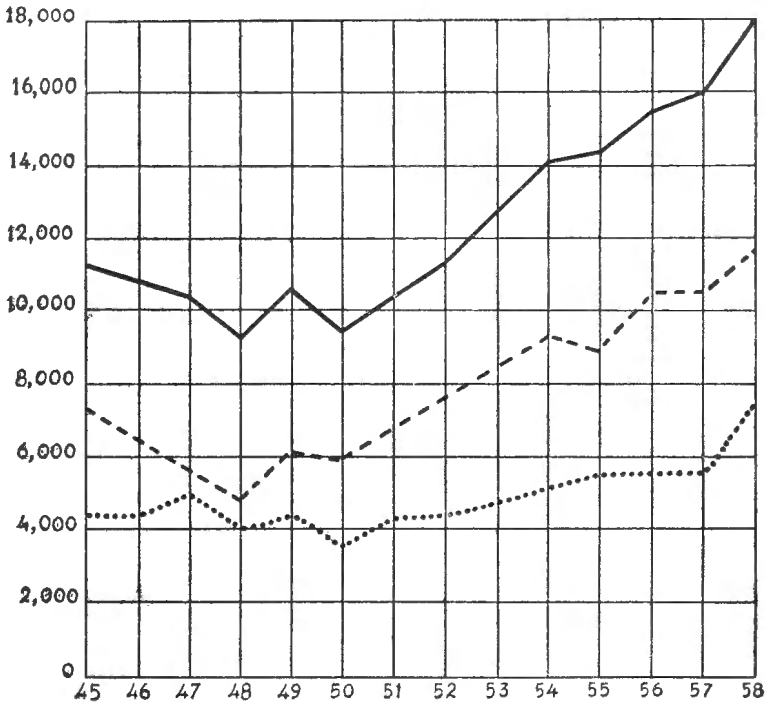
^{*} See *Michigan Juvenile Court Reporting*, 1958, page 32 (bibliography), for a complete tabular presentation of the characteristics of children referred to courts.

GRAPH I

CHILDREN REFERRED TO MICHIGAN JUVENILE COURTS
AS DELINQUENTS AND NON-DELINQUENTS, 1945-1958 *

(Some unofficial traffic cases included from 1945 through 1950)

*Number of
Referrals*



— TOTAL - - - DELINQUENT . . . NON-DELINQUENT

* Michigan Juvenile Court Reporting, Compiled by the Department of Social Welfare and the Association of Probate and Juvenile Court Judges, 1958; page 4.

2. Reason for referral

TABLE I

REASONS FOR REFERRAL TO JUVENILE COURTS

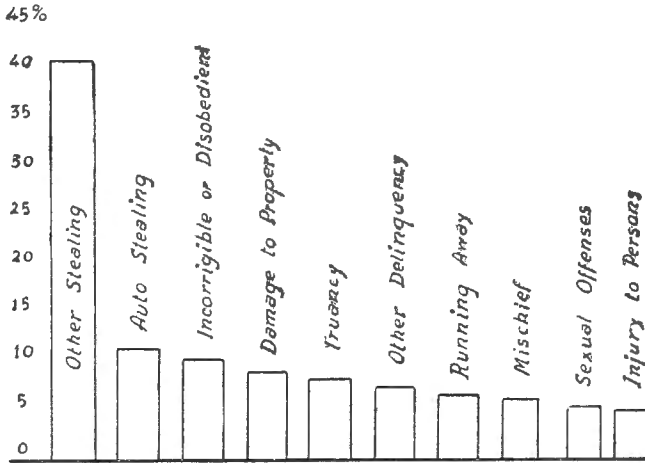
<i>Reasons for Referral</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Stealing (other than Auto)	4,516	41.0
Auto Stealing	1,262	11.0
Disobedience	1,029	9.5
Damage to Property	742	6.9
Truancy	644	6.0
Running Away	526	4.9
Mischief	492	4.5
Sexual Offenses	464	4.3
Injury to Property	459	4.2

Children are referred to the courts of the state for many reasons. Some of the offenses for which children are referred are violations of laws for which adults would be taken into court. These are: stealing, auto theft, sexual offenses, and injury to persons. Other reasons, applying only to juveniles, are: carelessness, running away, and incorrigibility or disobedience. It is interesting to observe that stealing shows the greatest increase (See Graph II). In 1948 there were 2,304 referrals for stealing and in 1958 there were 5,778. As we can see, this is an increase of 151 per cent.

GRAPH II

PERCENT OF DELINQUENTS REFERRED TO JUVENILE COURTS BY TYPE OF OFFENSE

MICHIGAN, 1958 *



<i>Reasons for Referral</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Other Stealing	4,516	41.0
Auto Stealing	1,262	11.0
Incurrable or Disobedient	1,029	9.5
Damage to Property	742	6.9
Truancy	644	6.0
Other Delinquency	557	5.2
Running Away	526	4.9
Mischief	492	4.5
Sexual Offenses	464	4.3
Injury to Persons	459	4.2

* Michigan Juvenile Court Reporting, Compiled by the Department of Social Welfare and the Association of Probate and Juvenile Court Judges, 1958; page 7.

3. Sex of offenders

TABLE II

SEX OF OFFENDERS REFERRED TO JUVENILE COURTS

<i>Sex</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Number of Cases</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Boys	12,355	8,916	82.5
Girls	5,571	1,887	17.5
TOTAL	17,926	10,803	100.0

The sex of offenders who came into contact with the juvenile courts of Michigan¹² is shown in Table II. Reports indicate that 8,916 boys and 1,887 girls were referred to the courts in 1958. The ratio is five to one; this means that boys contribute about five times more delinquency than girls. The Children's Bureau has reported the same ratio among juvenile offenders in the nation¹³. Stealing is the principal reason for the referral of boys, while a small percentage of girls are referred for this reason. However, a much larger percentage of girls than boys are referred for running away, truancy and for being ungovernable. This trend in delinquency was expected by the court because boys in our culture live more independently of their homes than girls.

4. Age of offenders

The age of offenders who came into contact with the courts ranged from seven to eighteen years (See Table III). For all cases, 56 per cent of the children referred are 15 years of age and over, while 30 per cent are children between 13 and 14 years of age. Children under 10 make up two per cent of all children referred to the courts. This means that the critical age in children from the standpoint of delinquency within the state is either fifteen or sixteen. These ages account for more than half of all delinquency cases in the State of Michigan.

TABLE III

AGE OF OFFENDERS REFERRED TO JUVENILE COURTS

<i>Age Range</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
17-18	201	1.9
15-16	6,054	56.0
13-14	3,739	30.0
11-12	833	8.2
9-10	302	2.8

5. *Marital status of parents*

Table IV shows the marital status of parents of juvenile offenders. A high percentage of children referred for delinquency lived with both parents, as indicated by the table. It seems that in Michigan, delinquency is not a product, necessarily, of broken homes. Fifty-nine per cent of the children have parents who are married and living together. This trend was contrary to what was expected because, generally, broken homes have been associated in the popular mind with the problem of delinquency. Moreover, the table shows that 19 per cent of all cases come from homes where parents are divorced; in 5.7 per cent the parents are separated or deserted, and in 7.9 per cent of the cases, the father is dead.

TABLE IV

MARITAL STATUS OF PARENTS

<i>Marital Status</i>	<i>Delinquency Cases</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Married, living together	6,376	59.0
Divorced	2,106	19.5
Father Deceased	848	7.9
Deserted	621	5.7

Many studies have proved that tensions in family life contribute to delinquency. Clinical experience shows also that the treatment of offenders is successful where parents live together in a normal happy family life. Professor Marshall Clinard cites examples of how the influence of the social environment may affect juvenile delinquency. He refers to such institutions as the home and the school, which, because of failure to meet higher demands may constitute what he calls «moral hazards». He also tells us that:

...records from the institute of Child Guidance in New York City have pointed out that Miss Witmer and her associates, in studying the factors associated with success and failure in treatment, both at the time of disposition and several years later, reported negative findings for such items as the child's age at the time of clinic study, sex, school placement, ordinal position in family, even the child's symptomatic behavior, and but slight significance for such factors as intelligence, economic status at home, and family size. What did have a striking relation to the clinic's success in dealing with children were the marital adjustments of parents, the emotional tone at the home, and the behavior and attitudes of parents towards the child...¹⁴.

6. *Disposition of cases*

Against this background of information we can now describe the juvenile court in its endeavor to return the child to normal life.

Juvenile offenses are investigated by the police. This is a routine investigation of the offense to determine whether the child needs to be referred to the court. The officer gathers evidence about the child and his social background. The information is limited to the facts indispensable to understand the child's situation. The officer does not make a case study of the child. Later on, the probation department makes a thorough study of the case. The child's medical and psycho-

logical condition are studied. These investigations are very important since it is upon the results of such investigations that the question of delinquency itself may depend. Frequently the reality is far from the ideal. More than half of the counties in the United States have never provided probation services to their courts. Only one probation officer in ten has completed social work training. (See «Children in Court» by Helen W. Puner, Public Affairs Pamphlet, Number 207). The Problem of what to do with the child, who is taken into custody of the court, during the interval until the case is heard, is solved in two ways: one solution is leaving the child in the custody of his parents; the other solution is detention.

Before going further, we should say that the Children's Court* is dedicated to the service of every child who is in conflict with society, and guarantees that such child will be dealt with intelligently as society's charge, not society's outcast. It is the earnest endeavor of the court, with the help of the home, the school, and the church to turn the children with whom it has dealing to the normal stream of life, whenever and as soon as possible»¹⁵. The duty of the court is to see that the child and its parents are accorded their civil rights. Not every child or parent brought before the court is actually neglected or delinquent. The court must determine the facts. The judge is expected to study the related family problems, search for the underlying causes, and decide on the best way to restore the family's function as a social unit.

According to Sutherland, the juvenile court is characterized by the following:

- a. Hearing characterized by scientific methods of investigation;
- b. Purpose of hearing to determine whether the child is delinquent and general conditions and character of the child.

* The Standard Juvenile Court Act has had a great influence in improving the treatment of juvenile offenders. See The National Probation and Parole Association. *Standard Juvenile Court Act*. The Association, 1949.

- c. Elaborate machinery for securing information regarding the character of the child.
- d. Such information is the basis on which the decision is made.
- e. Protection, guardianship, and treatment by the state if the existing conditions show the need.
- f. Correction methods determined by the needs of the particular individual without reference to other actual or potential delinquents¹⁶.

Through the initial interview information on the juvenile offender is gained, some of which may lead to the real motive of the offense. The major cases that show patterns of serious offenses require study before any action is taken. As pointed out before, after the child has been interviewed his parents may be asked to call at the Juvenile Bureau to talk over the offense committed by the child. In this case, either the family's priest, or the child's neighbors, or the child's teachers are enlisted in the investigation. The Juvenile Bureau was set up because of the deep concern of communities in Michigan with the problem created by youthful offenders. The establishment of this institution in Lansing shows how communities attempt to attack the problem of delinquency. The Juvenile Bureau is a new institution in the city and it functions under the Detective Department of the Lansing Police. The Bureau is concerned with the following:

1. All violations of laws by boys and girls of any age up to eighteen years.
2. All violations by adults where children are victims.
3. All violations regarding family matters such as child neglect, abandonment, cruelty to children, etc.
4. Keeping records of all juvenile violations.
5. Acting as liason between other departments for referrals concerning family matters¹⁷.

Furthermore, we must bear in mind that a most important function of the Bureau is the referral of cases. A child may be

referred to the juvenile court, released to his parents, or released to his parents with referral for non-authoritative treatment.

In many cases, an interested person may file a petition to the judge of the probate court asking the court to decide what action should be taken. The judge then sets a private hearing. The hearing must be attended by the following officers: the director of the probate court, a probation officer, a juvenile police officer, the child, and his parents. The probate judge presides at the hearings and the facts concerning the incident are presented to the judge.

The court's work does not end with the hearing. Usually placement is necessary. The child needs rehabilitation, that is, a place where he can be put on the way to a useful life. Incidentally, in some states the number of children sent to state training schools is as high as three fourths of the total number of cases. But in Michigan the percentage referred to these schools is low.

The hearings of children's cases are held separately from adult cases and the public is excluded from the court. Hearings are also informal so as to prevent the child from thinking that he is being tried for a criminal offense. The child's case is heard without a jury. Trial by jury does not apply in juvenile courts. Also the finding of facts rests on court evidence. Therefore, bias, gossip, or hearsay evidence have no place in the children's courts.

As to records, it must be said that they are strictly confidential. They are kept separate from cases of adults and must not be seen by other than the child's parents and officers of the court. Moreover, the law forbids fingerprinting of children and the publication, in newspapers, of the names of juvenile offenders without the consent of the court.

The juvenile court can make a variety of dispositions once this institution has taken jurisdiction over a child. The data from Michigan courts indicates that two thirds of the cases reported to the courts of the state were dismissed, placed on probation, or committed to public or private agencies. The rest were transferred to other courts²⁸. Offenders, seventeen years of age or older, are considered adults and may be sentenced to prison. Usually these are hardened youthful offenders

and they remain in prison until paroled. Also, special treatment is given to mentally deficient children as well as to those with high intelligence quotients.

Usually, children under 12 years of age are placed in foster homes. Only special cases are sent to institutions. This is done in order to care properly for the children. This group constitutes 10 per cent of the total number of cases in Michigan. Only two per cent or less of the children under 10 were referred to the courts for delinquency reasons¹⁹.

In Michigan, children from 12 to 17 years of age are sent to the Boys 'Vocational School or the Girls' Training School. It should be noted that in 1958 there were 551 boys and 190 girls in Michigan's vocational schools for juvenile offenders. That is, 4.3 per cent of all delinquents were sent to these training schools of the state²⁰. As we have seen, the juvenile court is a community institution. Its function is not to punish the child. Its true function is to rehabilitate him. By so doing, the court tries to restore the family's function as a basic social unit. Children must not feel that they are outcasts from the social norms; instead, that they are loved and wanted by society. In these schools children are in the care of professional personnel and there is a concrete program, either academic or vocational, for the student to follow. Some of the children may be transported by bus to near-by schools to continue elementary or secondary school studies. Academic instruction is provided up to the 10th grade and special instruction is given to retarded children. Training is given in such vocational subjects as machine shop, laundry, bench carpentry, tailoring, and shoe repairing.

TABLE V

DISPOSITION OF CASES CLOSED BY MICHIGAN JUVENILE COURTS, 1958 *

DISPOSITION	NUMBER OF CLOSURES			PERCENT OF TOTAL		
	Total	Delin- quency	Nondelin- quency	Total	Delin- quency	Non-Delin- quency
TOTAL	16,859	10,663	6,196	100.0	100.0	100.0
OFFICIAL CASES	12,356	7,411	4,945	73.3	69.5	79.8
Dismissed only	3,232	1,815	1,417	19.2	17.1	22.9
Dismissed after:						
Supervision	3,242	663	2,579	19.2	6.2	41.6
Probation	3,671	3,623	48	21.8	34.0	0.8
Commitment to private agen- cies	753	193	560	4.5	1.8	9.0
MCI for observation	16	4	12	0.1	*	0.2
Commitment to:						
State facility	1,018	765	253	6.0	7.2	4.1
Boys' Vocational School	551	530	21	3.2	5.0	0.3
Girls' Training School	190	162	28	1.1	1.5	0.5
Michigan Children's Institute ..	147	8	139	0.9	0.1	2.3
Other	130	65	65	0.8	0.6	1.0
Transferred to another juvenile court	272	227	45	1.6	2.1	0.7
Waived to circuit or other adult court	152	31	31	0.9	1.1	0.5
OFFICIAL CASES	4,503	3,252	1,251	26.7	30.5	20.2
Investigation only	2,367	1,643	724	14.0	15.4	11.7
After supervision	2,136	1,609	527	12.7	15.1	8.5

* Michigan Juvenile Court Reporting, p. 18.

On the other hand, the girls are taught homemaking and commercial subjects. They also learn sewing, cooking, store-keeping, cosmetology, and arts and crafts. Religious activities are under the direction of the Catholic and Protestant churches of the state. Also, the school offers recreational activities supplemented by dramatics and club activities.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

As a summary of the information presented in this paper we must point out the following: An examination of the source of referral to the juvenile courts of the state shows that these can be classified in three groups, namely, individuals, law enforcement officers, and public agencies. Law enforcement officers report the largest number while such agencies as the courts and the schools occupy the second place. Referrals by individuals—parents and relatives—are in the third place. These differences are due to the fact that stealing, which is the first cause of delinquency, is generally reported to the police.

Most juvenile offenders in Michigan are boys of the white race. Boys contribute about five times more delinquency than girls. This ratio is about the same reported for juvenile offenders in the nation.

In general, children are referred to the juvenile courts for theft. It is interesting to observe that the most important reasons for which children are referred are adult offenses, that is, stealing, auto-stealing, and damage of property. Moreover, most of the children referred were between the ages of fifteen and sixteen. The majority of youthful offenders in the United States fall in this age group.

Most of the children referred to the juvenile courts of Michigan lived with both parents. Broken homes have been associated with the problem of delinquency. However, it seems that in Michigan delinquency is not a product of broken homes.

The social problem created by juvenile delinquency, as we said before, is a complex one. Juvenile delinquency, unlike many other social problems, has not been adequately studied by social scientists. So there are many aspects of the problem

that are unknown. Because of the prospects that it will continue to increase in the future, much more should be learned about its prevention and treatment. Research should study the effects of such factors as changes in family structure, urbanization, industrialization, and social mobility. Research is also needed to understand how can the school anticipate delinquent behavior.

There are not enough trained personnel to apply rehabilitative methods. «This shortage of skilled workers is appalling evidence that we are far from using our best efforts in applying present techniques to the rehabilitation of the delinquent individual. The deficiency will not be corrected simply by setting higher personnel standards, paying better salaries, and providing more adequate training opportunities, though all of these are needed. Much of this reahabilitation work is conducted within the machinery of criminal justice, and much of the administration of criminal justice is based upon the concept that arrest and detention are useful deterrents to further crime. Firm and authoritative measures in handling the individual delinquent are important, but present evidence about human behavior supports the proposition that many delinquents are able with progressive assistance to make satisfactory adjustments in their social behavior without resort to arrest and detention. «2» In addition, we need constant evaluation of the programs sponsored by public and private agencies, agencies.

Above all, we need an adequately planned program of delinquency prevention that puts emphasis upon the problem of developing well adjusted children who derive their satisfactions in socially approved ways.

1. See article by PAUL V. TAPPAN, in *Criminology* by Clyde B. Vedder, The Dreyden Press, N. Y., 1955, p. 39.

2. *Michigan Statutes Annotated*, vol. 23, 1959, Commulative Supplement, Sec. 27.3178 (598.1).

3. *Michigan Juvenile Court Reporting, Compiled by the Department of Social Welfare and the Association of Probate and Juvenile Court Judges*, 1958, p. 32.

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