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THE INTELLIGENCE OF DELINQUENT BOYS COMMITTED TO WISCONSIN INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL¹

MORRIS GILMORE CALDWELL²

The I. Q. is claimed by a large number of educators, psychologists, psychiatrists, sociologists and social workers to be the measurement of intelligence par excellence. On the other hand, there is a large group of psychologists who hold mental reservations regarding the validity of mental tests as a present constructed and administered. Thomas says, "Mental capacity and growth can be measured only indirectly, and the meaning of the results obtained becomes a matter of great controversy. There is no general agreement as to the nature of intelligence and there is no scientific way of checking whether the empirically determined tests measure what their sponsors claim."² Nevertheless, mental testing is the only method of measuring intelligence yet devised and its use seems inevitable until more accurate techniques are evolved for the measurement of intellectual abilities and capacities.

With this consideration in mind as to the general nature of mental tests, the I. Qs. of 492 delinquent boys committed to the Wisconsin Industrial School may be examined to see what relation exists, if any, between delinquency, mental abnormality and mental defect. This investigation may be facilitated by a comparison with other groups of juvenile delinquents, children of dependent families and normal children.

TABLE 1
Distribution of Boy Delinquents Committed to Wisconsin Industrial School
According to Intelligent Quotient

I. Q. ³	Number	Per Cent Distribution
40-49	6	1.2
50-59	16	3.3
60-69	80	16.3
70-79	135	28.0
80-89	111	22.6
90-99	40	8.1
100-109	13	2.6
110-119	3	.6
120-129	1	.2
Not given ⁴	84	17.1
Total	492	100.0

¹Professor of Sociology and Economics, Ashland College, Ashland, O.

²This article consists of a selected part of the doctor's dissertation by the present writer on, *Male Juvenile Delinquency in Relation to the Home and Community Environment*, University of Wisconsin, 1929.

³Thomas, W. I., and Thomas, D. S., *The Child in America*, N. Y., 1928.

⁴The Psychiatric Field Service of the State Board of Control gave the mental examinations to the delinquent boys in this group.

⁵84 boys in this study were not given mental tests due to lack of facilities.

Table 1 shows the facts regarding the I. Q. of the delinquent boy group according to the Stanford-Binet classification. Exactly 48.8% have an I. Q. below 80 and 71.4% have an I. Q. below 90, which is normal. The modal group falls in the 70-79 interval, or "borderline" section, with 28% of the total cases.

TABLE 2
Distribution of Boy Delinquents Committed to Wisconsin Industrial School
According to Intelligent Quotient

I. Q.	Number	Per Cent Distribution
36-45	2	.4
46-55	11	2.2
56-65	56	11.4
66-75	108	21.8
76-85	142	28.9
86-95	60	12.3
96-105	21	4.3
106-115	7	1.4
116-125	1	.2
Not given.....	84	17.1
Total	492	100.0

In Table 2 the intelligent quotients are classified according to the Terman I. Q. interval. This tabulation shows that 64.7% of the cases have an I. Q. below 85. The mode of the group falls in the 76-85 interval, with 28.9% of the total cases.

TABLE 3
Distribution of 492 Boys Committed to Wisconsin Industrial School for Boys
and 252 Girls Committed to Wisconsin Industrial School for Girls
According to Intelligent Quotient

I. Q.	Boy Delinquents		Girl Delinquents ⁶	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
36-45	2	.4	...	.....
46-55	11	2.2	4	1.6
56-65	56	11.4	35	13.9
66-75	108	21.8	89	35.3
76-85	142	28.9	69	27.4
86-95	60	12.3	30	11.9
96-105	21	4.3	21	8.3
106-115	7	1.4	3	1.2
116-125	1	.2	1	.4
Not given	84	17.1	...	.....
Total	492	100.0	252	100.0

Table 3 is a comparison between the boy and the girl delinquent groups in respect to I. Q. Approximately, 60% of the girls have an I. Q. below 80, whereas only 50% of the boys have such an I. Q. rating. Almost 85% of the girls have an I. Q. below 90 and slightly over 70% of the boys have an I. Q. below normal. The mode for the girl delinquent group falls in the 66-75 interval, while the mode for the boy delinquent group falls in the 76-85 interval. Both groups have a tendency toward mental dullness and mental defect, but the girls lead in this direction by a little over 13%.

⁶Lumpkin, Katharine D., *Social Situations and Girl Delinquency*, Doctor's Thesis, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1928, p. 58.

TABLE 4*

Distribution of Boy Delinquents Committed to Wisconsin Industrial School, and of Terman's 905 Unselected Children 5-14 Years of Age by I. Q.

I. Q.	Boy Delinquents Wisconsin		Terman's Unselected ⁶ Children	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
36-45	2	.4	...	.....
46-55	11	2.2	...	.....
56-65	56	11.4	3	.3
66-75	108	21.8	21	2.3
76-85	142	28.9	77	8.6
86-95	60	12.3	182	20.1
96-105	21	4.3	306	33.9
106-115	7	1.4	209	23.1
116-125	1	.2	81	9.0
126-135	...	.....	21	2.3
136-145	...	.....	5	.5
Not given	84	17.1	...	.....
Total	492	100.0	905	100.0

*Graphic representation of data given in Chart I.

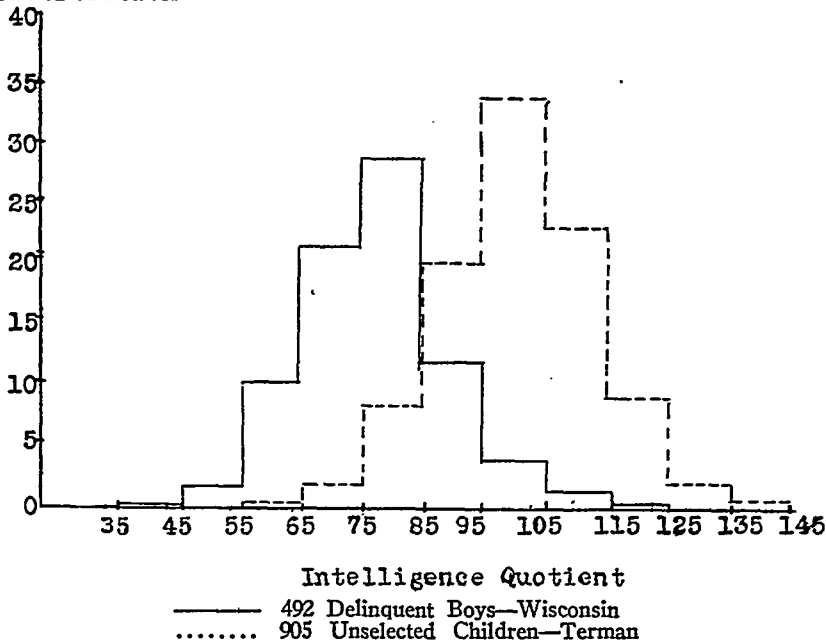
In Table 4 is given a comparison between the Wisconsin boy delinquent group and Terman's 905 unselected children. Some outstanding differences are apparent. The mode falls in the 96-105 interval among the unselected children and in the 76-85 interval among

CHART I*

Distribution of Boy Delinquents Committed to Wisconsin Industrial School and of Terman's 905 Unselected Children 5-14 Years of Age by I. Q.

Percent

Distribution



*Data based on Table 4.

⁶Cited by Slawson, John, *The Delinquent Boy*, Boston, 1926, Table 25, pp.

the boy delinquent group. Furthermore, only 11.2% of the Terman group have an I. Q. below 85, whereas 64.7% of the boy delinquent group have an I. Q. rating below that number. All this seems to indicate that this study deals with a mentally defective group.

Table 5*

Distribution of Intelligence for 492 Boy Delinquents and 252 Girl Delinquents
Wisconsin Industrial School, 451 C. O. S. Children, 80 F. W. S. Children,
821 Riley Hospital Children and Terman's 905 Unselected Children.

I. Q.	492	252	451	80	821 ⁷	905
	Children	Children	Children	Children	Children	Children
Below 66.....	14.0	15.5	8.6	10.0	13.3	.3
66-75	21.8	35.3	12.6	6.3	12.8	2.3
76-85	28.9	27.4	27.6	25.0	19.1	8.6
86-95	12.3	11.9	23.4	27.5	23.1	20.1
96-105	4.3	8.3	18.4	18.7	18.3	33.9
106-115	1.4	1.2	6.4	10.0	8.7	23.1
116-125 .....	.2	.4	2.8	2.5	3.4	9.0
126-145 .....	.....	.....	.2	.....	1.3	2.8
Not given	17.1	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

*Graphic representation of data given in Chart II.

Table 5 is a comparison of the Wisconsin delinquent groups with three groups of non-delinquent children of dependent families under the care of charitable organizations in various parts of the United States and Terman's 905 unselected children. The first group comprises 451 C. O. S. children from 204 dependent families in New York City. The second group includes 80 children from 23 families under the care of the Philadelphia Family Welfare Society in a study made by Phyllis Blanchard and Richard H. Paynter. The third group is composed of 821 children tested by Dr. Herman H. Young of Indiana University for the James Whitcomb Riley Memorial Hospital at Indianapolis. The dependent children in all three groups were not selected for testing because mental defect or mental superiority was suspected, but because their families were in need of aid from a charitable organization.

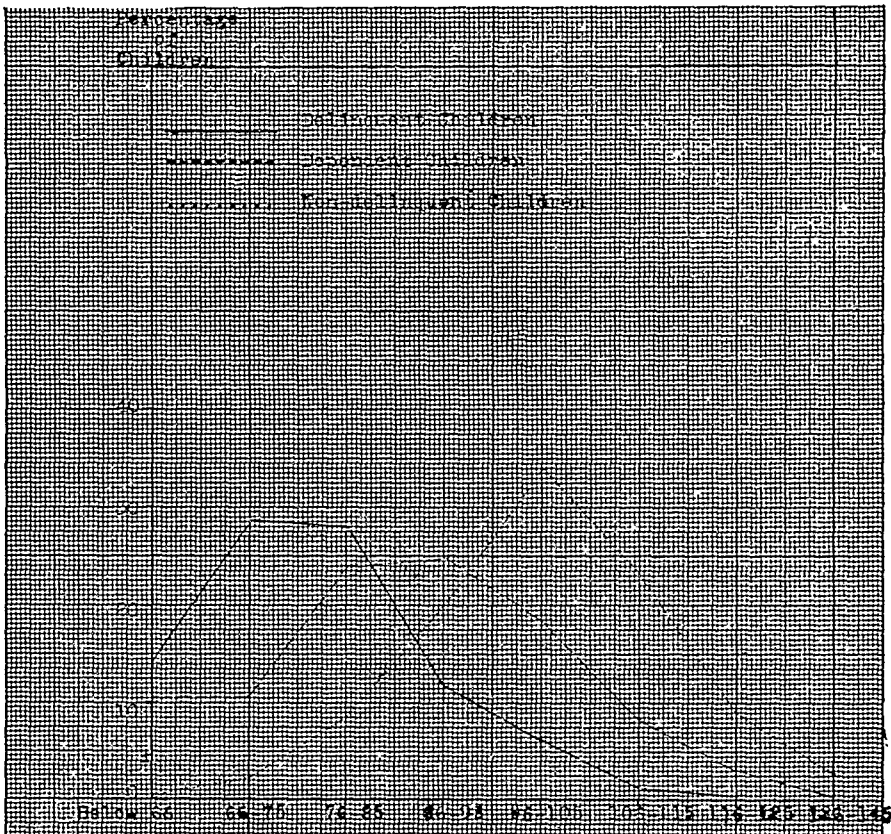
A division of the I. Q. range into three parts makes possible some very interesting comparisons. An I. Q. range of 86-105 is regarded as normal; all below 86 is below normal; and all above 105 is above normal. The various groups register percentages of intelligence below normal as follows: Wisconsin delinquent groups 71.4%; children of dependent families 45.1%; and Terman's 905 unselected children only 11.2%. The I. Q. percentages for normality are: Wisconsin de-

⁷White, R. C., "The Intelligence of Children in Dependent Families," *Social Forces*, Vol. VII, pp. 61-68, September, 1928.

linquent groups 18.4%; children of dependent families 43.1%; and 54% for Terman's unselected children. The I. Q. percentages for above normal are as follows: Wisconsin delinquent groups 1.6%, with 17.1% of the total cases not given; children of dependent families 11.7%; and 35% above normal for Terman's 905 unselected children.

CHART II*

Distribution of Intelligence of Delinquent, Dependent and Non-delinquent Children



I. Q. Range

*Based on data in Table 5.

TABLE 6

Distribution of I. Q. Percentages for Delinquent, Dependent and Non-delinquent Groups of Children

Type of Children	Below Normal	Normal	Above Normal
Wisconsin Delinquents.....	71.4	18.4	1.6
Children of Dependent Families....	45.1	43.1	11.7
Terman's Children.....	11.2	54.0	35.0

Table 6 shows that there is a descending scale of I. Q. percentages between delinquent, dependent and non-delinquent groups of children for I. Qs. below normal and an ascending scale for I. Qs. normal or above.

The data of the preceding tables is presented in a somewhat different form in Table 7, which is a comparison of the chronological and mental age levels of 408 cases of delinquent boys. The mean chronological age is 14 years and the mean mental age is 10.6 years. Approximately 25% of the boys have a mental age of 10 years. Using the year 12 as a dividing line, it is interesting to note that although 80.3% of the cases have a chronological age above 12 years, nevertheless, 84% of the cases have a mental age of 12 years and below. In other words, the mental age level lags behind the chronological age level to a very considerable degree.

TABLE 7*

Distribution of Boy Delinquents Committed to Wisconsin Industrial School by Chronological and Mental Age Levels

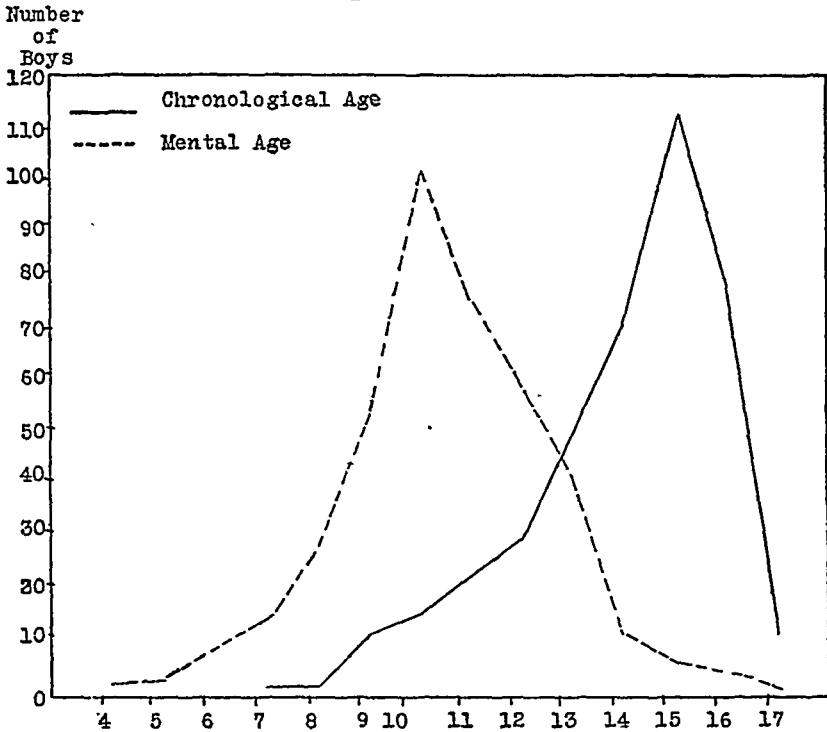
Age	Chronological		Mental ¹⁸	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
4 .....	...	....	1	.2
5 .....	...	....	2	.5
6 .....	...	....	7	1.7
7	1	.2	13	3.2
8	1	.2	29	7.0
9	11	2.7	53	13.0
10	15	3.7	101	24.7
11	23	5.6	77	19.0
12	30	7.3	60	14.7
13	52	12.8	42	10.3
14	73	17.9	12	3.0
15	112	27.5	6	1.5
16	79	19.4	4	1.0
17	11	2.7	1	.2
Total	408	100.0	408	100.0

*Graphic representation of the data given in Chart III.

¹⁸The Stanford-Binet tests were used in measuring mental age. The material on mental age was available for only 408 cases.

CHART III*

Distribution of Delinquent Boys Committed to Wisconsin Industrial School by Chronological and Mental Age



From the foregoing statistical analysis, some conclusions regarding the intelligence of boy delinquents in Wisconsin may be made. This group is decidedly mentally defective with over 70% of the cases having an I. Q. below normal. The modal group is composed of "borderline cases." Wisconsin girl delinquents in the Lumpkin study are even more mentally defective than the boys with approximately 85% of the cases having an I. Q. below normal. If mental tests as given to Wisconsin boy and girl delinquents by the Psychiatric Service of the State Board of Control are properly administered and give a true measure of intelligence of juvenile delinquents in Wisconsin, the inference is clear that the juvenile courts of the state committed 70% of the boy delinquents and 85% of the girl delinquents in these two studies to the wrong type of institution—that is they should have been sentenced to an institution for the feeble-minded.

*Data based on Table 7.

In a comparison with Terman's 905 unselected children it appears that approximately 65% of the boy delinquent group have an I. Q. below 85, whereas only 11% of the non-delinquent group have an I. Q. rating below that figure. Further, the mode in the Terman group falls in the 96-105 interval and in the 76-85 interval among the boy delinquent group.

In a comparison of the Wisconsin boy and girl delinquents with three groups of children of dependent families and Terman's 905 unselected children, it appears that there is a descending scale of I. Q. percentages between delinquent, dependent and non-delinquent groups of children for I. Qs. below normal and an ascending scale of I. Qs. for normal or above.

The mean chronological age for the boy delinquent group is 14 years and the mean mental age is only 10.6 years. The mean mental age lags behind the mean chronological age about 3.4 years.

The facts in this study seem to indicate that there is a very close relation between delinquency and mental deficiency, but this does not mean necessarily that mental deficiency is the only cause of delinquency.