

1957

Personalities of Predelinquent Boys, The

Starke R. Hathaway

Elio D. Monachesi

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarlycommons.law.northwestern.edu/jclc>

 Part of the [Criminal Law Commons](#), [Criminology Commons](#), and the [Criminology and Criminal Justice Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Starke R. Hathaway, Elio D. Monachesi, Personalities of Predelinquent Boys, The, 48 J. Crim. L. Criminology & Police Sci. 149 (1957-1958)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Northwestern University School of Law Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology by an authorized editor of Northwestern University School of Law Scholarly Commons.

THE PERSONALITIES OF PREDELINQUENT BOYS*

STARKE R. HATHAWAY AND ELIO D. MONACHESI

Dr. Starke R. Hathaway was Professor and Director of the Division of Clinical Psychology in the University of Minnesota Medical School when this article was prepared. He has had a broad experience in his profession since 1932. At present he is Acting Professor of Psychology and Thomas Walton Stanford Research Fellow in Stanford University. Dr. Hathaway has been associated with Dr. Monachesi in the preparation and publication of "Analyzing and Predicting Juvenile Delinquency with the MMPI."

Dr. Monachesi is Professor of Sociology and Chairman of the Department of Sociology in the University of Minnesota. His academic career began in that institution, and his service there has been continuous since, excepting as interrupted when, during two years he was engaged in research under the auspices of the Social Science Research Council. He is co-author, with E. M. H. Baylor, of "The Rehabilitation of Children" (1939), and with Don Martindale, of "Elements of Sociology" (1951). Professor Monachesi has published several articles in this JOURNAL. The last, on Cesar Beccaria, was in the *Pioneers in Criminology Series*, November-December, 1955.—EDITOR.

Delinquents tend to be greatly similar in only one respect, namely the fact that they have committed an act which is regarded, legally, as delinquent. This statement or generalization concerning delinquents seems, on the basis of the present state of knowledge, to be the only uncontestable one that can be made. No variable or factor among the many social and personal ones that have been studied is selectively and closely associated with the delinquency variable.

DELINQUENCY PRONENESS

Yet, there is reason to believe that personality variables or patterns are related to the occurrence of delinquency in the sense of delinquency proneness. Some boys are so resistant to delinquent behavior that they will conform to social requirements under extremely difficult circumstances. By contrast, other boys will find ways to misbehave in good environments. Such observations make appropriate the acceptance of the construct "delinquency-proneness" manifested in the various rates of delinquency observed among children with various personalities living in a constant environment. Of course, no study can completely control the effect of environment, and all observed rates change as both personalities and environments vary.

The environment can be manipulated to prevent the occurrence of delinquency in even the most delinquency-prone individuals. Such children could be institutionalized to insure that they would have no opportunity for delinquency. Under normal circumstances the rate of delinquency associated with any personality pattern will vary with cultural environments, and in any community delinquency rates will be the result of the average level of delinquency-proneness and the environmental

* Supported in part by a grant from the Graduate School of the University of Minnesota and by a grant from the National Institute of Mental Health, U. S. Public Health Service.

situations which either suppress or facilitate the expression of proneness to delinquency.

Data presented by studies designed to provide a generalized description of the delinquent personality support this line of reasoning. Although such studies suggest that practically every hereditary or environmental factor is in some way positively or negatively related to the occurrence of delinquency among groups, no one pattern of factors, whether environmental, hereditary, or both, yields a basis for accurate individual prediction of delinquency or, for that matter, of any other form of behavior.

The construct, delinquency-proneness, is not presented to suggest the acceptance of an individual determinism. Nor is it intended that license is given to say that proneness determines delinquency and that children who differ in this way are not amenable to personal psychological treatment or that the environment of such children cannot be improved in order to reduce the rate of delinquency. In practice, we should use both approaches. It is often easier to improve the environmental conditions than to give group or individual psychological help to delinquency-prone children. But it must be remembered that the reverse is often true. It is, at times, much more feasible and profitable to help children to adjust in the existing environment until we improve it. Slums offer an environment congenial to delinquency-proneness and slums should be eliminated, but there may be ways to help children who must, in the meantime, live in slums. Even if individuals cannot be treated to correct delinquency-proneness, it does not follow that these tendencies must be expressed in antisocial ways. Individual and group psychological help appropriate to the psychology of the individuals should contribute to alternative expressions of the personality pressures that make them prone to delinquency in addition to diminishing the more general maladjustment. Such preventive efforts can be directed toward the development of socially acceptable psychological equivalents of delinquency. To make any of these approaches effective, it is important to identify and measure the personality correlates of delinquency-proneness.

It is not necessarily assumed in this argument that delinquency-proneness is either hereditary or acquired as a personality pattern. Early conditioning or congenital prepotency would lead to the same problem for the adolescent in his social world. It seems likely, however, that no society, however healthy, can avoid the occurrence of delinquency-proneness among a considerable proportion of its adolescents. These ideas are not novel. They have been expressed over and over again. Their implications, however, are rarely applied to the prevention of delinquency.

PREDICTION AND POSTDICTION

Another common and difficult problem in the studies on delinquency is that of postdiction. The personality of a child who has transgressed, become delinquent, is changed by that fact. This is even more true if he is caught and identified. Not only will the child be different, but people around him will change their attitudes toward him. Neither the child nor the observers are free of bias after the acts have occurred. It is much easier to find psychological items that postdict the delinquency than it would have been to find personality factors predicting the delinquency. This is true

not only of the personal factors but also of the environmental ones. It is easy to say of a delinquent boy that his trouble is due to a broken home or to some other adverse social factor, but it is not at all easy to say which boy among all those with adverse environment will be delinquent. Most of our delinquency scales and data on adverse environments are more or less directly based on postdiction. They merely depict the social or personal consequences of past acts of delinquency or near-delinquency. Such factors or items, when employed for the analysis of delinquency, are circular in character in that they reflect the fact that a child is delinquent if he has had difficulty with authority or has had a bad relationship with his father, mother, or other persons. The personalities described by such items are nearly identical with those suggested directly by the fact of delinquent behavior which is the phenomenon we are trying to understand. As a consequence, little new information is discovered about the less obvious antecedent psychological factors. For example, the stealing of automobiles is delinquent behavior, but boys who steal automobiles may go against society in other ways as well, and it does not necessarily reveal much new about the personality patterns preceding delinquent behavior to find that such boys are also rejected by their teachers, have trouble with their parents, and underachieve at school. Knowledge of those personality patterns that are associated with more general psychological symptoms and not with delinquency alone is the area that should be explored.

In calling attention to the inadequacies of postdiction data as precise information about personality, we do not mean to imply that items and scales derived from studies of delinquents or misbehaving children do not yield some knowledge of the nature of the disorder. If one wishes to make predictions of delinquency, he will be most often right if he bases his prediction upon postdiction. No one fact is more predictive of future delinquency as the fact of past misbehavior or rebellion against society. We want to emphasize that it is useful to make a distinction between the psychology of boys already showing misbehavior and the psychological patterns of thought and character that are precursors to the maladjustment. True prediction-information leads toward the study and control of human personality among a variety of psychological patterns of adjustment where delinquency is just one among symptoms. We advocate a change in the narrow approach to delinquency wherein the symptom is treated as an illness, to an approach in which delinquency is considered as an occasional symptom of any one of a number of causative patterns.

In the early days of medicine, fever was considered an illness, and specialized professional efforts were directed at its reduction and control. Modern medicine recognizes the many social and organic origins of illnesses of which a fever is only one symptom. It is time to view delinquency similarly. We should treat the social and personal disorders that lead with varying frequency to actual delinquency. These disorders should be of concern although delinquency never occurs in all of the affected cases. This reasoning is based on the assumption that delinquent or delinquent-like behavior follows premonitory psychological signs rather than appearing without warning undistinguishably in normal persons.

Research directed toward the elimination of postdiction contamination of data is relatively simple to design but difficult to execute. The problem suggests longitudinal studies, involving the collection of a mass of what is hoped to be pertinent data on a

large number of children who are pre-delinquent. The investigator must patiently wait for delinquency to occur in part of the sample and then make tests concerning the relevancy of preformulated hypotheses while carefully assuring that the data are not contaminated by knowledge of which cases have become delinquent. Relatively adequate research designs often suffer from contamination of the initial observations even though the longitudinal approach is used.

In longitudinal studies of personality, it is simpler and experimentally safer to collect objective data derived from standard and objective personality tests or inventories in which the subjects themselves provide the information desired without recourse to an intermediary. At the present time it appears methodologically more efficient and practicable to correct for the biases of the subjects rather than of the numerous raters who collect the data in those designs that use data from sources other than the subjects themselves. Personality inventories contain items and scales each of which provides the hypothesis that the item is associated with the occurrence of delinquency. If such items and scales reflect a variety of behavioral and attitudinal areas and are not too directly based upon narrow preconceived notions of what should be related to delinquency, then conditions are favorable for the discovery of new and basic information.

THE PRESENT PROJECT

The data in this report are drawn from a project in which the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) was administered to 88.5 percent of the ninth grade school children of Minneapolis (2, 3, 4). The general project was initiated to provide empirical evidence about the value and practicality of using objective personality tests in providing analytic and predictive data on personal and social adjustment among school children. In the present context the measure of maladjustment is delinquency, and only the records of the boys are used. Although the most common and dramatic of the symptoms of adolescent maladjustment is delinquency emphasis upon this symptom must not lead to ignoring the fact that other problems of adolescence exist.

The MMPI is widely known and used so that it provides a familiar terminology and item content to facilitate communication and application of findings. Originally devised and applied to the analysis and measurement of adult personality deviations, the MMPI items and scales are not directly related to the phenomenon of delinquency. It is, however, a not unreasonable hypothesis to suggest that adult maladjustment patterns appear in adolescents and that some of these may be variously related to varying delinquency rates.

Nineteen hundred and fifty-eight relatively unselected ninth grade boys from the public schools of Minneapolis, Minnesota, constitute the basic sample that completed the test. Certain phases of the careers of these boys were checked two years after the MMPI had been administered. This follow-up consisted primarily of a search of the records of various public and private agencies for the names of the boys in the sample. The great majority of the boys whose names were found were listed in the records of the police department and in the records of the juvenile court; very few had had

contacts with other agencies. A delinquency rating was made on a scale of 0 to 4 as follows. (Some of these findings have already been published (3)).

Delinquency 0: No definite evidence of significantly deviant behavior.

Delinquency 1: In this classification the names were found in police records for at least one minor difficulty such as traffic contact (overtime parking) or for being picked up when involvement was poorly established or the individual was contributing in a minor way, not justifying a classification into one of the following groups.

Delinquency 2: The youngsters placed in this class had committed minor offenses such as destruction of property (especially when this was connected with play activities), drinking, one or more traffic offenses (escapades involving speeding, driving without a license, and/or going at high speed through a stop light or sign), curfew violation, and immoral conduct. The misbehavior was relatively nondelinquent in comparison to that of the following two categories. Nevertheless, these children as a group demonstrated clear evidence of undesirable conduct.

Delinquency 3: This involved the commission of one serious offense such as auto theft, grand larceny, or gross immorality, or more than one less serious offense such as petty larceny, immoral conduct, assault, disorderly conduct, malicious destruction of property, shoplifting, flagrant curfew violations, truancy, and incorrigibility. These youngsters were not clearly established as delinquent, but nevertheless they were showing behavior that needed more than casual explanation.

Delinquency 4: This level of misconduct denoted those who committed repeated offences such as auto theft, burglary, grand larceny, holdup with a gun, and gross immoral conduct (girls), accompanied by less serious offenses. In this category were placed all youngsters who were considered to have demonstrated an established delinquent pattern.

Four years after testing, a more extensive and intensive follow-up was completed. In addition to another check in the records of official and private agencies, information concerning the children was gathered by field workers through interviews with the child, his parents, or other persons acquainted with the boy. On the basis of the information available from this follow-up, another delinquency rating was made for the second two year period. The two delinquency ratings show the amount and kind of misconduct that each boy was alleged to have engaged in during each two year period.

The two ratings made in the first and second two year periods were added to produce a total scale from 0 to 8, suggestive of the severity and duration of delinquent conduct. This sum was the final rating when the group modal age of the boys was 19. It should be kept in mind that a rating over four means that subjects were in some difficulty during both follow-up periods, but a boy could be mildly delinquent in both periods and have a rating of 4 or less.

THE PERSONALITY PATTERNS

Table I is nearly self-explanatory. It presents the percentage of delinquents within the various rating categories. If a rating of 4 is construed as definite evidence of delinquency, then our findings show a rate of 7.5 percent for these boys. In contrast,

TABLE I

Delinquency Rating	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percentage	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percentage
0	1158	59.1	1158	59.1	1958	100.1
1	193	9.9	1351	69.0	800	41.0
2	203	10.4	1554	79.4	607	31.1
3	259	13.2	1813	92.6	404	20.7
4	54	2.8	1867	95.4	145	7.5
5	42	2.1	1909	97.5	91	4.7
6	25	1.3	1934	98.8	49	2.6
7	15	.8	1949	99.6	24	1.3
8	9	.5	1958	100.1	9	.5
Total	1958	100.00				

This table shows the number, percent, cumulative frequencies and percentages of the 1,958 boys assigned at various levels of delinquency.

TABLE IIA

Delinquency Rating	First Period before Testing		Second Period First Two Years after Testing		Third Period Second Two Years after Testing	
	N	Rate Among All Boys	N	Rate Among All Boys	N	Rate Among All Boys
	Delinquent 2.....	56	2.9%	88	4.5%	95
Delinquent 3.....	150	7.7%	131	6.7%	76	3.9%
Delinquent 4.....	41	2.1%	33	1.7%	17	0.9%
Total 2, 3, and 4's.....	247	12.6%	252	12.9%	188	9.6%
Delinquent 1 (Contact Only).....		125 (6.4%)			224	11.4%

TABLE IIB

Period	Modal Age	Delinquency 2, 3, or 4		Delinquency 1, 2, 3, 4	
		N	Rate	N	Rate
First.....	15	247	12.6	—	—
Second.....	17	461	23.5	586	29.9
Third.....	19	556	28.4	800	40.9

These tables show the occurrence of the delinquency levels among all delinquent boys of the sample as related to time of the acts. The rates are derived from the whole sample of 1,958 boys. Table IIB gives cumulative data showing the rates on reaching the indicated modal age levels.

59.1 percent had no public record. It is of interest to note that the home follow-up at the end of four years added very few names not discovered in police and court records.

Table II presents more of the general findings. The data show the frequencies of ratings over time. The first period is before testing and the boys in this group had acquired a record before testing. The second and third periods represent the first and second two year periods after testing. One or two items are of especial interest. The percentage of severe delinquents decreases for the third period when the group modal

age is over 18 years. This decrease contrasts with the increase in non-severe delinquency which results from an increase in the number of traffic offenses committed after the boys had become legally old enough to drive automobiles. It is interesting to note (Table IIB) that nearly half (41 percent) of all the boys had their names in some police record by the time the modal group age was 19 years. However, it cannot be too strongly emphasized that such records were most commonly minor in implication. Any meaning attached to this large number should be tempered by the fact (Table I) that only 7.5 percent of the boys had a record that was rated 4 or worse.

Let us turn now to a consideration of the main thesis of the study, namely the personalities of the predelinquents. In the analysis of personality characteristics, the data are based only upon the true prediction cases—those boys who were delinquent after testing. Boys who had acquired a delinquency record before testing are omitted (including those who were delinquent after testing but who were also delinquent before testing). The present sample also omits 244 boys whose ratings were at the Delinquency 1 level. These boys were rarely delinquent in any real sense. Even the boys with Delinquency 2 and 3 ratings that remain in the sample often were not characterized by any significant misbehavior. The sample size was the problem. On the one hand, severe cases were too infrequent to permit statistical reliability after breakdown into smaller groups; on the other hand, inclusion of mildly delinquent boys attenuates the findings because these boys have personalities very little different from the completely non-delinquent boys with whom the data contrast them. The purified sample contains 1,467 boys for this analysis.

In discussing the personality of predelinquents as suggested by MMPI scales related to adult maladjustment, a number of methodological cautions should again be stated. The scales of the MMPI are known to be related to various recognized forms of adult mental illness such as schizophrenia, depression, psychopathic personality, hypomania, and the like. The scores on these scales are not perfect measures of adult maladjustment; when they are applied to adolescents, some more of their validity is undoubtedly lost. This problem cannot be avoided; but it is reasonable to assume tentatively that if the scales are found to be related to delinquency in an orderly and clinically meaningful way, some part of what is measured is related to the adult maladjustment patterns they represent. With this qualification in mind, we may ask if there is evidence that some delinquent adolescents show personality disturbances similar to those known among adults and if so, do delinquency rates change appreciably in either direction from the over-all rate. If such rate changes occur, then it may be said that adult patterns appear in adolescents with different symptomatic signs than those that characterize the adult; and since offenses against society are far more frequent in adolescence than in any other period of life, it is an obvious possibility that some youthful offenders may become psychotic or neurotic or other types of psychologically deviant adults.

The data presented in Table III were obtained by first coding (1, 2, 3) the personality profile for every child, then dividing the total group of delinquents into subgroups according to which one of the ten MMPI personality variables was the most deviant point on the profile. Those unfamiliar with MMPI scales may get an idea of the import of this table from the following list of simplified scale descriptions:

Code	Scale	Variable	Description
0	Si	Social Introversion	Social introversion; withdrawn socially.
1	Hs	Hypochondriasis	Abnormal concern about bodily functions.
2	D	Depression	Depression; unhappiness.
3	Hy	Hysteria	Hysteria; solve problems by physical symptoms; immaturity.
4	Pd	Psychopathic Deviate	Absence of deep emotional response; inability to profit from social training; disregard of social mores.
5	Mf	Masculinity-Femininity	Tendency toward feminine interests (for males).
6	Pa	Paranoia	Suspiciousness; oversensitivity in social situations; rigidity of personality;
7	Pt	Psychasthenia	Fears; inferiority feelings; compulsive behavior; indecisiveness.
8	Sc	Schizophrenia	Bizarre thoughts or behavior; failure to be or feel in good social contact.
9	Ma	Hypomania	Over-productivity in thought; overactive; transient enthusiasms; expansive.

The first line of Table III, 'No high point,' indicates that 35 boys had profiles that showed no abnormal deviation on any scale. Only four of these boys became delinquent. The second item in the table shows that Scale 0 was the highest point of the profile for a total of 91 boys. Scale 0, when elevated, indicates social introversion, nonparticipation in social groups. Ten of these boys became delinquent. Continuing, Scale 2 was the highest elevation for only 47 boys. This scale is a measure of depression and ninth grade boys are not often so characterized. The general average on this scale steadily rises with age. The remainder of the table reads in like manner.

Table III also shows the percentage of delinquents that contributed to the entire total of after-test delinquents by the various profile high point patterns. As will be noted, the 35 boys whose MMPI profiles showed no deviant scores contributed only 1.5 percent of the total boys who later became delinquent. This most normal group is not only least frequent among nondelinquents, but it also contributes an even smaller proportion of the delinquents. Scales 1, 3, and 6 are also infrequent among nondelinquents, but they make a relatively equal contribution to the delinquents. In general, if a scale measures a factor not related to delinquency, then the percentage of the delinquents will equal that of the nondelinquents. This is approximately true of Scales 1, 3, 6, and 7. By contrast, boys characterized by profiles with deviant Scales 0, 2, and 5 and those with no high point show relatively decreased delinquency rates. Finally, profiles with deviant Scales 4, 8, or 9 show disproportionately high rates.

These data are treated differently in Table IV where the three scales that predict a relatively low rate of delinquency are grouped together and called inhibitory scales. The rate of delinquency for each subgroup is indicated, and the effect of greater deviation in the scale is indicated by the primed scale frequencies which means that the deviant scale was at least two standard deviations above the mean for adult norms. The data suggest that whatever personality factors are represented by these scales, they operate to lower the delinquency rate.

TABLE III

	Non- delinquents	Delinquent After Test	Total	(Valid Tests Only)	
				Percent Among 247 after Test Delinquents	Per cent Among 1096 Non- Delinquents
No high point.....	31	4	35	1.5 (-)	2.8
0 (Si).....	81	10	91	3.6 (-)	7.4
1 (Hs).....	37	10	47	3.6	3.4
2 (D).....	58	9	67	3.3 (-)	5.3
First 3 (Hy).....	32	7	39	2.6	2.9
Scale in 4 (Pd).....	211	65	276	23.7 (+)	19.3
High 5 (Mf).....	79	9	88	3.3 (-)	7.2
Point 6 (Pa).....	30	8	38	2.9	2.7
7 (Pt).....	72	17	89	6.2	6.6
8 (Sc).....	154	48	202	17.5 (+)	14.1
9 (Ma).....	249	68	317	24.8 (+)	22.7
Indeterminate.....	62	19	81	6.9	5.7
Total Valid.....	1096	274	1370	100.0	100.0
L > 9.....	26	7	33	2.3	2.2
F > 15.....	36	28	64	9.1 (+)	3.1
Total Invalid.....	62	35	97	11.4 (+)	5.3
Overall Total.....	1158	309	1467	—	—

MMPI scales with the frequencies of occurrence of each scale as most extreme among the scales of the profiles. After-test delinquents only, at delinquency levels 2 through 8 inclusive. The (+) and (-) indicate larger differences in rate between delinquent and non-delinquent boys.

The middle of Table IV shows the four scales that have variable or no effect on the delinquency rate. This could be due either to the fact that these personality variables are not related to the occurrence of delinquency or that the effect is obscured by the method used to analyze their effect. The delinquency rate of this group is roughly the same as the over-all rate of 21.1 percent. The over-all rate used here is the observed rate of after-testing delinquency 2 through 8 inclusive for the 1,467 boys.

Finally, boys with profiles dominated by Scales 4, 8, and 9 show higher delinquency rates subsequent to testing. The factors tapped by these scales seem to foster the occurrence of delinquent behavior.

In evaluating the changes in rate, it is important to remember that in order to obtain large enough numbers we were forced to use the data for boys as near normal as Delinquency 2 on the eight point scale. This means that a large percentage of the boys represented by the ratings are minimally delinquent, and all the differences are attenuated because so many boys were little different from the nondelinquents. Evidence that this attenuation does occur is supplied by the fact (not in the tables) that the effect of Scales 4, 8, and 9 on delinquency rate is markedly greater if one restricts the comparison to the severely delinquent boys who had a delinquency rating of 4 or greater. Parenthetically, with reference to the above discussion of post-diction, the boys who had been delinquent before testing showed still larger differ-

TABLE IV

Scales	All Profiles			Primed Profiles (70 T score and above at highest)		
	Total N	After-Test Delinquents	Rate for the Class	Total N	After-Test Delinquents	Rate for The Class
Inhibitory Scales						
0 (Si).....	91	10	11.0%	10	1	10.0%
2 (D).....	67	9	13.4%	24	3	12.5%
5 (Mf).....	88	10	11.4%	22	1	4.5%
No high points.....	35	4	11.4%	—	—	—
Total.....	280	33	11.8%	56	5	8.9%
Variable Scales						
1 (Hs).....	48	10	20.8%	24	4	16.7%
3 (Hy).....	39	7	17.9%	5	1	20.0%
6 (Pa).....	38	7	18.4%	14	3	21.4%
7 (Pt).....	89	17	19.1%	49	6	12.2%
Total.....	214	41	19.2%	92	14	15.2%
Excitatory Scales						
4 (Pd).....	276	65	23.6%	116	37	31.9%
8 (Sc).....	202	48	23.8%	119	31	26.1%
9 (Ma).....	317	68	21.5%	166	48	28.9%
Invalid.....	97	35	36.1%	—	—	—
Indeterminate.....	81	19	23.5%	11	3	27.3%
Total.....	973	235	24.2%	412	119	28.9%
Total Valid Profiles....	1370	274	20.0%	—	—	—
Overall Totals.....	1467	309	21.1%	560	138	24.6%

Delinquency rates among groupings of the profiles by most deviant single scale illustrating scale relations to delinquency rates.

ences. These more positive findings could be due to younger delinquents having stronger proneness or to postdiction error in which the differences are magnified by the effects of the fact of delinquency.

As will be noted in Table IV, the three scales that seem to depress the rate of delinquency are called inhibitory, and the three that are likely to be associated with a high rate are called excitatory scales. To further demonstrate the effect of deviation on the inhibitory and excitatory scales, the data of Table V were compiled. These data show the effects of the combination of two scale deviations. For example, the top row of Table V shows that when a boy deviates on both of any combination of 4, 8, or 9, the delinquency rate will be still higher than it is when only one of the scales shows definite elevation or when averages are calculated for any one of them in combination with all other scales. Here again the more deviant the scale (primed code combinations), the higher the delinquency rate. As would be expected, a combination of two inhibitory scales also depresses the rate to a greater degree. It is interesting to observe the effect of combinations of the psychological factors represented in the excitatory and inhibitory scales. We feel that the data on these combinations support the statement that the effect of having, in a marked degree, the personality character

TABLE V

	All Combinations			Primed Combinations (70 T score and above)		
	N	After-Test Delinquents	Rate	N	After-Test Delinquents	Rate
Combination of two among 4, 8, 9.....	391	111	28.4%	220	76	34.5%
Combination of two among 0, 2, 5.....	53	6	11.3%	12	2	16.7%
Combination with 4, 8, or 9 high and 0, 2, or 5 next lower.....	134	16	11.9%	58	10	17.2%
Combination with 0, 2, or 5 high and 4, 8, or 9 next lower.....	86	10	11.6%	24	3	12.5%

Some effects of combined deviation of two scales (first two scales of high point code).
General base rate for comparison: 309/1467 or 21.1%.

of one of the inhibitory scales is more clear cut than is the effect of a similar deviation on one of the excitatory scales. There is a definite tendency for the rate to be low when an excitatory scale is combined with an inhibitory one even when the excitatory scale is the more deviant of the two.

Table IV also provides a somewhat different type of information. As will be noted, the delinquency rate among boys who obtained invalid MMPI profiles is the highest of all such rates. Thirty-six percent were delinquent, and 20.2 percent were severely so! The invalid profiles are mostly a result of a high F score which indicates that the boy was careless in answering or was a very poor reader or was very disturbed and psychologically ill. At this point we cannot say which of these factors contributed the most to rendering the profiles invalid. The reading level required for the MMPI is low. Other factors could be responsible for invalidity, but those mentioned are probably the most common ones. It is suggested that either the predelinquent boy is strongly characterized by a tendency to be careless in responding to such an inventory when it is administered in a routine school situation where other boys and girls are working carefully and consistently or that such boys read so poorly that they answer the items in a random fashion or, finally, that they are psychologically ill. More data on the psychologically ill boys will be reported later. A few cases that produced high F score profiles have already been studied in a hospital setting and have been found to show evidence of encephalitis or other brain damage.

Once again it is interesting to note that one of the lowest delinquency rates is observed among those boys who get a clearly valid profile (with no abnormal score). Future analysis will shed more light on all these data. For the present, however, it may be assumed that those personality characteristics which are associated with carelessness and uncooperativeness in boys are also closely related to delinquency. It is also likely that these boys would under-achieve on other tests, i.e., would make poor scores on reading tests, not because of a lack of reading ability but because of the lack of a need to conform and to achieve. It appears that all test data from such boys in group testing programs should be re-examined to give assurance that low

scores really mean a low ranking in the same sense as would be the case among boys who are more docile and cooperative.

In summary, the scale data make tenable the conclusion that although the socially withdrawn, depressed, or feminine personality factors in a boy may indicate the presence of some sort of maladjustment with which we should be concerned, high scores on relevant scales suggest that his involvement in delinquent acts is unlikely. Most comforting of all, however, is the fact that boys with no high point profiles are least prone to get into any difficulty. At the other extreme, the data indicate that boys with rebellious, excitable, or schizoid traits are most prone to delinquency.

We also have data to show that many of these deviant boys come from less desirable social settings. When one selects cases from any one setting, however, the differences still hold. Boys from the best neighborhoods who have these delinquency-prone profiles still show a high delinquency rate, although both the number of such profiles and the number of delinquents are smaller.

These findings, relating juvenile forms of adult maladjustment to delinquency, will not greatly surprise educational and other professional workers; they seem to support clinical impressions. However, not all personal maladjustment patterns in boys are indicators of delinquency-proneness. This significant fact leads to the possibility that a boy with inhibitor traits could be psychologically harmed by exposure to a preventive program designed for boys who are characterized by excitatory traits. Such a boy may also impair the effectiveness of the preventive program. At any rate, the two groups are psychologically different and not likely to respond to the same appeals or controls.

The personality test data not only provided indications of delinquency-proneness or lack of it in some boys but also indicated that a large percentage of the abnormal profiles were achieved by nondelinquents, suggesting that a great many of these boys were maladjusted. These nondelinquency-prone forms of maladjustment are not as disturbing to adults as is delinquency and are of correspondingly less concern to the community.

We may finally turn to the MMPI items themselves. Each of these items provides an hypothesis to be tested in that each can be assumed to be related to the delinquency rate. Among the 550 items, 33 stood up in a double cross-validation both as against all delinquents and as predicting delinquency that occurred after the time of testing. The statistical significance requirements for these items were such that it is unlikely that more than one or two of them would be included as a result of random variance. The majority of those found significant seem related to the personality of the predelinquent child. These items with the delinquent response are listed in Table VI.

It is unreasonable to expect that relatively uncorrelated trait patterns contributing to delinquency will show up with clarity in item analyses. The main tendency in item analysis differentiating delinquents and nondelinquents is toward the emergence of items having postdictive meaning. In spite of the fact that prediction was emphasized in selecting items, in part this is what occurs. Trouble in school and in the home as well as a strong need for adventure and thrill are dominant factors. It may surprise some investigators that some of the MMPI items more obviously expressive of direct

TABLE VI
MMPI Delinquency Scale
33 Items

Booklet Number	Card Number	Item	Delinquent Response
21	C-6	At times I have very much wanted to leave home.	True
26	E-3	I feel that it is certainly best to keep my mouth shut when I'm in trouble.	True
33	H-12	I have had very peculiar and strange experiences.	True
37	E-17	I have never been in trouble because of my sex behavior.	False
38	D-32	During one period when I was a youngster I engaged in petty thievery.	True
56	D-29	As a youngster I was suspended from school one or more times for cutting up.	True
111	D-35	I have never done anything dangerous for the thrill of it.	False
116	D-36	I enjoy a race or game better when I bet on it.	True
118	D-30	In school I was sometimes sent to the principal for cutting up.	True
143	D-34	When I was a child, I belonged to a crowd or gang that tried to stick together through thick and thin.	True
146	C-33	I have the wanderlust and am never happy unless I am roaming or traveling about.	True
173	C-35	I liked school.	False
177	C-14	My mother was a good woman.	False
223	I-31	I very much like hunting.	True
224	B-52	My parents have often objected to the kind of people I went around with.	True
254	E-33	I like to be with a crowd who play jokes on one another.	True
260	C-36	I was a slow learner in school.	True
294	E-12	I have never been in trouble with the law.	False
298	E-	If several people find themselves in trouble, the best thing for them to do is to agree upon a story and stick to it.	True
343	G-5	I forget right away what people say to me.	True
355	I-2	Sometimes I enjoy hurting persons I love.	True
419	D-7	I played hooky from school quite often as a youngster.	True
421	C-1	One or more members of my family is very nervous.	True
427	C-13	I am embarrassed by dirty stories.	False
434	J-2	I would like to be an auto racer.	True
458	J-39	The man who had most to do with me when I was a child (such as my father, stepfather, etc.) was very strict with me.	True
464	H-23	I have never seen a vision.	False
471	D-28	In school my marks in deportment were quite regularly bad.	True
477	E-5	If I were in trouble with several friends who were equally to blame, I would rather take the whole blame than to give them away.	True
485	D-4	When a man is with a woman he is usually thinking about things related to her sex.	True
537	I-52	I would like to hunt lions in Africa.	True
561	J-28	I very much like horseback riding.	True
565	I-55	I feel like jumping off when I am on a high place.	True

aggressive feelings toward people and society did not emerge. As examples one could select:

"I get a raw deal from life."

"I easily become impatient with people."

"At times I feel like smashing things."

"I am often said to be hotheaded."

"At times I feel like picking a fist fight with someone."

These and many more that did not stand up in this pre-delinquent personality analysis may teach us more than do the items that survive. If any interpretation of a general sort is possible relative to this list of items, it might be that they express a psychological state of youthful exuberance with a love of danger and resentment of restriction. These trends are clearly related to the scale findings for Scales 4 and 9.

It is of interest that several odd items are included. While one or two of these may be due to random variance, it should be recalled that Scale 8, which is related to adult schizophrenia, is one of the best examples of an excitatory factor; and it is therefore, not surprising to find items in the list that come from that scale.

CONCLUSIONS

The data presented are not sufficient nor adequate to make any extensive discussion of the origin of delinquency-proneness and of other personality characteristics. It is possible that the personality traits indicated by the MMPI variables were acquired in the process of ontological development. It is also possible that some or part of the potential for exhibiting delinquent behavior came from genetic factors operating in an environment that permitted a development of such behavior.

This is not to deny the operation of social factors in the development of personality; but the data suggest that, for some delinquent boys at least, there are personality deviations familiar to clinicians that may be better treated and understood by an individual approach. Such an approach would be directed toward discovering broader and more analytically useful psychological groupings than are provided by classing boys by their socially delinquent acts which for many are an occasional symptom.

Deviant MMPI profiles were much more common among this group of boys than was delinquency. One must either assume that these deviant patterns have no validity as an indication of personality difficulty or that there is real and measurable stress in adolescence, part of which is related to delinquency. The MMPI provides some evidence that part of these stress patterns could be juvenile forms of adult maladjustment. The possibility is suggested that for such boys another attack on delinquency would be the provision of more freely available and skilled counseling and group activities. This does not mean the employment of clinical psychologists and psychiatrists, although these are needed, but rather a shift of emphasis on the part of community personnel from delinquency-centered efforts to adjustment-centered ones.

Of even greater importance, the collected data indicate that any community seriously interested in preventing delinquency should have several kinds of programs rather than concentrating upon a single program. Boys should, by guidance and inclination, be permitted to choose an appropriate program. Our data indicate the

possibility that a program of controlled revolt and even danger might help some boys, but others need something very different. These are not new ideas; we hope, however, that the empirical data provided will give greater effectiveness to preventive programs.

REFERENCES

1. HATHAWAY, S. R. *A coding system for MMPI profile classification*. J. CONSULT. PSYCHOL., 11: 334-337, 1947.
2. HATHAWAY, S. R. AND MEEHL, P. E. AN ATLAS FOR THE CLINICAL USE OF THE MMPI. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1951.
3. HATHAWAY, S. R. AND MONACHESI, E. D. ANALYZING AND PREDICTING JUVENILE DELINQUENCY WITH THE MMPI. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1953.
4. MCKINLEY, J. C. AND HATHAWAY, S. R. THE MINNESOTA MULTIPHASIC PERSONALITY INVENTORY. New York: The Psychological Corporation, 1943.