

# A Survey of Some Delinquent Boys in an Irish Industrial School and Reformatory

IAN HART\*

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THE research aimed at discovering specific social and psychological characteristics of institutionalized delinquent boys in the Irish Republic. Various researchers had considered separate aspects of juvenile delinquency in Ireland,<sup>1</sup> but what was lacking was an attempt to examine both social and psychological influences as they affected the same group. It was also hoped that a scale for delinquency-prone boys might be constructed; this scale would show the extent to which a boy's response resembled those of delinquent boys and thus the significance to be attached to his delinquent acts.

Conviction for an indictable offence was made the operational criterion of delinquency status. The study was confined to boys, as these make up the great majority of young offenders. It would have been desirable to survey non-institutionalized offenders, but limitation of resources precluded this. Since the sample was small, the research was more exploratory than definitive. The results gain value, however, by comparison with Andry's study,<sup>2</sup> as many of his questions on the delinquent's perception of family and home were used. Moreover, the validity of the delinquency association scale which was developed was explored by testing an additional 207 boys, as described in the Appendix. The results may be placed against the background of a low but steadily rising crime rate in the Irish Republic.<sup>3</sup>

\*I am greatly indebted to my colleagues at The Economic and Social Research Institute, and to Mr. W. R. Bowell, for their comments on the preparation of this article.

1. See O'Connor, *The Juvenile Offender*, in *Studies*, Spring, 1964; Hegarty, *Statistics: The Young Delinquent*, in *Christus Rex*, January 1960; and the chapter on delinquent children in C. K. Murphy, *The Lay Apostolate of Charity and Other Essays*, Cork University Press, 1959.

2. R. Andry, *Delinquency and Parental Pathology*, London, 1960.

3. Data from the *Annual Reports of the Garda Commissioner on Crime* show that the number of people convicted for indictable offences rose steadily from 6,284 in 1958 by 49 per cent to 9,364 in 1968. The number of indictable offences recorded rose from 16,400 by 41 per cent to 23,100 in the same period.

### *The Sample*

This was taken from an industrial school and from a reformatory for boys. There were about 85 delinquent boys in the industrial school, which had a total population of approximately 200 in the winter of 1963 when the research began. They were aged mainly between thirteen and sixteen and, since there was no system of psychological classification, presumably represented more than one psychological type of offender. The reformatory, which contained older and more criminally experienced offenders, was the only one for boys in the Irish Republic. The majority of the inmates of both institutions, and most of the sample, were from the Dublin and Cork urban areas. However, this bias is not of great significance as most delinquents come from urban areas.<sup>4</sup> A more serious difficulty arose from continual fluctuations in the numbers available for testing. This made it impossible to draw a random sample. Some boys committed for short periods were omitted from the industrial school group, and only about a third of the reformatory group could be tested as the institution was over a hundred miles from the interviewer's home.

Four areas of the boys' functioning and experience were investigated. The level of effective intelligence was individually measured by an intelligence test. Characteristics of social background were recorded in personal interviews. Self-evaluations and aspirations were sought by means of two sections of an inventory on social adjustment. Finally, 60 boys were matched with non-delinquents, and both groups were given an identical structured interview dealing with perceptions of parents, many aspects of home life and some details of personal history. In addition, 57 of the 60 delinquents in the latter groups were followed up to see which were subsequently reconvicted. Because of fluctuations in the number available for testing, not every boy got every test. However, all the sample was given an I.Q. test. Table 1 classifies the sample by source and by type of test administered.

The number given I.Q. tests was a sizeable fraction of the number annually committed to industrial schools or reformatory for indictable offences. These figures from the Statistical Abstract show the number annually committed for indictable offences:<sup>5</sup> 1961-1976, 1964-1965, and 1966-1973. Since about three years was the usual time spent in the industrial school and two years in the reformatory, the total number of boys in for indictable offences during the '63-'64 period of testing should have been between 300 and 400. The offences of those given I.Q. tests were mainly house breaking or larceny. Most had been convicted more than once and had been fined or put on probation for earlier offences. Their ages are shown in Table 2.

4. In the 1968 *Report of the Garda Commissioner on Crime*, about 72 per cent of indictable offences are shown to have been recorded for urban areas—Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Waterford and Galway.

5. *Statistical Abstract of Ireland 1967*, Dublin, pp. 251-2.

TABLE 1: *Delinquents by Institution and Type of Test Administered*

	<i>Industrial School</i>	<i>Reformatory</i>	<i>Total</i>
Total Number of Delinquents in Institution*	85	150	235
Number Given I.Q. test	77	48	125
Number Given Interview for Social Back- ground	70	39	109
Number Given Two Sections of Social Ad- justment Inventory	42	0	42
Number Given Structured Interview on Per- ception of Family Life and Personal History for Comparison with Matched Non- Delinquents	37	23	60

\*approximate.

TABLE 2: *125 Delinquents by Age*

<i>Age Group (Years and Months)</i>	<i>Number</i>
18.0-18.11	1
17.0-17.11	6
16.0-16.11	19
15.0-15.11	37
14.0-14.11	24
13.0-13.11	16
12.0-12.11	13
11.0-11.11	5
10.0-10.11	2
9.0- 9.11	2

### *Intelligence Test Results*

The tests used were the WISC (Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children) for those under sixteen, and the WAIS (Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale) for those of sixteen or over. These individual tests have a similar subtest structure. Their subtests comprise, among others, such problem-solving tasks as fitting coloured blocks together to make a pattern, spotting the missing detail in a picture, explaining the meaning of a word, and deciding what would be the best thing to do in certain practical situations. Since they provided separate verbal and non-verbal measures of intelligence; they seemed particularly suited for delinquents who might have been expected to have lower than average attainment in such skills as reading. A further advantage in using these two tests was that they were very similar in structure to the Wechsler-Bellevue intelligence test used by the Gluecks

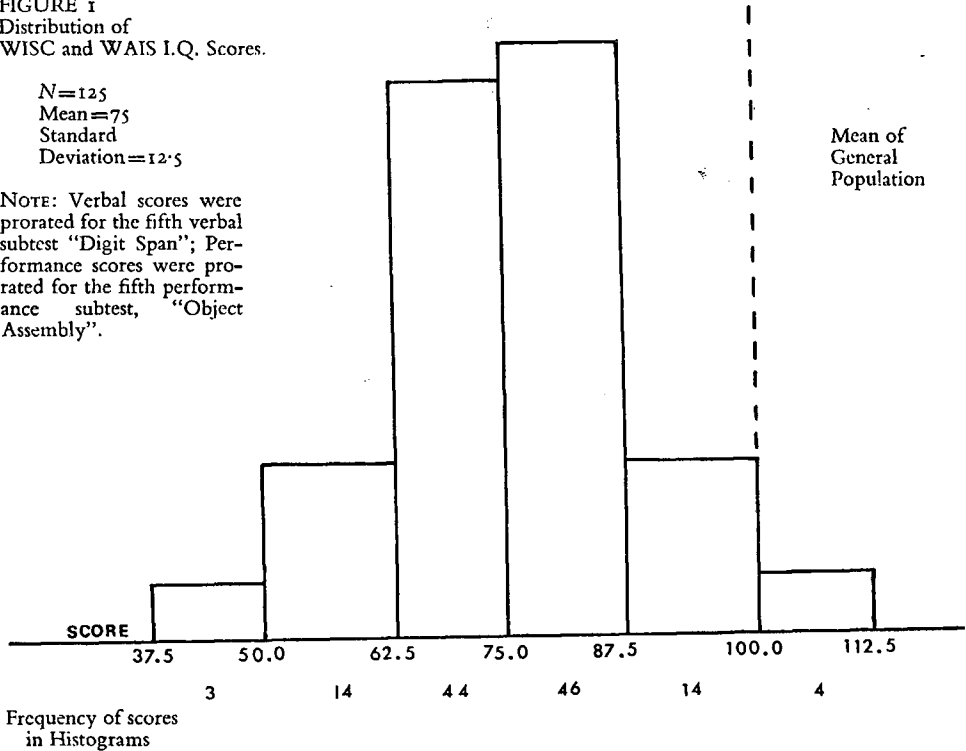
in their American research.<sup>6</sup> A few boys were rather wary at the start, but on the whole rapport seemed to be good during the intelligence testing.

As Figure 1 shows, the 125 I.Q. scores have a mean score of seventy-five points, which is very far below the population mean of a hundred. This score of seventy-five is at the mid-point of the borderline mental handicap region of scores. Thirty per cent of the group had scores indicating some degree of mental handicap. This finding, of a very low intelligence level among institutionalized offenders, is

FIGURE 1  
Distribution of  
WISC and WAIS I.Q. Scores.

$N=125$   
Mean=75  
Standard  
Deviation=12.5

NOTE: Verbal scores were prorated for the fifth verbal subtest "Digit Span"; Performance scores were prorated for the fifth performance subtest, "Object Assembly".



supported by evidence from the survey of inmates of industrial schools conducted by O'Doherty for the Commission of Inquiry on Industrial and Reformatory Schools, and from a survey of a small group in St. Patrick's Institution, Dublin.<sup>7</sup> It would also seem that the I.Q.'s of the present delinquents were not substantially

6. S. and E. Glueck, *Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency*, Harvard University Press, 1950.

7. The survey for the Commission showed a high incidence of mental handicap and borderline mental handicap among a mixed sample of delinquent and non-delinquent boys and girls in institutions. The incidence of mental handicap was found to be 37 per cent for 15 year old girls, 7 per cent for 15 year old boys, 8 per cent for 10 year old boys and 14 per cent for 6 year old boys. Flynn and McDonald in an article in *The Irish Jurist* (Winter, 1967) report a mean WAIS score of 83 for a small sample of boys in their late teens in St. Patrick's Institution.

affected by institutional experience, as a comparison of mean I.Q.'s for groups with different lengths of stay did not show any progressive decline with length of stay.

Although there was evidence that the I.Q.'s had been affected by lack of schooling,<sup>8</sup> the delinquents were almost certainly from an intellectually inadequate group. Even if we consider the boys' social class membership,<sup>9</sup> their I.Q.'s are much lower than would be expected. This finding runs counter to much evidence that delinquents, once social class is controlled, are at most only a little below average on intelligence tests.<sup>10</sup> It may be, of course, that the delinquents who escape conviction or committal are of higher intelligence and social class. But this is dubious, to judge from two results in Britain. J. W. Anderson found no significant difference between the I.Q.'s of first offenders and recidivists in the London Remand Home;<sup>11</sup> and L. McDonald found that anonymous admissions to delinquency were much more frequent among working than among middle class children.<sup>12</sup> The belief that the middle class child "gets away with it" is probably true only in some cases.<sup>13</sup> The delinquents' low I.Q.'s show that the juvenile offender comes not from Irish society as a whole, but from a particular group in it. And this group not only scores poorly on I.Q. tests but, as will be seen from further results, has social and domestic difficulties of a high order. No significant difference was found between the delinquents' mean verbal and performance I.Q.'s. This differs from the Gluecks' result, showing that the delinquents had higher performance than verbal I.Q.'s.<sup>14</sup> Presumably, the lack of any difference follows from the inordinately low I.Q.'s of the Irish delinquents.

These results again point to the need for a special centre for delinquent cases of mental handicap. This was first mentioned in the 1965 report on mental handicap but so far nothing has been done to meet the need.<sup>15</sup> A further need is for systematic intelligence testing of juvenile offenders and cooperation between the juvenile court and schools so that a young offender may be placed in a special class where necessary.

8. Delinquents in the seventh class of the industrial school had significantly higher I.Q.'s than those in the first and second classes. Later results will show that a group of 60 delinquents had spent less years at school than a matched group of non-delinquents, had truanted much more often and more frequently disliked school.

9. L. E. Tyler says "The relationship of I.Q. to socio-economic level is one of the best documented facts in mental test history": *The Psychology of Human Differences*, 2nd. ed., Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1956, p. 317.

10. See D. R. Cressy, "Crime", in R. K. Merton and R. A. Nisbet (eds.), *Contemporary Social Problems*, Harcourt, Brace & World, 1961, pp. 50-51.

11. J. W. Anderson, Recidivism, intelligence and social class, *Brit. Journal of Delinquency*, 1958, 294-297.

12. L. McDonald, *Social Class and Delinquency*, Faber and Faber, 1969.

13. See also, B. Berelson, and G. Steiner, *Human Behaviour—An Inventory of Scientific Findings*, Harcourt, Brace and World, 1964, p. 627.

14. *Op. cit.*, p. 207.

15. *Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Mental Handicap*, Dublin. Stationery Office, 1965, p. 109.

*Socio-economic circumstances*

A group of 109 delinquents from 103 families were interviewed for information on their family circumstances. In particular, information was sought on the presence of parents at home, the parents' present employment status and usual type of employment, and the number of children in the family. Since the boys' accounts might not have been wholly accurate, an attempt was made to check their information with the Department of Education.<sup>16</sup> In the majority of cases it was possible to carry out this check. Where a boy's information conflicted with the Department's (this arose in a few cases where the boy was uncertain about the precise number of his brothers and sisters), reliance was placed on the Department's information. Nevertheless, there is probably some residual inaccuracy in the social data on the boys in Table 3.

Most of the interviewing for social background was done in 1964, so the results, without too much risk of misinterpretation, may be compared with 1961 Census. Table 3 consists of four sub-tables. Sub-table (a) compares delinquents with the national population for distribution according to social group; (b) compares unemployment rates for delinquents' fathers with those for married and widowed men in the national population according to social group; (c) compares employ-

TABLE 3: (a) *Delinquent Boys and National Population by Social Group*

<i>Social Group</i>	<i>Delinquents</i>	<i>National Population</i>
	%	%
Farmers	0*	28.0
Other agricultural occupations	6	9.0
Higher and lower professional	0	5.5
Employers, managers and salaried employees	1*	15.0
Intermediate and other non-manual	31*	21.5
Skilled manual	12	7.0
Semi-skilled manual	32*	7.0
Unskilled manual	17	5.5
Unknown †	1	1.5
<i>N=103</i>		

\*The difference between the two percentages compared is significant at the .05 level.

†It was impossible to allocate one boy (whose father was dead and whose mother was not working) to a social group. Allocation was decided normally on the basis of the father's occupation. If he were dead, it was decided according to his widow's occupation; if she were not working outside the family, the occupation of the eldest unmarried son in Ireland was considered. In a couple of cases a family's social group had to be determined from the occupation of a son not resident in Ireland.

16. The Department gained its report through a Guard's visit to the boy's home: its information covered such points as whether either parent was dead, the father's occupation and the number of children in the family.

ment rates for delinquents' mothers with those for married and widowed women in the national population according to social group; and (d) compares the average number of live children in the delinquents' families with the average number for the national population according to social group.

(b) *Delinquents' Fathers and National Population of Married and Widowed Men by Rate of Unemployment According to Social Group*

<i>Social Group</i>	<i>Rate of Unemployment among Delinquents' Fathers</i>	<i>Rate of Unemployment among National Population of Married and Widowed Men</i>
	%	%
Other agricultural occupations	20(n=5)	20
Intermediate non-manual	18(n=11)	15
Other non-manual	7(n=14)	10
Skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled manual	31*(n=55)	13
N=85*		

\*Eleven fathers were dead, and seven working in Britain.

(c) *Delinquents' Mothers and National Population of Married and Widowed Women by Rate of Employment according to Social Group\**

<i>Social Group</i>	<i>Rate of Employment among Delinquents' Mothers</i>	<i>Rate of Employment among National Population of Married and Widowed Women</i>
	%	%
Other agricultural occupations	20(n=5)	0.2
Salaried employees†	0(n=1)	1
Intermediate non-manual	11(n=9)	16
Other non-manual	65(n=20)	11
Skilled manual	31(n=13)	3
Semi-skilled manual	21(n=29)	14
Unskilled manual	38(n=13)	0.1
Unknown	0(n=1)	0.1
N=91‡		

\*One boy's mother who did only part-time work outside the home was included in the "employed" category: this follows the practice adopted by the enumerators of the national census.

†This social group does not occur in the social distribution of fathers because one father, rated as a salaried employee, was working in Britain.

‡Eleven mothers were dead and one was working in Britain.

*(d) Delinquents' Families and Families of the National Population by Average Number of Live Children According to Social Group\**

<i>Social Group</i>	<i>Average number of live children in delinquents' families</i>	<i>Average number of live children in families of national population</i>
Other agricultural occupations, salaried employees, intermediate non-manual and other non-manual	6.31( <i>n</i> =39)	4.40
Skilled manual, unskilled manual, unknown	6.74( <i>n</i> =31)	4.80
Semi-skilled manual	6.63( <i>n</i> =33)	4.74

\*National averages are taken from figures for the 25-29 year duration of marriage group to improve comparison with the delinquents' families as the modal age of the delinquents was 15. The fact that a certain proportion of couples in that duration of marriage group are childless was allowed for by increasing the average number of children per social group in the population by a fraction based on the proportion of childless married couples in that group. The differences between the three pairs of means were statistically significant.

If all the social groups are combined in sub-table (c), 33 per cent of the delinquents' mothers are shown to be working outside the home compared with only 6.9 per cent of a corresponding group from the national population. A significantly higher proportion of delinquents had working mothers. Of the 30 working mothers, the husbands of six were unemployed, and one husband was retired. There were six widows in the group of 30 and two women had husbands in Britain.

A further point covered in the social investigation concerned the presence of the boy's father at home. The evidence, however, did not indicate that the fathers of delinquents lived abroad more often than might have been expected statistically. On the other hand, the delinquents who were compared with non-delinquents in the study of perceptions of home life had more fathers living away from home than the non-delinquents. Comparison between those two groups also showed that the delinquents were from larger families, were more likely to have unemployed fathers, and that their mothers were more likely in the past to have worked outside the home.

*Social Adjustment*

Forty-two of the delinquents who were given interviews for social circumstances were further assessed for social adjustment. Sections Five and Six of the Rogers Social Adjustment Inventory for Children were administered to these boys, in groups of about fourteen. Group administration took quite a long time as many



boys needed help to understand the questions. About three quarters of the group were in the 13-15 (inclusive) age group. All but two had both parents living. All were in the industrial school group. Ten questions from Section Five of the Inventory, with the distributions of answers, are given below.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Answer</i>	<i>Number giving Answer</i>
1. How many friends would you like to have?	(a) None	1
	(b) One or two	5
	(c) A few good friends	22
	(d) Many friends	5
	(e) Hundreds of friends	9
2. If you were going to the circus would you rather go (First choice)	(a) with your father	17
	(b) with your best friend	9
	(c) with a group of friends	0
	(d) with your mother	13
	(e) all alone	2
	no answer	1
3. Do you want be be a grown-up man or woman?	(a) I just can't wait to be grown up	4
	(b) I would like to be grown up	25
	(c) I don't want to be grown-up—I would rather be just as I am	6
	(d) I would like best of all to be a few years younger than I am now	6
	no answer	1
4. How well do your father and mother like you?	(a) I am the one they like best of all	16
	(b) They like me second best	6
	(c) They like all my brothers and sisters better than they like me	3
	(d) They like me well enough but not better than my brothers and sisters	16
	no answer	1
5. Which do you like best?	(a) to go off by yourself and play or read	4
	(b) to play with one or two others	17
	(c) to play with a whole crowd	21
6. Do you like to have some one else tell you how to do things?	(a) I like it	11
	(b) I don't care	11
	(c) I would rather do things my own way	10
	(d) I hate to be told what to do	10

<i>Question</i>	<i>Answer</i>	<i>Number giving Answer</i>
7. How do you feel when your brothers or sisters are praised for something they have done?	(a) I feel proud of them	27
	(b) I wish I could do better than they have done	6
	(c) I don't like to have them praised	0
	(d) I hate to have them do better than I can do	1
	(e) I don't care	6
	(f) I haven't any brother or sister	2
8. Do you have any good friends?	(a) None at all	2
	(b) One or two	6
	(c) A few good friends	20
	(d) Many friends	11
	(e) Hundreds of them	2
	No answer	1
9. Do people treat your brother (or sister) better than they treat you?	(a) never	14
	(b) sometimes	19
	(c) often	5
	(d) almost always	2
	(e) I haven't any brother or sister	2
10. Do you want people to like you?	(a) I just can't stand it if people don't like me	4
	(b) I always try very hard to make people like me	11
	(c) I don't care very much but I'm glad when people like me	14
	(d) I don't care a bit whether people like me or not	13

If these self-descriptions are true, it seems that at least some are well adjusted in their social relationships. It was impossible, however, to check the truthfulness of the reports. If certain responses are taken as indicative of social maladjustment,<sup>17</sup> eight boys give at least three such responses, and fourteen give two. The answers to other questions in Section Five showed the boys' fondness for active outdoor sports and pastimes. When asked what kind of person they wished to be when they grew up, most said they would prefer to be "a happy ordinary person, with a good job." This, they stated, was also their parents' preference for them. Few said they were physically weak or unattractive in appearance. Most felt that other children sometimes played mean tricks on them. A group of twenty-one believed

17. Answers which were interpreted as showing some degree of maladjustment were as follows: 1—(a) or (b), 2—(e), 3—(d), 4—(c), 5—(a), 6—(d), 7—(b), (c) or (d), 8—(a) or (b), 9—(c) or (d), 10—(d). The follow-up study showed that performance on these items was not significantly associated with recidivism.

they were popular with both boys and girls. Another eighteen thought they were more popular with boys than girls. In Section Six the group was asked to list the members of their family from oldest to youngest and to indicate their order of personal preference. The mother was selected as the most loved member of the family in twenty-eight cases, the father in six, both parents in one, a younger brother in two, and an older brother in one case. There were four cases of no answer or a deceased parent. The boys' attachment to their mothers was also apparent in the structured interview on family life.

The results on social adjustment showed that the boys seem to have a fairly strong need for affiliation with others. Only a few showed the social isolation so often associated with psychopathy. The results of the structured interview on their perception of family life are more alarming, if perhaps more predictable.

### *Discussion*

The data so far indicate that offenders in institutions come mainly from the manual working classes. McKinley has put forward a reason why delinquency is more common in these classes.<sup>18</sup> He found that fathers in the lower social classes tended to be more severe but probably less effective in the socialisation of children than middle class fathers. He suggested that working class fathers vent frustrations arising from a lack of occupational status on their children, rationalizing this as discipline. His findings indicate that working class juvenile delinquency is not so much attributable to a higher level of permissiveness among the working class as to faulty methods of discipline and a lack of love on the father's part.

The researches of Andry in Britain, and of Conger and Miller in the United States, show that the situation is, however, more complex. Andry found that, even when the variable of social class was controlled, there were still important differences between the childhood experiences of delinquent and non-delinquent boys.<sup>19</sup> The delinquents more often had poor relationships with their parents. Conger and Miller found that personality differences between delinquents and non-delinquents were not always of the same size, or even in the same direction, within different social classes.<sup>20</sup> They found, for instance, that socially deprived nine year old boys of low I.Q. status who later became delinquent gained more favourable ratings from teachers, on such traits as regard for persons and sense of responsibility, than future non-delinquents of the same social class and I.Q. This recalls Cohen's theory that boys turn to delinquency as a means of gaining status when they fail to gain it by culturally approved activity. Yet Conger and Miller did not study the way in which their delinquents were reared, so the possibility remains that delinquents of the low I.Q., socially deprived class experience more difficulties at home than non-delinquents of the same class.

The structured interview was given to delinquents and non-delinquents, both

18. D. McKinley, *Social Class and Family Life*, Free Press, 1963.

19. The Gluecks in Massachusetts found similar differences when type of neighbourhood was controlled, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

20. J. Conger, and W. Miller, *Personality, Social Class and Delinquency*, Wiley, 1966.

groups being matched for social class, to discover whether the delinquents' experience of their homes was different from that of non-delinquents. The areas of experience covered by the interview were similar to those investigated by Andry.<sup>21</sup> As with Andry, the roles of both parents in the aetiology of delinquency were explored. Possible defects in the maternal and paternal relationships were investigated—at least insofar as such factors could be assessed through a retrospective interview with the boy concerned. Bowlby<sup>22</sup> has shown some evidence to implicate maternal deprivation as a factor in the development of juvenile delinquency and his findings have to some extent been confirmed by Goldfarb.<sup>23</sup> Goldfarb has presented the following summary (Table 4) of comparisons between 15 children who spent three of their first three and a half years in a severely depriving institution with 15 children raised in foster homes.

TABLE 4: *Differences Between Children who had spent Three of their First Three and a half Years in an Institution and Controls Reared in Foster Homes*

Function tested or rated	Test or rating method	Results expressed as	Results	
			Institution Group	Control Group
Intelligence	Wechsler	Mean I.Q.	72.4	95.4
Ability to conceptualize	Weigl	Mean score	2.4	6.8
Reading	Standard tests	Mean score	0.5	4.7
Arithmetic	Standard tests	Mean score	5.1	4.7
Social maturity	Vineland scale completed by caseworkers	Mean social quotient	79.0	98.8
Ability to keep rules	Frustration experiment	Number of children	3	12
Guilt on breaking rules				
Capacity for relationships	Caseworker's assessment	Number of children able to make normal relationships	2	15
Speech		Number of children up to average	3	14

Source: W. Goldfarb, *Journal of Experimental Education*, 1943, 12, p. 106.

21. *Op. cit.*, pp. 25, 28, 30, 32, 34, 35, 41 *et al.* I would like here to record a debt of thanks for permission to use his questions.

22. J. Bowlby, *Maternal Care and Mental Health*, Geneva, 1952.

23. W. Goldfarb, The effects of early institutional care on adolescent personality, *Journal of Experimental Education*, 1943, 12, p. 106.

All differences between the groups were statistically significant. There is thus strong evidence that early lack of consistent mother love adversely affects later development. Not all researchers have shown a clear link between maternal deprivation and later social maladjustment; and, as Ainsworth says, the relationship between early separation and/or deprivation experiences, and delinquency, remains problematical.<sup>24</sup> The present study does not concern itself with cases of severe maternal deprivation, in as far as all the boys in the research on perceptions of family life had both parents alive, and none had been brought up for the first three years in an institution. Partial deprivation was investigated by some questions in the interview.

Apart from research on environmental causes of delinquency, there have been some recent developments in theories which link delinquency with temperamental or genetic factors. The Gluecks discovered that young offenders were more likely to be rugged and muscular in bodily build than non-delinquents—"the delinquent group has deeper and broader chests, wider shoulders, and greater waist breadth than the controls."<sup>25</sup> Eysenck has shown that many criminals tend to score high on questionnaires which seek to assess degree of extraversion and emotionality.<sup>26</sup> Jacobs in Edinburgh has found that a small proportion, about 3 per cent, of some male convicts have an extra sex-linked chromosome in their genetic structure.<sup>27</sup> However, temperamental or genetic structure was not considered in this study, nor was the possible influence of brain damage.<sup>28</sup> All these factors, directly or indirectly, may have affected the responses of the delinquents in the structured interview. They may explain the delinquency of some boys from apparently happy homes, and the apparent non-delinquency of a few boys from unhappy homes.

### *Matching Delinquents with Non-Delinquents*

Sixty non-delinquent schoolboys were selected from nine Cork and Dublin schools to serve as a control group for 60 delinquents. Since a boy's perception of his home might have been affected by social class, broken or unbroken status of his family, his age and his intelligence, an attempt was made to select only those non-delinquents who individually resembled delinquents on those factors. The nine schools comprised a primary, national, vocational and secondary school

24. *Deprivation of Maternal Care—A reassessment of its Effects*, Geneva, 1962, pp. 155, 156.

25. *Op. cit.*, p. 190.

26. H. J. Eysenck, *Crime and Personality*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1964.

27. P. Jacobs, W. Price, W. Brown *et al.*, Chromosome studies on man in a maximum security hospital, *Annals of Human Genetics*, 1968, XXXI, p. 339-358.

28. The McCords mention brain damage as a possible explanation for the behaviour of some adult psychopaths in *The Psychopath*, D. Van Nostrand, 1964. But brain damage during birth was not consistently shown to be associated with later misconduct in a thorough ongoing study of 400 British working class schoolboys begun by West in 1960, according to a review of the research in *The Times*: Family social level a factor in juvenile misconduct. (6th September, 1969).

in Cork city, a national school in County Cork, and three national schools and a vocational school in Dublin city. The procedure followed for selecting the majority of the controls was that schoolboys who had both parents alive and who were from appropriate social and age groups were given I.Q. tests. Then, if their I.Q. was suitable, they were matched with delinquents from the group of 109 interviewed for social data. Dublin schoolboys were selected as matches for Dublin delinquents and Cork schoolboys for Cork delinquents.<sup>29</sup>

Of the 60 non-delinquents, 27 were matched for I.Q. on the basis of their scores on the N.I.I.P. Group Test 33. This test had already been given to some schoolboys in Dublin city by the psychological service of the Dublin Vocational Education Committee. Since all the delinquents had been given the WISC or WAIS test, the scores on the N.I.I.P. test had to be translated onto a WISC-type scale with a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15 points. This procedure, a rather unsatisfactory one, was made necessary through lack of time and funds. Table 5 shows the degree of success obtained in the matching procedure.

As far as observation during testing or interviewing could show, neither group contained any psychotic or a moderate or severe case of mental handicap. There was no marked difference in birth order between the groups. There was no definite indication of more overcrowding in the delinquents' homes as the average number of occupants to a bedroom was much the same in both groups. On some points, however, the groups were significantly different. The delinquents were more likely to have mothers who had worked outside the family at some time. They had completed less years at school, were less likely to be members of a library, and were more likely to be members of a boys' club. They had a larger numbers of brothers and sisters and more unemployed fathers. Their fathers were more likely to live away from home. About two-thirds of the delinquents had left school and begun work, whereas all the non-delinquents were still at school. Accordingly, many of the delinquents' parents may have been less concerned about their boys' educational progress than the parents of non-delinquents. This suggests a further form of handicap arising from the delinquents' domestic experience. It is also possible that the delinquents' families were more troubled by lack of money and therefore could not keep so many of their sons at school.

The 60 delinquents comprised 37 from the industrial school and 23 from the reformatory. Their average number of convictions for indictable offences was 3.5, larceny and house-breaking being their usual offences. Six delinquents showed signs of anxiety neurosis or obsessive-compulsive neurosis. Two clearly showed a schizoid or psychopathic behaviour pattern.<sup>30</sup> Five of the non-delinquents said that at some time they had been in court. In each case this had been for a minor, non-indictable offence.

29. About a third of the schoolboys were selected with the aid of I.Q. tests administered by Br. Damian, Dip. Psych., of the De La Salle order.

30. The incidence of 10 per cent for neurotic disorders may be compared with the incidence of 15 per cent for the boys in Sir Cyril Burt's study. See *The Young Delinquent*, London, 1925, p. 581.

TABLE 5: *Distribution of Delinquents and Non-Delinquents by Social Group, Age and I.Q.*

<i>Social Group*</i>	<i>Delinquents</i>	<i>Non-Delinquents</i>
Farmers, other agricultural occupations, salaried employees and intermediate non-manual	9	6
Other non-manual	11	13
Skilled manual	11	14
Semi-skilled manual	22	22
Unskilled manual	7	5
<hr/>		
<i>Age Group†</i> (years & months)		
11.0-11.11	2	2
12.0-12.11	3	7
13.0-13.11	9	9
14.0-14.11	16	17
15.0-15.11	17	19
16.0-16.11	13	6
<hr/>		
<i>I.Q. Score Group‡</i>		
60-69	8	5
70-79	22	21
80-89	23	24
90-99	5	6
100-109	2	3
110-119	0	1

\*In 34 cases exact agreement for social group was obtained. In 13 cases there was a difference of one level and in 12 cases a difference of two levels. In the remaining case, a farm labourer (Social Group 1) had to be matched with a lorry driver (Group 8). No one from a definitely higher grade non-manual occupation was matched with someone from a low grade non-manual or manual occupation.

†The maximum difference was 20 months which occurred twice. There was one difference of 19 and one of 18 months. There were 14 differences between 13 and 17 months inclusive. The 42 remaining differences were at most 12 months.

‡The maximum difference was 15 points. This occurred in five cases. There were 12 differences of less than 15 but greater than 10 points. The rest were not more than 10 points.

*Results of Structured Interview*

The interview explored seven areas of a boy's experience of home and personal history. These were: parental affection, communication with parents, discipline experienced, tension within the family, early maladjustment of the boy, the physical health, personality, interests and attitudes of the boy, and finally such matters as pocket money, parental knowledge of the delinquent's anti-social activity, parental control and parental attitude to him after he had been convicted. A summary follows of the specific ways in which delinquents differed or did not differ from non-delinquents.

*Parental Affection:* The delinquents were more liable to feel their fathers had not given them enough love and that their mothers had given them too much. The indication of excessive maternal love is of doubtful validity, however, as some boys probably confused indulgence with love. When asked to explain in what way their mothers had given them too much love, some boys said they gave them anything they wanted and never checked them. An analysis of those who said their mothers had been too loving showed that a large group of them also felt their mothers had not seen enough of them and that they had been too easy about making them keep rules. The delinquents tended to be the favourite children of their mothers. To a lesser extent they were their father's favourites.

*Communication with Parents:* The delinquents said they would have benefited from having had more of their parents' company. When at home they spent more time with brothers and sisters or on their own than with a parent or the family as a whole. They usually would try to get out of trouble outside the home without telling their parents and often they said they had no one to talk to about their worries. When they had someone they could talk to, this was usually not their parents. They had spent a longer period away from the family than non-delinquents, even when their present stay in an institution was excepted. As has been noted, their mothers had worked more often outside the family. There is evidence here of both partial maternal and paternal deprivation.

*Discipline Experienced, Tension Within the Family and Early Maladjustment in the Boy:* The delinquents' parents were inconsistent about punishment. This often depended more on the mood of the father than the actual severity of the offence. The mothers were too easy about making them keep rules at home. They experienced physical punishment more often than any other kind and, probably as a natural consequence, took most notice of this type of punishment. A sizeable proportion, 20 per cent, said neither parent kept cool and reasonable during trouble at home, and 40 per cent felt either one or both parents had not praised them sufficiently. Only 2 per cent of the non-delinquents said that neither parent kept cool and reasonable during trouble, and only 20 per cent that either one or both parents had not praised them sufficiently. The delinquents felt their parents had often quarrelled between themselves and that drinking had at some time



made trouble at home. In 83 per cent of the cases, it was the father's drinking which had led to trouble. A certain amount of shifting of roots must have occurred through their families' frequent changes of residence—about three-quarters of their parents had changed home during the boy's life. The vast majority (92 per cent) of the delinquents had truantted fairly often from school. They started this on average at the early age of 9½ years. Forty-three per cent had tried to run away from home, compared with only 2 per cent of the non-delinquents.

*Physical Health, Personality, Interests and Attitudes:* No statistically significant differences were found between the groups' reports on the number and length of organic illnesses or on such symptoms of anxiety as dizziness and stomach upsets. Nor was there any significant difference for incidence of sadness or irritability without apparent cause. Similarly the groups were alike in the reported incidence of phobias such as fear of animals, the dark, or being in public places. On the other hand, those delinquents who did report irrational fears seemed to be troubled by them for longer periods, on average for about 5 years 5 months compared with 3 years 2 months in the case of non-delinquents. A substantially higher proportion of delinquents said they were easily discouraged. Rather surprisingly, a much lower proportion of delinquents said they had walked in their sleep.

The delinquents worried less often about progress at school, passing exams, or getting or keeping jobs. In general, they were more likely to report a worry than the non-delinquents. When given a number of wishes they were less likely than non-delinquents to wish for happiness or for some material object for themselves. Instead they more often wished for happiness for their families. Presumably they were more pre-occupied with their families because of greater difficulties at home.

Their pastimes were generally akin to those of the non-delinquents but more had uncreative hobbies such as playing draughts, checkers, making jigsaws or reading comics. They very often went to the pictures. About half said their friends had had a bad influence on them. However, the results concerning paternal rejection and inconsistent physical discipline suggest that gang membership was a precipitating rather than a primary cause of their delinquency. As has been noted, half of the delinquents did not like school. About a fifth of them thought they would go to Britain within a year of leaving the institution. This recalls the high incidence of institutional experience among a small sample of delinquent young Irishmen in Britain referred to in the *Tuairim* pamphlet, *Some of Our Children*. Almost all the boys, delinquents and non-delinquents, said religion was important to them.

*Pocket money, Parental Knowledge of the Delinquent's anti-social Activity, Parental Control and Parental Attitude to him after his First Conviction:* Surprisingly, the delinquents were much more likely to receive a fixed amount of spending money than the non-delinquents. There was little difference in the amount received by

delinquents and non-delinquents. In the case of about half the delinquents neither parent knew that the boy had ever stolen before he was complained of for stealing. Both groups said they had to be home by roughly the same time at night. Thirty per cent of the delinquents' mothers became more lenient and 17 per cent stricter since the boy first got into trouble. Twenty-five per cent of the fathers became more lenient, and 25 per cent stricter. These changes may partly reflect the influence of social workers attached to Child Guidance Clinics. Presumably these would usually find the mother easier to contact than the father. The majority of the mothers (88 per cent) wrote to their boy or visited him, compared with only 47 per cent of the fathers.

### *Comment and Interpretation*

Andry's thesis that the paternal role is of definite significance in the aetiology of delinquency was confirmed. However, unlike the delinquents in his sample, the present delinquents frequently said their mothers had been too loving. The boys in Andry's research tended to deny that parents ever habitually showed too much affection for a child, feeling excess affection to be more a sign of faulty discipline.<sup>31</sup>

The results showing inadequate supervision and inconsistent discipline by the parents bear out the Gluecks' finding. Craig and Glick carried out a validation study of the Gluecks' prediction table<sup>32</sup> (designed to predict whether a boy became delinquent or remained non-delinquent) and found three factors to be closely related to delinquency status—supervision of boy by mother, discipline of boy by mother, and cohesiveness of family. These three factors were also found to be related to delinquency in this study.

Eysenck's theory that delinquents are more emotional and extraverted than non-delinquents was not closely investigated, but insofar as the results bear on his theory, there is only equivocal confirmation of it. Fewer delinquents had sleepwalked than non-delinquents; yet if the delinquents had been more emotional, then surely more would have been expected to sleepwalk. Those favouring Eysenck's view might counter that sleepwalking is a symptom of an over-emotional, but inhibited or introverted, personality. The sleepwalker, although he may be expressing rebellion against parental authority, is doing this symbolically, not openly. Answers which might support Eysenck's theory, but which could just as well suggest the effect of an unhappy home life, were those which showed that delinquents were more likely to be easily discouraged, to have irrational fears for longer periods of time, and to worry more. The fact that the boys were institutionalized at the time of the interview may well have had something to do with these answers.

31. *Op. cit.*, p. 31.

32. M. Craig and S. Glick, *A Manual of Procedures for Application of the Glueck Prediction Table*, New York City Youth Board, 1964.

Edith Jacobson points out<sup>33</sup> that over-sensitivity, day-dreaming, irritability, a sharpening of the sense, a general intensification and differentiation of the emotional life and, paradoxically, an increased precision in logical thinking, are characteristic of women in prison. This over-sensitivity may be accounted for by the gradual withdrawal of love-interest from the environment and its re-investment within the self. The heightening of emotion and the sharpening of logical thinking might both result from a reaction of anxiety to prison life. Adolescent boys in institutions perhaps experience some of the same reactions.<sup>34</sup>

Edith Jacobson mentions the increased dependence of female prisoners. Their tendency to regress to earlier stages of development showed itself in the development of such defensive symptoms as obsessive, ritualistic ways of thinking and action. She interprets such forms of functioning as defensive reactions against the weakening of rational control and threatened disintegration of character. The delinquents' concern for their families and their apparent lack of personal acquisitiveness when given a number of wishes (during the structured interview) suggests in psycho-analytic terms a reaction formation against the hostility of their fixated relationship with the parents and the accompanying oral drives.

The hostility towards the father, quite marked in some delinquents' responses, is, psycho-analytically, very interesting. It is reminiscent of Lindner's thesis that the psychopathic boy hates his father.<sup>35</sup> Lindner suggested that psychopathic character disturbance was due to an unresolved Oedipus Complex after a hypno-analysis of eight criminal psychopaths. The hostility to the father shown in the present results at least does not conflict with the Oedipus Complex theory of delinquency. Yet an unresolved Oedipus Complex is presumably not exclusive to delinquents. Many non-delinquents may be said to show an unfulfilled yearning for a mother figure, veiled hostility to any kind of quasi-paternal authority and difficulty in forming strong relationships beyond the original family. The delinquents' open hostility to society may have been caused not just by experience of a stern father in infancy but also by identification with a father who was generally aggressive in his relationships. Despite finding their fathers aggressive, the delinquents (if we are to follow Freudian theory) would naturally tend to

33. *Searchlights on Delinquency*, K. R. Eissler (ed.), International Universities Press, 1949.

34. At the time of interview, the 60 delinquents had spent the following periods in their institutions.

Length of stay (in months)	Number of Delinquents
1- 6	27
7-12	11
13-18	6
19-24	7
25-30	3
31-36	1
over 36	5

35. R. Lindner, *Rebel Without a Cause*, Grune & Stratton, 1944.

identify with them at a deep level.<sup>36</sup> A masochistic trend might in some cases result as an attempt to gain punishment and so alleviate anxiety caused by hatred of the father. This masochism was very evident in the boys whose case histories are given below. In all, four boys said that only sterner punishment could help them and a fifth said he got into trouble to make his family suffer. It will be remembered, however, that only two of the 60 delinquents in the present sample showed clear signs of being schizoid or psychopathic.

An analysis of the delinquents' answers in the structured interview showed that their perception of the inadequacy of the father's love was closely linked with five other perceptions. These were: first, that the parents had quarrelled slightly more than average or ordinary parents, second, that the father had not been seen enough, third, that he had been too strict, fourth, that he had nagged a lot and fifth, that the father, or both parents, was inclined to pick on the boy.

Visits to the homes of some of the delinquents in Cork city confirmed the impression of unintegrated families and a low level of general cultural development. The majority of the homes were corporation houses, poorly looked after. Some were extremely squalid. A survey of social and psychological factors in the backgrounds of 30 delinquent Cork city boys by the Gardai<sup>37</sup> showed a high incidence of alcoholism among their parents and prostitution among their sisters. These checks provided some verification of the boys' reports. The writer felt this verification to be highly desirable in view of the distinct possibility that the boys in institutions saw him as an authority-figure and therefore would tend to give ideal-type answers in the interview. They might also have felt pressure to give answers attributing the guilt for their delinquency to their parents. However, Andry reports<sup>38</sup> substantial agreement between delinquent boys' perception of parental behaviour and the parents' own perception of it, even where the boys' reports were critical of the parents.

Two brief accounts of individual delinquents show the influence of sado-masochistic trends in the development of anti-social behaviour:

N., a Dublin boy, was just sixteen when first interviewed. A slim, pale faced boy, he seemed rather too gentle in manner for the reformatory where he was. His score on the intelligence test was very low and the structured interview revealed that he had had a very disturbed background. He was quite anxious to talk about his family. His father was a welder who often seemed to run foul of the Gardai. There seemed to be a bad relationship between the father and mother. N. said he had been very disturbed by their quarrelling. After a row, in which N. took his mother's part, he would wander around Dublin in a very disturbed state. In this state, he, according to himself, would often go on a spree of larceny and house-breaking.

36. Eight of 60 delinquents said their fathers were their heroes or ideal figures, despite the fact that they also felt they had not given them sufficient love.

37. I am indebted to Chief Superintendent Malone, at the time stationed in Cork city, for the execution of the survey.

38. *Op. cit.*, pp. 38, 57, 82, 106, 108, 110.

Emotional disturbance of a sado-masochistic kind underlay much of his anti-social behaviour. He had very mixed feelings about his father, who, he felt, was hostile to him. His father had once failed to give him a chemistry set for Christmas when he had earlier promised it to him. When Christmas came he told his father he would do something to himself if did he not get the set. When it was still not forthcoming he cut his knee with a knife in order to make his father feel guilty. This gained him the chemistry set. He also claimed that his father had been suspected of committing the theft for which N. had been sent to the institution. N. had owned up lest his father be blamed, according to N. When he told his father why he had owned up, his father, far from being grateful, criticized him for admitting to something which he said could not be proved. This thought that he was confessing in order to save his father hints at a certain masochism overlying hostility to the father. After a period at the reformatory the boy did not return from holidays and probably went to Britain. Some form of psychotherapy in an enclosed environment was indicated. Unfortunately none was available.<sup>39</sup>

B. was from a small town in County Cork and was the eldest of seven children. He was fifteen years three months at the time of interview and rugged in build. He talked quite freely about himself and I felt that, consciously at least, he was not attempting to deceive. He had been convicted three times for larceny and house-breaking and had been in the reformatory for seven months of his two year stay. His father was a casual labourer.

His I.Q. on the WISC was 79 and this was consistent with my impression that he was in general slow and dull. He did better on the performance than the verbal side, gaining a performance I.Q. of 90 and a verbal I.Q. of 72. A young brother, aged nine, was in an institution for the mentally handicapped. Cooperation was good during the WISC but I gained the impression from the structured interview that followed that he had difficulty in controlling his temper.

The structured interview revealed a lot. His grandfather was living with the family and often fought physically with the boy or his father. Once he hit the boy when the boy intervened in a quarrel between the father and himself. On another occasion the grandfather blamed B. for taking a penknife from him when, according to B., it was a young brother who was at fault. There seemed to be a strong, if ambivalent, relationship between B. and the grandfather and he said that it was a fight with him that first got him into trouble with the law. On that occasion his grandfather had nagged him a lot and, when the boy answered back, he hit him. B. said this had been undeserved and in retaliation he had hit his grandfather in the stomach. This caused an ulcer (which he did not know the old man had) to burst and he was taken to hospital where he had an emergency operation and had to stay for two months. B. was very disturbed on learning that he had nearly killed his grandfather and, while affected by this, took money in order to revenge himself on someone who he said had not properly repaired his bicycle. He was caught and fined but twenty minutes after the sentence, so he said, he began to steal again. He had been disappointed that he had not been "sent away" by the judge, as he felt then that this was the only thing that could "stop" him. Of himself, earlier in the interview, he said that whenever he gritted his teeth, he drew blood.

39. A good account of psycho-analysis with maladjusted boys of above average intelligence in a residential school is given by Otto Shaw, *Maladjusted Boys*, Allen & Unwin, 1965.

His anti-social activities were somewhat similar to N's. Both seemed partly motivated by the wish to avoid the awareness or memory of unhappy events at home. This recalls Stott's thesis that some boys commit anti-social acts in order to discharge tension accumulating from the repression of the awareness of family disturbances.<sup>40</sup> Some form of therapy might well provide a means whereby such boys could discharge violent emotion in a symbolic, verbal, or play oriented way. B's involvement in the conflicts at home probably led to a sense of guilt, which might cause in turn a kind of punishment-seeking behaviour. It is also possible that he sensed his inability to control himself in the face of the dissension at home and wished to be in an institution so that his behaviour would be strictly controlled. He was a case of borderline mental handicap with a schizoid behaviour pattern and should have been in a special centre. His case also shows the need for after-care hostels for boys from violent homes. After release from the reformatory, B. was reconvicted on twenty-six separate charges.

### *Towards a Delinquency Prediction Scale*

The Appendix lists fourteen questions which discriminate between the delinquent and non-delinquent groups at beyond the 5 per cent level of probability. Answers characteristic of delinquents and non-delinquents are given. Attached to each answer characteristic of delinquents is a score which is based on the difference between the percentage of the total giving that answer who were delinquent and the percentage of the total giving any other answer who were delinquent. The method by which the scores were derived is illustrated at the start of the Appendix. Each of the 120 boys was scored on the fourteen questions, and placed in a score group according to his cumulative total score.

The Appendix also shows the total scores on the fourteen questions of fresh groups of delinquents (60 boys from the reformatory, 29 boys from St. Patrick's Institution, and 56 boys on probation) and non-delinquents (29 boys at Technical School and 33 at National School). These results in general confirm that the fourteen questions discriminate between delinquents and non-delinquents. Two notes of caution should be sounded, however. First, boys of over seventeen who get into trouble may not show such a strong link between anti-social behaviour and disturbance at home. As will be noted below, the association between overall score and recidivism in the original sample of 60 was much stronger for 34 industrial school boys (average age, thirteen years nine months) than for 23 reformatory boys (average age, fifteen years seven months). Secondly, the scale may not be of much use as a structured interview with boys under thirteen who are of low intelligence. There were many changes of answer in a re-administration of the scale (after an interval of about two months) to 28 national schoolboys of Group (e) in the Appendix. In their cases, a visit to the family to assess at first hand factors mentioned in the scale would probably have been a more effective diagnostic procedure.

40. D. H. Stott, *Delinquency and Human Nature*, Dunfermline: Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, 1950.

In September 1969 the assistance of the Criminal Record Office and the Department of Education's Reform and Industrial School Branch enabled me to see which of 57 delinquents from the 60-60 comparison had been reconvicted after release from their institution. The shortest period after release from the institution of any boy who had not subsequently been reconvicted was two years five months. This occurred in one case. All the other non-recidivists had, as a minimum, a period of three years at risk. The recidivists were at risk for about the same period.<sup>41</sup> It was not possible to follow up 2 of the original 60 delinquents and a third boy was excluded from the follow-up survey because he was a non-recidivist whose period since release might not have exceeded six months.

The Table below shows the association between total score on the fourteen questions listed in the Appendix and recidivist status for the 57 delinquents.

TABLE 6: *Number of Boys With and Without Subsequent Conviction by Total Score on Scale of fourteen Questions Given in the Appendix (high score indicating high degree of perceived family disorder)*

	<i>Subsequent Conviction</i>	<i>No Subsequent Conviction</i>	<i>Total</i>
Score of 250 or more	27	14	41
Score of less than 250	2	14	16
Total	29	28	57

The association between scoring at 250 or over and being subsequently reconvicted is statistically significant (Chi-squared was 11.05 with Yates's correction,  $p < .001$ ). The Point Biserial Coefficient of correlation was .33 which, using a one-tailed test, was significant at beyond the 5 per cent level of chance occurrence. This indicates some positive relationship between degree of family disturbance and recidivism and neatly underscores the results which show that home background factors differentiate between delinquents and non-delinquents. It was also possible to see how the serious recidivists scored on the scale compared with those less serious. Boys with more than three reconvictions were placed in the "serious recidivist" category. In addition one boy with two reconvictions who was also on remand for murder by stabbing was put in this category.<sup>42</sup> Taking 300 as a cut-off point for prediction of serious delinquency, significantly more ( $p < .01$ ) of the serious than of the less serious recidivists scored at 300 or over.

41. Precise information on when some of the recidivists left the institution was not obtained in 5 cases. It is possible that one of these was at risk for only six months and another for one year eleven months.

42. His score of 507 was the second highest of the entire group.

TABLE 7: *Serious recidivists, Less serious recidivists, Non-recidivist Delinquents and Non-delinquents by Total Score on Scale of Fourteen Questions Given in the Appendix*

Total Score	Serious recidivists	Less serious recidivists	Non-recidivist delinquents	Non-delinquents
550-599	0	0	1	0
500-549	1	0	0	0
450-499	2	3	3	0
400-449	3	0	1	0
350-399	1	3	2	1
300-349	5	3	4	0
250-299	0	6	3	3
200-249	0	2	8	7
150-199	0	0	0	8
100-149	0	0	6	18
50-99	0	0	0	19
0-49	0	0	0	4
Total	12	17	28	60

It seems that a score of 200 may provide a useful cut-off score for indication of delinquency status, 250 a cut-off score for future recidivism, and 300 a cut-off score for future serious recidivism.

Factors other than those assessed by the scale of fourteen questions were related to the recidivism/non-recidivism outcome. The average number of children in the recidivists' families, 7.78, was significantly greater than in the non-recidivists' families, 5.86. Those with more than three convictions at the time of the interview were significantly more often found to be recidivists. Such crimes as damage to property, and breaking into factories, shops and garages and trouble over non-attendance at school were more often associated with future recidivism. Although most of the fourteen questions of the scale showed the recidivists as more often disadvantaged than the non-recidivists, only two questions showed statistically significant differences between the two groups. Drinking (usually by the father) had more often led to trouble at home for the recidivists and the recidivists also more often perceived that neither parent was just right about strictness at home. They tended to perceive that the father was too strict. Seven (including the boy on a murder charge<sup>43</sup>) of the serious recidivists felt their

43. The boy on a murder charge had spent four and a half years in the industrial school. Apart from saying that his father had been over-strict, he also said the father used drink a great deal and often quarrelled with the mother. According to the boy, the mother was over-indulgent with him. One of his worries was about being slapped or deprived of privileges for wetting the bed in the industrial school. This kind of punitive reaction to bedwetting—a sure sign of emotional disturbance—was fairly common in the industrial school. The boy was almost sixteen at the time.



fathers had been too strict compared with 4 of the 17 less serious recidivists and 6 of the 28 non-recidivists. All four boys who had felt that only severe punishment could stop them at an earlier stage became recidivists, as did a fifth who said he had got into trouble in order to make his family suffer. Bedwetting occurred in 25 per cent of those who later became serious recidivists compared with 7 per cent of those who were not reconvicted.

Of the 34 boys who had been at industrial school, 19 or 56 per cent had been reconvicted. The corresponding percentage for the reformatory group of 23 was 43 per cent. Most of their subsequent crimes consisted of housebreaking and larceny although, as mentioned, one boy had been remanded on a charge of murder by stabbing.<sup>44</sup> According to the Criminal Record Office most of the crimes had been committed within a short period of perhaps eighteen months after release. The general tendency was for the boys to settle down as they neared the age of twenty. This bears out the evidence of criminal statistics which shows the teenage group as having a relatively high crime rate. It may also account for the higher percentage reconvicted of the industrial school boys, who were younger than the reformatory boys. The association between type of home background and criminal behaviour on release was much stronger in the case of the industrial schoolboys than for the reformatory boys.<sup>45</sup> The conclusion to be drawn is that adverse home backgrounds had a less disturbing effect on the older boys. Social education for young offenders should therefore seek to develop their independence of home disturbance and sense of personal responsibility as rapidly as possible. This in some cases would necessitate separation from home by committal to properly run institutions or to probation and aftercare hostels.

The data of Table 6 show that two recidivists had scores below 250 and that one non-recidivist had the highest score of all. One of the recidivists under 250 had been receiving treatment at a Child Guidance Clinic and showed shyness and emotional withdrawal.

### *Conclusion*

The results indicate that the delinquents were handicapped not in one but in many ways. The problem of their treatment is manifold; but underlying any attempt to change their difficult, exasperating and hostile behaviour should be a disciplined love. This has been conspicuously absent in most of their lives. An Irish psycho-analyst, W. R. Bowell, puts it well<sup>46</sup>—"Successful treatment of child delinquency must be based on one fundamental psychological and spiritual principle. Only those can help and heal the delinquent who are able to receive with loving patience the full weight of his infantile and negative unconscious

44. The Criminal Record Office had been notified of subsequent convictions in Great Britain.

45. The chi-squared value from the test of independence for the variables of reconviction status and total score (dichotomized at 250) was 9.62 ( $p < .01$ ) for the industrial school boys. For the reformatory boys the probability of the degree of association on a chance basis between the two variables was .128 by Fisher's Exact Probability Test.

46. Personal communication, August 1960.

emotions. As a lightning conductor receives and safely runs to earth the free electrical discharges of a thunderstorm, so must such persons receive without hostile defence the crude, sly, dishonest behaviour of delinquents." Objectionable behaviour cannot be transformed by personal hostility. Neither is the emotion of love sufficient in itself but it must be subject to the discipline of understanding.

### *Summary*

The families of the delinquents were found to have significantly high rates of paternal unemployment and maternal employment. The families were significantly more often from semi-skilled manual and less often from higher non-manual classes and were significantly larger than would be expected for those classes. The average I.Q. of the boys was 75. Social adjustment, as measured by a questionnaire, seemed reasonably normal. Delinquents perceived significantly more often than non-delinquents that their home life was inadequate in some way. Drinking had significantly often made trouble in the delinquents' homes and significantly more of them had experienced corporal punishment. Most had started truanting at an early age. A scale of fourteen questions, based mainly on perception of home life, was formulated which discriminated between delinquents and non-delinquents and also between those delinquents who were subsequently reconvicted and those who were not. Furthermore, the scale discriminated between the serious and less serious recidivists.

## APPENDIX

### *Formulation of a Delinquency Association Scale*

Fourteen questions which distinguished between the delinquents and controls at the .05 level and which concerned a boy's experience of home and reaction to school were used to form a delinquency association scale. The delinquent-type answer in each case was given a score based on the difference between the number of delinquents giving that answer as a percentage of all boys giving the answer and the number of delinquents giving the non-delinquent type answer as a percentage of that total. For example, in answer to the question, "Which parent used to give too little love, affection or kindness to you?", the answer which characterised the delinquents was "Father" and 25 (or 71½%) of the 35 boys who gave that answer were delinquents; the answers which characterized the non-delinquents were "Mother" or "Neither" and 35 (or 41¼%) of the 85 boys who gave either of those answers were delinquents. The score for the delinquent-type answer of "Father" was made 71½ and the score for the non-delinquent-type answers of "Mother" or "Neither", 41¼%. To facilitate computation, the score for the non-delinquent-type answer was reduced to zero and that for the delinquent-type answer made equal to the difference in scores between the two types of answers.

Eight of the questions are duplications or modifications of questions in the research carried out by Andry. They are nos. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 13.

Question	Delinquent-Type Answer(s) and Score	Non-Delinquent-Type Answer(s) (zero score in each case)
1. Which parent is just right about strictness at home?	Neither (44·50)	Father/Mother/Both
2. Do your parents sometimes punish you a lot for doing something wrong and hardly at all on other times for doing the same thing?	Yes (26·25)	No
3. What kind of punishment do you usually get when you do something wrong at home?	Hit/None in parti- cular (30·75)	Talked to/Kept in. Extra jobs/Deprived of privileges
4. With whom do you spend most of your time indoors?	On own/Brothers or sisters (26·75)	Both parents or either parent/Family as a whole
5. Would it have been helpful if your father had seen a great deal more of you?	Yes/Don't know (32·50)	No
6. Would it have been helpful if your mother had seen a great deal more of you?	Yes (32·75)	No/Don't know
7. Are you inclined to talk to your parents when you are in trouble or do you try to wriggle out of it on your own?	Wriggle out (51·25)	Talk to parents/Don't know
8. Which parent used give too little love, affection or kindness to you?	Father (30·25)	Mother/Both/Neither
9. Which parent do you think loved you perhaps just a little too much than was good for you?	Mother (45·00)	Father/Both/Neither
10. Did your parents quarrel slightly more than average or ordinary parents?	Yes (48·50)	No
11. Did you ever try to run away from home (apart from spending a night or two nights away with the intention of returning home)?	Yes (59·00)	No
12. Did drinking ever make trouble at home?	Yes/Don't know (36·75)	No
13. Did you ever truant from school (apart from taking an occasional day off or staying at home pretending to be sick)?	Yes (68·50)	No
14. Did your parents ever change their home in your lifetime?	Yes/Don't know (23·25)	No

Each of the 120 boys was individually scored on the fourteen questions. The total score classes with the number of delinquents and non-delinquents scoring in each are as below:

<i>Total Score Class</i>	<i>Number of Delinquents</i>	<i>Number of Non-delinquents</i>
500 and over	2	0
400-499	12	0
300-399	19	1
250-299	11	3
200-249	10	7
150-199	0	8
100-149	6	18
50-99	0	19
0-49	0	4
Total	60	60

Taking 200 as a cut-off point for prediction of delinquency, 86 per cent of the total group were correctly placed as delinquent or non-delinquent. A chi-squared test on the scores dichotomized at 200 gives a chi-squared value of 62 ( $p < .001$ ). This provides a contingency coefficient of .584. The point biserial coefficient of correlation was .70 which shows a substantial degree of association.

#### *Further Samples*

The scale was tried out on five more groups.

##### *(a) Results for 60 boys in Reformatory School*

<i>Total Score Class</i>	<i>Frequency of Scores</i>
400 and above	12
300-399	25
250-299	11
200-249	7
150-199	3
100-149	1
50-99	1
0-49	0

92 per cent of the scores were at 200 or above. These results are very close to the results for the delinquents in the original sample of 120.

(b) *Results for 29 boys in St. Patrick's Institution*

<i>Total Score Class</i>	<i>Frequency of Scores</i>
400 and above	3
300-399	7
250-299	5
200-249	9
150-199	3
100-149	2
50- 99	0
0- 49	0

83 per cent of the scores were at 200 or above.

(c) *Results for 56 boys placed on Probation by the Dublin Juvenile Court. These were aged mainly between 13 and 16 inclusive*

<i>Total Score Class</i>	<i>Frequency of Scores</i>
400 and above	2
300-399	15
250-299	7
200-249	14
150-199	6
100-149	6
50- 99	6
0- 49	0

68 per cent of the scores were at 200 or above. This result shows the scores of boys on probation to lie between those of institutionalized delinquents and non-delinquents.

(d) *Results of an abbreviated form of the scale (eleven questions used) on 29 schoolboys at Technical School*

<i>Total Score Class</i>	<i>Frequency of Scores</i>
250-299	1
200-249	2
150-199	9
100-149	8
50- 99	7
0- 49	2

Some 90 per cent of the total scores were below 200. This compares with 87 per cent of the 60 non-delinquents and 13 per cent of the 60 delinquents in the original sample who score below 200 when their scores are computed on the abbreviated scale of eleven questions.

*(e) Results for 33 boys from two National Schools with a high delinquency rate*

<i>Total Score Class</i>	<i>Frequency on Scores</i>
400 and above	2
300-399	4
250-299	5
200-249	8
150-199	6
100-149	5
50- 99	2
0- 49	1

42 per cent of the scores were below the 200 mark.

The results for (e) seem to cast some doubt on the validity of the scale. It should be noted, however, that both national schools had high delinquency rates. Apart, however, from the possibility that some of the boys were, or would shortly become, offenders, it is also probable that some did not fully understand the questions. Seventy per cent of group (e) were below the 25th percentile point on the Progressive Matrices Intelligence Test. Moreover, the boys were quite young—4 were aged twelve and the remainder thirteen. When the scale was re-administered as a test of its reliability to 28 of the boys after a period which ranged from one to three months, there were many changes in answering. Changes were significantly greater in the case of boys of low I.Q. It should also be noted that the scale was administered on a group basis with group (e).

The brevity of the scale—it takes at most about 10 minutes to give—and the fact that it can be given by a trained social worker or probation officer are powerful arguments for its use if its predictive validity is verified by further research. Many predictive devices at present involve a whole battery of tests or the activity of a clinical psychologist (the Rorschach inkblot test for instance) or psychiatrist.