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AND JUSTICE
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THE RESEARCH
AND DOCUMENTATION
CENTRE

Juvenile Delinquency in the Netherlands

Edited by

Josine Junger-Tas and Richard L. Block



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INTRODUCTION

1. General Background of the Book

Holland is a European country and part of the Western world. As such it shares many essential features and fundamental cultural values with other European nations and with North America. Moreover a number of important factors of social change have affected The Netherlands in roughly the same way as they affected other Western societies. These social changes had important consequences for general social behavior of juveniles and for delinquent behavior in particular. They also had considerable impact on the juvenile justice system, not only on its direct functioning but also on its philosophy and approach of young offenders. Two phenomena characterize the evolution in Western societies since World War II, but most particularly from the '60 to the '80. They are: a large increase in juvenile crime and the construction of a 'welfare' model of juvenile justice. Both phenomena will be commented briefly.

The increase in juvenile crime started at the same time as economic prosperity began to spread. As early as 1974 there were serious debates in parliament about the increase in crime rates and about fear of crime among citizens. Claims were made for more police on the streets, better education, more welfare and a better housing policy. In the years that followed there was a growing awareness of the crime problem, which may be partly due to the victimization surveys introduced by the Research Centre of the Ministry of Justice, which include the 16 most frequently committed offenses. These offenses cover 60% of all cases coming to the attention of the prosecutor and more than 70% of all cases coming to the attention of the police. Of all offenses, those that have shown the greatest increase since 1975 are vandalism, shoplifting, burglary, autotheft and bicycle theft. In 1983, 35% of the Dutch population of 15 years and older became a victim of one of those 16 offenses. Comparison with other European countries in 1983 showed that in The Netherlands 18% of those interviewed had been victims of a theft or a burglary. This places our country third among eleven, after France and Great Britain with each 20%. Not only individuals but also public agencies and industrial enterprises are victimized. Shoplifting, burglary, vandalism of public buildings or in the public transport system cause large financial losses to local authorities and private industry.

Most of this type of criminality is juvenile crime. The question then is why we have witnessed such an increase in juvenile delinquency since the sixties. Among the causes that have been advanced in explaining the rise in juvenile crime since the sixties are the following:

Demographic factors

- the post-war ‘baby-boom’ led to a huge increase of the youth population which means a growing number of the part of the population that is most criminally active.

Decreasing informal social controls

- greater geographic and social mobility meant less influence of traditional bonds and relationships;
- a declining influence of the church and of youth-, sports-, social- and cultural organizations;
- the growth of a pluralistic, less authoritarian, less hierarchical and more democratic society gave youth a more powerful position.

More opportunities for crime

- a tremendous increase in objects to be stolen or vandalized: cars, bicycles, street-furniture, expensive equipment in schools;
- the growing complexity of the modern bureaucratic state: the more rules and regulations, the greater the possibilities for infraction of these rules.

Thus the main conclusion is that in The Netherlands, as in most European countries, during the last 25 years there has been a sizable increase in crime in general, and in less serious, juvenile crime in particular.

Turning now to the juvenile justice system it has to be recognized that the general prosperity, the rise in education, technical innovation and contraception all had a great impact on the position of women within the family and thus on the position of the child. Children became the product of deliberate choice instead of some kind of fatality. Moreover the child lost the economic value it has had for centuries, and became an object of care and affection. The greater value attached to children and the greater emotional and affective investment in children increased their power position. The essential value in our culture is one of great personal autonomy and of individual fulfillment.

Some sociologists have described the change in intimate human relations in terms of a gradual process leading from a ‘commanding household’ towards

a 'negotiating household' (De Swaan, 1979). Partners as well as parents and children determine each others roles, duties and rights by a continuing negotiating process: 'where can the parents exercise their authority, how much freedom will they allow considering the child's age?' This type of family has a very delicate power balance and it is no wonder many have spoken about the 'permissive' society, where parents are incapable of transmitting social values and norms and their children are turning to the peer-group for socialization. Social change related to early industrialization and urbanization led to what Lee called the 'protection paradigm' (Lee, 1982). In this model, children should be protected in the first place by their parents and second by others such as the church, the school and private welfare institutions. If all fail in this task, the state should intervene. Indeed, starting at the turn of the century official authorities played an increasingly important role as intervening agents in the lives of children. As far as juvenile justice is concerned the most important symbol of this intervention is the juvenile judge, operating in a paternalistic protection model. Lee observes that the protection model is essentially based on 'freedom from', that is freedom from cruelty, hunger, lack of shelter and lack of appropriate education. The protection model changed after the '50 into a typical 'welfare' model (see chapter 1) aiming at minimal intervention in the best interest of the child. The welfare philosophy led to a number of important changes in the way the system operated.

First both the police and the prosecutor collaborated in dismissing large numbers of cases in order to limit the system's input.

Second there was a tendency to resort to less severe measures than had been usual before: the number of children placed under supervision declined by 50% from 1967 to 1978 and institutional placements under a court order were reduced from 74% of all residential measures to about 50%. Alternatives for institutionalization were developed.

Third, instead of requiring more children to enter the juvenile justice system, there was a search for extra-judicial solutions. These were frequently offered by so-called 'alternative' social agencies which came into being as a reaction to the existing rather authoritarian social services. The agencies were essentially client-based and gave assistance and support to young people having all kinds of different problems.

New trends in juvenile justice

But in the '80 things changed again. The world-wide economic recession coincided with neo-conservative tendencies. There were many who felt that the 'permissive' socialization must be put to an end, and there were efforts to restore authority and impose stricter morals.

There are indeed signs that indicate a change of climate, for instance in the education system. Large scale changes in technology and the labor market accompanied by youth unemployment produced increased competition. General social security has diminished and young people are again confronted with harder living conditions. Moreover parents have become stricter. Some interesting data come from a recent study by Montreal University (Tremblay et al., 1986). Comparing two samples of adolescents over a period of 10 years, they found that family rules about behavior were set more strictly in 1985 than in 1974, but discipline was more often based on psychological techniques. A smaller number of youngsters in 1985 than in 1974 claimed that their parents used physical force. Behavior is more strictly controlled in 1985: in school youngsters participate more frequently in sports activities, and outside school they are more often involved in organized leisure occupations. In short, life for adolescents seems to be more structured than 10 years ago: 'socializing pressures are more pronounced and certainly more coercive' (Tremblay et al., 1986, 59). On the other hand individualization as a central cultural value will remain important. In a recent survey among a national Dutch sample of 12 to 18 years old, 85% agreed on the importance of personal fulfillment. Individualistic and even hedonistic values score high among young people. Moreover 70% of the boys and 80% of the girls approved of a man and a woman living together without being married, independently of degree of urbanization (Junger-Tas and Kruissink). But although the individualistic model of childrearing and education continues to be the dominant model – implying pronounced childcentred attitudes –, external social and economic pressures will force parents to develop a more rational approach to their adolescent children. The position of adolescents will be defined in a new way. Forced by necessity parents can no longer be as overly permissive, nor guarantee their offsprings high incomes, nor support them extensively when they are studying (Langeveld, 1985). Greater individualism and greater autonomy of young people will mean greater responsibility for their own life. Care and protection by the older generation will be more limited, expectations for conventional and adaptive behavior will be clearer and more pressure will be exerted to place the economic and social facts of life before young people. In fact less emphasis will be put on adolescence as an extension of childhood and more weight will be given to approaching adulthood in a world of rapid social change and less security.

The changes also have had important consequences for the juvenile justice system. The limitations of the protection model became apparent as early as 1967 in the United States by the famous Gault case (in RE Gault, 387, US 1–1967). The model was more and more criticized. It was felt that the emanci-

pation of youth required more respect for the autonomy of the individual juvenile, and that young people were entitled to a due process model with the same legal safeguards as adults have. However, more rights mean more responsibility and more accountability for committed acts. Parallel to the changed relationships between parents or educators and children, juvenile penal law underwent some changes in the direction of a more justice oriented model. The characteristics of the new emerging model can be summarized as follows:

- a blurring of the distinction between the juvenile justice system and the adult criminal justice system;
- a strengthening of the legal position of minors expressed in the due process model;
- less emphasis on the principle of protection, care and treatment and greater stress on young people's individual responsibility;
- less concern with the personality and needs of the juvenile offender and more concern with the victims of crime;
- a tendency to consider young people not only accountable for their acts, but also for the consequences these acts have for other people;
- a clear trend to demand reparation or compensation to individual victims or to the community for damage or injuries sustained.

Although these characteristics are more apparent in some countries than in others, we may speak of a general trend in Western societies.

2. The purpose of this publication

In the first place we want to give an overview of some of the research done by our Research Center on the subject of juvenile delinquency. Second, by presenting this material we wish to point out general common features across nations in the nature, the causes and the reactions to juvenile crime, the type of research conducted, theoretical orientation and the methodology used. Finally, we want to present some Dutch particularities. Although most of the problems in the field of juvenile delinquency are shared with other Western countries, the solutions that are looked for show variations. The Dutch differ from other nations in the manner they deal with juvenile delinquency, in general, and with juvenile offenders, in particular, and they have their own way in searching for a viable synthesis between the old 'welfare' model and the emerging 'justice' model. This book strives to give some insight in this matter.

The Structure of the Book

The book consists of three parts. Part one – including chapter 1 and 2 – gives a short introduction to the Dutch juvenile justice system and presents data on delinquent behavior, both from official sources and from self-report research.

Part II looks at causes of delinquent behavior. This part probably is the most 'international'. It presents tests of several criminological theories developed by American scholars. We feel it is very important that these theories should be tested in differential cultural contexts. Confirmation of some of them will add to their robustness and will help to construct more general theoretical basics. Chapter 3 presents a test of social control theory. One interesting methodological feature is that we added a follow-up dimension. Two years after the first interview, young offenders who had earlier contacts with the police or the prosecutor were interviewed again. One of the objectives was to examine whether a change in a youngster's social integration made for a change in delinquent behavior. Chapter 4 contrasts social control theory to differential association theory. It draws on data taken from the same large data-set that resulted from the extensive self-report study presented in chapter 2, 3 and 7. In chapter 5 the author reports an observation study on aggressive behavior in a youth club, based essentially on the theory developed by Patterson.

Part III looks at interventions of the juvenile justice system and at the ways in which the police, the prosecutor and the juvenile judge deal with young offenders. Chapter 6 reports an observation study on police behavior: how do police officers handle juveniles and how do they arrive at their decisions. In chapter 7 effects of police- and prosecutor-interventions are analyzed with respect to later juvenile behavior. None of these interventions seemed to be very effective as far as delinquent behavior was concerned during a follow-up period of two years. The last chapter introduces a new development in juvenile penal law, so-called 'alternative sanctions'. Holland introduced these in 6 court-districts as an experiment and the research centre evaluated them. Alternative sanctions present a major effort to develop new ways in sanctioning policy, both in juvenile- as in adult penal law.

The editors

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PART I

THE SYSTEM AND THE DATA

I. THE DUTCH JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM: AN INTRODUCTION

by Peter H. van der Laan

1. Introduction

This reader is about juvenile delinquency. It contains papers on the manifestation and etiology of juvenile delinquency and on society's reactions to juvenile delinquency. For a better understanding of these papers, some knowledge of the Dutch juvenile justice system might be desirable. This contribution is meant to give an overview of the juvenile justice system in The Netherlands; an overview of available judicial intervention methods and of official bodies concerned in the system. This overview does not pretend to be comprehensive, but only refers to the most important parts and characteristics.

The Dutch juvenile justice system rests on two pillars: civil law and criminal law. But by tradition the system as a whole is best being characterized by a care and protection philosophy. Not so much the child's acts or offenses, or his responsibilities, are taken into consideration, as well as his needs and 'the moral and physical dangers he is threatened with'. In that sense the juvenile justice system is part of a more comprehensive juvenile welfare system. Junger-Tas (1982) put it this way: the juvenile justice system 'is essentially a welfare model'. Judicial intervention may lead to (forced) use of general social welfare facilities for juveniles and their families. This care and protection philosophy exerts an influence on both the civil and the criminal part of the system. But above all it has contributed to an emphasis on the civil part. Not only where orphans and abused children are concerned, but also where young offenders come into the picture. Young offenders can be dealt with in a civil way: a penal intervention is not always necessary and certainly not obligatory. One could speak of diversion from criminal law into civil law. Besides, in Holland as contrasted to the United States, so-called status-offenses, like truancy and running-away, are not offenses. Juveniles cannot be prosecuted for those kinds of problematic behavior. However, judicial intervention is possible, but only by a civil disposition.

All decisions concerning young offenders, be it on the basis of penal or civil law, are taken in 'the best interest of the child'. Again this means that it is not so much the act or the offense, as well as the circumstances – psychologically and educationally, family-background, etc. – that affect discussions and decisions how to handle a case.

Several authorities are taking part in these discussions: the police (juvenile bureau), the public prosecutor, the juvenile judge, the Child Protection Council, and, sometimes, societies for (family)-guardianship.

With respect to punishable behavior, what can happen to juvenile delinquents? How do they get into the system and how does the system operate? The juvenile's presence within the system varies from an informal police caution without further consequences because no official report is written, to a passage through the various stages ending with one or several court appearances, resulting in a child protection measure lasting for one or more years, or a penal sanction.

Whether or not a juvenile will go through one or more stages depends on the successive decisions taken by the authorities he will meet at each stage. Those decisions are based on both formal and informal criteria. The formal criteria mainly concern the age of the offender and offense-related criteria such as seriousness of the offense, judicial past, value of stolen property, damage caused. The informal criteria refer to what we called 'in the best interest of the child' and include school status and family background. Depending on the outcomes of their investigations, authorities will decide whether they will prosecute, or will look for other, perhaps extrajudicial, solutions.

In the following paragraphs we shall describe the successive stages in which the juvenile may find himself whenever he enters the system, and the consequences of the decisions that can be taken at those stages.

2. The police

Police forces in major cities in The Netherlands have separate juvenile bureaus, whereas in the smaller police departments one or two officers have special assignments concerning minors (Doek and Drewes, 1984). Nearly all cases concerning juveniles are turned over to the juvenile bureaus or to these officers. This applies to criminal cases as well as to problem cases (running-away, truancy, child abuse and neglect).

According to Van der Hoeven (1986) 70% of juvenile cases that come to the attention of the police are offenses. Within the framework of this book, we confine ourselves here to police contacts because of criminal behavior.

The juvenile bureau only handles cases of juveniles younger than 18 years. The 18-year-olds and older are considered to be of age and therefore not to be handled by the juvenile bureau. Juveniles between the ages of 18 and 21 can be prosecuted according to juvenile panel law, but this has no actual meaning for the proceedings of the police. Apart from this maximum age, there is also a minimum age. But this limitations works in a somewhat other way. Delinquent behavior of children under the age of 12 cannot lead to criminal proceed-

ings. This means that there will not follow an official, written report to the public prosecutor, and therefore the offense will not result in criminal prosecution. Criminal behavior of children under the age of 12 is merely considered as a signal of a problematic background. Therefore an intervention may follow. There may be an informal dismissal by the police, after which the case may be turned over to a local welfare organization. Or the police, in consultation with the public prosecutor, may bring the child and his family to the attention of the Child Protection Council. This council may decide to investigate the case and ask the juvenile judge for a civil child protection measure.

When criminal behavior of juveniles between the age of 12 and 18 is involved, the police have three options. These options follow directly from the large discretionary powers the police have: discretionary powers in the sense that they themselves can decide whether a case will be brought to the attention of the public prosecutor. These discretionary powers are not stipulated formally; they are not incorporated within the law. They are derived from the discretionary powers of the public prosecutor who is responsible for police procedures. However, police discretion has become institutionalized. The three options of the police are the following.

1. *A police caution*: an informal dismissal by the police, no report is sent to the public prosecutor;
2. *An official report*, which is sent to the public prosecutor (Prosecuting Counsel);
3. A so-called *brief report*, which is sent to the public prosecutor; a prosecution rarely follows.

Of these three options the first and the second are the most important ones, and the ones most frequently used. The third option (brief report) is used in some but not all districts, and only when the police think that the offense is not serious enough to prosecute, but that some form of official documentation of the police contact seems necessary.

The first option, the police caution, is the one most frequently used. A recent study of Van der Hoeven (1985) revealed police caution percentages ranging from 54 to almost 80%. Junger-Tas *et al.* (1983) showed similar trends. Because of the fact that the police's discretionary powers are not anchored in the law, large differences in cautioning policy between police forces exist. But in general, the numbers of police cautions are substantial. These police cautions or dismissals are accompanied by a reprimand and/or a talk to the parents. The police can also refer the juvenile to a welfare agency or bring him to the notice of the Child Protection Council, in the same way as we have described for children under the age of 12.

Usually a case is dismissed by the police, when the offense is not too serious, or when it concerns a first offender. In less simple cases – serious offenses,

recidivists – an official report will be sent to the public prosecutor. The public prosecutor will decide on prosecution.

The three options available to the police illustrate the crucial role the police play in cases of juvenile delinquency. The police perform a first screening. And as far as the police decide to dismiss cases or to refer them to a welfare agency, they make a contribution to the extra-judicial dealing with juvenile delinquents, and in fact promote a decriminalization of this behavior.

3. The public prosecutor

The public prosecutor is responsible for the prosecuting policy within a court district. The information he needs to be able to decide on prosecution, is handed to him by means of police reports. As we have said, he receives two kinds of reports from the police: the brief report and the official report. The public prosecutor has large discretionary competencies, but, according to juvenile penal law, only under certain conditions. This is not so much illustrated by the way he decides on brief reports. Usually he dismisses these cases directly. Brief reports are seldomly followed by a decision to prosecute, or by a referral to the Child Protection Council.

In cases where the police have sent in an official report, the public prosecutor has two main options:

- 1 He can *dismiss* the case;
2. He can decide to *prosecute*, so that the case will be adjudicated.

In this decision the public prosecutor is advised by the Child Protection Council, who has received a copy of the official police report.

Whenever the public prosecutor decides to drop the charges, be it conditional or unconditional, he has to *consult* the juvenile judge first. This consultation is prescribed whenever he decides to dismiss unconditionally; a *formal permission* of the juvenile judge is needed, when he decides to dismiss conditionally. This means that the public prosecutor cannot decide without consulting the juvenile judge. His decision and his arguments are to be discussed. In many of the 19 court districts there are so-called tripartite meetings for this reason. In these meetings all decisions on juvenile cases are discussed by the public prosecutor, the juvenile judge and the Child Protection Council.

Sometimes discussions within the tripartite meeting lead to postponement of the decision. Concern about the juvenile's personality, his family background or other circumstances may require an investigation by the Child Protection Council. A later decision will be made, taking into account the Council's report and advice.

There are several forms of dismissal: we mentioned the conditional and unconditional dismissal.

A case can be dismissed unconditionally by letter, or verbally at the office of the prosecutor. Usually this verbal dismissal has the form of a last warning and an explanation of the consequences of a prosecution. Sometimes the juvenile's attention is drawn to compensation to the victim.

Conditional dismissals are usually accompanied by a probationary period of one or two years. In case of another offense the juvenile will be definitely prosecuted. Another condition might be compensation to the victim in terms of a certain amount of money. Dismissals can also be accompanied by a referral to the Child Protection Council, who may ask the juvenile judge for a civil child protection measure. An important feature of the dismissal is that there will be no annotation on the juvenile's criminal record.

When the public prosecutor decides to prosecute, the case will be adjudicated and one or more court appearances will follow.

A majority of cases which are brought to the attention of the public prosecutor, are normally dismissed. Data on six out of 19 court districts revealed that some 35% of all cases are prosecuted (Van der Laan and Van Hecke, 1985). So, like the police, the public prosecutor contributes to the extra-judicial dealing with juvenile delinquents, although in a less pronounced way.

4. The Juvenile Judge

In the foregoing paragraphs we mentioned the widespread phenomenon of diverting juvenile delinquents from criminal procedures. Both police and public prosecutor make frequent use of this possibility to dismiss a case and to refer the juvenile concerned to the Child Protection Council. One can say that especially in cases where there is a problematic social background, this procedure is followed. In its turn, the Child Protection Council investigates the situation and issues a social inquiry report to the juvenile judge. In this report they may put forward a recommendation for further action. The recommendation can take the form of an advice to handle the case by civil proceedings and to order a measure of child protection.

Three civil measures are available to the judge:

1. Release from parental rights (guardianship).
2. Removal from parental rights (also guardianship)
3. Supervision order.

The first and second options, both known as the child being placed under guardianship, were introduced with the so-called children's law at the beginning of this century. The introduction of the supervision order followed in 1922 (together with the institution of specialized juvenile judges). The measure of release from parental rights is taken when parents appear to be unable to edu-

cate their children. This measure cannot be taken against the parents' will. The measure of removal from parental rights is taken in cases of serious abuse or ill-treatment of children by their parents. This measure can be taken against the parents' will. A removal from parental rights is a more serious measure than a release. This is also illustrated by the simultaneous disfranchise of the parents. The differences between the two measures are only marginal in their consequences. For the children the results are practically the same. They are placed under the guardianship of specialized agencies who employ social workers for this work. The societies are completely responsible for the education and health of the children. In most cases the children are placed in an institution. These measures normally last several years till the juveniles come of age. In 1984 there were 8233 under guardianship. Only 683 of them stayed with their own parents, the others were placed in institutions and foster families (Directie Kinderbescherming, 1985).

A supervision order is applied to children who are threatened with moral or physical danger. This measure is considered to be less stigmatizing than the other measures. A family guardian is appointed by the juvenile judge, who assists and advises the families in the education of their children. Originally the child was not to be removed from his home; with the assistance of the family guardian conditions should be created so that the juvenile could stay at home. But in reality it did not work that way. In 1984 there were 10,922 supervision orders: 5572 children under supervision stayed at home, the others were living in institutions, foster families, or were living on their own. Children are placed under supervision for a period of one year. After one year the juvenile judge has to decide whether he will prolong the measure. In taking this decision he is advised by the family guardian.

A supervision order can also be ordered in the form of a criminal sanction. However, the number of penal supervision orders is very small. The exact number is hard to assess, because nearly all of these penal supervision orders are put into effect in combination with another sanction.

Over the last couple of years the numbers of civil child protection measures have stabilized. In 1967 there were twice as many measures, both supervision orders and guardianships. The decline of child protection measures coincides with social changes in the sixties and seventies; authorities became more and more reluctant to intervene in private affairs.

When a juvenile delinquent is not diverted completely from the system, nor diverted to civil proceedings, his case is adjudicated to the juvenile judge, or, when very serious offenses have been committed or when offenses are committed together with adults of age, the case can be transferred to the so-called Plural Chamber. A lawyer will be assigned to the juvenile – (if this has not

already been done because the juvenile was put into pre-trial detention) – and after a social inquiry the Child Protection Council will issue a recommendation.

The juvenile judge has a range of penal sanctions available, sanctions that can also be imposed in combination with other sanctions. Some, but not all sanctions, can be imposed conditionally. The following options are open:

1. Found guilty, but no sanction follows;
2. reprimand;
3. fine;
4. custodial sentences;
 - a. remand
 - b. correctional school;
 - c. juvenile prison;
5. supervision order;
6. committal to the care of the Government;
7. committal to an institution for special treatment.

In not too serious cases, the juvenile judge may confine himself to a *conviction without imposing a sanction*. The adjudication is considered to be impressive enough to the juvenile.

The *reprimand* by the juvenile judge is comparable to the reprimand by the public prosecutor. The adjudication, of course, makes all the difference. There is also a formal difference; a reprimand by the juvenile judge is a legal sanction in the law, a reprimand by the prosecutor is not. Because of this, annotation on the juvenile's criminal record will follow.

The minimum *fine* is 5 guilders, the maximum fine 500 guilders. A fine can be imposed in combination with a conditional custodial sentence. There are three forms of *custodial sentences*: remand, correctional school and juvenile prison. The sentence of juvenile prison is derived from adult law and can only be imposed by the Plural Chamber to juveniles of the age of 16 and 17, in very serious cases. The juvenile judge always is part of the Plural Chamber. The sentence of *remand* extends from a minimum of four hours to a maximum of 14 days. This custodial sentence can be executed in parts, e.g., in week-ends. The minimum duration of a sentence to a *correctional school* is one month, the maximum is six months. A special feature of this sentence is the educational training during the sentence.

The same minima and maxima as for adult prison apply to *juvenile prison*: a minimum of one day and a maximum of 15 years. The duration of the sentence depends on the kind of offense committed and other, personal circumstances.

The penal *supervision order* is similar to the civil supervision order. It is rarely imposed as such. The number of penal supervision orders is small, and in a majority of cases they are combined with another sanction. The measure is

ordered for one year, but may be extended for another year. The duration of a *committal to the care of the Government* is indeterminate, but always ends when the juvenile comes of age. Every two years the juvenile judge must re-examine the case for possible prolongation of the measure. This measure is only imposed in cases of very serious offenses, and where correction of the juvenile's behavior appears necessary.

A *committal to an institution for special treatment* is imposed to juveniles who are considered to be mentally insane, or mentally subnormal (in a mental, physical or intellectual way). The same rules of duration apply to this measure as to the committal to the care of the Government. Since January 1988, when majority according to civil law was put at 18 years of age, the duration of this order can be extended to 21 years of age. In this respect the *committal to an institution for special treatment* differs from a *committal to the care of the government*.

According to provisional figures of the Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics, there were 6128 minors of 12 to 17 years of age in 1984 sentenced by the juvenile judge or by the Plural Chamber. Over the last ten years the number of sentences remained stable. In Table 1 the distribution of sentences for 1984 is shown.

Table 1. Distribution of penal sentences in 1984

	N	(%)
Found guilty, no sanction imposed	91	(1.5)
Reprimand	170	(2.8)
Fine (unconditional)	1886	(30.8)
Fine (conditional)	279	(4.5)
Fine (in combination with conditional custodial sentence)	1096	(17.9)
Remand (unconditional)	210	(3.4)
Remand (conditional)	677	(11.1)
Correctional school (unconditional)	744	(12.1)
Correctional school (conditional)	860	(14.0)
Juvenile prison (unconditional)	340	(5.5)
Juvenile prison (conditional)	219	(3.6)
Supervision order	3	(0.1)
Committal to the care of the Government	9	(0.1)
Committal to an institution for special treatment	10	(0.2)
Total	6128	(100)

Under certain conditions a juvenile can be put into pre-trial detention. These *conditions* refer to certain offenses, and to whether or not society should be protected from the risk of repetition.

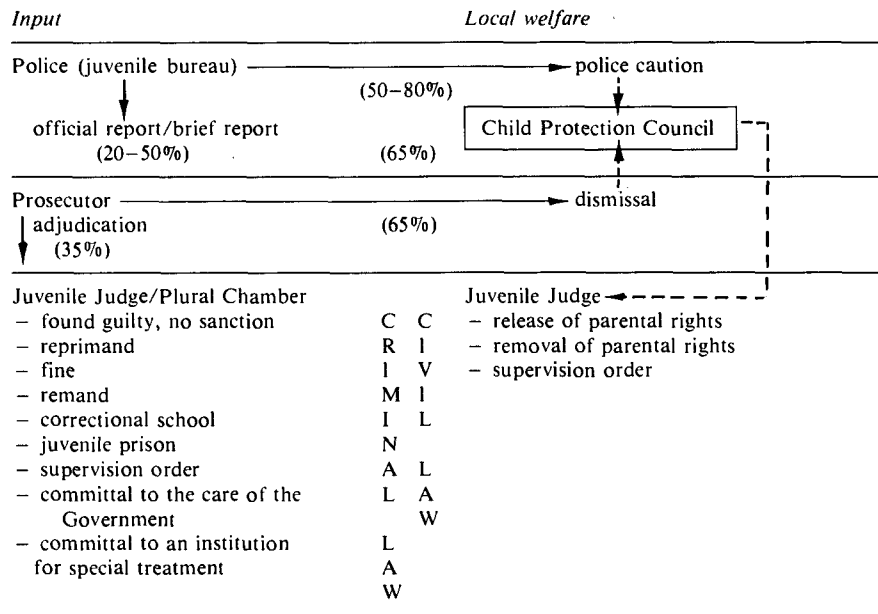
Sometimes pre-trial detention is used in order to perform a personality-inquiry by a psychiatrist or psychologists. The maximum duration will, in the final verdict, be converted into an unconditional custodial sentence.

5. Recent changes in the juvenile justice system

There are some recent changes in the Dutch juvenile justice system. The most important one is the introduction of so-called alternative sanctions. Although not yet incorporated in the law, the number of alternative sanctions (work and training projects) is rapidly increasing. A separate chapter of this reader deals with this topic.

Furthermore, other changes in the juvenile justice system are proposed (Sanctierecht voor Jeugdigen, 1982). This working party proposed to maintain only three penal sanctions: the fine, juvenile detention and one measure of committal to the care of the government (a combination of the present two committals). Changes of legislation are expected in 1988. The proposed changes are interesting, because they illustrate a tendency to abandon the philosophy of protection and care, which characterized the Dutch juvenile justice system for decades. More and more the system moves to an emphasis on the juvenile's own responsibility; he is held responsible for his acts and the

The Dutch juvenile justice system



consequences of his acts. Alternative sanctions, described elsewhere, form a good example of this tendency.

6. Summary

This chapter on the Dutch juvenile justice system is best summarized by a chart showing the various ways a juvenile delinquent can be dealt with. The chart shows both diversion from the official justice system and diversion from penal law to civil law, as well as the range of penal sanctions available to the judge.

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II. PATTERNS IN DELINQUENT BEHAVIOR

by Josine Junger-Tas

1. Introduction

To get a picture of the changes in juvenile delinquent behavior there are two kinds of data available. In the first place official statistics, elaborated by the Central Bureau of Statistics and based upon data delivered by the police, the prosecutor's office and the juvenile judge's office.

These data contain a number of flaws. They reflect mainly the activities of the juvenile justice system and do not give a reliable estimate of the real level of delinquency. Moreover, they reflect only those activities that have resulted in a written report: all that has been handled unofficially, remains unknown. The more cases are handled unofficially, the greater the undercount in the crime statistics. A third source of error results from differential tendencies to report offenses to the police in The Netherlands: there is less reporting of aggressive offenses than there is of property offenses and there are local variations as well.

To correct some of these flaws and present a somewhat more complete picture of juvenile delinquency we have studies at our disposal based on self-reported delinquent behavior, generally among representative samples of youngsters.

These studies give us insight in what one could call 'normal' delinquent behavior, that is the kind of acts that are committed by large groups of juveniles but that are mostly abandoned after adolescence. They also enable us to distinguish delinquency as a passing phenomenon from the more serious and persistent type of delinquency and relate these differences to possible causal factors. However, this does not mean that official statistics are without meaning: official data and self-report data are complementary, not mutually exclusive.

Studies have shown that seriousness and – above all – frequency of delinquent behavior are strongly related to official police- and prosecutor contacts (Erickson and Empey, 1963; Hirschi, 1972). In other words, juveniles with persistent and (more) serious delinquent behavior run a higher risk to be officially recorded than youngsters who occasionally commit a delinquent act.

So by and large the official figures give us a relatively reasonable picture of the major trends in more serious delinquency with, however, particular biases the extent of which is difficult to estimate.

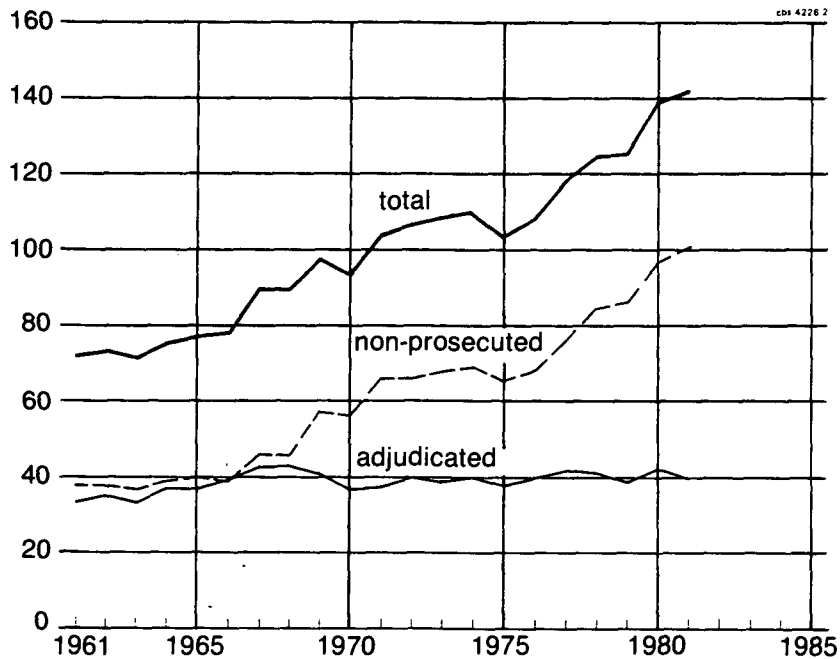


Fig. 1. Adjudicated and non-prosecuted offenders of 12-18 years per 10,000 of the same age population*.

Self-report studies, although they carry biases of their own do give a better picture of the more general and less serious delinquent behavior and enable us to identify some of the biases in official statistics. I will first present some official figures and then try to correct these by additional self-report data.

2. Official delinquency rates

Official statistics do reflect the operation of the juvenile justice system. This operation is, however, dictated by specific policy options such as the balance between prosecuting and dismissing cases. For instance, we note that in 1970, 37 per 10,000 children of 12-17 years were convicted; this figure was 41 in 1978 and 41.5 in 1982, a fairly constant figure. But taking convicted and dismissed

* Source: Statistiek jeugdcriminaliteit 1981, CBS, 1984.

cases together, we get 93 per 10,000 children in 1970, 124.5 in 1978 and 141.5 in 1981, a considerable increase! So it appears that, although there has been an increase in juveniles having official judicial contacts since 1970, this has mainly resulted in an increasing proportion of cases that are *not* prosecuted. Figure 1 illustrates this policy. Our first conclusion thus is that, although in the last decade relatively more children have entered the juvenile justice system, the number of children convicted has not increased.

2.1 Rates by type of offense

More children entering the juvenile justice system means more offenses officially reported. It does not mean, of course, that all types of offenses show the same increase.

The following table gives the rates for different types of offenses from 1978 to 1982.

Table 1. Juveniles convicted and not prosecuted by nature of offense per 10,000 children of 12–17 years old*

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982
Sexual offenses	2.4	2.3	2.5	2.7	2.1
Violence against persons	5.9	7.3	6.7	6.8	6.7
Simple theft	20.3	19.4	21.3	19.9	21.3
Aggravated theft	50.4	50.7	54.7	57.9	58.9
Embezzlement	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.1	1.3
Receiving	7.4	7.2	6.3	6.2	5.8
Malicious damage	14.3	14.1	15.5	15.4	16
Other offenses	12.0	12.1	16.7	18.9	17.0
Total	113.9	114.5	125.1	129.1	130.0

* Source: Statistiek jeugdcriminaliteit 1981, CBS 1984

What Table 1 shows is that sexual offenses form a negligible part of the total delinquency pattern. Violence against persons has increased slightly, but stabilized since 1980. However, it should be remembered that there is considerable underreporting with respect to this offense.

Most of the offenses committed are property crimes: the highest rate per 10,000 juveniles is for aggravated theft, such as breaking and stealing from houses and automobiles, bicycle theft, joy-riding, group theft. The rate for this category of offenses has increased from about 50 in 1978 to 59 in 1982. Second in rank is simple theft such as shoplifting. As far as this category is concerned, there has not been much increase since 1978. Vandalism or malicious damage

does show an increase since 1979. Thus we may conclude that the bulk of juvenile delinquency is property crime. Vandalism and violence against persons rank second, but these rates are considerably lower. Although drug abuse has spread among youth the last ten years, most of it does not appear in official statistics. In the first place, drug abuse is not always easily detected by the police. In the second place, police activities in this field are particularly concentrated on arresting dealers and not on detecting users or very small dealers, as juveniles mostly are.

In addition to this, juveniles who are drug addicts generally come into contact with the police – not because of the drug use – but because of drug-related offenses, in most cases property offenses. That is the reason why – especially in Amsterdam – these rates show such an increase over the last years.

2.2 Rates by sex

Concerning sex we know that the participation of girls in delinquency is relatively minor. Looking at the official rates we note a large difference between the sexes with respect to their entrance into the juvenile justice system.

Table 2. All officially recorded children per 10,000 of the same sex

	1975	1978	1979	1980	1981
Boys	171	205	204	222	228
Girls	14.7	18.7	20.4	23.7	25

Table 2 shows that almost ten times as many boys as girls have official contacts with the public prosecutor or the juvenile judge.

It is clear, however, that both sexes show an increase in contacts. Looking at index rates on the basis of the relative rates of Table 2 and fixing the level of contacts with the juvenile justice system in 1975 on 100, there is a striking difference between boys and girls; although the differential levels of intervention are considerably higher for boys than for girls (see Table 2) the increase in intervention level has been much stronger for girls since 1975.

Table 3. Convicted and not prosecuted children by sexes – index rates

	1975	1978	1979	1980	1981
Boys	100	120	119	130	133
Girls	100	127	139	161	170

One should keep in mind of course that if the starting rate is very low – as is the case for girls – such an increase shows very much in the relative rates. Nonetheless, it seems that girls' involvement in the juvenile justice system is increasing at a slightly faster rate than boys' participation.

2.3 Rates by age

Another important factor with respect to delinquency is age. It seems useful to look at changes in delinquent behavior for different age groups. Is it true, as some people claim, that age of onset in delinquency is getting lower? Let us look at this question for some selected offenses and only for boys.

Table 4. Convicted and not prosecuted boys per 10,000 of the same age – some selected offenses

	12 + 13 y.			14 + 15 y.			16 + 17 y.		
	1975	1978	1981	1975	1978	1981	1975	1978	1981
Sexual offenses	1	1.5	1.5	5.5	5.5	6.5	8	7	8
Violence against the person	1	2	1.5	4.5	8.5	10	15	22	24.5
Simple theft	13	13	10.5	36	40.5	36.5	44	46	46
Aggravated theft	32.5	40	32.5	97	108	122.5	137	132.5	155.5
Malicious damage	4.5	8.5	8	13.5	23	27	27	49.5	51
Total offenses	57	74	62	176.5	214.5	239.5	285	327	377

Several conclusions can be drawn on the basis of this table.

The first one is that for every offense type – sexual offenses included – there are huge differences between the three age groups. The levels of official contacts for the 14–15-year-olds are considerably higher than those of the 12–13-year-olds and the rates for the 16–17-year-olds are again much higher.

A second important point is that rates for 12- and 13-year-olds stay low throughout the years. Except for vandalism where there is some increase, offense rates for this age group remain uniformly low since 1975. If we consider these rates as a reflection of involvement in the juvenile justice system we may conclude that intervention starts by 14–15 years and not much earlier.

There are essentially three types of offenses that show an increase over the years: violence against the person, malicious damage and aggravated theft (in-

cluding offenses such as burglary, robbery, breaking and entering, stealing from cars, bicycle theft, group theft). The rates are lowest for violence against the person and highest for aggravated theft. In fact I would like to stress that, although there is some increase in interpersonal violence, these rates remain very low compared to the others.

As for vandalism we see indeed an increase of about the same magnitude for both older age groups: rates have doubled from 1975 to 1981.

By far the largest rates are those for property offenses: these rates are and remain very high. It should be noted, however, that they show not as large an increase as vandalism, which might explain the growing concern in The Netherlands about the latter type of offense.

Summarizing, the statistics show that official contacts with the juvenile justice system for delinquent behavior do not really start before 14–15 years. The main offenses for which these contacts occur are property offenses and vandalism. Both types of offenses have considerably increased since 1975.

2.4 Reconviction

In important element of the total picture is reconviction. An increase in reconviction rates would mean that a growing proportion of juveniles with official contacts get more deeply involved in the juvenile justice system.

Table 5 shows how many juveniles among those whose case was dismissed, had been convicted before.

Table 5. Earlier convicted juveniles as a percentage of those whose case was dismissed

	1975	1978	1979	1980	1981
Violence against persons	13.6	8	9.5	8	6.5
Simple theft	7.5	7	6	5.5	6
Group theft	10	6	7.5	7	6.5
Theft + breaking	17.5	10.5	9.5	6	7
Vandalism	9	7	6.5	5.5	5
Total	11	8	8	6.5	6.5

From 1975 to 1981, reconvicted juveniles in the population dismissed by the prosecutor, have become rare indeed. The decrease is most pronounced among cases of violent behavior and cases of theft combined with breaking and entering. This might mean two things: it might mean that the prosecutor is less inclined now than some years ago to drop the charges where there has been an earlier conviction; but it might also mean that relatively more youngsters com-

mit one – or two – offenses but do not persist in this behavior.

A look at Table 6 presenting those earlier convicted among the total of convicted juveniles, does seem to support the latter possibility.

Table 6. Earlier convicted juveniles as a percentage of the total of convicted juveniles

	1975	1978	1979	1980	1981
Violence against persons	23	17.5	16	16	16
Simple theft	20.5	22.5	24.5	18.5	22
Group theft	21.5	19	22.5	18	20.5
Theft + breaking + entering	30	26.5	23	20.5	20.5
Vandalism	21	18	18.5	15	19
Total	24.5	21	21.5	18.5	19.5

If the prosecutor would be less inclined to dismiss cases of earlier convicted juveniles, the rates among those convicted would rise. However, it is obvious from Table 6 that the proportions of recidivists among convicted juveniles are stable or have decreased. Again it appears that as far as violence against persons and theft with breaking and entering are concerned the rates have considerably declined.

The data do support the notion that the large majority of juveniles with official contacts are not persistent offenders. As we will see our self-report data do also confirm this hypothesis.

Although it seems justified to conclude that during the eighties increasing numbers of juveniles came into contact with the juvenile justice system, this does not mean that a growing proportion of these youngsters were reconvicted.

2.5 Size and type of community

A final point of interest is the type of community in which juveniles live. There is a great deal of literature on differences in crime rates between urban and rural areas and on differences related to size of community. However, some caution is warranted here. In every country there exists considerable local variation in police activity and in prosecuting policy both by the police – unofficially – and by the public prosecutor. In one study on police contacts of juveniles (Junger-Tas *et al.*, 1981) we found that the Hague's police dealt unofficially – without an official report – with 70% of all youngsters that became known to them for an offense. But in a provincial town – Venlo – the police dealt non-officially with only 21% of this type of cases and transferred the others, with a report, to the prosecutor. So in The Hague the police fulfilled

many tasks that in Venlo were considered as belonging to the competence of the prosecutor. The result of this is that, relatively speaking, more penal cases were recorded in Venlo in the crime statistics than in The Hague.

However, looking at the global figures it seems possible to draw some conclusions on the relationship between size of community and extent of delinquency.

Table 7. Convicted and non-prosecuted juveniles per 10,000 of the same population by size of community

<i>Communities</i>	<i>1978</i>	<i>1979</i>	<i>1980</i>	<i>1981</i>
< 50,000 inhabitants	99	102	113	114
50,000–100,000 inhabitants	152	146	166	164
100,000 or more inhabitants	170	172	190	199

It is clear that the best place to live in – with respect to delinquency – is a small community. The rates are considerably lower than in the large cities.

Cities with 50,000–100,000 inhabitants have a higher juvenile justice involvement than the small communities but their increase in rates is slightly lower. The main problem is of course in the large cities: the rates are the highest although the increase in rates is about the same. With respect to these figures it should be kept in mind that many of our serious social and economic problems – such as unemployment, bad housing conditions, concentration of ethnic minorities – are essentially large city problems. Like in other countries, middle class families move out from the cities and the old and the poor stay behind, overcrowding the inner city areas and leaning heavily on public and social services.

But even among the large cities there are differences, with Amsterdam having the highest rates and the largest increase.

These results probably are related to different factors such as level of delinquency, police activity, police prosecuting policy and nature of the population (The Hague, being the Government center, has essentially a population of civil servants, whereas Amsterdam's population is more cosmopolitan and heterogeneous).

In general the larger the city, the higher the delinquency rates. Since 1980 there seems to be in all cities – with the exception of Utrecht – a certain stabilization, with even some decrease in the case of The Hague. But as said before, these figures merely give some indications of change and we should be careful to avoid speculative interpretations.

Table 8. Convicted and non-prosecuted juveniles per 10,000 of the same population in the four largest cities

	<i>1978</i>	<i>1979</i>	<i>1980</i>	<i>1981</i>	<i>1982</i>
Amsterdam	174	173	222	244	215
Rotterdam	180	180	215	193	208
The Hague	171	174	174	166	162
Utrecht	93	110	133	140	156

3. Self-report data

Official statistics can – by definition – only show crimes that have been officially recorded. Only acts of which a police report has been sent to the prosecutor will finally figure in the statistics.

However, the police do not make a report of every offense that comes to their knowledge, nor do they detect all the offenses that are committed.

In the large cities the police handle unofficially, (without making a report) 70 to 75% of all juvenile cases that come to their attention. How many offenses are committed without anyone noticing, we simply don't know. One method to complement and correct the picture based on official statistics is to ask 'normal' groups of youngsters about their delinquent behavior.

We have conducted such a study among about 2000 youths, forming a representative sample of the youth population in two cities (Junger-Tas and Junger, 1984). This type of study does not trace the more serious delinquency but gives an adequate overview of extent and nature of delinquent behavior among ordinary juveniles.

Two years later we contacted again a sub-sample of the original sample and we were able to interview 331 juveniles, 61% of 543 youngsters that were contacted. One of the objectives of both studies was to examine delinquent behavior and the changes in that behavior after a period of two years (Junger-Tas and Junger, 1985).

3.1 Design of the studies

In the first study a representative youth sample of two cities – The Hague (about 700,000 inhabitants) and Venlo (about 75,000 inhabitants) aged 12–18 years were interviewed.

In The Hague we could not get access to the municipality's registration data*.

* In The Netherlands all municipalities have a registration system of their residents, which contains date and place of birth, nationality, marital status, children, place of residence.

So 1500 juveniles (three times as many boys as girls) were approached by the so-called 'random walk' method. This procedure resulted in a response rate of 72% (N = 1081) but in some underrepresentation of 16- and 17-year-olds. In Venlo we were able to draw the sample on the basis of population data which meant that each subject was personally approached. This resulted in a response rate of 85% on a total of 918 youngsters approached (N = 781); we also got a better age distribution.

Compared to population data, the samples show a fair distribution with respect to SES and education level. There is some underrepresentation of 16- and 17-year-olds, which also means an underrepresentation of working youth. As the study was set up to measure the effectiveness of police and prosecutor intervention in a follow-up perspective, it was essential to have a sample with a reasonable large group of juveniles which had official contacts with the police and with the public prosecutor.

Unfortunately our sample did not include enough of those youngsters. We had to conduct additional interviews at the police station (27), and at the prosecutor's office (104) in order to have 150 youngsters with prosecutor contacts, bringing the total of interviewed juveniles on 1980. When we examine delinquent behavior and judicial reactions in a 'normal' youth population, the latter groups are not included in the analysis, as they would introduce considerable bias.

We distinguished five separate groups:

1. Juveniles who did not report any offenses.
2. Juveniles who did report offenses but had no contacts with the police.
3. Juveniles who did report both offenses and contacts with the police.
4. Juveniles who did report offenses and had official – that is recorded – contacts with the police.
5. Juveniles who did report offenses and had to appear before the public prosecutor.

The instrument was a structured interview schedule taking about an hour's time.

Delinquency was measured by the self-report method, but additional information was gathered from police files and court files. Seven offenses were selected: shoplifting, theft at school, bicycle theft, joyriding, violence against persons, vandalism, football (soccer) hooliganism.

Judicial contacts have been measured by direct questions on contacts with the police and by data collection in the police and prosecutor's files.

We also included self-reports of drug use, running away from home and truancy, but in The Netherlands these behaviors are not 'offenses' and they were recorded as 'problem behavior'.

We tried to control validity by looking into the police files: we checked whether the offenses figuring in the files were mentioned by the juveniles in question and whether they had reported their contact with the police. Of 307 juveniles with a police record, 43 children had not reported one offense figuring in the police file and 16 children did not report two such offenses, a total of 19%. A total of 25 children – 8% –, did not mention a recorded police contact.

This is of course only a partial validity control: we don't know whether the children without a police file did report all offenses they have committed. There is no way to check this.

On the whole, however, our results suggest reasonable validity.

A limitation of self-report studies is that one does not reach the serious delinquent. Serious delinquency simply cannot be measured by this method. This does mean that one gets an underestimation of delinquent behavior among youth.

Adding the fact that from the universe of offenses we have selected only seven offenses, our results can only give an approximation of real delinquency among juveniles.

With respect to analysis, except for the usual multivariate techniques, we used a new technique – developed by the section data-theory of the University of Leiden – called HOMALS (Gifi, 1980). This technique has enabled us to construct social integration scales.

After a follow-up period of about two years we interviewed a sub-sample of the original sample taking care that the five above mentioned groups were represented in the sub-sample.

As we were particularly interested in effects of judicial contacts on later behavior (see Chapter VII) all juveniles with recorded police or prosecutor contacts have been approached for a second interview. From the other three groups we drew a stratified sample, matching with the former on age and sex.

Out of 691 juveniles 543 were approached for an interview. But 162 of them – 30% – refused, while 48 repeatedly did not keep the appointment. The final response rate was 61%. However, response was not distributed evenly over all groups. The lowest response was found among those who had had contacts with the police or prosecutor (45%).

There might be several reasons for this low response. One is a social class effect: a high proportion of juveniles with judicial contacts is lower class and these youngsters are harder to reach than middle-class juveniles. A second reason might be that youngsters with judicial contacts are not as inclined to agree to a second interview as the other juveniles. Whether or not they had committed delinquent acts seemed of less importance. To compensate somewhat for the loss of information we collected data from police and prosecution files for

all those who had had earlier recorded contacts, whether they could be interviewed or not. In this way we were able to relate this information to the predictions based on earlier interviews and earlier judicial contacts.

In fact our data include:

- interviews and judicial information for 235 controls;
- interviews and judicial information for 96 youngsters with earlier recorded contacts;
- judicial information on 196 non-interviewed youngsters with earlier recorded contacts.

Due to the fact that the control groups were matched with the police group according to age and sex, the sample showed an overrepresentation of 16- and 17-year-olds and underrepresentations of 14- and 15-year-olds and girls.

The age differential is due to the fact that the police usually do not make an official report of a committed offense before the age of 14 years, so these youngsters were 16 years or older after the follow-up period. The sex differential has two grounds: in the first place girls do not commit as many offenses as boys do (in fact 25% of girls reported having committed one of seven selected offenses against 54% of boys); in the second place their offenses are less serious. This means they don't frequently have contacts with the police or the prosecutor. The sample thus included only 14% girls.

As far as the other variables are concerned (education, SES) the samples did not differ. To make sure that our results would not be biased by the fact that we had not been able to interview a great number of youngsters with earlier judicial contacts, we conducted some analyses to find out whether those interviewed differed with respect to socio-demographic variables, integration scales, delinquency level and nature of contact from those who were not. The only differences we found was that somewhat more girls than boys and somewhat more boys with police contacts than boys with prosecutor contacts refused an interview. But the response group and non-response group did not differ on any of the other variables analyzed.

We essentially used the same interview schedule as in the first study, but we added some questions on eventual labelling effects of police and prosecutor contacts. These questions referred to the evaluation of such contacts, to the attitudes of parents, teachers and friends and to possible changes in their behavior towards the juvenile.

Comparison of the answers in the first and second study showed specific inconsistencies. First, answers referring to delinquency and judicial contacts were not always consistent; second, some registration data in the police files were lacking.

Comparing the results of 1981 with those of 1983, we found that 12% of

juveniles gave inconsistent answers: 5% had reported an offense in 1981 but did not do so in 1983. The problem is well-known in longitudinal studies and is based on two memory effects: the first one refers to simply forgetting past events: the second one – the telescoping effect – refers to the fact that one has not forgotten the event but does not know anymore when exactly it happened. Some authors state that forgetting the event takes place when the reference period is rather long, whereas the telescoping effect arises when the reference period is short. If the date of interview is too far away from the reference period, both effects appear (Kalton and Schumann, 1982).

The second problem concerned registration by the police. We could not find information on a small number of boys who had been registered earlier by the police. There were several reasons for this, such as the fact that the boy had moved to another city, or the destruction of the file when the boy reached the age of 18 years (penal majority).

Confronted with these problems we have taken the decision to consider the answers given in the first study as basic: thus youngsters admitting earlier to have had police contacts remain in that same category; the same applies for youngsters who reported earlier to have committed a delinquent act.

Considering the 38 juveniles (11.5%) who reported offenses in 1981, but none in 1983, 26 of them had reported only one offense and 12 two offenses: in this respect the discrepancy in results does not seem to be large. However, this is not the case as far as judicial contacts are concerned: 31% of the juveniles with a recorded police contact ($N = 40$), but 41% of those with a prosecutor contact ($N = 56$) did not report this the second time they were interviewed. Two conclusions can be drawn from these results.

First, we may conclude that delinquency is reliably measured by the self-report method. Considering the probable presence of some memory effects and the fact that only 11.5% of those interviewed gave inconsistent answers, the self-report method appears to be an acceptable way of measuring delinquency.

Second, we cannot say the same as far as contacts with the juvenile justice system are concerned: apparently shame and fear of negative consequences are not so much related to delinquent behavior but to intervention by the police and – even more so – by the prosecutor.

We did solve the inconsistencies in the data by taking self-report delinquency in the first study as a base-line. With respect to judicial contacts we simply collected the data from the police files.

The results are shown in Table 9.

Table 9. Delinquency and judicial intervention – time I and time II – in % (N = 331)

Time II \ Time I	No offenses	Offenses No P- contact	Offenses + self-rep. P-contact	Recorded P-contact	Prosec. cont.
	(N = 90)	(N = 82)	(N = 63)	(N = 40)	(N = 56)
- No offenses	56.5				
- Offenses – No P-contact	29	77			
- Offenses + self-rep. P. cont.	6.5	11	81		
- Recorded P-contact	3.5	5	9.5	73	
- Prosecutor-contact	4.5	7	9.5	27	100
	100	100	100	100	100

3.2 Patterns of delinquent behavior

Questions were asked about seven offenses: four property offenses (theft at school, shoplifting, bicycle theft, joy-riding) and three aggressive acts (violence against the person, vandalism and football-hooliganism).

About half of all respondents (52%) reported having ever committed at least one of the seven offenses and one third stated they had committed such an offense during the last year preceding the interview.

Of those who had committed at least one offense during the last year, one third did this once, about 25% did this twice and 42% three times or more. Combining frequency and nature of offense we get the following picture.

Table 10. Type of offense and frequency – in %

	Aggressive offenses	Property offenses	Aggressive and property offenses
	N = 210	N = 328	N = 306
1. offense	80	86	–
2. different offenses	20	13	46
3. different offenses	–	1	33
4. different offenses	–	–	21
	100	100	100

Most of those reporting offenses had committed only one property offense (39%); about 25% reported only aggressive offenses, and somewhat more than one third committed both. The latter group – about one sixth of all respondents, and one third of those reporting offenses – is the most serious group: they committed more offenses than the others, have started earlier and continue their offending behavior.

Were the offenses detected by the police or found out by others (parents, shopkeepers . . .)?

As might be expected most of the offenses are not detected at all; some, however, are.

Table 11. Self-reported offenses that were discovered by police or others

<i>Offenses</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Discovered</i>
Vandalism	229	41%
Theft at school	83	12%
Bicycle theft	100	17%
Joy-riding	14	(4%)
Shoplifting	175	27%

Table 11 shows that vandalism and shoplifting, both offenses occurring at public places are most frequently discovered. In half of the cases of vandalism the police detected the offense. With respect to shoplifting, in 83% of detected cases the shop personnel handled the case themselves. In 17% of cases the police were called in.

The other offenses were mainly detected by parents and interested parties who then sometimes called the police.

Concluding this section it appears that large groups of youngsters do commit offenses, but most of them do so only once or twice. The risk of being caught seems slight, but is clearly higher when offenses are committed in public places, such as vandalism and shoplifting.

3.3 Socio-demographic factors and delinquency

3.3.1 Sex and delinquency

We recall that boys' involvement with the juvenile justice system is about ten times higher than is the case for girls (see 1.2). But our data indicate that girls' participation in delinquency is much higher than might be expected on the basis of official statistics. 54% of the boys, compared to 24% of the girls reported having committed at least one out of the seven offenses. So boys' participation

in delinquency is twice as high as girls' participation.

Girls commit essentially property offenses and hardly any aggressive offenses. Half of the girls compared to one third of the boys declared that they had committed no offense during the year preceding the interview.

It may be said that girls' delinquency is of a more restricted nature than boys; it is less frequent, less persistent and less serious. The discrepancy between boys' and girls' delinquency is however considerably less pronounced than one would expect looking at official statistics.

Other studies have also looked at differences in male and female delinquency (Gold, 1970; Hindelang, 1981; Gomme *et al.*, 1984). They found that:

- more males than females reported engaging in delinquent behavior;
- the difference is less than suggested by official data;
- there is considerable similarity between the sexes with respect to type of delinquent behavior.

This study, as well as an earlier one in Belgium (Junger-Tas, 1977) does not entirely confirm these conclusions. Although we did find similarity between the sexes as far as so-called status offenses are concerned, there was a clear difference in type of delinquent activities: girls hardly commit aggressive offenses, their activity is mostly restricted to property offenses.

3.3.2 The effect of age

As far as age is concerned we did find a relation between frequency of delinquent behavior and age: those who reported both aggressive and property offenses show considerably more offenses at 16 and 17 years than at 12 and 13 years.

3.3.3 Socio-economic status and education level*

Most self-report studies do not find any relation between delinquency and SES. Our study is no exception, although youngsters in the highest status groups do report somewhat less offenses than those in the lowest status groups.

We did however, find a very strong relation between delinquency and education level: the lower the level of education the more delinquent behavior.

*The Dutch school system is essentially a 'tracking' system: a great variety of schools correspond to differences in SES and ability of students. There are special schools for lower, medium and higher vocational and professional training, lower high-schools offering four years of schooling and preparing for higher professional training and senior high-schools preparing for university (*cf.* the English system of secondary modern schools and grammar schools).

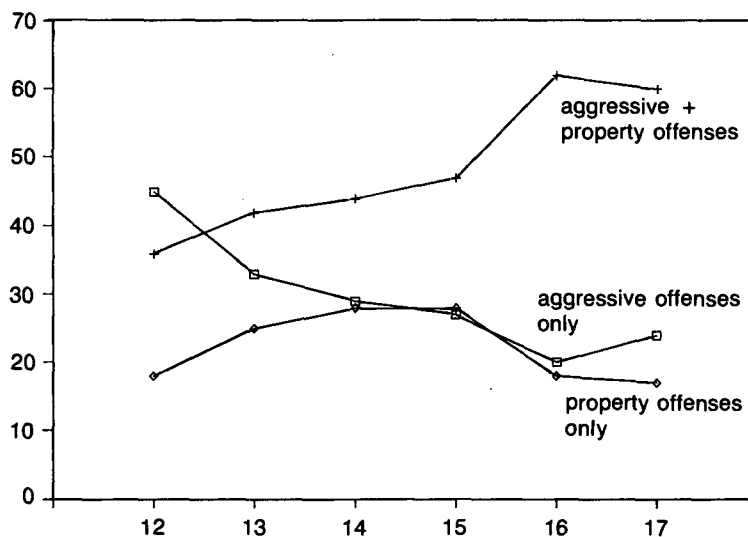


Fig. 2. Reported delinquency last year and age.

Table 12. Education level and offenses reported last year – in %

	<i>Extension primary school</i>	<i>Lower vocational training</i>	<i>Medium vocational training; lower high-school</i>	<i>Senior high-school preparing for University</i>
Reported no offenses	62	66	78	80
Reported offenses	38	34	22	20
	100	100	100	100

Table 12 shows that fewer youngsters in senior high-school, preparing them for university, commit offenses than do youngsters who are getting only vocational training.

It might be objected that type of school is related to other factors such as social class and age. Therefore we have controlled for both these factors. The results are shown in the following figures.

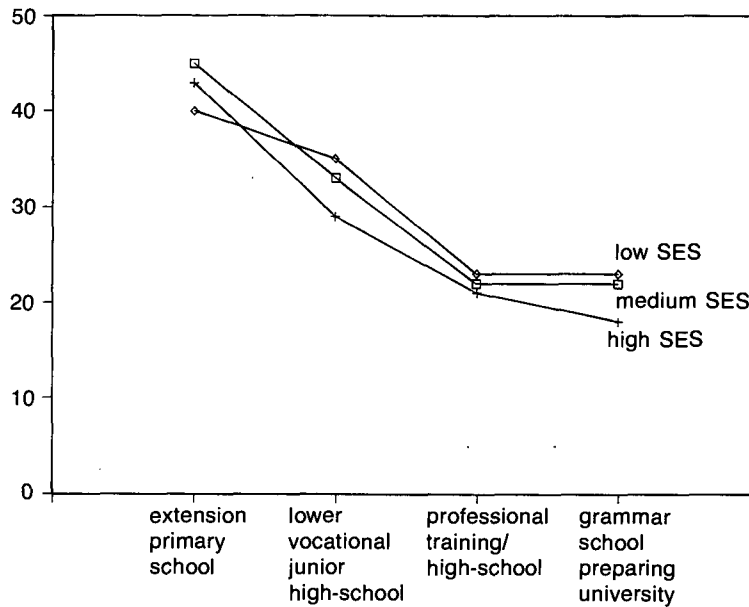


Fig. 3. Delinquency and education level controlled for SES – in %

It appears that the influence of SES is much weaker than the influence of school type. Delinquency level is somewhat higher when SES is low than when SES is high, but the differences between higher and lower education are much greater. In other words, juveniles of low SES going to senior high-school are less delinquent than juveniles of high SES who are getting only vocational training. We find comparable differences with respect to age, although age differences are of greater impact than SES differences.

Again we note the very strong relation between type of school and delinquent behavior, a relation that is stronger than the one between age and delinquency. This does not mean that age is a negligible factor, but the level of education a youngster is achieving seems a better predictor for his chances to commit delinquent acts than his age.

3.3.4 Urbanization

Finally, comparing delinquent behavior in a large city (The Hague) and a

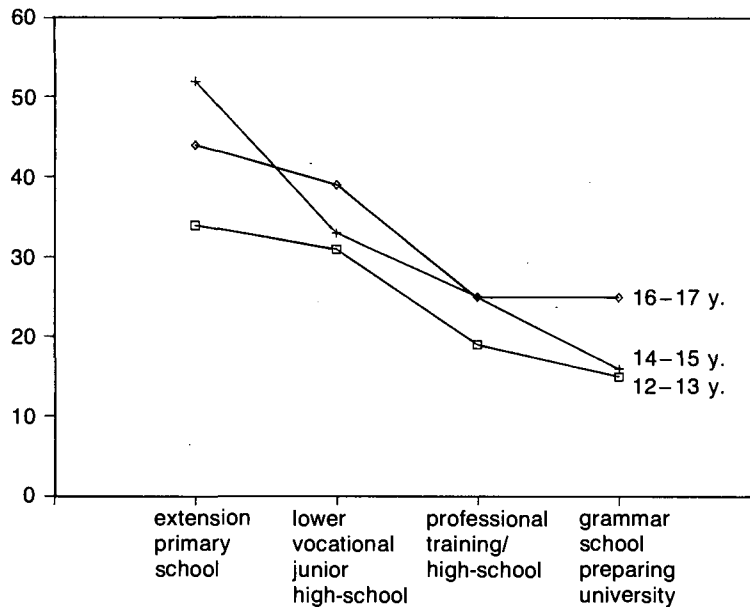


Fig. 4. Delinquency and education level controlled for age

provincial town (Venlo) we found some interesting differences. In the first place more juveniles in The Hague than in Venlo reported offenses – 50% against 40%. Indeed, delinquency seems to be more widespread in a large city. Looking at the nature of offenses we noted that The Hague's respondents reported considerably more property offenses, particularly shoplifting and theft at school. Football hooliganism is also more frequently reported in The Hague than in Venlo. These differences could be related to the characteristics of the large city such as the presence of more department stores and supermarkets, the greater anonymity, and the larger schools.

However, differences between the two cities should not be exaggerated. If one considers the most serious group of delinquents, that is those who reported having committed property and aggressive offenses, both during the last year and before, the proportions are 24% for The Hague and 21% for Venlo, which means hardly any difference. The Netherlands is a small modernized country. Differences between rural and urban areas may be rather limited.

3.3.5 Father's and mother's employment

The time has passed when employment of the mother outside the home was considered as a criminogenic factor.

Both my study in Belgium (Junger-Tas, 1975) and this study show no relation between mother's employment and delinquent behavior. All measures of delinquency: reporting of delinquent acts, number of different offenses, frequency and time of committal show the same absence of relation with mother's employment.

In sharp contrast with this finding is the impact of the fathers' employment situation.

There is an association between father's unemployment and self-reported delinquency. Of those children whose father has no job, 53% report at least one offense, while this is 43% when the father is employed.

3.3.6 Juvenile's employment

In our first study the number of juveniles having left school was too small to conduct any useful analysis. Two years later this is different: 22.5% of our sample has left school: 13.5% has a job, 9% is unemployed.

The question whether unemployment is directly related to delinquency is important and one which has not yet been settled by research.

In the first place we found a striking difference in delinquency between juveniles who remain in school and those who have left school ($F = 2.78$, $p < 0.004$). This remains true even when analysis is restricted to the 17- and 18-year-olds, where schooling is no longer obligatory: the average number of reported offenses among these school attenders is 1.20, while the average number among school leavers is 1.74 ($F = 6.24$, $p < 0.01$).

However, examining school-leavers we found no difference in delinquent behavior between employed and unemployed youth as Table 13 shows.

Table 13. Employment status and delinquency (N = 72)

	Total number of reported offenses - averages -	Offending frequency last year - averages -
Employed	1.55	1.43
Unemployed		
- had job before -	2.06	1.50
Unemployed		
- had no job before -	2.00	1.57
	$F = 74$, $p < 0.48$	$F = .037$, $p < 0.96$

These results are surprising. One would indeed expect unemployment to lead to social disintegration, which would be related to more delinquency.

But our research results are not unique. A Belgian study among young persons of 17 years and older could not establish any relation between unemployment and delinquency (Vattenburg *et al.*, 1984), and a recent study on the macro-level in different European countries trying to relate a number of social-economic indicators to crime rates, did not discover any relation either (Council of Europe, 1985). What can one say in the light of these data? In the first place it should be remembered that the large increase in juvenile delinquency came about in the sixties and seventies when there was no mass unemployment. In the beginning of the eighties, when youth unemployment rose, we see rather a flattening of the curve. In the second place, the finding that persistent delinquents are frequently unemployed does not say anything about causality. It is more than probable that a number of factors related to delinquency, are also related to long-standing or frequent unemployment. Unemployment could thus be seen as part of a delinquent life style. In the third place, considering the actual economic situation, one should take length of unemployment into account. In view of mass unemployment one would expect that many school leavers will be unemployed for some time. In that case unemployment is not particularly deviant and thus will not be considered as status lowering or as a personal shortcoming. This could be one explanation for the lack of relation between unemployment and delinquency, but the explanation presupposes that the unemployment is only temporary. If unemployment becomes permanent, it could have negative effects on social behavior. Such long-term effects have been tested in an eight-year follow-up study among 2000 American adolescents (Bachman *et al.*, 1978). The study shows certain interaction effects between unemployment and delinquency: those who were unemployed five years after leaving high-school were already more delinquent than average when still in high-school eight years before. On the other hand, differences in delinquent behavior between employed and unemployed youths increased with time and after eight years they were considerable. But even in this study the direct effect of unemployment was not very strong.

It seems safe to say – on the basis of our actual knowledge – that employment is a protective factor with respect to delinquency. But the data suggest that there is a relationship between unemployment and delinquency only in times of low youth unemployment. In times of high youth unemployment short-term unemployment seems to have no direct effects on delinquency, but long term unemployment seems to be a predisposing factor.

3.4 Changes in delinquency over a two-year period

It will come as no surprise to anyone that earlier delinquency and later delinquency are related. Comparing the frequencies of delinquent behavior at time I and time II where delinquency is measured by offenses committed during the year preceding the interview, we found that 72% of those who had not reported any offenses at time I did not report such acts at time II. But of those with high frequency scores two-thirds reported the same two years later.

In other words, those who did not commit many offenses at time I, still did not do so at time II, while those who reported having committed a number of delinquent acts at time I still did so after a period of two years. This is illustrated by Fig. 5 where total number of earlier offenses is related to frequency of delinquent behavior after two years.

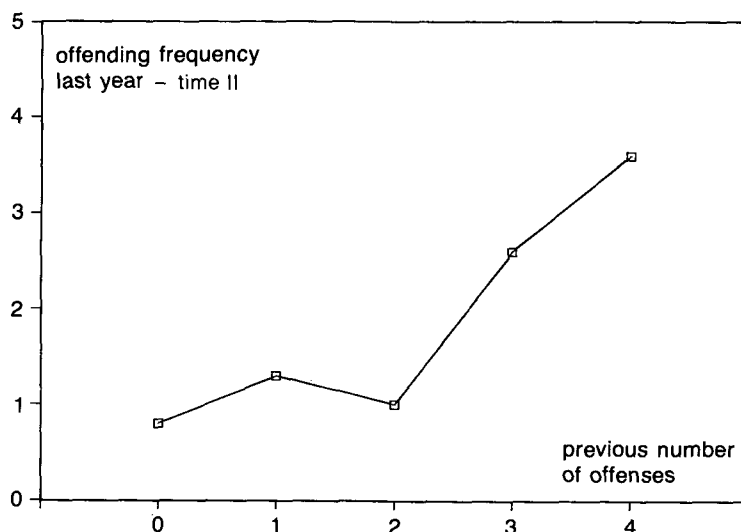


Fig. 5. Total number of earlier offenses and later frequency of offending

Now if we distinguish those who earlier reported none or only one offense, from those who reported two or more offenses, then the following comparative results can be noted.

- persistent low offending frequency (181): 55%
- persistent high offending frequency (50): 15%
- offending frequency has increased (50) : 15%
- offending frequency has decreased (50) : 15%

Stated otherwise, for 70% of the sample the level of offending remained the same, while 30% changed their offending behavior.

3.4.1 How persistent is delinquent behavior?

Taking together all those who – at time I – reported to have committed offenses, it appears that at time II half of them has stopped doing so and the other half has continued committing delinquent acts. Both groups have been compared on a number of factors.

Interestingly enough those who continued and those who stopped did not differ in socio-economic status, father's employment status or the juvenile's employment status, which means that these factors are not related to stopping or continuing delinquent behavior. However, other factors are related to persistence of delinquent behavior.

Education level is one of them: those who continued committing offenses attend more often vocational training schools, whereas those who stopped more often are students in high-school or in higher vocational training schools.

Another factor is age. Age is a difficult variable: most researchers find a strong relation of delinquency with age. Hirschi and Gottfredson have shown that this relation is a constant one. Looking at England and Wales in 1842 and in 1965, the relation appears practically unchanged. The authors show that this relation is independent of time, place, sex, ethnic background and other social conditions (Hirschi and Gottfredson, 1983).

In our follow-up study we have tried to control the impact of age by matching on age. The comparison group of respondents without recorded police contacts but with delinquent behavior and the group of youngsters that had recorded police contacts at time I were matched on age. Despite this we did find an age difference between those who stopped offending and those who continued. The persistent-offenders are on the average younger (six months) than those who have stopped. Moreover two years ago they had committed twice as many offenses as the group who stopped offending (3 versus 1.3 offenses; $p < 0.001$). Also, they had a significant lower social integration score ($p < 0.0002$) and they still have two years later ($p < 0.001$).

It seems we can distinguish two groups. The first is relatively well integrated, has committed a limited number of offenses, started offending at a later age and stopped earlier. The second group is less well integrated, started offending

at an earlier age, has committed relatively more offenses and still goes on offending.

Looking at the employment situation of those who reported offenses at time I and distinguishing again between those who continued offending and those who stopped, there appears to be no relation between employment status and delinquent behavior. Having a job apparently does not mean one stops offending, just as being unemployed does not automatically lead to more delinquent behavior.

Summarizing our findings with respect to persistence of delinquent behavior we may say the following:

The two groups do not differ with respect to the following factors:

- social class;
- father's employment status;
- going to school;
- juvenile's employment status;

Juveniles who go on offending differ from those who stopped in the following ways:

- they are younger;
- their education level is lower;
- they had, at time I, and still have at time II, lower social integration scores;
- they already showed higher offending frequency at time I;
- they started committing offenses at an earlier age.

4. Some concluding remarks

Combining official statistics and self-report data leads us to draw certain conclusions with respect to juvenile delinquency in our country.

- delinquent behavior is much more widespread than one would expect on the basis of official statistics. But most of the respondents report only one or two offenses. Both official statistics and self-report data indicate that many juveniles abandon delinquent behavior rather quickly. For most of our youths, delinquency is just a passing phenomenon.
- girls commit considerably less offenses than boys. Girls' delinquency is less serious - mainly restricted to property offenses - and also less frequent. Moreover, they abandon delinquent behavior more quickly than boys. However, since the seventies, girls' delinquency has grown at a faster rate than boys' delinquency while the discrepancy between the sexes is considerably less pronounced according to self-report data than according to official statistics.

- both sources indicate a strong relation between delinquency and age.
- social status, as defined by father's profession, is hardly associated with delinquent behavior, but education level is. Juveniles of high SES but low education level commit more offenses than juveniles of low SES and high education level. This suggests a modification of the thesis of many criminologists claiming that social class is not related to delinquent behavior. In fact, when one considers social status of the juvenile himself, expressed in type of school, then there is a very strong relation with delinquency.
- size of city - or degree of urbanization - is related to delinquent behavior as is apparent from official statistics and self-report data.
- no relation could be established between delinquency and the juvenile's employment.

Finally, I would like to stress the fact that most of these results have also been found in many Western European countries and in the U.S. It would seem that these results are characteristic of a specific type of society and The Netherlands clearly is no exception. The Netherlands' originality is probably more in its responses to juvenile delinquency than in the phenomenon itself.

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PART II

CAUSAL EXPLANATIONS

III. CAUSAL FACTORS: SOCIAL CONTROL THEORY

by Josine Junger-Tas

1. Introduction

Social control theory has been mainly developed in the United States and has first been systematized by Hirschi (1972). In the last decade Dutch researchers became more interested in the theory as an explanation of juvenile delinquency. One reason for this might be that it is a more concrete empirically testable theory than most of the criminological theories. Another reason might be the support for the theory that has come from a lot of research, indicating it might form a valuable contribution to the explanation of juvenile delinquency. A third reason is perhaps the mistaken association of the theory with more control in society by the police and other authorities, which has grown recently as a response to increasing crime rates.

This is why I do prefer the term social integration theory over social control theory.

The essential question the theory asks is not: 'why does anybody commit offenses', but 'why does anybody conform to conventional norms'. The second question implies that there are no special forces or motivations needed to drive youngsters to delinquency. The basic idea is that most youngsters will commit delinquent acts if the opportunity is there and detection is unlikely.

The philosophy of social control theory is that needs, desires and aspirations of a person are neutral, but the way in which they are fulfilled can be criminal. It is essentially the individual's integration in society which determines to what extent society's norms and values will be respected (Reckless, 1961; Matza, 1964). Integration of an individual in society takes place by two general processes: in the first place by rewarding conforming behavior so that youngsters get an interest in that behavior – this is what has been called commitment to conformity (Briar and Piliavin, 1965) – in the second place by controlling the behavior through negative sanctions in the case of non-conformity. These processes take place in important social institutions such as the family and the school.

For example, parents, generally representing conventional values, transmit these values to their children. Parents and children fulfill essential and profound needs of each other, and, to the extent that these needs are met, children

internalize the values presented by their parents. Parents also handle other social controls such as measures of discipline or punishment. The school offers rewards to those who perform well on the academic level or in terms of social behavior. However – as we will see – negative controls are frequent although not very effective.

The idea is that those who have a good relationship with their parents and perform well at school, in sports- or youth organizations, have much to lose if they would develop a delinquent life-style. The risks and social cost of detection of delinquency are many: one can lose the affection of his parents, be isolated by his environment, no longer be accepted in the sportsclub. In other words detection generally entails great loss of status.

Besides integration in social institutions such as the family (Nye, 1958) or the school there is the concept 'commitment' which means that youngsters engage themselves in conventional society in a conforming way. Reckless speaks about orientation to conventional future goals, implying adequate functioning in school, or in the workplace. The criterium is how successful one is and how intense participation is, according to standards within these systems.

A last element is the extent to which juveniles support conformist ideals, values and norms with respect to law-abiding behavior. Do they respect these norms verbally and in behavior or, if not, in what ways do they deviate from the norms?

It has been the merit of Hirschi to combine the more or less loose ends of the theory in a coherent and consistent theory, which has since then been tested by a number of researchers.

In my own study among 2000 juveniles* I have tried to test social control theory as it has been specified by Hirschi.

Put very succinctly, the theory states that the more a person is bonded to – or integrated in – conventional society, the less he will be inclined to transgress legal norms. Social control, or social integration as I prefer, is based on four important concepts or integration criteria.

- attachment to significant others. Matza and Nye both insist on the role of parents in achieving norm respecting behavior. Hirschi adds teachers and friends. As they all represent conventional order, close ties with them insulates children from deviant behavior. Nye stresses direct and indirect control by parents resulting in internalization of conventional norms;
- commitment to conventional sub-systems – such as school and work –, a desire to conform and to project oneself in the future in a conforming way;

* Research methods of the study have been specified in Chapter II.

- involvement in conventional activities, and adequate functioning in important sub-systems, such as school or workplace;
- beliefs in conventional social norms and respect for the prevailing legal norms.

In this research social integration has been operationalized in the following way.

- attachment to significant others is measured by items such as communication with parents, control by parents, relations with teachers, liking school.
- commitment to conventional sub-systems is operationalized by the value accorded to good grades and the dependence on judgement of teachers or boss.
- involvement in conventional sub-systems is measured by concrete activities shared with parents and school and leisure activities.
- beliefs in conventional norms are measured by opinions on delinquent behavior and on police reactions to delinquency.

With respect to analysis, we used a new technique, developed by the section data-theory of the University of Leiden, called HOMALS (Gifi, 1980). This technique has enabled us to construct social integration scales and thus to achieve a higher level of measurement: interval rather than ordinal. Moreover, the association of the scales with delinquency is stronger than the association of isolated items with delinquency.

2. Family integration

In this section we will examine whether family factors such as relationship with parents, communication and parental control are related to delinquent behavior. The analysis will also include 'problem' behavior such as running away from home and spending most of one's leisure time outside the home. Let me recall that what the Americans call status-offenses (running away, habitual truancy, incorrigibility and the like) are not offenses in Dutch juvenile penal law. At most these behaviors are considered as problematic or difficult. Family integration has been operationalized using many items. On the basis of HOMALS analysis we have been able to combine these and to construct four scales:

- direct parental control (who are the child's friends; at what time does he come home; does he obey his parents)
- communication with parents (talking about problems, discipline; reactions to good behavior)
- shared family activities (holidays, sports, visiting, going out together)

– family climate/family disagreements (general ‘ambiance’, quarreling, conflicts)

We then decided to take scale 1 and 2 together to form what has been called ‘the bond with parents’. Scale 3 and 4 were also taken together and were called ‘family functioning’.

Table 1 shows the relation of ‘bond with parents’ and ‘family functioning’ with offending behavior. Looking at both scales one notes that on the continuum from weak integration to strong integration, reported delinquent behavior is reduced by half.

Table 1. Family integration and delinquent behavior*

	<i>Bond with parents</i>					
	Weak bond			Strong bond		
	1 <i>N</i> = 106	2 <i>N</i> = 253	3 <i>N</i> = 267	4 <i>N</i> = 602	5 <i>N</i> = 375	6 <i>N</i> = 250
Has reported offenses	75%	61%	58%	54%	47%	38%
<i>p</i> < 0.001						
	<i>Family functioning</i>					
	Weak functioning			Good functioning		
	1 <i>N</i> = 125	2 <i>N</i> = 186	3 <i>N</i> = 397	4 <i>N</i> = 396	5 <i>N</i> = 372	6 <i>N</i> = 496
Has reported offenses	79%	66%	59%	54%	50%	40%
<i>p</i> < 0.001						

* Delinquency is measured by the self-report method using seven offenses. For complete description of study design, see Chapter 2.

Nearly 75% of juveniles who have a weak bond with parents report delinquent behavior, and this proportion is nearly 80% when family functioning is weak. Juveniles with the strongest bonds and best functioning family are much less likely to report delinquency (38% and 40% respectively).

Taking into account frequency of delinquency it appears that when the bond to parents is tighter and family functioning better, the number of youngsters reporting only one offense increases (to 71 and 64%) and the number of those reporting four or more offenses diminishes to a practically insignificant number (1.5% and 4%).

Therefore there exists a very strong association between family integration and delinquency. This is true both for the fact of reporting any offenses, and the number of offenses committed.

But of course this conclusion does not solve the problem of causality: is delinquency a consequence of a weak bond with parents and deficient functioning, or does delinquency of sons and daughters lead to weak family integration?

Assuming that it is delinquency that leads to weak family integration, one would expect parents to know about the delinquent behavior of their children. But we found that only 31% of parents actually were informed, in most cases because their children told them.

What was the reaction of parents according to the juveniles? We looked at parental reactions of those who reported a small number of offenses and of those who reported many. Parents of the former group tended to discuss the matter calmly, while parents of the latter group tended to be excited and shout at their children.

At low offending-frequency, telling one's parents was related to a better family integration; at high offending-frequency family integration was unrelated to telling parents about one's behavior.

Summarizing these findings, one can say the following. Comparing those who reported only a few offenses to those who reported three or more, there appears to be, in the first group, a positive relation between telling parents about one's delinquent behavior, a calm reaction of parents and a better family integration. However, this concerns a small group: only 16% of parents of these offenders were informed by them, and only 23% was informed at all.

With respect to frequent offenders, more parents – that is two thirds – were informed about their children's behavior, but this was not related to family integration.

The data clearly do not suggest a causal link between information of parents on the delinquent behavior of their children and family integration.

So we maintain our position that delinquency does not lead to weak family integration, but that weak family integration leads to delinquency.

3. Socio-demographic variables and family integration

Several external variables that might have an impact on family integration, have been examined.

SES is such a variable but proved not to be related to family integration. However, father's employment status is: family functioning is consider-

ably better when father is employed than if he is not ($F = 9.75, p < 0.001$).

An important result is that family integration is related to age of the children. When youngsters grow older both 'bond with parents' and 'family functioning' grow weaker. This probably reflects on normal adolescent development, in which family integration slowly decreases and juveniles adopt a greater distance towards their parents.

Another variable examined is sex. As mentioned before: there is a large difference in involvement in delinquency between boys and girls. One possible explanation for this difference may be found in differential socialization within the family. Indeed, we found a significant difference between the sexes for two of four family scales: direct control and family activities. Girls more often participate in family activities and they are more tightly controlled than boys. More social control may lead to more conforming behavior, a point that will be checked in other sections.

Absence of the mother or presence of a stepmother is related to a weaker family bond and weaker functioning than when the natural mother is present. Absence of the father or presence of a stepfather is related to weak family functioning, but not to the strength of family bonds.

3.1 Running away and delinquency

Running away is considered to be intervening with delinquency based on the assumption that running away results from a negative family situation and may then lead to delinquency.

The following table shows a small number of runaways when integration is strong and a high number when integration is weak. In this respect it is particularly family functioning that seems important. General family climate and rows with father and/or mother appear to have the greatest impact on running away from home.

Table 2. Family integration and running away

	<i>Bond with parents</i>		<i>Family functioning</i>		
	<i>running away</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>running away</i>	<i>%</i>	
Weak bond	1	13	Weak functioning	1	25
	2	13		2	16
	3	7		3	11
	4	10		4	8
	5	4		5	5
Strong bond	6	3	Good functioning	6	3
$p < 0.001$			$p < 0.001$		

Running away is related to delinquency: of those who never ran away 53.5% reported to have committed at least one offense, of those who ran away once this proportion is 76%.

Delinquent behavior is also more frequent among runaways: 37% of them reported to have committed three or more different offenses against 20% of those who had never run away ($p < 0.001$). Two explanations can be put forward. The first is that weak family integration causes running away, which in turn fosters delinquency. The second is that weak family integration causes both running away and delinquency.

Although weak family integration may lead to delinquency and at the same time to running away, running away creates a situation in which the committing of offenses becomes probable. In this sense running away can be considered as an intervening factor contributing to delinquent behavior.

3.2 Spending leisure time and delinquency

The reasoning in the case of spending most leisure time within or outside the family, is somewhat simpler. It seems rather obvious to suppose that, when family integration is weak, the tendency to spend one's leisure time mainly outside the home will grow. Similarly, we would expect a relation between spending most of one's leisure time outside the home in non-controlled activities – where opportunities for offending are many – and delinquent behavior.

Table 3. Family integration and spending leisure outside home

		<i>Bond with parents</i>		<i>Family functioning</i>	
		% leisure outside home		% leisure outside home	
Weak bond	1	66	Weak functioning	1	69
	2	64		2	55
	3	57		3	58
	4	56		4	56
	5	44		5	50
Strong bond	6	44	Good functioning	6	49
$p < 0.01$		$p < 0.001$			

When family integration is weak, more than two-thirds of juveniles spend most of their leisure time outside the home, when integration is strong this proportion is reduced to 44% and 49%.

Of those who spend their leisure time outside the home 60.5% report

offenses; of those who frequently stay at home this is 49%, a significant difference. Two times as many of the former compared with the latter group report having committed three or more offenses, so that the frequency of offending is also related to the way leisure time is spent. Although there is no difference in nature of offenses, the most serious group – those who commit property and aggressive offenses – is overrepresented among those who spend much of their leisure time outside the home. This group also has more official judicial contacts, particularly contacts with the prosecutor. This is not surprising because official contacts are strongly related to frequency and seriousness of delinquent behavior.

Finally, we found that the way one spends one's leisure time and running away from home, are not related. This would suggest that we have here two independent variables, being associated with delinquent behavior.

In summary, it was found that children with an absent or replaced parent report more offenses than children with both natural parents. Weak family integration was found to be related to extent and frequency of delinquent behavior. These relations proved to be very strong. There is evidence to suggest that weak family integration causes delinquency and not the reverse. In general parents are not aware of the delinquent behavior of their children, and when they are – when their children are frequent offenders – this does not seem to be related to family integration.

Running away and spending most of the time outside the home are not related but each of them must be considered as a delinquency promoting factor. They can be seen as symptoms of weak family integration, but may start a process of drifting into delinquency.

4. School integration

There is a bulk of literature showing how important the school is in the life of children and how strong the impact of success or failure on social behavior (Glueck 1950; Cohen, 1955; Elliott and Voss, 1974; Polk *et al.*, 1974; Rutter *et al.*, 1979).

In this study the associations between school integration and delinquency, truancy and spending most of the time outside the home are examined. In addition we will look at the impact of specific socio-demographic variables. The scales measuring school integration were constructed as mentioned before. Originally there were four scales:

1. Bond with school (liking school; relation with teachers)
2. Commitment to school (importance of good grades, judgement teachers, staying in school)

3. School performance (performance, homework, repeating classes)
4. Social behavior (punishment, sent away, suspended, relations with other students)

Scale 1 and 2 together formed 'the bond with school', while 3 and 4 have been called 'school functioning'. The following table shows the relation of both school scales with delinquency.

Table 4. School integration and delinquency

<i>Bond with school</i>			<i>School functioning</i>		
		<i>% reporting offenses</i>			<i>% reporting offenses</i>
Weak bond	1	84	Poor functioning	1	93
	2	78		2	80
	3	73.5		3	71
	4	63		4	56.5
	5	51		5	41
Strong bond	6	46.5	Good functioning	6	38

School functioning appears to be more important than the bond with school: when functioning is good, 38% reports having committed offenses, but when functioning is deficient, nearly all juveniles report delinquent behavior. Half of the latter group report three or more offenses, while this is only 16.5% for those who function well at school.

The delinquency of the malfunctioning group is also more serious – two thirds of them committed aggressive and property offenses – as well as more persistent. Comparing them with the group that functioned better we found that three to four times as many juveniles in the poorly functioning group had a rather serious delinquency pattern, and six times as many were persistent offenders.

Another striking fact is that school integration is more strongly related to delinquency than family integration.

The data indicate that the importance of success or failure at school can hardly be overestimated.

4.1 Some socio-demographic variables and school integration

Not surprisingly, SES is related to school functioning: children of fathers with a liberal profession or being a higher employee, generally do better than children of unskilled workers.

With respect to type of school, the lower the education level the more failures we meet, the difference between students of vocational training schools and

grammar school being extreme ($F = 44.48, p < 0.001$).

Similar to the findings for family integration, school integration decreases with age, and this is especially true for school functioning. Looking at sex, it was found that girls do better than boys. This is the case for both the bond with school ($F = 5.35, p < 0.02$) and school functioning ($F = 33.53, p < 0.001$). In view of the fact that school integration is so strongly related to delinquency, this would be an additional factor explaining the limited participation of girls in delinquency.

4.2 The impact of truancy

We have long known that truancy is related to delinquency. One can of course consider truancy as an indicator of bad school functioning. But we choose to consider truancy, like leisure time spent outside the home, as an intervening variable. We decided to do so because habitual truancy creates the opportunity for, and may induce delinquency.

Thus truancy is not only seen as a consequence and expression of a lack of school integration but also as a facilitating factor, fostering delinquency.

Both school scales are related to truancy as well as to the frequency of truanting. School integration decreases gradually from those who never play truant to those who do this regularly. Particularly those who truant often, function very badly in school.

Moreover, only half of those who did not play truant, report delinquent behavior, while almost all juveniles (93%) who play truant frequently, do report such behavior.

Table 5. Truancy and delinquent behavior

	<i>Never</i>	<i>Seldom</i>	<i>From time to time</i>	<i>Often</i>
	<i>N = 1529</i>	<i>N = 189</i>	<i>N = 173</i>	<i>N = 80</i>
Reported offenses	49%	69%	76.5%	92.5%

$p < 0.001$

As we might expect, those who play truant often also commit more offenses than those who do not: 43% of them report three or more different offenses where this is only 15% among those who do not play truant.

In fact, it may be concluded that truancy is positively related to all measures of delinquency.

4.3 School and leisure

Earlier it was mentioned that weak family integration is related to spending most of one's leisure time outside the home. But when we relate this to the school scales, it appears that weak school integration is also related to this variable.

In this respect the peer group forms an important element. Peer group influences will be examined in the next section, but the fact of spending so much time outside the home would suggest that youngsters are seeking certain compensations for a rather negative family and school situation. This is confirmed by the relation between truancy and spending leisure time on the streets: more of those who regularly play truant spend their leisure time in such a way ($p < 0.02$). Moreover, this factor may – as such – foster delinquency: juveniles who spend most of their time outside the home do commit more and different acts.

All in all, the data suggest that youngsters who do not function well at home or at school and consequently do not feel happy there, tend to enjoy themselves in places where they feel free from direct and indirect social controls.

The most important finding in this section is that school functioning, in terms of school performance and social behavior is strongly related to delinquent behavior. In fact, failure at school comes out as the best predictor of delinquency, a better predictor than weak family integration.

In general, school integration was better in schools leading to higher education than in schools offering only technical training.

School integration decreases with age, and is generally stronger for girls than for boys.

With decreasing family and school integration, delinquency grows and the risks of official intervention also increase. Frequency of truancy is strongly related to poor functioning at school and extent of delinquency; frequent truants also have more prosecutor contacts.

5. Leisure

Leisure covers many things: the way in which it is spent, the activities that are undertaken, the place where one spends leisure time and the companions one chooses.

In this section we look only at leisure activities in relation to family and school integration and to delinquency and judicial contacts. The peer group will be the subject of the next section.

We had a great number of leisure variables. From these we constructed three

scales. But not all variables were correlated. Thus we have not been able to construct a scale 'bond with friends'.

Other variables such as 'number of friends' and 'how important is the judgement of friends to you' did differentiate significantly between groups, but were not related.

Finally three scales could be constructed, composed as follows.

Nature of leisure activities

- visiting pub and/or disco*
- much alcohol consumption by friends;
- drinks alcohol when going out.

Involvement

- judgment on possibilities to enjoy oneself outdoors;
- having feelings of boredom.

Bravado

Juvenile claims:

- to be good at sports**
- to be good in speaking back;
- to be popular with girls;
- to be popular with boys.

5.1 Family, school and leisure

Family integration is related to leisure variables. When integration is strong the juvenile spends more time at home, and he also tends to go less often to a pub or disco and is less inclined to drink alcohol. Moreover he is more optimistic about leisure possibilities and does not often get feelings of boredom or emptiness.

However, the bravado scale is not related to family integration.

With respect to the school scales: they are related to all leisure scales. Deficient functioning at school goes hand in hand with negative functioning during leisure and with the scale 'involvement'.

Bravado is strongly related to school integration: the lower the scores on 'bond with school' and 'school functioning', the higher the scores on the bravado scale.

* From the age of 16 on, drinking alcohol is not illegal.

** Sports is not a school activity.

The conclusion seems obvious: the nature of leisure time spent and the attitudes developed in this connection, have more to do with integration in the school system than with what happens in the family.

5.2 Socio-demographic factors and leisure

SES and education level were found to be related to 'involvement'. This means that juveniles of higher SES and higher education level see more possibilities to enjoy themselves and do less frequently get feelings of boredom, than those of lower education level.

One of the strongest relations is the one between leisure activities and age. Visiting disco's and drinking alcohol increase considerably with age; so do 'involvement' and the bravado attitude.

Of course one must interpret these findings in the light of what was found with respect to family and school integration. There is a growing disengagement from family and school with increasing age and this is coupled with other forms of leisure with friends outside the family sphere. As such, this is a normal development and it should worry us only when it takes extreme forms. When there is a combination of weak functioning in family, school and leisure activities, then the juvenile may turn away from conventional settings and – possibly with similar partners – resort to delinquent behavior.

Another interesting finding is that girls do differ from boys with respect to the attitude of bravado: they score much lower on that scale than do boys ($F = 8.15, p < 0.004$). This may be due to the fact of a stronger bond with school and better school functioning, factors that are negatively related to the bravado scale. But perhaps girls are less inclined to develop such an attitude because they are less subject to pressures of competition. Dutch society does not expect of girls the same performance and achievement that it expects of boys, so the self-image of girls may be not as much related to success or failure in school as is the case for boys. Assuming that attitudes of bravado develop as a kind of compensation for loss of status due to school failure, girls would feel less need to develop such attitudes.

5.3 Leisure and delinquent behavior

The leisure scales are clearly associated with delinquent behavior although not all of them in the same direction. What one can say is that infrequent visiting of pubs and disco's, low alcohol consumption and positive feelings about leisure opportunities are all associated with relatively low delinquency.

With respect to the bravado scale, the relation is reversed. High scores on

Table 6. Leisure and reported delinquent behavior

<i>Nature of leisure activities</i> % delinq.			<i>Involvement</i> % delinq.			<i>Bravado</i> % delinq.		
Negative	1	65.5	Little	1	64.5	Little	1	45
	2	59		2	54		2	53.5
	3	55		3	54		3	62
Positive	4	47	Much	4	49	Much	4	64.5
							5	68
$p < 0.0001$			$p < 0.0001$			$p < 0.0001$		

the bravado scale are directly related to high delinquency scores.

Considering the fact that weak school integration is related to high scores on the bravado scale, we would suggest that a psychological process takes place as a reaction to school failure.

When functioning in the conventional school system is less and less satisfactory and the bond with school weakens, one's self-image becomes more and more negative. This creates the need to build up another self-image, that of the 'tough guy': good at sports, popular with girls and boys, a big mouth, someone who is afraid of nobody and does not care about anything or anybody. This self-image corresponds very well with the tendency to commit delinquent acts, particularly such acts as violence against persons, vandalism and shoplifting. Although an attitude of bravado is not quite exceptional, our data indicate that a strong school integration and socially acceptable leisure time activities apparently present boys with sufficient rewards and status so as not to develop such an attitude to any great extent. Those who cannot obtain these rewards have recourse to bravado and deviant behavior in order to achieve at least some status among peers.

Confirmation for this line of reasoning is found in some other research results. High scores on the bravado scale are also related to nature and frequency of delinquency as well as to persistence of the behavior. Boys with a strong attitude of bravado commit property as well as aggressive offenses and they did so in the year preceding the survey and before. They also frequently visit pubs and disco's and have a great alcohol consumption. The research results all point to a consistent picture of a group of juveniles that is weakly integrated in the family, the school and the conventional leisure system. They develop a special attitude of bravado and are characterized by a rather extensive, persistent and more serious delinquency pattern.

6. The peer group

Weak family integration, failure in school and socially unacceptable leisure create a climate that fosters delinquent activities: they present the setting and the opportunities that make delinquency a possible and acceptable form of behavior.

It is in this connection that the peer group plays an important role.

Although all humans are social beings, adolescents are perhaps even more so: only 3% of all respondents declared to have no friends at all; and when going out, 72% do this in the company of several others. Asking about friends, their number and their significance is a difficult matter: at what moment can someone be considered as a friend and how much do people differ in their definitions of friendship?

However, the number of friends did differentiate among groups of respondents. Those who reported the greatest number of friends (five or more) reported more offenses than the others. The same is true for those who reported having no friends at all. This would suggest that loners and those who operate in groups show the most extensive delinquent behavior.

This does not mean that number of friends and significance of friends are related. Indeed Hirschi found that delinquents are less committed to friends than non-delinquents.

Confirming these findings I found that those who commit relatively more offenses tend to consider that the judgement of their friends is not very important, while juveniles who attach importance to the judgement of their friends, commit relatively less offenses. So what happens is that juveniles who possess a limited number of friends (one to four) and who think the judgement of these friends is important to them, are less delinquent than juveniles who do not have any friend or who have many but do not attach much importance to their judgement.

One would think – with Hirschi – that strong bonds with friends, family and school would insulate youngsters from delinquent behavior. If this is true then we would find significant associations of family, school and leisure variables with 'judgement by friends'. But this has not been the case. There is no relation between the importance attached to judgement by friends and the family scales, but there is a positive one between this variable and school integration. An additional problem is the fact that we did not find any consistent relation between 'judgement by friends' and any of the leisure scales.

The explanation must probably be found in the relationship between significance and influence of friends, and the type of friends juveniles have. There is of course a difference between the juvenile who has two to four good friends

whose judgement he values, and the juvenile who depends on a large – and perhaps fluctuating – peer group, for achieving status. Moreover, there is a difference between socially conforming friends and delinquent friends.

In this respect, we asked those who reported offenses whether they talked about this behavior with their friends. In fact only 27.5% of this group said they did so.

Friends did not react at all in 42% of cases discussed with them, and disapproved of the delinquent acts in 20% of these cases.

Approval was given in 43% of cases involving low offending frequency, but in 60% of cases involving high frequency. In other words, juveniles who frequently commit offenses tend to have friends who approve and support this behavior.

So, although generally speaking, there are indications that strong bonds with friends protect from delinquency, the nature of the friendship tie seems an important element. This is partly expressed in the number of friends one mentions. But more important still is the kind of friends one chooses and the attitudes of friends with respect to conforming and delinquent behavior.

6.1 The delinquent peer group

We asked whether the juvenile had any friends that had been picked up by the police, and – if this were the case – how many they were.

One third of all respondents said they had such friends and of these two-thirds claimed that at least three or more of their friends had been picked up by the police.

A second question is whether the fact of possessing such friends is related to reporting offenses.

Table 7. Number of friends picked up by the police and delinquency

	<i>None</i> <i>N = 1283</i>	<i>1</i> <i>N = 248</i>	<i>2-3</i> <i>N = 276</i>	<i>4 or more</i> <i>N = 153</i>
Reported offenses	41.5%	69%	86.5%	93%

$p < 0.001$

The relation is exceptionally strong. Of those who have no such friends 40% report having committed at least one offense while of those who mentioned having four or more of such friends, practically all report delinquent behavior.

The same is true for extent of delinquency: only 2.5% of those who have no

delinquent friends report three or more offenses, against nearly half of those who have at least four delinquent friends.

Or, stated in another way, 83% of the group of frequent offenders have delinquent friends, while only 36% of the group reporting only one offense have such friends. Similarly, persistence of offending and type of offense are both related to the fact of having friends picked up by the police. Finally judicial intervention is also strongly related to this variable. Those who have delinquent friends have two times as many official judicial contacts and many more self-reported contacts (32.5% to 17% and 37.6% to 21.5%). So we may conclude that delinquent friends, delinquent behavior and judicial intervention are closely associated. Looking at social integration we get results that are consistent with what has been mentioned before: the weaker the family – and school integration, the more friends picked up by the police.

Moreover, juveniles who have many delinquent friends go more often to pubs, drink more alcohol, feel more often bored, do not know what to do and score higher on the bravado scale.

These results confirm what has been found earlier: juveniles who fail – essentially in school – construct a self-image of ‘tough guy’, and choose similar marginal friends. They operate in groups and share and support delinquent behavior (see also Cohen, 1955).

Reconsidering now the meaning of friends for different groups of juveniles we find the following:

Table 8. Type of friend and importance attached to their judgement

	<i>No delinquent friends</i>	<i>1 delinquent friend</i>	<i>2 or more delinquent friends</i>
<i>Judgement friends</i>	<i>N = 1277</i>	<i>N = 245</i>	<i>N = 426</i>
Very important	67	66	57.5
Somewhat important	22	21.5	19.5
Not at all important	11	12.5	23
	100	100	100

$p < 0.0001$

It is interesting to note that there is practically no difference between those without and those with only one friend picked up by the police: two-thirds of both groups attach much importance to the judgement of their friends. But even those who have a number of delinquent friends, keep on thinking that their friends' judgement is important to them. However, nearly 25% of them consider this as of no importance at all, which is twice as much as in the other groups.

Whatever the group of friends – conventional or deviant – friends are important to youngsters and they certainly take their opinions into consideration. At the same time the proportion that has joined a delinquent peer group, but does not care whatsoever about the judgement of their friends, is rather large. The function of the latter peer group might differ from that of the conventional peer group.

The data suggest that their function is essentially one of supporting and approving delinquent behavior and conferring status on the basis of that behavior (see also Matza, 1964).

Summarizing the main findings we saw that juveniles who attach importance to the judgement of their friends report a smaller number of offenses than juveniles who don't care.

There is a very strong association between delinquency of friends and extent, nature and persistency of delinquent behavior of juveniles. Those who have many delinquent friends also have more official judicial contacts. The weaker the family, school- and conventional leisure integration, the more delinquent friends seem to perform an important supportive role. However, among juveniles who have delinquent friends, the proportion that don't care about the judgement of their friends is also large.

7. Values and norms

Although values and norms play an important role in anyone's life, one of the questions is whether certain norms determine behavior or whether they are essentially rationalizations or justifications of behavior. In order to try to get some insight into this problem, we added three specific questions to our interview schedule. The first one referred to the judgement of respondents about the offenses mentioned in the interview: do they generally disapprove of such behavior or do they consider this of no importance. The question was based on the assumption that those who report many offenses would have a more approving attitude than those who report hardly any offenses. The second question referred to the police. How – in their opinion – should the police react to delinquent behavior: should they do nothing, give a warning or take the youngster to the police station?

In this case, we wanted to measure identification with society and the underwriting of some form of social control. Again we supposed that answers would be different according to participation in delinquency.

The third question related to their own behavior: if they were sure they would not be detected, would they commit offenses more frequently?

7.1 Values and delinquency

In the first place we wanted to know whether the answers to the three questions were related to extent of delinquent behavior.

Table 9. Some norms and number of different offenses reported

<i>Evaluation of committing offenses</i>	<i>Mean number committed offenses during last year</i>
Is not serious	2.4
It depends on the act	1.9
Disapproves	1.6
<i>F = 24.8</i>	
<i>p < 0.0001</i>	
<i>Opinion on police-reaction</i>	
Police should not do anything	2.5
Police should give a warning	1.9
Police should take offender to the station	1.7
<i>F = 6.40</i>	
<i>p < 0.002</i>	
<i>Would do this more often if sure not discovered</i>	
No	1.6
Sometimes	2.1
Yes	2.7
<i>F = 63.30</i>	
<i>p < 0.0001</i>	

The associations are very strong. Juveniles who disapprove of committing offenses and would not commit them even if they were sure not to be detected, reported on the average 1.6 offenses. This is considerably less than youngsters who did not consider committing offenses as serious (2.4 offenses) or who admitted they would commit more offenses if they were sure not to be detected (2.7 offenses). Particularly the last question differentiates strongly.

Juveniles who support more police intervention are more conforming (1.7 offenses) than those who think the police should not do anything (2.5 offenses). Taking into consideration frequency of delinquent behavior, nature of offenses and persistence of offending, similar results were found.

Juveniles who tend to condone committing offenses and to disapprove of police reaction, commit relatively more offenses with greater frequency and

persistence, while juveniles who tend to condemn delinquency and to claim harder police action commit relatively few offenses.

However, the distribution of answers does not suggest that delinquent juveniles have really different values from non-delinquent ones. Taking the most extreme group – those who have committed three or more offenses – there is still 40% that disapproved of committing these offenses, and half of them declared they would not commit more often offenses even if they were sure they would not be detected.

In other words, it is clear that, independently of delinquent behavior, all juveniles tend to support conventional values as far as delinquency is concerned.

But the extent to which these norms are supported is variable. The more frequent and the more persistent delinquency is, the greater the proportion of juveniles that adapt their value system to the realities of their behavior. By doing so they facilitate the behavior and make it possible.

7.2 Values and integration scales

Of course the reasoning above may be questioned: what if juveniles do first develop deviant values and on the basis of these values do commit offenses? Thus the question is what comes first: the values or the behavior.

Perhaps we can get some indications on causal links from the data on family-, school- and leisure integration.

We found a very significant relation between the judgement of committing offenses and all integration scales: family- as well as school integration is better of juveniles disapproving of delinquent behavior. Disapproval is also related to positive leisure activities. There is one exception: high scores on the bravado scale go hand in hand with an attitude of condoning delinquent behavior.

Judgement on the police is also related to the different scales: juveniles that are better integrated more often think that the police should react with force when they detect offending youngsters.

The same is true with respect to the question whether one would commit more offenses if one was sure not to be detected. Juveniles who said yes they would do so, are weakly integrated in family and school, spend their leisure time more often in pubs and drinking beer, don't know how to enjoy themselves and often feel bored. They also score high on the bravado scale.

Assuming that school and family generally transmit conventional values with respect to delinquency we found that the majority of the juveniles support these values. But there is a group who support them to a lesser degree: these are the youngsters that function poorly in family-, school- and in conventional

leisure settings, who develop a deviant attitude of 'tough guy' and commit more offenses.

The pattern that shows itself is one in which youngsters gradually turn away from conventional subsystems and at the same time develop a somewhat more deviant value system, together with more delinquent behavior. In this process the peer group seems to play an important role.

The data suggest that juveniles who gradually turn away from conventional society, look for company and support to other juveniles in a similar situation, having the same problems.

Such groups will not be such strong supporters of conventional norms and values as juveniles whose integration in the different sub-systems brings them more rewards.

7.3 Values and friends

In this analysis we used two variables: how much importance does one attach to the judgement of one's friends, and number of friends picked up by the police. The judgement of one's friends is only weakly related to the three value questions. The question does not differentiate too well and this may be a fault of the instrument or it may mean that for a number of juveniles their friends' opinion does not count that much, independent of orientation to norms.

The number of delinquent friends, however, is strongly related to the value questions. The more friends picked up by the police, the more one claims committing offenses 'is not serious' and the more one would commit offenses if one was sure not to be detected.

Not surprisingly, these youngsters prefer, in case of detection, that the police give just a warning instead of taking them to the station. All this is consistent with what we have noted before, and it suggests that friends have a special function in the process of developing deviations from conventional norms. These deviations are negatively related to family- and school integration, but positively to the number of delinquent friends.

The relation of delinquent friends with delinquent behavior is stronger than the relation of deviations from the norms with delinquency. Moreover, we noted that most juveniles support conventional values with respect to delinquency, whether they commit offenses or not.

This suggests that deviation from conventional norms only develops slowly on the basis of one's own deviant behavior and when supported by deviant peers.

7.4 Values and socio-demographic variables

Some scholars have claimed that social classes differ in norms of behavior and value system and that some values may more easily lead to delinquent behavior than others (Miller, 1958). That is why SES has been analyzed in relation to our three questions.

With respect to police reactions on delinquency, we did not find any difference according to SES level. Some differences were noted where the two other questions are concerned: more children of unskilled workers than of higher employees think that committing offenses is not a serious matter (9.5% to 4.5%) and that they would commit more offenses if they were sure not to be detected (7.5% to 4%), but the differences are rather small.

Similar results were found when father's employment status was taken into account. Education level was not related to these variables, nor was age. On the basis of these data we cannot speak of real differences among social classes.

The only demographic variable that showed some significant differentiation is sex: two times as many boys than girls said they would commit offenses if they were sure not to be detected (20% to 10%). But on the whole, the large majority of respondents agreed to these norms without much differentiation.

The most important variables associated with some deviation of the norms are a strong attitude of bravado and having delinquent friends. Summarizing the process that leads to that deviation we suggest the following.

Failure in important social sub-systems – such as the school – leads to a specific mechanism of compensation and to joining similar 'problem' youngsters. These groups spend much of their leisure time in bars and disco's where they drink alcohol, and it is in this climate that delinquency finds its natural place and that deviant norms can develop. Moreover, the more delinquent friends, the greater the deviation of conventional norms with respect to delinquent behavior.

Two more remarks. One is that we are speaking about a small minority: the majority of the juveniles continue to support conventional norms. Second, the fact that most respondents – delinquents as well as non-delinquents – support conventional norms suggests that instead of real changes of values, the deviations are rather justifications and rationalizations of the behavior.

8. The time perspective: social integration two years later

In order to compare earlier with later integration we made use of the scores on the different integration scales at time I and at time II. But we also established, for every respondent that had been re-interviewed, total integration

scores. These are based on the following data, collected both at time I and at time II.

- the family scales
- the school scales
- the leisure time scales
- spending leisure time at home or outside
- nature of peer group
- running away
- frequency of truancy

On the basis of these data we devised a total integration scale on which respondents could be placed.

Depending on the different scores, respondents could be categorized into three groups: those of high social integration, those of medium integration and those of low social integration.

We then were interested in examining two questions. The first was whether there were any changes in integration level during the follow-up period. The second was the question whether such changes are related to changes in delinquent behavior and if so, in what way.

Let us first see what happened during the follow-up period in terms of social integration levels.

8.1 Family integration

Research results concerning family integration indicate that two years later the average family integration has decreased. In this respect we recall that family integration is strongly related with age. In the first part of our study we found that the older age groups had lower family integration scores than the younger age categories. The older a juvenile gets, the less effective parental control is, and the more communication and activities together, decrease. This is of course a normal process of gradual detaching oneself from the home environment and parental supervision. The process is illustrated by Fig. 1 that shows a particular decrease of the index 'bond with parents' including direct control and communication. It seems as if, when children are 13 to 14 years old, parents start to lose a lot of their influence. Family functioning shows a slower decrease and a stabilization at 18-19 years old.

8.2 School integration

Here also we find a decrease in school integration in the two years older sample. It should be stressed, however, that the decrease in family integration is

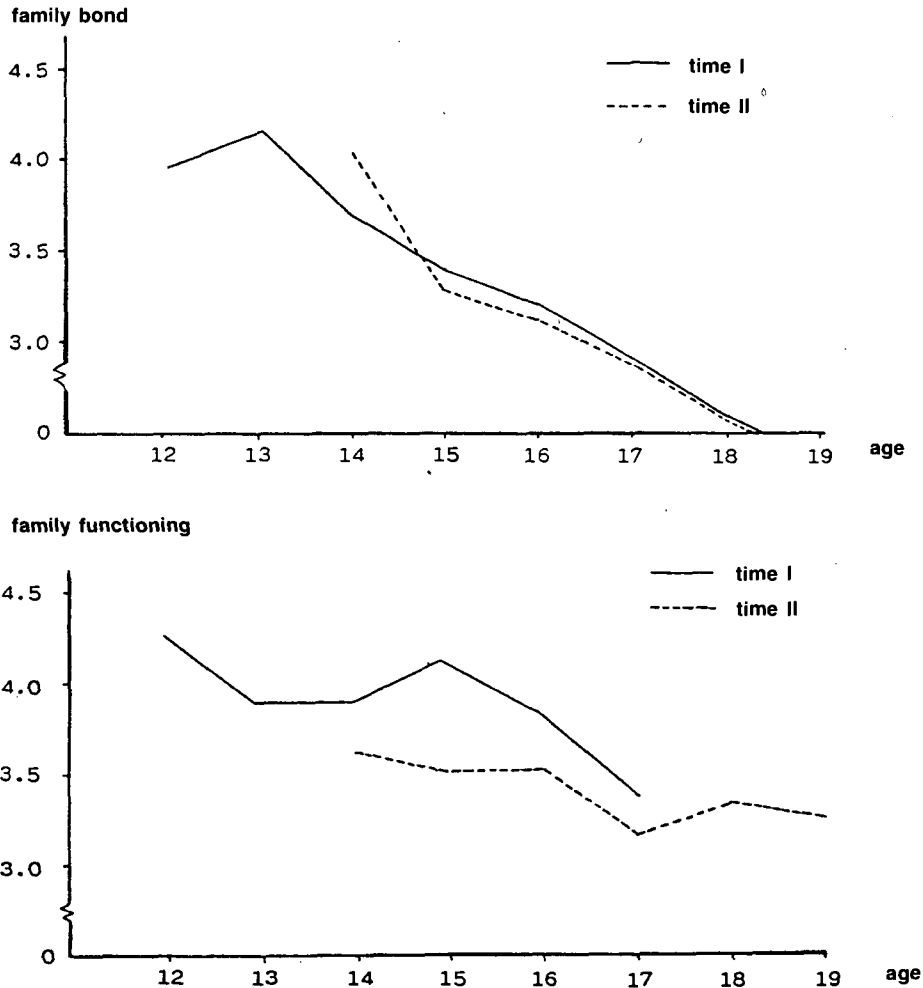


Fig. 1. Family integration and age

considerably stronger than the decrease in school integration.

Fig. 2 makes clear that the school integration curves are flatter than those of family integration. It is also clear that the decrease in integration scores is especially strong between about 14 and 16 years of age. The oldest age groups seem to show a more stable pattern, which is particularly the case of school functioning, including both school performance and social behavior. Changes also in the habit of truanting: 30% of the 16- and 17-year-olds in 1981, reported some or frequent truancy; two years later 51% of this same group report such behavior.

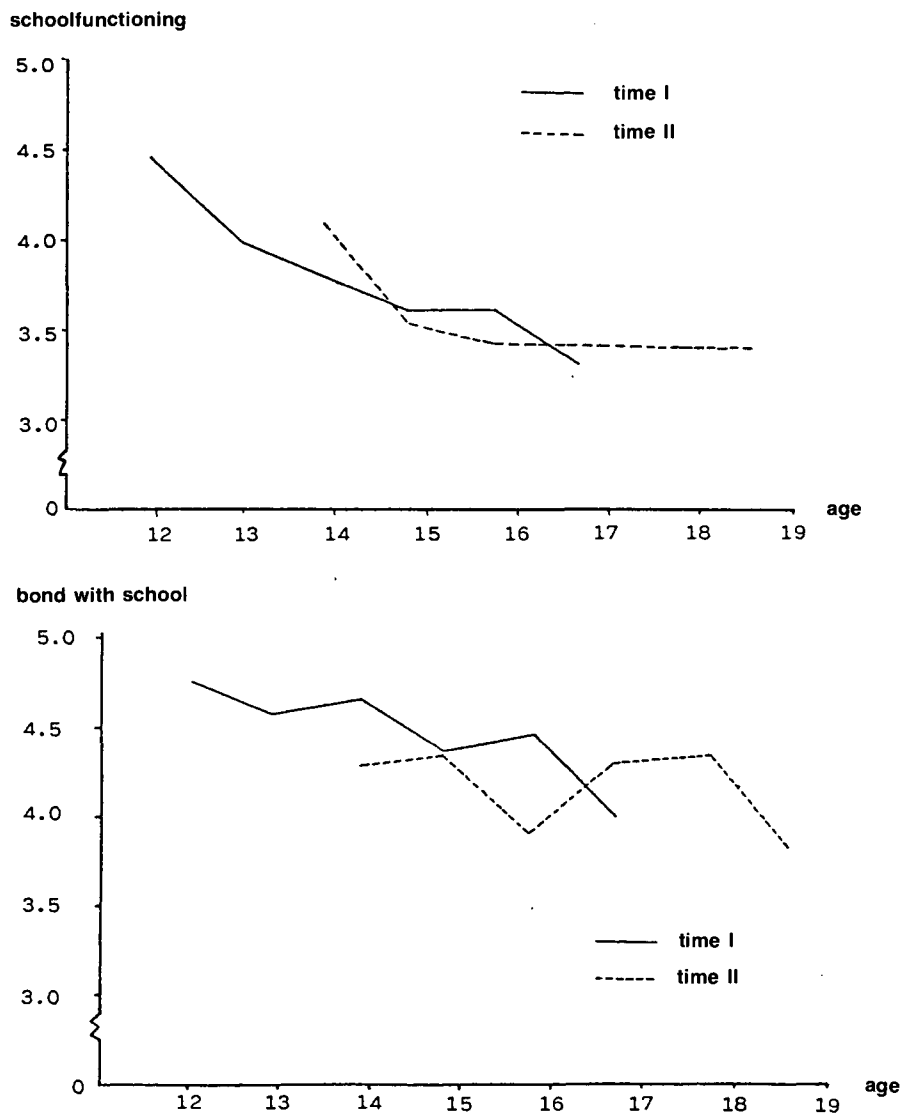


Fig. 2. School integration and age

8.3 Leisure and peers

As Fig. 3 shows, the results are in a somewhat different direction this time. The average score on the scale 'functioning' is lower than two years ago, which means that these youngsters more frequently go to bars and disco's and that

there is more consumption of alcohol (around them and by themselves). This change again shows a growing detachment from the family with increasing age. The same conclusion can be reached with respect to the second scale that gets higher scores instead of lower scores.

This means that respondents perceive more possibilities for spending leisure outside the home and are not bored so frequently compared to two years ago. In other words, the group as a whole is less influenced by the family – and is more oriented towards the outside world and to contacts with peers.

The only scale that did hardly change is the bravado scale. High scores on that scale were related to delinquency. Stability of this scale means in any case that in this respect the situation has not become worse.

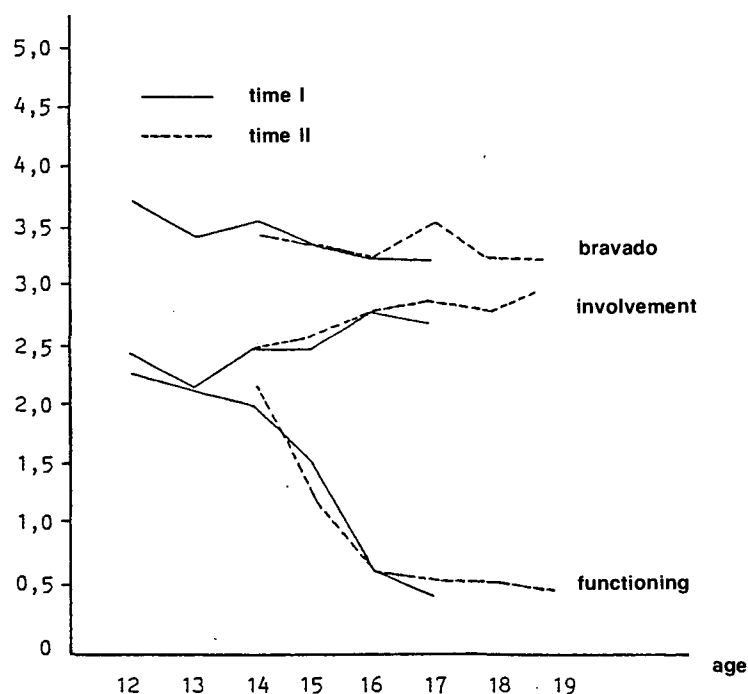


Fig. 3. Leisure time scales and age

We have also checked whether the nature of the peer group has changed: do they have more, or less friends with judicial contacts than two years ago? In this respect there are not many changes: two years ago as well as now, somewhat more than half of the youngsters reported that none of their friends had ever been picked up by the police.

Summing up: although leisure time functioning scores were lower, the scores on the other leisure scales remained largely unchanged, whereas attitudes towards leisure occupations outside the home have become more favorable.

8.4 Values and norms

The principal conclusion on the basis of the answers at time I was that most juveniles have rather conformist views with respect to delinquency as well as towards the police. In fact whether they had committed offenses or not did not make much difference. Although there was a small group of persistent offenders who deviated somewhat from these norms, most of them had conventional views. Looking at the answers at time II there are some interesting shifts towards more conformity. Of those who – two years ago – thought that offending was ‘no serious’ matter, only one-fifth kept thinking this, while half now disapproved. Of those who had said that it depended on the act, now 60% disapproved. Thus more respondents than two years ago disapproved of committing offenses.

If one was sure not to be detected, would one commit more offenses? Here again we note greater support for the conventional norm than before. Of those who had said ‘sometimes’ the first time, now 66% said they would *not* do so; and of those who had said ‘yes, they would’ half now said they would not and only one-fifth said ‘sometimes’.

With respect to police reaction, more juveniles now than before chose for the hard line: the police should take the delinquent to the police station.

All in all, the group as a whole has become more supportive of conventional norms with respect to delinquency, during the follow-up period.

8.5 Socio-demographic variables and social integration

At time I we found that socio-demographic variables are not related to social integration, with the exception of father’s employment and sex. Girls were better integrated into family-, school- and leisure occupations than boys; and family integration as well as school integration were significantly better when the father was employed. These results were confirmed at time II. Moreover, employment status of the juvenile also appears to be related to social integration. Those who still go to school and those who are employed have significantly higher social integration scores than those who are unemployed ($F = 13.50$, $p < 0.001$).

As far as age is concerned Fig. 4 shows that integration scores slowly but systematically decrease with increasing age.

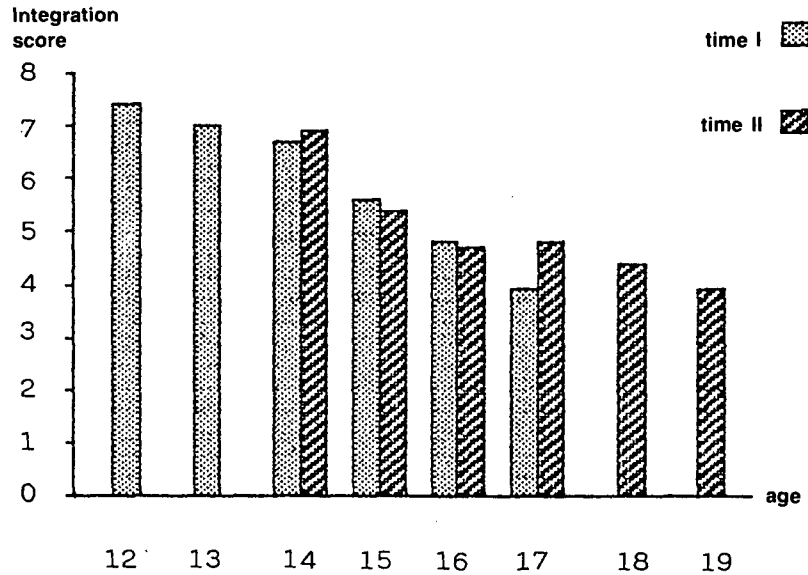


Fig. 4. Age and social integration

In the follow-up sample the average integration score at age 14 is 6.9 and at age 19 is 3.9. Fig. 4 clearly shows that the situation before and after the follow-up period is practically identical. Integration scores of 14- and 15-year-olds, then and now hardly differ ($F = 1.0, p < 0.78$) and this is also the case for the 16- and 17-year-olds, then and now ($F = 1.04, p < 0.81$). There further is a strong correlation between average integration scores of both samples ($r = .56$). In other words, within homogeneous age groups social integration is the same, independent of time. These results suggest that age is strongly related with social integration as well as with delinquency (see Chapter 2). This relation seems independent of time and perhaps also – as Hirschi states – of other factors such as place and ethnicity.

Summarizing this section it was found that there have been considerable changes in social integration during the two year follow-up period. Family integration and school integration have decreased; leisure time behavior has changed: more juveniles than before spend most of their leisure time outside. However, although the youngsters are more detached from their family and from school they have got more positive attitudes towards spending leisure time and they are more supportive of society's norms with respect to delinquency. On the other hand, analysis shows that earlier family- and school integra-

tion are strongly related to later integration and the same is true for spending one's leisure time and having delinquent friends. This means of course that the research results indicate a certain continuity as well as clear changes related to the development of young persons. The conclusion that these changes reflect normal processes of growing up can also be drawn from the fact that delinquency of the total group has not increased during the follow-up period – as might be expected – but has about remained at the same level.

9. Social integration and delinquency two years later

As far as family and school integration are concerned we found the same relations as in the first study. Particularly school functioning is strongly related to delinquency. When school functioning is good there is hardly any delinquency: the average number of delinquent acts is 0.19. When school functioning has become worse, the average number of delinquent acts increases up to 2.65.

In other words, although family- and school integration have generally decreased during the follow-up period, the relations between that integration level and delinquency remained as strong as two years ago.

With respect to the other forms of integration the same pattern holds. Some positive changes concerning the leisure scales and the support for conventional norms have been demonstrated. But independently of these changes occurring in the follow-up period, the relation between all these variables and delinquency, practically remained unchanged.

Using the global integration scores we are able to illustrate the relations between integration and delinquency in 1981 and 1983. This is shown by the following figure where both are represented.

Fig. 5 shows that in 1981 as well as in 1983 the relation between integration and delinquency is very strong. The correlation coefficient for 1981 is $r = -.49$ and for 1983 $r = -.41$. Moreover, we see that the curves are practically identical, indicating that the same processes are operating now as two years before.

One question one may ask is whether earlier social integration would have some predictive value with respect to later delinquency. This would imply that social integration is a fairly stable variable: remaining constant, it influences earlier as well as later delinquency. Secondly, we want to trace the effects of changes in integration. If there is any change, how does it affect actual delinquent behavior?

As appears from the outline we can express these analyses by two arrows: the first one points from earlier integration to renewed delinquency, the other points from earlier integration to later integration and then to delinquency.

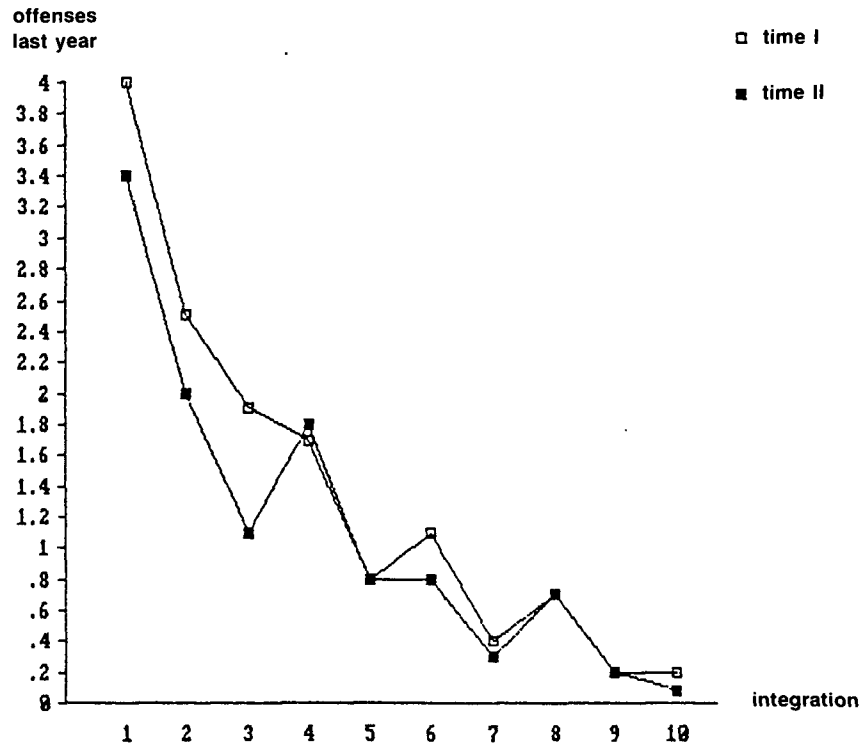


Fig. 5. Total integration scores and offending frequency last year - 1981 and 1983

1981

1983

Integration → Integration
 Delinquency → Delinquency
 Judicial contacts → Judicial contacts

Considering our first problem, regression analysis shows that the relation between earlier integration and earlier delinquency ($R = .63$) is much stronger than the one between earlier integration and later delinquency ($R = .44$). This would suggest that the two states are related; but as social integration is not a given state once and for all, but is changing over time, the relation between earlier integration and earlier delinquency is stronger than the relation between that integration level and later delinquency.

Path-analysis shows this more clearly. The correlation of earlier integration with later delinquency is $r = -.22$, $p < 0.001$. However, controlling for later

integration, that correlation disappears completely ($r = .01, p < 0.039$). This means in fact that, when one controls for the actual integration level, earlier social integration is *only indirectly* related to the delinquent behavior of juveniles two years later.

These results suggest that as situations change, consequently behavior changes. Two years in the life of a juvenile means a considerable period: the situation in his family, with respect to school or job, leisure occupations and friends may change over time.

In our study we have stated as a hypothesis that delinquency would decrease with improving level of integration and would increase in case of lower integration level, remaining constant if no change occurred. This has been tested by splitting the group of earlier offenders into three sub-groups: those who had a low integration level (scores 1, 2, 3), those of medium integration level (scores 4, 5, 6) and those who were well integrated (scores 7, 8, 9, 10). We then compared average offending frequency in 1981 and 1983.

Table 10. Earlier integration and delinquency level in 1981 and 1983

	<i>Low integration level</i>	<i>Medium integration level</i>	<i>High integration level</i>
<i>Offending frequency</i>	<i>N = 84</i>	<i>N = 99</i>	<i>N = 145</i>
1981	2.9	1.4	0.3
1983	2.0	1.5	0.9

We note a clear difference in frequency of delinquent behavior between the three integration levels, a difference that remained fairly stable over the two years. This would suggest that overall the situation did not change for most of the juveniles. However, this analysis is too simple. We now attack the second question looking first at changes in social integration and then relating the changes to delinquency level. This is expressed by the second arrow in the model, the one that leads from earlier to later integration and then to delinquency.

Combining the two tables one gets the following. Of those who – in 1981 – had a low integration level, about 25% improved their situation. This has resulted in a considerable decrease of their offending frequency as is shown in column 4. The second group of medium integration level split up in three sub-groups: for half of them the integration level lowered, leading to more delinquency (average offending frequency increased from 1.4 to 2.3). The other

Table 11. Changes in integration level and in offending frequency in a two-year period

<i>Earlier integration</i>	<i>Earlier offending frequency</i>	<i>Later integration</i>	<i>Later offending frequency</i>
Low (1, 2, 3)	2.9	Low (N = 64)	2.3
		Medium (N = 16)	1.2
		High (N = 4)	1.0
Medium (4, 5, 6)	1.4	Low (N = 49)	2.3
		Medium (N = 31)	0.9
		High (N = 19)	0.3
High (7, 8, 9, 10)	0.3	Low (N = 28)	2.5
		Medium (N = 35)	1.1
		High (N = 82)	0.3

groups, whose integration level remained stable (one-third) or increased (20%), show a sizeable reduction in delinquency.

The third group also needs some comments. On a total of 145 juveniles, 63 or 43.5% had lower integration levels at time II. Somewhat less than half of them, now having a clearly low integration showed a considerable rise in average offending frequency (0.3 to 2.5). Only the sub-group that maintained its high integration level continued to have the very low average offending frequency of 0.3.

The table also shows that – independent of earlier integration – those who now have low, medium or high integration scores (column 3) also have similar delinquent behavior (column 4). In fact, what determines actual delinquent behavior is the actual integration level, and not the situation as it was two years ago.

Two more remarks on the changes in delinquent behavior. We have seen that the global integration of the sample as a whole has decreased during the two-year follow-up period: although the group of medium integration level has remained more or less stable, the group of high level has been reduced from half to one-third and the group of low level has increased from about 26% to 43%. But the offending frequency of the total sample has remained constant or is even slightly reduced. We would suggest that we are dealing here with an effect of ageing: social integration – as it has been measured in this study – declines with age. This means that lower integration levels are a normal maturation process, and not always translated into more delinquency. If this were not the case delinquency levels would now be higher than two years ago. Part of the global decline in integration thus should be attributed to the process of becoming adult and does not lead to more delinquency.

The second remark concerns the relation between earlier and later delinquency. One would expect an impact of earlier delinquent behavior on such later behavior and indeed path-analysis gives us a correlation of $r = .22$ ($p < 0.001$) between the two variables. However, when controlling for levels of integration, the relation disappears. This means that the best predictor of delinquency is the current level of social integration and *not* earlier delinquency.

10. Some conclusions

An important objective of this study was to test social control theory or as I prefer it, social integration theory. The theory claims that:

- the more a juvenile is attached to conventional significant others,
- the more he is committed to the values of conventional systems,
- the better he is involved in those systems,
- the more he believes in conventional values and norms,

the more conforming and the less delinquent his behavior will be.

We found these concepts valid and the operationalizations we used proved to differentiate clearly between conforming and more or less delinquent juveniles.

We have suggested some more nuances with respect to the meaning of conforming versus delinquent friends to juveniles. We also found that practically all juveniles subscribe to conventional norms regarding delinquency. On the whole, however, we may conclude that the theory finds confirmation in this study. We have attempted, in testing the theory, to shed some light on the processes by which alienation from conventional society takes place. The follow-up study gives even more support to the theory than our first study. Not only did we find that social integration is related to delinquency, but we were able to establish that changes in integration level have a direct impact on offending frequency: when integration increases offending frequency decreases; when integration decreases, offending frequency rises. These relations appeared to be particularly strong. On the basis of the results from the two studies we feel confident in stating that social control theory forms an essential contribution to explaining delinquent behavior. Having reached this conclusion, I would like to add a certain number of remarks.

First, girls are more conforming than boys in all respects: they have a stronger bond with their parents and spend more of their leisure time with them; they function better at school, both in terms of performance and of social behavior; they spend their leisure time in more positive ways and do not develop to any extent an attitude of bravado.

There are probably several factors that could explain these differences.

There still are in our country differences in socialization. For boys the emphasis is on autonomy and independence, while the socialization of girls is much more oriented towards the development of emotional ties with parents and family. Moreover, girls are subject to considerably more social control mechanisms than boys.

A second factor might be that as far as girls are concerned the faculty of developing and maintaining interpersonal relations is considered as more important than intellectual and socio-economic achievements. This means that, with respect to self-esteem, failure in school must mean more to boys than to girls, so that boys will try to find compensation for loss of status and look for ways to improve their status. One of these ways is to turn away from society, to join boys with similar problems and to commit delinquent acts.

Finally, it is possible that girls develop other compensation mechanisms than boys do, in case of weak integration in family and school. Thus girls might try to improve their status, not by delinquent, but by problem behavior such as early sexual intercourse, running away from home, truancy, spending leisure time outside the home, alcohol or drugs. However, our data do not support this hypothesis. If this were the case we should have found more problem behavior among girls than among boys, but boys and girls do not differ in this respect. Moreover, girls spend much of their leisure time within the family.

A second remark concerns the finding that practically no factor makes such an important contribution to delinquent behavior as failure in school. Such failure is strongly associated with frequent truanting, negative leisure activities, a 'tough guy' attitude, delinquent friends, frequent offending and deviations from conventional norms regarding delinquent behavior. If we want to undertake action in order to prevent delinquency we should address our efforts in the first place to the school. Moreover, our chances of success are greater when we approach an open and accessible system such as the school, then when we try to influence the essentially private sphere of the family.

A last remark concerns the delinquent peer group. A number of criminologists have claimed that one of the most important causes of delinquency must be found in a peer group transmitting deviant norms and values, condoning delinquent behavior: the delinquent subculture (Cloward and Ohlin, 1960; Cohen, 1955; Cressey, 1960). Our study shows this to be a simplification of reality. It is of course correct to state that delinquent peers approve and support delinquency, and indeed juveniles who have many delinquent friends deviate from conventional values with respect to delinquency. But the fact remains that it is not by chance or accident that youngsters join such a peer group.

On the contrary, it is those who fail in conventional sub-systems and consequently do not get any rewards from those systems, who turn towards such a

deviant peer group, where behaving like a 'tough guy', much drinking and committing offenses are the norm. This process is furthered by factors such as spending most of one's leisure time outside the home, truancy and running away, factors which are highly correlated with delinquent behavior.

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IV. SOCIAL CONTROL THEORY VERSUS DIFFERENTIAL ASSOCIATION

A test on panel data*

Marianne Junger

1. Introduction

Many variables are found to be correlates of juvenile delinquency in criminological research. For example, strong relations are usually found between delinquency of friends and delinquents, and between delinquent values and delinquent behavior. In almost every study these relations can be observed. However, theorists disagree about the causal ordering of the three variables (delinquent friends, delinquent values and delinquent behavior). Social control theory and differential association place them in a different order. According to differential association theory delinquent associates teach other youngsters delinquent values; as a result delinquency will follow. According to social control theory youngsters with low stakes in conformity and with weak bonds to conventional values, will be free to commit delinquent acts and will, at the same time, associate with delinquent friends. Delinquency and deviant friends both result from the same cause: a lack of social integration in conventional society.

In this study we will try to test models derived from both theories, and we will look for evidence for the causal ordering problem. Most studies which attacked this problem were limited to cross-sectional data (*e.g.*, Jensen, 1972; Hepburn, 1977; Johnson, 1979; Matsueda, 1982). In this research, panel data are available. The existence of a time lag will give more confidence about the causal order of relations.

First a short introduction will be given to both theoretical frameworks. A presentation of the data and the variables in the analyses follows. We will present a test of both theories using the LISREL V program. The chapter ends with a summary and a discussion of the results.

2. Differential association versus social control theory

2.1 *The theory of differential association*

Sutherland is the father of differential association theory. The first princi-

* Our special thanks are due to H. Hoogeveen who helped with the statistical analyses, and to Frans Schachtschabel for his help with the translation.

ples of this theory have been stated by him and by Cressey (Sutherland, 1956; Cressey, 1964; Sutherland and Cressey, 1974). The essence of differential association theory is relatively simple: criminal behavior is learned in interaction with others.* 'A person becomes delinquent because of an excess of definitions favorable to violation of law over definitions unfavorable to violation of law. This is the principle of differential association', 'Differential associations may vary in frequency, duration, priority and intensity' (Sutherland and Cressey, 1974).

There is a multitude of factors correlated with criminal behavior. All these factors are important in so far as they influence the contacts people have and their opportunity to come into contact with patterns of criminal behavior. But, from a theoretical point of view it is not necessary to explain why a person has the associations he has (Sutherland and Cressey, 1974). For example, family conditions and the neighborhood may be important because they influence differential opportunities for youngsters to associate with delinquent peers from whom they might learn criminal behavior. Therefore, there is never a direct relation between these elements (family, neighborhood, school etc.) and criminal behavior. Kornhauser calls all these elements 'aleatory factors', at least from the point of view of differential association theory (Kornhauser, 1978, p. 237). The model proposed by differential association theory can be summarized as follows.

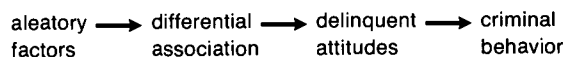


Fig. 1. Differential association theory (according to Kornhauser, 1978).

Support for differential association theory comes from among others: Glaser (1970), Cressey (1970), Burgess *et al.* (1979) and Matsueda (1982), Bruinsma (1985), Krohn *et al.* (1985).** Matsueda's (1982) analyses are especially interesting to us because his aim is comparable to our purpose in this chapter. He uses the same data as Hirschi (1969) to compare differential association theory with social control theory. With the LISREL IV computer program he tests the two models (Fig. 2).

The main difference between his social control model and his differential association model is that there are two additional arrows relating the social control variables (parental supervision and peer relationships) directly to delin-

* Other theorists claim that criminal behavior is learned but that interaction with others is not necessary. For example, stealing a fur coat is reinforcing itself (see for example: Jeffery, 1965; Burgess and Akers, 1966; Adams, 1973). We will not consider this version of the theory.

** A review of the literature and test of differential association theory can be found in Guenther (1970).

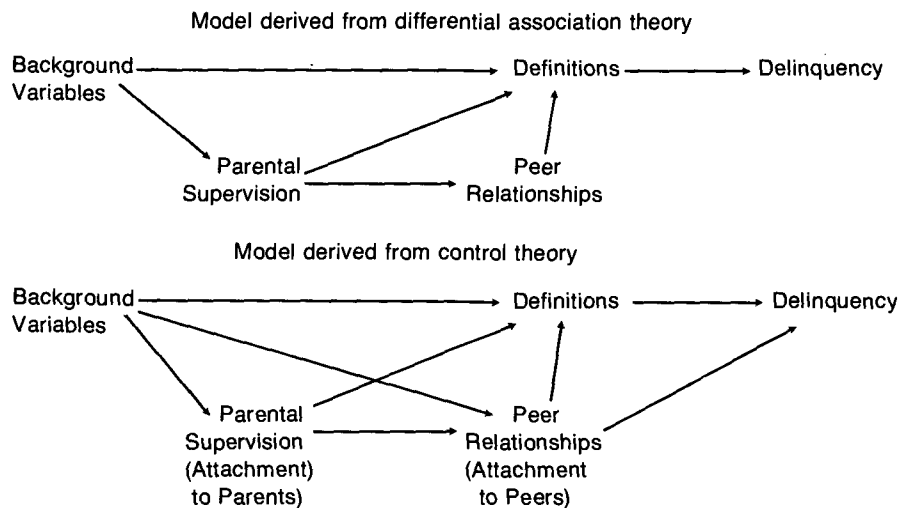


Fig. 2. Models tested by Matsueda (1982).

quency. In the model of differential association theory there is only one variable determining delinquent behavior: delinquent values. The fit of both models appears to be quite low (social control model: $\chi^2 = 97.6$; $df = 71$, $p = .02$; differential association model: $\chi^2 = 107.6$; $df = 78$; $p = .016$)*. Matsueda uses cross-sectional data, therefore the causal ordering of the variables remains uncertain. In addition there are some methodological problems about the way he used LISREL.** Therefore, according to his own words, his findings should be interpreted with care. He did not present a final test of social control versus differential association theory but 'has located possible sources of unreliability' in Hirschi's data (Matsueda, 1982, p. 501).

2.2 Social control theory

Social control theory has been developed by, among others Briar and Piliavin (1965) and Hirschi (1969). It is essentially Hirschi's approach that we will test here. The central question to explain delinquency according to Hirschi is not 'why do they do it' but 'why don't we do it' (Hirschi, 1969, p. 34) (see also Chapter 3 for an introduction to control theory). According to control the-

* He suggests that the relatively bad fit for both models is due to the relatively large sample ($N = 1140$, M.J.) and a large number of overidentifying restrictions (Matsueda, 1982, p. 497).

** Matsueda introduces correlating errors among indicators within and between theoretical constructs. Doing this usually improves the fit of the model. But correlating errors should be used only when there are sound reasons to do so. The necessity for Matsueda to use correlating errors might suggest that none of the hypothesized models fit the data sufficiently.

ory the motivation to commit delinquent acts is almost general and requires no special explanation, *e.g.*, stealing is very often an easier way to get money than to work for it. In differential association there is a positive motivation: people commit delinquent acts because they have learned to value this positively. For control theory – on the contrary – the motivation to be deviant is shared by everybody. The reason why most people ‘don’t do it’ is because they are bonded to society. Therefore they are not free to commit delinquent acts. The costs – in terms of the bonds they have to lose – would be too high. If youngsters lose their bond to society they are free to deviate, whereas in differential association theory youngsters are required to behave in a criminal way.

There are several components of the bond to society:

Attachment to significant others: youngsters usually have strong ties with their parents, teachers and friends. When these ties are weak, delinquency will not be restrained.

Commitment to conventional subsystems such as school and work. This is the ‘rational component’ of the bond. It is a desire to conform and to invest in the future in a conforming way (Hirschi, 1969, p. 20).

Involvement in conventional activities: this is the way youngsters function in their family, at school or at work. Youngsters who are able to function well in these subsystems, have a stronger bond to society.

Beliefs in conventional social norms and respect for prevailing legal norms. Social control states there is a single value system condemning delinquency. But, while this value system is shared by people, not everybody does feel the same commitment to these values. This does not mean that delinquents adhere to values requiring delinquent behavior, but it signifies an absence of beliefs which forbid delinquency. This leads to a state of normlessness according to control theory. The absence of beliefs prohibiting delinquent behavior has probably an independent effect on the probability to commit delinquent acts. According to control theory weak stakes in conformity (= weak bonds to conventional society) are related to weak bonds to the conventional value system and this makes delinquent behavior possible. In differential association theory a delinquent value system is a result of differential association, and delinquent behavior follows as a result of this process.

The role of attachment to friends and the influence of delinquent peers is one of the subjects of controversy in criminological theory. We will discuss Hirschi’s views on this point.

Hirschi (1969) stresses the fact that attachment to peers is not different in its consequences from attachment to parents with respect to delinquency, whereas in differential association theory attachment to deviant peers (if not outweighed by attachment to conventional others) will lead to delinquency.

For Hirschi attachment has only one dimension, it doesn't matter to whom one is attached, while the balance of attachment is the key variable in differential association theory.

According to Hirschi the following relations are important:

- Usually youngsters attached to their parents will also be attached to their friends: there is a positive relation between these two aspects of attachment. In differential association theory strong attachment to deviant peers will very often be a compensation for low attachment to parents (Hirschi, 1969, p. 143).
- Attachment to peers is related positively to commitment to conventional success goals. For differential association theory this relation will not hold in the case of delinquent friends.
- Strong attachment to peers is related to less delinquency.

Hirschi does find a strong relation between having delinquent friends and reporting delinquent behavior. On the basis of his analysis he draws the following conclusions about the influence of delinquent friends:

- Having delinquent friends is related to low stakes in conformity; it is not a result of differential opportunity but the consequence of already weakened bonds with society.
- Relations with delinquent peers aren't usually warm, and attachment to delinquent friends is not strong. Differential association theory on the contrary asserts that delinquency is learned 'within intimate personal groups' (Sutherland and Cressey, 1974, p. 5).

When there is a strong attachment to delinquent friends, delinquency levels are lower instead of higher as one would expect according to differential association. Hirschi (1965, p. 152) concludes: 'we honour those we admire not by imitation, but by adherence to conventional standards'. In Hirschi's model, social control is related to delinquency and to delinquent peers. There is also a direct relation between delinquent peers and delinquency. Hirschi attributes the effect of delinquent friends on delinquent behavior to group processes (and not to the learning of delinquent values). 'Although these criminal influences are beyond the reach of control theory, group process theories are forced to work with material supplied to them by the weakening of social controls' (Hirschi, 1969, p. 161).

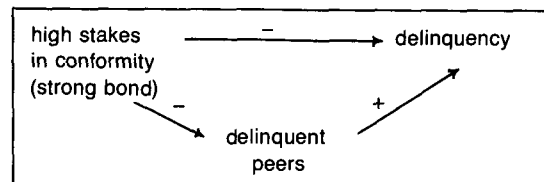


Fig. 3. Social control theory.

The different elements of the bond to society are positively related to each other:

- attachment and commitment vary together
- commitment and involvement are related
- attachment is related to beliefs.

Insofar as the child respects (loves and fears) his parents and adults in general, he will accept their rules (Hirschi, 1968, p. 30).

Many studies support the theory of social control: Jensen (1972), Hindelang (1973), Hepburn (1977), Johnson (1979), Kornhauser (1978), Wiatrowski *et al.* (1981), Junger-Tas and Junger (1984, 1985), Thornberry *et al.* (1985), Patterson and Dishion (1985), La Grange and White (1985), see also Junger-Tas (Chapter 3 of this volume).

Interesting from the point of view of our analysis is Hindelang's research. Hindelang (1973), in a partial replication of Hirschi's study, finds similar results, but with two exceptions. Firstly, there is almost no relation between attachment to parents and attachment to friends. Secondly – and for control theory this is a relatively important point – there is a positive relation between attachment to friends and delinquency. Therefore Hindelang (1973) suggests that, contrary to Hirschi's position, attachment is not unidimensional and that its effects on delinquent behavior depend upon the characteristics of the persons to whom the attachment is directed.

The results of La Grange and White (1985) are also quite interesting. They compared the relations of social control variables (family and school integration) and the variable 'delinquent friends' to delinquent behavior for three groups: 12-, 15- and 18-year-old youngsters.* They found that the influence of social control variables seems to peak for 15-year-old youngsters, while for 18-year-old youngsters the only variable related to delinquency is delinquent friends. Their results stress the fact that there may be shifts in the relative weight of factors influencing delinquent behavior for different age groups. They suggest that research, focusing on causal processes, should concentrate more on dynamical processes at work in the causing of delinquency. However, they indicate that panel studies might be preferable to analyse these processes because the comparison of three cross-sectional groups does not rule out the possibility that these three groups might differ significantly on some – unknown – variables.

* They interpret the influence of delinquent friends as supportive for differential association theory. We endorse Kornhauser's (1978) view that the influence of delinquent friends can be seen as a result of the presence of group processes. This is not supportive of differential association in itself. According to differential association theory, the influence of delinquent friends has to pass through delinquent values. Only this last aspect has a direct impact on delinquency. La Grange and White cannot verify this aspect because they did not measure delinquent values in their study.

Summarizing, social control theory and differential association theory use the same concepts – attachment to friends, delinquent peers, values and delinquent behavior – but place them in a different causal order. For social control theory the bond to society is the central variable in the explanation of delinquency, while in differential association theory control variables have no direct relation to criminal behavior.

We will now discuss the main features and the purpose of the present study.

3. The present study

The data used for the analysis presented in this chapter, come from a panel study on juvenile delinquency and its causes and on the effects of judicial contacts on youngsters. We will present the main features of this study. For more details about the research design and the results of the study we refer to Junger-Tas and Junger (1984, 1985) and to Junger-Tas (this volume).

In 1981 a group of youngsters, aged 12–18 years, were interviewed by means of a structured questionnaire ($N=1980$). The largest group was a representative sample of youngsters of the cities of The Hague (475,000 inhabitants) and Venlo (75,000 inhabitants) in The Netherlands. An additional group of youngsters was interviewed at the police station and at the prosecutor's office, the study's objective requiring more youngsters with judicial contacts in the sample. Two years later a sample of the first group was interviewed a second time. This group was selected in such a way that youngsters with different levels of involvement in delinquency and judicial contacts would be represented. Youngsters in the 1981 sample were divided in five groups (see also Junger-Tas, Chapter 2 of this volume):

- youngsters reporting no delinquency,
- youngsters reporting delinquency but no police contacts,
- youngsters reporting offenses and unofficial police contacts,
- youngsters with official police contacts,
- youngsters with prosecutor contacts.

In the 1983 sample, 691 juveniles from these five groups were selected for a second interview. From this sample 148 youngsters could not be reached, 162 refused to participate whereas 48 were not at home after an appointment was made. This means we got a response of 48%. In the final sample, 14% were girls and 86% were boys, their age ranged from 14 to 20 years.* The analysis

* The underrepresentation of girls is a result of two factors. Less girls than boys were interviewed (in 1981) in the first place, because they were assumed to be less delinquent than boys. As was expected, they were less delinquent and as a consequence few girls had judicial contacts. Because of the criteria which were applied (youngsters coming from different levels of judicial intervention) much more boys than girls were selected for a second interview.

presented in this paper is based on this group which was interviewed twice ($N=332$).

Youngsters who were not interviewed (in the second sample) were slightly but significantly more delinquent (according to official judicial information). Because the objective of our analysis is to study relations rather than to give a description of a population, we think this fact will not interfere with the validity of the results of our analysis, as long as youngsters, coming from all levels of judicial contacts, are represented in the 1983 sample (see also Junger-Tas, Chapter 2 of this volume for more details).

3.1 The variables in the analysis

All the scales included in the present analysis, were constructed by means of the computer programs HOMALS and CANALS (see also: Gifi, 1980; Van den Berg and de Leeuw, 1983; Tenenhaus and Young, 1985). HOMALS is a form of principal component analysis (PCA), specialized in handling nominal data (no linearity assumptions are needed). As in PCA- or factor analysis, HOMALS produces several dimensions (or factors). The scores of the respondents on these dimensions can be used as scales.

CANALS is a program which performs a canonical correlation analysis on data of different measurement levels (nominal, ordinal or numerical). Two sets of variables are scaled in such a way as to produce maximum canonical correlations between the two sets. The scores of the respondents on the canonical axes can be used as scales. When CANALS was used to make scales, the delinquency measures (self-reported and official delinquency) constituted one set of variables; the other set consisted of the variables which were to be scaled. The advantage of this procedure is that the independent variables can be scaled in such a way as to have a maximum correlation with the delinquency measures which were relevant dependent variables in these analyses (the only exception is 'delinquent friends'). These programs are very well suited for the construction of scales based on nominal or ordinal data. Seven concepts were measured twice (in 1981 and 1983). The scales are constructed in the same way for the data of both interviews. A presentation of seven concepts follows.

Delinquent behavior (1981, 1983):

We used HOMALS to construct a delinquency scale. Two variables were used:

- Self-reported delinquency during the last year. This is a count of the 'yes' answers on seven questions about delinquency: shoplifting, malicious damage, violence against persons, theft at school, bicycle theft, soccer hooliganism, joy-riding.
- A count of the number of judicial contacts during the last year.

Number of delinquent friends (1981, 1983):

This variable consists of the answers on the question: how many of your friends have been picked up by the police?

Beliefs regarding delinquent behavior (1981, 1983):

We constructed a scale (with HOMALS) on the basis of two variables:

- How seriously do you evaluate the offenses mentioned in the interview?
- Would you do these things more often if you were sure not to be discovered?

Family integration (1981), family integration (1983):

With CANALS we made a family integration scale assembling information about:

- Communication of the youngsters with their parents.
- Direct control by the parents of their child.
- Activities shared by the whole family.
- Quarrels in the family.

School integration (1981), school integration (1983):

The following information about school integration was used to construct a scale (with CANALS):

- Commitment to school.
- Attachment to school and teachers.
- School behavior (punishment).
- Truancy.

Leisure time activities outside the home (1981, 1983):

This scale measures the amount of leisure time spent outside the home and the extent to which youngsters have unconventional leisure time activities. The scale is scored with CANALS, using questions about the number of evenings the youngster goes out, the rate of alcohol use by his friends and himself, and the number of evenings they are going to disco's.

Attachment to friends (1981, 1983):

We used two variables to make this scale (with CANALS):

- Do you discuss your problems with your friends?
- Do you consider the opinion of your friends very important?

3.2 Two hypothetical models

3.2.1 Social control theory

Following Hirschi we can formulate several hypotheses:

The elements of the bond with society are expected to vary together within one period and over time. Hirschi stresses the importance of family integration. Therefore it is expected that family integration will influence school inte-

gration and attachment to friends. School integration will be related to the amount of leisure time spent outside the home. It is also expected that youngsters with a relatively strong attachment to friends will prove to have conventional leisure time activities.

Beliefs regarding delinquent behavior will be related positively to all the other control variables.

Delinquency of friends is related to low stakes in conformity, especially to lower attachment to friends and to less conventional values.

Delinquent behavior will be a result of low stakes in conformity and the presence of delinquent friends. The latter relation (delinquent friends – delinquent behavior) is not really a social control relation. Hirschi calls it a relation which arises from the operation of group processes. In Fig. 4 we present the hypothetical model according to social control theory. As the reader can see we hypothesize the same pattern of relations to hold for the data in 1981 and 1983, although it might be possible – according to LaGrange and White (1985) – that the influence of family integration declines when the youngsters are two years older, whereas the influence of delinquent friends might increase after two years.

The only relations between 1981 and 1983 are those relating the four social control scales* (above in the scheme) to their parallel scales in 1983.

3.2.2 Possible extensions of the social control model

The model of social control theory as it is presented in Fig. 3 is relatively simple. The only longitudinal arrows are those connecting the 1981 social control scales** family integration (1981), school integration (1981), leisure time activities (1981), attachment to friends (1981), to their parallel scales in 1983.*** This might be an unrealistic picture. First it may be possible that the 1981 social control scales[◊] are related to different social control scales in 1983 instead of being related only to their parallel scales. For example, it may be possible for family integration (1981) to be related to family integration (1983) and also to school integration (1983) because, just as family and school situa-

* Family integration (1981)–family integration (1983), school integration (1981)–school integration (1983), leisure time activities (1981)–leisure time activities (1983), attachment to friends (1981)–attachment to friends (1983).

** Family integration (1981), school integration (1981), leisure time activities (1981), attachment to friends (1981).

*** Family integration (1983), school integration (1983), leisure time activities (1983), attachment to friends (1983).

◊ Family integration (1981), school integration (1981), leisure time activities (1981), and beliefs (1981).

tions are related within the same period, the family situation of 1981 might influence the school situation of the youngsters in 1983 as well as the future family integration itself. This seems to be a more realistic approach which is perfectly in accordance with social control theory.

Second, the scales should be conceived as a reflection of the situation of the juvenile at one particular point in time. In the questionnaire youngsters were asked to take the last year as a reference period. In the case of delinquency the question was asked explicitly for each offense: how many times during the last year? But all the concepts we have measured at one moment should be considered as 'snapshots' of continuous processes. Following this line of reasoning it might be possible for the social control variables in 1981 to covary with the dependent variables beliefs, delinquent friends and delinquent behavior in 1983. Adding these arrows would be in accordance with social control theory: they relate the same scales as they do in the social control model but at different points in time. The presence of these arrows would illustrate the fact that processes going on at one point in time do influence the future situation of the juvenile.

Finally a relation between delinquent behavior (1981) and the 1983 variables (except for delinquent behavior (1983) might appear in the data. This is not predicted by social control theory but it is not in conflict with it. It illustrates again that we are dealing with processes. For example, a child with low stakes in conformity and a high delinquency level may engage himself more and more in problematic situations. This, for example, can result in a relation between delinquent behavior and family integration (1983) or delinquency (1981) and school integration (1983), because in the family and in school, parents and siblings, teachers and pupils might react to deviant behavior of the youngsters and relations between them and the youngsters might deteriorate even more.

If we find a relation between delinquent behavior (1981)—delinquency of friends (1983) this will support the theory of the Gluecks (Glueck and Glueck, 1950) that delinquent youths look for delinquent companions. Thus delinquent friends (or additional delinquent friends in 1983) are a result and not a cause of delinquency as differential association theory states.

To summarize, three types of arrows are allowed to complete the first hypothetical social control model (Fig. 4).

- The five social control scales of 1983 might be related to the social control scales of 1983.
- The relations within one period might be found between the same scales but relating '1981' scales to '1983' scales.
- Delinquent behavior in 1981 might influence the 1983 variables (except for delinquent behavior (1983)). These arrows can be added to the model

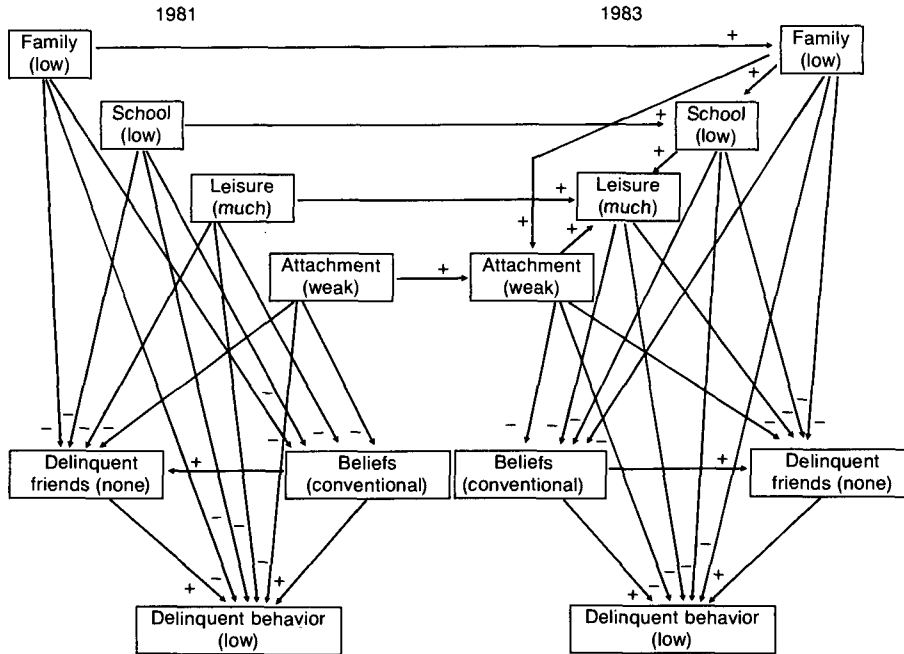


Fig. 4. Hypothetical social control Model.*

of Fig. 3 without altering the principles of social control theory.

3.2.3 Differential association theory

According to differential association theory youngsters commit delinquent acts because they learn to value delinquency positively. Therefore only one scale is related directly to delinquency: beliefs (Fig. 5). This is the first difference with social control theory. Beliefs which value delinquency positively are mainly learned through association with delinquent friends. In the figure of differential association theory this relation will be represented by three arrows** instead of arrows where beliefs influence the choice of delinquent friends, as social control theory predicts. This is the second difference with control theory.

* The relations between Attachment 83, School 83, Leisure 83 and Family 83 are not drawn for the 1983 indices, because with LISREL it is impossible to define relations between exogenous variables.

** Delinquent friends (1981)–beliefs (1981), delinquent friends (1983)–beliefs (1983) and delinquent friends (1981)–beliefs (1983).

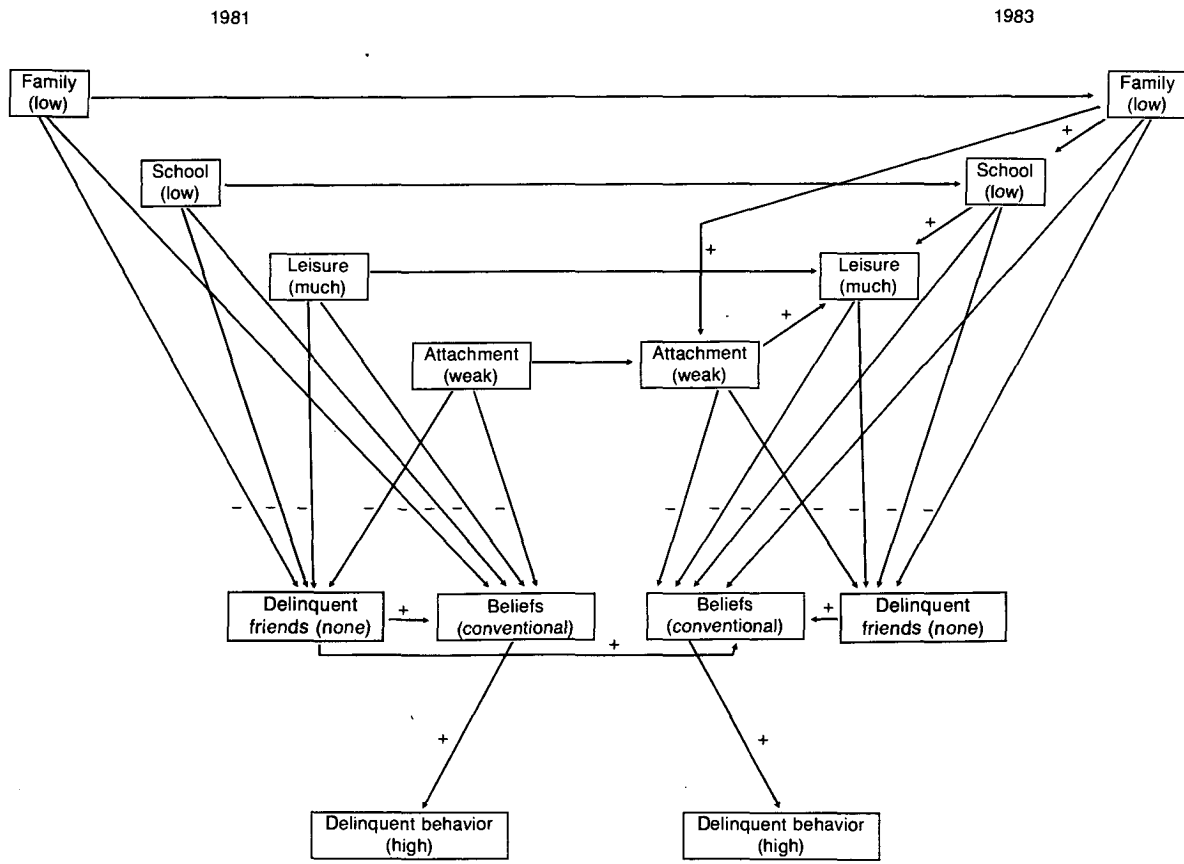


Fig. 5. Differential association theory.

Usually family integration, school integration, leisure time spent outside the home and attachment to friends are only indirectly important for delinquency, because they influence the associations of the youngsters. But in principle, according to the theory delinquent values can be learned from everyone and these variables may influence delinquent beliefs directly.

Therefore, arrows were added in the figure, relating the four social control scales (family integration, school integration, leisure time spent outside the home and attachment to friends) to each other, within one year and from the 1981 to the 1983 scales. We took them over from the social control model (Fig. 4) because – even if differential association theory says little about their mutual relations – it seems unrealistic to suppose no existing relations between them. Consequently, the best solution seemed to apply to these four social control variables the principles of control theory (Fig. 5).

3.2.4 Possible extensions of differential association theory

Just as we saw for social control theory, some arrows could be added to the model, presented in Fig. 5, without altering the principles of differential association theory.

The scales of family integration, school integration, leisure time spent outside the home and attachment to friends may covary together within the same year and from 1981 to 1983 in more ways than is presented in Fig. 5. For example, school integration (1981) can be related to school integration (1983) but can also covary with leisure time activities (1983).

Arrows relating the scales within 1981 can relate the same variables from 1981 to 1983. For example, beliefs (1981) is related to delinquent behavior (1981), therefore we may extend the figure by adding the arrow relating beliefs (1981) to delinquent behavior (1983).

Some of the dependent variables in 1981 (delinquent friends, beliefs, delinquent behavior) might influence the independent variables of 1983 (school integration, family integration, leisure time, attachment to friends). These relations are the result of the fact that social integration and delinquent behavior can best be considered as processes (see 2.1.2).

4. The analysis of the data

4.1 *The method of analysis*

To test the probability of a hypothetical model we used the LISREL-V computer program. For an introduction of LISREL we refer to Jöreskog and Sör-

bom (1981), Scott Long (1983), Sarris and Stronkhorst (1984) and Van der Heyden *et al.* (1985). For our purpose LISREL has two important advantages. We will discuss only briefly some features of LISREL which are helpful to interpret the figures, presented later in this chapter.

4.1.1 Some features of LISREL

The input for LISREL is a matrix of observed correlations (or covariances). On the basis of hypothesized relations, LISREL estimates a new correlation matrix. To measure the difference between these two matrixes a chi-square test can be performed. If the test value is not significant the data do not differ significantly from the hypothesized model; in that case the model can be accepted.

In LISREL a distinction is made between exogenous variables and endogenous variables. *Endogenous variables* are variables which are predicted by other variables in the model. *Exogenous variables* are variables which are not predicted by the variables in the model. The relations between the endogenous and exogenous variables are expressed in the general linear structural equation (1):

$$(1) \eta = B\eta + \Gamma\xi + \zeta$$

Where η is a vector of endogenous variables,
 ξ is a vector of exogenous variables,
 ζ is a vector of errors,
 B and Γ are matrices of coefficients.

In this analysis the exogenous variables are: family, school, leisure time and attachment (1981); the endogenous variables are: family, school, leisure time and attachment (1983) and delinquency of friends, beliefs and delinquency (1981 and 1983). Structural equations can be represented graphically in a figure of variables in which arrows indicate which variables are to be predicted by which other variables. The values of β and γ are usually placed near the arrows to indicate the relative weight of the relations. The program also computes significance tests (*t*-values) for the β and γ coefficients.

As can be seen from (1) there are errors involved in the prediction of the endogenous variables: variables cannot be predicted perfectly because possibly not all relevant variables can be taken into account.* LISREL also makes it possible to estimate the correlations between these 'errors in equations'. A cor-

* LISREL also allows errors in variables. 'Errors in variables' are sometimes introduced when several variables are supposed to measure one latent variable. As we do not construct factors in the present analyses the concept 'errors in variables' is not used.

related error can be interpreted as resulting from a common variable (*i.e.*, a common cause) which was left out from both equations. For example, a model is constituted of three variables: delinquency is a result of I.Q. and family situation, and I.Q. is the result of the family situation. Obviously in a model as simple as this one, a lot of important variables are left out. If the hypothesized model does not fit the data, by allowing for correlated errors, an acceptable fit might probably be found. This means that important common causes of I.Q. and delinquency, which are the predicted variables of the model (*c.q.* the school situation), are left out of the model. The question arises what value a model has, when correlated errors have to be introduced into the model in order to get an acceptable fit. Therefore researchers usually do not allow for correlated errors. However, in panel data it is usual to introduce correlated errors when similar variables are predicted at two points in time. For example, in the present analysis delinquency of friends, beliefs and delinquency are predicted twice by other variables in the model (1981 and 1983). Variables that are absent from the equations predicting delinquency of friends (or beliefs or delinquency) in 1981 are also missing in 1983. Therefore we will allow for correlated errors between the equations predicting beliefs, delinquency of friend and delinquent behavior in 1981 and 1983.* Correlated errors are usually represented by curved arrows. LISREL computes modification indices. These modification indices give an indication of the extent to which relations – which are not represented in the model – will lead to a lower chi-square (all other things being equal) and therefore improve the fit.

4.2.2 The procedure of the analysis.

We will test three models for both theoretical frame works.

- We will test the model as specified in Figs. 4 and 5.
- If the model does not fit the data ($p < .05$) we will, in a second step, leave out all the non-significant relations (the β and γ coefficient) and test this new model. The presence of non-significant coefficients indicates we overfitted the model, for example: we introduced more relations in the hypothesized model than was necessary, to obtain a certain degree of fit.
- If the model still does not fit the data well enough we will inspect the modification scales, computed by LISREL. These modification scales indicate

* No correlated errors between equations are possible between the exogenous variables of the model (family, school, leisure time and attachment in 1981) and their parallel variables in 1983 because, as was discussed before, exogenous variables are not predicted by other variables in the model. Therefore there can be no errors in equations.

to what extent relations – which are not represented in the model – will lead to a lower chi-square and therefore improve the fit.

This information, in combination with guidelines about the theoretically acceptable extensions of the model (explained in 3.2.2. and 3.2.4.) will give an indication of what relations might improve the fit of the model. Relations which fulfil both criteria (high modification scale and theoretically correct) will be added to the model. If the model still does not fit the data we will have to conclude that no adequate model can be found. As mentioned above these three steps will be followed twice: first, for social control theory and second for differential association theory.

4.2 The results for social control theory

The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The chi-square for models estimated ($N=261$)

<i>Social control theory</i>	χ^2	df	p
model 1 (Fig. 3)	116.4	44	.00
model 2 (like model 1) minus 12 parameters ($p < .10$)*	129.7	56	.00
model 3 (like model 2, adding 11 parameters)**	50.3	45	.27
<i>Differential association theory (D.A)</i>			
model 4 (Fig. 5)	255.9	53	.00
model 5 (like model 4, minus 9 parameters and adding 1 parameter)***	258.4	61	.00
model 6 (like model 5, adding 9 parameters)****	185.5	52	.00

* See appendix (A)

** See appendix (B)

*** See appendix (C)

**** See appendix (D)

First we tested the model, described by Fig. 4 (model 1). This model does not fit the data. The next step was to remove relations from the hypothesized

model which were non-significant. In this way 12 relations (or parameters) were removed. We tested this model (model 2). The fit of model 2 is still unacceptable. Finally, modification scales were inspected. Those parameters with a high modification scale (> 5) on the one hand and which were in accordance with the principles of possible extensions of the model on the other hand, were added to the model (see also section 2.1.2.). In this way 11 parameters were added to model 2 to produce model 3. All the parameters added, relate 1981 variables to 1983 variables (except for family integration (1983)—leisure time activities (1983)).

For reasons of clarity the graphical representation of model 3 is divided in two figures. In Fig. 6 the arrows are represented which relate scales measured within the same year and three curved arrows for the three correlated errors. In Fig. 7 we drew the arrows which relate scales, measured in 1981 to scales, measured in 1983.*

We will now look at the hypotheses, formulated in section 2.1. and compare them with the final model (model 3).

The social control variables vary together within the same year and over time. Globally, one might say this statement is confirmed. In Figs. 6 and 7 the four social control variables (family integration, school integration, leisure time, attachment to friends) appear to be related to each other. (The role of beliefs will be discussed in section 4.2.2.) However, there are some differences in the final model in comparison with the hypothesized model. For the 1983 variables the following relations appear**:

- Family integration is related positively to school integration.
- Youngsters who are well integrated at school spend less time outside the home.
- Youngsters with a strong bond to their friends have also more conventional leisure time activities. This is just as was expected. However, family integration is not related to attachment to friends, but it does influence leisure time activities.

We have to be careful in generalizing these findings because, as we will see later in this section and because of the findings of La Grange and White (1985), it might be that for younger children these relations would be somewhat different.

* Two parameters which were not significant ($< .10$) are not drawn in the model (family integration (1981)—family integration (1983), family integration (1983)—attachment to friends (1983)).

** There are differences between boys and girls: boys are somewhat less integrated than girls. However, sex does not influence the relations presented here (social integration—delinquency). The processes are the same for both sexes, that is why we will not differentiate between them in these analyses. In Chapter 1 sex differences in social integration levels are discussed.

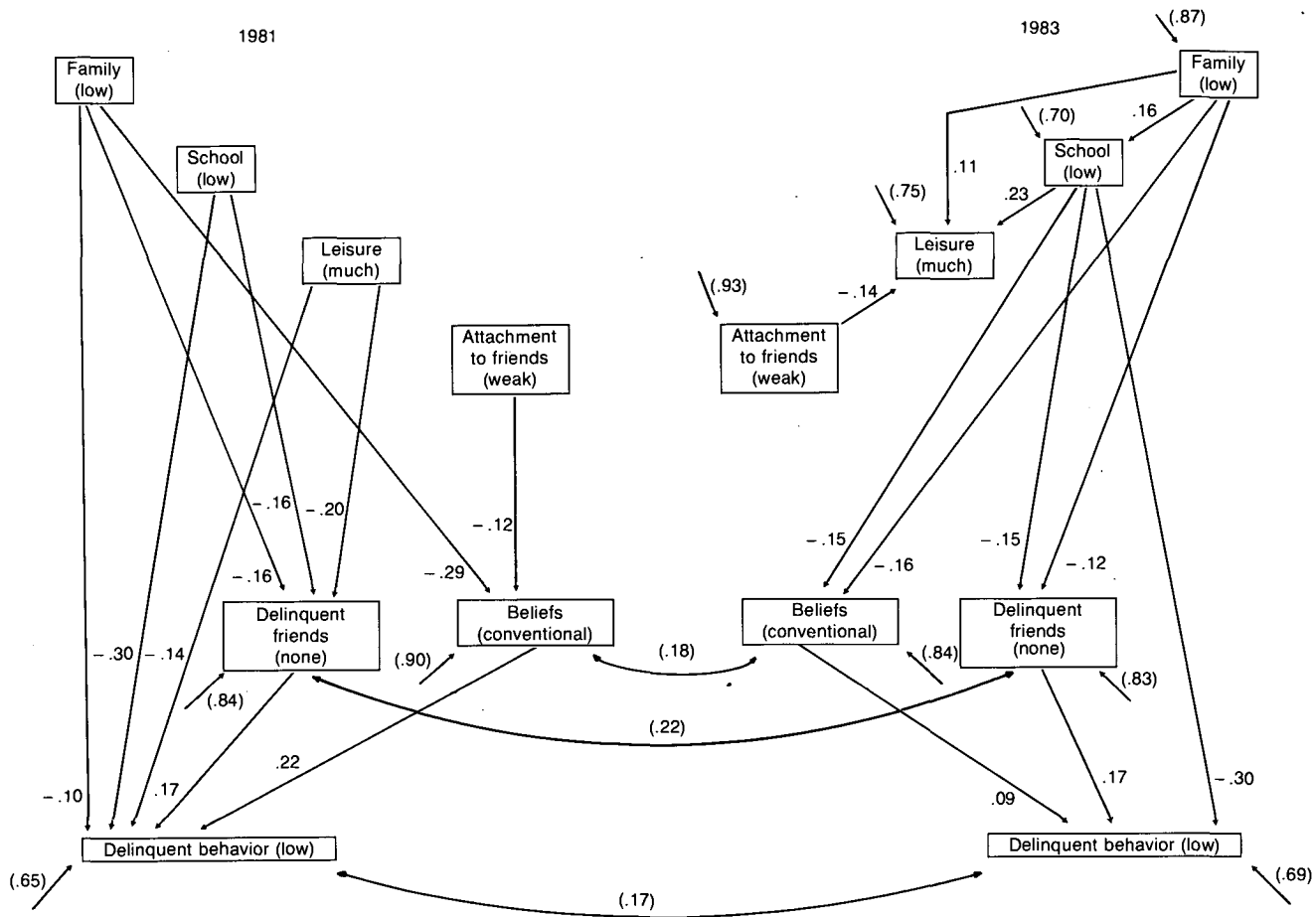


Fig. 6. M.L. estimates of model 3 (arrows relate to indices measured at the same point in time).

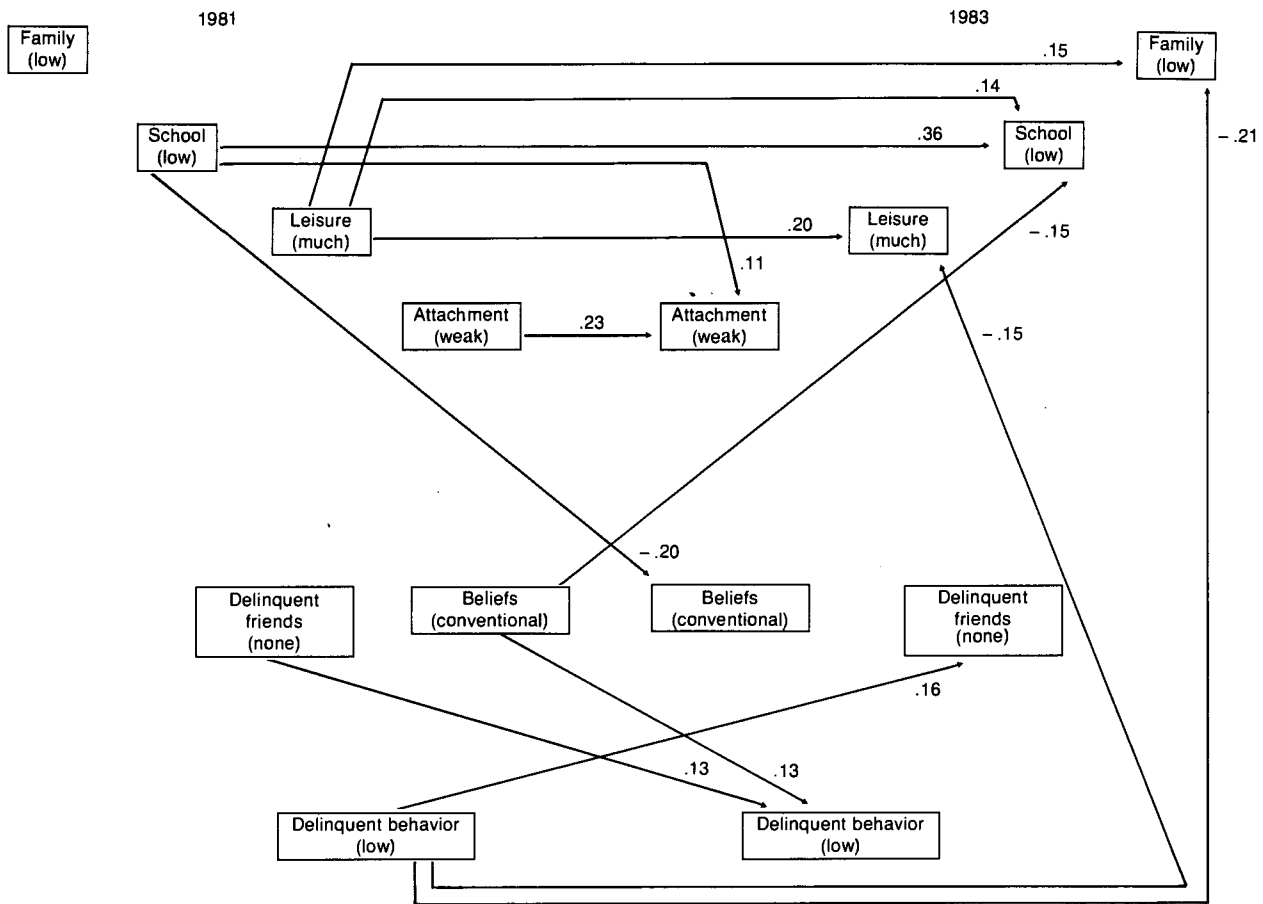


Fig. 7. M.L.-estimates of model 3 (arrows relate to indices measured in 1981 and 1983).

There are, as hypothesized, positive relations between the social control variables of 1981 and 1983. School integration, leisure time activities, attachment to friends in 1981, are related to their parallel variables in 1983. Only family integration (1981) is not related to family integration (1983) as we expected. There are, however, relations in the model between the social integration variables in 1981 and 1983 we did not expect, but which are in accordance with social control theory.

Delinquent behavior (1981) seems to influence future social integration (family integration and leisure time activities in 1983). We think this illustrates what we introduced in 3.2.2. When we are describing social integration and delinquency, we have to keep in mind that we are dealing with dynamic processes. This results in more arrows between the variables measured in 1981 and 1983 than we hypothesized.

School integration is influenced besides school integration (1981) by leisure and beliefs in 1981.

As Hirschi (1969) stated attachment to friends is related positively (directly or indirectly) to the other elements of the bond with society. There is no direct negative relationship between family integration (1983) and attachment to friends (1983) as one might expect according to differential association theory (strong attachment to friends as a compensation for weak family ties; see also 2.2.).

Beliefs are related positively to the other control variables

As was predicted, beliefs (1981) are related relatively strongly to family integration and attachment to friends. Contrary to our model, the other two control variables (school integration (1981), leisure time activities (1981)) are not related to beliefs. In 1983 the situation is different: beliefs (1983) are related to family integration (1983) (the relation is weaker than in 1981) but not to attachment to friends. Beliefs in 1983 are relatively strongly related both to school integration in 1981 and 1983. It appears that when the youngsters are two years older the family influence is declining, the impact of the bond with friends disappears, but the importance of school remains strong.

Delinquency of friends is related to low stakes in conformity

In 1981 youngsters who are weakly integrated in their family and at school, and have unconventional leisure time activities, have more delinquent friends than youngsters with high stakes in conformity. This is supportive of social control theory. However, attachment to friends and beliefs are not related to delinquent friends as was hypothesized. In 1983 having delinquent friends is also related to the family- and school situation and is not related to attachment to friends. The influence of leisure time activities disappears.

What is striking is the presence of a relation between delinquent behavior in

1981 and delinquency of friends in 1983. Within cross-sectional data one has to be very careful about causal inferences. The fact that we are dealing here with panel data gives more (but not total) confidence in the causal ordering. This relationship delinquent behavior (1981)–delinquent friends (1983) supports the theory of the Gluecks (1950) that youngsters choose friends in whom they recognize themselves: delinquent youngsters choose delinquent friends ('birds of a feather flock together'). This is quite the opposite causal order of what differential association predicts.

We conclude that having delinquent friends does not happen by chance; it is obviously related to low social integration, just as control theory states; it also is a result of prior delinquent behavior.

Delinquency is related to low stakes in conformity

For 1981 all the variables are related directly* or indirectly** to delinquent behavior.

In 1983 the influence of attachment to friends, and leisure time disappears. The influence of family integration seems to decline in 1983: the direct influence of family on delinquent behavior disappeared, only an indirect effect (through delinquent friends) remains. School integration, beliefs and delinquency of friends are the scales related directly to delinquency.

We can see again that aspects of the youngsters' lives in 1981 seem to influence future delinquency levels. Delinquency of friends and beliefs in 1981 are related to delinquent behavior in 1983, independent of delinquent friends and beliefs in 1983.

As we mentioned before, attachment to friends is related to less delinquent behavior through beliefs (1981) when we look at the data from 1981. This supports Hirschi's findings about the influence of attachment to friends. These results differ from the results presented by Hindelang (1973) who found that the influence of attachment depends upon the person to whom one is attached: attachment to unconventional others might lead to more delinquent behavior. In 1983 however, the influence of attachment to friends disappears.

4.3 The results of differential association theory

To test differential association theory, the same steps were repeated as for social control theory (see also 4.2.2.). The results of the analyses are presented in Table 1. The first model (see also Fig. 5) tested for differential association theory is model 4 of Table 1. It has a very bad fit. Leaving out non-significant

* Family integration (1981), school integration (1981), leisure time activities (1981), delinquent friends (1981), beliefs (1981).

** Through attachment to friends (1981).

relations ($p > .10$) does not improve the fit (model 5 of Table 1). (The relation delinquent friends (1981)–beliefs (1983) which represents the influence of delinquent friends on delinquent values over two years, was not significant and was also removed from model 4.) We inspected the modification scales of model 5 and when they were high (> 5) and represented relations in accordance with the principles of possible extensions of the model, we added those parameters in the model (model 6 of Table 1). The chi-square is much lower but the fit is still bad.

In model 6 we allowed delinquent behavior to be related only to beliefs as differential association requires. However it might be that the measurement of beliefs is not as valid and reliable as it should be. Because this variable is essential for differential association theory this fact could disturb our analysis. Therefore one more model was tested where relations, relating delinquent friends directly to delinquent behavior were added.* Still the model does not fit the data ($\chi^2 = 135$; $df = 49$; $p < .001$). But adding ‘social control arrows’ can lead to an acceptable model (see appendix E).

Therefore we conclude – contrary to Matsueda (1982) – that the social control variables are needed to find an acceptable model and that delinquent values are insufficient to predict delinquency. Even adding direct relations from delinquency of friends to delinquent behavior does not improve the model sufficiently to fit the data.

5. Summary and discussion

In this chapter we compare differential association versus social control theory. Both theories relate the same variables but in a different causal order. According to differential association theory delinquent behavior is learned in interaction with others (mainly delinquent friends). According to social control theory, having delinquent friends is a result of weakened controls. Both may lead to delinquent behavior. Central in the controversy is the place of delinquency of friends. The relation between delinquency of friends and delinquent behavior originates from group processes; learning is not needed. For differential association theory this relation is the motor which starts the learning process.

In panel-data the presence of a time-lag gives the researcher certainty about the sequence of the measured variables. It follows that there is an extra basis to conclude that relations might be causal.

* Delinquent friends (1981)–beliefs (1981), delinquent friends (1981)–delinquent behavior (1983), delinquent friends (1983)–delinquent behavior (1983).

The data were analysed with the LISREL V computer program. No model could be found that supported differential association theory but a social control model was supported by the data. The main results can be summarized as follows:

- Social control variables are directly or indirectly related to delinquent behavior.
- Social control variables are related within the same year and over time. Attachment does not seem to be a multi-dimensional concept (unlike Hindelang's results). The scale attachment to friends does not relate differently than other social control variables. It correlates positively with other control variables and negatively with delinquency. Beliefs are also related to the other control elements.
- Delinquency of friends is related directly to delinquent behavior and this influence is not mediated by beliefs as differential association theory states.
- Also, in contradiction to differential association theory we find evidence for the idea that delinquency of friends is a result as well as a cause of delinquency.
- There is also evidence that the role of social control variables as measured in this study, changes over time.

Overall the importance of most social control scales has become less pronounced in 1983 in comparison to the situation in 1981:

- The influence of family integration on delinquency disappears in 1983 (only an indirect effect remains).
- The influence of attachment to friends and unconventional leisure time activities on delinquency is gone.
- The influence of beliefs drops substantially in 1983.
- Only school remains a relatively strong predictor of delinquency of friends and of delinquent behavior.

A picture emerges of a 'spiral process': low integration leads to higher delinquency levels which lead to lower integration which leads to higher delinquency levels and so forth. Thus, like Liska and Reed (1985) we find that 'there is every reason to assume that delinquency affects social attachment as well as being affected by it' (p. 556). However, unlike Liska and Reed (1985), no simultaneous effects are needed in the present study*: lag effects (from 1981-1983) are sufficient. We think our model is not in opposition with social control theory. Rather it can be considered as a somewhat refined description

* An example of a simultaneous effect is: from family (1981) to delinquency (1981) back to family (1981).

of social integration processes. Much research, presumably for practical reasons, is cross-sectional. This could explain why processes over time have received less attention in the literature. The present results indicate that more research is needed in which processes and changes over time are studied. That this is possible within the framework of social control theory is supported by this study.

Finally, we would like to emphasize that, while the differential association model does not fit the data it seems possible to integrate learning theory – used very differently – in a social control framework, as Patterson (1980) did among others. Delinquency is – in his study – a result of not enough, or bad learning instead of learning the wrong things. This suggests that social control and learning principles are not necessarily in opposition with each other.

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Appendices

Appendix A

The 12 parameters' estimates which were not significantly greater than zero are: beliefs (1981)-delinquent friends (1981), school integration (1981)-beliefs (1981), leisure time activities (1981)-beliefs (1981), attachment to friends (1981)-beliefs (1981), attachment to friends (1981)-delinquent behavior (1981), family integration (1983)-delinquent behavior (1983), leisure time activities (1983), delinquent friends (1983), leisure time activities (1983)-beliefs (1983), leisure time activities (1983)-delinquent behavior (1983), attachment to friends (1983)-delinquent friends (1983), attachment to friends (1983)-beliefs (1983), attachment to friends (1983)-delinquent behavior (1983).

Appendix B

The 11 parameters added are: school integration (1981)–attachment to friends (1983), school integration (1981)–beliefs (1983), leisure time activities (1981)–family integration (1983), leisure time activities (1981)–school integration (1983), delinquent friends (1981)–delinquent behavior (1983), beliefs (1981)–delinquent behavior (1983), delinquent behavior (1981)–family integration (1983), delinquent behavior (1981)–leisure time activities (1983).

Appendix I C

Nine parameters were set zero which were non-significant: school integration (1981)–beliefs (1981), leisure time activities (1981)–beliefs (1981), attachment to friends (1981)–delinquent friends (1981), delinquent friends (1981)–beliefs (1983), family integration (1983)–leisure time activities (1983), leisure time activities (1983)–delinquent friends (1983), leisure time activities (1983)–beliefs (1983), attachment to friends (1983)–delinquent friends (1983), attachment to friends (1983)–beliefs (1983).

Appendix D

School integration (1981)–family integration (1983), school integration (1981)–beliefs (1983), leisure time activities (1981)–family integration (1983), leisure time activities (1981)–school integration (1983), delinquent friends (1981)–school integration (1983), delinquent friends (1981)–leisure time activities (1983), beliefs (1981)–school integration (1983), beliefs (1981)–delinquent behavior (1983), delinquent behavior (1981)–family integration (1983).

Appendix E

We inspected the modification scales of model 6. When the modification scales which represent relations relating the remaining social control variables directly to delinquent behavior, are summed up, we have an indication of the extent to which the chi-square would drop if those parameters were entered into the model. If we would add six parameters (family integration (1981)–delinquent behavior (1981), school integration (1981)–delinquent behavior (1981), leisure time activities (1981)–delinquent behavior (1981), family integration (1983)–delinquent behavior (1983), school integration (1983)–delinquent behavior (1983), leisure time activities (1983)–delinquent behavior (1983)) to model 6 the chi-square would drop at least 126 (according to the count of the modification scales). With $df = 46$ ($52 - 6 = 46$) this would produce an acceptable model with a chi-square of approximately 59 ($185.5 - 126$ with $df = 46$).

V. AGGRESSION IN A YOUTH CLUB

An observation study in a town in the west of Holland

Carl H.D. Steinmetz

1. Introduction

The paths of criminologists and victimologists diverged during the seventies. From the beginning of the decade criminology has confined its study of crime to criminals and their milieu. By adopting this approach criminologists, like writers of detective stories, restrict themselves to the question of culpability, with all the risks this entails – since some solutions can justify retribution.

Unlike criminology, victimology studies crime victims and tries to make pronouncements on crime from their point of view. Dutch victimology began in the late sixties-early seventies, when there was a strong movement in the community for help to be given to crime victims. This was supported by voluntary workers from Humanitas (1979) MGM; the aim of equal treatment for criminals and victims was supported by the Nijmegen Conference on Crime Victims in 1971. Realization dawned that there was another party involved in crime – the victims.

So far, however, there has been little change in the position of victims. Crime victims are still regarded as potentially valuable sources of information whose evidence can help solve a case and convict the offender.

Witnesses are only important in resolving the question of culpability. Questions to witnesses at the trial as to who is in fact the guilty party show that police and prosecutors sometimes suspect the actual victim. The underlying assumption here is that the victim may have given cause for the offence. This point marks the beginning of victimology: it is to be found in earlier victimologists such as Von Hentig (1948) and Schafer (1968).

Meanwhile, present-day victimologists have more or less abandoned this approach to the question of culpability and concern themselves mainly with improving the position of victims and helping them to cope with unpleasant consequences of crime.

The difference, in a nutshell, is that criminology is concerned with 'retribution', as can be seen from its central concepts, which include general and specific prevention, whereas victimology is concerned with the involvement of victims in crime. Victimology could be said to be an emancipatory movement, whose aim is to restore the position of victims in the social system and in particular in the criminal law. In practice this has resulted in the study of ways of helping crime victims.

The divergent interests of criminologists and victimologists also influence the academic approach to the study of crime and the improved knowledge that can result from it. Having concentrated on criminals and victims respectively, they have not noticed the signs of overlap between the criminal and victim populations and the significance of this overlap in explaining crime. As a result of the failure to recognize these signs there has not been much research into the causes and consequences of being a victim at one moment and an offender the next.

Psychology, on the other hand, considered this phenomenon in 1964, when Patterson demonstrated with the aid of social learning theory that some very young children are the motive force behind a spiral of violence in social intercourse. For this to happen, however, they must have frequent contact with their peers. Among the children who had been frequent victims of acts of aggression Patterson (1964) found children who went on to use violence increasingly often. Their first experiences had been of successful retaliation. In line with this, Patterson found that in half of the cases acts of aggression produced the desired result: the aggressor was foiled and chastised. Patterson concluded from these data that self-defence produces positive effects in so many cases that it is not realistic to expect punishment to inhibit the spiral of violence. This information could have led to the conclusion that the overlap between the criminal and victim populations was well worth studying. In fact it took almost twenty years before these findings began to influence criminological and victimological thinking.

Even then it was not yet acknowledged that bystanders or witnesses can also play an important part in the commission of a crime. Here again psychology made an important contribution. In 1970 Latané and Darley investigated what witnesses do in the presence of a crime. They posed the question: when, in practice, does a witness of a crime decide to help the victim? They used a model of individual decision-making to explain actual interventions. Two factors were found to be decisive: first, a witness would not help a victim if there was any doubt that the act was a crime; second, the witness had to feel responsible for the victim's fate, and the sense of responsibility is greater if the witness is alone.

This was another independent development in psychology – one which criminology and victimology ignored at the time. The study, however, did not take witnesses' specific criminal and/or victimization experiences into consideration. These relationships were not investigated until 1981, by Huston and others, who found that witnesses who intervened had more experience with serious forms of crime as victims than witnesses who did not intervene. These findings too, even considering only the possible consequences, are of great interest to both criminology and victimology. Huston's findings (1981) can be

traced back, it would seem, to the mechanism described by Patterson which produces the spiral of violence. Huston (1981) made no allowance for the possibility that witnesses might also have had experience of being offenders themselves.

One thing emerges all too clearly from this argument: crime does not divide the population into two camps, with criminals in one and victims in the other, despite the fact that criminologists and victimologists have suggested a split of this kind.

The first sign of a change of attitude, away from the criminal/victim dichotomy, is found in the victimological risk models of Cohen and Felson (1979) and Van Dijk and Steinmetz (1980), which make explicit allowance for the amount of crime, which is one factor in the risk of becoming a victim. A person who has frequent contacts with offenders or with a group in which crime is common runs a greater risk of suffering physical, material or non-material damage. The point may seem trivial, but the contacts must actually take place: this will be the case, for instance, in the world of pubs and clubs, where fleeting relations, the absence of clear standards and the presence of opportunities make criminal acts more likely.

These models, however, make no allowance for the possibility of victims retaliating or even deciding to commit an offence themselves in completely different situations. Nor do they allow for the possibility that the fact of having been a witness may make it easier to commit a crime. There are two conceivable alternatives: (a) it may occur to people to steal something or beat someone up because of the frequency with which they have themselves witnessed such crimes; (b) witnesses who have successfully intervened in acts of aggression (for example) may decide to get tough with the person concerned in other situations.

Some of these arguments played an important part in an exploratory study of the overlap between experiences as victims, witnesses and such offenders as bicycle thieves, purse stealers and stealers of other personal possessions. The study, carried out at a pre-university secondary school in a town in the west of Holland (Van Dijk and Steinmetz, 1984), showed that there was an overlap between the three categories of pupils, and that the offenders had much more experience as witnesses and victims than the non-offenders. In line with this it was also found that about half the bicycle thieves had been victims before stealing their first bicycle; in the case of the other half, they were victimized in the same month as they stole a cycle, both for the first time. These findings broadly correspond to those of Patterson (1964).

The Dutch data currently available do not indicate whether witness' experiences are decisive in the commission of offences. However, we know from

crime witnesses in the Netherlands (Steinmetz, 1985) that about 27% of them intervened. It was found that there were explanations for their decision to intervene: they knew the victim or the offender or did it as part of their job. Witnesses of street crime who knew neither the offender nor the victim were unlikely to intervene unless they were present in the course of their duties. These data correspond to the findings of Latané and Darley (1970), who presumed that decisions to intervene were rational.

The precise transitions between the roles witness, victim and offender remain to be described. A related question is whether frequent offending results in victimization, and if so, to what extent. The converse is also an interesting proposition: frequent involvement as a witness or victim could incite a person to offend. Secondly, what victims and witnesses do in practice and how they resolve the conflicts in which they are involved; both from the point of view of their experiences as offenders and in terms of the number of occasions on which they were victims/witnesses has not been examined.

Lastly we could look at whether frequent offenders can be distinguished from one-time offenders by external characteristics. The public has latched onto the idea that certain external features, e.g. punk appearance, are associated with criminal acts. Victims could also be looked at from this point of view, since the public think of them as pathetic, as wearing funny glasses or having weard hair.

To answer some of these questions we carried out an ethological observation study of acts of aggression at a youth club in a town in the west of Holland. We spent a month studying the behaviour of young people who go out drinking at weekends, and could therefore come into contact with crime. This supposition was not invented for this study but is based on the victim and witness risk models (Steinmetz and Van Dijk, 1984). Young people who go out drinking are particularly likely to experience crime, and are therefore worthwhile to be studied.

This article contains a description of the research method, a summary of the results, and relevant appendices.

2. Method

2.1 The situation

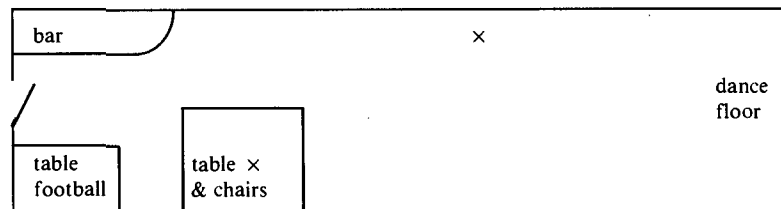
We investigated how young people became involved in acts of aggression at a youth club in a town in the west of Holland. Immediately after the 1981 summer holidays, in August and September, we observed aggressive behaviour and the reactions to it. Our observations took place only on weekends, on

Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. On Fridays and Saturdays we observed during the evening and night; on Sundays, when there was a children's disco, we observed during the afternoon.

The youth club was run mainly by the young people themselves. The group in charge of the bar and other matters was fairly stable in size, comprising some twenty boys and girls. The advantage of the young people in running the bar and cleaning the various rooms themselves is that they incur no staff costs for bartenders, porters, cleaners etc. An evident drawback is the absence of proper supervision, especially, combined with low prices for drinks. We accordingly observed large quantities of alcohol being consumed: social drinking, with one round after another being consumed, was much in evidence.*

In this description I shall try to indicate what possible factors not included in the study may have influenced the incidence of acts of aggression. Observation work in bars in Vancouver (Canada) showed that various situational factors influenced the incidence of acts of aggression there, including the type of barman, the quantity of drink and of course the type of public. Factors of this kind are also likely to influence the incidence of acts of aggression in the present study. In the youth club they were constant, since the bartenders, drinking habits and public scarcely changed during the two months. We did not take these situational factors into account in our observations.

Lastly, some comments are called for on the customers. On Fridays and Saturdays their ages ranged from about 17 to 22, although it was not unusual to find people in their thirties or even forties among them, especially on the busier nights. Members of various youth groups such as punks, mods, skin-heads and traditionalists were to be seen. On Sundays the ages ranged from about 12 to 17; these are youngsters who evidently do not frequent the sports fields that day. The figure below is a diagram of the club, showing the principal observation posts.



x = observation post

Fig. 1. a youth club in a town in the west of Holland

* In Holland the minimum age for using alcohol in public places is 16 years.

Almost all of the room could be seen from the two observation posts. We did not observe the dance floor to any significant extent since the incidence of acts of aggression there was minimal and there were only two of us observing.

2.2 Observation method

The observations were based on previously formulated hypotheses on conduct likely to incite aggression. We observed the acts of aggression according to a fixed protocol for a maximum of ten minutes. Attention was paid to the behaviour of aggressors, victims and witnesses (by which we mean people near the victim of aggressor watching the act). While counting the numbers of acts of aggression, we also included the actions and reactions of aggressors, victims and witnesses.

We did not in fact apply the ten-minute rule strictly. We curtailed observation of actions and reactions which ended before the ten minutes were over and continued observing acts of aggression which lasted longer than ten minutes.

The ethological literature refers to this method as a combination of event and sequence sampling. It does not include investigating whether particular aggressors, victims or even witnesses are involved in more than one act of aggression observed on a particular day. What we tried to do is to observe the subjects not only on one particular day, but also on different days: i.e. we investigated on what day or days a person was involved in one or more acts of aggression, but we soon found that our memories were inadequate for this. Studying the acts of a particular individual is referred to as focal sampling in the ethological method (Lehner, 1979). Our choice of observation method was based on the following argument: 'By combining more than one method, a researcher is often able to maximize efficiency of data collection and ensure that the proper data are collected for testing the research hypothesis' (Lehner, 1979).

2.3 Indicators of aggressive behaviour

A pilot study to examine what types of acts of aggression occur. Different bars in the 'Schilderswijk' district of The Hague were visited on several occasions*. Acts of aggression were also observed at a large party of secondary school pupils in Leiden. We carried out further observations in other districts of The Hague, in particular in entertainment centres such as Scheveningen. We spent five evenings and nights on the pilot study.

* Observation was a risky business in these bars in a particularly run down area. I myself was victimized several times: once I was forced to pay someone else's drink bill, and on another occasion someone set his dog on me and I was bitten in the rear.

The types of acts of aggression I indentified were:

1. *Physical action against the person*
 serious: X hits, kicks or knocks down Y, causing injury to Y
 minor: X hits, kicks of knocks down Y, causing no injury to Y
 very minor: X pulls, pushes or fools around with Y
2. *Physical action against property*
 e.g. throwing beer, smashing glasses or knocking over a football table
3. *Sexual harassment*
 physical: X makes a nuisance of himself/herself to Y, touching Y
 threats: X makes sexual threats against Y, without touching Y
4. *Physical threats (without bodily contact)*
 serious: X pretends to kick or hit Y
 minor: X gives Y threatening looks or adopts a fighting stance against Y;
 here we include walking up to Y in a threatening manner
5. *Verbal threats*
 X uses abusive language to, or shouts at, Y. Bystanders' encouragements to the aggressor are included here.

These definitions of acts of aggression indicate the type of aggressors we are concerned with. We also looked at the reactions of victims and witnesses; the latter, incidentally, may include people who could be regarded as being on the aggressor's side but do not take any part in the event themselves.

We identified the following types of reaction:

1. *none*
 X does not react to Y's action and continues with whatever he or she was doing before
2. *flight*
 X reacts to Y's action by running away, withdrawing or evading Y
3. *appeasement*
 X reacts to Y's action by laughing or making a pleasant remark
4. *retaliation*
 physical action against the person or property and physical or verbal threats as a direct response to a previous action. These types of behaviour are defined above.

3. Results

3.1 Stability in a group of young people

Ethological researchers study members of a group by investigating who is dominant and who is subordinated. It is assumed in such studies that everyone

is striving for the highest possible status in the group. Ways of achieving this, according to Van Dijk (1977), include fighting (causing injury to others) and dominating (subordinating or driving away other members of the species).

There are limits, however, to the struggle for the highest position in a group. Not everyone can occupy the most important position, nor can all the members of a group have equal positions. In other words, members of a group do not always strive to reach the highest position; a certain amount of stability must be ensured in the hierarchy. In the long run, both the struggle for the highest position and the maintenance of a relatively stable hierarchy will limit the incidence of fighting and dominating in a group. If the number of fights and domination acts keeps rising, the group is no longer viable and disintegrates.

Table 1. Daily incidence of acts of aggression

<i>day</i>	<i>no. of customers (approx.)</i>	<i>no. of acts</i>	<i>no. of aggressors</i>	<i>total observation time</i>
Friday 21/8*	200	22	24 incl. 3 revenge	290 min.
Sunday 23/8	50	5	9 incl. 3 revenge	55 min.
Friday 28/8	150	15	22 incl. 3 revenge	180 min.
Sunday 30/8	50	4	6	105 min.
Friday 4/9	100	2	6 incl. 3 revenge	130 min.
Saturday 5/9**	30	—	—	120 min.
Friday 11/9	150	11	13 incl. 2 revenge	150 min.
Saturday 12/9	70	3	6	120 min.
Sunday 13/9***	30	1	2	60 min.

The observations were encoded dyadically (i.e. an interaction was counted as two acts: e.g. if the victim retaliated, the second time the retaliator was encoded as the aggressor and the original aggressor as the victim) and processed in tabular form. Aggressors who acted jointly were included in the data and counted separately, as were victims and witnesses.

* On this Friday between 12.30 and 01.50 everyone was watching a sizeable band set up its equipment, so there was little opportunity for acts of aggression.

** Band present; few customers, only the club officials.

*** This Sunday is not included in the observations.

We wondered whether these assumptions were true for young people at the youth club, and tested them by observing the youngsters who met again there after the summer holidays. Their first opportunity to see one another happened to coincide with our first observation session. The results are shown in Table 1; they would seem to confirm the assumptions. As the young people became more familiar with one another again, the number of acts of aggression decreased in relation to the number of customers on the Fridays and Sundays, although this was not true of the two Saturdays, which did not seem to fit into the picture. We believe that this was due to the lack of customers on the first Saturday.

Since the number of observations are limited we shall not refer to the particular days on which observations took place in the presentation of the results.

3.2 Aggressors

3.2.1 Characteristics

Who were the aggressors at the youth club, and how many acts of aggression did they commit? During the nine afternoons, evenings and nights, we watched aggressive acts for 1,210 minutes, during which time we observed a total of 283, for which 86 different individuals were responsible.

However, not all of the aggressors were involved to the same extent. We can divide them into those who carried out one act and those who carried out more. We shall refer to the latter as 'multiple' aggressors: 57% ($n = 49$) of the 86 aggressors fell into this category. They were responsible for 246 acts, almost 90% of the total. An average of five acts per evening or afternoon were committed by multiple aggressors.

Not all of the acts were spontaneous, some were the direct result of a previous event. We describe these as 'retaliations', although we are aware that we did not identify some indirect or delayed retaliations as such. Of the 283 acts of aggression 35 (12%) were immediate and 4 (1%) delayed retaliations, and in two cases a bystander intervened in his official capacity (as barman). Fourteen percent of all acts were the result of a previous action.

An obvious question is whether multiple aggressors also retaliate more often than one-time aggressors. Our data in Table 1 ($\chi^2 = 0.6$; $df = 1$; ns) suggest they do not. It should be noted that the multiple aggressors include two individuals whose acts were exclusively retaliations.

In view of the frequent assertions (for example in the Dutch newspaper *de Telegraaf*) that frequent offenders can be identified by their external ap-

pearance alone, we tried to establish whether there are social or external characteristics that distinguish the two groups, one-time and multiple aggressors, from each other. We paid particular attention to punks, since the public holds them responsible for a good deal of aggression.

Our scrutiny revealed that it was principally boys (87% of all acts) who were aggressors. Girls were responsible for only a small number of acts, but they were almost all multiple aggressors. The two categories did not differ in age. The majority of the acts (69%) were carried out by 16, 17 or 18-year-olds. The fact that this age group was responsible for more than half the acts could not have been predicted from the ages of the young people at the club, since only half of them were in this age group.

The study also showed that the one-time and multiple aggressor categories were not distinguishable from each other by the physical characteristics of height and size. Nor were aggressors distinguishable from the other customers in these respects or in terms of origin: persons visibly of non-Dutch origin were responsible for a total of 16 acts (16%).

These data would lead us to suppose that differences between one-time and multiple aggressors should be sought not only in external characteristics but rather in factors related to the establishment of the pecking order in a group. Multiple aggressors carried out their acts more commonly in the presence of other people (60% of acts) than one-time aggressors (38%)*. This is presumably also the explanation for the bravado attitude of those cocksure individuals who walk around with their chests puffed out: one-time aggressors (3% of acts) did this much less often than multiple aggressors (47%). In our opinion, carrying a knife and displaying muscles fall under the same heading: it is a way of commanding respect. Multiple aggressors (49% of acts) consumed more alcohol and were more commonly employed as porters or bartenders ($\chi^2 = 15.2$; $df = 1$; $p < 0.01$; $\phi = 0.23$) than one-time aggressors (22%).

3.2.2 Behaviour

How often do acts of aggression (as defined above) occur? Is there a difference between the acts committed by one-time aggressors and multiple aggressors? Are co-aggressors more likely to be one-time or multiple aggressors.

Table 2 shows the types of acts committed by one-time and multiple aggressors. The figures reflect complex acts, i.e. those involving more than one type of listed action, as more than one act.

* The correlation (ϕ) was 0.15.

Table 2. Number of different acts of aggression by once-off and multiple aggressors respectively

action	aggressor:		total
	one-time	multiple	
physical action against the person	15 (44%)	166 (54%)	181 (53%)
physical action against property	10 (29%)	11 (4%)	21 (6%)
sexual harassment	—	17 (6%)	17 (5%)
physical threat (without contact)	3 (9%)	37 (12%)	40 (12%)
verbal threat	6 (18%)	74 (24%)	80 (24%)
total	34 (100%)	305 (100%)	339 (100%)

Table 2 shows that physical actions against the person were the most common type. We observed a total of four serious fights (very serious physical acts against the person): multiple aggressors were responsible for three of them. It can also be seen from Table 2 that physical acts against the person were equally common among one-time and multiple aggressors ($\chi^2 = 1.3$; $df = 1$; $p = 0.75$). Closer examination of these cases show that *very minor* physical acts against the person (pulling and pushing) ($\chi^2 = 7.7$; $df = 1$; $p < 0.01$; $\phi = 0.21$) were more common among multiple aggressors (73%) than one-time aggressors (40%).

If we look at combinations of very minor acts with other physical acts against the person we find that acts by multiple aggressors include more types of behaviour than those by one-time aggressors: the 49 individuals in the multiple category displayed 305 different kinds of aggressive behaviour in 246 acts, whereas in the case of one-time aggressors each act generally comprised only one type of behaviour.

To sum up, in the case of multiple aggressors *minor* acts against the person (fighting without injury) were often combined with *very minor* acts (pulling and pushing), and *very minor* acts were associated with verbal threats. It may be that by exaggerating in this way (using more force than is necessary) multiple aggressors anticipate others' reactions to their acts.

Table 2 shows that only the multiple aggressors are involved in sexual harassment. It should be noted that cases involving bodily contact with the victim are as common as cases involving no more than threats.

3.3 Victims and witnesses

3.3.1 Characteristics

Who were the victims and witnesses of acts of aggression at the youth club? Did some victims also have experiences as witnesses? Were there any witnesses who were also victimized? We shall try to answer these questions here.

Table 3. Number of young people with one experience and more than one experience as witness/victim

<i>victim/witness</i>	<i>no. of persons</i>		<i>no. of experiences</i>
one experience			
– victim	90 (55%)		90 (25%)
– witness	20 (12%)		20 (5%)
subtotal	110 (67%)		110 (30%)
more than one experience			
– victim	23 (14%)		57 (16%)
– witness	8 (5%)		52 (14%)
– victim & witness	22 (14%)	{	37 (10%)
		victim	
		witness	108 (30%)
subtotal	53 (33%)		245 (70%)
total	163 (100%)		364 (100%)

Table 3 shows that the majority of victims and/or witnesses had only one experience. A minority of those with a single experience was a witness.

There are many ways of looking at the data. We find, for instance, that the single-experience group accounted for only 30% of the total of victim and/or witness experiences, from which we may deduce that there is another completely different group of youngsters, who were frequently both victims and witnesses (these are only a small number of individuals). 33% of youths with victim and/or witness experiences had more than one such experience. It is striking that this relatively small group accounts for 70% of all victim and witness experiences: an average of 4.8 per person.

Like single-experience youngsters, we find that those with more than one experience who were only witnesses were in the minority (15%); 43% had experiences solely as victims. This means that 58% of the more-than-one-

experience group were either solely victims or solely witnesses. The remainder (42%) combined experiences as victims and witnesses, i.e. a smaller group. In the more-than-one-experience group being a witness occurs twice as much as being a victim.

Witness experiences were also more common than victim experiences in the case of members of the more-than-one-experience group who were either solely witnesses or solely victims: those who were solely witnesses had still an average of 5.3 experiences. It seems that one witness experience during an evening at the youth club is likely to be followed by more. The victims were victimized twice on average during an evening – a much lower figure than the average number of witnesses experiences.

One thing is clear from this analysis: not every victim was also a witness, only a small proportion of victims (16%) witnessed acts of aggression the same evening. The same overlap can be looked at from the point of view of witnesses; 40% of them were victimized on the same evening – a markedly higher overlap. This raises the question whether there is a special group of victims who are also frequent witnesses: we shall deal with this question in a separate section.

In view of Olweus' conclusion in his study of 'whipping boys' (1978) that lack of physical strength was a factor in repeated victimization of such children, we considered what personal characteristics might make frequent victims different from other children. Although not a particularly good reflection of physical strength, we included sex, age and height in the analysis. During our observations we noted on each occasion whether the victim or witness was younger or shorter than the aggressor or aggressors. In selecting these characteristics we allowed ourselves to presume, in effect, that aggressors choose victims on the basis of their external characteristics: in general we should not expect an aggressor to choose an opponent who is certain to come out on top. This is not to suggest that the choice is so obvious, however. If aggressors make it too easy for themselves we believe they will lose the respect of the other aggressors.

When examining similarities and differences between types of victims and witnesses, we found it worthwhile to include psychological characteristics such as bravado and other forms of external display. So as not to overcomplicate the comparison we divided the subjects into groups, eventually arriving at four types:

- a) young people who were not victimized and were only once witnesses of an act of aggression;
- b) youngsters who were solely witnesses on more than one occasion;

- c) young people who were victimized once and were not witnesses;
- d) young people who were both victims and witnesses on more than one occasion.

Firstly, our data (see Appendix 2) show that 19% of the youngsters who were victims and/or witnesses were female. If we compare those who were not victimized with those who were, we find that the proportion of girls was the same in both groups.

Comparison, of aggressors and victims in terms of physical characteristics confirms our previous assumption that victims are often shorter and younger (70%) than their aggressors. Also, youngsters who were *solely* witnesses were older and larger than aggressors: only 35% were younger and 20% shorter. The age and height factors gain in importance if we look at the correlations: the correlation (ϕ) of victim/witness age to aggressor age was 0.26; the height correlation, on the other hand, was 0.39.

The data also show that some differences in the typology of victims and witnesses are of a psychological nature – characteristics such as bravado, a popular attitude and carrying a knife. Drinking seems to play a part, as does being employed in one's official capacity. Within our typology we find that such factors were involved particularly in the case of young people who were frequent victims, in 19% of cases; among the other victims and witnesses the figure was 10% (correlation (ψ) = 0.14). Whether these figures should be seen as a confirmation of the provocation hypothesis or as no more than a reaction to disturbances in the pecking order is a point we shall return to later.

Finally, if we examine the origin of victims and witnesses, we find that those subjected to repeated victimization were more commonly of non-Dutch origin (11%) than the other victims and witnesses (4%).

3.3.2 Behaviour

Now that we have some idea of who the witnesses and victims were at the youth club, it remains to be seen how they reacted to acts of aggression. We shall of course take into account the number of witness/victim experiences they had on the particular day and distinguish, where relevant, between victims' and witnesses' reactions. Table 4 shows the figures for reactions by victims and witnesses. To simplify matters, data on the types of acts involved are omitted; these will be dealt with later (see Appendix 2).

The first thing we notice from Table 4 is that witnesses rarely if ever reacted by running away, appeasing or retaliating. It does not seem to make much difference which group they belong to, one with frequent or infrequent ex-

Table 4. Reactions of witnesses and victims to aggressive behaviour in four groups: young people who were solely witnesses and only once, those who were solely witnesses but more than once, those who were solely victims and only once, and those who were victimized more than once, some of whom were also witnesses more than once

reaction	$V=0$ $W=1$	$V=0$ $W=>1 \times$	$V=1 \times$ $W=0$	$V=1 > \times$ $W=>1 \times$		total	
				V	W	V	W
none	17	52	69	46	104	115	173
flight	1	—	9	25	1	34	2
appeasement	2	—	4	5	1	9	3
retaliation	—	—	8	18	2	26	2
total	20	52	90	94	108	184	180
none		69(77%)	46(49%)	} $\chi^2 = 15$ phi = .29 df = 1			
other		21(23%)	48(51%)				
total		90(100%)	94(100%)				

V = victim; W = witness

periences: in 96% of cases witnesses did not react to acts of aggression. Reactions – running away, appeasement and retaliation – were more common among victims. Nevertheless victims did not react in 63% of the cases. They ran away in 18%, tried to appease in 5%, and retaliated in 14%. Victims would seem to be more involved in the act than witnesses: their interests are at stake. The greater variety of reactions found among those who were victimized more than once would seem to be an extension of this need to react: 23% of those victimized only once reacted, as against 51% of those victimized more than once.

Are aggressors ever victimized and vice versa? We shall consider the role of witnesses in our discussion of the overlap between the offender and victim populations. In this connection it is intriguing, that a substantial minority (36%) of young people with more than one experience of acts of aggression were found to have come into contact with more than one aggressor, i.e. the majority were confronted by a single aggressor.

We also wanted to know how many victims and witnesses were involved in the various types of act, and whether their reactions depended on the type of act. To keep the presentation simple we show complex acts as single ones, coding them by the dominant component. Table 6 shows how many victims and witnesses were involved in the various types of act.

Table 5 shows first that the total of victims involved in the acts was some-

Table 5. Number of victims and witnesses per type of act, and their reactions

<i>acts</i>	<i>reaction</i>	<i>victim</i>	<i>witness</i>
physical against the person (N = 152)	none	104	175
	flight	30	1
	appeasement	7	1
	retaliation	17	1
physical against property (N = 22)	none	3	13
	flight	—	—
	appeasement	—	—
	retaliation	1	—
physical threat (without contact) (N = 25)	none	17	4
	flight	10	1
	appeasement	—	—
	retaliation	1	—
verbal threat (N = 40)	none	44	2
	flight	1	—
	appeasement	1	—
	retaliation	5	—
sexual harassment (N = 17)	none	9	5
	flight	9	—
	appeasement	2	1
	retaliation	—	1

what higher than the total of witnesses. It should be noted, however, that the ratio differed considerably depending on the type of act: more witnesses than victims were involved in physical acts against the person or property, whereas the contrary was true of physical threats without contact, verbal threats and sexual harassment.

How witnesses and victims reacted depended on the type of act. Reactions (other than 'none') were virtually non-existent in cases of physical acts against property and verbal threats. Victims' reactions to these last two categories differed hardly if at all from witnesses'. The other reactions, flight, appeasement and retaliation, were found mainly in cases of physical acts against the person, physical threats without contact and sexual harassment. It is noteworthy that the most common reactions to sexual harassment were 'none' and flight; both were equally common.

3.4 Victims, witnesses and aggressors

3.4.1 Overlap

In the last section, we examined whether any victims were also witnesses the

same evening, and vice versa. We found that only a small proportion of victims were also witnesses, but most witnesses were victimized during the evening. We are concerned not only with the overlap between witness experiences and victim experiences but also with that between aggressor experiences and victim and witness experiences.

This section deals with the interrelations between the various types of experience in a particular timespan. Figures for young people involved as aggressors, victims and/or witnesses are given in Table 6, as are figures for the numbers of aggressors who were neither victims nor witnesses during the evening.

Table 6. Numbers of young people who were both aggressors and victims and/or witnesses, and solely aggressors

<i>victim/witness</i>	<i>total no. of persons</i>	<i>no. of aggressors</i>	
W = 1 V = 0	28	5 (18%)	} $\chi^2 = 12$ df = 1 phi = 0.28
V = 1 W = 0	90	15 (17%)	
V = > 1*	45	25 (56%)	
subtotal	163	45 (28%)	
V = 0 W = 0	41		
total	204	86	

* Of the 45, 49% were witnesses more than once; the remainder were not witnesses that day.

The first thing we note from this table is that half of the aggressors were victims or witnesses of aggression the same evening. This figure is very similar to the findings of Patterson and others (1964), who found that aggressors lost in half of the cases. It is difficult to assess the precise situation with a study such as the present one, since we do not know whether the acts of aggression arose from underlying conflicts. A failure rate of one in two would seem to be high. In their anthropological studies Whiting and Whiting (1975) found a failure rate of under one in three.

Secondly, Table 6 shows that fewer than a third of the victims and witnesses of one or more acts during the evening were aggressors, and that more young people with frequent experiences as victims (who, incidentally, were also witnesses more than once in most cases) were aggressors than those who were solely witnesses or were victims only once.

These last two findings do not seem very consistent at first sight. Evidently aggressors often lose or observe aggressive behaviour as witnesses, and more

so than vice versa: the majority of victims and witnesses, over two-thirds, were not recorded as aggressors during the evening. We found in the previous section that most witnesses were victims and not the other way round. All this would seem to indicate that a small group of aggressors commit a lot of acts and are often involved in acts as victims and sometimes also as witnesses.

3.4.2 Behaviour

Are there any signs among a) the frequent victims and b) those who were victimized only once that would point to their being aggressors. In other words, do victims who were also aggressors react to an attack in the same way as, or differently from, victims who were not aggressors? The answer can be found in Table 7.

Table 7. Reactions of victims who were and were not also aggressors respectively, classified into once-only and more-than-once victims

reacion	victim = 1		victim = > 1 ×	
	aggressor	non-aggressor	aggressor	non-aggressor
none	14 (58%)	55 (83%)	30 (52%)	15 (42%)
flight	2 (9%)	7 (11%)	9 (16%)	17 (47%)
appeasement	—	4 (6%)	1 (1%)	4 (11%)
retaliation	8 (33%)	—	18 (31%)	—
total	24 (100%)	66 (100%)	58 (100%)	36 (100%)

Table 7 shows that young people in the only-once group who were not aggressors differ considerably from those who were aggressors: in most cases (83%) they did not react to aggression. Those who were aggressors reacted more often (42%; $\chi^2 = 54$; $df = 1$; $p < 0.01$; $\phi = 0.24$). The retaliation can take any form, e.g. shouting back or hitting back.

The dissimilarity is quite different in the case of frequent victims, among whom aggressors react almost as often as non-aggressors. The reactions of the two groups differed, however: the aggressors often hit back, whereas the non-aggressors ran away.

Olweus (1978) would call those who run away so often 'whipping boys' — an apt description, although not an attractive one.

4. Summary and discussion

Our study of the involvement of aggressors, victims and witnesses in acts of

aggression was based on two propositions. The first is taken from the study by Patterson (1964), who found that a person's experience as the victim of a fight can help him or her over the threshold of deciding to hit back for once. This can result in a victory, which can include the idea of making the first move in the future. The first proposition, then, is that victim's experiences of acts of aggression can be the start of their careers as aggressors.

Our second proposition is taken from the work of Latané and Darley (1970) and Huston (1981). Huston's study led to the conclusion that a person's witness and victim experiences can help him or her over the threshold of deciding to get tough with someone who attacks another person – provided the decision has already been taken to help the other person. Huston gives good examples to suggest that there must be a point in intervening. In two of his three examples it transpires that the intervener knew the victim: this is how we should interpret the notion of 'feeling responsible for helping' used by Latané and Darley (1970). A striking feature of Huston's study, however, is that those who intervened described themselves as aggressive and regarded themselves as physically stronger than the people they attacked. The second premise, then, is that witnesses' and victims' experiences of acts of aggression can be the start of their careers as interveners – with the proviso that these interveners must not be afraid of violence.

The obvious conclusion from these findings of Patterson and Huston is that victim and witness experiences alone could result in a spiral of violence. Before discussing this point, we need to examine the transition from being primarily a victim and witness to becoming an aggressor, and what mechanisms are involved. This can best be explained in terms of experiences of witnesses or victims. We shall begin with victim experiences.

The social learning theory, as set out by Bandura (1973), sees 'aversive' stimuli such as insults and provocations as a source of aggressive behaviour: they are attacks on a person's honour, and according to the theory this is enough to make someone decide to retaliate. This is not to say that aversive stimuli will necessarily be met with by retaliation; in practice rational considerations will also influence the decision. These include 'I can beat him' or 'this is really going too far'. Such considerations are sometimes referred to as direct or indirect consequences, inseparably linked to a choice.

Aside from this, the social learning theory states that we learn behaviour by imitating a model and seeing what other people do and do not appreciate. The imitation is guided by both the appreciation and the rejection. If this leads to victories, we may generalize that witnesses' experiences of aggression will make them fighting. Here again it is clear that not every witness will intervene. The point of intervening and the consequences of so doing, according to the theory, will influence the decision to intervene.

Now that we have assembled arguments for the existence of a spiral of violence, we need to ask how it can be inhibited. Ethology indicates that suitable inhibiting mechanisms do exist. Ethologists presuppose that individuals in a group strive for status: each individual tries to improve or reinforce his position. We could say that there is a point in improving one's position; it explains why someone starts fighting, or fights back or even 'joins in' a fight. The inhibiting factor, according to ethology, is the same individuals' desire for stability. The argument is that endless conflicts and the associated fighting only cause more and more social unrest, which benefits no one. Thus the collective good of 'social rest' has to compete with the individual good of 'improved status'. De Waal (1982) established the existence of these collective and individual goods in a study of chimpanzees over a period of several years. Fighting, joining in a fight or fighting back for a status which is at stake or can be improved is set against the desire for stability, which can take the form of coalition-forming or appeasement.

So is the spiral of violence fiction or reality? To answer this question we carried out an observation study at a youth club in a town in the west of Holland, with a concentration on acts of aggression by the customers.

We investigated whether our two propositions were true in this kind of situation. If so, one would expect a considerable overlap between the aggressor population and the witness and victim populations. We also wanted to find out whether a spiral of violence existed, and if so, whether there was an inhibiting mechanism at work; this would be shown in a reduction in the incidence of acts of aggression over a period of time. Lastly, we wanted to know whether the observations could be regarded as supporting typologies of victims and aggressors such as those of Olweus (1978) and Montagner (1982). This would be a strong indication of the existence of three main kinds of victims: a) aggressors who often lose to someone else, b) frequent victims of aggression, and c) those who are victimized only once. This would influence the development of risk models: it would enable us to detect self-reinforcing elements in the spiral of violence using the victim and witness risk model (Steinmetz, 1985).

We shall discuss the results produced by the study on the basis of the questions formulated above. First we shall consider overlap and typology, but not before it is clear who the aggressors, victims and witnesses are. We shall describe the types of aggressive behaviour in detail and note the reactions of those subjected to it.

The first group to be discussed are the aggressors. From our observations we were able to distinguish between those who committed a single act of aggression and those who committed more than one: we refer to them as 'one-time' and 'multiple' aggressors respectively. The multiple aggressors were responsible for the majority of all acts of aggression, an average of five per evening.

We then found that half of the acts were physical acts against the person. It should however be noted that the majority were of an innocent kind: during our observations we witnessed no more than four serious fights. Other, more frequent, acts were verbal threats, which accounted for 25% of the total. Less common were physical acts against property (6%), sexual harassment (5%) and physical threats without personal contact (12%).

The number of acts is not, the only factor that distinguishes one-time and multiple aggressors. The latter are also distinguishable by the fact that they are more often involved in minor physical acts such as pulling and pushing. Their acts are also more complex than those of one-time aggressors. Innocent tussles are often combined with pulling or pushing in the case of multiple aggressors, and pulling or pushing is combined with verbal threats. It seems that it is only the multiple aggressors who indulge in sexual harassment. They are distinguishable from one-time aggressors not only by their deeds but also by psychological characteristics: a bravado attitude was more common among them and they were more often drinkers. They were more likely to commit acts of aggression in the company of other multiple aggressors. The classification 'multiple aggressor' covers more, then, than just a high incidence of aggressive behaviour.

How do victims and witnesses react to the acts of aggression, and what kind of people are they? Here again we can distinguish between those with only one experience and those with more than one. The 'more-than-one' experience group is small compared with the number of victims and witnesses with one experience, no more than 33% of the total. Despite this, that group accounted for 70% of all victim and witness experiences. This is even more the case with witnesses, who came into contact with some 50% of all victim experiences but over 90% of all witness experiences, from which we may deduce that not every victim is a witness on the same evening and that only a small group of victims have the majority of witness experiences.

Our observations revealed that witnesses rarely if ever reacted to an aggressor, unless their girlfriend was being pestered or they regarded it as part of their job to intervene (as in the case of bartenders). Witnesses reacted in only 4% of cases.

Victims too did not usually react to an aggressor; they did so in 38% of cases. The most common reactions were flight (18%) and retaliation (14%). Victims tried to smooth over the situation by laughing or making a humorous remark in only a small number of cases (6%). Here again, membership of the more-than-one-experience group was reflected in behaviour: those with more than one victim experience more often reacted to aggression (51%) than those victimized only once (23%). This is not the only difference between those with

only one and those with more than one experience: the latter were of a sturdier physical build. In fact it should be noted that most victims were somewhat smaller than their aggressors. The more-than-one-experience group also drank heavily, certainly more than the single-experience group, and there was more knife-carrying among them, often used to support a bravado attitude. Whether these were straight provocations designed to upset the pecking order we cannot say.

Now that we have seen who the aggressors, victims and witnesses were, we can discuss the overlap between these populations at the youth club. About 28% of all victims and witnesses were found to be aggressors, whereas 52% of the aggressors were also victims or witnesses. We found that 56% of those with more than one victim or witness experience were aggressors the same evening; this was true of only 17–18% of the remainder. Aside from this, victims who were also aggressors reacted differently to aggression than victims who were not aggressors: one third of the former retaliated, as against 8% of the latter. A striking fact is that those who were victimized only once and did not commit an aggressive act did not react to the act of aggression in 83% of cases. This cannot be said of those who were victimized more than once and did not commit aggression that evening: their most common reaction was flight (47% of cases); in 42% of cases they did react to the aggressor.

What do these data enable us to say about the overlap between aggressors, victims and witnesses? How do they help us to develop a typology including both aggressors and victims? They suggest that two types of victimization are conceivable: (a) simply being the victim of an act of aggression, and (b) starting or joining in a fight and then losing. We included witnesses who tried to help someone and lost in the latter category. A similar distinction can be made between witnesses: some youngsters became witnesses because they happened to be around, whereas witnessing an act was less of a coincidence in the case of others, who were watching because someone they knew was involved on one side or the other.

Whether these data enable us to quantify the various types of witness and victim is debatable. We can however state that aggressors often lose and often witness attacks on their friends. In other words, the overlap between the various types of experience is largest in the case of aggressors. Aside from this there is a fairly large group who are evidently victimized willy-nilly. Being a witness is not so much a matter of chance: such coincidences were rare at the youth club. It may be concluded, therefore, that these data are very similar to the typology developed by Olweus (1978): among those with more than one victim experience there is clearly a group of whipping boys, as is clear from their behaviour – they were more likely than anyone to run away from aggressors.

To answer the central question at last, whether the spiral of violence is fiction or reality, we need to know whether there is any progression in the incidence of acts of aggression. The observation data show that this did decrease somewhat over a period of time. We saw that the number of serious fights was minimal. There is also a highly practical inhibiting mechanism, which could be called 'effectiveness'. Acts of aggression entail a certain risk. Both the fights and the pulling and pushing at the youth club are not designed to destroy the other individual but are an expression of the desire for more status. Status is gained by showing that you make another person your subordinate. This forcible acquisition of status is however subject to rules, the most important one being that no injuries should be inflicted. When this 'implicit' rule was infringed there was mass disapproval, as far as we could see. There would seem to be limits on the struggle for higher status among peers. Some people have to recognize others as their superiors eventually, resulting in the long term in a stable group.

When judging the spiral of violence to be fiction or reality we should not forget that the group involved in most acts of aggression is very small. The desire for status by subordinating others is particularly important to them. They pay a high price for it, however, since there is a large risk that they will lose, and everyone will find out about it. Most such fights take place when other witness-aggressors are present.

From the results it can be deduced that witnesses become entangled by not helping a friend who is losing. Rational arguments can play an important part here, e.g. not being strong enough to deal with the opponent. They presumably then have to prove their worth, by attacking an opponent to whom they are not so likely to lose. All these types of involvement in aggressive behaviour in this small group can only be explained as expressions of a self-reinforcing spiral of violence, although it should be noted that decisions to act aggressively are likely to be rational even in this group. Given their considerable experience of acts of aggression, both positive and negative, they know better than anyone what the risks are.

Lastly, if we are to have any certainty as to whether the spiral of violence is fiction or reality, we need to know how other young people can be drawn in. For this to happen, in general two conditions have to be met: first, there has to be contact with youngsters who engage in acts of aggression, and second, the person concerned has to have been victimized several times himself before fighting can be effective. Clearly this does not happen automatically: not all youngsters will choose the society of friends who fight, and most of them will moreover make the best of a bad lot when it becomes clear that there is a high price to pay.

The spiral of violence (and presumably of crime) applies in practice to only a restricted group. This means in effect that the chance of being victimized increases if one keeps the company of people who fight or steal, and this factor is worth including in the risk models.

Appendix 1: Aggressors

Table 1. Type of aggressor and retaliation (no. of persons)

type of aggressor	retaliation		total persons
	yes	no	
one act	12 (32%)	25	37
> 1 act	20 (41%)	29	49
total	32 (37%)	51	86

$\chi^2 = 0.63$; $df = 1$; $\phi = .09$

Table 2. Type of aggressor and presence of others (no. of acts)

type of aggressor	situation		total acts
	alone	group	
one act	23	14 (38%)	37
> 1 act	99	147 (60)	249
Total	122	161 (57%)	283

$\chi^2 = 6.3$; $df = 1$; $\phi = .15$

Table 3. Type of aggressor and his/her sex (no. of acts)

type of aggressor	sex		total acts
	male	female	
een act	36	1	37
> 1 act	210	36	246
Totaal	246	37	283

Table 4. Type of aggressor and his/her age (no. of acts)

type of aggressor	age				total persons
	< 16	16-17	17-18	> 18	
one act	5	11	10	4	39
> 1 act	21	86	81	56	244
Total	26	97	91	60	174*

* no information on 9 acts

$\chi^2 = 2.97$; $df = 3$

Table 5. Type of aggressor and his/her height (no. of acts)

type of aggressor	height			total acts
	short	average	tall	
one act	3	21	9	33
> 1 act	54	123	63	240
Total	57	144	72	273 *

* no information on 10 acts

χ^2 (kl 1 short/average + tall) = 3.2; df = 1; NS

Table 6. Type of aggressor and his/her attitude (no. of acts)

type of aggressor	attitude			total acts
	popular	bravado	normal	
one act	1	1	29 (24%)	31
> 1 act	22	116	108 (44%)	246
Total	23	117	137	277 *

* no information on 6 acts

Table 7. Type of aggressor and build (no. of acts)

type of aggressor	build			total acts
	thin	normal	fat	
one act	1	34	2	37
> 1 act	17	107	20	249
Total	18	243	20	283

Table 8. Type of aggressor and punk-ness (no. of acts)

type of aggressor	punk		total acts
	yes	no	
one act	5	20	25
> 1 act	57	186	243
total	62	206	268 *

* no information on 15 acts

χ^2 = 0.15; df = 1; NS

Table 9. Type of aggressor and special characteristics, e.g. barman, drinking, body-builder behaviour, tattoos (no. of acts)

type of aggressor	special characteristic		total acts
	yes	no	
one act	8 (22%)	29	37
> 1 act	121 (49%)	125	246
Total	129	154	283

$\chi^2 = 15.2$; $df = 1$; $p < .01$; $\phi = .23$

Table 10. Type of aggressor and his/her origin (no. of acts)

type of aggressor	Dutch origin		total acts
	yes	no	
one act	37	—	37
> 1 act	238	8	246
Total	275	8	283

Table 11. Type of aggressor and type of act (no. of acts)

type of act		agressor		total acts
		= 1	= > 1 x	
physical against the person	serious	1	3	4
	minor	8	41	49
	very minor	6	122	128
physical against property	throwing beer	1	5	6
	throwing glasses	5	1	6
writing graffiti		3	—	3
	knocking over tables	1	5	6
sexual harassment	physical	—	9	9
	threats	—	8	8
physical threat	serious	—	4	4
	minor	3	33	36
verbal threat		6	74	80

Appendix 2: Victims and witnesses

Table 12. Type of victim/witness by sex

sex	type of victim/witness				total persons
	V = 0 W = 1	V = 0 W = > 1 ×	V = 1 W = 0	V = > 1 × W = > 1 ×	
male	17	5	72	36	130
female	3 (15%)	3 (38%)	15 (17%)	9 (20%)	30 (19%)
Total	20	8	87 *	45	160

* no information on 3 persons

Table 13. Type of victim/witness by correspondence between his/her age and that of aggressor

age	type of victim/witness				total persons
	V = 0 W = 1	V = 0 W = > 1 ×	V = 1 W = 0	V = > 1 × W = > 1 ×	
< aggressor (43%)	2 (30%)	1 (77%)	21 (63%)	18 (66%)	42
= aggressor	1	2	22	9	34
> aggressor	4	7	13	16	40
unknown	13	—	34	5	52
total (excl. unknown)	7 (2 counted for multiple acts)	10	56 (3 counted twice for multiple acts)	43	116

$\chi^2 = 8.05$; $df = 1$; $p > .01$; $\phi = .26$

(<; = >; V = 0/V = 1, V = > 1 ×

Table 14. Type of victim/witness by correspondence between his/her height and that of aggressor

height	type of victim/witness				total persons
	V = 0 W = 1	V = 0 W = > 1 ×	V = 1 W = 0	V = > 1 × W = > 1 ×	
< aggressor (20%)	— (20%)	1 (75%)	24 (62%)	19	44 (60%)
= aggressor	3	1	22	12	38
> aggressor	12	8	15	19	54
unknown	5	—	29	2	36
Total (excl. unknown)	15 (2 counted twice for multiple acts)	10	61 (7 counted twice for multiple acts)	50	136

$\chi^2 = 21$; $df = 1$; $p < .01$; $\phi = .39$

(<; = / > 1; V = 0/V = 1 ×, V = > 1 ×

Table 15. Type of victim/witness by build

build	type of victim/witness				total persons
	V = 0 W = 1	V = 0 W = > 1 ×	V = 1 W = 0	V = > 1 × W = > 1 ×	
thin	—	—	—	1	1
normal	20	8	84	44	156
fat	—	—	3	—	3
unknown	—	—	3	—	3
Total (excl. unknown)	20	8	87	45	160

Table 16. Type of victim/witness by attitude

attitude	type of victim/witness				total persons
	V = 0 W = 1	V = 0 W = > 1 ×	V = 1 W = 0	V = > 1 × W = > 1 ×	
bravado	1 (16%)	—	8 (15%)	6 (25%)	15 (18%)
popular	1	—	—	2	4
normal	10	2	54	23	89
unknown	8	6	27	15	56
Total (excl. unknown)	12	8	63	31 (1 counted twice)	108

Table 17. Type of victim/witness by punk-ness

punk	type of victim/witness				total persons
	V = 0 W = 1	V = 0 W = > 1 ×	V = 1 W = 0	V = > 1 × W = > 1 ×	
yes	—	—	6	2	8
no	7	1	54	29	91
unknown	13	7	30	14	64
total (excl. unknown)	7	1	30	31	99

Table 18. Type of victim/witness by special characteristics, e.g., knife-carrying, drinking

special characteristics	type of victim/witness				total persons
	V = 0 W = 1	V = 0 W = > 1 ×	V = 1 W = 0	V = > 1 × W = > 1 ×	
yes	5 (13%)	1 (6%)	21 (10%)	26 (24%)	53
no	34	16	189	82	321
Total	39	17	210	108	374 *

* more than one characteristic may be present in an act
 χ^2 (V = 0, V = 1/V > 1; yes/no) = 6.6; df = 1; phi = .14

Table 19. Type of victim/witness by origin

Dutch origin	type of victim/witness				total persons
	V = 0 W = 1	V = 0 W = > 1x	V = 1 W = 0	V = > 1x W = > 1x	
yes	19	8	23	40	150
no	1	-	4	5	9
unknown	-	-	3	-	3
Total (excl.unkn.)	20	8	87	45	162

Table 20. Type of victim/witness by reactions to various types of act

type of act	type of reaction	V = 0 W = 1	V = 0 W = > 1x	V = 1 W = 0	V = > 1x W = > 1x	total reactions
physical against the person	none		24	44	28	89
	flight	1		2	19	22
	appeasement	2		2	5	9
	retaliation			6	10	1
subtotal		3	24	54	62	90
physical against property	none		13	3		16
	flight					
	appeasement				1	1
	retaliation					
subtotal		13	-	3	1	-
physical threat (without contact)	none		2	4	1	2
	flight			4	4	1
	appeasement					
	retaliation			2	2	
subtotal		-	2	10	7	3
verbal threat	none		25	15	14	13
	flight			1	1	
	appeasement					
	retaliation				5	
subtotal		-	25	16	20	13
sexual harassment	none	4	1	3	3	
	flight			2	1	
	appeasement			2		1
	retaliation					1
subtotal		4	1	7	4	2
total		20	52	90	94	108

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PART III

REACTIONS OF THE JUVENILE
JUSTICE SYSTEM

VI. THE JUVENILE INVESTIGATION UNIT

An observation study

by Erik van der Hoeven

1. Motive, goal and strategy of the research

1.1. The Juvenile Investigation Unit

The Dutch juvenile justice system is founded on the welfare model (see the introduction). Characteristic of this model is a non-punitive ideology with a strong emphasis on individualized treatment. Much attention is given to social and psychological conditions surrounding the offense and the efforts to implement dispositions aimed at the individual interest and needs of the juvenile. The needs of the child, irrespective of the act committed or its seriousness are the guiding principles for judicial reactions. A section of special police officers, who handle exclusively children's cases, was justified (for that matter, following closely the establishment of the juvenile court).

At the outset the juvenile police was primarily engaged in supervision and control of foster families, cases of abuse and neglect, truancy and problem behavior of youth. After the Second World War it became an institutional police department for judicial proceedings and during the fifties most of their activities in the social field were taken over by the board of child welfare. Nowadays the juvenile police is engaged in:

- the handling of criminal cases involving minors
- the handling of missing and runaway minors
- the handling of social problems regarding minors

Today, most medium and large law enforcement agencies have juvenile divisions, and smaller agencies have at least a juvenile specialist. More precisely: 70% of the Dutch police forces have a juvenile police section. Depending on the available manpower, the task of the juvenile police can vary across policeforces from a mainly consulting or advising one to a full processing of nearly all offenses committed by juveniles in their district. The latter is the case with the sections consisting of more than three detectives. Such juvenile investigation units are attached to about 25% of all law enforcement agencies. These units have medium to large size cities as their working area.

The majority of contacts these investigation units have with minors and/or their parents concern criminal cases (70 to 80%). Regarding these cases it is the

work of the detectives to deal with suspects delivered to them (by patrol-officers) or otherwise identified through the work of others (shop detectives, members of the public). Once suspects are confronted with the juvenile detectives, it is up to the detectives to decide what could and should be done.

For this decision detectives have two official dispositions available:

- an informal warning; the detective makes an (internal) police-registration but does not inform the prosecutor;
- an official report; a report concerning the offense is sent to the prosecutor for further processing, the offender is officially registered.

In addition to this settlement, dispositions are sometimes accompanied by police assistance, i.e. dispositions are followed by activities such as mediation between parents and offender, advice to the juvenile's teacher, referral of parents and/or juvenile to a professional agency, etc.

Naturally, the actions detectives perform do not have the scope and intensity of assistance rendered by most professional agencies. The activities developed by the police are meant to create a first start in assistance for the juvenile. Nevertheless, this assistance is formally embedded in the specification of duties of police personnel: "to maintain law and order and assist those that are in need" . . . ; it is by definition a part of the police task. We may characterise this police assistance as a social network approach (Kennedy, 1985). Detectives try to activate significant others (parents, relatives, guardians, teachers, social workers) in dealing with – the delinquency problems of – the juvenile.

In this sense it represents a special kind of reaction to the offender and the offense committed. A reaction by police personnel that is seldom recorded in the (Dutch) police files of offenders.

1.2. Varieties of police behavior

Police assistance is most frequently rendered in the handling of missing and runaway minors. Because a status offense is not a criminal act, the police has two options after detection: to do nothing or to start assistance.

It appears that where runaway minors are concerned, juvenile investigation units have a consistent view in handling runaways (Van der Hoeven, 1985). The general assumption is that running away indicates a situation of conflict between parents or caretakers and the juvenile; it is this conflict that needs attention. So, after the runaway is detected, the main question the detective asks himself is whether there is some need for assistance or not and if so, is this assistance already arranged.* In these runaway cases the police operate similar

*Since 1983 a person who hides a minor from his or her parents is no longer penalized when certain

to a social service agency, specialized in dealing with crisis situations. Juvenile investigations units do not differ very much in their reaction where runaways or social problems are concerned.

With respect to the handling of criminal cases, quite a contrary picture emerges. There exist large differences in the number of official reports between units with comparable tasks. These differences between units do not seem to be fully attributable to differences in legal aspects of the cases, *i.e.*, inflicted damage, previous contacts with the police or type of offense, (Junger-Tas 1981, Van der Hoeven, 1985). Detectives of some investigation units base their decision – apart from legal aspects – on aspects such as school attendance or cooperation of the offender with the police. Furthermore, different units give different weights to the same aspect (Andriessen, 1976, Van der Hoeven, 1985).*

From a welfare point of view such differences would not be so bad as long as they are in agreement with the welfare ideology. However, research has shown that some extra-legal variables, such as neighborhood and ethnic group, also seem to affect the disposition. Aspects that cannot be justified by either legalistic or substantial reasoning (Landau, 1981; Landau and Nathan, 1983). These differences can be understood though by the way the welfare ideology is operational within the juvenile justice system.

One consequence of the belief in the welfare ideology and particularly the emphasis on 'individualized treatment' is that legal authorities are empowered with a good deal of discretionary decision making power. The fact that the practice of informal warning is (still) not anchored in the law – although generally accepted – is in agreement with this idea of individualization. In addition, official guidelines either do not exist or differ between investigation units in content, clarity and in the way they are followed.

Therefore, although the existence of a juvenile investigation unit finds its roots in the belief in the welfare model, paradoxically this does not mean that the individual or local handling of criminal cases is inspired by exactly this same belief.

Consequently, we believe there exists a variety of police behavior in the handling of criminal cases. It is further plausible that police conduct can be largely attributed to the variety of perspectives from which police forces or -units do their work. In fact, this is exactly a feature on which Wilson – speaking about the conduct of patrolmen – so vividly reported (Wilson, 1968). But also Andriessen (1976), basing her conclusions on structured observation of

conditions are met, that is when diligent assistance is rendered.

** For that matter, research in other Western countries produced comparable results; Morash, 1983; Mott, 1983; Landau and Nathan, 1983 and Hackler, 1984.

police contacts, suggested that the two juvenile investigation units she examined differed in styles of police conduct (personal style versus business-like style); which seemed to be related to the 'unconscious policy' of the unit.

In view of the foregoing, it is interesting to examine the varieties of police behavior between and within investigation units, and to ascertain in what way they diversify from a welfare model of police conduct.

1.3 Relevancy of the study

The importance of the research is not only interesting from a scientific point of view. Considering several recent trends in the thinking on crime control, it is of growing practical relevance. Primarily there is the notable change surrounding the philosophy of the juvenile justice system. Although the welfare model is incompletely realised in practice and there are experimental diversion programs based on the model (Junger-Tas, 1984), there is a growing tendency to re-emphasize the committed act, the responsibility of the offender and to give sanctions related to the offense (see also the contribution by Van der Laan).

In a sense these principles are in agreement with the more general movement for acknowledgement of the emancipation of the juvenile: the due process model. But also in the application of the penal code, norms such as measurable fairness, impartiality and equal treatment are stressed across judicial agencies. It is important to note that these two movements – the further development of the welfare model and the rediscovery of equity and justice principles – develop side by side. This results in a mixture of a simultaneous 'return to justice' and a willingness to preserve important positive acquisitions of the welfare model (Junger-Tas, 1984).

These changes in philosophy are partly influenced by a second trend that finds its roots in the awareness that police and justice cannot by themselves control crime (see also the contribution by Junger-Tas). Crime control of delinquent acts as petty theft and vandalism, can no longer be the exclusive domain of the (juvenile) justice system. The community itself must also recognise its responsibility.

In view of these trends we must expect radical changes in crime prevention and control strategies in the near future.

With regard to the second trend we can mention the recent adoption of a policy by the government which is focussed upon stimulating active involvement of the community in crime prevention (Society and Crime, 1985). At the moment this policy is mainly concerned with starting, broadening and intensifying socio-preventive measures in the context of local administration.

However, the question concerning the role of the police in connection with these strategies remained as yet unresolved. To the juvenile police this question is particularly important, as a large part of the crime, that is aimed at by this policy, is committed by juveniles. Considering the policy theme 'activating the community', it seems plausible that various assistance activities of police personnel can be of great value and relevance. Besides, an emphasis on the possible importance of assistance is consistent with a further development of the welfare model within the juvenile justice system. On the other hand these same trends can have consequences that are rather destructive for the existence of a juvenile police.

With respect to the possible role of the police in the field of prevention, a prime condition is that the existing gap between police and public must be closed. One way to attain this is to strive for a more visible and accessible police force within the community. A consequence of this strive is a reorganisation of the policeforce of which despecialization is one of the issues. So the demand for community policing raises serious questions concerning the maintenance of a unit specialized in juvenile matters.

A relevant question is therefore: how the termination of the juvenile police would influence the handling of offenses committed by juveniles; can the quality of work be preserved in this situation?

One problem in answering these questions is the lack of relevant information on which the answers or policy decisions can be based (Fijnaut *et al.*, 1985). We do not know for example what (assistance) qualities and possibilities juvenile investigation units have or do not have in co-realising these trends. So, policy development can at least benefit from empirical knowledge and understanding of police behavior.

1.4 Objective of the research

We believe previous (Dutch) research of juvenile investigation units neglected some relevant topics in this respect. Research has resulted in a description of characteristics of the offender and offenses which justify official reports or informal warnings (Junger-Tas, 1981; Van Loon, 1982; Sociale achtergronden, 1983). Only Andriessen (1976) gives a fuller account of the behavior of detectives. However, in this research no attention is given to the police assistance that may accompany the disposition. Besides, hardly any attention is paid to related topics such as amount of and the way in which the police gather information about the offender and about the social conditions underlying the delinquent behavior. The few studies providing some insight in these topics are all qualitative and, more important, neglect the possibility of variety in

police behavior (Aalberts and Camminga, 1983; De Jong-Wieth, 1985).

This brings us to the research objective*: to give a (relevant) quantitative description of police behavior in the handling of criminal cases of juvenile offenders with a special focus on the place and function of police assistance.

1.5 The research

The choice of suitable investigation units was made on the basis of several criteria. The main criterion was the existence of some substantial policy regarding police assistance. In agreement with this – and some other practical reasons** – two juvenile investigation units were chosen (Rotterdam and Utrecht). A third unit was chosen explicitly because of the absence of such a policy (Eindhoven: a medium-sized city, see Table 4 in the appendix). The number of detectives working in each unit was respectively 34, 29 and 11. All three units handle comparable criminal cases.

The unit of analysis is the contact of a detective with a juvenile offender concerning a criminal case. This contact begins at the moment suspects are confronted with the juvenile detective (at the police office) and is set to end after the juvenile is sent home or collected by the parents/caretakers.

The research population consists of all contacts the three investigation units had with juvenile offenders aged 12 to 18 years – in 1983 and 1984.

During our stay at the units – in Rotterdam and Eindhoven this lasted about six months and in Utrecht four months – the contacts of detectives with juveniles were registered (in total 2,189). Using the available police files, this registration provided us with information on aspects as sex, age, ethnicity of the juvenile, type of offense, duration of the police contact, previous police contacts and the disposition. Over 300 registered police contacts were also subjected to a structured observation. After ending the police contact – but before the juvenile left the office – the detective and the juvenile were interviewed separately. Observation and interviews provided us with additional information about the juvenile, his way of life, his social conditions, the detective, the decision taken, and police assistance.***

* Actually, the research was directed also to some other goals *i.e.*, the handling of missing and runaway minors and a systematic comparison between contacts of the police with Dutch juveniles and juveniles from ethnic minorities.

** Because another goal of the research was a systematic comparison between juvenile offenders from ethnic minority groups and Dutch juveniles offenders, another criterion was a sufficient number of police contacts with juveniles from ethnic minorities that would allow quantitative comparative analysis. In this article we shall not refer to that part of the study. Important though is the fact that we found no or little differences in the handling of criminal cases of Dutch juveniles or their ethnic counterparts.

*** The sample of police contacts is not a random sample. We could not foresee which and how

As the following section shows, we distinguished several themes of police conduct. In the light of these themes we tried to describe police behavior. A separate description of the themes and aspects we distinguished, turned out to clarify very little of the police behavior. These results had some consequences for the scheme of analysis we followed. It resulted in a scheme consisting of three phases. First we described the police contacts of the three investigation units separately with characteristics of offender, offense, disposition (including the grounds for the decision) and assistance, using the data from the registration (some of the results are presented in section 4).

Second we applied a discriminant-analysis to the observed contacts, distinguishing contacts with and contacts without assistance. In this phase the relevant variables were significantly reduced.*

Third, we analysed the remaining variables with two- and three-dimensional tables (using Chi-square and Phi or Cramers V as statistics). Also in this phase multiple regression analysis was done on both registered and observational data to determine the relative significance of characteristics influencing the disposition decision. The main research questions that are addressed in our analysis are the following:

- what are the aspects that discriminate between police contacts with assistance and police contacts without assistance. What is the relationship between these characteristics?
- what characteristics of contacts influence dispositions?
- what differences exist between contacts, concerning dispositions and the items that influence this decision?
- what is the role of information gathering (signalling) in police assistance and in the disposition decision?
- do investigation units differ in the above mentioned aspects?

We hoped that answering these questions would enable us to give a relevant

many contacts would present themselves at what time. Certain strategies were used to minimize systematic bias.

The sample of observed contacts has been compared with the sample of registered contacts on aspects as age and sex of offender, type of offense, disposition, previous police contacts and detectives handling the cases. No significant differences were detected. The sample of registered contacts is compared with information from the annual reports on aspects as type of contact (criminal case or problem case), sex of the juvenile, ethnicity and disposition. This too revealed no significant difference. Consequently we have no indication of selectivity in the sampling procedure we used; we have reason to believe the sample is non-biased.

* Discriminant analyses were carried out with the following sets of variables: characteristics of the offense and/or offender (*i.e.*, age, sexe, ethnicity, previous police contacts, type of offense) characteristics of the detective (age, length of service by the force and by the units, background knowledge concerning ethnic minorities); characteristics of the course of the police contact (various themes of signalling, foreknowledge, contacts with colleagues, contacts with superior, immediate confession, estimated chances of deviant development, time at which police contact ends).

description of police behavior and make comparisons between investigation units in such a way that it provides some understanding of the real orientation of units where detectives handle criminal cases.

2. Themes of police conduct

The basic assumption of this study is that the way in which police is processing criminal cases is related to an underlying philosophy on the basis of which individual detectives or investigation units as a whole do their work. One main characteristic of the police job is the fact that a detective has to decide on a reaction to the committed crime. In order to make and reason these decisions, detectives need information about the offense (has it actually taken place, in what way, with whom, etc.) and the social conditions of the juveniles. We distinguished four themes in describing police behavior

- philosophy of policework;
- information gathering (signalling);
- police disposition;
- police assistance.

Naturally, police behavior does not take place in isolation. It may be influenced by several 'external' aspects such as the time between the detective's first contact with an offender and the end of his duty, discussion with colleagues or a superior about a case, work pressure (amount of general rush) at the police office, etc. Of course, personal characteristics of the detective and the juvenile offender can affect the course and outcome of a police contact. So, to be able to describe the police conduct more fully, several contextual and personal aspects of the juvenile suspect and the detective as well as offense characteristics had to be included in the analysis.

With these themes and the additional characteristics of a police contact, we have – exploratively – described police behavior. Before presenting the results of the study we shall first further describe the themes we mentioned above.* While doing this, some concepts and central variables that were used in the analysis will be explained.

2.1 Justice model versus welfare model

With regard to the possible philosophies of police conduct we distinguished

* It was during the phased process of analysing and interpreting, that we were better able to make sense of significant as well as non-significant differences. As the research went on, understanding of the themes became more clear. So the following clarification of the themes is in part an 'interim-result' of the study.

two approaches detectives adopt in handling criminal cases (Marshall, 1983; Tutt and Giller, 1983).

A *judicial approach* is strongly directed at fighting crime by tracing down criminals, employing strategies aimed at confirming the suspect status and taking relevant action, i.e. 'to round off the case', so that in principle the suspect can appear in court. The seriousness of the committed crime is the point of reference for the decision taken by the police. This decision only consists of the dispositions 'informal warning' or 'official report'. Assistance is not a theme of policing: it is seen as independent of the decision. To the police there is in principle no difference between dealing with adult offenders or with the juvenile counterparts (except perhaps in the strategies used during interrogation).

Opposite to the judicial approach is the *welfare approach*. Now, the committed crime is seen as a signal for social problems in the life of the juvenile. These problems are responsible for the start or persistence of delinquent behavior. Moreover, this misbehavior is seen as temporary and reversible. The juvenile character is viewed as not yet completely 'determined' and amenable to 'treatment'. Also, because of their age, especially juveniles are considered to be not as responsible, and thus less culpable as adults are supposed to be. With respect to the decision, 'the pedagogical needs of the child' are a point of reference. Therefore, the efforts are aimed to achieve a non-judicial solution 'Informal warnings' are preferred. Important is further that great value is given to (police-)assistance as a reaction to the committed crime.

These approaches gave us some clues for interpreting the research results. Our intention was to look for variations along these dimensions, therefore it seemed unwise to hold on too tight to the approaches we distinguished. It would possibly restrict the explorative goal too much.* So we used these two themes as 'guiding images' (Glaser and Straus, 1969) in our efforts to make sense of the various characteristics. Furthermore, use of these models was important in formulating implications that have relevance for the recent and future development of (Dutch) police regarding the juvenile police.

2.2 Information gathered for selection (signalling)

The fact that the detective has to make a decision to react to the committed crime means that he or she has to make a selection between juveniles who may

* With respect to instrumentalising this concept, we did consider measuring attitudes of the detectives to crime control in general and more specifically with regard to juveniles. We abandoned this idea because of the validity problems attached to it: (there is a difference between what detectives say and what detectives do).

receive an informal warning and juveniles for whom an official report seems more appropriate. In making these decisions a detective needs information. Because police assistance was a major theme of the study, both information concerning the offense and the offender seemed only partially relevant. The question if and how much information detectives gather about the social conditions of the juveniles required more attention.

In relation to this 'information gathering' – in short signalling – we distinguished the impact of three dimensions: general information, fore knowledge and an estimation concerning the chances of future delinquency.

'Information gathering' or signalling means the stock-taking by the detective of circumstances and possibilities for assistance in the actual living conditions of the juvenile. In the research we distinguished six topics:

- information about the group of suspects (with what kind of people was the crime committed);
- information about the situation at home (family composition, relationship with parents, care-problems, judicial backgrounds of relatives);
- information about the living situation (quality of housing, facilities in the neighborhood);
- information about recreational activities (kind of activities, kind of friends, places where time is being spent);
- information about the juveniles school career (educational career, achievement, truancy, future plans);
- information about relationships at school (with teachers and pupils).

The detective does not only make enquiries during the contact with the juvenile.

Sometimes the detectives has information about the social and living conditions of the juveniles even before the contact is made; *fore knowledge*. Sometimes this is due to experience from previous policecontacts with the juvenile; usually however, the information is taken from files.

On the basis of information gathering and fore knowledge, the detective estimates the juvenile's chance to get into trouble again in the near future: the *estimated chances of future delinquency*. This reflects a general opinion of the chances of recidivism based on the delinquent behavior, the personal circumstances of the juvenile and the (limited) possibilities for assistance (see also section 2.4).

2.3 Police assistance

Assistance includes any action detectives take to activate significant others

in the social environment of the juvenile. This activation is demonstrated in solving practical problems for the juvenile, consultation, mediation, referral to professional social agencies, and exchange of information about the juvenile between the detective and all other involved persons. We did not consider a reprimand or mere information given to the parents (that the juvenile committed an offense) as being assistance. The activation may be directed towards the parents, the school or agencies that 'already assist' the juvenile.

As a result we distinguished two types of contacts: contacts with assistance (the social environment of the juvenile is being activated) and contacts without assistance (activation is omitted). Moreover, we made a theoretical distinction between three types of assistance. These three types differ in nature and derive their meaning from the question whether the police relate their assistance to the formal decision of disposition or not.*

The first type of assistance is aimed at the social problems recorded during the course of contact and is motivated by the urge to do something about it. Seen from the juvenile police's point of view the starting of assistance within this context can be logically derived from the official task of the police of 'assisting those who need it'. The detective acts in the individual interest of 'the client'.

The second type of assistance is aimed at the offense and the prevention of committing new offenses (social problems are only a relevant target insofar these are related to the delinquent behavior). Seen from the juvenile police's point of view it concerns assistance in connection with the maintenance of law and order. The detective acts in the public interest and tries explicitly to decrease or prevent future recidivism. This type of assistance is similar to the notion of diversion. In this context assistance is frequently offered in combination with an informal warning.

The third type of assistance is aimed at the consequences of a judicial disposition; *i.e.*, an official report. It corresponds with 'the rights' of the juvenile to receive social and legal support that result from a judicial disposition. In some (Dutch) cities this type of assistance is rendered by programs operating independently of the justice system. These programs have been established for juveniles to whom an official report has become inevitable; they are often from the lower social classes and seem to lack control and support from their direct environment. An important principle of these programs is their solidarity with the client (Andriessen, 1985).

* It is important to note that this distinction remained theoretical during our study. It served the purpose for relevant interpretation of the data. We could not ascertain these three types of assistance directly. Even when we describe the decision quantitatively by combining the two elements – disposition and assistance – it does not reflect the actual extent in which the second and third type of assistance are offered.

In many respects this third type of assistance contains some features of diversion, as diversion can be a result of this type of assistance or its objective. In this sense the second and third type of assistance are comparable: they both pursue diversion. Nevertheless, the origin of the diversion is quite different. Diversion connected to the second type of assistance finds its roots in the explicit objective to prevent further delinquency. Diversion connected to the third type of assistance finds its roots in the objective to offer the needed legal and social support to those who would otherwise have to do without it. Besides, diversion of the third type of assistance functions at the level of the public prosecutor.

2.4 Police disposition

One of the main topics, that has been investigated regarding the functioning of the juvenile justice system, is how the police, prosecutor and juvenile court reason their decisions; to what extent are these decisions based on legal characteristics and to what extent do extra-legal characteristics such as age, ethnic origin, socio-economic status and sex influence the decision?

In this research we considered the following potentially relevant items that may influence the disposition decision (Lundman *et al.*, 1980; Landau, 1981; Landau and Nathan, 1983; Mott, 1983; Morash, 1984; Andriessen, 1976; Junger-Tas, 1981 and 1983):

- legal items
 - inflicted damage;
 - number of previously registered police contacts (official and non-official);
 - type of offense (felony, burglary, assault)
- extra-legal items*
 - age of the juvenile;
 - sex of the juvenile;
 - ethnic origin of the juvenile;

* The last four variables in this list need some further explanation. The attitude of the offender is measured by seven five-point scales. A principal component analysis (with varimax rotation) extracted two factors (explained variance is respectively 38,3% and 20,7%). The first factor, we called 'willingness to cooperate'; the juvenile is cooperative, sincere and not aggressive. The second factor we named 'being impressed'; the juvenile is nervous and 'knocked sideways' by the police contact.

The detective's attitude is measured by eight five-point scales. The principal component analysis extracted two factors (explained variance is 47,8% and 12,9%). The first factor we called 'harsh attitude'; the detective is suspicious, aggressive, blunt and incorrect in his behavior.

The second factor we called 'an open and interested attitude'; the detective is sympathetic attentive and lets the juvenile speak.

- being impressed (as judged by the detective);
- willingness to cooperate (as judged by the detective);
- harsh attitude of the detective (as judged by the observer);
- open and interested attitude of the detective (as judged by the observer);
- probability of future delinquency of the juvenile (as assessed by the detective).

Naturally, the legal items fit in perfectly with the justice model. Some of the extra-legal items can be interpreted as undoubtedly welfare related, such as age, being impressed and probability of future deviancy. These items can be seen as legitimate disposition criteria because of their substantial meaning (Landau and Nathan, 1983). Other non-legal items though, such as sex and ethnicity, can neither be justified in the welfare model or in the justice model. Some of the other extra-legal items are more difficult to interpret *e.g.*, willingness to cooperate, the open attitude, and the harsh attitude of the detective.

In this regard the research by Andriessen (1976) is important. Basing her findings on observations at two investigation units, she concluded that age, seriousness of offense and recidivism (previous police contacts) were beyond doubt the operating norms for the disposition decision in both cities. Along with these so-called 'conscious' criteria, there were other aspects that exercise their influence 'unconsciously'. It is in view of this dimension that units differed from one another. These criteria were: friendly attitude of the detective, contact with parents, willingness of juvenile to cooperate, offense committed with a group, whether the detective is busy or not. Based on these unconscious aspects she concluded that detectives of one unit operated in a more personal style (The Hague), while the other unit adopted a business-like style (Amsterdam).

We can derive several points from this study. First, apparently there exists an unconscious policy which is made up of quite heterogeneous elements. This 'policy' refers to the offender, the course of the contact and also to aspects of work pressure. Secondly, it seems possible to characterize investigation units according to these unconscious aspects, but not – or not sufficiently – by the 'conscious policy' of disposition criteria. Thirdly, the question remains whether these two styles are consistent with a welfare or justice model.

So, to make sense of these many factors that exercise an influence on the disposition decision, we should look at them from a broader description of the police behavior. Consequently, we have to interpret the (disposition) items in relation to the rendered police assistance and the amount and quality of the signalling.

A final remark concerns the item 'estimated chances of future delinquency'.

Researchers, like Landau and Nathan (1983), Mott (1983) and others, argue that aspects as broken home, school enrollment, problems with parents or school, latchkey child, etc. all refer to the (problematic) character and social circumstances of the juvenile. Consequently, they consider these characteristics as being welfare related items. However, we assumed that detectives did not explicitly use such items separately as decision criteria. Instead they are more inclined to base a decision upon a more global impression of the juveniles background in relation to committed acts. Doob and Chan (1982) emphasized this aspect in their observation study. So, a subjective item that refers to the mentioned circumstances seems to be more appropriate: an evaluation (good or bad) by the detective of the environment of the juvenile in the light of future (delinquency) problems.*

3. The behavior of the juvenile police

The first question we had to answer was: can police behavior be meaningfully described on the basis of the themes we distinguished. Therefore, our first analysis concerned police conduct in general, without differentiating between units. By doing this, we did not expect to establish a representative picture of the behavior of the Dutch juvenile police. Rather we hoped it would give us some idea of the interrelationships between the themes and of the possible significant factors that directly or indirectly influence police assistance. Besides, a mere global but general picture of all three units could give us the necessary backing for the description of police behavior in the separate units. In the next paragraph we present a brief description of some relevant features. In par. 3.2 we indicate interrelationships between the themes.

3.1 Characteristics of police contacts

As shown in Table 5 in the appendix, the major part of criminal contacts (ca. 65%) consists of less serious crimes against property (shoplifting, bicycle theft, etc.). About 20% to 25% is related to more serious kinds of theft (burglary), while a limited percentage 10%–15% is related to aggressive delinquency generally against property, not so much against people). Most juveniles who come into contact with the police are 16–17 years old (40%). A close second

* This measure is validated by the relationship it shows with other relevant variables. An assessment of high probability of future delinquency is significantly (between $p = .000$ and $p = .01$) correlated with previous police contacts, one-parent families and the reason given by the detective for the disposition, which refers to the presence of 'delinquency restricting' factors (the criteria of assistance).

are those who are 14–15 years old (30%). In 50% of the observed contacts the juvenile had previous contacts with the police. As expected, mainly boys are responsible for the offenses known to the police (ca. 80%).

Concerning 'signalling' we can point out the following. Gathering information about the conditions of housing is done least of all (ca. 40%), while most of the time detectives are interested in the juvenile's schoolcareer (60%). The detectives have some foreknowledge about the juvenile in 30% of the criminal cases.

In approx. 50% of the contacts detectives judged the prospects of the juvenile as good; *i.e.*, they assessed a low probability of future delinquency.

Table 1. Action taken

	N	%
I informal warning with assistance	44	20
II official report with assistance	41	19
III informal warning without assistance	90	41
IV official report without assistance	44	20
	219	100

In 39% of the contacts we observed, assistance is rendered. That is to say one or more persons in the social environment of the juvenile were activated by the detectives. This was not done in 61% of the cases. Most of the contacts are characterized by an informal warning: 40% are characterized by an official report, half with and half without assistance.

From this we can infer that the juvenile police divert juveniles – by way of dismissal – to a considerable extent (60%). One third of this 'diversion' is accompanied by assistance. It is not clear though to what extent the assistance is 'diversive in nature'. As we argued before, assistance can be offered because of the simple reason some need for assistance was perceived by the detective during the contact. The connection between assistance and judicial reaction is in itself far from selfevident. The question is when and where this is the case. To arrive at that point, we have to add information on the philosophy detectives adopt to handle their cases and the concrete police practice.

3.2 Relationships between characteristics

In general we found the relationships between characteristics as summarized in the Figure 1.

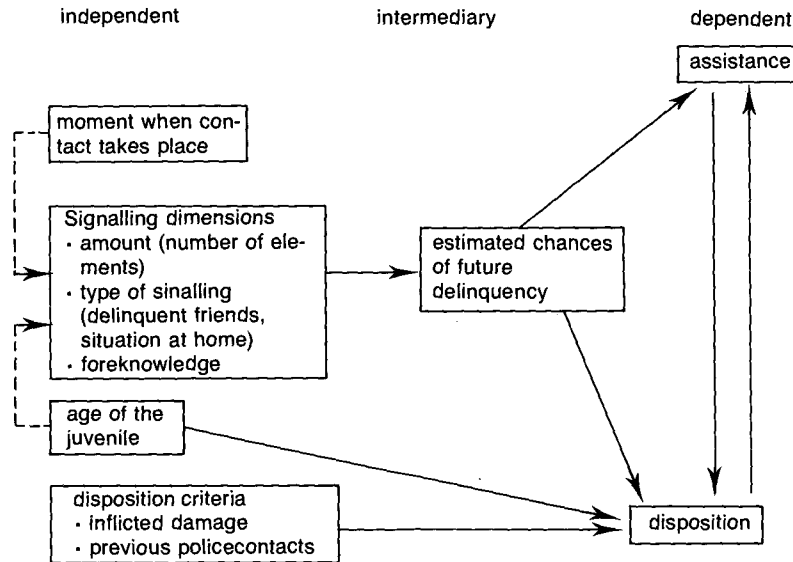


Fig. 1. Relationships between signalling, disposition and assistance.

The extent to which problems are noticed and the content of signalling are having an influence upon the estimated chances of future delinquency. This estimation is an important 'subjective moment' determining both the decision of assistance and the decision of disposition. The higher the probability of future delinquency (as assessed by the detective), the greater the chance assistance is offered and/or an official report is made.* Nevertheless, first of all offense- and offender-related factors influence the disposition decision. We can infer this from the results of the regression analysis.

In general it seems that inflicted damage, age and previous police contacts are the major items that influence the disposition decision. The larger the damage, the older the juvenile, and the more often the juvenile returns to the police, the greater the chance detectives will decide to make an official report. Even when distinguishing between contacts with and without assistance. Inflicted damage and age remain the most important items. However, there is a significant difference. Only with respect to contacts with assistance is 'estimated chances of delinquency' an item with significant influence. Without controlling for the other two items though, this item does not relate to the disposition decision. It seems plausible that the item represents an additional criterion for the disposition.

* The relationship between 'estimated chances of future delinquency' and 'assistance' is significant at $p = .0002$; Cramers $V = .35$.

Table 2. Combination of variables affecting the disposition decision (official report or not).

<i>All contacts</i> <i>n = 177</i>		<i>Contacts with assistance</i> <i>n = 70</i>		<i>Contacts without assistance</i> <i>n = 107</i>	
<i>variable</i>	<i>multiple correl.</i>	<i>variable</i>	<i>multiple correl.</i>	<i>variable</i>	<i>multiple correl.</i>
inflicted damage	.56	inflicted damage	.49	inflicted damage	.62
age	.61	age	.58	age	.65
previous police-contacts	.64	estimated chances of development	.62		
R = .64		R = .62		R = .65	
R ² = .41		R ² = .39		R ² = .42	
<i>p</i> ≤ .000		<i>p</i> ≤ .000		<i>p</i> ≤ .000	

From Fig. 1 we can further derive that signalling is only moderately meaningful. Although detectives do use information concerning the home situation and delinquent friends, other important topics (*e.g.*, situation at school) seem to be of little relevance.* Furthermore many problems that – according to the juvenile – exist, are not at all recorded by the detective during the contact. This is especially the case in contacts without assistance. It also suggests that in many contacts detectives are not primarily interested in offering assistance. Even when information concerning the other topics is gathered, it seems not to have the slightest influence on police disposition. Recognizing a social problem (*e.g.*, truancy), does not immediately result in providing assistance.**

Attitudes and characteristics of police seem to be unrelated to assistance. This is the case with the age of the detective and the number of years of service.*** A separate analysis of other characteristics show that a harsh or open and interested attitude of the detective seems of no importance. Moreover, every detective in this field has criminal cases on his record for which assistance was or was not given.

* Relationships between signalling dimensions and police assistance:

	Phi	P
homesituation	.27	.000
delinquent friends	.21	.002
leisure	.02	.81
relations at school	.02	.80

** More than 50% of the (social) problems in the various fields – *i.e.*, quarrels at home, friends with police contacts, truancy – are not noticed in the course of those contacts when there is no assistance. In the course of the contacts where assistance is rendered this varies from 15% to 30%.

*** The differentiation between units will show otherwise.

This does not mean though that the attitude of the detective during the police contact plays only a minor role. On the contrary, the detectives are generally positively judged by the juveniles (*i.e.*, kind, interested, and business like). This positive judgement refers to an attitude of the detectives that in a sense is basic to police practice within a juvenile investigation unit. Because of this constancy no significant statistical relationships can be established. Assistance does not seem to be dependent on the attitude of the juvenile either. That is to say whether the juvenile is cooperative and/or impressed – in the opinion of the detective as well as the observer – do not lead the detectives to activate the social environment of the juvenile. Only age of the offender is related to assistance; the younger the juvenile, the more detectives are inclined to offer assistance.

An interesting factor, that seems to influence signalling and assistance, is the moment when contact takes place. This has to do with the wish of the detective to finish the case within working hours.

3.3 Some preliminary conclusions

Is it possible to describe police behavior in a coherent way by means of the themes we distinguished? We believe it is. The description gives us some insight in the way in which various aspects of police contacts relate to one another.

It turns out that legal aspects have the most powerful influence on the disposition decision. If these items cannot give a decisive answer, an assessment of the future delinquency of the juvenile becomes relevant. Consequently, signalling has, above all, a disposition function. Signalling on behalf of possible assistance is a complementary activity. Under this circumstance contextual aspects may influence the decision to render help; assistance is dependent on the amount of time that is left to the detective before his duty is over. From this global picture we can derive that many detectives use a judicial approach when handling criminal cases (see section 2.1).

Of course, the resulting picture is still global; it remains to be seen if it stands for all examined units and if it has the power to make differences between units understandable. The main point though is that police dispositions can be seen in relation to rendering assistance and signalling.

In fact, it is possible to make inferences in view of welfare related versus justice related police behavior. If the police contacts in which assistance is given are characterized by welfare related disposition criteria and the police contacts without assistance are not, then we can interpret the contacts of the unit in question as (partly) welfare oriented. In police practice, inspired by the justice model, it would make no difference at all whether assistance is offered

or not; the disposition criteria would be the same regardless of the given assistance. Besides, as the overall picture of police behavior indicates, by interpreting the various themes in relation to each other some mechanisms that underly the handling of criminal cases manifest themselves. This too provides us with some clues regarding the welfare- or justice relatedness of police conduct. The variable 'assessment by the detective of the future delinquency of the juvenile' seems crucial. In examining the relationship of this variable with the disposition and assistance decisions, it may become clear from which perspective police conduct is put into practice in a specific unit.

We assumed the three units would differ, especially with regard to their philosophy of police behavior.

4. 'Varieties of police behavior'

Naturally we knew at forehand that the policy between the three investigation units differed.

Utrecht pursued the most clearcut policy. In handling criminal cases they explicitly chose to settle these in a non-judicial manner. This means most of the time offering assistance; a judicial reaction is seen as a last resort. When deciding on the disposition, detectives have to take into account the background of the juvenile. The personality of the juvenile, his social environment, the perspectives the juvenile has for his future, all play a significant role apart from his judicial record and the seriousness of the offense (Gemeentepolitie Utrecht, 1984). Such an approach accentuates the assistance dimension of the police task. Signalling problematic circumstances, advising parents, referring to professional assistance agencies, are seen as important features of police conduct.

Eindhoven's policy was the least clearly defined. Policy guidelines about handling criminal cases are hardly available on paper. In our pilot-study superiors and detectives told us their procedures in handling cases are purely justice related. The disposition decision is based on legal aspects (*i.e.*, seriousness of the offense, recidivism). No policy exists with respect to the assistance dimension of the police task. Superiors try to stimulate detectives to settle cases with some accompanying activities – like exchange of information, solving concrete problems – but they indicated these efforts were rarely successful.

In Rotterdam comparable efforts of superiors in this direction seemed to be more fruitful. At the end of the seventies and start of the eighties several new policies were developed. Policy notes – in which the police task, including assistance, were elaborated – were written and discussed within the unit. To improve expertise, courses in dealing with juveniles from ethnic minorities were

organised. A strictly justice related approach was rejected. Yet, the police did not strive to copy the policy of Utrecht and wished to set strict limits to assistance. However, what these limits are or where the lines are drawn remained unclear. With respect to the disposition, the prosecutor provided some guidelines (*i.e.*, age of the juvenile, recidivism), but they were rather vague. On the basis of this picture we assumed the assistance dimension would receive some substance in this unit. The existence of a special (sub)unit that handles runaway and problem cases in an explicitly welfare related manner, sustained this assumption.

On the basis of these first notions we assumed Rotterdam would occupy a middle position with regard to disposition and assistance. Eindhoven would come up with the largest amount of official reports and Utrecht with the lowest; Eindhoven would offer the least amount of assistance and Utrecht the largest.

Unfortunately, these assumptions were not confirmed by the results from the registration study.

In Rotterdam official reports amount to 46% of all dispositions, in Eindhoven it is 38% and in Utrecht only 21%. Police assistance is rendered by the Rotterdam unit in 25% of the cases, in Eindhoven this is ca. 35% and in Utrecht over 50% of the cases were settled by way of assistance. We were puzzled. Besides, the data of the observation study seemed to make things worse by revealing partly the same picture.

As assumed the signalling in Utrecht is the most complete. The extent to which various dimensions of signalling occur, varies from 65% to 75%. In about 60% of all contacts the signalling concerns four or more dimensions. In contrast with our assumption in Eindhoven the amount of signalling varies across the topics from 45% to 55%. In Rotterdam the signalling is most frequently neglected (20%–35%). Only the topics 'school career' and 'leisure' are moderately represented (40% and 65%). In Rotterdam, only in 15% of all cases the signalling concerns four or more topics.

With regard to 'fore knowledge', there is no difference between the units; in about 30% of the contacts detectives have some fore knowledge at their disposal. Differences do exist concerning the assessment of future delinquency. In Eindhoven 18% of the juveniles are judged to be potential recidivists. In Rotterdam and Utrecht this is significantly more (35% and 40%).

At first, it was hard to make sense out of these findings. Fortunately, a more detailed correlational analysis of the observation- and interviewdata gave some explanation. The three investigation units appear to represent three varieties of police behavior.

According to the perspective from which criminal cases are handled these varieties can be characterized as 'justice oriented', 'equity oriented' and 'welfare oriented'. It is this difference in philosophy that mainly provides the explanation for the differences found in our first analysis.

4.1 Rotterdam: Justice oriented police conduct

Referring to the general picture in par. 3.2 it is most striking that assistance in Rotterdam does not seem to be dependent on the quantity of signalling or on specific topics of information gathering. The same is valid for fore knowledge and the estimated chances of future delinquency. The contacts where assistance is offered are rarely characterized by a better signalling function. They are more or less characterized by other factors such as the time the detective has available for the case or the type of offense. How should this be understood?

It appears that the estimated chances of future delinquency strongly determine whether an official report will be made. Other elements are inflicted damage and age. Detectives in Rotterdam strongly take into account personal circumstances of the juvenile in their disposition decision. However, it would be wrong to draw the conclusion that this decision is inspired by the wish to react to the causes of delinquency (the offense as a signal for problems). This interpretation is contradicted by the limited gathering of information. Further analysis shows that detectives in Rotterdam mention criteria for assistance as reason for the disposition in 35% of the cases where assistance is offered (in general this is 23%). These assistance criteria are mainly used in support of an official report.* Consequently, the assistance rendered is largely supporting an official report or considered as a consequence of that fact. Analysis of the content of assistance criteria reveals that the assistance is meant to give a signal to the public prosecutor whether to prosecute or not (*e.g.*, advising parents to make sure the juvenile starts to follow an educational program before he has to appear in court).

In Rotterdam an informal warning is rarely given on the basis of assistance criteria. Thus, assistance is rarely associated with an informal warning.

The item 'estimated chances of future delinquency' is especially important in view of the clarification of the philosophy of police conduct. More than in the other two units this item is significantly related to previous police contacts ($p = .005$). For the Rotterdam unit, if a delinquent has had previous police

* It appears that assistance is strongly connected with the decision to make an official report. Only in 6% of the cases that are dealt with by an informal warning, the contact is characterized by assistance. Where official reports are concerned this is 50%.

contacts, a prognosis will be made about the chance of repetition of delinquency. This prognosis is mainly based on the behavior of the juvenile. Therefore, signalling topics like schoolcareer and use of leisure are more frequent than other topics. This signalling though doesn't seem to be done for a possible assistance, but to aid in the disposition decision. So, the perspective from which Rotterdam handles the police contacts is an enlargement of the justice principle, stating that the seriousness of the offense ought to be the determining norm for the reaction to be given. Seriousness is certainly an important element in Rotterdam, but more important is the chance of repetition. This is based on the previous behavior of the juvenile and on his behavior at school and in leisure. Therefore, the disposition decision is a reaction to characteristics of the individual delinquent.

This does not mean that juveniles, who come into contact with the police for the first time, will not receive enough attention. A lot of attention to these first offenders consists of information given to the parents and is accompanied by a "thundering speech" to the juvenile. These rather passive activities towards the parents have not been arranged under our definition of assistance. Nevertheless, the nature of these activities is of importance. Both juvenile and parents are informed about the committed crime and the dangers related to formal police contacts. The character of these actions – although not considered as real assistance – is similar in character to the assistance detectives offer in combination with an official report.

We have summarized the above description in the following figure.

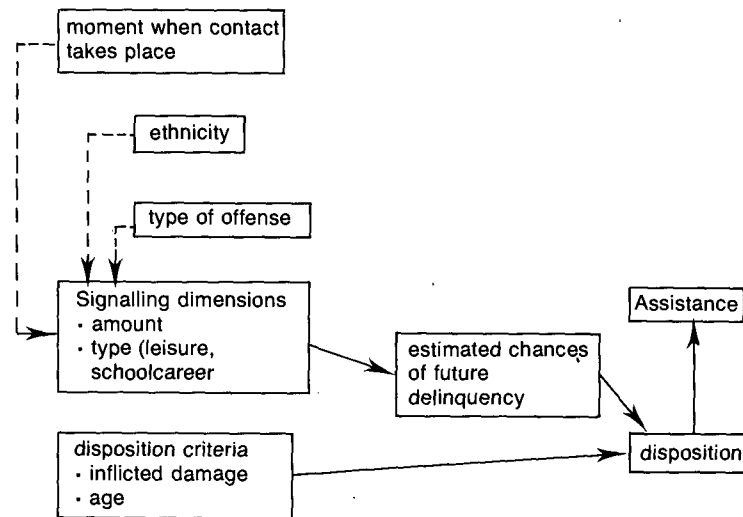


Fig. 2. Relationships between signalling, disposition and assistance (Rotterdam).

4.2 Eindhoven: Equity oriented policy conduct

The function of signalling in connection with assistance is more advanced in Eindhoven than in Rotterdam. If problematic circumstances are noticed within the family, school or recreation, assistance will frequently be offered. The age of the juvenile is important; children aged 12–13 years old will receive assistance sooner than the older juveniles. Finally, the moment of starting the contacts is highly significant; the earlier in the day the police contact takes place, the greater the chance of assistance given by the detective. Based on these results one would expect that assistance is related to a high degree of signalling. However, this does not seem to be the case. A large amount of signalling characterize contacts where activation was lacking. As an explanation for this fact, the context in which the signalling takes place is of great importance.

In Eindhoven, a 'final talk' with the parents occurs more often than in the other two units. In this discussion parents are informed about the contact and the disposition decision. The fact that such a discussion is routinely carried out, generally results in a lot of questions by the detective about the social environment.

Keeping this context in mind, it becomes clear why contacts without assistance have a higher amount of signalling. In those cases little is known about the juvenile and during the discussion certain themes come up for the first time (*i.e.*, family circumstances or the recreational activities of the juvenile). If problems arise that require a police reaction, other themes will not be discussed. Furthermore, in the context of the 'final talk' assistance in Eindhoven is mainly aimed at the parents.

With regard to the disposition decision this interpretation implies that, the decision to render assistance is made after the decision to take a certain disposition; therefore there will be no relationship between the two. And indeed this is statistically the case.* One criterion of disposition, inflicted damage, is equally likely to be used in cases with and without assistance. Detectives rarely suggest assistance criteria as a reason for the disposition decision. Because inflicted damage has a consistent influence on the disposition, the disposition seems to be based on the reaction to the committed crime. Assistance, though, has a different basis.

Despite an equity oriented philosophy, assistance is not forgotten. On the contrary, it is possible that this perspective actually leads to assistance.

First of all, because of this equity perspective, the procedure for the disposition decision and 'the procedure' to decide on assistance are kept independent

* Phi = .09, $p = .42$.

of each other. Secondly, we may assume that many cases can be characterized judicially as 'easy to solve' (see also note on page 171). Practically speaking it means that in many cases the Eindhoven detectives – using the criterion of seriousness of offenses – have more than enough time to decide on the disposition. This leaves them with enough time to discuss the social backgrounds of the juvenile with the parents. And when in this discussion problems are brought up that need any attention, detectives will give assistance (provided there is enough time before the duty ends).

The above suggest that the juvenile investigation unit in Eindhoven seems to realize the first type of assistance we defined (on behalf of the individual interest of the 'client'). The primary police task is to decide upon the judicial reaction to the committed crime; however, there is a definite willingness to render assistance to those that need it. The activities taken in that connection are especially aimed at the parents. Activation of the school or professional assistance agencies is not common.

The foregoing is diagrammed in Figure 3.

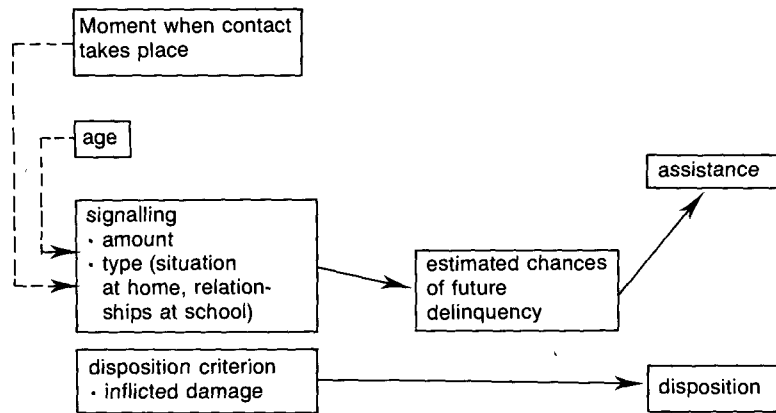


Fig. 3. Relationship between signalling, disposition and assistance (Eindhoven).

4.3 Utrecht welfare oriented police conduct

From the discriminant analysis it seems that assistance is dependent on signalling. However, further (bivariate) analysis of the included variables indicate no relationship. The reason is, that the most important characteristic of contacts with assistance is the fact that the detective has some foreknowledge about

the juvenile in question.* When the detective does not have this foreknowledge (e.g., with first offenders) signalling will play an important role in the assistance decision. The decision also depends on characteristics of the detective. The longer the detective has worked for the department and the older he is, the more often assistance will be rendered. We first found no statistical relationship between the estimated chances of future delinquency and assistance.** Even when the chances for recidivism are judged low, assistance takes place. This does not mean the detective's judgement is an insignificant aspect of the policecontact. This judgement is related to the intensity of the intervention. This is partly indicated by the differences in type of actions detectives perform in connection with the disposition. When cases are settled with an informal warning, then the parents or teachers are contacted, while in cases with an official report, referral to professional assistance agencies is most common. It further appears, that assistance varies and sometimes includes activating more than one person. This variation of actions taken by detectives is consistent with the idea that the offense is a signal for 'social problems'.

Where disposition is concerned, previous police contacts seem to be the most important criterion. In addition, items that are explicitly welfare related appear to exert an influence: the extent of impressionability of the juvenile and the estimated chances of delinquency. The more often the juvenile has had previous police contacts, the less the juvenile is impressed by what is happening and when the chances of future delinquency seem high, so is the filing of an official report.

The significance of previous police contacts suggests that a justice related item is the prime disposition criterion. Further analysis reveals this is only partly true. It frequently occurs that juveniles who already have had several previous police contacts, still receive an informal warning.*** Apparently, detectives in Utrecht do not consider previous police contacts in a purely legalistic way. They may use the information about accompanying actions in previous contacts in making a disposition decision. Contrary to the other two investigated units Utrecht systematically registered in their files the content and character of assistance (besides the disposition decision and the committed offense). Nevertheless, one can seriously question this practice; is it a good idea to divert a juvenile who keeps coming back?

* Sometimes due to experience from previous contacts with the juvenile, but most of the time by information from files; $\phi = .46, p = .001$.

** Cramers $V = .28, p = .114$; in addition, the variable 'estimated chances of future delinquency' was not selected by the discriminant analysis of contacts with and without assistance.

*** About 60% of the juveniles with two or more previous police contacts receive an informal warning.

On the other hand this childdirected orientation offers the opportunity to drop the charges on 'grounds of welfare' and replace the charge by a specific assistance. However, here we have some doubts. In view of the foregoing evidence referring to the existence of a welfare related police contact, one would expect that the detectives of the Utrecht unit explicitly base their disposition decision on assistance criteria, such operating norms occurred only in 15%. By contrast, the percentage in Rotterdam is 35%. This indicates that although detectives of Utrecht realize much assistance and divert most of the juvenile offenders, this assistance doesn't seem related to the prevention of future delinquency. The detective directs assistance to social problems which have been discovered during the contact. This leads us to a paradox. As mentioned before, the assistance rendered is quite varied. In this sense Utrecht puts into practice one of the most central features of the welfare model: individualized treatment. Nevertheless, this very assistance does not seem to have an explicit prevention objective, which, after all, is the core of this whole idea.

The picture that emerges from the given description can be outlined as follows:

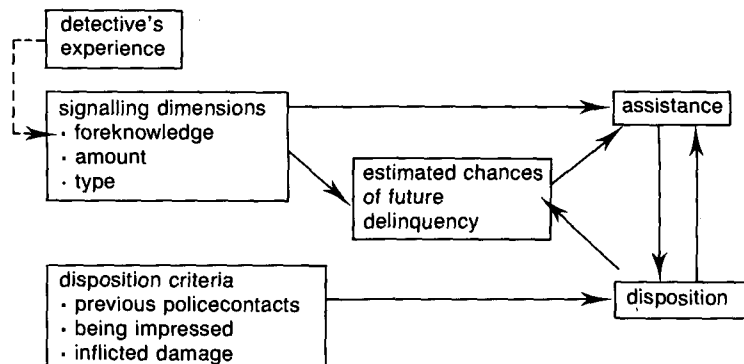


Fig. 4. Relationship between signalling, disposition and assistance (Utrecht).

4.4 Comparison between investigation units

The foregoing description gives us a shaded picture of police behavior, of course, the analytical model we used is not a perfect one. The model is both developed and 'tested' on data from the three investigation units. Actually, the results have only the status of an exploration. The model is a first construction and it remains to be seen if it will be appropriate in describing police conduct in other units. Besides, some refinement of the used concepts seem to be required. Differentiating assistance in types of intervention is one option; im-

proving the instrument to be able to directly discriminate between the various kinds of assistance is another. Also the variable 'estimated chances of future delinquency' requires a better (construct) validation.* Nevertheless, the model

	Rotterdam	Eindhoven	Utrecht
decision philosophy	to react to the individual delinquent	to react to the committed offense	to react to the problematic background of the delinquent
signalling objective	aimed at the disposition decision	aimed at possible assistance	aimed at disposition and assistance
amount of signalling	limited	moderate	extensive
relevant elements of signalling	leisure schoolcareer	homesituation relationships at school	homesituation leisure participation in school
number of informal warnings	ca. 50%	ca. 60%	ca. 75%
disposition criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · estimated chances of future delinquency · inflicted damage · age 	inflicted damage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · previous police contacts · being impressed · estimated chances of future delinquency · inflicted damage
effect of the variable 'estimated chances of future delinquency'	negative opinion promotes the making of an official report	not relevant	positive opinion leads to an informal warning
most frequent decision	informal warning without assistance (53.5%)	official report without assistance (26.5%)	informal warning with assistance (45%)
amount of assistance	ca. 25%	ca. 35%	ca. 50%
type of assistance	aimed at the consequences of an official report	aimed at the social problems noticed during the course of contact	all types of assistance including assistance aimed at the offense and prevention of new offenses
conditions for assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · available time · young age of the delinquent 	· available time	· knowledge and experience of the detective

Fig. 5. Features of the various types of police behavior.

* Besides, because the nature of this study was exploratory, this seemed not unjustified. At the moment preparations are made to re-analyse the data with statistical techniques that are appropriate for variables at the nominal level (*i.e.*, logit-analysis). With this analysis it is possible to realise some of the above mentioned refinements.

seems sensitive enough to describe police behavior and systematic enough to make (quantitative) comparisons.

In the next figure we have summarized the most important features of the varieties of police conduct we have described in the foregoing paragraphs.

The difference in disposition, types of assistance, quantity and quality of the signalling can be largely understood from the different perspectives the three units have adopted.

Rotterdam processes criminal cases taking into account a juvenile's unacceptable behavior and an estimate of whether he will or will not repeat this behavior in the future (justice oriented).

Eindhoven processes the cases considering the delinquent behavior itself (equity oriented).

Utrecht processes the cases considering the possible problematic background of the offending juvenile (welfare oriented).

Consequently, the contacts between detectives and juveniles show different emphases.

In Rotterdam the reaction of the police is aimed at the culpability of the juvenile. In Eindhoven the police reaction is aimed at the seriousness of the committed crime. In Utrecht the reaction is aimed at protecting the juvenile from the deprived milieu.

In Rotterdam the signalling – *i.e.*, the auditing of circumstances and possibilities for assistance in the actual living conditions of the juvenile – mainly supports the disposition decision. As a consequence, the signalling is realized in a limited way. In Eindhoven the signalling is hardly relevant for the disposition decision. However, it does have a function for adequate assistance, with the result that a reasonable amount of information is gathered, but only after the disposition decision has been made. In Utrecht signalling has a function for both disposition and assistance. A lot of background information is gathered and many contacts are characterized by an active contribution of the detectives.

In general, all detectives move in the direction of assistance if, in their opinion, problems will occur in certain areas. But the investigation units differ in considering some topics of signalling to be more relevant than others. This selectivity in signalling can best be understood from the philosophy of the unit in question. An uncontrolled use of leisure time by the juvenile or a low achievement at school can be a reason to offer assistance for a certain – *i.e.*, justice oriented – investigation unit, while other units consider it being no reason at all.

Likewise, differences in philosophy determine to what extent the detective's evaluation of the future delinquent behavior becomes a decisive element in the

police decision. In Rotterdam a negative assessment in this matter furthers the making of an official report; and a positive assessment leads in principle to an informal warning. In Eindhoven the opinion of the detective has only significance in the decision to offer assistance. In Utrecht a negative assessment has occasionally a reinforcing effect on the decision to make an official report, while a positive assessment leads (implicitly) to an informal warning.

Resulting from these differences between units in processing criminal cases are differences in dispositions and differences in the amount and type of assistance rendered. In Rotterdam not much assistance is rendered; actions taken in this field are frequently aimed at preparing a diversion possibility at the level of the prosecutor or may be placed within the context of the rights the juvenile has to due process. In Eindhoven assistance is mainly offered when the need becomes apparent during the 'final talk' with the parents, after the disposition decision is made. In Utrecht all types of assistance, can be rendered, nevertheless we may doubt if this assistance, offered in combination with an informal warning, has explicit diversion objectives.

The actual conduct of the juvenile police in Utrecht turns out to be very much in agreement with the official policy. As expected, Eindhoven shows differences on several points with the original 'welfare idea'. We had expected more socially oriented police conduct in Rotterdam, but this was not the case.

With this description, of police behavior the goal of the study as formulated in par. 1.4 has actually been reached. However, another question has hardly been touched upon. Do these descriptions of police conduct contain some practical value; is the resulting information relevant for crime policy in general and particularly policy at the police level? We believe it is.

5. Implications and recommendations for police-policy

In the next paragraph we present the implications of this study that are relevant for the development of police policy on juvenile delinquents. Paragraph 5.2 presents a general structure for the settlement decision; a structure we believe better fulfills the requirements of today's policy on crime control than the police practice now existing in the three units.

5.1 Implications

There are some features of the various described forms of police conduct that have a specific relevance when developing a police policy about handling offenses committed by juveniles.

Justice oriented police conduct:

- the selective role of the ‘subjective moment in police practice’ – the assessment by the detective of the chances of a criminal career – for both disposition and assistance;
- a very reserved attitude towards assistance in cases with an informal warning;
- the diversive nature of assistance.

Equity oriented police conduct:

- the non-relatedness of disposition and assistance;
- the nature and amount of assistance (partly) determined by the time that is left in the officers work shift;
- the lack of referral to professional social agencies.

Welfare oriented policeconduct:

- the great variety in types of assistance;
- the lack of clarity in the diversive nature of assistance;
- the lack of a criterium when to leave assistance undone.

Reflecting the two main trends in the thinking about crime control – (a) a certain change to a justice model with the preservation of elements of the welfare model; (b) the emphasis on community based control – all units show some characteristics that in themselves seem to realize specific parts of these trends.

In Rotterdam, the police recognises the self-determination of the juvenile and address the juvenile’s responsibility. In Eindhoven the emphasis upon activating available significant others (mostly parents) of the juvenile is coherent with the idea of community-based control in its pure form.

In Utrecht the tendency to give an individualized reaction results in the preservation of a crucial element of the welfare model.

No matter what policy measures are taken one must examine the specific nature of the police behavior, as different kinds of police conduct have different consequences.

Measures aimed at improving the signalling by detectives – for instance by training in diagnostic skills – are likely to have different effects throughout the three investigation units. In Rotterdam this could lead to more official reports and more assistance related to this disposition (probably more social problems will be noticed and consequently more often future delinquency will be assessed). In Eindhoven improvement of signalling will probably have no effect on the disposition decision and little on the amount of assistance (as it is limited by the time left over before duty ends). In Utrecht this would possibly lead to more assistance and in particular more referrals.

Of course, a similar line of argumentation can be followed for other policy measures; for example measures directed to reduce the likelihood of informal warnings or to reinforce the possibilities to refer to professional assistance agencies.*

Whatever police policy on the reaction to juvenile delinquency, is adopted, it should contain a coherent package with guidelines trying to avoid negative effects and strengthening the positive aspects.

In the next paragraph we propose some elements of a decision structure for valid police reactions.

5.2 A decision structure for the valid processing of criminal cases

5.2.1 The basic notion

A prerequisite on valid police reactions is some basic concept that is formulated explicitly and unambiguously. We have formulated on the basis of our results some premises about delinquency and the appropriate reaction. We believe the following are of particular relevance:

1. acknowledge the fact that delinquency is only a temporary behavior pattern for most of the juveniles;
2. use as a starting point the law and order dimension of the police task and, consequently, its directedness on controlling crime;
3. consider the fact that the objective of the police reaction is to prevent the temporary delinquent turning into a permanent delinquent;
4. recognise the fact that the environment in which juveniles live and grow up, determines to a large extent whether delinquent behavior will continue or not;
5. acknowledge the self-determination of the juvenile; the juvenile must be held responsible for his or her own acts;
6. take into account that judicial action can be counterproductive.

* With respect to the first option – reducing the amount of informal warnings – we could expect that in Rotterdam the ‘subjective moment’ would gain in influence and – all things being equal – result in an increase of arbitrariness or selectivity in disposition decision. In Eindhoven this option would result in less assistance, because of the time involved in making up a report (to a lesser extent this is also the case in Rotterdam). In Utrecht this option would result in less intensive (and individualized) assistance, for the detectives would be more and longer involved in determining which of the cases should be considered for an official report.

With respect to the second option; increasing the possibilities for referral to professional assistance agencies would possibly not been used by the Eindhoven unit, because assistance is rendered in the context of a final talk with the parents. Utrecht on the other hand would refer more often. In Rotterdam the same effects seems plausible, possibly on the condition these professional agencies are in some way connected to the justice system.

The first and last premises imply that a reaction from the police should not interfere with the natural course of maturation. The common policy of minimal intervention – or true diversion – as expressed in the large number of informal warnings shows wisdom.

However, in view of the prime goal of the police reaction, a mere warning without any consequences seems ineffective. Action demands reaction. Besides, the principle of the juveniles self-determination requires that offenders must face the consequences of their acts. The environment too has an impact on the behavior of the juvenile; consequently, the community should be vested with 'sanction authority'. By this we mean that the community should take measures to reduce recidivism. It is the task of the detective to see to it that such processes are set into motion.

5.2.2 Features of valid police assistance

In criminal cases, it is important to distinguish clearly between two types of assistance (see also section 2.3).

The first type is (mostly) connected with an informal warning and is preventive or diversive in nature.

The second type of assistance is connected to an official report and is aimed at supporting the juvenile with respect to the consequences of prosecution where support from the environment is missing. Only these two types of assistance can be understood as police assistance.

In general police assistance is characterized by the following:

- police assistance is cautiously applied. Caution is required because of the natural course of delinquency. Besides, the environment of the juvenile and the juvenile himself have their own responsibility in this respect. Because the police prime task is to maintain law and order, assistance cannot be justified by benevolence;
- police assistance is directed at the environment of the juvenile. In view of the concrete purpose, the activation of significant other – parents, teachers, siblings, other relatives, guardians, etc. – must be linked to the reduction of delinquent behavior;
- police assistance is limited. Police assistance is rendered with a specific purpose in mind or when specific situations arise. Therefore, the two types of assistance must be carefully distinguished. It also means that in some cases no assistance must be rendered although social problems are noticed. In principle detectives offer no assistance when this cannot be related in any way to the disposition.

The most important question is of course in which instances the police must offer assistance and in which instances the police must do nothing. This matter brings us to the factors on which the police must make the disposition decision and the decision to assist.

5.2.3 Suggestions for a decision structure

The processing of a criminal case should be characterized by both holding the juvenile responsible for his acts (the justice related dimension) and taking into account the background of the misbehavior (the welfare related dimension).

The first dimension means that the police must 'do justice' and react to the offender and the committed crime. In this respect, seriousness (*i.e.*, inflicted damage), type of offense, offending frequency seem to be relevant. The description of the police conduct in Eindhoven and Rotterdam show that seriousness is an important criterion for the disposition decision. However, research has shown that in particular offending frequency and the variety in offending are characteristics of persisting offenders (Junger-Tas, 1985; see also Chapter 2). In other words the prime aspect of delinquent behavior for which the juvenile has to be held responsible is the frequency of delinquent behavior.

Naturally it is doubtful the detective can know everything about the delinquent behavior on such short notice (*i.e.*, the contact with the juvenile). * Certainly, the interrogation is frequently organized for this purpose, but with variable success. The only solid information detectives have at their disposal is the fact the juvenile does or does not have previous police contacts. Consequently, previous police contacts is the first criterion for the police decision. **

However, new police contacts are mainly determined by previous police contacts and rarely by the real frequency of (self-reported) delinquent behavior (Junger-Tas, 1985). This implies that using previous police contacts as a deci-

* It appears that of all the police contacts we observed, only 10% did not admit the offense. Almost half of the juveniles admitted the offense even immediately (46%), that is at the outset of the first interrogation and 43.5% admitted the offense in the following interrogations. Of the juveniles with previous police contacts 16% kept denying they committed the offense.

As other studies of the detection process suggest, the detectives have in general to cope with two kinds of criminal cases: cases that are very easy to solve and cases that are very difficult to solve. The proportion falling in between these two categories, where different levels of detective effort affect the outcome, is small. So, spending more time or more personnel on these cases will not increase the solving-rate spectacularly.

As the above figures indicate, at least half of the criminal cases fall in the first category; these are easy to solve. This means that practically speaking detectives have in principle time and opportunity to pay attention to assistance possibilities.

** This criterion could be elaborated further by sub-criteria as frequency and variety of offenses.

sion criterion, has the real danger of contributing to new police contacts independently of the number of delinquent acts. As a consequence, we need another criterion to compensate for this effect. It appears from the same research that when problematic circumstances in the environment of the juvenile – *i.e.*, bad social integration – do not improve, these circumstances will strongly contribute to persistence of the delinquent pattern. This means, police attention to the juvenile's environment could possibly counter the unintended effects of the disposition. The findings of the observation study suggest that the assessment of the juveniles future delinquency by the detective can in principle fulfill this role of 'social brake'.

Acknowledging the relevance of this item makes it possible that an improvement of the living conditions (a better social integration) exerts a positive influence on the decision to process a juvenile into the system. In terms of the disposition decision this item refers to the large or small chance for recidivism in relation to the presence or absence of informal controls or possibilities of care and absorption.

Combining these two items result in a compound guideline; integrating both a retrospective and prospective dimension. This guideline not only directs the disposition decision, but also gives a decisive answer to the question whether in a certain case, assistance is to be offered. Using these guidelines as a starting point, we can classify the criminal cases into four categories; to each category belongs an 'individualized' appropriate action.

In the next table we have presented these categories together with the actual decisions detectives made in the observed cases. We have indicated the most appropriate decision with an asterisks.

One asterisk indicates the actual decision is in principle the most appropriate decision according to the model we propose. Two asterisk indicates the actual

Table 3. Theoretical guideline and types of decision (in %)

	A	B	C	D
	n = 76	n = 12	n = 52	n = 39
I informal warning with assistance	22.5	*17	**15.5	**28
II official report with assistance	5.5	**25	19.5	*46
III informal warning without assistance	* 59	41	32.5	10.5
IV official report without assistance	**13	17	*32.5	*15.5

A = 'First offender' and low probability of future delinquency

B = 'First offender' and high probability of future delinquency

C = 'Recidivist' and low probability of future delinquency

D = 'Recidivist' and high probability of future delinquency

* = This decision is the most appropriate

** = This decision is in agreement with the guideline provided certain grounds exist

decision is still in agreement with the theoretical decision provided certain grounds exist. When asterisks are omitted the according decision is considered not desirable.

The first category concerns the least problematic group of juveniles and easiest to handle; the delinquents who come into contact with the police for the first time and whose probability of future delinquency is assessed as low. This category consists of 42% of all the observed contacts.

An informal warning seems to be the most appropriate decision, although we can imagine an official report is indicated in certain cases because of the seriousness of the crime in question. Assistance is certainly not indicated. Informal controls operate sufficiently and, in the case of an official report, possibilities of care and absorption are present. Even when problems are signalled, detectives may not solve these problems. These are primarily the responsibility of the juvenile and his social environment.

The table shows that most cases in category A are handled in agreement with the theoretical model. Nevertheless, 25% deviate from the proposed norm. This deviation concerns mainly the offer of assistance where assistance is not indicated by our model; altogether this occurs in 11.5% of the observed contacts.

The second category consists of first offenders whose probability of future delinquency is assessed as high. It is a relatively small group (6.5%).*

Just like the first category, an informal warning is the most appropriate disposition. Important though, in this situation the chances of future delinquency are estimated as big. This implies that an official report is definitely a possible disposition. More meaningful is that in any case assistance should be rendered. Particularly in the case of an informal warning assistance is needed as a prevention measure.

Hence, it is striking that so many contacts are dealt with by an informal warning without any accompanying assistance. The percentage of these less appropriate decisions is small: 4% of the observed contacts.

The third category are recidivist whose chances of future delinquency estimated as small (29% of the observed contacts).

Primarily, an official report without assistance seems the most appropriate decision. Nevertheless, an informal warning with assistance is a second option in those cases where detectives have high expectations from police assistance. Especially when the detective judges the mechanisms of social control to be present (although the recidivism indicates they have failed). Furthermore, it is

* It seems plausible though to assume that when signalling is improved and implemented in combination with the guidelines we propose, this category will consist of more cases.

possible that the previous policecontact was about an offense committed a long time ago. This too may justify an informal warning; but, never without adequate police assistance.

From the table we can derive that many of the decisions with respect to this category differ according to this last point. Another deviation from the proposed norm are the contacts that are dealt with by an official report with assistance. In all, the rather inappropriate decisions of this category amount to 15%.

Finally, the fourth category concerns the most problematic group of offenders: the recidivist whose probability of future delinquency are assessed as high (22% of all the contacts we observed). It is likely that in these cases the judicial door must be unlocked (an official report). Assistance seems necessary, but of course only when the juvenile agrees. As it is possible that former police contents concern offenses committed a long time ago, an informal warning with assistance is a second option (although it is likely to occur only in a few cases).

From the table we can derive that the actual decision is largely in agreement with the theoretical mode. The decisions that deviate from that model total only to 2.2%.*

In general the guideline for the processing of criminal cases corresponds well to the actual police behavior.

Considering all decisions, the number of actual decisions that deviate from the theoretical model amounts to 32.5%. Consequently, two third of the actual decisions are within the limits of the guideline we propose. This is confirmed by the differentiation between units.

In 26% of the Rotterdam cases the actual processing is not in agreement with the theoretical model. An important deviation concerns the second category (first offenders with bad perspectives); three out of four cases are deprived of assistance. Further, relatively many cases of recidivists with good perspectives are handled with an informal warning only (10%).

In Eindhoven 37% deviate from the guideline. A number of first offenders with good perspectives are offered assistance (9.5%). It also occurs rather often, that recidivists with good perspectives are dealt with by an informal warning (also 9.5%) or, on the contrary they are dealt with by an official report and assistance (also 9.5%). When looking at Utrecht the deviation is 32.5%. This deviation can be largely attributed to the category first offenders with good perspectives; assistance is offered although not indicated by the theoretical model (17.5%).

* When the decision 'informal warning with assistance' is included the percentage increases to 8%.

In view of the basic notions and the proposed guidelines, the following picture emerges. Rotterdam offers too little assistance to support the taken dispositions. Eindhoven can be characterized by an inconsistent decision making; it renders assistance although not indicated or does not assist when indicated. Utrecht can be criticized because of the large amount of assistance that is being rendered at an early stage; the needed caution is lacking.

In all, the resulting picture corresponds well with the differences in police conduct as described in the preceding paragraphs.

5.2.4 Signalling

In relation to the guidelines we propose, it is important to note that detectives not only review the previous delinquent behavior of the juvenile, but also what was done in the past to react to this behavior. This means that first of all signalling must concern the former police contacts. The resulting foreknowledge needs further completion with information about the present situation.

With regard to the content and type of information that is needed, the research of Junger-Tas (1985; see also Chapter 2 and 4) can be of great use. In any case the information should embrace the type, variety and frequency of criminal acts and the attachment to and involvement with the family, school and leisure. In particular the last three dimensions provide the basis on which to ground a difficult disposition decision. In these cases the estimation of the chances for future delinquency occupies a keyposition. The observation study suggests this aspect needs improvement.

5.3 Concluding remarks

The preceding figure of a decision structure is a first construction. It is a framework that needs further elaboration. Our intention is to make it plausible that decisions can be made that correspond to both, recent trends in the thinking on crime control and the actual police practice. The guidelines we propose meaningfully connect the judicial disposition on the one hand and assistance on the other. In this way, the assistance dimension of the formal police task is brought into congruence with the dimension of law and order maintenance. In addition the decision structure links up with the idea of community based control. It further is in accord with other developments concerning the juvenile justice system. It accentuates justice principles without rejecting attainments of the welfare model. All in all we believe it can contribute to police behavior, that integrates both welfare related and justice related elements.

Appendix

Table 4. Population figures of youth (0-19 year). Rotterdam, Eindhoven and Utrecht (January 1984)

Rotterdam	131 662
Eindhoven	49 699
Utrecht	64 170

Table 5. Type of cases handled by the three Juvenile Investigation Units (in %)

	<i>Justice oriented (Rotterdam) n = 1064</i>	<i>Equity oriented (Eindhoven) n = 721</i>	<i>Welfare oriented (Utrecht) n = 404</i>
1. bicycle theft	10.2	13.6	5.
2. Shoplifting	31.5	46.2	47.3
3. burglary	13	9.8	10.6
4. extortion/fraud	1.4	0.6	-
5. common assault	0.2	1.4	0.2
6. assault	3.2	4.7	2.7
7. vandalism	4.9	8.2	3.2
8. arson	0.7	1.1	0.5
9. requests for (social) assistance	5.9	1.9	8.2
10. runaways	24.1	8.5	16.8
11 else (e.g., cases of prostitution, child abuse)	5.1	4	5.4
	100	100	100

Table 6. Combination of variables representing discriminant functions for contacts with and without assistance (on cases of the units together).

Entering variables representing the course of the police contact (see page 145).

	Wilks' Lambda
1. moment when contact takes place	.92
2. information gathering about the situation at home	.86
3. foreknowledge	.83
4. information gathering about housing conditions	.82
5. information gathering about delinquent friends	.79
6. information gathering about leisure	.78
7. estimated chances of deviant development	.77

$\chi^2 = 39.4; p = .0000$

Canonical correlation = .48

Perc. of grouped cases correctly classified: 72% ($n = 193$).

Table 6 Cont.

Entering all variables (see pp. 145).	
	Wilks' Lambda
1. moment when contact takes place	.92
2. information gathering about the situation at home	.86
3. age of the juvenile	.82
4. leisure	.79
5. information gathering about delinquent friends	.76
6. information gathering about relationships at school	.73

$\chi^2 = 47.5; p = .0000$
 Canonical correlation = .48
 Perc. of grouped cases correctly classified: 71.5% ($n = 224$)

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VII. EFFECTS OF INTERVENTION BY THE POLICE AND THE PROSECUTOR

Josine Junger-Tas

1. Questions and hypotheses

This part of our large scale study was undertaken at the request of the prosecutor in youth cases in The Hague, one of our four largest cities and the administrative capital of the country. The question was whether the policy of minimal intervention conducted in collaboration by the prosecutor and the police, was in any way effective in the prevention of renewed contacts with the juvenile justice system. This policy of minimal intervention is based on a mixture of experience and labelling hypotheses, which can be summarized as follows.

- most juveniles coming into contact with the police do this only once: they don't come back;
- judicial intervention may have negative effects: it could lead to stigmatization of the juvenile by his environment and produce a negative – delinquent – self-image;
- judicial intervention thus may lead to more instead of less delinquent behavior.

On the basis of these assumptions – as well as more pragmatic considerations such as workload – the general policy of the police in our large cities is to drop the charges in about 75% of all cases of juveniles coming to their attention, often after reprimanding the juvenile. In all these cases there is no official report but just an informal note for the police own files.

If the police judge that the case cannot be simply dismissed a report is sent to the prosecutor. The prosecutor may also – and often does – reprimand the juvenile and then drop the charges. In this case, however, the juvenile will be officially recorded in the judicial documentation system. The essential question is whether this policy of reprimanding and then dismissing the case at both levels would produce a salutary shock so that juveniles will not have renewed contacts with the juvenile justice system.

This is a difficult question and we felt some preliminary questions would have to be answered, such as.

- do juveniles who have police contacts differ from juveniles who don't have such contacts?

- what background factors are related to coming in contact with the police and the prosecutor?
- in what ways do youngsters that have repeated contacts with the police differ from those who have only one contact?

But if juveniles do or do not have repeated contacts with the juvenile justice system is that because of previous judicial intervention or is it because of eventual changes in their life situation, in their family, school or job?

Moreover, if judicial intervention has any effect, what kind of effect. Was the experience traumatic, did it lead to negative reactions in the juvenile's environment; did it have negative effects on the life situation of the juvenile, or on his offending pattern?

To summarize, we wanted to examine possible effects of official intervention by the police or prosecutor on later delinquent behavior, on renewed contacts with the juvenile justice system and on the level of social integration.

So, we wanted to test a certain number of hypotheses mainly based on social control and labelling theory.

As far as delinquent behavior is concerned our hypothesis was that factors related to social integration – or social control – would be more important in determining changes in delinquency than contacts with the juvenile justice system.

However, we did not think that judicial intervention would have no effects whatsoever. Our second hypothesis was that effects of judicial intervention on delinquency would be found only for those juveniles who were relatively well integrated and whose delinquency level was not too high. On the other hand, we expected that youngsters with low integration scores and a high delinquency level, live under such negative social conditions that judicial intervention would hardly have any effect at all on their behavior. In other words, we expected that this form of deterrence would only work with rather well integrated and not too delinquent youngsters.

Another quite opposing hypothesis – based on labelling theory – states that judicial contacts lead to a deviant self-image and to taking on a delinquent identity. By this process juveniles are not deterred from further delinquent behavior, but would instead tend to commit more delinquent acts, the so called 'secondary deviance'. Thus contacts with the juvenile justice system would lead to more instead of less delinquent behavior.

With respect to social integration we tested the hypothesis that judicial contacts have negative effects on integration: juveniles might be stigmatized by family, friends or school. This means that the bond with significant others might weaken, commitment and involvement in conventional subsystems might diminish and a shift towards less support for conventional norms would

be probable. If this were the case, contacts with the juvenile justice system would lead to lower social integration levels.

The final problem concerned the effects of police or prosecutor contacts on renewed contacts. Labelling theory would argue that once a juvenile has been nailed down by the system, chances are great that he will be picked up again and reported to the prosecutor. The fact that official agents of the system have labelled a juvenile as a delinquent might mean that they would tend to pay special attention to him and to re-label him at the first occasion available.

In practice this would mean that once recorded, chances are high that renewed contacts will lead to an official report bringing the juvenile to court, independent of any other circumstances.

Before testing these hypotheses we will first examine the relationships between judicial intervention and delinquency and between such interventions and a number of socio-demographic variables.

In summary our hypotheses are:

- factors related to social integration will have a greater impact on a juvenile's behavior than contact with the police or the prosecutor;
- effects of such judicial intervention will be largest on juveniles who are relatively well integrated and have a low delinquency level;
- effects of judicial intervention will be smallest on juveniles who are poorly integrated and have a high delinquency level.

Alternative – labelling – hypotheses are:

- contacts with the juvenile justice system will lead to weaker social integration;
- contacts with the juvenile justice system will lead to an increase in delinquent behavior;
- once a juvenile-police contact has been recorded, later contacts will lead to an official report to the prosecutor.

2. Delinquency and judicial contacts

An interesting question is whether self-reported delinquency is related to self-reported police contacts.

Only 4% of the sample said they had a police contact after committing one of the seven offenses that we inquired about. But when asked whether they have had police contacts related to other offences, 23% reported such contacts. Thus, we have included all reported police contacts in the analysis.

So the more specific question is: do juveniles who report many offenses or have high frequency scores, run a higher risk to get into contact with the police? The following table gives an overview of the relations we found.

Table 1. Percentage of reported police contacts by number of different offenses and committing frequency

Number of offenses	% P-contacts	
	N-844	N-556
1	25	31
2	38	41
3	56	49
4	77	47
		66

It is clear that the risk of police contacts grows when one commits more different offenses, or when one commits offenses more frequently. At four different offenses that risk is three times higher than when only one offense has been committed.

The risk of police contacts is also related to the type of offense. Of those who reported exclusively property offenses, only 26% had had a police contact; of those who reported only aggressive offenses, this proportion was 38%, and of those who reported both types of offenses, 51% declared having had contacts with the police.

Time of committal was also important. Juveniles who had committed an offense more than a year ago were least likely to have had police contacts (23%), whereas juveniles who had committed offenses in the last year and before, were most likely to have had such contacts (54%). These were of course the more frequent offenders. Moreover, there is also a relation between the extent of delinquency and the type of judicial intervention. When the number of committed offenses grows, the juvenile is more likely to be officially registered by the police or to end up before the prosecutor with an official record.

To say this in a slightly different way: of those who have reported one offense, only 13.5% had an official police or prosecutor contact; of those who have reported four or more offenses this proportion is 55.5%. Prosecutor appearances grew from 6% at one reported offense to 35% at four or more reported offenses.

Distinguishing among types of offenses we note again a significant difference between those who reported only property offenses or aggressive acts and those who committed both.

The latter group has considerably more registered police contacts and prosecutor contacts, while the group that has committed offenses but has not had any police contacts is much smaller.

Table 2. Type of offense reported and judicial contact

	<i>Exclusively aggressive acts</i>	<i>Exclusively property offenses</i>	<i>Aggressive and property offenses</i>
	<i>N = 219</i>	<i>N = 370</i>	<i>N = 356</i>
No P-contacts	63	63	37.5
Reported P-contacts	25	19.5	27
Registered P-contacts	6.5	9.5	15.5
Prosecutor contacts	5.5	8	20
	100	100	100

$p < 0.001$

The frequency of 'problem' behavior (truancy and running away) is positively related to judicial contacts. At a frequency score of three only 19% reported no police contacts, but more than half mentioned official contacts with the police and the prosecutor. In view of the fact that 'problem' behavior as such is not considered as offending behavior and consequently does not lead to judicial intervention, these findings suggest the existence of a link between delinquent and 'problem' behavior. This has been considered in more detail in Chapter 2.

3. Socio-demographic variables and judicial intervention

In this section we will examine the relation between different socio-demographic variables and judicial intervention. This question is important because of the widely accepted idea that the juvenile justice system operates on the basis of selection criteria which are not necessarily related to delinquent behavior.

For instance, a number of criminologists have demonstrated that the juvenile justice systems operation results in higher risks for lower class kids to end up in the system, compared with middle class kids (Gold, 1970; Christie, 1965; Jongman, 1971).

These conclusions are generally based on self-report delinquency studies. The studies show not only that delinquent behavior is widespread, but demonstrate also that the relation between delinquency and sex or social class is much less pronounced than appears from official statistics.

In this section the association between background factors and judicial intervention will be considered, controlling for delinquency. This will produce a better view on the way these three dimensions are interrelated.

With respect to *sex* let us remember that only 24% of girls compared to 54% of boys reported one out of the seven offenses. Moreover, frequency was lower and the type of offense differed. First, 56% of delinquent girls, compared to 43.5% of delinquent boys, had no police contacts, either official or non-official. So boys report more police contacts which is probably related to the greater number of aggressive offenses they commit: particularly vandalism leads more often to detection than other offenses do. The nature of girls' delinquency leads less frequently to detection.

Table 3. Sex and contacts with police or prosecutor – in %

	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>
	<i>N=428</i>	<i>N=53</i>
Reported police-contacts	65	56.5
Registered police-contacts	24.5	34
Prosecutor contacts	10.5	9.5
non-significant	100	100

However, if one considers officially registered contacts – as is shown in Table 3 –, both sexes have about the same number of contacts. The differences that appear are non-significant.

It may be concluded that there are no indications that sex forms a selection criterion for judicial intervention.

A second variable is *age*. The following table shows a very strong relation between age and judicial contacts.

Table 4. Age and judicial contacts – in %

	<i>12-13 y.</i>	<i>14-15 y.</i>	<i>16-17 y.</i>
	<i>N=127</i>	<i>N=200</i>	<i>N=15</i>
Reported P-contacts	76.5	65	53
Registered P-contacts	19	29.5	26
Prosecutor contacts	4.5	5.5	21
	100	100	100

$p < 0.0001$

For the youngest age groups police contacts remain on the whole on an inofficial level. Fourteen- and 15-year-olds clearly have more registered police contacts, whereas the oldest age group ends up much more frequently before the prosecutor.

But there also was a strong relation between frequency of delinquent behavior and age.

Thus more than half of 16- and 17-year-olds had a frequency score of three or more, where this was only one third of the 12- and 13-year-olds.

Also half of the 16- and 17-year-olds reported property- and aggressive offenses against less than one third of the 12- and 13-year-olds.

So we roughly can say that the difference in extent and frequency of delinquent behavior between the oldest and the youngest age groups is in the proportion of 3 to 2.

However, the difference in judicial contacts is much greater: five times as many 16- and 17-year-olds compared to 12- and 13-year-olds end up before the prosecutor, and twice as many 16-17-year-olds have officially recorded contacts.

The conclusion seems justified that age is a selection criterion for official judicial intervention.

One of the most crucial variables is of course *SES*. We have seen that there is practically no relation between SES and delinquent behavior. Keeping this in mind the following table is worth considering.

Table 5. Fathers profession and judicial contacts

	<i>Unskilled laborers</i>	<i>Skilled laborers</i>	<i>Low employees Small entrepreneurs</i>	<i>High employees Liberal professions</i>
	<i>N = 76</i>	<i>N = 147</i>	<i>N = 108</i>	<i>N = 123</i>
Reported P-contacts	54	61	65	78
Registered P-contacts	39.5	26	21	18
Prosecutor contacts	6.5	13	14	4
	100	100	100	100

$p < 0.001$

It is clear that children of lower SES have more often officially recorded contacts than children of higher SES.

A second finding is that police-contacts of children of high employees or fathers with a liberal profession frequently remain on an unofficial level:

registered contacts are relatively rare, and prosecutor contacts extremely rare.

These results seem to indicate a real social class bias by the police. But before drawing this conclusion, several controls were introduced. The first one is frequency of delinquent behavior.

Considering the total number of registered contacts, these contacts increase from high SES towards low SES in a proportion of about one-fifth to about one-half of those who reported offenses, whether they reported just one offense or more.

A striking fact is that prosecutor contacts show a strong relation with social class only when frequency of delinquent behavior is low: twice as many juveniles from lowest SES-categories compared to the others, appear before the prosecutor. When offending frequency increases this effect disappears. This means that frequency of delinquent behavior is more important than SES, as a determinant of intervention.

Thus there appears to be a global social class effect in police selection. However, at the level of the prosecutor this effect is especially prevalent at low offending frequency: when more offenses are committed, social class bias disappears.

Another variable is father's employment. Children of unemployed fathers more often have prosecutor contacts than children of employed fathers. But there also is a relation between the father's employment status and extent of delinquent behavior (see Chapter II). So we controlled for frequency of delinquency. The results confirm what has been found for SES: at low frequency of delinquent behavior considerably more children of unemployed than of employed fathers end up before the prosecutor – 23% against 11%. But at high frequency the relation is non-existent: frequency is a more important factor in deciding to send a juvenile to the prosecutor than the father's employment status. We conclude that for serious delinquents socio-demographic variables are unimportant.

No relation could be found between the mother's employment status and judicial intervention, recalling that there was no relation either between the mother's employment status and reported delinquency.

Education level appeared to be strongly related to delinquency, that is youngsters attending special vocational training or junior high schools report more offenses than youngsters attending higher vocational training schools or a school preparing for higher education.

Knowing this, it will not come as a surprise that we also find a relation between type of school and judicial intervention.

In the first place more juveniles in the higher school streams report offenses without having any police contacts. Secondly, juveniles in the lower streams

have more officially registered contacts: 40% among students in the lower vocational and junior high schools, against 25% of students in the schools preparing for higher education. Thirdly, it is remarkable that no one of the latter group appeared before the prosecutor.

Controlling for age the relation did not disappear. The age group of 12–15-year-olds of the lower school streams had three times as many officially registered contacts as did the same age group in higher school streams; with respect to 16- and 17-year-olds the proportion of official contacts of lower versus higher school streams is 2 to 1.

Frequency of delinquent behavior does not intervene either. Whether frequency is high or low, the mentioned differences in official contacts remain the same.

Considering the fact that SES and education level are related, a control for SES showed clear interaction effects.

Table 6. Education level and judicial intervention controlled for SES

	<i>Low SES</i>		<i>High SES</i>	
	<i>Lower education level</i>	<i>Higher education level</i>	<i>Lower education level</i>	<i>Higher education level</i>
	<i>N = 250</i>	<i>N = 35</i>	<i>N = 95</i>	<i>N = 65</i>
Reported P-contacts	58	74.5	74	75.5
Registered P-contacts	32	8.5	4.5	23
Prosecutor contacts	10	17	11.5	1.5
	100	100	100	100
	<i>p < 0.02</i>		<i>p < 0.05</i>	

At low SES and low education level there is the highest percentage of juveniles with official contacts – 42%. But education level is a stronger determinant than SES: the number of youngsters with higher education level that have official contacts is practically the same for low SES and high SES, although the number of prosecutor contacts is much greater in the case of low SES. Looking only at high SES, the number of prosecutor contacts of youngsters in a lower stream is eight times that of juveniles in a higher stream.

Finally, low SES, low education level and dropping out of school all interact

and are strongly related to judicial intervention. Of those who dropped out of school nearly half had appeared before the prosecutor and this was only 9.5% of those who were still at school.

Taking into account the juvenile's *employment status*, we found that unemployed youths run a higher risk of having repeated official contacts with the juvenile justice system than employed or school-going juveniles. This means that in the case of unemployment the police is more inclined to make an official report. Remembering the fact that there was no relation between delinquency and employment status, the conclusion must be that unemployment is a selection criterion influencing the decision of the police to take formal action.

Concluding this section the following summary of research findings can be presented.

- Official intervention is strongly related to extent and frequency of delinquent behavior: the chances of such intervention are 1 in 8 when one offense is committed, but 1 in 2 when four or more offenses are committed.
- However, other factors intervene in the decision of the police to make a report. The most important of these factors are age, SES, father's employment status, education level, dropping out of school and the juvenile's employment status.
- Reviewing all these factors and considering them as constituting factors of the more general concept of social class, it must be said that police decision making operates in such a way that lower class kids who commit a delinquent act are more likely to enter the juvenile justice system than comparable middle class kids.
- However, considering the overruling association between extent and frequency of behavior and judicial intervention, this process should not be overstated.

4. Contacts with the juvenile justice system after two years

We were not able – at time II – to reinterview all juveniles that had contacts with the police or the prosecutor at time I. But we collected information on renewed judicial contacts for all of them ($N=292$). Moreover, we also collected information on those follow-up respondents who – at time I – had not had any judicial contacts in order to verify whether they had come in contact with judicial authorities during the follow-up period ($N=235$).*

* By contacts we mean: judicial contacts occurring in the year preceding the interview; this holds both for time I and II.

Contact with the police

Of those who had not any previous police contacts, 40% did have such contacts, after a follow-up period of two years.

Of those who had police contacts at time I, 56% had no new contacts during the follow-up period, while 44% renewed their contacts with the police.

Contacts with the prosecutor

63.5% had no earlier prosecutor contacts and did not have such contacts during the follow-up period; 36.5% of them did. Of those who had appeared before the prosecutor two years ago, 60% did not come back, but 40% had to appear again.

Contact with the juvenile judge

Only 9% of the total follow-up group went to court. For half of them this was the first time; for the other half it was the second time.

Considering all judicial contacts we can say that 72% of the follow-up sample did not have any contacts during the follow-up period, while somewhat less than half of them had such contacts at time I.

From the original sub-group with recorded contacts, about 40% got new contacts with the juvenile justice system and 60% did not. Table 7 shows for each contact level at time I, how many juveniles had additional contact at time II.

Table 7. Judicial intervention at time I and additional contacts at time II

<i>Time II</i>	<i>Time I</i>				
	<i>No offenses</i>	<i>Offenses, no P-contact</i>	<i>Self reported P-contact</i>	<i>Recorded P-contact</i>	<i>Prosecutor contact</i>
<i>Additional contacts</i>	<i>N = 90</i>	<i>N = 82</i>	<i>N = 63</i>	<i>N = 144</i>	<i>N = 148</i>
P-contacts	4 %	6 %	14.5%	26.5%	14 %
Prosecutor contacts	4.5%	7.5%	8 %	24.5%	42 %
Juvenile judge	1 %	1 %	--	9 %	21 %
Total additional contacts	8 %	12 %	19 %	37.5%	44.5%

All differences are significant at the $p < 0.001$ level.

There is a clear difference between those who already had recorded contacts two years ago and those who had not. The former had considerably more repeated contacts with the juvenile justice system than the latter. There appears to be a kind of scale. About one-fifth of juveniles who earlier had reported police contacts, now have additional registered contacts, while somewhat less than half of the juveniles who had to appear before the prosecutor, had additional contacts.

Actual delinquency and increase in number of contacts

It seems rather obvious to relate change in delinquent behavior during the follow-up period with a possible increase in number of judicial contacts. Doing this, we find a difference between those who did not report one of the offenses in the first interview and those who did. It did not matter whether they had reported one, two or three offenses: about one-third of those who reported any offense had additional contacts, whereas this was only 14% for those who did not report any. This result seems to suggest that repeated judicial intervention is not as closely related to frequency of delinquent behavior as we might expect.

Who had additional contacts?

One important finding is that we did not find any relation between the fact of coming again in contact with the juvenile justice system and the socio-demographic variables that proved to be a contributing factor in earlier police decision making. Thus the fact of repeated contacts was not related to SES, education level, sex and age or any of the other variables treated under section 2 of this chapter. This means that the police did not make a second socio-demographic selection within the group that had earlier contacts, and it suggests that the decision of the police to make an official report is essentially determined by the fact that there were earlier recorded contacts, and not so much by social class factors. There are, however, some differences between the two groups. Thus, the group with additional contacts had, two years ago, committed more delinquent acts than the others. They also had lower integration scores at that time. Moreover, at that time they had more contacts with the police and the prosecutor. The striking fact remains that these differences refer to the situation as it was two years ago. Two years later both groups do not differ any more in level of social integration, in number of committed offenses or in any of the socio-demographic variables. This means that the additional contacts cannot be explained by the actual level of delinquency. They have to

be explained by the earlier number of judicial contacts. Frequent and earlier judicial contacts are the most important characteristics of those who have repeated contacts with the police and the prosecutor.

Concluding this section, we found that judicial contacts of youngsters two years earlier was the best predictor of new contacts with the juvenile justice system. Two years ago the group with current contacts with the justice system:

- was less integrated;
- had committed more offenses;
- had more judicial contacts.

After the follow-up period both groups differ only in number of additional contacts and in none of the other variables. It seems probable that there is a rather high threshold before the police decide to make an official report of a police-juvenile contact. But when this barrier has been taken and once an official report is made, then this is followed almost automatically by a second report. This produces a pattern in which earlier recorded contacts become adequate predictors of such contacts later on.

5. Effects of judicial intervention on later social integration

Labelling theory assumes that judicial contacts will have rather serious consequences for juveniles: they are stigmatized by family and friends; they then consider themselves as deviant and consequently they will tend to commit more offenses.

These hypotheses have become to a large extent the philosophy of the juvenile court. It is therefore important to test them under different angles. In the first place it can be said that labelling theory holds that judicial contacts will lead to a decrease in social integration because bonds with significant others weaken, commitment to conventional sub-systems becomes less strong, and support for conventional norms decreases.

Apart from this general approach we have asked juveniles a number of questions in order to measure possible labelling effects in a more direct way. We then examined whether subjective perceptions and feelings are related to level of integration. Earlier judicial contacts and later integration are related ($F=12.77, p < 0.001$), in the sense that those who have not been in contact with the police two years ago now have a much higher integration score (5.0) than those who earlier had appeared before the police or prosecutor (2.7). But in that analysis we did not take into account the level of delinquency: it is possible that stigmatization varies with level of delinquency. Keeping earlier frequency of offending constant, there appears to be some labelling effect when delinquency level was low at time I. But when frequency of offending at time

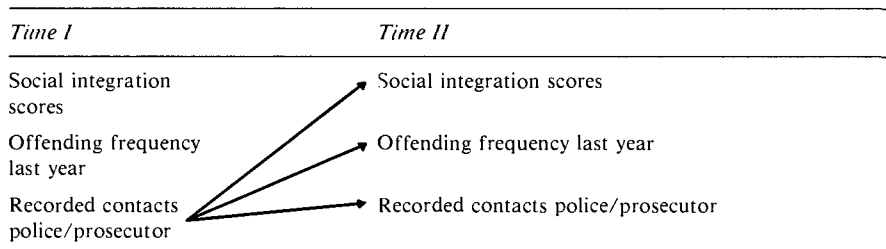
I was high, integration at time II is only slightly less for juveniles with officially recorded contacts than for those who had no such contacts.

Table 8. Earlier judicial intervention and later integration, keeping earlier delinquency level constant

<i>Earlier judicial contacts</i>	<i>Later social integration</i>	
	<i>Low frequency of offending</i>	<i>High frequency of offending</i>
No recorded contacts	4.1	3.5
Recorded contacts	2.2	2.5
	$F = 10.6, p < 0.002$	$F = 1.7, p < 0.19$

Juveniles with a high delinquency level have lower integration scores. The life situation of these youngsters may be so unfavorable that judicial intervention would not result in any change in their life. Other data point in the same direction. For instance, we found that the better integrated juveniles more often felt ashamed of their contacts with the police. In other words, labelling would have stronger effects on well integrated youth than on those who already are in a rather bad situation and the labelling effects seem clearer when delinquency level is low.

In order to test this and other relations we used path-analysis. The analysis refers to six sets of variables: social integration expressed in the already described total integration scores; delinquency, each time expressed in offending frequency during the preceding year of the interview; and officially recorded contacts with the police or the prosecutor which we summarize as judicial contacts.



The arrows indicate the relation that are tested in this chapter.

The complete analysis will be examined in the final section. Here we look first at the partial correlations, controlling for possible intervening factors. For instance, the simple correlation between earlier judicial contacts and later integration is relatively high, $R = -.43$, $p < 0.001$. However, controlling for both earlier integration and earlier delinquency, the partial correlation is only $r = -.10$. This means that the explained variance is so small that the labelling effect is non-existent.

But looking at the subjective side of the matter, how do the juveniles themselves perceive their contacts with the juvenile justice system? To get some insight into possible feelings of stigmatization, we posed a number of questions, four of which were so strongly related that we could construct a scale. These questions mainly refer to the consequences of their contact with the police.

- do you think the police watches you more closely now?
- do your parents pick on you more often than before?
- does the trouble with the police harm you when looking for a job?
- do some of your friends shun you since you had trouble with the police?

A high number of recorded contacts go together with a high score on the labelling scale. Moreover, judgement about the way they were treated by the police or the prosecutor is related to labelling feelings: when this judgement is negative, labelling feelings are strong. These results indicate that many judicial contacts are related to a negative perception of these contacts and high scores on the labelling scale. Moreover, there is also a relation between the labelling scale and level of integration.

Table 9. Labelling scale and social integration

<i>Labelling scale</i>	<i>Average integration score</i>
	<i>N = 99</i>
Low labelling scores	8.6
High labelling scores	1.9
<i>F = 3.79, p < 0.003</i>	<i>2.9</i>

Let us repeat that this relation holds only for the labelling scale. A great number of other labelling variables – such as being ashamed of contacts with the police, knowledge of parents, teachers and friends about the contact, reactions and measures taken at home, at school or from friends – had no relation at all with social integration.

What can one conclude on the basis of these data? In the first place it should

be recognized that juveniles, when they have been in contact with the police, indeed get the feeling that they are stigmatized by their environment. The more contacts, the worse their social integration, and the stronger these feelings. However, we should not overestimate these perceptions because we found that a great number of labelling variables, all concerned with negative reactions of family, school and friends did not differentiate within the group of juveniles with judicial contacts. Moreover, path-analysis did not show any relationship between earlier contacts with the juvenile justice system and later social integration levels. Global integration levels hardly seem affected by judicial intervention of the type we have measured in this study.

6. Effects of judicial intervention on later delinquency

Do earlier contacts with the juvenile justice system have any effect on the later delinquency level? One may assume that the police and prosecutor expect that their intervention has some effect and that it will lead youngsters to stop committing offenses. However, labelling theory claims that judicial intervention has negative effects and would lead to more rather than less delinquent behavior. Simple tabular analysis shows indeed that the earlier number of recorded contacts is related with increased delinquency two years later, which gives support to the labelling hypothesis. But in order to test the different hypotheses several controls need to be introduced. The first is for earlier delinquency: can we still predict later delinquency from earlier contacts if we take into account earlier delinquency? And as far as the earlier contacts are concerned we make a distinction between police contacts and prosecutor contacts.

Table 10. Earlier judicial contacts and later delinquency by earlier delinquency level

<i>Earlier judicial contacts</i>	<i>Later offending frequency</i>	
	<i>Earlier low delinquency level</i>	<i>Earlier high delinquency level</i>
No police contacts	1.2	3.0
Recorded police contacts	1.8	2.9
	$F=1.4, p < 0.24$	$F=0.001, p < 0.97$
No prosecutor contacts	1.3	3.0
Prosecutor contacts	1.0	2.9
	$F=0.3, p < 0.57$	$F=0.001, p < 0.97$

The table clearly shows that when earlier delinquency level is kept constant, the relation between earlier judicial contacts and later delinquency completely disappears. Whether there have been officially recorded contacts or no, such contacts seem to make no difference as far as later delinquency is concerned.

We have shown that social integration is strongly related to delinquency. It thus could be possible that social integration functions as a kind of intervening variable between earlier judicial contacts and later delinquency level. To examine this possibility we controlled for integration level.

Table 11. Earlier judicial contacts and later delinquency by social integration level

<i>Earlier judicial contacts</i>	<i>Low integration level</i>	<i>High integration level</i>
No police contacts	2.0	0.47
Recorded police contacts	2.5	0.33
	$F=0.82, p < 0.36$	$F=0.12, p < 0.72$
No prosecutor contacts	2.2	0.45
Prosecutor contacts	1.8	0.55
	$F=0.55 < 0.46$	$F=0.05, p < 0.82$

Again there is nothing left of the relation between earlier judicial contacts and later delinquency. It does not make any difference whether there have been such contacts or not. It appears from Table 11 that integration level has much

Table 12. Offending frequency at time II by earlier delinquency, earlier judicial contacts and current integration level

<i>Earlier low offending frequency</i>				<i>Earlier high offending frequency</i>			
<i>No recorded contact</i>		<i>Recorded contact</i>		<i>No recorded contact</i>		<i>Recorded contact</i>	
0.5		0.6		2.6		2.7	
<i>offending frequency</i>				<i>at time II</i>			
1.2		1.2		1.9		2.2	
<i>Low social integr.</i>	<i>High social integr.</i>	<i>Low social integr.</i>	<i>High social integr.</i>	<i>Low social integr.</i>	<i>High social integr.</i>	<i>Low social integr.</i>	<i>High social integr.</i>
1.9	0.5	1.6	0.3	2.2	1.3	2.5	0.6

more impact onto later delinquency than earlier delinquency level. This becomes quite clear in Table 12, where we controlled for delinquency and judicial contacts at time I and for social integration levels at time II.

The table reviews all of our earlier findings. In the first place we see that low delinquency levels remain relatively low, while high delinquency levels remain high. But low frequency increased whereas high frequency decreased so that the discrepancy between both groups has diminished. In the second place the table shows again the absence of any impact of judicial intervention on delinquency. Whether a juvenile has had officially recorded contacts or not does not make any difference for the frequency of his offending. Thirdly, it is clear that the greatest impact on delinquent behavior comes from the current integration level. The considerable differences in delinquency all go into the same direction. Finally, actual integration has its effects on delinquency, independent of earlier delinquency level. Differences in offending between juveniles with low integration scores are small, whether they had committed a few or many offenses two years ago. The same is true for those with high integration scores: independent of earlier offending, actual offending frequency is low. Finally, we computed correlations between earlier contacts and later delinquency. The simple correlation is $r = .16$, $p < 0.002$, and – though small – is significant. But controlling for earlier delinquency, the partial correlation is $r = -.013$, $p < 0.41$. In other words, there is no relation between contacts at time I and delinquency at time II. The conclusion must be that official contacts with the police or the prosecutor have no effect on reoffending. This means that our hypothesis as well as the labelling hypothesis are not confirmed by our research data. Even when integration level is high there is no effect of judicial contacts on later delinquency and this is contrary to our expectations. The labelling hypothesis claiming that judicial contacts lead to more delinquency finds no confirmation either.

7. Effects of earlier judicial intervention on later intervention

Once a juvenile is registered in the police files, what are the chances that he will be registered again? The next table (Table 13) relates earlier judicial contacts to such contacts two years later.

For those who had two or more earlier contacts, the risk of having a new contact with the police is 1 in 4; but the risk of having a new contact with the prosecutor is 1 in 2. Of those who only had one contact, more than one-third had new contacts, whereas for those who had two or more contacts nearly half had additional contacts. It thus appears that once recorded by the police the risks of a recorded contact are high. But of course things are not that straight-

Table 13. Earlier and later judicial contacts – in %

Contacts at time II	Contacts at time I			χ^2	p
	Had no contact	Had 1 contact	Had 2 or more contacts		
	N = 246	N = 179	N = 102		
P-contacts	8	18	25	17.80	< 0.001
Prosecutor contacts	9	22,5	49	69.10	< 0.0001
Juvenile judge	3	5,5	28	62.60	< 0.0001
Total % with contacts	15%	35%	48%	45.12	< 0.0001

forward. In the first place one should take into account the differences in reported delinquency. This is well illustrated by the next figure which shows the increase in total number of contacts since 1981, controlling for the level of delinquency.

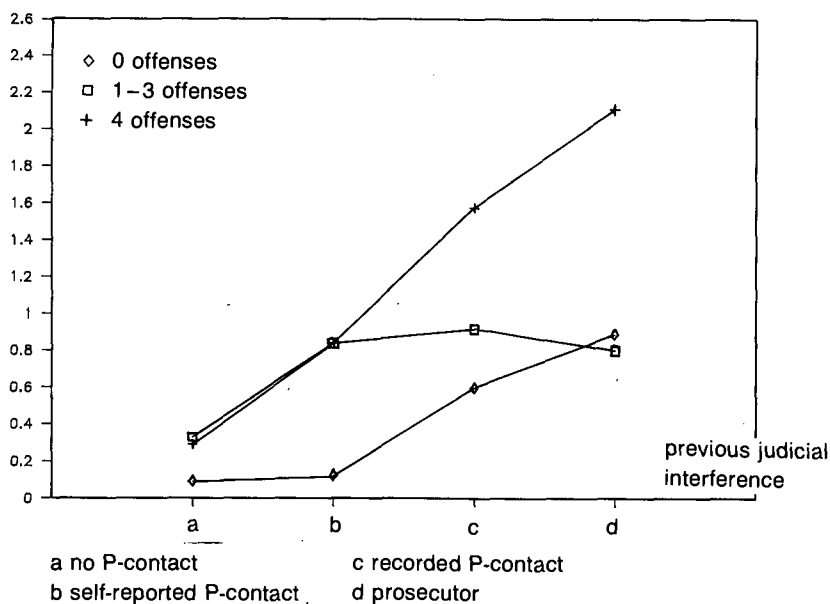


Fig. 1. Increase in total number of offenses since 1981 controlling for offending frequency

It is clear that juveniles with a high delinquency level show the highest increase in number of contacts. The other two groups show a more reduced relation between earlier and later number of contacts. We then controlled for delinquency level and number of earlier contacts. The relationship between earlier and later contacts is weaker for the less delinquent youngsters. However, when delinquency level is high there is a considerable difference in number of later contacts between those who already had such contacts earlier and those who had not. Particularly the large difference in prosecutor contacts suggests that the police tend to forward an official report to the prosecutor in cases where there have been earlier contacts. The predictive value of earlier contacts is thus fairly strong in the case of relatively delinquent youngsters. Juveniles who are frequent offenders run a high risk of having official contacts with the juvenile justice system if they already had such contacts. When there have been no such contacts the risk of having them is just as high as for those who only committed a few offenses. Path-analysis shows a partial correlation of earlier contacts with later contacts of $r = .35$.

Summarizing the main findings of the last sections, we examined the following questions.

1. Does judicial intervention have labelling effects and thus produce a decrease in social integration?
2. Is there a relation between judicial intervention and later delinquency?
3. Is there a relation between earlier contacts with the juvenile justice system and such contacts after a two-year period?

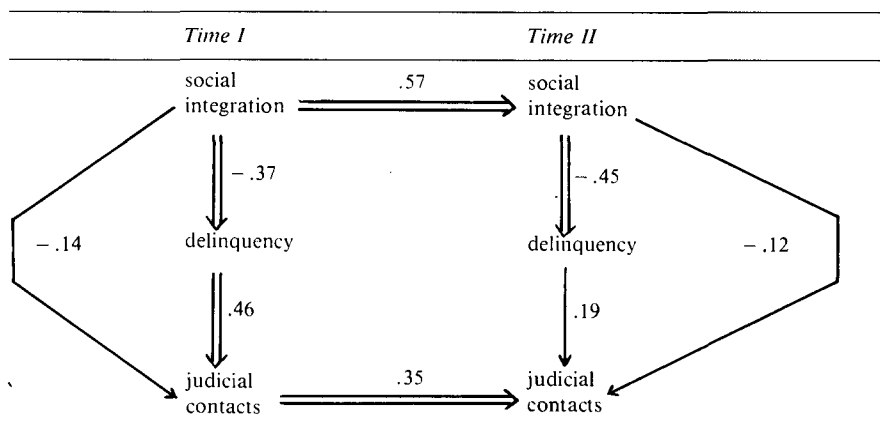
Answering the first question we found a small labelling effect at the level of the individual juvenile. The more police contacts, the more the juvenile experiences some stigmatization by his environment. The question is however, to what extent labelling feelings lead to changes in behavior by the social environment or by the juvenile himself. Labelling theory predicts an effect of earlier judicial intervention on later social integration, but there is none in our data.

Secondly, controlling for earlier delinquency, there appeared to be no relation between earlier judicial contacts and later delinquency: frequency of delinquent behavior is independent of the occurrence of contacts with the police or the prosecutor two years earlier. Apparently delinquency is related to other factors.

The third question has a positive answer. Although, when offending frequency is low, there is only a weak relation between earlier and later judicial intervention, the relation is very strong for frequent offenders. In this case the best predictor for a new recorded contact is an earlier recorded contact.

8. Effects of both judicial intervention and changes in integration

This part of the study can be expressed in a model – LISREL –, designed in collaboration with the department of Research Methods of Leiden University (Meijerink *et al.*, 1985).



$$\chi^2 = 5.38; df = 5; p = .37$$

The objective of the model is to clarify the processes operating during the follow-up period. In this respect we recall that social integration is expressed by total integration scores, delinquency is measured by offending frequency during the year before the interview, and judicial contacts are those contacts that are officially recorded.

Effects of judicial intervention

- high scores on the labelling scale, measuring the stigmatizing consequences of judicial contacts, are related to a large number of such contacts and to low integration scores. However, labelling effects could only be found for the labelling scale. We did not find any effect of variables measuring the reactions of family, school and peers
- no labelling effects of judicial intervention on later social integration have been found.

The hypothesis was that judicial contacts would have negative effects on integration, that is on relations and functioning in the family, school- and peer group. This hypothesis has not been confirmed. The correlation between earlier judicial contacts and later integration is non significantly low.

Judicial intervention and later delinquency

- recorded contacts with the police or prosecutor have no effect on the level of later delinquency.

In this case the hypothesis was that judicial intervention would have specific effects, although we expected that eventual effects would be stronger if the juvenile was well integrated. However, this proved not to be the case. Juveniles with low integration scores did commit more offenses than juveniles with higher scores, but this happened irrespective of their having had contacts with the juvenile justice system. The labelling hypothesis stating that judicial contacts would lead to more delinquency was not confirmed either. In fact, no relation could be established between recorded contacts and later delinquency.

Judicial intervention and later judicial contacts

- earlier judicial contacts are the strongest predictors of later judicial contacts.

This is particularly the case for juveniles with high offending frequency: if they had an earlier recorded contact then the risk of having another one was high; if they did not have earlier recorded contacts then the risk of having one was low.

The LISREL model correlation between earlier and later judicial contacts (.35) is relatively high. We must conclude that it is an important relation. Earlier we expressed the view that there probably is a high threshold for the first official recording of delinquent behavior. Once that threshold is passed, new recordings seem to follow more or less automatically.

*Effects of changes in social integration**Actual social integration and delinquency*

- actual integration level is strongly related to actual delinquency level;
- earlier delinquency has no direct effect on later delinquency

The model shows a relatively high correlation between actual integration and actual delinquency ($r = -.45$).

Changes in social integration and delinquency

- changes in integration are strongly related to changes in offending frequency;
- when integration increases, offending frequency decreases;
- when integration decreases, offending frequency increases.

These results cannot be inferred directly from the model. In fact this would necessitate an arrow leading from earlier integration to later delinquency but passing through later integration. The high correlation between earlier and later integration ($r = .57$) indicates that there is much continuity in the social integration of most youngsters. But this is not true for all juveniles. Some have done better: in the family, in the school, or they found a job. Others did not fare so well: more conflicts with their parents; they dropped out of school or spent their leisure time in a more negative way. These changes have a great impact on delinquent behavior: less delinquency when the situation improves and more delinquency when things become worse (see also Chapter 3).

We conclude that changes in a juvenile's life situation constitute the best predictor of changes in delinquent behavior.

Changes in social integration and judicial contacts

- social integration is related to judicial contacts;
- changes in social integration are not related to later judicial contacts if we control for earlier contacts.
- irrespective of integration changes those who had earlier recorded contacts now have more such contacts than those who had not.

Two arrows run from social integration to judicial contacts meaning that – in 1981 as well as in 1983 – the police, in their decision making, take into account factors that are part of our integration scales, such as family- and school factors. However, in both cases explained variance is small. It seems likely that the police take into account these factors (plus a number of class-related factors as we have demonstrated in our first study) when they are considering to make an official report for the first time. We deduce this from the finding that changes in social integration are *not* related to additional judicial contacts. Juveniles with earlier contacts have more additional contacts than juveniles without earlier contacts whether their situation has improved or not.

This confirms the threshold hypothesis. When the police make the decision to file an official report for a juvenile for the first time, they are prepared to consider a number of background factors, which they think are important in determining delinquent behavior. When a juvenile comes in contact with the police again, there will be almost automatic registration and background factors are no longer considered.

9. Some conclusions

Two fundamental problems have been examined in both studies. The first

is: what are the causes of delinquent behavior; the second is: does judicial intervention stop further offending.

With respect to the first problem we have tried to explain delinquency on the basis of social control theory. We now may conclude that the follow-up study gives even more support to the theory than our first study. Not only did we find again that social integration is related to delinquency, but we were able to establish that changes in integration level had a direct impact on offending frequency. These relations appeared to be particularly strong. On the basis of the results from the two studies, we feel confident in stating that social control theory is essential in explaining delinquent behavior.

The second problem is considerably more complex. Expectations on possible effects of judicial intervention on behavior were not too high. It seemed to us that generally unrepeated and isolated events such as a judicial contact, never can have as much determining influence on behavior, as a juvenile's more permanent and more pervasive life situation. Even when the perception of such contacts is penetrating and disturbing, it is a passing event that does not necessarily leave profound traces. In other words we expected social integration to have stronger effects on behavior than judicial contacts. However, we did expect a kind of shock effect of such contacts on juveniles who were reasonably well integrated and not very delinquent. Finally we did not expect to find clear and unambiguous labelling effects of judicial contacts, in terms of decreasing integration, increasing delinquency and more judicial contacts.

Our first hypothesis has been confirmed: changes in social integration went together with changes in delinquent behavior. Judicial contacts, on the contrary, had no effect on later delinquency: whether there had been or had not been recorded contacts did not make any difference in later behavior. Moreover, even differentiation by integration level produced no differences in offending frequency between those with earlier judicial contacts and those without such contacts. To some this will be a disappointing and perhaps shocking conclusion. Whether juveniles perceive their contacts with the juvenile justice system as painful and threatening – and there are indications that many of them feel this way – this seems to have no consequences as far as their later behavior is concerned. Our expectation that there would be a deterrent effect in the case of well integrated juveniles was not confirmed. This hypothesis has to be rejected.

As far as the labelling hypotheses are concerned, the results are not clearcut. A labelling scale measuring some negative consequences of judicial intervention, was related to number of judicial contacts and integration level. However, this was not the case for other labelling variables measuring reactions from parents, teachers and peers. In any case labelling effects are weak:

judicial intervention did not lead to lower social integration scores or to more delinquent behavior.

The third hypothesis predicting a strong relation between earlier and later judicial contacts has been confirmed. Particularly among the relatively more delinquent youngsters the rule "once contact, more contacts" appears to be valid. Irrespective of offending frequency, those who had earlier recorded contacts always ran a higher risk of new contacts than those whose offenses had not been recorded before.

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VIII. INNOVATIONS IN THE DUTCH JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Alternative sanctions

Peter H. van der Laan

1. Introduction

In March 1983 an experiment was started in The Netherlands with a new penal sanction for juveniles: the so-called *alternative sanction*. In this paper this new way of sanctioning young offenders will be described, followed by a discussion of the first outcomes of the experiment. All this is based on a research project which monitored and evaluated these experiments right from the start (Van der Laan and Van Lindt, 1983; Van der Laan and Van Hecke, 1985a, 1985b, 1986). This research was carried out by the research unit 'Juvenile Care & Juvenile Delinquency' of the Co-ordinating Committee on Research into Child Care and Protection (Coördinatiecommissie Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek Kinderbescherming).

Successively the following aspects will be presented: nature and contents of alternative sanctions, conditions and framework for the experiment and modes for enforcement of alternative sanctions. The second part consists of a description of the outcomes of the experiment. These sections are followed by a final paragraph with some concluding comments and implications for the future.

2. The experiment

2.1 *Two types of alternative sanctions*

The experiment was conducted by a working party appointed by the Minister of Justice. This working party proposed two different types of alternative sanctions: *work projects* and *training projects*. These two types differ from each other in nature and, usually, in the amount of time needed by a young offender to complete the assigned project.

The work projects are not that new for Holland, since experiments with this form of sanctioning for adults have been used since 1980 (Bol, 1985). Work projects followed the English example of Community Service. In *Guide-lines for Experiments with Alternative Sanctions* (Raamwerk van uitgangspunten en richtlijnen voor experimenten met alternatieve sancties voor jeugdigen, 1983)

the working party describes work projects as follows:

To carry out within a fixed period of time, certain well described tasks, useful to the community and of an educational character, preferably during leisure time. The educative impact might be increased if nature or contents of the activities to be developed is related to the committed crime and/or damage done to society or individual.

Among the tasks are repair, maintenance and painting work in schools, churches, youth clubs and neighborhood centers; kitchen and cleaning work in hospitals, homes for the elderly and institutions for the mentally handicapped; and maintenance work in community greens, forests and so on. Also included were repair of damage done to public buildings, public transport and private properties.

Training projects – unlike work projects – are rather new for The Netherlands. These training projects have, to a certain extent, the same features as the English Intermediate Treatment* and the Social Skills Training Programs, developed by the Institute of Pedologics of the Free University in Amsterdam. In *Guide-lines for Experiments with Alternative Sanctions* training projects are described as follows:

To undertake, within a fixed period of time, some form of training, to take courses, or other educational activities, aimed at improving social and/or practical skills, needed to face life's stresses.

This guide-line suggests different kinds of projects, which include practicing alternative ways of behaving, based on behavioral principles, aimed at preventing police and judicial contacts of these youngsters in future. Training projects also include more practically oriented educational activities such as courses in electronic and reading and writing. Finally, youth-adventure type of activities as developed by Outward Bound Schools are another training possibility.

2.2 Main objectives

The main objective of the introduction of alternative sanctions is to promote a more educative juvenile justice system.

On the one hand, this should be achieved by limiting the use of traditional penal sanctions, especially detention, in order to avoid such unwanted side-effects as stigmatization, temporary separation from home, and the non-occurrence of positive re-enforcements.

On the other hand, by emphasizing several underlying principles, for example:

* As illustrated by this, in Holland we are much inspired by several innovations in England.

- Youngsters are held personally responsible for their acts. It is not simply a matter of fines being paid for them by others, like their parents. Or a matter of undergoing detention. No, they themselves have to fulfil certain tasks useful to others and society. Real commitment is demanded. Unfulfilled obligations are followed by other, more traditional and unconditional (*i.e.*, not suspended) penal sanctions.
- Whenever possible, youngsters are confronted with the harm, injury or damage they have caused. They must repair this damage or make symbolic repairs of benefit of the community. Thus, there is some sort of compensation, retribution, or restitution.
- Especially in work projects, youngsters may have new experiences: keeping appointments, having responsibilities, gaining work experience, working in a team, getting in touch with other sections of society, being appreciated, etc..

Another objective is to speed up the response to detected crime. The period of time between crime and settlement in the traditional way is considered too long to be understood by juveniles, and the credibility of the justice system is not promoted by this delay. It is hoped that the introduction of alternative sanctions will shorten the interval between crime and the starting of work project or training project. A fast reaction may contribute to clearness and awareness of society's reactions to unacceptable behavior. Reducing recidivism has not been mentioned as an objective. Although this is one of the objectives, it is not the main one at this moment. The 'enrichment' of the judicial system and the humanizing aspects of the alternative sanctions are felt to be more important.

2.3 Conditions for enforcement

In *Guide-lines for Experiments with Alternative Sanctions* the working party stated a few conditions for enforcing alternative sanctions. The most important are:

1. Alternative sanctions should only be imposed in cases where criminal procedures would have started if alternative sanctions had not been available. In other words, cases which would have been dismissed before – *i.e.*, before the introduction of alternative sanctions – should not be assigned an alternative sanction. (Though this is not supported by all concerned.) This condition is meant to prevent 'net-widening'; the introduction of alternative sanctions should not lead to a judicial system covering more youngsters than before.
2. The alternative sanction should be proposed by the suspect himself. This

is done in order to avoid the alternative sanction being characterized as 'forced labor', which is, as we know, restricted by the European Convention for Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedom. For the same reason the juvenile has to admit the offense.

3. Alternative sanctions may last from four up to 150 hours. (Recently (in 1985) the working party recommended the maximum duration to be extended up to 200 hours in special cases.) At the beginning of the experiments the working party stated that a rigid handling of the maximum number of hours might be undesirable as far as training projects are concerned. An extended duration might be indicated.
4. Alternative sanctions can be imposed by the public prosecutor – after consultation with the juvenile judge which is obligatory in the Dutch juvenile justice system – as well as by the juvenile judge. The public prosecutor can make use of two legal modalities of application:
 - a simple or conditional dismissal after completion of the work or training project (completion of the project being the condition);
 - suspension of the decision to prosecute until completion or non-completion of the work or training project.

These modalities are being defined as the *prosecutor's model*. In the *judge's model*, where the alternative sanctions are imposed by the juvenile judge, the following modalities can be used:

- suspension of pre-trial detention;
- postponement of judgement.

Alternative sanctions under the judge's model are clearly penal sanctions; they follow after adjudication. Alternative sanctions under the prosecutor's model might be seen as a kind of diversion, there will be no annotation on the juvenile's criminal record, and an appearance before the juvenile judge will be avoided by the prosecutor dismissing the case on completion of the work or training project.

5. Alternative sanctions can be applied for *all* sorts of crimes, to *all* juveniles who come into contact with the law, and they can replace *all* other, already existing penal sanctions. Consequently this means that there are no offenses excluded. Property offenses like theft and burglary, violent offenses like vandalism, assault and sexual offenses, drug offenses and traffic offenses, are all eligible for an alternative sanction. Alternative sanctions can be imposed on first-offenders as well as on recidivists and on boys as well as on girls (although the number of girls who come to the attention of the court is very small). Because of the fact that alternative sanctions can replace all other penal sanctions, they can be imposed instead of reprimands, fines and custodial sentences, conditional or uncon-

ditional. In this the experiments for juveniles differ from the experiments for adults. For adults community service may replace up to three months unconditional imprisonment, but may not replace fines or other conditional sentences.

6. Work and training projects, not properly completed, must be reported immediately to the judicial authorities. In such cases a decision may be taken to prosecute (prosecutor's model) or a traditional penal sanction may follow (judge's model).

2.4 Organization aspects

In the first instance the experiments have been started in six out of the 19 Dutch court districts. Judicial authorities in these six court districts were asked to start imposing alternative sanctions. (Meanwhile there is hardly any court district left where no alternative sanctions are being applied; one did not have to wait for formal legislation to be allowed to impose alternative sanctions outside the six experimental court districts.) In each court district a steering committee was set up in which the juvenile judge, the public prosecutor, the Child Protection Council, the bar, the police and other parties, interested in alternative sanctions, were represented. The steering committee keeps determined the general policy with respect to alternative sanctions, and supervises the so-called alternative sanctions co-ordinator. The co-ordinator is specifically appointed for the executive work concerning alternative sanctions. His tasks are:

- recruiting work projects and training projects;
- creating a placement pool (hospitals, public services and other institutions where alternative sanctions can be performed);
- drafting concrete proposals for alternative sanctions;
- introducing the juvenile at the location of employment or training;
- mediating when problems arise;
- reporting to the judicial authorities on proceedings and results;
- giving information on possibilities of alternative sanctions to juveniles, their parents, lawyers, etc.
- maintaining good contacts with voluntary and public institutions collaborating with the scheme.

The role of the co-ordinator in applying alternative sanctions is a crucial one. For that reason, his office is at the Child Protection Council. In this way, early involvement of the co-ordinator is guaranteed and he will be able to quickly obtain all the necessary information about a juvenile. This enables him to organize a work or training project. The co-ordinator is responsible for a smooth working of the scheme. He is not a professional helper. When specific support

and assistance is needed by the juvenile, he or she is to be referred to specialized social agencies (and not to be helped by the co-ordinator).

As mentioned in the introduction, the experiments are monitored by a research project.* During the first 15 months (April 1983–June 1984) of the experiments all alternative sanctions, imposed and executed in six court districts (Amsterdam, Arnhem, Groningen, Leeuwarden, Rotterdam and Zutphen), were recorded. Most of the other, complementary information was collected by means of interviewing judicial authorities, the juveniles concerned, co-ordinators and staff members of the collaborating institutions where alternative sanctions are performed. These data enable us to present a complete description of the number and nature of the alternative sanctions imposed, and to describe the experiences and judgements of the parties involved. Legal aspects of alternative sanctions like the modalities chosen for application (simple or conditional dismissal, suspension of decision to prosecute, suspension of pre-trial detention and postponement of judgement) and the question whether or not lawyers are involved, were also part of the study. Furthermore, a sample was collected of juveniles who came into contact with the law in the same period as the alternative sanctions were used, but whose cases were either dismissed by the public prosecutor or traditionally sanctioned by the juvenile judge (*e.g.*, by fine or detention). This was done to check whether, and if so how, traditionally sanctioned juveniles and dismissed juveniles differ from juveniles given an alternative sanction. The information obtained concerns personal data, data concerning the committed crimes and criminal records. For all youngsters, alternatively and traditionally sanctioned, as well as juveniles dismissed from court, the following information is collected:

- age and gender;
- ethnic background;
- home situation;
- school status;
- child protection measure (for example supervision order);
- type of offense;
- period of time between offense and sanction or dismissal;
- legal framework (judge's model, prosecutor's model);
- crimes committed in the past and ways in which they were dealt with.

In the same way samples of court records of cases handled in 1981 were examined. In that year, alternative sanctions for juveniles were not yet in use.

* As a matter of fact, court districts had to participate in this research in order to be assigned as an 'experimental' court district.

Comparing these data with those of the alternative sanctions three years later, enabled us to indicate whether or not 'net-widening' has occurred. What is meant by that? At the beginning of the experiments the working party emphasized the starting point or principle that alternative sanctions are only to be imposed in cases in which the public prosecutor would have prosecuted, if an alternative sanction had not been available. The experiments should not increase the number of juveniles entering the juvenile justice system. An increase of summons or court appearances of juveniles who would have been dismissed if the possibility of imposing alternative sanctions was not there, should not occur. Alternative sanctions should not replace dismissals. In order to verify that this did not occur, dismissed juveniles in 1981 were compared to those dismissed in the registration period (April 1983–June 1984) and the juveniles alternatively sanctioned. For instance, should we conclude that the alternative sanctions differ from the dismissals in the same period on a certain number of variables, and the dismissals in that period do not differ from the dismissals three years earlier, then we have no reason to believe net-widening has occurred. If the category dismissals in 1983–1984 still has the same features as the category dismissals in 1981, the alternative sanctions are clearly a different category. However, if the alternative sanctions correspond with the dismissals in the two periods, we might speak of net-widening. If we cannot find any difference between the alternative sanctions in 1983–1984 and the dismissals in 1981, but a clear difference between those groups and the dismissals during the experimental period (1983–1984), drawing a conclusion concerning net-widening is becoming more difficult. We might speak of a kind of net-widening (dismissals are left only for the least serious offenses and/or juvenile offenders), but this might also be due to a changed prosecuting policy. For example, cases which would have been dismissed in 1981 would not have been dismissed in 1983–1984, even if alternative sanctions would not have been available. This changed prosecuting policy is best being characterized by reservedness in dismissing cases. (In order to be complete: we have checked with several public prosecutors whether a change in the prosecuting policy occurred between 1981 and 1983–1984, and as far as we know, there was no such change; at least not a change in national prosecuting policy.)

If we get indications for a correspondence between alternative sanctions and traditional sanctions, we might be able to say something about the replacement of traditional sanctions by alternative sanctions.

3. Outcomes

3.1 *Alternative sanctions*

3.1.1 Number of alternative sanctions

During the first 15 months of the experiment 432 alternative sanctions have been imposed in the six experimental court districts. Some 320 of them are applied by the juvenile judge under what we called the judge's model, and about 110 by the public prosecutor under the prosecutor's model. Of a total of more than 8000 decisions (5000 prosecutor's dismissals and 3000 penal sanctions varying from reprimands and fines to custodial sentences) in these court districts, 5% took the form of an alternative sanction. Confined to the judge's model, more than 10% of all sanctions imposed were alternative sanctions. Under the prosecutor's model only 2% of the decisions used alternatives.

In some court districts, especially Rotterdam and Zutphen, the number of alternative sanctions was considerably higher than in others. Although in Rotterdam and Zutphen registration took only 12 months instead of 15 months, the number of alternative sanctions was twice as high as in most of the other court districts. Especially for Zutphen this is rather notable, because this court district is one of the smallest in the country (not in size, but in number of inhabitants; the proportion of alternative sanctions is definitely larger than the 5% we mentioned above).

The large proportions of alternative sanctions in Rotterdam and Zutphen are to a great extent related to the model chosen. Rotterdam and Zutphen made use of both the judge's model and the prosecutor's model (in Zutphen the prosecutor's model was preferred). Because of the procedures taking less time under the prosecutor's model, more alternative sanctions could be handled by the judicial authorities in these two court districts. This is clearly shown by the figures in Table 1; Rotterdam and Zutphen covered almost half of all alternative sanctions imposed (214 out of 432).

Recently the other court districts have increasingly used the prosecutor's model. Nevertheless, the number of alternative sanctions under the judge's model is still three times as high in those court districts as under the prosecutor's model.

3.1.2 Number of hours imposed

The average number of hours imposed was 51.1 (range: 6–152 hours), the

Table 1. Number of alternative sanctions (April 1983–June 1984)

<i>Court district</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>(%)</i>
Amsterdam	60	(13.9)
Arnhem	40	(9.3)
Groningen	79	(18.3)
Leeuwarden	39	(9.0)
Rotterdam*	113	(26.1)
Zutphen*	101	(23.4)
total	432	(100)

* April 1983–March 1984

latter slightly over the maximum of 150 hours proposed by the working party (this must be caused by the wish to impose alternative sanctions in terms of number of working days of eight hours a day; 152 hours being 19 days, almost four weeks of full time working). The number of hours applied on 52.5% of all juveniles was 40 hours (one week!) or less; on 12% of them 81 hours or more.

The average number of hours differed much from district to district. In Arnhem the average number was 74.7 hours, in Rotterdam only 40.4 hours. In Rotterdam hardly any alternative sanction of 81 hours or more was recorded; the opposite was the case in Arnhem: hardly no alternative sanction of 40 hours or less was imposed. This can mainly be traced to the model preferred. In general juvenile judges (judge's model) impose a larger number of working hours than prosecutors. This has to do, as we shall see later on, with the seriousness of the case either in terms of the offenses committed, or the juvenile's record.

3.1.3 Types of alternative sanctions

Most of the alternative sanctions (95%) were work projects, of which 65% consisted of maintenance, repair and painting work, and about 20% of kitchen and domestic work.

Training objects were rare. Only 21 training projects (5%) were imposed, five of them being a combination of taking some sort of course and performing a job, often at the same institution where the course was taken. Most of the training projects were Social Skills Training Programs. The main reason for the small number of training projects is the novelty of training projects in a judicial scheme in The Netherlands. It is an entirely new form of penal sanction, so there is little experience with this kind of project, and a great lack of

facilities. This was not the case as far as work projects were concerned, because experiments with community service for adults had started two years earlier. From the start of the experiments, most co-ordinators were allowed to make use of the pool of possible work project-placements for adults.

The design and development of valid training projects took considerable time and is still not what it should be. Also, the financing of training projects is not an easy matter. Another reason for the small number of training projects imposed is the lack of confidence in the usefulness of these projects. Not all juvenile judges and all public prosecutors seem to believe that training projects can contribute to a more significant way of life with better prospects for youngsters, and not all proposed training projects are accepted by the court. Today, some three years after the start, we have reason to believe things have changed a little: the number of training projects is increasing rapidly in several court districts.

The organizations and institutions offering opportunities for work projects are mainly hospitals, homes for the elderly and institutions for the mentally handicapped, and neighborhood centers, youth clubs, swimming pools and municipal departments like the department for public gardens and the public cleaning department.

Training projects mainly took place in Amsterdam and Groningen, where staff members of child protecting agencies were trained to conduct such training programs.

3.1.4 Starting procedures

Although alternative sanctions are usually, according to the guide-lines, formally proposed by the juveniles themselves, the initiative was almost always taken by someone else. In one-third of all cases, it was the lawyer who first got the idea to ask for an alternative sanction. In nearly the same number of cases the judicial authorities (juvenile judge or public prosecutor) suggested the juvenile or his or her lawyer should propose an alternative sanction. This happened either at tripartite meetings of the juvenile judge, the public prosecutor and the Child Protection Council, where possible judicial reactions in cases are discussed; during court appearances, or during the deliberations on suspension of pre-trial detention. This situation differed from district to district. In court districts where the judge's model is preferred, the role of the lawyer is more active. In court districts using the prosecutor's model, the tripartite meetings are important in deciding whether or not an alternative sanction will be applied. These differences also explain the difference in number of alternative sanctions imposed. In some court districts imposing an

alternative sanction depends completely on the willingness of lawyers to propose an alternative sanction, and when they are not interested, or when they are uninformed about it, no alternative sanction will be applied. In fact, some inequality before the law is hereby introduced.

3.1.5 Results of alternative sanctions

Of all work projects 89% were completed. In only 11% of the projects did juveniles fail to complete the number of hours imposed, or did not show up at all. Of the training project orders nearly one-third were not completed. Because the number of training projects was so small, it does not seem justified to conclude that training projects are more likely to fail. More experience must be gained before definite conclusions can be drawn.

So, the failure or success of an alternative sanction cannot – at this time – be related to the nature or type of alternative sanction. However, there seems to be a relation with age; of the juveniles aged 13 to 15, 25% failed to complete their alternative sanction. For those aged 16 and 17 years, 12% failed and for the 18- and 19-year-olds this was only 4%. These percentages underline the need for special guidance and assistance for younger boys and girls in the program to which they are assigned. No relation whatsoever was found between number of hours imposed and success or failure of the project. The risk of failure does not seem to be greater for long-term alternative sanctions.

3.1.6 Period between offense and sanction

Usually quite some time elapses between date of crime and date of final judicial reaction. Introducing alternative sanctions might reduce this length of time in comparison to at least the traditional penal sanctions and perhaps even the dismissals. So far, this has not happened. In 22% of all cases juveniles started to perform their alternative sanction within six months after they committed the offense(s) for which they were sanctioned. For 52% of the youths the interval was six months to one year to start their project, and for the others it was even longer. This was not always the case. In Amsterdam where the modality 'suspension of pre-trial detention' was used frequently in order to impose an alternative sanction, many work and training projects were started within six months after the offense was committed. In other court districts, two or even three court appearances were needed before the youth could start his project. Compared with dismissals and traditional penal sanctions these figures are rather disappointing. Of course, dismissals need less time to be arranged, but even traditional sanctions were imposed in less time after the committed crime than were alternative sanctions.

Proportionally most dismissals took only six months* and a few of them more than a year.** The opposite was true for the alternative sanctions: proportionally many started after more than one year*** and very few within six months. ◊ The differences between alternative sanctions and traditional sanctions are not that large in all court districts, but they are still considerable and that causes some worry.

3.2 The young offenders

3.2.1 Age and gender

Table 2 shows us the age distribution of juveniles alternatively sanctioned at the time they committed their offenses.

Table 2. Age at the time of offense – in %

Age	N = 432
13	1.9
14	5.8
15	14.8
16	24.1
17	31.5
18*	16.9
19*	1.2
unknown	3.9

* Although over 18 years old and therefore not to be handled by the juvenile judge, they are part of this population probably because they offended together with minors, or because they committed several offenses of which one or more still under age.

Alternative sanctions are preferably applied to the older juveniles. The average age was 16 years and five months. This was not the case in all court districts. In Amsterdam, Arnhem and Leeuwarden juveniles who received an alternative sanction were a little older than those in Groningen and Zutphen; in Rotterdam they were on the average a few months younger. In Rotterdam, Zutphen and Groningen juveniles of the age of 12 to 15 were well represented, but few offenders were over 18. In this respect, Arnhem and Amsterdam gave a different picture: few 12- to 15-year-olds, quite a lot of 18-year-olds and older among the alternatively sanctioned juveniles.

* Standard score 8.452 (loglinear analyzed)

** Standard score – 3.777 (loglinear analyzed)

*** Standard score 5.958 (loglinear analyzed)

◊ Standard score – 8.526 (loglinear analyzed)

The preferred age is related to the model chosen. The prosecutor's model seems to be applied to the younger ones, the judge's model to the older ones.

There is a tendency to impose a larger number of hours on older juveniles. For example, of the 14-year-olds only 4.3% received an alternative sanction of 81 hours or more, where this is 22.5% for the 18-year-olds. A complete picture is presented in Table 3.

*Table 3. Age and number of hours imposed – in %**

<i>Age</i>	<i>6–40 hours</i>	<i>41–80 hours</i>	<i>81–152 hours</i>
13 (<i>N</i> = 6)	50.0	50.0	–
14 (<i>N</i> = 23)	78.3	17.4	4.3
15 (<i>N</i> = 64)	62.5	34.4	3.1
16 (<i>N</i> = 103)	57.3	30.1	12.6
17 (<i>N</i> = 133)	44.4	42.8	12.8
18 (<i>N</i> = 71)	40.8	36.6	22.5
19 (<i>N</i> = 5)	60.0	40.0	–

* *N* = 405; for 27 juveniles neither age nor number of hours was known.

The age distribution of the alternatively sanctioned juveniles is not different from that of the sample of traditionally sanctioned youths in 1981 and 1983–1984. The two populations are similar in this respect. Juveniles who are dismissed, however, are usually a bit younger. Compared with the sanctions – both alternative and traditional – the youngest age category (12 to 15 years of age) is over-represented. But apart from the youngest category, age does not seem to be a criterion on which juveniles are being selected for an alternative sanction.

We cannot draw the same conclusion where gender is concerned. Although the number of girls involved in the juvenile justice system is traditionally very small, the number of girls on whom an alternative sanction has been imposed is even smaller. Only ten out of 432 juveniles were girls, which is 2.3% of the total population. Sometimes organizations say that the work to be done is too hard for girls. Therefore, we have reason to believe that gender forms a criterion on which youngsters are being selected for alternative sanctions.

3.2.2 Ethnic background

13.9% of the alternative sanctions were imposed on members of ethnic minorities, most of them being Surinamese youngsters, living in Amsterdam

and Rotterdam. The number of Turks and Moroccans is very small.* Compared with other, more traditional penal sanctions, the proportion of ethnic minorities is small: 13.9% against 21.4. In a way this should worry us, because in view of the types of offenses committed, we cannot think of any reason why these juveniles should be underrepresented within the group of alternative sanctions. On the contrary, based on the type of offense there should be a larger proportion of ethnic minorities among the alternatively sanctioned juveniles. Furthermore, we found no indication that alternative sanctions proposed by this group are refused more often by the judicial authorities. However, we are told that lawyers are reluctant to suggest an alternative sanction, because it would conflict with the conception held by ethnic minorities about penal sanctioning. This might be true for some Islamic cultures (alternative sanctions not being seen as genuine penal sanctions), but certainly does not hold for the Surinamese. Thus, we are still looking for a satisfactory explanation of this divergence.

3.2.3 Home situation

Nearly all juveniles (86.1%) lived at home with their parents; 5.8% lived in an institution, and some 3.5% on their own in rooming houses. The number of juveniles living in institutions was considerably higher in Zutphen. No wonder, because this court district in the east part of Holland is known for its large number of institutions. Juveniles living on their own are found relatively more frequently in Amsterdam and Groningen.

We did not find many differences in home situation between alternative sanctions and other judicial decisions (dismissals and traditional sanctions). In Rotterdam we found relatively more juveniles living at home during the alternative sanctions, and in Leeuwarden and Amsterdam quite few. For the traditional sanctions in these three districts the opposite was the case. Therefore, one might say that the home situation of juveniles, in one way or another, did play a role in deciding about an alternative sanction in Amsterdam, Leeuwarden and Rotterdam. In the other court districts this does not seem to be the case.

3.2.4 School-status

Of all juveniles performing an alternative sanction 70.2% went to school,

* Surinam was a former colony of The Netherlands. When it became independent in 1975 many Surinamese decided to stay in Holland. Back in the sixties and seventies, many workers from Turkey and Morocco came to the Netherlands, together with their wives and children.

4.7% had a job and 25.1% did not go to school and did not have a job either. On this matter large differences exist among court districts. For instance, in Arnhem, Groningen and Leeuwarden the proportion of juveniles not going to school or not having a job was more than one-third (ranging from 34.2% to 42.5%). In the other districts this was less than 20%. We found a relation between school status and number of hours imposed. On the whole, there is a tendency to impose a smaller number of hours on school-going youths and a larger number on those not going to school and not having a job. The average number of hours for school-going youths was 69.4 and for those without a job and not going to school 91.9. The average number of hours applied on working youths was the smallest (56.9 hours), but the number of working juveniles is so small that it is hard to draw a reliable conclusion. The same applies to successful or unsuccessful completion of the alternative sanction. Only 5.9% of the working youths did not complete their work or training project, compared to 12.3% of the school-going youngsters and 15.1% of those who left school and were jobless. But again: the number of working juveniles is small. We did not find a relation between type of alternative sanction and school- or work status. Although we expected training projects to be specifically suitable for juveniles who left school early and did not find a job or did not even look for a job, this was not the case.* Partly, we think, because of the lack of opportunities and facilities. But compared to other sanctions and dismissals there are more jobless juveniles and school-dropouts among the alternative sanctions (standard score 2.437).

So, although we did not find a relation with type of alternative sanction, the alternative sanction in general seems to be felt more appropriate for this particular group of young offenders (jobless juveniles and school-dropouts).

Level of education hardly played a role; differences were small and clear tendencies were not found.

3.2.5 Child protection measure

As far as can be determined 12.3% of all juveniles who received an alternative sanction were under a child protection measure, most of them (civil) supervision orders. Again the differences among the court districts were large. In three court districts the proportion of juveniles under a supervision order ranged from 20.6% to 35% (in Arnhem), in the others it was only ranging from

* This expectation was based on a survey among judicial authorities, lawyers and others, prior to the experiments. The respondents thought training projects to be particularly suitable for those youngsters who are not going to school and not having a job.

2.7% to 10.9%. Juveniles with a supervision order differed from juveniles without one in number of hours imposed and completion of the alternative sanction. On the average the number of hours was larger and so was the percentage of unsuccessful completed projects (20.8% versus 11.2%). This is not surprising, because most of the juveniles under a child protection measure are found in Amsterdam, Arnhem and Leeuwarden, the court districts where the number of hours imposed is considerably higher. Compared to other judicial reactions we see that there are relatively more youngsters with a supervision order among alternative sanctions than among dismissals (standard score - 1.952). In some but not all court districts, this is also the case compared to traditional sanctions. This brings us to the conclusion that having a supervision order may contribute to a positive decision to impose an alternative sanction.

3.2.6 Judicial past

Table 4 shows that about half (46.3%) of the population did not have previous contacts with the law (possible police contacts which did not result in an official record excluded). 19.7% came into contact with the law once before, and 29.9% twice or more times before.

Table 4. Judicial past - in %

<i>Previous contact</i>	<i>N = 432</i>
No previous contacts	46.3
Once before	19.7
Twice before	13.0
More than twice	16.9
Unknown	4.2

The highest percentages of first-offenders were found in those court districts where the prosecutor's model is in use, and - probably a more relevant factor - where most of the youngest offenders occurred. The highest percentages of recidivists were found in Amsterdam and Arnhem. Combined with the fact that in these two districts the largest numbers of hours were imposed, that the modality 'suspension of pre-trial detention' was used more often than in the other court districts, and that the offenders were on the average a little older, this suggests that, compared to the other districts, in Amsterdam and Arnhem alternative sanctions are applied to the more serious offenders.

There seems to be a clear relation between type of alternative sanction and whether or not the offender was before the law for the first time. Of those

performing a training project 66.7% were recidivists. However, when we keep in mind that the number of training projects is very small, this relation becomes less clear. This is best shown by the proportion of recidivists and first-offenders who went to a training project: 6% of the recidivists and 4% of the first-offenders.

A relation was found between the number of hours imposed and the judicial past of the offenders. Only 6.6% of the first-offenders received an alternative sanction of 81 hours or more compared to 24.7% of the recidivists with three or more previous contacts; 64.3% of the first-offenders received an alternative sanction of 40 hours or less compared to only 33.3% of the juveniles with three or more previous judicial contacts.

Looking at the differences between judicial reactions we can say that alternative sanctions clearly differ from dismissals in that first-offenders are found more often among the dismissals, and recidivists more often amongst alternative sanctions. The same is true for the comparison of alternative sanctions with traditional sanctions: more first-offenders among the traditional sanctions and more recidivists among alternative sanctions. Rotterdam and Zutphen form an exception: relatively more first-offenders among the alternative sanctions and more recidivists among the traditional sanctions. In the other court districts alternative sanctions seem to be felt appropriate for recidivists, although one should not forget that only some 10% of all penal sanctions – and in most court districts even less – were alternative sanctions.

3.2.7 Summary

Juveniles who received an alternative sanction differ from youths whose cases were dismissed or youths who received an alternative sanction. Although these differences vary from district to district, and are of course relative, we will recite them once more. Alternatively sanctioned juveniles differ from dismissed and traditionally sanctioned juveniles in the following ways:

- more alternatively sanctioned juveniles in the highest age category (18 years and older);
- less of them in the youngest age category (12–15 years of age);
- most of them boys;
- a smaller number of members of ethnic minorities;
- more juveniles who do not go to school and do not have a job;
- more juveniles under a measure of child protection;
- more juveniles who offended together with others;
- more juveniles with previous judicial contacts.

3.3 Offenses

3.3.1 Type of offense

The preceding paragraphs considered the personal and judicial features of the young offenders, mostly in comparison with those of juveniles with other judicial reactions than alternative sanctions. In this section we shall describe the offenses whether or not damage or injury was caused, and whether or not pre-trial detention was imposed, the latter to be considered as an indication for the seriousness of the offense committed.

In many cases the youngsters did not commit just one offense, but two or three. In Table 5 nature and number (many times a judicial reaction does not refer to a single offense, but to a couple of them) of offenses is shown compared with the national distribution of offenses (committed by juveniles) as collected by the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) in 1981.

Table 5. Offenses – in %

<i>Type of offense</i>	<i>Research population*</i>	<i>CBS 1981</i>
Property offenses	80.5	61.8
Violent offenses	17.5	26.0
Other offenses	1.9	12.2

*N = 794 (number of offenses committed)

Compared with the national figures of 1981, property offenses appear to be over-represented, and violent and other offenses to be under-represented. But this should be further differentiated. Of all property offenses almost 80% concerned group-theft (in fact of *all* offenses 90% were committed together with others). Of all violent offenses in the research population, almost 60% had to do with vandalism. These percentages differ from the national distribution. For the sake of clarity, it is therefore better to speak of an over-representation of group-theft and vandalism amongst alternative sanctions. For that reason we believe the judicial authorities feel alternative sanctions to be especially appropriate for these types of offenses. With respect to vandalism this is emphasized by the comparison of alternative sanctions with dismissals and other sanctions. In earlier years most of the offenders of vandalism were reprimanded by the public prosecutor and finally dismissed (no court appearance followed). At present an increasing number of them has to perform an alternative sanction, imposed by the juvenile judge; the alternative sanctions mostly in terms of reparation. Clearly, there has been a change in prosecuting policy,

that seems to have led to net-widening. However, we do not think this to be a result of the introduction of alternative sanctions, but rather of a change in attitude to vandalism. A lot of money is involved repairing damage caused by vandalism; a different approach might eliminate vandalism in the future and save money.

The distribution of types of offenses is not the same for alternative sanctions in all court districts. The proportion of violent offenses is considerably higher in Leeuwarden and Rotterdam (see above).*

No relationship was found between type of offense and type of alternative sanction, nor for type of offense and number of hours imposed.

It proved to be hard to get reliable information about damage and injuries caused by the young offenders. The official police reports and judicial sentences either did not mention them or mentioned various figures. Based on the information obtained, we know that in three quarters of all cases there was some damage, but most of the time the amount of money involved is unknown. The same applies to personal injuries, although we know that they did not occur frequently (8.4% of all cases).

Alternative sanctions do not differ from traditional sanctions in the sense that juveniles alternatively sanctioned caused more or less injuries; for both categories the percentage is about 10%. For the category dismissals this percentage is only 6%. Therefore, we do not think causing personal injuries is a special indication or contra-indication for imposing an alternative sanction.

No reliable information was available about damage caused by young offenders from all categories (sanctions and dismissals), partly due to different ways of collecting data about alternative sanctions and other judicial reactions. A comparison is made impossible.

3.3.2 Pre-trial detention

In 18.5% of all cases pre-trial detention has been executed, lasting from one day to slightly more than two weeks. This does not mean that for all these juveniles the modality 'suspension of pre-trial detention' was used to impose the alternative sanction (the modality most frequently used was 'postponement of judgement', see 3.4).

Especially in Amsterdam many of the alternative sanctioned juveniles (61.7%) spent time in pre-trial detention. This is in conformity with the national figures on pre-trial detention, in which Amsterdam occupies the first

* We cannot tell whether the same applies to dismissals and traditional sanctions; the figures issued by the CBS do not differentiate for court districts.

place. Compared with these national figures, the length of pre-trial detention for alternatively sanctioned juveniles was much shorter than for those traditionally sanctioned (an average number of ten days against an average of 40 days for those traditionally sanctioned).

Of the juveniles performing a training project, 43.8% stayed in pre-trial detention; of those performing a work project this was only 18.5%. This can be ascribed mainly to the fact that the majority of training projects is found in Amsterdam, the court district where we also found most of the juveniles in pre-trial detention. It is probably premature to speak of a clear relation, also because the number of training projects is, as we have said before, very small for drawing conclusions.

A clear connection was found between the number of hours of an alternative sanction and whether or not pre-trial detention is executed. On the average an alternative sanction took 17 hours more for juveniles who stayed in pre-trial detention than for those who did not (64.4 hours against 47.3 hours). Although it is difficult to point out a clear connection between the number of hours imposed and the seriousness of the offense committed, these figures suggest that there is at least some connection (although perhaps the proportions may differ in each court district), because pre-trial detention is only executed in case of more serious offenses. The relationship between pre-trial detention and number of hours of alternative sanctions results from a strong relationship of both to the seriousness of the crime.

This leads to the conclusion that in Zutphen and Groningen less serious crimes and in Arnhem more serious crimes are alternatively sanctioned. We came to this conclusion by comparing alternative sanctions with traditional sanctions. This showed us that among the alternative sanctions relatively few juveniles were in pre-trial detention in Zutphen and Groningen (standard score -3.547 for Zutphen and -2.028 for Groningen) and relatively many in Arnhem (standard score 1.883).*

3.4 Legal framework

As mentioned before in paragraph 2.3, alternative sanctions can be applied under the prosecutor's model and under the judge's model. In all court districts but one (*i.e.*, Zutphen) the majority of alternative sanctions has been imposed by the juvenile judge. On the whole 73% (313 alternative sanctions) have been imposed by the juvenile judge and almost 23% (116 alternative sanctions) by

* Significance on a 10% level.

the public prosecutor.* Recent figures show some changes in this respect for several districts (an increasing or diminishing number of alternative sanctions imposed by the public prosecutor), but on the whole the situation remains the same.

3.4.1 Prosecutor's model

The prosecutor's model seems to be favorite in Zutphen, where 64% of all alternative sanctions have been imposed by the public prosecutor. In Groningen this was 25%, in all other districts 17% or less.

Under this model the modalities most frequently used are 'suspension of the decision to prosecute until after completion or non-completion of the work or training project' and – especially in Zutphen – a 'simple dismissal after completion of the work or training project'. The 'conditional dismissal' (the work or training project being the condition for dismissal) is rarely used. But for the juveniles, the differences between these modalities are only marginal, because for all of them it means that the final decision about dismissal depends on whether or not they have fulfilled their task.

The outcomes show that only three projects applied under the prosecutor's model were not completed as agreed upon. One of the youths received an additional number of hours, the other two were conditionally dismissed like those juveniles who completed their project.

In 26.5% of these cases a lawyer had been assigned to the juvenile. Although a lawyer is assigned only when the case is adjudicated, in some districts it is felt that no sanction – be it alternative or not – should be applied without the legal protection and presence of a lawyer.

3.4.2 Judge's model

Under the judge's model the modality most frequently used (in almost 90% of all cases) is the 'postponement of judgement': the juvenile has to perform his work or training project before he is finally sentenced by the juvenile judge. In some 10% of all cases under the judge's model 'suspension of pre-trial detention' has been used. This was especially the case in Amsterdam (35% of all cases) and more or less in Rotterdam (almost 10%).

Under the judge's model 15% of the projects were not fully completed. These juveniles were either sentenced to conditional or unconditional deprivation of liberty, an unconditional fine, or an additional number of hours. For

* Unknown for three cases.

about two-thirds of the juveniles who completed their project as agreed upon, the sentence was a conditional deprivation of liberty ranging from one week to six months in a detention center with a symbolic time of probation of one day or three weeks. In some cases the final sentence was partly conditional, partly unconditional deprivation of liberty, the latter part in order to 'legalize' the period of time previously spent in pre-trial detention. (The final sentence will never be the alternative sanction itself, but always a (conditional) traditional sanction as long as the alternative sanction is not incorporated in the law.)

In Groningen all juveniles who completed their project, were symbolically fined 5 guilders (approx US \$ 2.50). In Amsterdam a quarter of the juveniles was found guilty 'without imposing a sanction', a legal possibility; this modality was also used in Leeuwarden.

Court districts differed from each other in time of probation imposed in the case of conditional sentences. In some court districts a symbolic time of probation of one day was used; in others this was three months.

3.5 An arsenal of penal sanctions

3.5.1 Net-widening

As we have seen in the previous section we have hardly any reason to believe that net-widening had occurred. Only vandalism, especially in Rotterdam, is at present sanctioned alternatively, while in earlier days it would probably have been dismissed. Since the beginning of the eighties Rotterdam has an extensive anti-vandalism policy, embodied – among other things – in Buro HALT (HALT meaning in Dutch: the alternative). Youngsters who get caught because of vandalism can be sent to Buro HALT either by the police, the public prosecutor, or the juvenile judge in order to make arrangements, together with one of the staff members, to repair or repay the damage caused by them. It is evident that the presence of such an agency is sufficient to 'attract' young vandals. And certainly now that the experiments with alternative sanctions have been established, many juveniles are sent to Buro HALT by the public prosecutor or the juvenile judge as an alternative sanction. As we have said before, we do not think there is reason to regret this form of net-widening, because here we have a really meaningful judicial reaction with clear educational and pedagogical aspects.

3.5.2 Replacing other penal sanctions

Apart from the vandalism phenomenon, we did not find any net-widening. But net-widening was not the only aspect of the experiments there was to study. Another important topic is the replacement of already existing, traditional penal sanctions by alternative sanctions. Although the working party did not set up any rules about replacing specific penal sanctions by alternative sanctions; there is a motive to study this aspect. It makes quite a lot of difference whether a reprimand or a fine is replaced by an alternative sanction, or a custodial sentence of three months. Of course, we also wanted to find out whether alternative sanctions mainly replaced custodial sentences; an opinion which could be heard more and more as the experiments went on.

It is not simple to find out which traditional penal sanctions are replaced by alternative sanctions, because, as we have said before, the alternative sanction as such is not yet legalized, not yet incorporated within the law. Because of the experimental status the official, final sentence for juveniles who have carried out a work- or training project as an alternative sanction, is always a traditional one. Therefore, we have to compare the alternatively sanctioned juveniles with those traditionally sanctioned on a number of personal and criminal variables (as we did in section 3.2 and 3.3). We must also find out whether a disproportionate increase or decrease of specific sanctions appeared. We did this by comparing the total number of sanctions imposed in 1981 with those of the research period in 1983–1984. This comparison did not show an increase but a decrease: from 3284 cases, handled by the juvenile judge in the six experimental court districts, to 2738 cases. The same could be said for the dismissals: a decrease from 5812 in 1981 to 5571 in 1983–1984. In terms of net-widening this strengthened our argument that no such phenomenon occurred. The decrease of dismissals is not transformed in an increase of penal sanctions.

At the same time these figures show one of our main research problems. On a total of almost 3000 penal sanctions in 1983–1984 the alternative sanctions represent some 10%. The impact or influence of alternative sanctions on the whole must be rather small. Therefore, a distinction among different types of sanctions is needed. In Figs. 1 and 2 we show, assisted by piecharts, the distribution of different types of sanctions in 1981 and in 1983–1984 for the six experimental court districts together. Comparing these two piecharts, we are able to determine whether a specific category of penal sanctions shows an increase or decrease, possibly caused by the imposition of alternative sanctions.

The following categories are used in the piecharts.

- unconditional deprivation of liberty (detention center order and youth custody);

- conditional deprivation of liberty;
- unconditional fine in combination with other, conditional sentences;
- reprimand;
- found guilty, but no sanction imposed;
- other sanctions (conditional fines, child protection measures, confiscation etc.).

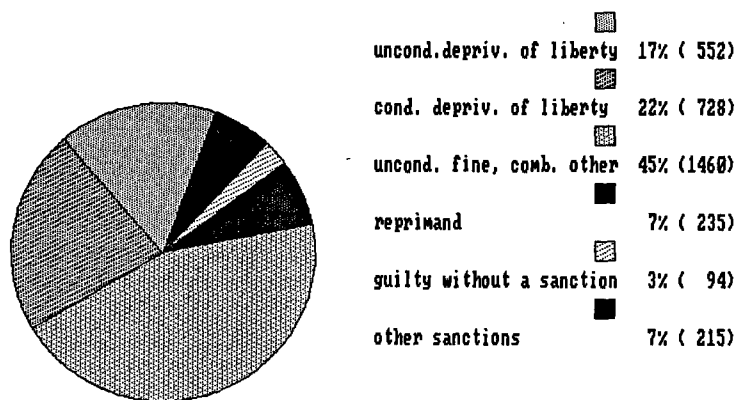


Fig. 1. Penal sanctions in 1981*

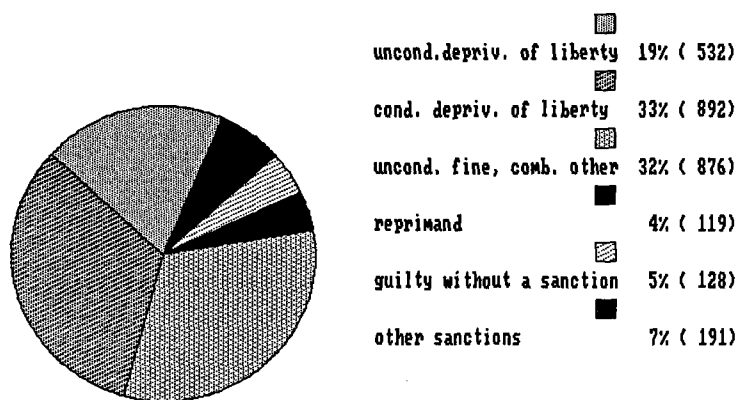


Fig. 2. Penal sanctions in 1983-1984**

* $N = 3284$ (Amsterdam, Arnhem, Groningen, Leeuwarden, Rotterdam and Zutphen).

** $N = 2738$ (Amsterdam, Arnhem, Groningen, Leeuwarden, Rotterdam and Zutphen; period April 1983-March 1984).

As we can see, the distribution of types of penal sanctions in 1983–1984 has changed compared to 1981. In particular the categories ‘conditional deprivation of liberty’ and ‘found guilty, but no sanction imposed’ show an increase both absolutely and proportionally; ‘conditional deprivation of liberty’ from 728 (22%) in 1981 to 892 (33%) in 1983–1984, ‘found guilty, but no sanction imposed’ from 94 (3%) to 128 (5%). ‘Unconditional deprivation of liberty’ shows a small proportional increase (from 17% to 19%), but at the same time decreased slightly in absolute sense (from 552 to 532). Furthermore we see a considerable drop in ‘unconditional fines in combination with other, conditional sentences’: from 1469 (45%) to 876 (32%). The ‘reprimand’ shows the same trend but on a smaller scale: from 235 (7%) in 1981 to 119 (4%) in 1983–1984.

The increase within the categories ‘conditional deprivation of liberty’ and ‘found guilty, but no sanction imposed’ is probably caused by the use of alternative sanctions since we know that the final sentence in those cases is mainly one of these two possibilities. This does not automatically mean that the alternative sanction is a substitute for the unconditional deprivation of liberty, although many people think it is. The category ‘unconditional deprivation of liberty’ shows a decrease too small to justify such a conclusion; proportionally this category even shows an increase. Even if there would have been a change in juvenile delinquency over the last five years in the sense that juvenile delinquency has become more serious, as some people say, and that because of that more custodial sentences could be expected, the number of alternative sanctions is just too high to cover a possible increase of more serious juvenile crimes. We think it more likely to conclude that a fairly high number of unconditional fines in combination with other, most of them conditional, custodial sentences, is replaced by alternative sanctions. The use of alternative sanctions does not explain completely the decrease of fines. Change in legislation, which made it possible to come to an arrangement with the public prosecutor in order to avoid adjudication, also explains part of this considerable drop.

Our conclusion that alternative sanctions mainly substituted the unconditional fines in combination with other, conditional sentences and the conditional, custodial sentences, does not fit for all experimental court districts. For instance in Amsterdam, as we can see in Figs 3 and 4, the ‘unconditional deprivation of liberty’, seems to be replaced by the alternative sanction. As we remember, it is Amsterdam where the modality ‘suspension of pre-trial detention’ is used many times in order to impose an alternative sanction, and it is this pre-trial detention, which is a good indication for the seriousness of the case, and which makes it more likely that an unconditional deprivation of liberty will follow.

When a work or training project is finished the final sentence in Amsterdam most frequently used was the ‘conditional deprivation of liberty’ with a short,

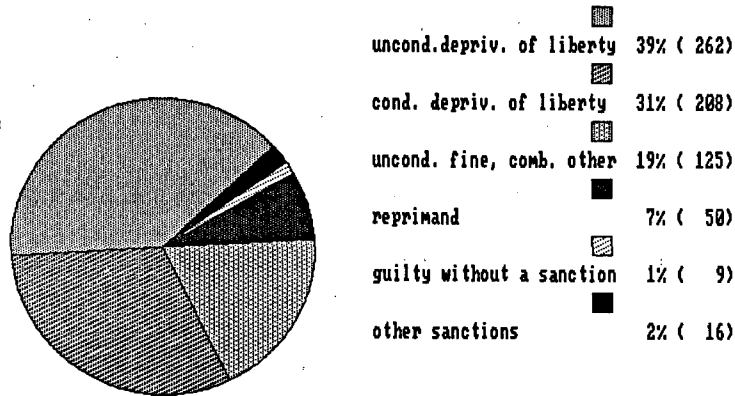


Fig. 3. Penal sanctions in 1981 in Amsterdam

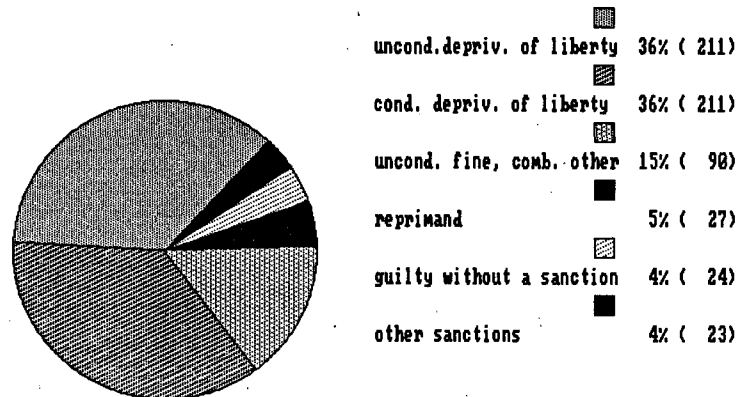


Fig. 4. Penal sanctions in 1983-1984 in Amsterdam

symbolic time of probation. The other final sentence most frequently used was 'found guilty, but no sanction imposed'. This can be seen clearly within the piecharts. The number of these sentences has risen.

The change in distribution of penal sanctions in Arnhem shows the same trend as did the overall change in distribution. The alternative sanction must have substituted mainly the unconditional fines. Compared with the number of unconditional custodial sentences in 1981 as well as in 1983-1984, the number of alternative sanctions in 1983-1984 is relatively high: 39. It does not seem plausible that they have substituted those sentences, because the number of unconditional custodial sentences even showed an increase. This is illustrated by Figs. 5 and 6.

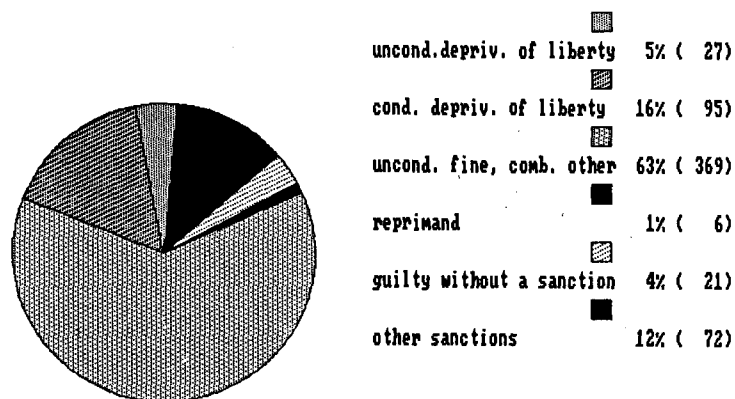


Fig. 5. Penal sanctions in 1981 in Arnhem

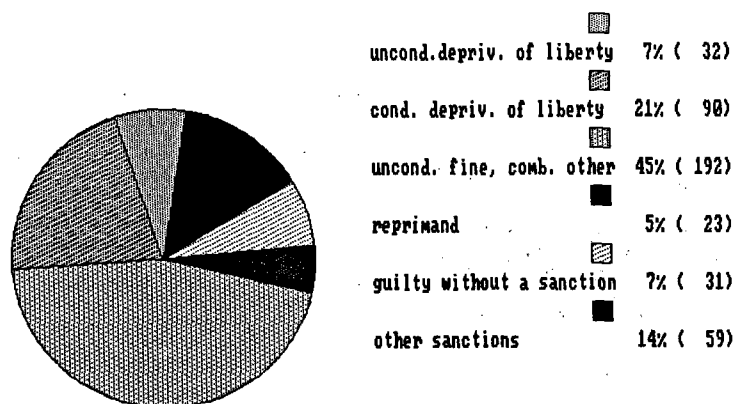


Fig. 6. Penal sanctions in 1983-1984 in Arnhem

As the piecharts in Figs. 7 and 8 show, it is hard to tell which penal sanctions in Groningen are replaced by alternative sanctions. Compared to many other court districts the overall drop in penal sanctions is rather small: only 5.9%. The conditional and unconditional custodial sentences have increased in number and therefore we do not think those categories of penal sanctions to be affected strongly by the alternative sanctions. And since we know that the final sentence most frequently used after the alternative sanction was completed, was the unconditional symbolic fine of 5 guilders, this might explain why Groningen does not show the same drop in unconditional fines as the other court districts do. All this together makes us think that the alternative sanctions have been imposed instead of the unconditional fines.

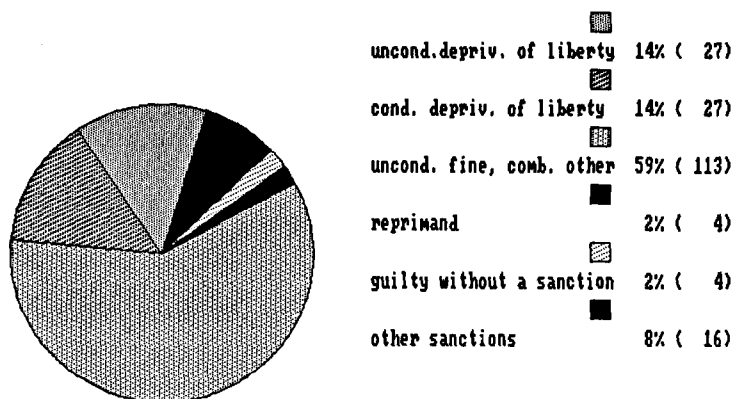


Fig. 7. Penal sanctions in 1981 in Groningen

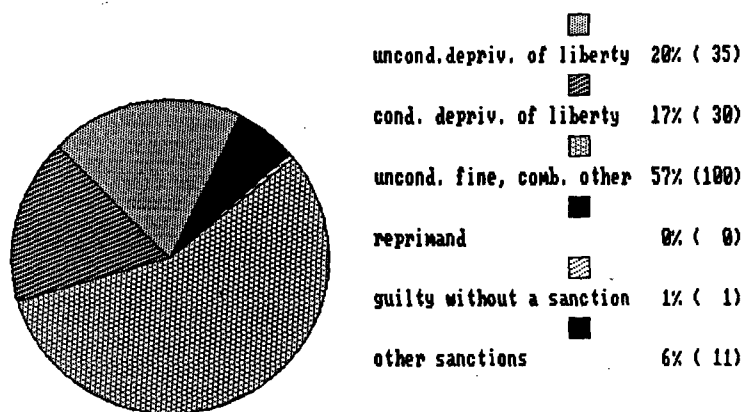


Fig. 8. Penal sanctions in 1983-1984 in Groningen

The court district of Leeuwarden differs from all other experimental court districts because of the increase of penal sanctions in 1983-1984 compared to 1981: 333 in 1981 and 364 in 1983-1984. As we remember, the other court districts showed a decrease. The distribution of penal sanctions shows some remarkable changes (see Figs. 9 and 10): a small and a large increase of, respectively, the unconditional and conditional custodial sentences and only a small decrease of fines. The fall-off in the number of reprimands is very strong. It appears that this is caused by the alternative sanctions being a substitute for some of those reprimands. The rise of 'guilty, but no sanctions imposed' in

Leeuwarden can be explained by indicating that this modality is used many times as the final sentence for those juveniles who finished a work or training project.

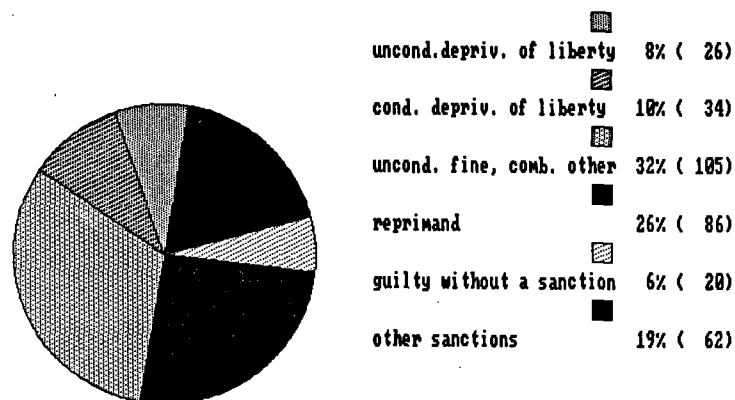


Fig. 9. Penal sanctions in 1981 in Leeuwarden

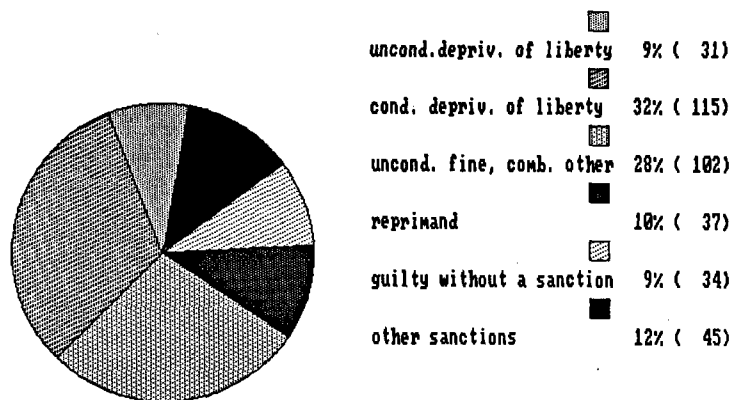


Fig. 10. Penal sanctions in 1983-1984 in Leeuwarden

Compared to other court districts the number of penal sanctions in Rotterdam is fairly high. But in this court district as well, the number has dropped since 1981: 1255 penal sanctions in 1981, 1050 in 1983-1984. This drop has not been mirrored by all categories of penal sanctions (see Figs. 11 and 12). The numbers of unconditional and conditional custodial sentences have increased both abso-

lutely and proportionally. The numbers of fines and reprimands have (almost) broken down to half. Therefore, we consider these categories to be replaced, partly, by alternative sanctions. It appears unlikely that alternative sanctions are a substitute for custodial sentences in the court district of Rotterdam.

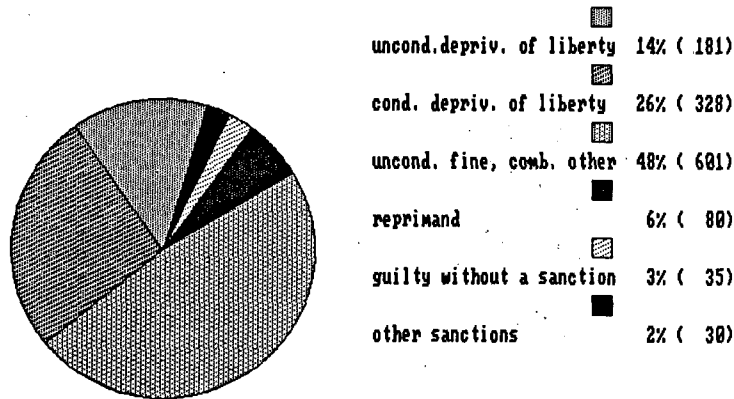


Fig. 11. Penal sanctions in 1981 in Rotterdam.

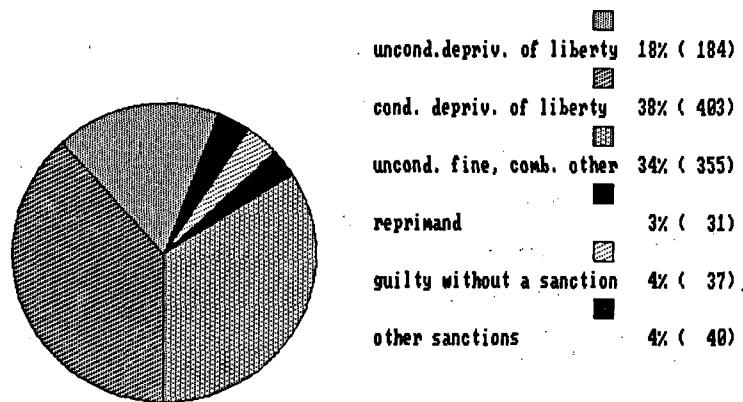


Fig. 12. Penal sanctions in 1983-1984 in Rotterdam.

In Zutphen we can see similar shifts as in Rotterdam: a rise, absolutely and proportionally, in numbers of conditional and unconditional custodial sentences and a clear drop in fines (see Figs. 13 and 14). The total number of penal sanctions in 1983-1984 is almost half of that in 1980. For a great deal this seems to be caused by the use of alternative sanctions. As we have mentioned

before in Zutphen the prosecutor's model is preferred in order to impose alternative sanctions. For that reason we will not find many final sentences of the juvenile judge for juveniles who performed a work- or training project, when the public prosecutor decides not to prosecute if the project is finished as agreed upon.

Because of the decrease of fines it appears that the alternative sanctions have replaced at least part of the fines.

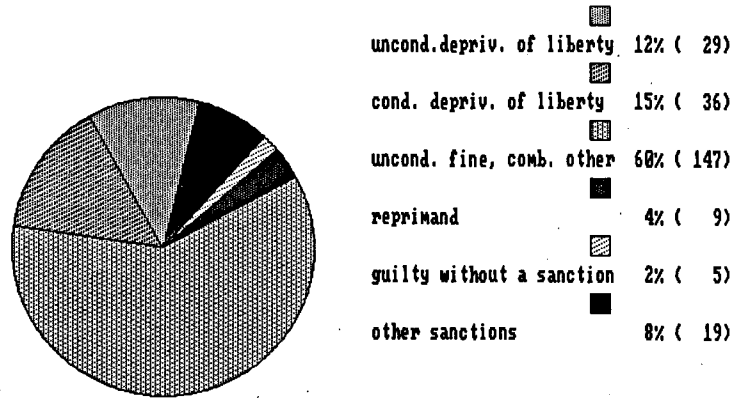


Fig. 13. Penal sanctions in 1980 in Zutphen

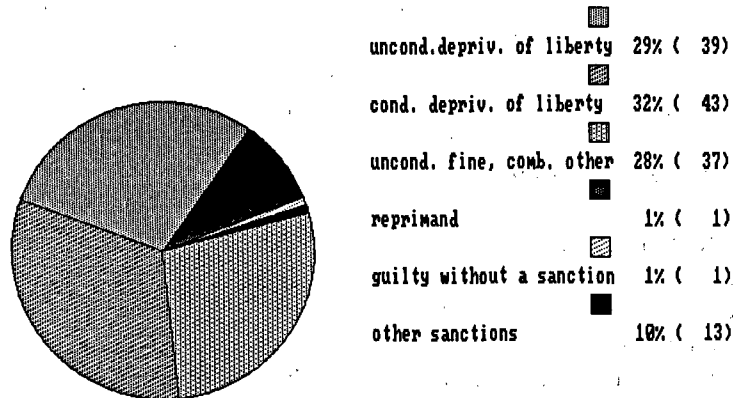


Fig. 14. Penal sanctions in 1983-1984 in Zutphen

3.6 Appreciation of alternative sanctions

A nationwide written inquiry among juvenile judges, public prosecutors, lawyers and institutions offering project possibilities revealed that almost 75% of the respondents ($N=430$) was moderately pleased with the course and the outcomes of the experiments with alternative sanctions; 25% of the respondents considered the experiment to be a great success. They all wished the possibility of imposing alternative sanctions to be continued. Only a few respondents, mostly lawyers, were not convinced of the success of the experiment. For that reason they did not want the experiments to be continued.

Apart from this written inquiry which took place after the two-year experimental period was terminated, interviews were held with judicial authorities, co-ordinators, representatives of institutions providing projects, and juveniles, if possible for every alternative sanction imposed. Interviewees were asked to judge the project performed.

According to *co-ordinators and representatives of the institutions* where projects took place, most projects (87%) were appropriate for the juveniles, mainly because the youngsters had worked well and were able to finish their tasks. Sometimes the project was found too hard and too difficult, and the juveniles not motivated enough to be able to speak of an appropriate project. Most institutions providing work and training opportunities were positive about the activities performed, because of the youngsters working hard and because of the projects which otherwise would not have been done.

The *juvenile judges and public prosecutors* interviewed appreciated 84% of the alternative sanctions imposed, mainly because the projects were finished as agreed upon. A negative attitude towards the alternative sanction and not properly finished projects caused judicial authorities to judge negatively on 12% of the alternative sanctions. 4% of all projects contained both positive and negative aspects as far as the juvenile judges and public prosecutors were concerned.

The alternative sanction exceeded most of the juvenile's (80%) expectations. They enjoyed the atmosphere at the institution, appreciated the kind of work they had to do and did not find their tasks too hard or too difficult, the latter being the reason for some youngsters why they did not like their alternative sanction: it was too hard and/or too difficult.

Many juveniles (71%) considered the work done useful for themselves. They had learned from it in terms of social and practical skills. Even more juveniles (87%) believed their activities to be of use for others, especially the organizations where they had worked; much work was done which otherwise would not have been done.

Just 54% of the youths had experienced their work or training project as a real sanction; 44% of them did not. Those youngsters who did not experience their project as a genuine sanction, mentioned the atmosphere being too enjoyable and the project just as working without a salary. They did not consider the alternative sanction as a form of deterrence, which is what most of them think is the main feature of sanctions. If they could choose between an alternative sanction and a traditional sanction 71% would vote for an alternative one. This was motivated by 'working is better than just being incarcerated', 'within an alternative sanction it is your own responsibility to repair or repay – be it symbolically – the damage you have caused', and 'the positive impact of an alternative sanction is far more important'.

4. Concluding comments

In December 1985, after two years of experiments, the working party who conducted the experiment issued its final report. The working party recommended new legislation in order to provide a more stable, legal basis for alternative sanctions for juveniles. The working party considered the experiment as a clear success, and therefore believed further delay in constituting this legal basis was not desirable. But was the experiment successful in all respects? It depends on what is called a success. This has to do with the terms for success one states. On the basis of our research data we think that the experiment was successful in some but not all respects.

Given the number of actually executed alternative sanctions we can speak of a success. From no alternative sanction at all to almost 450 of them in six court districts within a period of 15 months is quite an accomplishment. An organization was put into effect, co-ordinators were hired – made possible financially by the Ministry of Justice, another important result of the experiments – and many possible work- and training projects were recruited and selected in a relatively short time.

The success rate of the work projects can be called high: almost 90% of all work projects were finished as agreed upon with few reported problems. The success rate of the training projects is not that high; some 35% of the training projects have been broken off prematurely; mainly because the youngsters did not show up anymore.

At this moment we have no information available about the effects of work and training projects in terms of lower recidivism rates. A study of recidivism among alternatively sanctioned juveniles is planned to start in the summer of 1987. A similar study has taken place among adults who received a Community Service Order. The findings of this study became available recently (Bol and

Overwater, 1986). Especially young adults (18- to 24-year-olds) who had committed property offenses showed less recidivism as did their contemporaries who were sent to detention centers. No different results were found among traffic offenders who received a Community Service Order and those who were sent to prison. For the under-aged we have to wait for another two years before we know more about their recidivism rates.

Although the overall number of alternative sanctions can be called promising, the distribution among the court districts cannot. In some court districts the number of alternative sanctions is relatively high, in others rather small. This is caused by the model chosen and the kinds of cases (seriousness of the offense, personality and judicial past of the juvenile concerned) which are taken into consideration. Although one can say that the policy towards imposing alternative sanctions is at least a consequent one in every court district and has not changed much during the experiments, it is somehow alarming that those differences between court districts exist; not only in number of alternative sanctions, but also in duration, in number of hours imposed. It could mean that a juvenile who has broken a shop window or has stolen a car would get a work project of, say, 80 hours in one court district and no sanction at all or a fine of 25 guilders in the court district next to it. Consequently some inequality before the law can be distinguished. But at the same time, one should keep in mind that such tendencies are not typical for alternative sanctions. Court districts differ from each other in prosecuting policy. This is clearly shown by the different numbers of penal sanctions in the two biggest court districts in The Netherlands: Amsterdam and Rotterdam. The number of penal sanctions in Rotterdam is twice as high as in Amsterdam, and so is the number of alternative sanctions. The difference between the two court districts is mirrored by several aspects; not only by the number of penal sanctions, but also by the features of the juveniles prosecuted.

Apart from the overall number of alternative sanctions the number of training projects is disappointing. The training projects do not form the most successful part of the experiment. Although after a very slow start the situation is improving somewhat, the numbers remain small. In paragraph 3.1.3 we mentioned some reasons for this development, and we would like to call to mind what we believe to be the most important one: the lack of confidence in training projects among judicial authorities. When the working party argued for legislation for alternative sanctions, it made an exception for training projects. The working party asked for an extended experimental period for the training projects. According to the working party there was too little experience, too few results to pass judgement on this topic. When one does not manage to convince the judicial authorities of the usefulness of training

projects, these training projects are foredoomed to failure. Failure in terms of small numbers, and perhaps, as a result of poor selection of juveniles, in terms of no positive effects on the juveniles.

Recalling some of the starting points, formulated in *Guidelines for Experiments with Alternative Sanctions*, the experiment could be called unsuccessful. The proposed relation between type of offense and type of project is only realized in a minimum of cases, according to the co-ordinators. However, we do not think this was a very realistic starting point or criterion. Most offenses are not 'suited' for a specific type of project. One could imagine that working at a fire-station might be a proper reaction on arson, and that repairing the damage you have caused as a vandal is an example of a strong, direct relation. But what to do when breaking and entering or shoplifting is involved? In those cases it is not that easy to organize a work- or training project, which corresponds directly with the committed offense. So, on the one hand one should say that in this respect the experiments did not meet the criteria. On the other hand, one should add that even if there is no clear relation, the activities to be performed by the juveniles are, in itself, far more useful than paying a fine or undergoing detention. And since a majority of the juveniles thought of their project as a meaningful project for themselves, and even more juveniles thought of it as meaningful and useful for others, the alternative sanctions deserve some credit.

But credit alone is not enough. One should also try to shorten the period between offense and work- or training project.

During the experiments this period was far too long in many cases. One year or more between offense and project was no exception. It is commonly accepted that confronting juveniles who have committed an offense with the reaction of the society in a fast and direct way, can be one of the most important pedagogical aspects of the juvenile justice system. A judicial reaction after a one-year period cannot be called a fast and direct reaction. Therefore, this period should be shortened. One of the possibilities to realize this, is to make use more often of the prosecutor's model, because this model does not need these time absorbing court appearances. But since the prosecutor's model is not accepted much in every court district because of its legal security aspect, which is believed not to be present in the same amount as in the judge's model, it should be tried to quicken the procedures within the judge's model. Priority of alternative sanctions above traditional sanctions might be a solution.

Another aspect which needs attention is the selection of young offenders. During the experiments juveniles with other than Dutch ethnic backgrounds, and more in general girls, seemed to be excluded more or less from alternative sanctions. This is contrary to the *Guidelines*, which stated that alternative

sanctions can be applied to all sorts of crimes, and to all juveniles who come in contact with the law.

Especially where girls are concerned this could mean that for them special projects need to be recruited. Many work projects are told to be too hard for girls. For that reason some institutions providing work opportunities won't accept girls.

As we have said before, we have no strong data about the background of the small number of members of ethnic minorities among the alternatively sanctioned juveniles. But it seems to be a matter of convincing lawyers to propose alternative sanctions for their clients with a different ethnic background.

Perhaps the most successful outcome of the experiment is the absence of net-widening. In a way this should not surprise us, because according to the *Guidelines* alternative sanctions can be applied instead of all other penal sanctions. Usually one thinks of alternative sanctions as being an alternative only to custodial sentences. If alternatives are used instead of fines or conditional custodial sentences, one tends to think of net-widening (and if this would have happened to the experiments with community service for adults, it would have been net-widening).

But as the situation for juveniles differs in this respect, net-widening could not be determined, for all juveniles who carried out a work- or training project would have been sanctioned anyway, even if there had been no possibility to impose an alternative sanction. Thus far the experiments have met the conditions stated in the *Guidelines*. Alternative sanctions were a substitute for all other, existing penal sanctions. They mainly replaced fines and conditional custodial sentences and only in a minority of cases unconditional custodial sentences. If there is preference – and this is something one can overhear many times – for alternative sanctions to replace unconditional custodial sentences, the more serious offenses and the more persistent recidivists should be included. So far most court districts fail to do that.

Although the experiment with alternative sanctions for juveniles was not successful in all respects, we do not think that those less positive findings should prohibit further application of alternative sanctions. They concern mostly minor points, which can be improved without too much effort.

It is more important to notice that judicial authorities show confidence in this new form of sanctioning, that juveniles perform meaningful and useful activities both for society and for themselves, and that most organizations where the youngsters carried out their tasks are enthusiastic and willing to cooperate permanently with this form of sanctioning.

Alternative sanctions do form an enrichment of the arsenal of penal sanctions, in particular educationally. More than ever juveniles are held personally

responsible for their acts; responsible to community and/or individual. Even though the relation between offense and work or training project is not always that direct, the work they do is meaningful and useful to – at least – the community. One should also keep in mind that if an alternative sanction is a substitute for a custodial sentence, the youngster is not isolated from society, but is kept integrated. Feelings of rejection are avoided. So, just from the humanitarian point of view this new form of sanctioning juveniles is to be preferred.

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