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THE ATTITUDE OF JUVENILES TOWARD THE LEGAL INSTITUTION*

JOHN P. CLARK AND EUGENE P. WENNINGER†

A persistent theme in the voluminous current literature on the condition of modern youth is their supposed adverse attitude toward law and its enforcement. This lack of "respect for authority," as it is also sometimes phrased, is often associated in some manner with explanations for deviant behavior among juveniles.

Much of the data upon which such statements are based appear to have been gathered through only casual observations of highly selected populations of juveniles. Although a perusal of the literature reveals something of the nature of the anti-legal institution attitude, there are numerous conflicting observations and findings about it. Most authors agree that there is greater animosity toward the legal institution in the United States than in certain other advanced societies,¹ but there is wide disagreement on an explanation for this difference.² Furthermore, there appears to be some question about the direction of change, if any, in the attitude,³ some believing the negative attitude is diminishing, others that it is increasing both in intensity and pervasiveness. Much of the concern

is based upon the assumption by the authors that a positive attitude toward the law and law enforcement is essential to the continued existence of society.⁴

There are, therefore, two general conclusions that may be drawn from the review of the current literature. *First*, as can be seen by the volume and emotional content of the writings of lay persons, practitioners, and academicians, there is widespread concern about the attitude of juveniles toward the legal institution. *Second*, there is an apparent need for a more accurate and detailed examination of the quality and quantity of the attitude under discussion. This paper concerns the development of an instrument with which to measure more accurately the attitude of juveniles toward the legal institution, i.e., toward the law and lawyers, law enforcement officials, judges, and courts. The research herein reported also identifies some correlates of the attitude that may help us to gain insight into its etiology, distribution, and consequences.

One of the few rigorous empirical studies of public attitudes toward law was included in the Rundquist-Sletto studies of the *Personality in the Depression*.⁵ By employing a scale which measured "attitude toward law," these authors found that an unfavorable attitude toward law was associated with generally poor adjustment of the respondents to their social situation. For example, such feelings as low morale, inferiority, and poor attitude toward the family and the economic organization and such conditions as unemployment, a broken home, and recent migration to the city were all related to a poor attitude toward law. Rundquist and Sletto concluded that since many of these individual factors were family oriented, "this scale may be measuring an extension of parental authority—attitude toward authority in general."⁶

⁴ See *Editorial*, Saturday Evening Post, May 2, 1959, p. 10; ROBISON, JUVENILE DELINQUENCY 210 (1960); RECKLESS, *op. cit. supra* note 1; *Respect for the Police*, 93 AMERICA (April 16, 1955); Arizona Republic (Phoenix), Dec. 30, 1955, p. 1, quoted in Vedder, *supra* note 3, at 263.

⁵ RUNDQUIST & SLETTA, PERSONALITY IN THE DEPRESSION 213 (1936).

⁶ *Id.* at 211.

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¹ See, e.g., *Why Law Fails To Stop Teen-age Crime*, U. S. News and World Report, Jan. 14, 1955, p. 70; ELLIOTT, CRIME IN MODERN SOCIETY 455 (1952); RECKLESS, THE CRIME PROBLEM 2 (3d ed. 1961).

² Different viewpoints are suggested by these sources: RECKLESS, *op. cit. supra* note 1; *Why Law Fails To Stop Teen-age Crime*, *supra* note 1. See also Gourley, *Police Public Relations*, 291 ANNALS 136 (Jan. 1954); Aspell, *Should People Distrust Lawyers*, Saturday Review, Dec. 17, 1955, p. 7; FRIEDENBERG, THE VANISHING ADOLESCENT 27 (1959); *How Lawyers Rate With Us*, 36 Science Digest 41 (Dec. 1954).

³ Again, conflicting viewpoints are evident from the following: Aspell, *supra* note 2; TUNLEY, KIDS, CRIME AND CHAOS 63-64 (1962); TAFT, CRIMINOLOGY 404 (1956); Vedder, *Delinquency and Justice*, in JUVENILE DELINQUENCY 251 (Roucek ed. 1959); DEUTSCH, THE TROUBLE WITH COPS 4 (1954), wherein he quotes a report of the American Bar Association; and FRIEDENBERG, *op. cit. supra* note 2. For an excellent survey of the attitudes of the British toward the police see SOCIAL SURVEY CENTRAL OFFICE OF INFORMATION, ROYAL COMM'N ON THE POLICE, THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE POLICE AND PUBLIC (1962).

As is obvious from many of the correlates to the "law scale" in the Rundquist-Sletto study, a negative attitude toward the legal institution is possibly related to a disadvantageous socio-economic position in society. The validity of this observation is enhanced by the findings of Westley⁷ and Gourley⁸ in which minority status (e.g., being Negro) was found to be a probable correlate to an unfavorable attitude toward the police. Those in the lower socio-economic classes (especially minority members within these classes) have little reason to look favorably upon the legal mechanisms of social control. Although lower class juveniles might admire the ruggedness of the police officer or the power of the courts,⁹ they frequently see many of their own class (and perhaps even themselves) "treated" there. One must have money or contacts to employ a lawyer (or the "fix") in order to neutralize legal prosecution; the lower class has little of either. Money and social class status can also assure one of relatively private environs for his illegal behavior; again the lower class are disadvantaged. Furthermore, a significant portion of the law is concerned with the maintenance of minimum standards of housing, sanitation, education, and family support. Those in the lower classes often unavoidably conflict with the law in these regards. Instances of differential law enforcement to the detriment of lower class members (especially minority members) merely add to their already long list of reasons for looking unfavorably upon the legal institution.

However, a negative attitude toward the legal institution is obviously not found among the lower classes alone. It seems that some amount of anti-law and law enforcement feeling is present throughout the population. Such an attitude may be fostered by a general culturally-engendered aversion to formal and public social control of individual freedom, which is magnified and more sharply brought into focus through membership in the social categories most likely to be the recipients of social control effort. Therefore, those who have had their activities curbed by legal agencies or who conceive of themselves as potential candidates

⁷ Westley, *The Police: A Sociological Study of Law, Custom, and Morality* 104-06 (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1951).

⁸ GOURLEY, *PUBLIC RELATIONS AND THE POLICE* 75 (1953).

⁹ As might be inferred from the listing of lower class focal concerns in Miller, *Lower Class Culture as a Generating Milieu of Gang Delinquency*, 14 *J. SOCIAL ISSUES* (1958). See also *U.S. News and World Report*, Sept. 26, 1960, p. 61.

for such action are likely to view these agencies with hostility. In this sense, involvement with the legal institution (whether actual or prospective) contributes to a negative attitude, rather than a negative attitude *causing* involvement with the legal institution.

Based upon the foregoing brief discussion, the following working hypotheses were constructed for testing:

1. The greater the degree of maladjustment to school and family authority, the more negative the juveniles' attitude toward the legal institution.
2. The lower the juveniles' socio-economic class, the greater their negative attitude toward the legal institution.
3. The greater the actual or potential involvement in illegal behavior, the more negative the juveniles' attitude toward the legal institution.

THE STUDY

The data used to test the above hypotheses were gathered in 1961 as part of a larger exploratory study of illegal behavior (particularly theft) among juveniles and its relationship to socio-economic class, type of community, age, race, and various attitudinal variables.¹⁰ A total of 1154 public school students from the sixth through the twelfth grades in four different types of community were respondents to a self-administered, anonymous questionnaire given in groups of from 20 to 40 persons by the senior author.

Other published papers from this research include a more detailed description of the sample communities, and only a brief summary of their characteristics will be presented here. The communities were chosen for their unique social class structure. The Duncan "Socio-economic Index for All Occupations"¹¹ was used to determine the occupational profile of each community, as shown in Table 1.

Three of the areas were predominately lower class (*rural farm*, *industrial city*, and *lower-class urban*), while the fourth was upper-middle class (*upper-middle-class urban*), as determined by the Duncan Socio-economic Index. The selection of community types allowed us to make comparisons of "lower classes" within different urban areas as

¹⁰ For reports of other aspects of the study, see 27 *AM. SOC. REV.* 826 (1962), and 42 *SOCIAL FORCES* 49 (1963).

¹¹ REISS, *OCCUPATIONS AND SOCIAL STATUS*, esp. pp. 109-61, prepared by Otis D. Duncan.

TABLE 1
DUNCAN SOCIO-ECONOMIC INDEX SCORES BASED ON OCCUPATION OF FATHER

Scores by Social Class Categories	Type of Community			
	Rural Farm	Lower-Class Urban	Industrial City	Upper-Class Urban
1. 0-23	82.5%	55.7%	41.1%	6.4%
2. 24-47	10.7	21.4	21.8	5.4
3. 48-71	5.2	17.2	25.8	49.3
4. 72-96	1.6	5.7	11.3	38.9
Total Classifiable.....	100.0 (N = 252)	100.0 (N = 192)	100.0 (N = 248)	100.0 (N = 298)
Total Non-Classifiable*....	8.0 (N = 22)	27.4 (N = 73)	11.4 (N = 32)	11.0 (N = 37)
Total N.....	274	265	280	335

* A socio-economic index score could not be determined on respondents from homes with no father and respondents who did not furnish adequate information for reliable classification. The percentage cited as non-classifiable is the portion of the *Total N* for each community that could not be classified. The 27.4 per cent figure in the lower class urban community reflects a higher proportion of "father-less" homes rather than greater numbers of responses which were incomplete or vague in other ways.

well as with a rural sample. There is also the possibility of comparing rural behavior patterns with urban ones, *per se*, and lower class to upper middle class behaviors. The rural farm sample consisted mostly of farm children (all white) in an agriculturally prosperous Midwestern state. The industrial city respondents lived in a city of 40,000 (15 per cent Negro) mostly devoted to manufacturing. Almost all in the lower-class urban sample were Negroes living in a fairly stable but poor section of a very large Midwestern metropolitan city. The upper-middle-class urban community is a high-status suburb of this same large city, with extremely few Negroes in the sample.

Random sampling by grade level was followed within each of the school systems in each community, with two exceptions: (1) those who could not read at a fourth grade level were removed in all cases, with a resulting loss of less than one-half per cent of the total sample, and (2) the sixth grade sample in the industrial city community was drawn from a predominantly Negro, working-class area and was, therefore, non-representative of the total community for that grade-level only. All the students from grades six through twelve were used in the rural farm community.

INSTRUMENTS

Two instruments and several single-item questions were utilized in the gathering of data with which to test the above hypotheses. One instru-

ment was a Guttman-type scale which measured the attitude toward the legal institution. The other instrument was an inventory of behaviors which measured the nature and extent of illegal conduct.

The primary source of items for the attitude scale was the Rundquist-Sletto law scale. The derived seven-item scale¹² (with a reproducibility of 91 per cent) contained the following statements:

1. On the whole, policemen are honest.
2. On the whole, judges are honest.

¹² Respondents were asked to state whether they would a) Strongly Agree, b) Agree, c) Disagree, or d) Strongly Disagree with each item. The responses were dichotomized, with the following ones designated as "positive" for each item: Item 1: b,c,d; Item 2: b,c,d; Item 3: b,c,d; Item 4: b,c,d; Item 5: a,b,c; Item 6: b,c,d; Item 7: a,b,c. "Positive" responses in this scale are those *more* anti-legal institution.

The range of marginal frequencies was as follows: Item 1: 79.5% positive responses; Item 2: 73.0%; Item 3: 69.5%; Item 4: 67.5%; Item 5: 50.5%; Item 6: 48.5%; Item 7: 43.5%. All item reproducibilities were 0.87% or above.

The pattern of errors was found to be random, and each item category has more non-errors than errors. See TORGERSON, *THEORY AND METHODS OF SCALING* 322-24 (1958), for a discussion of criterion of scalability.

Two other Guttman-type scales were derived, both of which included some of the items of the scale used in this study. They are included here for the use of readers who are more specifically interested in the "courts" or "law."

One scale, tentatively called the "court scale" and with the over-all reproducibility of 90 per cent, included the following items:

1. On the whole, policemen are honest.
2. On the whole, judges are honest.

3. A person should obey the laws no matter how much one has to go out of the way to do it.
4. In the courts a poor man has the same chance as a rich man.
5. Laws are made just for the good of a few.
6. A person should tell the truth in court, no matter what.
7. It is O.K. for a person to break the law if he doesn't get caught.

The instrument for the measurement of the involvement of the respondents in illegal behavior is described in detail elsewhere.¹³ Essentially it consisted of 38 items ranging from nuisance offenses to very serious ones. Respondents were asked to indicate if they had committed each of the offenses *within the past year*, thus furnishing data amenable to age-level analysis. If the re-

3. A person should tell the truth in court, no matter what.
4. It's O.K. to lie in court in order to protect a friend who is on trial.
5. In the courts a poor man has the same chance as a rich man.
6. Almost anything can be fixed up in the courts if you have enough money.

As with the more general scale, the respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with the item. The responses were dichotomized, with the following ones designated as "positive" for each item: Item 1: b,c,d; Item 2: b,c,d; Item 3: b,c,d; Item 4: a,b,c; Item 5: c,d; Item 6: a,b. "Positive" responses in this scale are those *more* anti-court.

The range of marginal frequencies was as follows: Item 1: 79.5% positive responses; Item 2: 73.0%; Item 3: 48.5%; Item 4: 42.5%; Item 5: 35.0%; and Item 6: 29.5%. All item reproducibilities were 0.87% or higher. The pattern of errors was found to be random, and each item category had more non-errors than errors.

The second scale, tentatively called the "law scale," and with the reproducibility of 92 per cent, included the following items:

1. People who break the law are nearly always caught and punished.
2. A person should obey the laws no matter how much one has to go out of his way to do it.
3. Just because a person gets himself in a corner is no reason to break the law.
4. Laws are made just for the good of a few.
5. It is O.K. for a person to break the law if he doesn't get caught.

Again the respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with the item. The responses were dichotomized, with the following ones designated as "positive" for each item: Item 1: b,c,d; Item 2: b,c,d; Item 3: b,c,d; Item 4: a,b,c; Item 5: a,b,c. "Positive" responses in this scale are those *more* anti-law.

The range of marginal frequencies was as follows: Item 1: 72.5%; Item 2: 69.5%; Item 3: 66.0%; Item 4: 51.5%; Item 5: 42.5%. All item reproducibilities were 0.89% or higher. The pattern of errors was found to be random, and each item category had more non-errors than errors.

¹³ See Clark & Wenninger, 27 AM. SOC. REV. 826 (1962).

spondents admitted commission of an offense, they so indicated by disclosing the number of times (either 1, 2, 3, or 4 or more) they had done so.

FINDINGS

The data of this study support the hypothesis that the attitude toward the legal institution is related to the adjustment of juveniles to other authority situations, i.e., the school and family. Although the adjustment to teachers and the legal attitude are apparently not related in the upper-middle-class urban community, low though significant relationships were found in the other three areas as shown by items a, b, and c in Table 2. The association between responses on adjustment to family authority and attitude toward the legal institution was greatest in the rural farm and the Negro-lower-class urban communities, both of which were lowest in average socio-economic index (see Table 1).

The second hypothesis, that there is a significant relationship between the juveniles' socio-economic class origin and their anti-legal institution attitude, is only weakly supported. Three procedures were used to examine the hypothesized relationship: the comparison of total communities which represent one dominant social class; the comparison of similar social class categories (as delineated in Tables 1 and 2) *among* communities; and the cross-class comparisons *within* each community.

As shown in Table 3, a comparison of whole communities of one predominant class reveals two important results: (1) a higher proportion of the rural farm boys and girls are favorably disposed toward the legal institution than of juveniles in any of the urban areas, and (2) within the urban areas a greater proportion of the upper-middle-class juveniles hold a favorable attitude than of the lower-class urban youngsters, whether found in a large Negro area or in a smaller urban environment.¹⁴

¹⁴ However, a significantly larger proportion of the boys had unfavorable attitudes in the rural farm and industrial city communities, but there was no difference in this regard between the boys and girls in the upper-middle-class urban and lower-class urban samples. As to *age*, juveniles age 14-15 and older were more likely to hold a negative attitude than were the 10-13 year old juveniles in the rural farm community. In the industrial city and upper-middle-class urban samples, however, this change did not occur until age 16-17. There was no significant change in the Negro-lower-class urban area over age categories. Apparently in the latter community the distribution of the anti-legal attitude is determined prior to age 10-13 and does not change *for those who remain in school*.

TABLE 2

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SELECTED VARIABLES AND ATTITUDES TOWARD THE LEGAL INSTITUTION BY COMMUNITY

Variable.....	Community			
	Rural Farm N = 274	Industrial City N = 280	Upper- Middle-Class Urban N = 335	Lower-Class Urban N = 265
a. Adjustment to teachers: ¹				
Gamma Value ²38	.25	.02	.46
Significance Level— χ^2	<.001	<.05	<.30	<.001
b. Adjustment to father's discipline: ³				
Gamma Value.....	.35	.34	.29	.37
Significance Level— χ^2	<.001	<.05	<.05	<.05
c. Adjustment to mother's discipline: ⁴				
Gamma Value.....	.75	.27	.43	1.00
Significance Level— χ^2	<.01	<.50	<.20	<.01
d. Extent of admitted illegal behavior: ⁵				
Pearsonian r.....	.27	.27	.23	.21
Significance Level.....	<.01	<.01	<.01	<.01
e. No. of court appearances: ⁶				
Gamma Value.....	Too few cases	.77	.63	.00
Significance Level— χ^2	—	<.02	<.05	<.99
f. Self-concept: ⁷				
Gamma Value.....	.49	.60	.45	.31
Significance Level— χ^2	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
g. Likely resort to "normless" behavior: ⁸				
Gamma Value.....	.51	.52	.43	.38
Significance Level— χ^2	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
h. Extent of socialization: ⁹				
Pearsonian r.....	.36	.38	.39	.29
Significance Level.....	<.01	<.01	<.01	<.01

¹ Attitude scores were related to the responses to the question: How well do you get along with the teachers (very well, good, fair, or poor)?

² The Goodman-Kruskal's gamma was used here as a measure of associations based upon Goodman & Kruskal, *Measures of Association for Cross Classification*, 49 J. AM. STATISTICAL ASS'N 732 (1954). A recent article by these same authors concerns the matter of testing for levels of confidence that were not previously available. 58 *id.* 310 (1963).

³ Attitude scores were related to the responses to the question: In regard to the way your father (or other man in your home) has made you behave, would you say he has been: (over strict, real loose and easy, firm but kind about it, not the same all the time, has never been a man in the home)? Responses one and four were combined and compared to the third response, in keeping with the scoring scheme of S. & E. GLUECK, *UNRAVELING JUVENILE DELINQUENCY* 261 (1950).

⁴ Attitude scores were related to responses to the question: In regard to the way your mother (or other woman in your home) has told you what you should or should not do, would you say she has been (very good at it, fairly good at it, or not very good at it, has never been a woman in the home)? The first response was compared to the third one.

⁵ A crude over-all measure of involvement in illegal behavior was calculated by adding the number of different offenses individuals admitted having committed. These scores were correlated with the legal institution attitude scores.

⁶ Attitude scores were related to the responses to the question: How many times have you ever been before juvenile court or before any court (0, 1, 2 . . . 8, 9)?

⁷ Attitude scores were related to the responses to the statement: I consider myself what some people call a delinquent (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree).

⁸ Attitude scores were related to the responses to the statement: From where I stand, it will be necessary to break the rules once in a while in order to have or do the things I want (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree).

⁹ Attitude scores were correlated with the scores on the Gough Socialization Scale.

TABLE 3
FAVORABLE RESPONSES TO LEGAL ATTITUDE SCALE BY COMMUNITY AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CLASS†

Scores	Communities					
	RF/IC	RF/UMCU	RF/LCU	IC/UMCU	IC/LCU	UMCU/LCU
Community vs. community . . .	% 58/34*	% 58/43*	% 58/28*	% 34/43*	% 34/28	% 43/28*
Socio-Economic Class Scores						
1. 0-24	58/41*	58/38	58/27*	41/38	41/27	38/27
2. 25-48	63/24*	63/36	63/27*	24/36	24/27	36/27
3. 49-72	53/38	53/45	53/32	38/45	38/32	45/32
4. 73-96	#	#	#	21/44*	21/27	44/27

† Percentages in this table denote the proportion of the respondents in the community or social class category within the community that responded "favorably" (scores of 0-3) on the attitude scale. With these percentages and reference to Table 1, the reader can reconstruct the raw data, which are too voluminous to be presented here.

* Statistically significant between communities at the .05 level of confidence using chi-square technique.

In these instances there were too few cases in the rural sample to meet requirements of the chi-square technique.

Each socio-economic class category was compared among the various communities, and though the results are far from spectacular, there are indications that not only is the rural farm sample different from urban areas in this respect also, but that most of the difference occurs in the lower two social classes. None of the comparisons of the third socio-economic class (Duncan index numbers 49-72, consisting mostly of highly-skilled and white-collar occupations)¹⁵ revealed differences, regardless of the community in which they were found. These data do not provide a good test of the upper-middle-class compared across communities,¹⁶ although the available data suggest that it might vary from one community to another.

Comparisons of the four social class categories (as previously defined) within the four communities resulted in only one comparison being significant out of the possible 24. In this manner of comparison, the second hypothesis is rejected, i.e., within communities there is no relationship between socio-economic class and attitude toward the legal institution.

In summary, the data indicate that within all communities there appear to be few, if any, differences among social class categories in their attitude toward the legal institution. When social class categories are compared among communities, differences are between the rural and urban communities

and in the lower social class categories with some indication of inter-community difference in the highest social class category. The lack of significant differences in any instance on the third social class category (which includes the white-collar occupations) suggests a homogeneous middle class orientation toward the legal institution regardless of other community characteristics.

The last hypothesis was tested in various ways as summarized by items d, e, f, g, and h in Table 2. Seventeen of 18 tests resulted in support for the hypothesis that involvement in illegal conduct, actual or potential, is related to a negative attitude toward the legal institution.

The relationship between actual involvement in illegal behavior and a negative attitude toward the legal institution was measured in two ways. The extent of admitted illegal behavior in the past year was found to be significantly associated with an anti-legal institution attitude. The same relationship existed between admitted court contacts and the attitude toward the legal institution in the industrial city and the upper middle class urban communities, but not in the Negro lower class urban area.

Another crude measure of involvement in illegal behavior is the juveniles' assessment of their own symbolic role in this regard. The studies of Reckless, *et al.*,¹⁷ have demonstrated the relationship

¹⁵ Clark & Wenninger, *supra* note 13.

¹⁶ The scarcity of cases in the highest class in the rural farm community made comparisons involving this community impossible.

¹⁷ See Reckless, Dinitz & Murray, *Self-Concept as an Insulator against Delinquency*, 21 *Am. Soc. Rev.* 744 (1956). For the description of the conclusion of a longitudinal study involving "legal self concept" see Scar-

between self concept and subsequent contact with legal authorities. In the present study boys and girls who view themselves as "delinquents" are more likely to hold a negative attitude toward the legal institution than are those with a non-delinquent self concept.

Respondents were also asked to indicate to what extent they believed it would be necessary to break rules in order to achieve their goals.¹⁸ Those who predicted a likely resort to "normless" behavior were also found to be more negative in their legal attitude than were those who did not so predict. It is interesting that in both this and the self concept comparison, the lowest relationships to attitude toward the legal institution were found in the Negro lower-class urban community, which finding suggests that other factors prompt anti-legal attitudes under these conditions.

The Gough Socialization (30) Scale, designed to detect the veering toward delinquent behavior,¹⁹ was found to be moderately associated with the legal attitude scale.

In summary, data of several varieties support the hypothesis that involvement in illegal behavior is associated in some fashion with a negative attitude toward the legal institution.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

There is voluminous evidence that a considerable proportion of our population holds a negative attitude toward the legal institution. This paper reports an attempt to quantify this attitude and to discover some of its correlates. The data reported suggest the following conclusions:

1. Socio-economic class, *per se*, is not closely related to this attitude. Demonstrated differences between population areas can be explained better through reference to community "status area" or "cultural area" norms, which may reflect such community-wide phenomena as quality and quantity of community law enforcement, juvenile court activities, race and cultural minority relationships,

pitti, A Follow-up Study of Good Boys in High Delinquency Areas (unpublished M.A. thesis, The Ohio State University, 1959). For a critical examination of this concept, see Strodtbeck, Short & Kolegar, *The Analysis of Self-Descriptions by Members of Delinquent Gangs*, 3 SOCIOLOGICAL Q. 331 (1962).

¹⁸ The concept of resorting to the use of illegitimate means in order to attain legitimate goals has been included in the study of alienation under the term of normlessness. See Seeman, *On the Meaning of Alienation*, 24 AM. SOC. REV. 783 (1959).

¹⁹ Gough & Peterson, *The Identification and Measurement of Predispositional Factors in Crime and Delinquency* 16 J. CONSULTING PSYCHOLOGY 207 (1952).

and exposure to legal agents. As was suggested elsewhere in a report of similar findings on admitted juvenile misconduct,²⁰ perhaps the concept of social class should be remolded to reflect our increased knowledge of sub-cultural attitudes and behaviors in order to make it a more useful concept for explaining variation in social behavior.

2. There is some indication that differences between communities and/or similar classes in different communities are concentrated in the extreme social class categories. As with admitted juvenile misconduct²¹ and goal orientations,²² the distribution of the anti-legal attitude was similar in the middle class category regardless of the predominant social class of the area in which it is found. This finding suggests the presence of a somewhat "universal" middle class culture, but an absence of "universal" lower class and upper middle class structure.

3. Apparently, a negative attitude toward the legal institution is related in some fashion to juveniles' assessment of the quality of discipline received in their home and their adjustment to teachers in school. These findings would support the notion of a general "anti-authority" syndrome on the part of the juveniles or, conversely, perhaps a common rejection or hostility toward certain juveniles on the part of the parents, school teachers, and representatives of the legal institution. More likely a "feed-back" system is at work here making it extremely difficult to discern cause and effect.

It is interesting to note that the mother-child relationship is highly indicative of the legal attitude in the rural farm and lower-class urban areas, but is not statistically significant in the other communities. Apparently the mother-child relationship may serve in certain social situations as a critical factor in the determination of the legal attitude in these surroundings. Possibly a "satisfactory" rural farm and Negro-lower-class urban mother-child relationship provides the insulation from what would otherwise be conducive to an anti-legal or anti-authority attitude. More specifically, she may provide a haven from the relatively authoritarian rural farm father and the anomic environs of the lower-class-urban Negro. If this last "buffer" is not present for one reason or another, then the juvenile may more readily assume an anti-legal attitude. This mechanism would not be as likely

²⁰ Clark & Wenninger, *supra* note 13.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Clark & Wenninger, 42 SOCIAL FORCES 49 (1963).

to operate in our industrial city and upper-class urban areas which may not be characterized by authoritarian fathers nor anomic social environs.

4. The greater the involvement in illegal conduct, in many senses of the concept, the more negative the attitude toward the legal institution. Taken together, the findings of this study suggest the existence of a role or roles including both the involvement in illegal behavior and a negative attitude toward the legal institution. Although actual contact with the legal institution is related to a negative attitude (except in the lower-class urban area), so few boys and girls experience such contact that it must play a small part in the etiology of the attitude in the general juvenile population. But conceptualizing oneself in the deviant role includes the consideration of the *possible* consequences or risks of playing this role which might eventually involve conflict with authorities, including those of the legal institution. The preconceived notions concerning one's probable treatment in an entanglement with and disentanglement from the legal institution may color the attitude toward the institution as such. Of course, such a preconceived judgment would necessarily reflect the quality of the juveniles' criteria for evaluating such an eventuality. Herein, the internalization of values of significant others and reference groups, together with the residue from any pertinent personal experience with legal authorities, becomes meaningful.

5. The relationship of several variables to the attitude toward the legal institution in the Negro-lower-class urban area is very low. In addition, the high proportion of those with an anti-legal attitude *regardless of age* (see footnote 14) indicates that another factor or factors are more influential than the variables here studied in the development of the attitude in this area. The most obvious possible factor is racial prejudice or the expectation of it to which Negroes are exposed at a very early age. The legal institution has been and is yet essentially white man's domain.

RESEARCH SUGGESTIONS

Although the study has been oriented toward the development of a research instrument and the

identification of some gross correlates to a measured attitude, the findings are suggestive of further research areas.

1. At least some of the correlates to a negative attitude toward the legal institution pervade whole communities, but differ in distribution among these communities. Cross-cultural comparisons on a much larger scale should help identify what social attributes of communities account for these differences. Among these community-wide attributes may be the involvement of the legal institution with political organizations, the quality of local law enforcement,²³ and the cultural inheritance in the nature of the "truce" between individual freedom and formal social controls. Cross-community comparisons of the attitudes of those living in cities long known for excellent police and other legal structures with those living in cities with equally long histories of questionable legal operations might prove illuminating. Cross-cultural comparisons among the United States, Britain, France, Sweden, and Japan, as well as some "under-developed" countries, should prove worthwhile.

2. The data of this study suggest that there is a role of "deviant" which includes an anti-legal institution orientation. Such a statement is hardly new, but neither is it very specific. Research to identify the dimensions of roles which include significant amounts of illegal behavior and anti-legal sentiment should provide insights into the nature of attitudes toward the legal institution. Such roles might include the "conflict gang member," "liberal college student," "hot-rodder," "highway speedster," "street-walker," etc.

3. Knowledge concerning the possession of a negative attitude toward the legal institution does not reveal its influence on overt social behavior. Identification of how individuals implement this attitude, under what conditions it is called into action, and under what conditions it is "out-ranked" in the value hierarchy should lead to a greater understanding of its role as an instigator of social deviance.

²³ Goldman, The Differential Selection of Juvenile Offenders for Court Appearance (unpublished dissertation, University of Chicago, Dec. 1950).