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## FURTHER VALIDATION OF THE GLUECK SOCIAL PREDICTION TABLE FOR IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL DELINQUENTS

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This paper describes two additional validations of the Glueck Social Prediction Table, originally presented in "Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency" by Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck.<sup>1</sup> In constructing this instrument to be used for the purpose of identifying youngsters showing proneness toward delinquent behavior as early as the age of six, the Gluecks selected from among their numerous findings reported upon in "Unraveling" five factors which differentiated most markedly between their 500 persistent delinquents and 500 non-delinquents, who were matched in terms of age, intelligence, ethnic origin, and residence in the underprivileged areas of Boston. These selected factors, namely, (1) father's discipline, (2) mother's supervision, (3) father's affection, (4) mother's affection, and (5) family cohesiveness, are weighted by percentages, according to the proportion of the 1,000 boys in the Glueck sample who fell into each of the different sub-categories under the five respective factors. When these weighted social factors are totaled for all the cases, they fall on a continuum ranging from a low score of 116.7 to a high score of 414. The score of 250 represents the discriminative point in the sense that any score above this point indicates that the child has a great likelihood (6 to 8 out of 10 chances) of becoming a serious delinquent, while a score below 250 signifies that the child's chances of becoming a delinquent are not more than 3 out of 10.

The Glueck Prediction Table is at the present time still in the experimental stage. To date, however, several successful attempts have been made to test the efficiency of this predictive device by checking it against samples other than that on which it was constructed. Axelrad and Glick<sup>2</sup> report that the Table was successful in designating correctly 91 percent of their 100 Jewish delinquent boys. Thompson<sup>3</sup> found similar results (91 percent accuracy) in a sample of 100 boys, both delinquents and non-delinquents. A study made in New Jersey<sup>4</sup> showed that of 51 delinquent boys who were on parole, the Table identified 80 percent of them as delinquents on the basis of the five family-relationship factors making up the predictive device.

<sup>1</sup> The Commonwealth Fund, New York, 1950, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, pp. 257-262.

<sup>2</sup> AXELRAD, SIDNEY, AND GLICK, SELMA J., *Application of the Glueck Social Prediction Table to 100 Jewish Delinquent Boys*, THE JEWISH SOC. QUART., Vol. 30, 1953, pp. 127-136.

<sup>3</sup> THOMPSON, RICHARD E., *A Validation of the Glueck Social Prediction Scale for Proneness to Delinquency*, JOUR. CRIM. L., CRIMINOL. AND POL. SCI., Vol. 43, November-December, 1952, pp. 451-470.

<sup>4</sup> *Predicting Juvenile Delinquency*, RESEARCH BULLETIN No. 124, April 1955, published by the State Department of Institutions and Agencies, Trenton, N. J.

Although the validation studies mentioned above give encouraging results so far as the predictive efficiency of the Glueck Table is concerned, they represent at best retrospective research, and for this reason caution should be exercised in interpreting the findings. More definitive results should be derived in the not too distant future from a study currently being undertaken by the New York City Youth Board,<sup>5</sup> which is prospective in orientation in the sense that predictions have been made with the use of the Table on a large group of first graders before they have developed any overt signs of delinquent behavior.

In the present paper, two further attempts at validating the Glueck Table are reported, and they are comparable with the published validation studies in that they are also retrospective in nature.

#### PROCEDURE

The Glueck Prediction Table was applied to two separate samplings of 50 subjects each. The first sample was composed of 50 boys, aged from 8 to 18, who appeared in the Boston Juvenile Court during the first seven months of 1950. In selecting these cases (during summer of 1954), every tenth case was drawn from the court files, and whenever a selected case was rejected for the reason of insufficient data for the purpose of this study, the next case was employed.<sup>6</sup>

For the second sample, data on 50 delinquent girls, aged from 12 to 18, were taken from the files of the Division of Youth Service of the Massachusetts Department of Education (better known as the "Youth Service Board"), to which they had been committed for custodial care and treatment by the local courts. Unlike the Juvenile Court sample, these girls were selected (during spring of 1955) consecutively over a period of seven months, from November, 1954, to May, 1955. Whenever data for any case were found insufficient, it was omitted, and additional consecutive cases were gathered until a total of 50 cases was reached.<sup>7</sup>

To test the validity of the Gluecks' prediction device, the writer culled from the case folders information relative to the five family-relationship factors comprising the Table itself. The information sheets thus prepared were then scored by Mrs. Glueck according to the items and weighted points of the Table, without her knowing anything about these cases other than the five factors. She rated each case as far as it was possible in terms of what the family situation was when the youngster was six years old, at which time the Gluecks believe the Table should be most effective for preventive purposes. The scores for the 100 boys and girls were next totaled by the writer to determine their proper classification, delinquent or non-delinquent, with the score of 250 constituting the discriminating criterion.

Although the 50 boys who appeared in the Boston Juvenile Court might be con-

<sup>5</sup> WHELAN, RALPH W., *An Experiment in Predicting Delinquency*, JOUR. CRIM. L., CRIMINOL. AND POL. SCI., Vol. 45, November-December 1954, pp. 432-441.

<sup>6</sup> The writer wishes to express his gratitude to Judge John J. Connelly and Chief Probation Officer Charles Eliot Sands of the Boston Juvenile Court for their generous cooperation and aid in obtaining data on the 50 boys who appeared in their court.

<sup>7</sup> Much appreciation is also extended by the writer to Mr. John D. Coughlan, Chairman of the Division of Youth Service of the Massachusetts Department of Education, for his kind permission to extract information on the 50 delinquent girls from this agency's files.

sidered on the surface as true delinquents, care was taken to investigate the delinquency record of each boy to make certain that none was actually a non-delinquent engaged only temporarily in minor episodes or in petty delinquency.<sup>8</sup> In instances where few offenses and dispositions were entered in the records or were of minor nature, they were "cleared" through the Board of Probation (in the fall of 1954) for any record of recidivism. As a result of this scrutiny, two of the 50 boys in the group were found to be really non-delinquents. One appeared in court for "assault and battery," but investigation revealed that this fifteen-year-old boy was involved in a fight with another boy whom he accidentally stabbed with a knife. He showed no recidivism, except for one traffic violation. In the case of the second non-delinquent, who was sixteen years old when he appeared in court, he was arrested for stealing a pair of pants in a store, which he steadfastly denied, and the incident was no doubt due to misunderstanding. He had no other record, except for speeding.

As regards the 50 girls who were committed to the Youth Service Board, they were all found to be serious delinquents. There should be no question about this particular group being delinquent in the light of the fact that judges and probation officers are generally more reluctant to commit girls as delinquents than they are about recalcitrant boys.

Before the results of applying the Glueck Table to the two samples are presented, let us consider at this point the family and personal background characteristics of the 50 boys and 50 girls, and see how they compare with the Gluecks' sample of 500 delinquent boys described in "Unraveling."

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE TWO SAMPLES

The average age of the 50 boys in the Boston Juvenile Court sample is 13.1 years; and that of the 50 girls committed to the Massachusetts Youth Service Board is 15.3 years. The mean age of the Gluecks' 500 delinquent boys was 14.6 years.

All but one of the 50 boys lived in the city of Boston, whereas the girls came from all parts of the state. Only 18 percent of these girls lived in Boston proper, and this is in marked contrast with the Gluecks' sample because 90.2 percent of the 500 delinquent boys in "Unraveling" were drawn from the city alone. Of the remaining girls, 18 percent were from Greater Boston and 64 percent from other parts of the state, as compared with 7.2 and 2.6 percent of the Glueck boys, respectively.

The average number of appearances the 50 boys made in court is 1.20. Half of the whole group (52 percent) had no previous court appearances at the time they appeared in the Boston Juvenile Court in 1950. Of the 24 boys who made court appearances prior to 1950, eleven (45.8 percent) appeared in courts other than the Boston Juvenile.

<sup>8</sup> The Gluecks' definition of delinquency is as follows: "Delinquency refers to repeated acts of a kind which when committed by persons beyond the statutory juvenile court age of sixteen are punishable as crimes (either felonies or misdemeanors)—except for a few instances of persistent stubbornness, truancy, running away, associating with immoral persons, and the like. Children who once or twice during the period of growing up in an excitingly attractive milieu steal a toy in a ten-cent store, sneak into a subway or motion picture theatre, play hooky, and the like and soon outgrow such peccadilloes are not true delinquents even though they have violated the law." UNRAVELING JUVENILE DELINQUENCY, p. 13.

The average number of appearances for the 50 girls is 1.76, while the 500 delinquent boys in the Gluecks' sample appeared in court on the average of 3.66 times. Half of the girls were known to be sexually promiscuous. Two of these girls were unmarried mothers, two were pregnant at the time of commitment to the Youth Service Board, one had a forced marriage, and one had an illegitimate pregnancy that resulted in a miscarriage.

In contrast with the Glueck sample, which did not include any Negro boys, five of the 50 boys from the Juvenile Court and six of the 50 girls were Negroes.

In 66 percent of the Court group and in 56 percent of the girls, the religious denomination was Catholic. The Gluecks' sample had a higher proportion of Catholic boys (81.2 percent). Only 15.8 percent of the Gluecks' boys were Protestants, while 31.9 percent of the Court boys and 44 percent of the girls were of that faith. There were no Jewish girls in this present study, and two percent of both groups of boys were Jewish.

The average I.Q. of the 50 Court boys is 89.1, while that of the girls is 89.9. The Gluecks' delinquent boys had a slightly higher average I.Q.—92.3.

The following table shows a marked contrast between the samples of 50 boys and 50 girls on the one hand and the Gluecks' 500 delinquent boys on the other in terms of their parents' nativity. A far greater proportion of the Glueck boys' parents were foreign-born. This raises the question as to whether the Glueck Prediction Table is applicable to children of such diverse parental background, since the Table itself is based on those boys more than half of whom had one or both parents who immigrated to the United States.

Parents' Nativity	Glueck Boys 1940-46	BJC Boys 1950	MYSB Girls 1954-55
Both native-born.....	42.0	62.5	77.3
One foreign-born.....	20.7	22.9	15.9
Both foreign-born.....	37.3	14.6	6.8

The parents of the 50 boys and 50 girls were much better educated than those of the Gluecks' 500 delinquent boys, as the following table shows:

Parents' Formal Schooling	Glueck Boys 1940-46	BJC Boys 1950	MYSB Girls 1954-55
One or both attended or graduated from high school.....	27.0	65.3	77.4
One or both attended or graduated from grammar school.....	52.9	34.7	22.6
Both had no schooling.....	20.1	0	0

The average number of children in the families of the 50 boys and 50 girls is less than that of the Gluecks' 500 delinquent boys. The families in the Court sample had, on the average, 4.54 children; the girls' group, 5.72 children; and the Gluecks' sample, 6.85 children.

There is not much difference in the rank comparison of the youngsters in the three

groups according to their numerical position among their siblings in their families. Of the 50 Court boys, half (50 percent) were "middle" children, while 52 percent of the girls and 60 percent of the Gluecks' delinquent boys were of that rank.

A higher proportion (78 percent) of the girls committed to the Youth Service Board as delinquents were from broken homes, as compared with 63.3 percent of the Court boys and 60.4 percent of the Gluecks' delinquent boys.

The following table shows interesting differences between the three groups in regard to the marital status of their natural parents. A higher percentage of the Gluecks' delinquent boys (54.3 percent) had parents who were living together in contrast with only 22.4 percent of the girls. A higher proportion of the girls who comprise the more recent group of youngsters (1954-55) had parents who were divorced, which is undoubtedly a reflection of the increased frequency of divorces in the United States.

Marital Status of Parents	Glueck Boys 1940-46	BJC Boys 1950	MYSB Girls 1954-55
Living together.....	54.3	36.7	22.4
Separated.....	12.4	18.4	24.5
Divorced.....	8.7	18.4	38.8
Widowed.....	18.3	20.4	4.1
Did not marry each other.....	6.3	6.1	10.2

The parental make-up of the 50 delinquent girls' families shows marked differences in comparison with the two groups of boys, as the following table shows:

Parental Make-up of Home	Glueck Boys 1940-46	BJC Boys 1950	MYSB Girls 1954-55
Both own parents.....	50.2	40.0	22.0
One own parent.....	34.6	38.0	40.0
One own parent and one step-parent.....	8.0	14.0	26.0
Foster parents, etc.....	7.2	8.0	12.0

A higher proportion of the girls were living with one parent, usually the mother. In contrast with both groups of boys, a large percentage of the girls had step-parents.

The delinquent girls were less retarded in school than the two groups of boys. Of the girls, 20.4 percent were retarded at least two years in school, while 34 percent of the Court boys and 41 percent of the Glueck delinquent boys were that far behind in school.

#### RESULTS OF CHECKING THE GLUECK SOCIAL PREDICTION TABLE

We can now ascertain the results of applying the Glueck Prediction Table to the group of 50 boys who appeared in the Boston Juvenile Court and to the group of 50 girls committed as delinquents to the Massachusetts Youth Service Board. These 100 youngsters differed in various respects, as seen from the above description of their family and personal background, from the Gluecks' 500 delinquent boys who constituted half the total sample on which the Prediction Table itself is based. The question is whether or not the predictive power of the Table is as great on the two

samples in the present study as it has proved to be in other studies, despite the differences in the characteristics of the 100 boys and girls.

The outcome of applying the Social Prediction Table to the two new groups is outlined in the following table:

Predicted by the Glueck Table as:	Correct Predictions		Wrong Predictions	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Delinquent . . . . .	44	50	0	0
Non-delinquent . . . . .	2	0	4	0
	46	50	4	0

Of the 50 boys who appeared in the Boston Juvenile Court, 46 were correctly identified by the Glueck Table as delinquents or non-delinquents, for a percentage accuracy of 92.

Of the 50 girls who were committed to the Massachusetts Youth Service Board as delinquents, all were accurately designated as delinquents by the Table.

These results show that the Social Prediction Table has predictive power even with girls, who were not represented in the "Unraveling" sample on which the device was constructed. More encouraging is the fact that the differences in the family background of the youngsters, such as parents' nativity and extent of schooling, had no appreciable effect on the Table's capacity to differentiate the delinquents from the non-delinquents.

#### COMPARISON OF THE THREE GROUPS ON THE FIVE PREDICTIVE FACTORS

Table I presents comparative data between the three groups in regard to the five family-relationship factors making up the Glueck Table. Inspection of these findings shows that the group of girls came largely from homes having more damaging family pathology.

In marked contrast with the fathers of the Gluecks' 500 delinquent boys, the fathers of the 50 boys and 50 girls were considerably more lax than overstrict or erratic in their disciplinary methods. The reason for this discrepancy may be partly attributed to the greater percentage of subjects in the two groups studied whose fathers were out of the home (see page 179) because of marital separation, divorce, or death. (Because of sketchy information in some cases in regard to father's discipline, this particular factor was rated as lax when it was clear that it was not firm and kindly on one hand and not certain that it was overstrict or erratic on the other. This may be an additional factor in the greater percentages of "lax" fathers among the 100 boys and girls.)

In comparison with the boys in the other two groups, a higher proportion of the 50 delinquent girls (71.4 percent) had mothers who provided them with supervision that was considered to be unsuitable. A higher percentage of the delinquent girls as compared with the two groups of boys had parents whose affectional attitudes toward them were indifferent or hostile. The mothers' feelings of affection toward their daughters is the most markedly differentiative factor of the five predictive items for

TABLE I  
PERCENTAGES OF CASES ON FIVE PREDICTIVE FACTORS

Factors	Glueck Boys 1940-46	BJC Boys 1950	MYSB Girls 1954-55
1. Father's Discipline			
Firm but kindly.....	5.7	2.3	0
Lax.....	26.6	63.6	75.6
Overstrict or erratic.....	67.7	34.1	24.4
2. Mother's Supervision			
Suitable.....	7.0	19.2	16.3
Fair.....	29.2	34.0	12.3
Unsuitable.....	63.8	46.8	71.4
3. Father's Affection			
Warm.....	40.2	24.4	12.5
Indifferent or hostile.....	59.8	75.6	87.5
4. Mother's Affection			
Warm.....	72.1	58.8	19.4
Indifferent or hostile.....	27.9	41.2	80.6
5. Family Cohesiveness			
Cohesive.....	16.0	12.3	0
Some.....	59.3	40.8	24.0
Unintegrated.....	24.7	46.9	76.0

the group of girls. Nearly three times as many mothers of the girls as the Gluecks' delinquents and twice as many as the Court boys were indifferent or hostile in their attitude toward them. The families in the girls' group were considerably less integrated than the boys' families.

When comparing the two groups of boys alone, the Juvenile Court boys showed greater family pathology than the Gluecks' delinquent boys in a direction identical with that of the delinquent girls, with the exception of mother's supervision.

#### THREE CASES ILLUSTRATING THE APPLICATION OF THE GUECK PREDICTION TABLE

CASE A. This 11½ year-old boy is an only child. His mother married the father about nine months after he was born. It is reported that the boy was not actually his father's son. The parents were divorced when the boy was six. The mother said that her husband, who had a criminal record, had been cruel to her, assaulting her numerous times. From him she received five dollars a week, although he was ordered by the court to pay fourteen dollars; but she never made an issue of this. The father married another woman, with whom he lived on and off, and had two children by her.

When the boy was five years old, the Boston SPCC came into contact with his family. The mother was separated from the father at this time, and was working as a waitress at a cafe. She left the boy at home alone at night from 5 P.M. to 1 A.M. The SPCC investigator found, however, that the home was cleanly kept and that the child was attached to his mother. The mother subsequently had the boy live with her mother outside of Boston. The agency lost contact with the family until four years later when the boy returned to live with his mother. A neighbor had

complained that the mother had stayed out late at night and gave parties in her home. It was also stated that the boy was pale and tired, and frequently went to see his father who hung around Scollay Square and occasionally gave him a dollar. Several months later the boy was placed in a foster home where he stayed for seven months until he went to live with his maternal grandparents again.

The probation officer felt that the boy lacked affection from his mother, who was careful in looking after his physical needs, but appeared to lack any warm feeling for him. She was known to have given him severe beatings as punishment for his misbehavior, and appeared to be a domineering, rejecting woman.

When the above case was rated on the Glueck Social Prediction Table on the basis of the situation when the boy was six years old, the five items comprising the test were scored as follows:

	Score
1. Father's discipline: lax .....	59.8
2. Mother's supervision: fair .....	57.5
3. Father's affection: indifferent .....	75.9
4. Mother's affection: hostile .....	86.2
5. Family cohesiveness: unintegrated .....	96.9
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>376.3</b>

The total score of 376.3 exceeds the discriminating point of 250 by a wide margin, and therefore indicates that the boy had, even at the age of six, a very high likelihood of becoming a delinquent. Such prognosis turned out to be correct, for the boy became officially involved in delinquent behavior when he was 13, although he became known to the Boston Juvenile Court when he was 11½ and was supervised by the probation officer on an informal basis.

CASE B. This 14-year-old girl's family had very little home life. The parents' marriage was an unsatisfactory one, and separations between them occurred frequently. In the past three years the family moved from one place to another, staying no longer than two months and living in furnished rooms.

Each of the parents went his own way, leaving the children largely to their own devices. The mother worked nights as a waitress at a cafe, and the children were left unsupervised because the father also worked at night as a cab driver. The children were poorly dressed and unclean when appearing at school. The mother herself was not very careful about her appearance. At the time the Youth Service Board's worker visited the home, the mother was found walking around the house in her bare feet. The father claimed that she drank and was promiscuous. The SPCC reported that the children were at one time taken into their custody for a short period of time, but were allowed to return to their parents when the mother agreed to give up her job at a cafe and remain at home.

The father was recently brought before the court for failing to send his children to school. The girl blamed her father for her difficulties, saying that he did not seem to

care what happened to her and her siblings. She expressed dislike of her father, and there was no feeling of warmth or even friendliness evident in their relationship.

The girl's relationship with her mother was also poor. When the girl ran away from home, the parents did not report her missing. She said her mother did not worry about her, even though she was gone for two weeks. The mother was not glad to see her when the girl returned, but did think of beating her. The girl said she ran away because she was not happy at home where the parents were constantly quarreling. They would go out drinking at night, always leaving the girl at home to care for the younger children. They would then come home fighting, and their heated arguments would wake up all the children. The father kept accusing the mother of sitting with other men in the tavern where she worked.

According to the Glueck Prediction Table, the girl's case was scored on the five factors as follows:

	Score
1. Father's discipline: lax.....	59.8
2. Mother's supervision: unsuitable.....	83.2
3. Father's affection: indifferent.....	75.9
4. Mother's affection: indifferent.....	86.2
5. Family cohesiveness: unintegrated.....	96.9
Total.....	402.0

Since the total score of 402 is well over the criterion score of 250, this girl's chances of becoming a delinquent were marked.

CASE C. This boy appeared in the Boston Juvenile Court for the first time when he was 15½ years old. He had no previous record of any kind. He was brought before the Judge for alleged assault and battery against another high school boy with whom he had a fight during which he accidentally stabbed him with a knife. The Judge, after hearing the case, placed the boy on probation with suspended sentence and ordered him to attend the Citizenship Training Group, a court-sponsored rehabilitation service for probationers.

The social worker from the Citizenship Training Group visited the boy's home in the South End. He found the family was living in an attractive, well-furnished apartment that was kept spotlessly clean. A number of new electrical appliances were in evidence. The father was at this time trying to buy property in a better neighborhood outside the city.

The father watched his family closely and gave them everything they needed. However, he would become very much upset and easily confused when things did not go right. He appeared to be a highly excitable person, although well-meaning and very much concerned about his family. He was extremely disturbed and heart broken over his son's first and only court appearance, and could not believe that his boy would commit such an "outrage."

The mother was a quiet, reserved woman who was also very much disturbed about the boy's court appearance. Both she and her husband described the boy as a model

son in the home. He would assist his mother in a number of household duties. He had been very active at a settlement house where he was well thought of by the director, who had known him and his parents since he was small. The boy actively participated in the gym activities, and at times would assist the staff in running the program. He always came home at a reasonable hour and would go to bed shortly afterwards.

The boy had a brother four years older than he, who was a first-year law student. The boy was said to be a real companion to his brother. His court appearance was a blow to the whole family, one which the parents refused to believe. The CTG worker concluded from his visit to the family that "the home appears to be an adequate one where there is considerable love, warmth, and affection."

With the foregoing information relative to the boy's family relationships, the Glueck Social Prediction Table was put to a test. The five factors making up the table were scored as follows:

	Score
1. Father's discipline: erratic.....	72.5
2. Mother's supervision: suitable.....	9.9
3. Father's affection: warm.....	33.8
4. Mother's affection: warm.....	43.1
5. Family cohesiveness: cohesive.....	20.6
Total.....	179.9

When the scores were added, the total of 179.9 fell below the criterion score, thus placing the boy in the non-delinquent category, which turned out to be a correct prognosis.

#### SUMMARY

In this paper the results of testing the validity of the Glueck Social Prediction Table for proneness to delinquency were given. This instrument, first introduced in "Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency" (1950) by Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck, was applied to two separate samples of youngsters, ranging in age from 8 to 18. One group was composed of 50 boys who appeared in the Boston Juvenile Court in the first seven months of 1950. The other group was comprised of 50 girls who were committed as delinquents between November, 1954, and May, 1955, by the local courts to the Massachusetts Youth Service Board for custodial care and treatment. When these 100 cases were rated on the five family-relationship factors making up the Glueck Social Prediction Table, 92 percent of the 50 boys and 100 percent of the 50 girls were correctly identified as delinquents or non-delinquents. This finding seems especially encouraging in view of the family and personal background differences between the two samples on the one hand and the group of 500 delinquent boys, who were included in the sample in "Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency" on which the Gluecks' predictive device was constructed, on the other. Three illustrations of applying the Table to an individual case were also presented.