A study of the institutional adjustment of twenty adolescent narcotic users admitted to the New York state training school for boys from October 1950 to July 1951

Edward Cecil Webb
Atlanta University

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A STUDY OF THE INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT OF TWENTY ADOLESCENT
NARCOTIC USERS ADMITTED TO THE NEW YORK STATE TRAINING
SCHOOL FOR BOYS FROM OCTOBER 1950 TO JULY 1951

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE ATLANTA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL
OF SOCIAL WORK IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

BY

EDWARD CECIL WEBB

ATLANTA, GEORGIA
JUNE 1952
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer wishes to express his deep appreciation to all those who assisted him in this study. In particular does he wish to thank Mr. Floyd B. Holley, Supervisor of the Bronx-Manhattan Unit of the New York State Training School After Care Office for his advice, assistance and encouragement.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of the Study</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Purpose of the Study</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Method of Procedure</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Scope and Limitations</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BOYS STUDIED</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Characteristics</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familial Characteristics</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of Anti-Social Behavior</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons For The Use of Narcotics</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of Drugs and Length of Time Used</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects of Narcotics Upon Social Adjustment</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of Referral</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. THE INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT OF THE BOYS STUDIED</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Effects of Adjustments</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Case Conferences and Program Committee</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tables</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Age, Race and Religion of the Twenty Boys Who Used Narcotics</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Parents and Other Adults with Whom the Boys Were Living at the Time of Admission</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Marital Status and Length of Time Parents Have Been Out of the Home at Time of Admission</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Intelligence Quotients and Grade Levels of Boys at Time of Admission</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Occupations and Monthly Income of Parents with Whom Boys Were Living at Time of Admission</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Educational Status of Parents of the Twenty Boys</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Recorded Dates of Court Appearances of the Twenty Boys</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Types of Offenses Charged to the Twenty Boys</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Number of Boys According to Types of Drugs and the Length of Time Used</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Types of Adjustments Made by Boys in Cottage Placements and Program Assignments</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Significance of the Study

The word "narcotics" symbolizes drugs that are used for euphoric or analgesic effects. Ordinarily, the term drug addiction is limited to narcotics, such as, opium and its derivatives—morphine, heroin, codeine, et cetera,—cocaine, marihuana and peyote. There are other drugs such as barbiturates, benzedrine and sodium amytal which have addiction potentials, but it is best to follow the practice of the United States Public Health Service Hospital for Addicts, Lexington, Kentucky, in limiting the majority of the users to the four main narcotic drugs mentioned above.¹

There are three factors that make for addiction, dependence, tolerance and habituation. Dependence means that the user must continue to take drugs to "feel right." Tolerance describes the physical need for increased dosages of drugs. Habituation is the psychological dependence upon drugs. The opiates when used produce all three of these factors, but cocaine and marihuana are not considered in the same class because, while they produce psychological dependence, they do not produce physical dependence or disturbed behavior. They are, however, extremely dangerous and bring out feelings of hostility expressed violently by certain persons. They do not cause psychosis but

release the instinctual desires in a latent psychotic person. Cocaine has a high toxic effect and often causes hallucinations and delusions. Marihuana and cocaine are excitants while opiates are a depressant with a dulling effect upon a person.

An individual can become an addict by taking one of three routes, namely, medical, accidental or emotional. The medical addict, as a result of an accident or prolonged illness, is given drugs for the relief of pain and after the pain has ceased, still feels the need for the drug. The accidental addict innocently takes a remedy on his own, and becomes dependent upon drugs. The emotional addict seeks to escape reality and either finds drugs a means of doing so or he is looking for a new experience as a "kick". However, this study deals with adolescent narcotic users who, for the most part, fall into the latter group.

The present increase of the use of drugs by adolescents is involving them in one of the most menacing evils with which youth has ever come to grips. An effective opponent to such practice requires the appropriate use of social work along with related disciplines, such as, medicine, psychology, psychiatry and education. The use of drugs among adolescents like other forms of juvenile delinquency, is symptomatic of sociopsychological maladjustment and the inadequacy of the individual's environment. This is true for seriously emotionally disturbed youth who may be "addict prone," and for those less emotionally disturbed who take drugs to gain status and
prestige within the group of which they are a part.\(^1\)

Frequently, a human being whose needs are not met, who is an unwelcomed addition to his family, who is neglected and lives in an environment indifferent and cold toward him, will develop feelings of hostility and resentment, hate and pessimism. The child's first ego ideals are his parents. If they do not give him enough inner security and if he is not loved and knows it, he may become a potential delinquent. Insecurity coupled with inadequate ego ideals induces anxiety which induces aggressive action that can be destructive.

Addiction is caused by human need, not by drugs and is a symptom of personality conflict. Here, then is the picture of a typical adolescent narcotic user. Rightly or wrongly he feels he is unloved and unwanted; therefore, he is pervaded by feelings of insecurity and seeks security in a socially undesirable gang. He is introduced to smoking a marihuana cigarette, probably supplied free by peddlers seeking new customers. The youngster delights in the trance-like state the cigarette produces, becomes talkative and acquires self confidence he has never known before. The drug has deadened the pain and dissatisfaction he experiences in life. In a matter of weeks marihuana loses its potency to satisfy and something stronger is sought. Almost always, the next step is heroin, a drug that is

vicious and toxic in its effects. This vicious progression takes its toll; and the bright alert youngster becomes a sleepy, half-alive wreck with "rotted moral fiber." He cares little for personal appearance or for old associates. He is driven by one and only one desire, a desire for drugs. He spends his lunch money, pawn small objects stolen from his home, and makes bungling attempts at burglarly.

In general, drug addiction is a medical, psychological, social and law enforcement problem which has not yet been satisfactorily solved. It is not enough to think of addicts as psychopathic, neurotic or delinquent individuals. Addiction adds its own problem, of which many sufferers are well aware. They are aware of the fact that indulgence does not solve their basic personal problem; but it is compensatory and makes them feel more secure, more competent and emotionally stable while under the influence of drugs.¹

In the final analysis, the prognosis in the use of narcotics depends largely on the underlying personality make-up of the individual and the intensity of his supervision. In dealing with adolescents, it is believed that the majority of them are not true addicts but users. Their prognosis is much better than adults if remedial intervention is started early. In the adolescent, the character structure is not completely formed and certain basic psychic processes are more readily

influenced by corrective measures. Therefore, it is felt that under conditioning environmental circumstances, combined with a therapeutic relationship, the adolescent may be assisted to acquire a more acceptable super-ego structure.

The social case worker can play a most strategic part in helping the adolescent narcotic user. He can offer continuous acceptance, emotional support, encouragement and reassurance to instill confidence within the adolescent user, and in his ability to change his behavior. He can assist him in making use of community resources for self-improvement and expression and help him to understand and accept community attitudes. Finally, the adolescent narcotic user might be able to gain insight into the meaning of his behavior and will acquire more self-control and an ability to assume responsibility for the way he acts as a result.

There was much discussion about the use of drugs among the adolescent groups of New York City during 1950 and 1951. There were public hearings, police activity, a rapid increase in arrests, court appearances and commitments, but little or no provision made for the handling of adolescent narcotic users. In an effort to segregate them from the community, they were committed to institutions for delinquent boys and girls. Out of 307 boys admitted to the New York State Training School for Boys during this period, forty-nine had a history of using drugs or were suspected of using dope. Unfortunately, the Training School had no special facilities for treating
adolescent narcotic users, and of much interest to the writer were these boys who were known users of drugs as a means of determining their adjustment to an institutional setting.

Purpose of the Study

This study purposed to describe the general background of twenty boys and to ascertain to some degree factors which may have contributed to their use of narcotics. It also attempted to examine the influence that the program at the State Training School had upon these boys in developing more satisfactory patterns of behavior while in the Institution.

Method of Procedure

The method used in this study was as follows: first, conferences were conducted with social workers and other personnel who had had contact with the boys studied; and secondly, a review of the case histories and allied data of those cases selected for the study were made by means of a schedule to determine the early development of each boy and his institutional adjustment. The records at the State Training School and its After Care Department were read. The cases were selected from a roster of forty-nine boys admitted for using narcotics or who had been suspected of being narcotic users at the time of their commitment or return from parole to the institution. Only those boys who were admitted for the first time and who were known users of narcotics were used in this study. This excluded those boys who were only suspected users and those
returned from parole. In addition, the literature, published and unpublished, pertaining to the subject was examined.

Scope and Limitations

The scope of this study covered twenty adolescent boys admitted for using narcotics to the New York State Training School for Boys between October, 1950 and July, 1951, from the five boroughs of New York City and Orange County. However, the greater distribution of the cases were restricted to the Manhattan and Bronx areas of New York City. Because it was difficult to obtain data on the adjustment on the boy who was a narcotic user and on parole, the study did not include him. Therefore, very little conclusive evidence was secured to make a valid comparison on how the institutional program had effected the extent and degree of the boy's adjustment in the community. Moreover, published material on the problem of narcotics among adolescents was limited, which confined the obtaining of source bibliographical material to periodicals, pamphlets, and reports.
CHAPTER II

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BOYS STUDIED

Primary behavior disorders in children are classified in three groups, namely, habit disturbances, neurotic traits, and conduct disturbances. The behavior disorders of the boys in this study apparently fall into the group of conduct disturbances. However, all three disturbances mentioned stemmed from the earliest years as reactions to inadequate parents or parent substitutes. Conduct disturbances indicated symptoms such as truancy, disobedience, untruthfulness, stealing, setting fires, sex offenses, use of alcohol and use of drugs. Children with conduct disturbances are obviously and aggressively in conflict with their environment and their behavior persisted only when there were severe parental frustrations, harshness, or lack of love for the child, because only by experiencing love, can a child love back. With the boy, he continues to want his male parent to love him. If he does not obtain affection and support from parental figures to enable him to incorporate an adequate super-ego, there are defective controls; and conflicts remain between him and his restraining environment.

Personal Characteristics

The age, race and religion of the twenty boys studied who were users of narcotics are revealed in Table 1. Out of the

\[1^{\text{Lawson G. Lowrey, op. cit., p. 27.}}\]
twenty boys, seventeen were Negroes, and three were white. Twelve of them fell in the age bracket of fifteen and sixteen years. These boys were in the middle teen-age group, and were reflecting characteristics of an adolescent by continuing to seek independence yet rebellious, and resentful of adult authority. Likewise, ambivalence is characteristic of the adolescent and was manifested by the boys in this study. The striving for adulthood created conflicts and frustrations within them, and with the Negro boy, who was a narcotic user, to a large extent seemed to have acquired the habit between the age of fourteen and fifteen years.

In considering religion, all of the boys professed some religious conviction indicating that at sometime in their lives they had been exposed to such teachings. Three-fourth of them were of Protestant faith, but only one-fourth were Catholics which pointed to the fact that the Catholic boys did not seem to have as much conflict in accepting authority as other boys.

TABLE 1

AGE, RACE AND RELIGION
OF THE TWENTY BOYS WHO USED NARCOTICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Negro Protestant</th>
<th>Negro Catholic</th>
<th>White Protestant</th>
<th>White Catholic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The twenty boys came from three boroughs of New York City, namely Manhattan, Bronx and Queens. But fourteen of them came from the metropolitan area, the largest and most populous section of New York, and only a few boys came from the less populous and somewhat suburban sections of the City.

TABLE 2

PARENTS AND OTHER ADULTS WITH WHOM THE BOYS WERE LIVING AT THE TIME OF ADMISSION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parents and Other Adults</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother and Father</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother and Step-father</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paternal Grandmother</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 indicates with whom the twenty boys were living at time of commitment. Eighteen had had parental care, fourteen of whom had had one parent in the home; and four had had both maternal and paternal figures in their homes. The fact that the majority of the boys were living with parental persons and were exposed to some contact with parental figures and to some familial interest, raised the question as to the kind of parents they had and the type of supervision received.

Thirteen of the boys were living with their mothers. Three of these boys were exposed to mothers whose own behavior was asocial. The examples of defective super-ego exhibited by these parents, their maladjustment and conflicts with their
environment, produced frustrating situations for these boys. One of these mothers had spent some time in a Girls Training School and later, some time in prison for selling narcotics. During the course of these boys' development, the parental asocial behavior became a part of their development by introjecting their parent images. Such parental ideals which were dissocial became the boy's standards and he inevitably came into conflict with society.¹

Two other mothers were considered neurotic cases, and at one time one had attempted to commit suicide. Two other mothers were strict and domineering persons who were damaging influences because of their severe super-egos which were prohibiting; and their attitudes of rejection caused them to hate more than love their boys. They would demonstrate no affection, would severely criticize and handle the boys in a rough non-tender manner. It appeared that they could expect nothing but a bruised body or hurt feelings from their mothers; these boys tried to avoid them because they feared and hated them. They became rebellious and antagonistic; they believed that all adults were like their parents; and to these adults and society, they reacted in a negative fashion or with submission.²


The other six mothers were weak, ineffectual persons who manifested guilt feelings about their children, and because they were overburdened with their own problems, were unable to give consistent supervision. The inconsistent handling of these boys caused them to feel rejected, and they were unable to form a healthy relationship with maternal figures. Because of their deficient super-egos, they sought gratification and status in socially unacceptable groups outside the home.

One of the boys who lived with his father was exposed to a parent who was rigid, punitive and repressive in his discipline. The three boys who resided with their mothers and step-fathers, in each case, were subjected to similar treatment. The mothers of the boys, in an effort to compensate for the step-fathers' sadistic attitudes, were devoted and overprotective. All of these boys experienced parental inconsistent handling in which they were torn between the guilt of their mother and the rigid, punitive attitude of a step-father. They expressed ambivalent feelings towards their parents, and because of their frustrations, conflicts arose between them and their environment. Due to the lack of a satisfied relationship with their ego-ideals, their super-egos were stunted, and these boys eventually turned to acting out their impulses which developed into overt social behavior.

The boy who lived with his paternal grandmother had been shifted about from parent to parent. Finally, his father placed him with his paternal grandmother who was over indulgent and
over protective of the boy. This boy, because of no permanent home most of his life, had deficient sense of right and wrong because he did not remain with a parental ideal figure long enough to acquire an adequate super-ego. The overt rejection of this boy resulted in aggressive behavior which eventually led him to delinquent acts. The boy who lived with his natural parents was under the influence of an inadequate but domineering mother and a father, who was a weak, irresponsible chronic alcoholic. A well rounded and wholesome personality can best be developed when a child is exposed to healthy and normal parents, who are able to give him the necessary affection, acceptance and approval in the parent-child relationship.

TABLE 3

MARITAL STATUS AND LENGTH OF TIME PARENTS HAVE BEEN OUT OF THE HOME AT THE TIME OF ADMISSION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status of Parents</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Years Out of Home</th>
<th>Mothers</th>
<th>Fathers</th>
<th>Both Parents</th>
<th>Neither Parent</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0-3</td>
<td>4-7</td>
<td>8-11</td>
<td>12-15</td>
<td>0-3</td>
<td>4-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status of Parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated or Divorced</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father dead</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother dead</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father deserted</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother deserted</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent out of Home</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 discloses that out of the twenty boys, nineteen came from homes that had been broken; however, three of the boys' mothers had remarried, and step-fathers were in the home at the time of their admission. There was only one boy who came from a home with both natural parents. Most of the homes had been broken by either divorce or desertion. Two boys came from homes where there were no parents. One boy lived with his maternal grandmother, and the other lived with a friend. Three-fourths of the fathers were out of the home, and the length of time they had been out of the home ranged from two years to fourteen years. The length of time that one father had been out of the home was unknown. Without a father figure in the home most of the boys studied were exposed to an atmosphere controlled by a maternalistic figure. The absence of a father left its mark upon the boys studied and impeded an adequate resolving of the oedipus phase and identity in these already disturbed boys. The outcome was less satisfactory adjustment, and the boys were unable to accept social behavior for themselves. Of the twenty boys in the study, sixteen had legitimate births, and four were born out of wedlock.

Taking into consideration the negatives of the boys' parental situation, there were reasons to justify blocking in their intellectual achievements. Intelligence defects were at one time considered to be a major cause of delinquency, and sometimes, a contributing factor.¹ In Table 4 is shown that

out of the twenty boys, three-fourths of them were functioning from a borderline level of intelligence to a dull normal range of intelligence. Three of the boys were achieving within the normal range of intelligence, and one boy was within the bright normal group. Five boys in the dull normal group surpassed one of the three boys in the normal group, which indicated that there was a possibility of these boys attaining a higher degree of intelligence through encouragement and individual attention. All of the boys were retarded academically, from the boy with an I. Q. of sixty-eight, who was retarded nine years according to his age, to the boy with the highest intelligence quotient, or 110, who was academically retarded three and one-half years according to his age.

TABLE 4
INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENTS AND GRADE LEVELS
OF BOYS AT TIME OF ADMISSION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intelligence Quotient*</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 - 69</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 - 89</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90 - 109</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110 - 124</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Stanford-Binet Test

Familial Characteristics

As pointed out in Table 1, the majority of the twenty boys studied came from Negro families. Table 5 gives the
occupation and monthly incomes of the parents of the boys. The chief breadwinners of these families were the mothers. Most of the jobs were unskilled occupations or menial labor. The monthly incomes of the twenty families ranged from forty-two dollars a month to $340, with the majority falling within the $100 to $200 a month bracket. Six families in the unemployment class received public assistance. The unemployed families' incomes were as high as the majority and, in some cases, more.

TABLE 5

OCCUPATIONS AND MONTHLY INCOME OF PARENTS
WITH WHOM BOYS WERE LIVING AT TIME OF ADMISSION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupations of Parents</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>$42-100</th>
<th>101-200</th>
<th>201-300</th>
<th>301-350</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mothers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factory worker</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janitor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housekeeper</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maid</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cafe helper</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving clerk</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed*</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fathers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doorman</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chef cook</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tile maker</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porter</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The classification of "unemployed" indicates that families were receiving financial assistance from D.P.W.

**Classification of "unknown" concerns one family receiving public assistance but grant was unknown. In another family, father was employed but monthly income unknown.
The educational factors in the familial situation should also be considered in their relationship to the cause of delinquency. The extent of formal education of the parents plays some part, however unmeasurably, in the rearing of the children.¹

**TABLE 6**  
EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF PARENTS OF THE TWENTY BOYS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last Grade Completed</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Father</th>
<th>Mother</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 6 of those parents whose status was known, all of them had been exposed to partial elementary education. Six parents completed the eighth grade elementary school, namely, four fathers and two mothers. The third grade was the lowest completed and that was by a mother. On the secondary level, two mothers and two fathers completed first year high school, two fathers completed third year high school; two fathers and one mother completed fourth year high school; and one father completed second year college.

¹Eleanor and Sheldon Glueck, One Thousand Juvenile Delinquents (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1934), p. 68.
The fathers' educational levels were higher than the mothers of the boys studied, which was somewhat contrary to custom because it is usually the father-person who discontinued school early and the mother person who obtained more schooling. Inasmuch as the fathers had the highest educational attainment in the study and most of them were out of the home, they did not have too much influence upon the boys studied. The mothers had the closest contact with their children in their formative years, and consequently, the influence of education upon the boy was minimum. The twenty boys were in most cases were retarded academically in considering their chronological age, reflecting the maternal interest in education in their home.

Types of Anti-Social Behavior

The types of anti-social behavior displayed by these twenty boys were not any different from any other types of anti-social behavior that is exhibited by delinquents who are not narcotic users. The only differences were the motivations, that is, the desire to secure drugs; and when they did not have the money to purchase drugs, they would beg, borrow, steal, work, cheat or lie.

Table 7 indicates that all the boys showed at time of referral recidvistic behavior prior to commitment. The earliest record of court appearance began back in 1943 for one boy. The anti-social behavior of the twenty boys began long before the dates mentioned because their asocial behavior manifested itself in their formative years. However, the increased number
of court appearances of the twenty boys in 1950 and 1951, corresponded to the rapid increase of the use of narcotics among teen-agers during this two-year period.

TABLE 7
RECORDED DATES OF COURT APPEARANCES
OF THE TWENTY BOYS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>No. of Court Appearances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of court appearances seemed indicative of the symptoms of these boys maladjustments and their lack of respect for authority. Their severe conflicts within themselves in reaction to a restraining environment stimulated them to act out their impulses in a socially, unacceptable manner. The type of offenses with which this group was charged is indicated in Table 8. All of the boys were users of narcotics and were truants. These boys used narcotics to make them feel more secure, more emotionally stable, and some for the thrill or "kick" they experienced under its influence. Social maladjustment had been expressed throughout the school careers of the twenty boys, largely by truancy, that is, by running away
from unpleasant social situations and obligations.¹

Most of the boys resorted to other offenses such as assault, stealing, breaking in automobiles, housebreaking, incorrigibility and violation of parole. All of these charges represented the boys' defective super-egos in which their lack of respect for authority was acted out. However, with the exception of the latter two, all of the former offenses could be associated with the boys being motivated to secure money to purchase drugs.

### TABLE 8

**Types of Offenses Charged to the Twenty Boys**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Offenses</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assault</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breaking in Autos.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugs</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housebreaking</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorrigibility</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stealing</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truancy</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violation of Parole</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In general, of the twenty boys studied, Negroes composed the majority as narcotic users, with only a few whites involved. All of them had been exposed to religious teaching but exemplified little respect for authority. Most of them came from metropolitan areas and from homes where there were

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parental persons. However, most of the fathers were out of the home, and the boys were chiefly under the care of a maternal figure. The educational levels of the boys indicated that they were retarded academically; most of their homes were broken; and the majority of their parents were either separated or divorced.

Their anti-social behavior reflected much recidivism and many court appearances. In addition to the use of drugs, truancy was frequent. Lack of respect for authority and for property was prevalent, and their stealing and housebreaking was prompted by a need to obtain money to buy drugs.
CHAPTER III

THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

The most widely used drugs among teen-agers were marihuana and heroin. For the most part, adolescent drug users fall into two classes; namely, the unruly thrill seeking youngster from a well-to-do home, or the youngster from a deprived home mainly from slum areas. ¹ The twenty boys in this study fall in the latter class, because most of them came from areas where the rate of delinquency was high and from families where there was very little parental control or training in socially acceptable habits. ²

Reasons For the Use of Narcotics

The boys' reasons for using narcotics followed the almost universal pattern given by most adolescents. Some of their reasons, expressed in addict lingo were, first, "to get kicks or a lift;" secondly, "to get high and feel right;" thirdly, "did not want to be called 'turkey'," by their associates, and finally, because it made them happier about unpleasant situations. It was recognized that these reasons were valid inasmuch as the use of drugs did produce the affects mentioned by


the boys while under its influence. However, it was also recognized that the basic reasons stemmed from a weak ego structure which usually exemplifies itself in personality maladjustments. Seven boys were pleasure seekers or had personal problems from which they were trying to escape. These boys, whose conflicts and frustrations resulted from damaged relationships with their parental ideals, used drugs only in an effort to get a feeling of well being and security which they had not received in their poor home environment. Their reasons for using narcotics were "to get a lift or to feel right."

Three other boys were much more emotionally disturbed. One of them was very closely attached to his mother and slept in the same room with her. This experience was sexually stimulating to him; and he seemed forced to seek drugs as a means of escaping from his sexual desire and also to suppress his urges. Another boy had a very close attachment to his father who died about three years prior to his delinquency. He sought drugs as a means of release because he was unable to form any attachment to another male object. Both of these boys mentioned had conflicts in resolving their oedipus situation in that they found it extremely difficult to break away from parental figures and to establish their own identities.

The third boy, in addition to a poor home setting, had difficulty in making an adjustment in school. He had unusually fair skin, and his odd coloring set him off from the rest
of the boys in his class. The other classmates thought something was wrong and different about him, and accused him of being "a sissy, a homosexual and a dandy." This factor coupled with his poor home situation contributed to his drug habit; and he, similar to the other boys, used drugs because it made him feel happier about unpleasant situations. The remaining ten boys, inasmuch as they were having conflicts with their parents in the home, exemplified a greater degree of pseudo-social tendencies than other boys, in that they sought status and security in socially undesirable street groups. As these groups were composed of boys who used narcotics, the ten boys studied identified with these gang groups because they did not want to be labeled as being "turkey".¹

Type of Drugs and Length of Time Used

Table 9 indicates that over half of the twenty boys in the study began their drug habit by using heroin. Only eight boys used marihuana before they sought heroin which gave them a greater "lift". One of the twenty boys used marihuana and did not graduate to the use of heroin. The length of time used ranged from four months to two years. The majority of the boys fell within the range of five months to one year. Six boys, which was the largest group, had been using drugs for one year.

¹Synonymous to sissy or being timid.
A person who indulged in drugs consistently over a period of two weeks usually became "hooked". The question may be raised as to why these boys were not "hooked" since they were exposed to drugs longer than two weeks. These boys only used small amounts of the drugs at a time, and this was partially due to the high price they had to pay to purchase them. Marihuana cost from twenty-five to fifty cents a cigarette; and a "cap" of heroin cost from one dollar to three dollars. However, the use of heroin among these boys per day ranged from one-half capsule to six or seven capsules. These boys were prevented from becoming addicts chiefly because of the peddler's greed. In a recent attorney-general's report on narcotics in New York, it was pointed out that the drug peddler's greed had been a blessing in disguise. He constantly used the process of dilution of the narcotics, and when it finally reached the

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1 Refers to a person who becomes so dependent upon drugs that he can not do without them.

2 Refers to capsule of heroin.
neophyte, the true narcotic content was small. If it had not been for this greed that existed among the peddlers, the boys studied would have become true addicts according to the length of time they had been using drugs. However, a few of the boys who took larger amounts of the drugs, even after medical and psychiatric treatment was administered, still manifested a desire for drugs, but had no severe withdrawal symptoms.

Effects of Narcotics Upon Social Adjustments

An indication of outside social adjustments is pictured in Table 8, which highlighted the types of offenses with which the boys were charged as a result of their anti-social behavior. It pointed to the fact that their social adjustments were rather negative because they found it difficult to resolve their conflicts and frustrations in a restraining society. According to Dr. Zimmering, senior psychiatrist at Bellevue Hospital, adolescents resort to stealing and anti-social conduct in order to secure money for drugs; they do not steal for the sake of stealing, and they do not resort to violence for the sake of violence. Therefore, the use of narcotics brought with it an additional problem because the motivation that accompanied the desire for its use, stimulated the boys anti-social behavior if money could not be secured legitimately.


2Ibid., p. 90.
The effects of narcotics upon adjustment was evident in the case of M. He was a short, stocky, sixteen-year old Negro boy and the product of a forced marriage and a broken home. His mother was fourteen years old when she married; and his father deserted the family when M. was two years old. His mother was rejecting of M. and did not give him adequate emotional attention or supervision. However, in discussing the situation, she was rather protective of M., stating that he was a good boy and did not give her any trouble. He would truant from school, but she did little to encourage him to attend because he wanted to work. M. was aware of his mother’s attitude, and his feeling of being rejected was further aggravated by her being out of the home working and leaving him alone. M. had no behavior problems in elementary school, but his difficulty seemingly started in high school where he began to truant, thereby, failing in all his subjects. His difficulties increased; and his first court appearance came as a result of using marihuana. He was placed on probation, but, in a short time, he was in court again for snatching a purse.

M. was experiencing rejection in the mother-son relationship, and efforts to handle his feelings of not being wanted by his mother or father were manifested in poor adjustments in the community. The hostility his mother had for his father apparently was projected upon his ego extension her son M. whom she was not able to accept. Her guilt feelings concerning M.
were evidenced by her protectiveness of him; however, she expressed ambivalence in that she manifested little interest in his behavior outside the home. The primary behavior disorder of M. seemed to have been a reaction to gross and early parental neglect and rejection of him by his ego ideals.¹

There were also indications of an unresolved oedipus situation, and because of the absence of his father, M. was unable to work out his feelings about the maternal or paternal figure. As a result, during his adolescence, he found it difficult to break away from his mother and move towards mature male figures. These conflicts and frustrations apparently contributed to his use of drugs as a means of escaping from his unpleasant family situation. However, drugs can be seen as adding another problem to M.'s maladjustments. In his outside adjustments, narcotics apparently dulled his intellectual capacity and contributed to his truancy and failure in his subjects in school. He lost all interest in school, and his desire for drugs became so great that he began to steal in order to maintain the habit. This type of anti-social behavior later caused him to be removed from the community.

Sources of Referral

The sources of referral to an institution dealing with delinquents are usually the parents, the school, the delinquent

himself or the courts. Even if a parent or the delinquent boy voluntary seeks aid because of the nature of the problem, the court is usually the primary source of referral. The referral procedure to an authoritative institution somewhat differs from that in a non-authoritative one. In an authoritative setting, the referral is usually mandatory in that the client cannot reject the services requested. In a non-authoritative one, the client has the right to accept or reject the services of the agency.

In the cases of the boys studied who were narcotic users, they had been referred to hospitals for medical and psychiatric services prior to institutional commitment. The purpose of their referrals was to treat them and to ascertain the emotional problems of the boys to determine its relationship to their narcotic usage. Out of the twenty boys known to the Children's Court; three were self referrals; six were referred by parents; and eleven, by law enforcement officials. The three self referrals indicated that the boys did have some awareness of the dangers of the use of narcotics and were willing to seek help. The six mothers, a few of whom were sincere in their referrals, and others, prompted by feelings of rejection, were desirous of eradicating the drug menace that encompassed their sons.

On the whole, the components of the problem centered around the twenty boys studied who had deep-seated feelings of insecurity and rejection. They had been using narcotics for a long time and had not been severely damaged because they were
obtaining diluted drugs. Their maladjustments were not only reflected in the home but also at school. Some parent persons were concerned about the effects of narcotics upon their boys, but for the most part, law enforcement officials brought them into court, which was the primary source of referral to the institution.
Because of the lack of adequate treatment facilities, adolescent narcotic users were committed to the same institutions as other delinquents when they came in conflict with the law. This was an effort to help them because it removed them from environments detrimental to their character and health. However, the New York State Training School for delinquents had no special treatment facilities for narcotic users; its primary purpose for delinquents was rehabilitation. The boys experienced warm, loving attitudes from adults as a significant part of the program. In this sense, all the facilities, classroom, work, vocational training, recreation, athletic and other activities were media for relationships. Through these experiences and new identification with adults, these boys acquired new values and standards and had an opportunity to become more socialized individuals.  

General Effects of Adjustments

The twenty boys in the study were divided into three groups to determine the types of adjustments made in their

1Norman Lourie, "Casework Services Today In Institutions For Delinquent Children," Selected Papers in Case Work (Raleigh, North Carolina, 1951), p. 103.
cottages and program area outside their cottage life. The three groups were; first, boys who made a good adjustment, secondly, boys who made a satisfactory or fair adjustment, and boys who found it difficult to adjust and made a poor adjustment. The cottage adjustments of the boys were based upon the following factors: cleanliness, language, work habits, integrity, sex habits, symptoms of enuresis, ability to get along with the group, and personal and emotional reactions. Additional criteria upon which the cottage adjustments were evaluated were the boy's interest, method of handling him to meet his needs, relationship with his family, and general difficulties encountered in his cottage.

Outside the cottage life, there were other program assignments designed for the boys. All of the younger boys under sixteen years of age were included in the academic school program; and the older boys engaged in work-education which was pre-vocational in nature. Other program areas were work groups, recreation, religion, and athletics. An adjustment was considered to be good when the boys encountered a minimum amount of conflict in these areas and exemplified growth and emotional maturity as a result of their cottage placement and program assignment. An adjustment was satisfactory or fair when the boys, although they displayed a reasonable amount of conflict in making an adequate adjustment, were able to improve their attitudes and habits. A poor adjustment indicated that

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1Erwin Schepses, Organization for Treatment at the New York State Training School For Boys (Warwick, N. Y., 1951), p. 32.
the boys found it difficult to make an adequate adjustment and were even unable to conform on a superficial level. The evaluation of these boys adjustments were based upon their case conference committee meeting and their progress committee meeting.

### TABLE 10

**TYPES OF ADJUSTMENTS MADE BY BOYS IN COTTAGE PLACEMENTS AND PROGRAM ASSIGNMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cottage Adjustments</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 20

Table 10 points out that sixteen of the boys were getting the four basic needs of security, responsibility, social and emotional expression met, at a substantial level, from warm, understanding and accepting cottage parents. In the program adjustment, the majority of the boys fell in the good and satisfactory adjustment categories, but a larger number also fell in the poor adjustment category. Although most of the boys were consistent in their adjustment in both areas, there were slight fluctuations in a few. Two of the boys who made a good adjustment in their cottage area made only a satisfactory

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adjustment in their program assignment. However, the conflicts manifested such as, brief spells of resentment and vulgarity, were remedied with a minimum of understanding handling and did not interfere with their total adjustment.

Out of the nine boys who made satisfactory adjustments in their cottage area, one made a good adjustment, four satisfactory adjustments and four, poor adjustments in their program area. This was an indication of boys who adjusted well in one area and had difficulty adjusting in another. The boys who made a good adjustment in the cottage setting experienced less difficulty in the two areas, as only two fluctuated to a satisfactory level in the program area, and none to the poor adjustment level. In the satisfactory cottage adjustment, one boy made a good adjustment in the program area, whereas four fluctuated to the poor adjustment level. The boys who made good cottage adjustments were less "prone" to make poor adjustments in the program activities than the boys who made satisfactory cottage adjustments. However, after displaying a reasonable amount of conflicts and neurotic symptoms such as, enuresis, sleep walking, perverted sex habits, disrespect for adult supervision, resentment of school, and lazy work habits, these nine boys who made a satisfactory cottage adjustment, by encouragement to assume responsibility, overcame faulty habits and began to make an adequate adjustment.

The four boys who made poor cottage adaptations maintained the same poor adjustments in program area. These boys may
have been so damaged by their conflicts and frustrations with their previous environment that it was doubtful whether the Training School could be of help to them. One of the four boys, on his first home visit, remained in the city and was absent without leave from the Institution at the time of the study. However, all the boys were particularized by someone concerned about their individual problems and their adjustment at the Training School; and the majority of them were seemingly getting the full value of what the Institution itself meant to them.¹

In a large group of boys, many of whom had emotional problems, difficulties of a disciplinary nature arose from time to time. The adjustment Committee handled misbehavior and infraction of the rules of the Training School of a more serious nature such as, runaways, belated returns from home visits, assaults, and sex conduct.² The committee also gave rewards to boys who continued to improve in their cottage and various program assignments. It was also active in change of cottage placement, and school and work assignments.

The number of times the boys studied had been before the Adjustment Committee further substantiated the types of adjustments they were making at the Training School. The number of times the boys who were making a good adjustment had been


²Erwin Schepses, op. cit., p. 28.
before the Adjustment Committee ranged from one to five times. Out of the seven boys who made good cottage adjustments, four had appeared before the Adjustment Committee for mild infractions or misbehavior. Three of these over-stayed their home visits, but two were excused, and the other boy had a change in cottage placement. All of these boys in the good adjustment category, with the exception of one, were still in the same cottage they had been assigned after the period of reception. The number of times the boys in the satisfactory adjustment category had been before the Adjustment Committee ranged from two to five times. Their types of misbehavior were different from those boys making a good adjustment. In addition to runaways, three boys, who had work assignments in the laundry, were accused of stealing shirts, and one boy of stealing a chicken. However, as it was previously mentioned, these boys were able to make adequate adjustments. There were only three boys in the satisfactory adjustment group who had cottage placements changed one time; the others were still in their original cottage placements.

The number of times the boys in the poor adjustment category were before the Adjustment Committee ranged from one to eleven times. The nature of their appearances was the most serious of the three adjustment groups, in that, in addition to over-stay of home visits and runaways, one boy was charged with attempt assault upon a teacher; and another was involved in an attempt to pass narcotics among a group at the Training
School. One of the boys in the poor adjustment category over-stayed his home visit and was absent without leave. None of the boys in the poor adjustment category were ever before the Committee for receiving awards for any type of improvement in any area of the program at the time of the study. One boy had been before the Adjustment Committee eleven times. These boys in the poor adjustment group had the greatest number of cottage placements. One had four cottage placements, another three cottage placements and the third, two cottage placements. The fourth boy had only one because he was absent without leave from the Training School. All of the twenty boys had had weekend visits home, but none had been known to have used narcotics during their visits. Five of the boys were suspected, but these assumptions were based primarily on reports of their mothers. However, according to experts on narcotic usage, it was difficult to label persons as narcotic users in a short period of three days unless they used it to an excess.

The Case Conferences And The Program Committee

Case conferences were held on all of the twenty boys in this study and conducted two months after their admission. This conference was composed of a psychiatrist, a psychologist, the clinic case supervisor and the heads of the departments of Education, Home Life, and Social Services. The case discussions were based upon the social history data submitted by the social worker of the New York office. The clinic supplemented this information by giving the boy's own reaction towards his
delinquencies and his commitment, and his attitude with regard to his family, his school in the community, and the Training School. All persons with whom the boy had daily contact, namely his cottage parents, teachers, shop instructor and work supervisors, reported to the Committee about their experience with the boy. Thus, the staff was able to evaluate the boy's personality and his initial adjustment at the Training School. W., previously mentioned, was admitted to the Training School for the use of narcotics, and his case was presented to the Case Conference Committee two months later.

His birth was normal, a full term baby, and his early developmental history was good. However, he suffered with his tonsils and vision. His father deserted when W. was two years old, and he had been shifted from his maternal grandmother to his mother all his life. His behavior in the community and school was attributed to neglect rather than delinquency. He got along in school when present with his teachers but attended school about three days a week. When he truanted, he would attend the movies and play around in the neighborhood. After his father deserted, W.'s mother began living with a paramour. As a result of their relationship, two children were born. The mother and the paramour separated, and W. and his half sisters were placed in the custody of their maternal grandmother because of neglect. His mother later served time in prison for selling narcotics. W. enjoyed living with his mother and her paramour because he said they understood him, but his grandmother was rigid, domineering and too old fashioned. He admitted using heroin about one year but denied being an addict. He talked very freely about the use of the drug and appeared to have a good deal of insight as to the serious effects the continual use of the drug would have upon him.

The cottage parents reported that W. was fairly clean in personal habits, but his language was poor. He got along fairly well within the group, but he needed strict supervision.
The recreation director reported that he was abusive, aggressive and carried a chip on his shoulder. His teacher reported that his language was vile, vulgar and unfit. He did very little classroom work and spent his time annoying others and sleeping. He was pictured as being a negative character in all respects so far as social standards were concerned.

In evaluating W. at the Case Conference meeting, he was seen as an aggressive boy in the program. In personal contacts he was constrained and suspicious and seemed to harbor strong feelings of hostility; he could not relate easily and needed a great deal of personal attention. His adjustment to this point had been considered poor in the Training School program. He was difficult to reach, immature and unable to face reality. Until he began to face reality, very little help could be given. A rather long period of stay in the Training School seemed indicated.

About half of the boys studied had had their progress committee evaluations. The date set for this Committee meeting was never more than a maximum of eight months after a boy's admission. Its duties were to review the boy's adjustment, formulate treatment plans, set a date for another progress meeting, refer to Program Committee when program changes were indicated and plan for a pre-parole period. This Committee was composed of the assistant superintendent, psychiatrist, the clinic social worker, and the social worker from the After Care office. The clinic worker indicated changes and progress in
the boy's attitude. The after care worker reported on the present home situation, and as at the Case Conference, the cottage parents and supervisors made their statements about the boy's adjustment. If institutional adjustment and prospects for community adjustment warranted a boy's return to his home, the Committee recommended pre-parole status or referral to the Status Committee. In the case of C., a sixteen year old boy committed because of his use of narcotics, he came from a stable hard working family of acceptable social standards.

From the onset, C. was regarded as intelligent and stable and was expected to make a good adjustment. In the program, C. had had a consistent record of good work habits and respect for authority. He was polite and cooperative and got along well with his pals. C. had the potentiality of being good school material but preferred work. His family maintained their interest in C., and his sibling relationships were good. It was felt that C. would be able to get along better at home because his family had moved to another neighborhood. C. was a rather pleasant, quiet mannered boy who related in a friendly matured manner. He viewed his drug habit as disturbed behavior and honestly felt that he would no longer use drugs. It was felt that he would seek the help of the case worker should he encounter any serious problem of adjustment in the community.

In considering C., the Progress Committee reported that he was making a satisfactory adjustment in the Training School program. His early problem in the community was the use of narcotic drugs; however, C. was now fully aware of the dangers and appeared sincere in his resolution not to use them in the future. The family situation was seen as a positive and constructive one; and there seemed no valid reason to keep C. for
a longer period in the Training School. He was recommended to the Status Committee, and special privileges were to be granted to him.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The use of narcotics by adolescents involves them in a most menacing evil, and during October 1950 through July 1951, there was use of narcotics among the teen-age group of New York City, but little or no provision for their treatment. As a result, out of the 307 boys admitted to the New York State Training School for Boys during that period, forty-nine had been suspected or were known users of narcotics.

This study was limited to twenty boys known as users of narcotics and was concerned with their general background in order to ascertain those factors which attributed to their use of narcotics. To understand them, it was essential to examine the influence of the program at the Training School upon the boys as they developed a more satisfactory pattern of behavior.

Of the twenty boys studied, seventeen were Negroes, and three were white; most of the Negro boys began using narcotics at fourteen and fifteen years of age. All of the boys had been exposed to religious teachings but had inculcated little moral respect for authority. The majority of the boys came from the ghettoes of the Metropolitan area of New York and from homes where there was inadequate parental control. Because of the large number of fathers out of the home, for the most part, they were under the care of a maternal figure. They were products of the homes broken by separation or divorce and
domiciles where mothers were the chief breadwinners. Illegitimacy was not characteristic because only four boys were born out of wedlock.

Three-fourths of the boys were academically retarded and were functioning at a dull normal level of intelligence. This was apparently a result of the low educational attainments of their mothers and the lack of emotional satisfaction which seemingly caused these boys to have psychological blockings as to intellectual achievements. Their anti-social behavior reflected much recidivism and many court appearances. In addition to the use of drugs and frequent truanting, the lack of self discipline was prevalent; and stealing and housebreaking was motivated by a need to obtain money to purchase drugs.

The twenty boys had deep-seated feelings of insecurity and rejection and had been using narcotics for a long time but had not been severely damaged because they were obtaining diluted drugs. Their maladjustments were not only reflected in poor parent-child relationships, but also in teacher-pupil contacts. Some of the parents were concerned about the effects of narcotics upon their boys, but, for the most part, law enforcement officials brought them to the attention of the court.

At the New York State Training School, there were no special treatment facilities for adolescent narcotic users. Therefore, they received the same treatment as other youth who came in conflict with the law. However, all the facilities
including classroom, cottage life, work, vocational, recreation, religion, and other activities, were media for therapeutic experiences. Sixteen boys, because of more satisfactory experiences, were able to make good or adequate adjustments to the Training School program. Four boys, because of their previous damaging conflicts and frustrations before admittance, found it difficult to adjust, and their prognoses were poor. The following conclusions seem to be indicated by this study.

First, that the use of drugs among teen-agers might be widespread over New York City, but users from the lower income families composed those admitted to the State Training School.

Secondly, that the majority of the boys resided in areas which had a prevailing low income, Negro and white population, with the additional cultural determinants as to race, color, and nativity.

Third, that drug addiction stemmed from unmet psychological needs suggesting symptoms of personality conflict.

Fourth, that the personal characteristics of the boys studied reflected problems where causative factors deeply embedded in family friction and aggressive reactions to frustrations were characteristic of the cultural factors in the family way of life.

Fifth, that their personal relationships were hampered by inadequate and distorted parent-child relationships throughout their lives and greatly influenced by the absence or inadequacy of an unsuitable parental ideal in the home.
Sixth, that these boys' good and satisfactory institutional adjustments were in part attributed to the fact that they were in a formative and impressionable stage which made them more readily influenced by understanding corrective measures; and, finally, that because of the lack of treatment facilities in the community or institution, their prognoses for continued rehabilitation seemed poor.

Potentiality for recovery was inherent in that these were boys diagnosed medically and psychiatrically as users rather than addicts. However, it would seem that cultural class structure played a part in determining the liability of teenagers to addiction which required action stronger than the local community could exercise. More attention had to be given to the violation of narcotic laws, and basic reasons why youth from deprived homes and slum districts adhere more readily to the use of narcotics.
SCHEDULE

I. Identifying Data

A. Case Number
B. Date of Admission
C. Age at Time of Admission
D. Race
E. Relation
F. Borough Resided in at Time of Admission

II. Personal Characteristics of Boys

A. With whom living at time of admission
B. Length of time living at present address
C. Grade attained and I. Q. at time of admission
D. Attitude towards: School
   Teacher
   Subjects
   Classmates
E. Types and Numbers of Previous Offenses
F. Number of Court Appearances
G. Disposition of Courts
H. Subsequent Narcotic Record
   1. When began
   2. Where
   3. What type
   4. Reason for use
   5. Length of time used
   6. Hospital referral
   7. Withdrawal effects
   8. Parental attitude toward boy's use of narcotics

III. Familial Characteristics

A. Number of Children in Family
B. Marital Status of Parents
   1. Broken by divorce
   2. Broken by death: father___ mother___
   3. Broken by separation
   4. Remarried: father___ mother___
   5. Family intact
C. History of Alcoholism: father___ mother___
D. History of Use of Narcotics: father___ mother___
E. History of Jail or Prison: father___ mother___
F. Other information
G. Family Income
   1. From social agencies
   2. Low
   3. Average
   4. High
   5. Not recorded
H. Occupation of Parents: father___ mother___
I. Parental Attitudes

1. Overprotection: father_________ mother_________
2. Indulgence: father_________ mother_________
3. Ambivalence: father_________ mother_________
4. Rejection: father_________ mother_________

J. Educational Level of Parents

K. Area and Neighborhood in which Family Resided

IV. Institutional Adjustment

A. Cottage Adjustment

1. Cleanliness_______ 6. Enuresis________________
2. Language_________ 7. Ability to get along
3. Work habits_______ in group
4. Integrity_________ 8. Personality and emotional
5. Sex habits________ reactions

10. Relationships with family

11. Method of handling boy's need

12. Difficulty in cottage

B. Program Adjustment

1. Where placed: school___ vocational training___ work

2. Attitude toward: school____ teachers_______ vocational training_______ work_______ other boys

3. Progress in: trade and skills________________ academic achievement________________ work habits________________ other interest

4. Week-end visit: return on time or overstayed

indication of use of drugs

5. Number of times before Adjustment Committee____ reasons for appearance

6. Case conference evaluation:

7. Progress committee evaluation:
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


Articles


Pamphlets


Documents