

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

HISTORICAL, CULTURAL,
LEGAL PERSPECTIVES

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Legal Perspectives**

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Preface

Juvenile Delinquency: Historical, Cultural, Legal Perspectives was written as the next step in an evolutionary process that has produced increasingly excellent textbooks on juvenile delinquency over the past two decades. The incremental improvement shown in our book includes:

- General comprehensiveness.
- Inclusion of the most recent empirical results and theoretical thinking.
- Treatment of juvenile delinquency as a social phenomenon that is in constant interaction with juvenile delinquency as a legal creation.
- Placement of the issues of delinquency and juvenile justice in an historical context that is fully developed up to the current era with the degree of accuracy one expects in a history text.
- Incorporation of the latest possible statutory enactments and case law decisions.
- And a writing style aimed at keeping students interested in the material presented.

To help in achieving those ends, the book has been rewritten several times over a four-year period while being used, in photocopy form, as the text in a high-enrollment course on juvenile delinquency at the University of California, Irvine.

We believe that the comprehensiveness of the book (including several topics not found in comparable texts) allows the instructor, as it has allowed us, to handle the course in other than traditional lecture style. Some lecturing is clearly necessary to clarify points, to expand the discussions in areas where the teacher is especially knowledgeable, and to discuss issues that are not covered despite the book's comprehensiveness, but, in general, those should not be extremely time-consuming considering the number of class hours available during a quarter or semester. We propose that the instructor allow the students to use the text as the source of almost all relevant information such that the class, no matter the size, may be used as a forum for: discussions generated by students' reactions to their developing knowledge in a genuinely engrossing

field; presentations of invited guests who are professionals in the juvenile justice system or experts in a relevant field; and for currently available films and videotapes of high quality (several of these are discussed in the accompanying Instructor's Manual).

The book is divided into five parts. *Part I* provides the foundations for the central themes of the book by elucidating the meaning of the concept "juvenile delinquency," by indicating how delinquency is evaluated and related to socio-demographic variables, and by showing the development of notions regarding childhood and adolescence in Western civilization. *Part II* contains the theories, presented over the years, that explain delinquency and related phenomena, and details how such theories often collide with popular explanations. *Part III* traces the methods used in the attempts at social control of delinquency in the United States from the period shortly after independence. Emphasis is on current law and the modes of implementation. The methods of control in several other countries are covered too. *Part IV* focuses on the community as a resource in the treatment of delinquency and on certain of its institutions that are thought to be influential in stimulating or abetting delinquency. Finally, *Part V* is devoted to such special issues as female delinquency, significant problem areas in youthful offending, and future directions in three broad spheres of concern.

The book is well suited for a course that is a semester in length, but can be adapted easily for a quarter course, if the instructor so desires, by omitting certain of the chapters that are not critical in the development of the central themes. Chapters 13, 16, and 17 are such examples.

Finally, we would like to express our appreciation to several people. Dear to our collective hearts is Carol W. Wyatt. As friend, confidante, and master at word processing, she simultaneously made our lives more pleasant and mastered an overwhelmingly difficult task efficiently and gracefully. Many thanks to Carol and also to the following reviewers who evaluated an early version of the book: Donna Hale, Edward S. Ryan of *Mansfield University*, and William Selke of *Indiana University*. Their painstaking, effective, insightful reviews were critical in motivating and guiding a major revision—a revision which, we believe, has improved the book enormously.

A.B.

G.G.

D.B.

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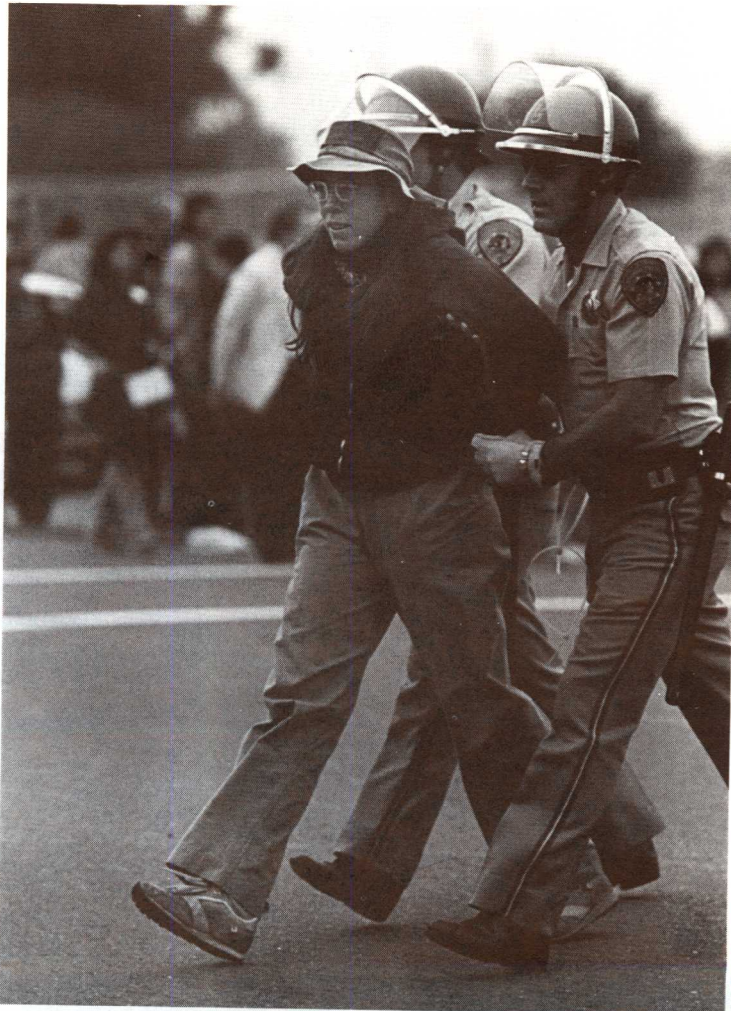
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PART **I**

Introduction to the Issues

Defining Juvenile Delinquency and Determining Its Extent



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