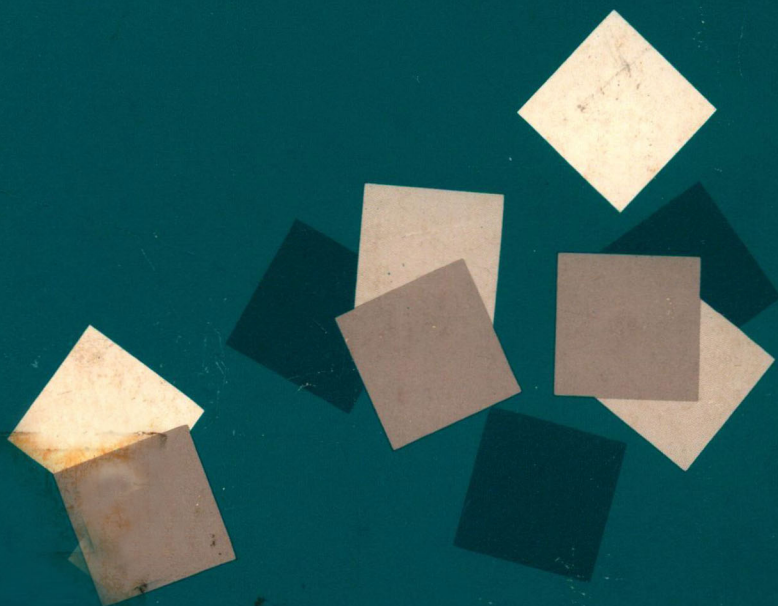

JUVENILE MISCONDUCT^{AND} DELINQUENCY

ARNOLD ■ BRUNGARDT



J U V E N I L E M I S C O N D U C T AND D E L I N Q U E N C Y

W I L L I A M R. A R N O L D
U N I V E R S I T Y O F K A N S A S

T E R R A N C E M. B R U N G A R D T
S A I N T M A R Y C O L L E G E

H O U G H T O N M I F F L I N C O M P A N Y
B O S T O N • D A L L A S • G E N E V A, I L L.
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P R E F A C E

Most textbooks on juvenile delinquency leave students with the uneasy feeling that criminologists have no sound, general understanding of juvenile crime. Presented with evidence for and against all the major theories of delinquency, students often conclude that it makes no difference which theory is used, for every theory is partly right. Most texts also present a limited picture of the scope of juvenile crime because they depend largely on crime statistics furnished by government agencies.

Juvenile Misconduct and Delinquency avoids both problems. It is unique among textbooks on juvenile delinquency in two ways. First, it covers the subject of misconduct and delinquency from the perspective of one unifying theory, our version of control or containment theory. Second, most of the information it provides on juvenile offending derives from a relatively new kind of source, self-report studies.

A THEORETICAL APPROACH THAT'S PRACTICAL

Our theory contains several components. Each component is a social force that *could* control young people so that they do not engage in illegal acts; however, the failure of these forces to exercise control allows misconduct to occur. As we elaborate the various components of our theory, we examine the research that we feel is relevant.

We are also concerned with the relationships among these potentially controlling forces, namely, the sequence in which the failure of one controlling force produces the failure of another controlling force in a causal chain. For example, we investigate the possibility that lack of control in families has an impact on lack of control in school.

In learning about these controls, the student will become familiar enough with the traditional theories of offending to discuss them with students who have used other texts. Our overall theory not only gives the student a more integrated understanding of misconduct than is common, but it also bears more directly than most other theories on what we do, and might do, to control delinquency. We answer such questions as, what controls can we reasonably add to those already present? and, can we make police control more effective without relinquishing our civil rights?

OUR MAJOR SOURCE OF DATA

Although most of the recent texts on delinquency acknowledge the usefulness of data acquired by self-reports — that is, from offenders themselves — these texts focus on that minority of relatively serious offenders who remain in the juvenile justice system's "sifter" after most offenders have been screened out. Certainly information about this minority is important, and the justice system's collection of data on this minority can never be matched in continuity or geographical comprehensiveness by self-report studies. Nevertheless, the picture that self-reports provide of the scope of juvenile offending and of the forces behind this offending makes suspect all explanations of misconduct that are based solely on official data. Accordingly, we rely on self-reports whenever possible. In the Appendix of this text, we evaluate the major sources of data about misconduct. Those who want a detailed justification of our preference for self-report data should study this Appendix carefully.

ORGANIZATION AND SPECIAL FEATURES

Juvenile Misconduct and Delinquency is divided into three parts. Part One, *Evolving a Theory of Misconduct*, explores the history of juvenile offending, explains our research methods, and delineates the framework of our version of control theory. Part Two, *Causes of Misconduct*, examines biological, environmental, and social variables that are crucial to the occurrence of misconduct. In Part Three, *The Juvenile Justice System*, we study our society's mechanisms for dealing with juvenile lawbreaking, including the police, the courts, probation, and parole.

Several *theory boxes*, appearing in Parts One and Two, outline other important theories of juvenile offending. Theory-box presentations of psychoanalytic theory, labeling theory, social disorganization theory, and other theoretical approaches in criminology will help students to broaden their perspective on the subject of juvenile misconduct.

Research opportunities and *research exercises* also appear in Parts One and Two. Focusing on specific issues in the study of juvenile delinquency and its control, these features carefully guide students toward

doing some productive research on their own. The research exercises are expressly designed to help students test the assertions of our theory against their own experience and against research they are asked to conduct.

Case studies appear sporadically throughout the book to illuminate particular characteristics of juvenile lawbreaking or clarify problems the juvenile justice system must try to solve.

A running series of dialogues helps to dramatize our discussion. These dialogues, which open each chapter, follow the course of one hypothetical delinquent through her involvement with lawbreaking and with various components of the juvenile justice system.

Nearly every chapter introduces a fresh set of key terms and concepts that students should know. These terms appear in bold type in the text (in theory boxes they appear in italics) and are listed at the end of each chapter where they occur.

Finally, study questions at the end of each chapter will aid students in review.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Those to whom we are most indebted in the creation of this book are intentionally, and perhaps necessarily, anonymous. They are the thousands of persons who have written about themselves or answered questionnaires in their school classrooms, their homes, or their hangouts, about the offenses they have committed or that have been perpetrated against them. We are also grateful to the many scholars who have questioned people about misconduct, analyzed the answers, and interpreted the results. These scholars are cited throughout the text.

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PART ■ ONE

EVOLVING A
THEORY OF
MISCONDUCT



CHAPTER ■ ONE

JUVENILE MISCONDUCT —WHAT IS IT?

*"... Yes, this is Mary? Where are you? ...
At the police station? It's three A.M. Your mother and I thought ...
But didn't you just go out to ... ?
Of course we'll be there. You broke the curfew law!
You better have a good story! There are lots of things kids can't
do. ...
Yes, yes ..."*

THE CREATION OF ADOLESCENCE

AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

In most times and places in the history of our world, growing up has been a fairly simple process. Children learned to do what their elders did, and most of the learning took place in or close to the home. When children reached puberty, they went through an ordeal and/or a ceremony, called a **rite of passage**, that certified they had become adults. Young people did not need an intermediate stage between childhood and adulthood. Learning to be an adult was "closed;" very little choice was possible, and the tasks to be learned were mostly determined by whether the child was male or female.

WHAT IS ADOLESCENCE?

Vast increases in the knowledge to be acquired and in the choices to be made before entering adulthood loom as important features of to-

day's "open" society. The learning and choosing take time, so much time that we have designated a whole stage of life in which youths must learn and choose. This stage, called **adolescence**, provides not only for learning an occupation, but also for learning how to act like an adult. Because our industrialized society assigns and reassigns people to occupational roles on the basis of expertise and skill, millions move from place to place each year. In these circumstances, parents became unable to teach needed job skills or make decisions for their children about such matters as spouses or life styles. Instead, schools became the environment not only for acquiring knowledge, but also for making many key life decisions (Coleman, J. S., 1961:Ch. 1).

WHAT DO ADOLESCENTS DO?

Some young people, by virtue of parental action or good fortune, were able to participate fully in the schools, but even these active participants found that they had time and energy left over after each day's education. Other youths, without the advantages of family and good fortune, left high school as soon as, or before, the law or school regulations allowed, but they had little opportunity for gainful employment. They had much idle time on their hands to threaten life and limb on city streets. Between these two extremes fell an ever-increasing proportion of young persons who finished high school or received some college education. All youths, however, were "given" a time in which they had to prepare for adult roles. What youths now do in addition to preparing for adulthood during this time period constitutes most of our general "youth problem" (Won, Yamamura, and Ikeda, 1969:44).

The possibilities and range of choices for the "additional" activities in adolescence have been expanded in recent years by our affluence. The automobiles available from parents, friends, or those willing to pick up hitchhikers have increased the geographical range of activities. The mass media have expanded almost everyone's awareness of the variety of lifestyles possible in our society. The combination of these and other resources have made it possible to create youth subcultures (ways of behaving created by youths) over which adults have relatively little direct control. This freedom adds to the split between youths and adults arising from the historic, inevitable forces that create conflicts between generations (Davis, K., 1940 and 1944; Gottlieb and Ramsey, 1964:Ch. X).

The behavior of those in the various adolescent groups ranges across a huge spectrum from fundamentalist religious practices to irreligion, from high levels of conformity in high school musical and athletic organizations to consciously planned and ideologically defended deviance in dress and manners, and from high levels of heroism and self-sacrifice to self-destruction by hard drugs or intentional suicide. The open society permits positively valued acts. It also permits the creation of subgroups that sometimes engage in and/or support acts that are disvalued (disliked or considered unacceptable) by the larger society.

TABLE 1.1 Total Arrest Trends, Sex, 1976–1980 [9,648 agencies; 1980 population 194,685,491]

OFFENSE CHARGED	Males					
	Total			Under 18		
	1976	1980	Percent change	1976	1980	Percent change
TOTAL	7,191,106	7,523,312	+ 4.6	1,667,330	1,512,251	– 9.3
Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter	14,586	15,500	+ 6.3	1,482	1,528	+ 3.1
Forcible rape	23,333	27,537	+ 18.0	3,985	4,088	+ 2.6
Robbery	114,273	124,768	+ 9.2	36,337	38,170	+ 5.0
Aggravated assault	179,119	211,776	+ 18.2	30,711	30,818	+ .3
Burglary	415,169	421,024	+ 1.4	214,462	189,833	– 11.5
Larceny-theft	679,043	754,639	+ 11.1	306,240	296,735	– 3.1
Motor vehicle theft	116,063	111,836	– 3.6	60,262	50,063	– 16.9
Arson	13,434	14,922	+ 11.1	7,327	6,702	– 8.5
Violent crime ¹	331,311	379,581	+ 14.6	72,515	74,604	+ 2.9
Property crime ²	1,223,709	1,302,421	+ 6.4	588,291	543,333	– 7.6
Crime Index total ³	1,555,020	1,682,002	+ 8.2	660,806	617,937	– 6.5
Other assaults	326,175	366,740	+ 12.4	63,025	61,447	– 2.5
Forgery and counterfeiting	40,122	45,553	+ 13.5	4,660	6,117	+ 31.3
Fraud	102,470	131,257	+ 28.1	4,373	4,762	+ 8.9
Embezzlement	5,948	4,919	– 17.3	526	605	+ 15.0
Stolen property; buying, receiving, possessing	90,818	95,411	+ 5.1	29,694	29,427	– .9
Vandalism	170,219	199,482	+ 17.2	107,946	99,867	– 7.5
Weapons; carrying, possessing, etc.	123,851	136,176	+ 10.0	20,681	21,427	+ 3.6
Prostitution and commercialized vice	19,683	24,989	+ 27.0	635	874	+ 37.6
Sex offenses (except forcible rape and prostitution)	51,144	54,995	+ 7.5	10,079	9,664	– 4.1
Drug abuse violations	477,808	422,876	– 11.5	110,423	78,405	– 29.0
Gambling	63,317	40,920	– 35.4	2,733	1,624	– 40.6
Offenses against family and children	52,159	37,989	– 27.2	2,852	1,199	– 58.0
Driving under the influence	900,896	1,024,063	+ 13.7	18,215	23,064	+ 26.6
Liquor laws	263,088	324,768	+ 23.4	88,934	100,765	+ 13.3
Drunkenness	1,065,968	914,027	– 14.3	40,533	34,055	– 16.0
Disorderly conduct	550,838	581,500	+ 5.6	104,866	94,032	– 10.3
Vagrancy	28,054	24,126	– 14.0	5,743	3,263	– 43.2
All other offenses (except traffic)	1,148,416	1,308,543	+ 13.9	235,494	220,741	– 6.3
Suspicion (not included in totals)	24,465	13,464	– 45.0	5,933	2,714	– 54.3
Curfew and loitering law violations	78,942	47,176	– 40.2	78,942	47,176	– 40.2
Runaways	76,170	55,800	– 26.7	76,170	55,800	– 26.7

¹ Violent crimes are offenses of murder, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

² Property crimes are offenses of burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson.

³ Includes arson, a newly established Index offense in 1979.

⁴ Less than one-tenth of 1 percent.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States* (Uniform Crime Report). Washington, D.C.: 1981.