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## DISTRIBUTION OF CRIMINAL OFFENSES IN SECTIONAL REGIONS

STUART LOTTIER<sup>1</sup>

Two earlier articles in this *Journal* demonstrate that crime and criminals are not distributed over the country helter-skelter but occur in a regional pattern concentrating about metropolitan cities. This *crime region* is identical with the metropolitan region, a new unit of population settlement and mobility which has succeeded the town-and-country distribution characteristic of the pre-automobile era. A farmer living thirty or forty miles from Detroit, for example, markets his products in Detroit, and the prices he gets depend upon employment conditions in Detroit. He and his family read Detroit newspapers, attend Detroit theaters, listen to radio broadcasts from Detroit, patronize Detroit department stores. If their Ford is stolen, the local Sheriff calls the Detroit police. And when a major robbery occurs in Detroit, State police and local officers in the surrounding country cooperate in blockading the highways leading out of the city. The metropolitan region functions as a crime region, despite the fact that it has no political existence, nor does any formal agreement exist between the scores of police jurisdictions contained within its boundaries.

Geographic, economic, and cultural processes had combined to develop patterns of settlement in the United States a century or two before *metropolitan* regions appeared on the scene. These recent territorial units are the product of automobiles and large cities but are themselves parts of larger, longer established *sectional* regions. Thus, gradients have been used to delineate the crime region of a large city, and to show the large city's crime dominance over outlying zones. This dominance is a result of concentration in metropolitan centers of economic and commercial functions. But while the metropolitan regions of Boston and Atlanta, for example, may show crime rates which decrease regularly from their respective city centers, yet the extent and kind of crime committed in the two regions is very different. Each city has crime dominance over its region, but not explainable in terms of commercial and economic

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dominance are differences between crime in Boston and crime in Atlanta. The cultural background of the two cities is different. It is culture which distinguishes sectional regions.

### *The Concept of Culture*

Culture is the basis for the attempted delineation of sectional regions and the concept of culture is fundamental to the ensuing paragraphs. Culture refers roughly to the social inheritance or the historical background which a group of people have in common. It is defined as "all those artificial objects, institutions, modes of life or of thought which are not peculiarly individual but which characterize a group and have both spatial and temporal contiguity."<sup>2</sup> Thus there are culture areas and cultural epochs. Sumner divided culture into folkways and *mores*: the first are customs which are morally indifferent while the *mores* are actively and rigidly enforced by the group.<sup>3</sup> The *mores* may or may not be logical or rational, but the "*mores* can make anything right and prevent the condemnation of anything."<sup>4</sup> Territorially, the *mores* vary from the narrowest limitations, like the locally circumscribed attitude of accepting the negro in social as well as political activities, to attitudes like *laissez faire* which are common in every section of the nation.

In general, this study has to do with the spatial regularity of the *mores*, and specifically with those *mores* that are indexed by the rates of selected offenses known to the police.

### *Historical Basis of Sectional Differences*

The development of differences between sections in the United States involves the whole gamut of factors in the country's economic and cultural development. Two general types of factors are basic to this process: (1) the changing modes of transportation and communication, and (2) the different agricultural and industrial adjustments which were made in accordance with resources both natural and human. McKenzie distinguished three periods in the development of settlement in the United States: first, an adjustment of settlement to transportation by water, then by rail, and finally by motor vehicle.<sup>5</sup> During the first era, "the various areas

<sup>2</sup> W. D. Wallis, "The Analysis of Culture," *Pub. Ann. Soc. Society*, Vol. 21, 1927, p. 158.

<sup>3</sup> *Folkways*, Boston, 1907, *passim*.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, title to chapter 15, p. 521.

<sup>5</sup> *The Metropolitan Community*, *op. cit.*, pp. 3-7.

of habitation were, for the most part, self-contained and self-sufficient. Accordingly a condition of local life developed in this period which may be described as *sectionalism*.<sup>6</sup> With the advent of rail transportation began tendencies towards the national integration of sections. Motor transport is integrating the sections still further, not on a national basis by reducing sectional differences, but on an intra-sectional basis by bringing the hinterland closer to the dominant cities. Thus Willey and Rice conclude that "longer journeys by more people are now made with relatively greater frequency than ever before. But *an even greater intensification of mobility takes place within circumscribed local areas*. While the average user of the automobile travels on occasion to distant points (with resulting new experiences and contacts) his travel within the narrower limits of the local area increases even more. *Contacts within the community area are multiplied out of proportion to contacts at a distance*."<sup>7</sup>

Present-day mobility is in no sense obliterating sectional differences, as is commonly supposed. What seems to be happening is an integration of the old section in terms of the newly expanded cities and their respective hinterlands. Boundaries between sections would not be arbitrary state lines but zones of diminishing influence between the regions of each respective section. Thus defined, the section assumes an orderly gradient character, becomes a *sectional region*. It is the result of the impact of economic and historical processes upon modern transportation, particularly the automobile.

Many of the cultural variations between sectional regions are deeply rooted in the types of settlement which accompany different economies. The south, predominantly agrarian, was sparsely settled according to a plantation economy. The north was quickly industrializing and its population began to concentrate in rapidly growing cities. While these patterns were becoming solidly established in the eastern half of the country, settlement in the western half was only being initiated in the pioneer or frontier stage.

From the plantation economy of the south sprang a tradition of sharp caste discrimination between the landed gentry and the negroes or poor whites whom they exploited. Castes engendered characteristic criminal offenses. One expression of the maintenance of rigid social stratification is lynching which has been confined to

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 143.

<sup>7</sup> *Communication Agencies and Social Life*, Recent Social Trends Monograph, New York, 1933, p. 57.

the southern and southwestern states.<sup>8</sup> Also, family feuds developed in the isolated and thinly settled areas of the southern mountains "where self help was once the dominating necessity and where decentralized judicial administration has enfeebled the enforcement of the law."<sup>9</sup> It is true that lynching and feuds are hardly significant numerically but they symbolize extremes of conditions which are territorially circumscribed.

In the north, taking root in the novel and uniquely rapid expansion of industry and the wholesale and private commandeering of natural resources, were tendencies to dissolve social precedent as a means of social control and to replace it with a peculiar fusion of corrupt politics and puritanical legislation. Organized racketeering and the gangster type have been characteristic of the urban north. Thus, many cities in the south and west have their traditional red light district, but limited to the north is the highly *organized* response to the urban demand for prostitution. In no small measure is organized crime in the north related to emulation of the men and methods of large-scale business and to the readily available and approved rationalization of the same dominant class.

In the west, as a counterpart of immature settlement, flourished the frontier tradition of intense individualism and the readiness of the westerner to take the matter of control into his own hands. The west was free, its land and its people, and it was unsettled culturally as well as it was unsettled territorially. Laws were few, and the vigilantes utilized the same violence in enforcing them as the outlawed desperadoes who broke them.

Differences in crime follow directly from historical differences in settlement and division of labor. Crime of a sectional nature continues in the cattle country of the west, but thoroughly conditioned by modern devices and techniques. "Instead of working over (cattle) brands, rustlers load cattle into trucks, transport them to a deserted area and slaughter them for meat, but officers can usually track the rustlers down. Range law requires that hides of slaughtered cattle be spread on a fence so that all comers may observe the brand. Instead, rustlers bury the hides. Deputies go straight to a cattle thieves' rendezvous by watching the buzzards and tracing truck-tire tracks."<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> *The World Almanac and Book of Facts for 1936*, New York, 1936, p. 270; compiled by the Department of Records and Research, Tuskegee Institute.

<sup>9</sup> Harold D. Lasswell, "Feuds," *Ency. Soc. Sci.*, Vol. 6, New York, 1931, pp. 220-221.

<sup>10</sup> "Where the West Is Still Wild," *Popular Mechanics Mag.*, Nov., 1933, pp. 690-693.

There is today a noticeable contrast between tranquil New England and the comparatively furious west. It is highly improbable that a criminal of Dillinger's type could carry on his depredations in Massachusetts. A United Press dispatch of December 12, 1935, from Marblehead, Massachusetts, reported that "this 300-year old seacoast town has had its first holdup. . . . A salesman was held up at gun point and robbed of \$15." Is there a town in the whole west that has had no holdup?

Another illustration from another section: "The east has its tramp and the middle west its hobo with whom years of experience have enabled them to deal, but Oregon has a new problem which it does not yet know how to handle—the problem of the 'gasoline bum' . . . Oregon is suffering from the fact that its agricultural employers depend on an annual invasion of families in automobiles applying at their gates for work in harvesting the berries, cherries, vegetables, hops, prunes, and apples . . . Delinquency among migratory families is assuming such proportion as to require attention from the courts."<sup>11</sup>

Do the statistics of crime show significant sectional differences? If so, are such differences sufficiently regular and orderly to be called regional?

#### *Sources of Data*

The police departments of approximately 1,350 cities regularly report the number of Part I<sup>12</sup> offenses which occur within their jurisdictions to the Federal Bureau of Investigation. These are tabulated by states, divided by the population represented in the respective cities of each state, and the resulting per capita rates are published in the quarterly *Uniform Crime Reports*. Compiled from this source for the present investigation are the totals of the rates for each offense for 1934 and 1935. In order to express all offenses on a comparable scale, the averages are determined for each offense and the rates expressed as the per cent of the average.<sup>13</sup> The actual numbers of offenses per capita are not shown; the per-cent-of-average rates are in Table I.

<sup>11</sup> Louise F. Shields, "Problem of the Automobile Floater," *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 21, October, 1925, pp. 13-15.

<sup>12</sup> For definition of Part I offenses see *A Guide for Preparing Annual Police Records*, Committee on Uniform Crime Records, I. A. C. P., p. 11, or this *Journal*, May-June, 1938, p. 40.

<sup>13</sup> The per-cent-of-average rates are not *strictly* accurate. They are calculated by dividing each rate by the average of the individual rates rather than by the true average rate. Because they are accurate *in seriatim*, however, the discrepancy in no way influences the coefficients of correlation which follow.

TABLE I

SELECTED OFFENSES KNOWN TO THE POLICE FOR URBAN PLACES REPORTING TO THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION, 1934 AND 1935, PER 100,000 INHABITANTS IN 1930 EXCEPT AUTO THEFTS WHICH ARE PER 10,000 AUTOMOBILES IN 1933, EXPRESSED AS PER CENT OF THE AVERAGE RATE\*

State	Murder	Robbery (Holdup)	Aggravated Assault	Burglary (Breaking Entering)	Larceny (Theft)	Auto Theft
Average	100	100	100	100	100	100
Maine .....	2	17	50	70	46	77
New Hampshire .....	12	8	9	42	30	21
Vermont .....	5	12	10	19	16	18
Massachusetts .....	18	39	25	71	51	94
Rhode Island .....	12	9	28	60	69	28
Connecticut .....	15	29	32	34	67	84
New York .....	46	23	51	23	47	60
New Jersey .....	45	63	82	93	52	66
Pennsylvania .....	46	61	50	41	24	61
Ohio .....	79	134	71	91	98	67
Indiana .....	68	131	74	93	101	91
Illinois .....	73	380	72	125	55	86
Michigan .....	34	72	67	60	105	60
Wisconsin .....	11	16	13	37	68	37
Minnesota .....	27	115	18	97	49	98
Iowa .....	30	82	15	87	94	64
Missouri .....	91	119	59	78	113	86
North Dakota .....	21	120	10	89	70	57
South Dakota .....	44	96	16	65	66	62
Nebraska .....	69	73	27	53	69	101
Kansas .....	73	136	43	119	131	47
Delaware .....	100	38	85	68	72	73
Maryland .....	58	71	15	62	51	101
Virginia .....	206	110	418	133	158	132
West Virginia .....	94	64	51	78	68	104
North Carolina .....	265	99	828	118	86	165
South Carolina .....	225	73	190	77	220	105
Georgia .....	229	57	152	97	155	118
Florida .....	223	130	230	176	157	111
Kentucky .....	185	219	300	172	130	183
Tennessee .....	323	222	356	121	42	182
Alabama .....	364	105	180	148	51	243
Mississippi .....	202	63	211	71	54	52
Arkansas .....	269	172	142	136	111	208
Louisiana .....	174	68	138	60	57	119
Oklahoma .....	106	149	72	155	133	84
Texas .....	189	109	158	138	160	156
Montana .....	66	57	19	67	159	47
Idaho .....	56	80	40	79	129	78
Wyoming .....	52	55	21	82	162	87
Colorado .....	67	189	33	178	126	83
New Mexico .....	98	88	20	121	162	98
Arizona .....	162	216	103	161	170	283
Utah .....	30	109	43	134	117	146
Nevada .....	120	115	20	176	229	198
Washington .....	39	132	50	184	139	111
Oregon .....	30	179	26	193	165	83
California .....	46	87	48	119	114	83

\* Federal Bureau of Investigation, United States Department of Justice, *Uniform Crime Reports*, Vol. V, No. 4, Table 5, p. 10, and Vol. VI, No. 4, Table 5, p. 13; automobile registrations from National Automobile Chamber of Commerce, *Facts and Figures of the Automobile Industry*, New York, 1934 Edition; population data from U. S. Census, 1930.

There are several general sources of error in these data. (1) Entirely comparable rates by states can hardly be expected for the very reason that uniform crime reporting has been organized on a national basis for only a few years. (2) The per capita rates for 1934 and 1935 are calculated from the population enumeration of 1930 and the extent is unknown to which the numbers of inhabitants in the different cities had increased or decreased during the intervening time. (3) The state rates are based entirely upon the offenses reported in urban places and no allowance is made for differences in rural urban ratios. (4) Some states are represented by as many as 137 cities (Pennsylvania in 1935) while other states are represented by only a few cities. The ten states whose rates are calculated from five or less cities for either 1934 or 1935 are as follows:<sup>14</sup>

	<i>Cities Reporting</i>	
	1934	1935
Delaware .....	2	1
Maryland .....	4	6
South Carolina .....	2	3
Alabama .....	5	7
Arkansas .....	5	7
Idaho .....	5	6
Wyoming .....	5	4
New Mexico .....	3	4
Arizona .....	5	6
Nevada .....	3	4

The indexes of offenses for the aforementioned states are based on such few cities largely because the states are not densely populated and not because of unwillingness on the part of the police to report.

These general errors are apparently the causes of some inconsistencies in the tabulation by states. For example Wisconsin and Michigan had the two highest rates in the country for the offense of rape, while Ohio, Illinois, and Minnesota were considerably below the average rate for this offense. Again, Illinois had a robbery rate which was over five times as high as that of Michigan, and over 23 times as high as the rate for this offense in Wisconsin. It is doubtless true that these differences reflect in part variations in recording practices and are not to be interpreted entirely as actual differences in the per capita numbers of offenses committed in the respective states. A less general analysis of inconsistencies, by correlation, follows below.

<sup>14</sup> *Op. cit.*, Vol. 5, No. 4, Table 4, p. 9; Vol. 6, No. 4, Table 4, p. 12.



*Inter-correlations Between Offenses*

Coefficients of correlation are calculated in order to get a mathematical statement of the consistency of variation between offenses. The coefficients are used here for three purposes: (1) as a partial indication of the reliability of the rates; (2) as a means of determining the extent to which the rates of one offense are associated with the rates of other offenses; (3) to determine whether the offenses tend to group together into classes. The coefficients of correlation are computed from the per-cent-of-average rates in Table I and are presented in Table II.

TABLE II

INTERCORRELATIONS BY STATES BETWEEN OFFENSES KNOWN TO THE POLICE FOR URBAN PLACES REPORTING TO THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION, TOTALS OF RATES FOR 1934 AND 1935\*

	Rape	Robbery	Assault	Burglary	Larceny	Auto Theft
Murder .....	-.06	.32	.70	.39	.24	.17
Rape .....	..	.008	.03	-.04	.18	.28
Robbery (holdup) .....	..	..	.19	.67	.24	.42
Assault .....	..	..	..	.25	.08	.04
Burglary (breaking and entering) .....	..	..	..	..	.59	.61
Larceny .....	..	..	..	..	..	.48

\* Calculated by the product moment formula from data in Table I. Auto theft rate is per 1,000 automobile registrations.

Regarding the reliability of the rates, it is apparent from Table II that the offense of rape tends to vary in a chance way and does not correlate above .28 with the other six offenses. This in itself is not proof that rate is reported inaccurately. There are two alternative interpretations: that rape is an independent variable or that it is the only one of the seven offenses which is reported accurately. The first alternative cannot be demonstrated on the basis of any facts in the present study. The second alternative may be rejected because field investigation of the reporting of offenses by places within the Detroit commutation area disclose that rape is recorded with a minimum of uniformity. This fact coupled with the consistently low correlation by states seemed sufficient to eliminate this offense from further consideration.

It has been contended that crime is a general tendency, and knowing the extent of one offense allows for estimating the extent of the others. This is the notion expressed by Brearley concerning the relationship between homicide and other offenses: "Not only

is homicide the one offense of importance for which reliable data can be secured, it is also the crime typical of many others . . ."<sup>15</sup> A reverse statement of the relationship is made by another writer who contends that a high homicide rate is an indication of low rates for other offenses. Opposed to both of these views is Sutherland's: "no judgment regarding other crimes . . . should be based on homicides, for homicides are in a class by themselves."<sup>16</sup>

The data in Table II show that all of the coefficients (excepting rape) are positive and hence show a general tendency towards consistency. On the other hand, the size of the correlation is notably small. Only five of the 21 coefficients are approximately .50 or larger:

1. Murder and assault .....	.70
2. Robbery and burglary.....	.67
3. Burglary and auto theft.....	.61
4. Burglary and larceny.....	.59
5. Auto theft and larceny.....	.48

The size of these is large enough to consider the variables spatially related but not large enough to allow for estimating one from the other.

The relative configuration of the coefficients rather than their absolute magnitude is the basis for grouping the offenses into classes. It is apparent from the perusal of each column in Table II that offenses which may serve an economic or sustenance function group together. The largest correlations of robbery are with burglary, auto theft, and larceny. The largest correlations of larceny are with burglary and auto theft. Likewise, the non-sustenance offenses or crimes against the person group together. The largest correlation of murder is with assault which is considerably larger than the correlation between murder and burglary, the next highest. A third definite grouping is notable from Table II. It is that the higher correlations are between offenses which involve persons (murder, assault, robbery) as compared with correlations between offenses which involve units other than persons (burglary, auto theft, larceny).

#### *Distribution of Offenses by States*

The correlations show that there are three representative offenses: murder, robbery, and larceny. Maps are drawn for these

<sup>15</sup> *Homicide in the United States*, Chapel Hill, 1932, p. 4.

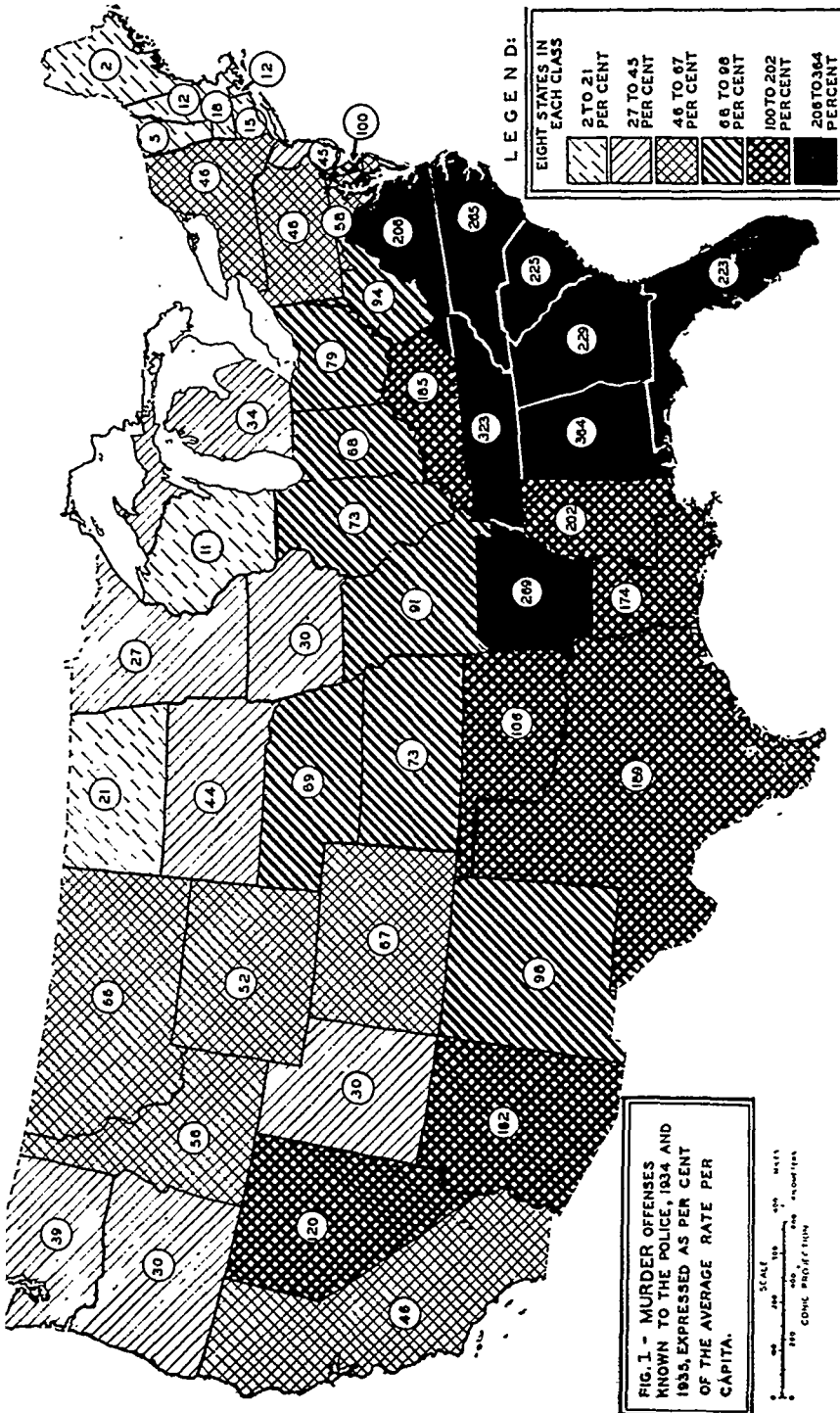
<sup>16</sup> *Principles of Criminology*, Chicago, 1934, p. 23.

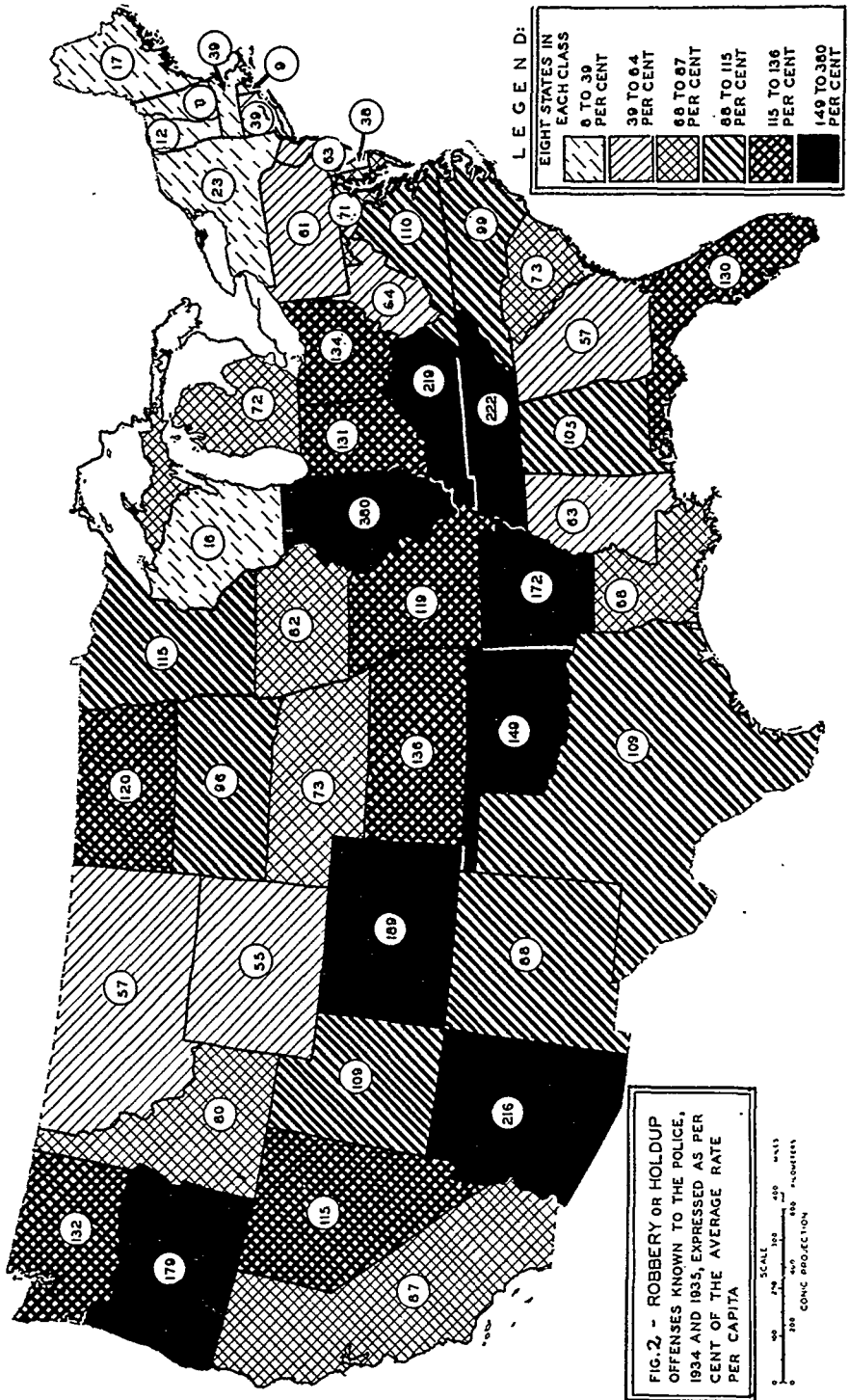
to determine whether they are distributed according to a regional pattern. By regional here is meant something more than sectional, not only whether states of similar rates are lumped together but whether gradients characterize the distributions. Is there a gradual and orderly increase in specific rates from states having low rates to states having high rates?

The maps are constructed from the per-cent-of-average rates presented in Table I. They are all per capita rates. The states are arranged in rank order for each offense and divided into six groups of eight states each. Each state is cross-hatched from black to light gray according to its rank interval. Also each state is marked with the per-cent-of-average rate from Table I.<sup>17</sup> Although the shading technique presents the distributions more graphically, the inserted rates give the more accurate distribution and are used in the following analysis of the distributions.

The distribution of murder offenses by states in Figure 1 shows a definitely gradient pattern. All of the eight states in class six on the map are adjacent states in the south east. Similarly lumped together are four adjacent states in the mountains which are in class three: seven adjacent central states in class four; three adjacent middle-Atlantic states in class three; five adjacent north-central states in classes one and two; and all six New England states in class one. It is notable that there is not one state which is more than one class removed from some adjacent state. Also, there are no class one states south of Wisconsin and no class six states north of Virginia. Neither are there any class one states adjacent to class six states. Referring to the more precise state differences as shown by the per-cent-of-average figures in the circles of each state, there are several lines or tiers of contiguous states which show regularly increasing murder rates. Some of these are as follows. (1) Going from north to south through six states from North Dakota to Texas; through five states from New York to North Carolina. (2) Going from south to north through three states from Florida to Tennessee, through three states from Texas to Tennessee. (3) Going from west to east through six states from Utah to Virginia; through five states from Colorado to Virginia; through five states from New Mexico to Alabama. (4) Going southeast through five states from Indiana to Texas. It is apparent from Figure 1 that the south-eastern section of the country is the dominant homicide area.

<sup>17</sup> See note 13, above.





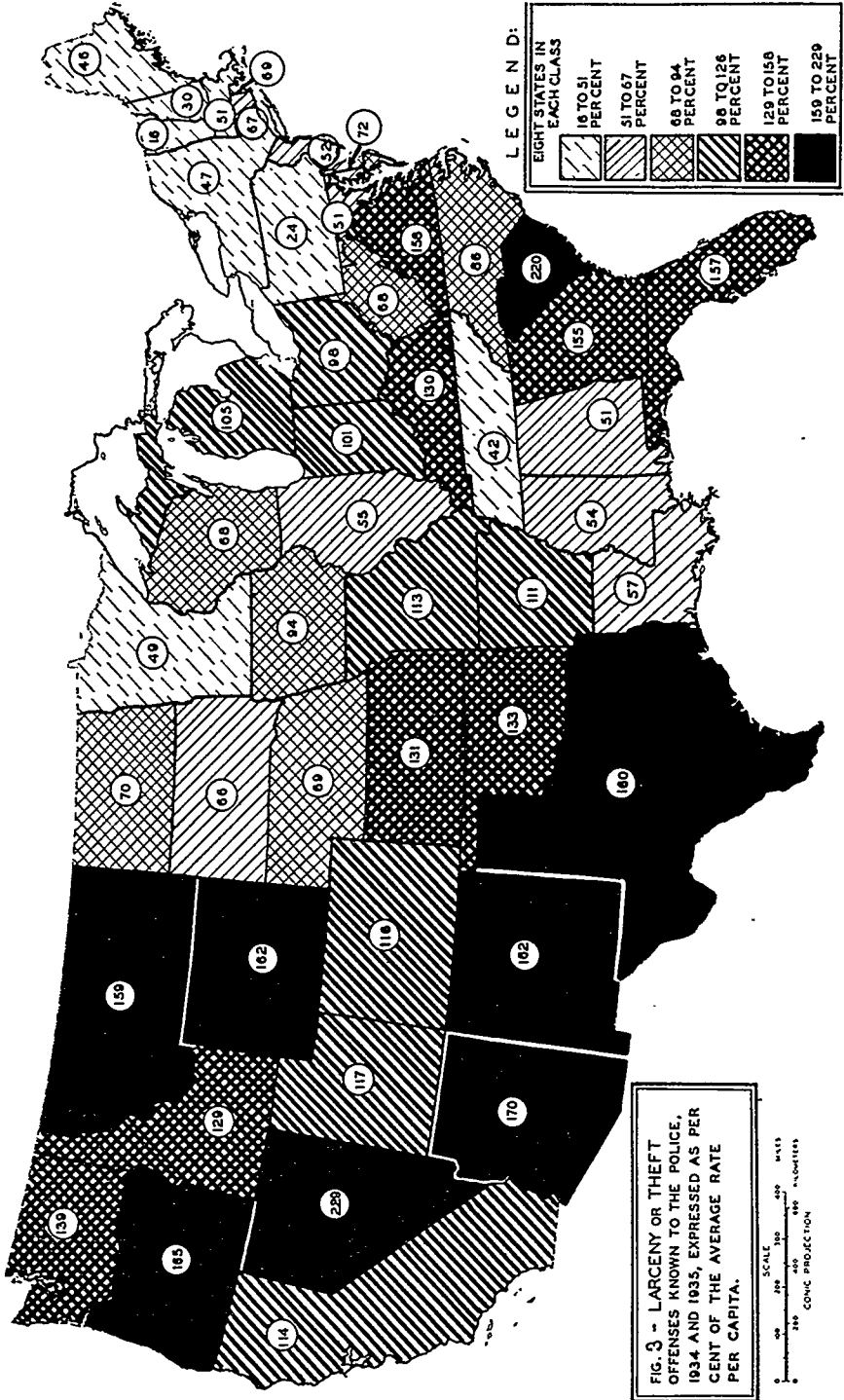
The pattern of the distribution of robberies shown in Figure 2 is not as consistently regional as is murder, but there is a definite gradient tendency. Rather than showing a concentration of class six states in the southeastern part of the country, this offense tends to group around a central axis running from east to west. Ten adjacent states in the middle central group are in classes five and six. A notable concentration is evident in the group of nine states running from Washington southeast to Texas, in the three heavier classes. There are no states in class one west of Wisconsin or south of Delaware and no states in class six east of Tennessee. That the concentration is central and western is shown by the fact that no class six state borders on Canada, the Atlantic Ocean or the Gulf of Mexico. An exception to the gradient is class one Wisconsin touching class six Illinois. There are several groups of states in gradient order. (1) Going north to south there are six states from New Hampshire to Tennessee; four states from Michigan to Tennessee; four states from Montana to Arizona. (2) from south to north there are four states from Georgia to Virginia; and three states from Nebraska to North Dakota. (3) Going west to east there are three states from Missouri to Colorado; and three states from Mississippi to Texas. The pattern of the distribution of robberies is essentially axial.

An opportunity to compare the distribution of robberies as shown by Federal Bureau of Investigation data with roughly comparable data compiled by an independent agency is afforded by statistics of the National Bureau of Casualty and Surety Underwriters. This private company writes more than 95 per cent of the bank robbery insurance in the United States.<sup>18</sup> Bank robberies in 23 western states "have developed increasingly higher loss ratios in comparison with premium revenue, despite several increases in ratios given effect in recent years."<sup>19</sup> "In 14 western states (Territory 4, see footnote 19) an insured bank must pay \$200 a year for the same insurance that a bank in New York State can buy for only \$10."<sup>20</sup> This private underwriter's statistics of robbery thus correspond generally, if not specifically, to the robbery rates of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

<sup>18</sup> *Am. Bankers Assoc. Jour.*, Vol. 26, August, 1933, "New Restrictions in Robbery Insurance."

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, These 23 states are divided into two territories, 3 and 4. Territory 3 contains Alabama, Arizona, California, Idaho, Louisiana, Mississippi, Montana, New Mexico, and Tennessee. Territory 4 contains Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, November, 1933, "Protection," p. 52.



The distribution of larceny offenses in Figure 3 shows that this offense is concentrated in the western states. Seven of the eight states in class six are west of Texas, and six adjacent states in the New England and Middle Atlantic group are in class one. Sixteen adjacent states from the Pacific group east to Missouri and Kansas are in the three heavier classes. Although no class one state is adjacent to a class six state, there are six adjacent states in the central and Atlantic group in which all six classes are represented: Tennessee, Alabama, Virginia, Ohio, Kentucky, and South Carolina. Predominant gradients run from north to south: (1) Five states from South Dakota to Texas, three from Tennessee to Florida, three from Minnesota to Missouri, and three from Pennsylvania to Virginia. (2) One gradient from south to north is of three states from Louisiana to Missouri. (3) From east to west there are two gradients of six states each: from Tennessee to Arizona and from Alabama to Arizona. (4) A gradient going west to east is of three states from Alabama to South Carolina. The dominant states for this offense are thus concentrated in the west with the northeastern states having the lowest rates, but otherwise the distribution is more irregular than gradient.

### *Conclusion*

It is evident from the correlations and the maps that three offenses are distributed in sectional regions: murder, assault, and robbery, because (1) all three distributions are sectional, that is, states of nearly equal rates occur adjacently, (2) all show gradients which are several states or more in length, (3) marked inconsistencies in the distributions are few. Murder and assault are oriented to the southeastern states as the dominant culture (crime) center, whereas robbery is oriented to a dominant axial grouping centering about the central and western states. The other three offenses, of which larceny is representative, show only slight tendencies towards regional distributions, the probable reason being, however, that per capita rates are not valid to describe such widely varied offenses. In other words, offenses against the person are regional when analyzed from rate per person data, while offenses against an infinite variety of property are not, but probably would be if the rates were calculated per unit of property.

The present investigation concludes that criminal phenomena, as an inter-related part of the general social life, have spatial regu-



larity over both metropolitan and sectional areas and are therefore regional. The crime region is an area in which offenses are distributed in a regular pattern emanating from an influential center, and its boundaries are delineated by the gradual change of the crime rate from the center to the boundary where the trend in an opposite direction begins.

It is submitted that one of the first steps in a program for the prevention of crime and the apprehension of criminals in the United States is the elementary procedure of dividing the country into natural regions of crime. The larger units would take into account sectional differences in culture, for areas of homogeneous culture would have common problems of crime control. But such sections would be comprised of coterminous metropolitan regions and not groups of adjacent states. The delineation of regional units on a detailed and empirical basis would continue down to the local community. Administrative agencies might then take advantage of patterns of movement and differences in culture. Official recognition would help further the integration of these agencies insofar as it gives sanction and facilitates the machinery of organization.