A study of the social histories of 32 negro women committed to a state reformatory for women for the first time September 1941-August 1942

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A STUDY OF THE SOCIAL HISTORIES OF
32 NEGRO WOMEN COMMITTED TO A STATE
REFORMATORY FOR WOMEN FOR THE FIRST
TIME SEPTEMBER 1941 - AUGUST 1942.

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
JUANITA JOSEPHINE SMALL

ATLANTA, GEORGIA
MAY 1943
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Much has been written about delinquency, both juvenile and adult, in an effort to discover exactly what some of the causative factors are that lead to it. It has been accepted that both environmental and hereditary factors play an important and vital part and to draw a fine line in any case by saying it is heredity here or it is environment there, is practically impossible. Delinquent behavior as well as all other types of abnormal behavior is symptomatic of some underlying problem of emotional and personality unadjustment of long duration.

The following statement made by Kenworthy and Lee about lying may easily be applied to any other form of delinquent behavior or potentially delinquent behavior:

Only recently have we come to realize that behavior which is wholly immoral from a superficial point of view may be entirely pathological in its significance and due to factors which have no moral implications whatever. To one to whom lying is immoral and always immoral, it may come as a shock to find that lying is frequently a rather desperate outlet for an individual who finds himself emotionally at bay through no fault of his own.1

In this study we shall see the many different types of behavior that these women adopted because they were "emotionally at bay" or because they were making feeble attempts to compensate for certain inadequacies, deprivations and feelings of insecurity.

1 Marion E. Kenworthy, Porter R. Lee, Mental Hygiene and Social Work (New York, 1929), p. 22
Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to look briefly into the backgrounds of these thirty-two delinquent Negro women to discover what some of the factors and working forces were that contributed to their behavior. At the same time, attention will be called to many of the same factors which occur in any large numbers. Study will be made of the women's families, personal data and legal data.

Scope and Source of Study

The material for the study was received from the police and case records of women committed to the Massachusetts Reformatory for Women, located at Framingham, Massachusetts. There is to be no inclusion in this group, of women who were resentenced either because of revocation of parole from the Reformatory for Women or because of new charges brought against them. In other words, only those women who had never been committed to the state reformatory at any other time were made a part of the study. During the one year period chosen, September 1941 to August 1942, there were out of the total of 483 admissions, 32 Negro women committed for the first time to the Reformatory for Women.

Method of Procedure

Because there is an adequate case work department at the Reformatory which studies rather thoroughly all women committed to the institution from the time of admission up until the time of their release, all of the information desired pertaining to their backgrounds was obtained chiefly from the case records. Each case record contains a chronological history of the woman; outside investigation including court and agency histories which reveal much of the early life of the woman; the family set-up, and something
of the status of the family plus the early delinquencies, if any, of the women and educational and work histories. All of these must be known in order to write a complete social history for the Parole Board or the Commissioner at the time of release. The study was a matter of reading the thirty-two case records and sifting from them most of the required data. From the chronological history there was secured a clearer picture of the women themselves and some of their attitudes about society.

Formal, personal interviews with each woman were not possible because some of them had already been released. Informal conversations were held with 15, or less than half, either in club meetings or as they were encountered going about their daily duties.
CHAPTER II

SOCIAL BACKGROUNDS

The personality of a child develops in response to the interaction within the family situation into which it is born. The traditions and culture patterns, social and economic levels of the family groups are determining factors as to the kind of discipline a child is subjected and exposed. Numerous authorities have expressed the opinion that it is the duty of the adults of a group to teach, and the duty of the children of a group to accept or learn the approved standards of behavior. It is expected that all members of a group will abide by these standards and we usually do what is expected of us by our group. Thus we know that children imitate, copy and learn from those about them, parents and playmates. They are the people from whom they obtain their ideals, hopes, fears, attitudes, values and prejudices. An individual's behavior is too an indication of the extent to which his or her needs have been met. It is hoped that in this chapter it will be seen to what extent these families were able to satisfy the needs of these women.

Nativity of Parents

Birthplaces of fathers. -- The question first arises as to the types of cultures and groups from which the parents of the women came. Of the thirty-two women studied it was found that 17 fathers were born in the south. None of them migrated to the north at an early age, but received their training and education in the southern states and had been completely exposed to southern culture, mores and traditions. Three fathers were born and reared in the north, three in the British West Indies, (two of whom came to the United States in early childhood.) The third remained in the West Indies and never migrated to the United States. One father was born in Portugal, but was brought to Massachusetts at an early age.
The birthplaces of 8 fathers are unknown. This is due partly to the fact that there is some question of the women's legitimacy; that their mothers were promiscuous; or partly to the fact that the fathers deserted when the children were quite young and nothing was ever known of them nor has anything further been known of their whereabouts.

Birthplaces of Mothers.—It was found that 18 mothers of the women studied were born in the south. Of the remaining eleven whose birthplaces are known, nine were born in the north, one in the West Indies and one in Canada. There were 3 whose birthplaces were not known.

As was the case with the fathers, many of the southern born mothers did not migrate to the north until they had become fully adapted to southern customs, and ways of life befitting their social status. Some of them came north with their husbands and children.

Legal Status of Parents

Knowing that a two parent home of some permanency is important for a child during his or her formative years, it is interesting to note to what extent the parents of the women studied were really concerned or able to provide the desirable family milieu for them. The figures obtained for this are that although the parents of 23 of the women were married at the time of their birth, there was early desertion and separation in practically all of them on the part of either the mother or the father. Seven mothers were not married but at the time of the birth of the women in the study did marry the fathers. The legal status of two sets of parents is doubtful or unknown.

Economic Status

It is with some certainty that the economic status of these families can be judged from the types of occupations in which the parent or parents
were gainfully employed. The economic insecurity facing the majority of Negro families is due to the fact that:

Middle class white families who employ Negro domestics often naively hope and even expect that their servants will have a personal standard of health, dress, diction and trustworthiness which will enable them to fit into and support their own standards, particularly in the care of the children. How such behavior can be expected with a six dollar a week wage as the only incentive is a question seldom raised. Notwithstanding their low reward, many colored domestics and other workers do maintain a relatively high standard of efficiency and personal conduct. In general, however, these studies have revealed repeatedly that the maintenance in Negro community life of standards of living and health in keeping with the "American pattern" requires an income which only a small fraction of Negroes enjoy. The reports have underscored the fact that Negro youth generally start out in life surrounded by physical and social conditions conducive to the kind of behavior which in the past has made them the objects of criticism. Thus, the cycle of adverse influences and undesirable social behavior repeats itself generation after generation.1

The occupations mentioned by Von Hentig as being in the lowest layers of the economic structure are agriculture, personal and domestic service.2 The occupations of parents in the study in the order of highest incidence were domestic service, farmer, waiter, laundry worker, janitor, cook, railroad worker. One father was described as contributing to the family support through "odd jobs."

The pursuance of such occupations as those mentioned would explain why so many of the families might be classed as lower class, which as described by E. Franklin Frazier is composed chiefly of "unskilled laborers and many domestic workers."3 However, those few of the families such as the one who could claim a mason for a father, the one whose father owned his own business or the one in which the father was a contractor might be considered middle

3 E. Franklin Frazier, Negro Youth at the Crossways (Washington, D. C., 1940), p. 23
class. In this class are found skilled and most of the semi-skilled workers and a large portion of female domestic servants. Probably the deciding factor in classing a domestic worker in either the lower or middle class would be for whom he works and the length of employment in one family as opposed to the part-time work and temporary, spasmodic employment of some. These "one family" domestics are in a minority though in this study, numbering on the whole but five.

Too much emphasis cannot be placed upon the effect that a mother's working outside of the home has upon the unity of the family. Large percentages of Negro youths are forced to grow up in broken homes where it is necessary for the mother to work. Because of this they are found to be exposed to vice and crime of all forms, and they therefore contribute in large number to the delinquency in the community. Every mother of the women in this study worked out of the home with the exception of four who were either too poorly equipped physically or mentally to pursue an occupation.

Contacts with social agencies may serve as some indication of the economic security that was available to the women. It is found that according to Social Service Index reports that twenty-three families were known to agencies classified as those providing financial assistance. One mother is reported as having begged from every agency available including Catholic, Protestant and Jewish. Nine families were not registered by any agencies. With the exception of two families who were rather financially secure with both parents working together as domestics, the accounts given by the women indicate that a need existed.

Size of Families and Early Family Relationships

The only child.--The places of the women in their families varied from

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1 Robert L. Sutherland, Color, Class and Personality (Washington, D. C., 1942), P. 69.
that of being an only child to being one of sixteen. Seven of the women were an "only child." An only child is considered here to mean that she either had no siblings or that all other siblings died in early infancy. One of these seven was raised by her grandparents and knew nothing of her father. There was much dissension between parent and grandparents regarding her upbringing. She was placed at one time with a friend who gave her rather indifferent care. The girl later became illegitimately pregnant and reluctantly married the putative father. The mother states that she "always wanted to be the center of attention." Two others in this group were placed under foster home and institutional care at early ages. One began stealing and continued this form of behavior through adolescence; the other was raised in an orphanage and later placed in a wage home. She entered into relations with her employer's son, later giving birth to his child. Another accompanied her mother when she separated from the father in the West Indies. One woman had suffered the traumatic experience of having her psychotic mother placed in a mental institution. Her grandfather attempted to care for her, but found her difficult to discipline and requested foster home care for her. After frequent replacements, she began to run away from these homes. She was sent repeatedly to hospitals for observations. At the age of seventeen, she gave birth to an illegitimate child. Then there is the woman whose divorced mother worked as a domestic, living a questionable life and leaving the child with her grandmother or neighbors who in turn left the child to her own designs. This woman displayed a bad temper and a stubborn streak. Those who have known her have reported that she has "never been able to get along with anyone." Two other women were orphaned at an early age, but grandmothers and aunts assumed the responsibility of rearing them. In one case, the maternal aunt of one, a nurse, offered the child moral standards, but expected too much of her as a child and was entirely too strict. The result
was revolt on the part of the girl. In the other case, there was definite exploitation of the girl by the relatives with resultant refusals on her part to remain with them any longer. The last of this group was removed from a not too happy home by her mother. Together, they journeyed to a neighboring state where the child was placed in an institution where she remained for eight years.

One of Three Siblings.—Eight of the women in the study came from families in which there were three siblings. One came from a broken home in which all three children were placed in separate foster homes after both parents deserted. She remembers her mother as being a "show woman." Another in this group was brought north with her parents at the age of nine. Both parents were working as domestics. The girl was lazy, drifted and started supporting herself at the age of fifteen by prostitution, lewd and lascivious cohabitation. She had one illegitimate child whom she left with her parents and wandered off to New York and Boston. Another in this group was held to rather rigid standards by her mother. The older sister stopped school to work with the mother. They both had high ambitions for the younger sister who disappointed them after having an illegitimate child and living a loose life. Another woman became a half orphan at the age of two. Her mother's second marriage lasted only a few months after which she was required to absent herself from the home to support herself and children. Another woman led an ordinary life with her own parents in meagre circumstances. There was one who was torn between divorced parents, and after they both remarried, step-parents played important parts. Another was a product of a broken home. Her mother deserted when she was a baby; her father obtained a divorce; remarried; and raised another family. The woman found herself in constant conflict with her stepmother and step-siblings. The last of this group has a sordid background colored by promiscuity on the part of her mother and her later death caused by tuberculosis. Her mother was never married,
but gave birth to three illegitimate children. The woman's grandfather reared them in his home. He himself later married a 22 year old girl who was pregnant by him. The woman's behavior, although it was not condoned by her grandfather, was accepted by him as inevitable.

One of Four Siblings.---Three women belong to the next group in which there are those who came from families of four siblings. The first in this group was taken away by her mother following the parents' separation. There is no evidence that they obtained a divorce, but her mother remarried twice. During all these years her mother worked in laundries and private homes, leaving the children pretty much to their own designs. The second in this group was illegitimate. Along with her step-siblings, she was reared by her grandparents in the south after her mother went north, following an unsuccessful marriage. The last in this group came from a home in which the family life was stable and orderly. Her parents prided themselves upon their background and the fact that they were law-abiding and self-respecting. Strict religious training played a very important part in the early life of this woman.

One of Five or Six Siblings.---In the group of families with five siblings there are two women. The first experienced separation from her siblings after the death of both parents and the subsequent adoption of all the children by various friends of the family. The second of this group with her siblings was supported by a widowed mother.

Two women came from families in which there were six siblings. The first had lost two siblings in infancy from pneumonia. Both parents worked steadily out of the home to provide for the remaining four. The father had become chronically ill and the burden of support rested upon the mother. The second was one of many illegitimate children born of mixed parents. They were all removed from the home at an early age. The woman was very
fond of her step-siblings but was never allowed to feel that she was one of them because of differences in their coloring.

One of Seven Siblings.—Three families had seven children. The first does not remember her own mother and states that her father remarried. She is extremely reticent about disclosing any facts of their early home life. Her sisters have been known to be leading questionable lives for quite some time. The second of this group was brought north by her mother with her siblings when she was six months old. She remembers nothing of her father. Her mother, however, returned south leaving her in the care of her older siblings when she was still in elementary school. None of them have kept in touch with the mother.

One of Ten Siblings or More.—The next group consists of women who were from families with ten siblings. The mother of the first had had three illegitimate children before her marriage. When the mother left the father claiming incompatibility, she took the children with her. They received public relief until the mother died. Then the father reclaimed them and remarried. There was much friction between the two sets of children. The next in this group was from a family of poor farmers in Virginia. The last in the group was from North Carolina. Her parents reported that she was always a problem at home. Severe beatings were given to her, but no improvement was seen in her behavior. Her parents are poor God-fearing farmers. The woman states she was tired staying at home.

One woman came from a family of eleven siblings. There were two sets of children since her own father died and her mother remarried. She reports friction between her own siblings and step-siblings.

The two largest family units consisted of sixteen siblings. In one woman's case the father deserted and his whereabouts have not been known for years. The children have had to work to assist their mother. In the
second family the mother was in poor health for years because the children were born in such rapid succession. The older siblings report they spoiled the youngest who is the woman in the case, and that they all had aspirations for her. She was never required to work; did not have a number of friends her own age; never confided in any of the family, but was very reticent about her thoughts, activities and friends.

These brief sketches of the family lives of the women reveal certain things that are worth considering when thinking of factors or forces that might have affected the behavior, attitudes and emotional security of these women as children. Many of them never experienced normal family life and relationships. Some were exposed to it for a few short years, but later suffered the traumatic experience of being sent to live in foster homes either with strangers or relatives and probably without preparation for such changes. Remarriages of parents were quite frequent in many cases thus causing a conflict to exist in the minds of the women and very often an actual conflict with step-parents. Discipline in the lives of the majority of these women was lax or not present at all. In some instances there was parental rejection without any affectional ties between parents. Those who lived in foster homes found something lacking in them and little or no security. There was found to be no relationship between the ordinal position and types of relationship within the family setting.

Here again, families contacts with social agencies might be indicative of a problem existing. In this instance, not economical needs or financial problems, but social and emotional ones were indicated such as sickness, truancy, stealing, uprooting of family units and the presence of any other problems that might lead to later conflict with the law. These agencies that could and did offer consultative services were the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, City Hospitals, Child Welfare Agencies, Juvenile
Courts, and Institutions for Mental Disorders.

Personal Data

Age.—Contrary to what may be expected or what may have been concluded from the use of the term "women," many of those studied are in reality not mature adult individuals emotionally although legally they were considered chronologically as adults. They are girls in late adolescence and early twenties, suffering from instability and uncertainties that accompany the transition from a child's world to the adult world, especially since their childhood did not offer them much satisfaction for their needs.

Seven of the women studied were seventeen, eighteen and nineteen upon admission. Seventeen were in their twenties, four in their thirties, three in their forties and one was in her late fifties. The average age was twenty-six.

Nativity.—Both the north and south are represented as birthplaces of the women. Sixteen were born in the south, in Georgia, Virginia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Florida, Alabama and the border state of Maryland. Fifteen were born in the north, coming from Massachusetts, New Jersey, Rhode Island and Pennsylvania. One was born out of the country in the British West Indies.

Education.—None of the women studied had any outstanding educational achievements. Seventeen advanced no further than elementary grades. Less than half, in fact eleven, did progress to high schools in New York and Massachusetts. Rather doubtful high school educations are reported by four from North Carolina, Alabama and Florida. There were, however, no high school graduates found among the whole group.

Various reasons were stated for the women's having left school. The most prevalent one was for economic reasons, that is, they wanted to or had
to go to work. Some were quite retarded and because they were unable to advance any further, withdrew from school. Coupled with these two reasons was the lack of interest on the part of many of them. One other reason might be stated and that is that the women as girls were sent to correctional institutions. Frequent replacements in foster homes in some instances contributed too to the women's discontinuing their education.

Mental Capacities.—Discussion of the women's education would naturally bring to mind their mental endowment. Looking at the bare figures and taking them at face value, it would appear that few of them possessed the average adult endowment. Twelve of the women were not tested at the time the material was gathered. Of the remaining twenty there were, five in the 90 and over group; three in the 80-90 group; four in the 70-80 group; and eight were found to have I.Q.'s below 70.

These figures were arrived at by tests administered at the Reformatory. With this in mind, then, one cannot wholly accept these findings knowing that some of them had never before had the experience of being tested. Tests for general intelligence were Terman-Merrill, Binet or Weschler-Bellevue; for determining manual and planning ability the Porteus; ability to see relationships, Healy P. C. II. The Scaled Information test is administered to determine general information. Illiterate persons are given the Beta instead of Terman-Merrill or Weschler-Bellevue. In some special cases, when requested, Rorschach, Allport Personality and Wells Memory tests are given.

Because of the differences in cultural and educational backgrounds some of the women would not have been exposed to the information which some of the tests actually measure. Then too, it must be borne in mind that the women are tested in an artificial setting and under terrific emotional strain. Therefore, as has been indicated, the validity of the tests must be considered with the above mentioned factors in mind. However, after allowances
arc made on the basis of these factors, it is evident that the general intelligence level of the women tested is low.

Work History.--As has been seen by the education the women have had, they were not prepared to earn a livelihood in any other than the jobs offering low wages and poor working conditions. They entered employment at an early age. Domestic employment occurs most frequently among the listed occupations, with 30 women reporting that type of work as their chief legitimate means of support. The remaining two worked in laundries, restaurants and factories.

There was nothing to be gained by doing the type of work they were engaged in. No advancements were possible. Some of the women reported irregularity of pay, unsatisfactory hours, dislike of the work. As was stated by one woman, she turned to prostitution because she "hated dirty work." Another woman gave up domestic work and started "running a house" which offered more remuneration.

In some instances it was a case of the women accompanying families to the north as servants, becoming dissatisfied in a short while and leaving their jobs for more exciting things. One woman came north with a family and after a few months she stole a number of pillow cases from her employer because "she didn't pay me."

Occupations in which there was occasional employment are beautician, pastry cook, singer, dancer. Work was also done on W. P. A. and M. Y. A. projects and in canning factories.

Marital Status.--Sixteen women included in this study were married. Ten of them were separated from their husbands at the time of their commitment to the Reformatory. The husband of one was at Deer Island, penal institution for men. One woman was divorced; one way living in common-law relationship; two were living with their husbands at the time of commitment; and one was
a widow. The remaining sixteen were single.

According to those who were married, their marital lives had not been happy or normal ones. There were frequent separations, Unfaithfulness and dissension reported.

There was too, little evidence of the women's observing matrimony as sacred. Pre-marital and extra-marital relations are in evidence in all but three cases. It seems to be an accepted pattern of behavior of the groups or individuals with whom the women associated. Not in one case did any woman express any inhibitions regarding sex relations.

A number of the children resulting from the promiscuity of these women were rejected and neglected by them. They were removed from the custody of their mothers and placed in foster homes as state wards.

The foregoing data point out certain facts that give a composite picture of the backgrounds of these thirty-two women. Over one half of the parents were southern born. This factor could serve as a basis for cultural friction. Many of the women were illegitimate, or siblings were illegitimate. This indicates a certain lack of moral standards. Economic conditions were not of the best in any of the women's families and a consideration of the occupations in which parents were engaged explains this point.

The personal data reveal that the largest part of the women were, at the time of admission, in late adolescence or early twenties. One half of them were born in the south. Of the twenty who were tested, twelve were found to possess limited mental capacities and question is raised as to the appropriateness and validity of the tests in being administered to these women. Sixteen of the women were married but they were either unable or unwilling to assume the responsibilities of marriage and there was family disintegration. This indicates a repetition of the pattern of broken homes, illegitimate pregnancies and loose moral standards that characterized their
family life before marriage. The lack of outstanding educational achievements of the women showed that they could not, because of limited mental capacity, realize any degree of success. Then too, some withdrew from school for economic reasons. Without special training or educational background the women found themselves engaged in work that offered little remuneration and some admitted that it was because of this that they turned to such things as prostitution.
CHAPTER III

LEGAL DATA

Under the Massachusetts Law commitment to the Reformatory is warranted by 49 charges of violations. The thirty-two women included in this study were committed for ten of these charges which were drunkenness or drunkenness with assault and battery upon the arresting officer, stubborn child, idle and disorderly, larceny, fornication, neglect of minor children, adultery, keeping and maintaining certain disorderly house and lewdness or lewd cohabitation.

Early Delinquencies and Commitments

A large proportion of the women had received some form of correctional treatment or had some encounter with the law prior to being committed to the Reformatory. Only those encounters however that occurred before late adolescence or before they could be committed to an adult institution are considered in this section. Under early delinquencies there will also be considered behavior, which although it did not lead to encarceration nor for that matter, to encounters with the law indicated a lack of moral standards.

Illicit sex behavior was found to have been experienced by some women when they were quite young. This accounts for the number of illegitimate children, lives of prostitution and admitted promiscuity on the part of the women. Eleven of the total of 32 were mothers of illegitimate children. Two admitted having experienced either an abortion or miscarriage. Many

1 Annual Report of the Commissioner of Correction, Year Ending December, 1940, pp. 88-89.
of these illegitimate children were born when their mothers were in late adolescence or their early twenties. A statement made by one of the women indicates the attitude that prevails regarding sex behavior:

"Many young girls engage in sexual relations, visit "high spots" and become pregnant".

Thinking such as this, on the part of the women brings out again the fact that an individual's behavior is controlled or influenced by the group with which she associates. The desire to be accepted and gain approval is so great that they resort to questionable and unaccepted behavior.

Continuing with the early delinquencies, we see that eight of the women had been committed to the Girls Industrial School on "stubborn child" charges. Each of them was paroled, but was returned to the institution because of revocation of parole. A charge of fornication sent 1 woman to the Industrial School at the age of seventeen; another was sentenced at the age of fifteen on the charge of lewdness; still another was sent to Lancaster on a larceny charge.

Considering behavior that did not bring the women into conflict with the law, but perhaps should have, there is the woman who at the age of sixteen became pregnant by her employer's son. For years she blackmailed her employer, and thus was the beginning of her delinquent career. Soliciting was the means of support for two of the women at the ages of fifteen and sixteen.

There are eleven women for whom no record is found concerning early delinquencies or commitments. The early lives of these women were spent in communities from which reports were not available. Although there is no legal data for them, there is evidence that some of them led a rather free and easy existence as far as sex behavior was concerned. There was the one woman who commented that she did not believe in marriage but had been living
in a common-law relationship in Alabama since she was sixteen and had two children.

Number and Frequency of Arrests

A continuance of the pattern of behavior adopted in earlier years resulted in the frequent conflicts with the law later in life. Probationary periods for most of them had been unsuccessful, which may or may not speak well for the probation departments in those areas represented. It is true that for two women, the present commitment to the Reformatory is their first arrest.

Closer scrutiny of their records reveals that the largest number of arrests is twenty-five for a forty-six year old woman. Her delinquent career began at the age of twenty-three and included charges of fornication, larceny, drunkenness, possessing morphine, violating the drug law, idle and disorderly and possession of narcotics. She had adopted over a period of years a number of aliases, using the name of each current common-law husband which made it such a task for the authorities to finally succeed in having her committed to the Reformatory.

One thirty-five year old woman, before being committed had offered no problems during adolescence, but since 1934 she has been arrested three times for idleness and disorderly conduct, adultery and assault and battery with dangerous weapon. In contrast to this, there is one forty-two year old who had spent twenty months in a house of correction. Since 1934 she has been apprehended twenty-one times on maintaining common nuisance, lewd and lascivious cohabitation, fornication, drunkenness, adultery, larceny, disorderly house and soliciting prostitution.

A follow up of the careers of those girls who had spent some time in the Industrial School reveals that upon release they continued their misconduct
and were again apprehended by the police. One was arrested four times since 1932 for drunkenness, another four times since 1934 on stubborn child and larceny charges. One was arrested on two charges of runaway and stubborn child since 1940 after having been paroled from Lancaster. Another Lancaster product, age forty-two at the time of commitment to the Reformatory continued her delinquent career after parole in 1926 having been charged ten times with fornication, keeping and exposing liquor for sale, neglect of minor child, drunkenness, adultery and polygamy. After her release from Lancaster on a charge of fornication at the age of seventeen, another woman was arrested nine times since 1932.

Two remaining parolees from Lancaster, age eighteen were caught in the web and questionable associates, unwholesome leisure time activities plus many emotional conflicts led to their arrest and commitment to the Reformatory. These two girls are particularly interesting because each represents the two extremes in coloring that are found in the Negro race. The delinquencies of both are directly attributable to their feeling about their color.

There are eighteen who are considered in a group apart from the others. They have had no previous incarcerations in Massachusetts and have only come to the attention of the Massachusetts police since 1937. Three were found to have been arrested previously in New York, New Jersey and Rhode Island. They are among the seven of the group who have migrated from other states both northern and southern. It is quite possible that the others did get into difficulties in their home states, but no record was obtained of this. The remaining eleven were residents of Massachusetts.

The average number of arrests for these eighteen women is two within the period of five years. The charges were lewdness neglect of child, idle and disorderly, larceny, prostitution, stubborn child, fornication, vagrancy,
adultery. The frequent occurrence of sex offenses is worthy of note. The age range of this group is seventeen to thirty-four.

This factual information points to certain things. Of the total of thirty-two, only two had had no encounter at all with the police prior to commitment. The frequent coupling of sex offenses with other offenses cannot be ignored. It may be interpreted as meaning that the deprivations and neglect experienced by these women in the primary family group tie in with their need for love and attention which perverted sex life offers as a substitution for close family ties. Weaknesses in the treatment of these early delinquencies, particularly those which resulted in commitment to Lancaster, are perceived.

These legal data also give us some picture of the types of offenses that brought the women into conflict with the law. Personality maladjustments are evidenced by offenses such as drunkenness and idle and disorderly. The stubborn child charges point to the possible presence of conflicts within the family set-up and inadequacies on the part of the parent or guardian to discipline the adolescent girls or the failure on the part of the parents to understand the behavior of the girls. The numerous sex charges would lead us to believe that "they are more responsive to the colorful satisfactions of good times here and now, to sex indulgence, and to other free and easy behavior which parents do not or cannot suppress and which the example of other youth incites."\(^1\)

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CHAPTER IV

FIVE CASE STUDIES

Only through presenting the individual cases of some of the women will a clearer conception of the motivating forces of their behavior be obtained. It will be seen that from early childhood they were deprived of gratifications and satisfactions of their needs that make for normal development and the ultimate total adjustment of an adult in society. These cases might be thought of as representative of the total because had any others been chosen there would be seen the same underlying influences and forces in the lives of the women.

Case #1

Gertrude.—Gertrude was committed to the Reformatory for Women at the age of nineteen. She is an illegitimate child born in Boston. The circumstances surrounding her birth were of importance because they directly affected her entire life thereafter. Gertrude's mother at the time of her birth was married but as a result of immorality and promiscuity on her part, Gertrude was born. After her birth, her mother's husband secured a divorce on the grounds of adultery. When Gertrude was thirteen months old her mother deserted her and disappeared entirely from the picture. Gertrude was received by the Division of Child Guardianship and there was no record of her having had any siblings or relatives. Nothing else was ever known of the mother, her husband or of the alleged father of Gertrude.

By the time she was twelve, Gertrude had been placed in six foster homes. As early as five she was reported as stealing from her foster parents, gradually increasing her thefts from the small amounts of five and ten cents to $3.00 to $5.00. When questioned about this habit of hers she stated that she could not help it. Also in connection with her foster homes she said that she was always discriminated against because of her extremely dark color and that one foster mother went so far as to hit her with a stove poker. She also believed that foster mothers agreed to take her only because of the money they received. She talked with skepticism and contempt of all her foster home experiences.

While under the supervision of the Division of Child Guardianship, Gertrude in spite of her many placements and replacement in foster homes completed the 9th grade. She never repeated any grades and belonged to the glee club of the last school she attended. Gertrude received the usual religious education attending the Baptist Sunday Schools and churches, contributing to their choirs and singing groups with her contralto voice.
Music seems to be her outstanding interest at present and she takes great pride in her voice.

Gertrude's continued misbehavior in foster homes resulted in her being referred to the Judge Baker Guidance Center for intensive treatment. This however was not successful and in September, 1935, the Division of Child Guardianship reported that although Gertrude was very kind hearted, thoughtful of others and quite capable in housework, and willing, she could not be trusted to leave other people's property alone, and she was very untruthful. They recommended that she receive the discipline and training of an industrial school before being placed in another home. Consequently she was brought before the court and committed to the Industrial School for Girls.

For three years in the Industrial School Gertrude was considered underhanded, untruthful and resentful and on the whole a very difficult girl to train. Her hardworking and industrious manner was however commented upon favorably, as were her moral habits. In 1938 Gertrude was paroled from the Industrial School to a work placement, but by March of 1939 she was returned to the Industrial School because her employer reported her as having stolen continuously from one of her friends. Gertrude's attitude did not in any way indicate that she regretted what she had done, so it was thought advisable to return her to the Industrial School.

A few months later she was paroled from the School again for the second time. It was not more than a matter of four months that her new employer reported missing goods valued at $33.95. Gertrude was given an opportunity by her employer to reimburse her. She succeeded in paying back most of her debt, but in February of 1940 the New York City police reported they had her in custody. Once again she was returned to the Industrial School.

September 1940 found Gertrude emerging again from the Industrial School and going to work as a pastry cook in a hotel and later into a private family as a domestic. It was while she was working here, that in 1941 just before Christmas that she forged the name of a former employer on a blank check of her present employer for the sum of $10.00 payable to herself. Her explanation of her actions was that she wanted to spend the Christmas holidays in Georgia with a friend and that since she had already sent her trunk, she had to obtain the money some way to pay for its transportation. Gertrude was brought into court after being apprehended by the police and was given a five year indeterminate sentence to the Reformatory for Women on a charge of larceny.

Gertrude in all these years of being shifted from one foster home to another had not made any close friends or steady associates. She felt that she had only one friend, the girl with whom she was going to visit. As far as male companions was concerned she stated that there was only one with whom she had been associating but she considered him a casual friend more than a "boy friend." Gertrude admits the circumstances of this present arrest but maintains that this is the first time that she has committed larceny, preferring to believe that it was because of her color that she was first sent to the Industrial School.
We have here a picture of a girl whose life has been colored by three things, desertion by the mother, frequent foster home replacements, and a very dark complexion which can cause many hardships to those with a healthy outlook on life. Gertrude was never secure in any situation in her life. Stealing to her might have represented her resentment towards society and more specifically against all mother persons.

Case #2

Lillian.—Lillian is the second daughter of southern parents, born in New Jersey. At the time of her commitment to the Reformatory for Women she was thirty-one years old. Lillian's mother came north to Cambridge when she was five years old. At the age of fifteen she was offered a job in New Jersey. Working to her was nothing new because she claimed that she had been working ever since she was seven. While in New Jersey she met and married Lillian's father, a waiter in the same restaurant where she was working. Three children were born of this union of whom Lillian is the second. Her older sister is still living but a younger brother died of pneumonia in infancy. Because Lillian's mother wanted to return to Massachusetts where she had lived all her life, the whole family moved to Massachusetts. The father, however, did not fulfill his obligations as the head of the family, working sometimes for a period of five months and doing nothing for the rest of the year. Lillian's mother during all this time was still working and feeling that she was capable of raising her two daughters by herself. She and the father separated, he returning to his relatives in New Jersey and she remaining in Massachusetts.

Through much effort and hard work, Lillian's mother managed to keep a home for herself and her two daughters and to give them an education. She looked with contempt upon other mothers who allowed the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children or any other agency to take their children because of their own inability to do so. Lillian was thought to be the more promising of the two daughters and more opportunities were given her by her mother. Her sister upon completing the 8th grade withdrew from school and decided to remain at home as a help to the mother who was working as housekeeper for another family. All of this the older sister did without any hard feelings, thinking that it was her duty as an older sister to help take care of Lillian. All three, Lillian, her sister and mother formed a closely knit family unit.

Lillian completed elementary school and because she showed great ability for drawing, the principal of the school suggested that she continue in the High School of Practical Arts which she did for three years.

Lillian's mother had always been conservative, religious and austere, seeing to it that the children always attended the local Baptist Church.
She did not allow any smoking or drinking, and in general set definite standards of conduct which she expected the girls to follow. Lillian knew this and when she was offered a well paying job away from home she did not dare to tell her mother that she did not want to go to school any longer, but accepted the job at her own responsibility. When she received her first pay she told her mother about the job, and although her mother was keenly disappointed she agreed that since Lillian was eighteen years old she was capable of deciding for herself what she wanted.

Soon after she started working, Lillian began keeping company with a young man with whom she became intimate. Her mother found out about her affair under her pregnancy and visited the "no good boy's" parents and asked him to marry Lillian. The older members of the family absolutely forbade it. Lillian has continued going with this man for fourteen years in spite of the interference of his family. His older sister has completely taken over the child in question and is giving her the best of care. At the time of the baby's birth, Lillian's mother forbade the father to visit but he would often get drunk and while in this state would break into the house. When Lillian became sick after giving birth to the child, he took the baby to his own home. Lillian has no desire to take the child back because she realizes that his family can give her more opportunities. His family also believe that neither Lillian nor their own son would be good examples for the child.

Lillian continued living in a semi-common-law relationship with her boy friend, working as domestic and contributing to the support of her daughter. His family continued to be antagonistic toward her and her probable marriage to their son. He, however, was continually making promises of marriage but would never keep them. He would keep any company that he saw fit and Lillian declared that she grew tired of waiting for him to marry her. She had by this time become quite a drinker and although never really popular managed to find many drinking companions.

Lillian's mother remarried in 1940, much to Lillian's disgust. She felt that her mother's second husband married her because he thought she had money.

Lillian had arrived at the state where she found herself having fun only when she had been drinking and it was on a night in February 1942 that she was emerging from a tavern in town when an officer addressed her asking her her name. She immediately became impertinent and it became necessary for the officer to arrest her. She was subsequently sent to the Reformatory on a charge of "idle and disorderly."

In Lillian's own words she feels that the present situation could have been avoided, if only her boy friend's family had consented to their marriage years ago. She says too that she is planning to marry him when released stating that it wouldn't hurt any of us to be married now.

It appears though that Lillian's difficulty stems from the fact that as a child her family had too high aspirations for her, that she was
subjected to too much discipline. When she accepted the job she was really openly revolting against her mother's rule. Her later chronic alcoholism might be attributed to the fact that she was frustrated and unable to remedy the situation as far as her marrying was concerned.

Case #5

Delia.—Delia presents a particularly interesting problem. She is of mixed parentage, the illegitimate daughter of a white mother of German descent and a Negro father. Altogether Delia's mother bore three illegitimate children. Della's stepfather who accepted her as his own had a court record behind him. He had served time in the House of Correction for non-support and he had been brought into court on a Neglect charge. He had at one time been employed at a boy's school in a neighboring state but had been discharged for telling immoral stories to the boys. He finally deserted his family in 1932. Delia's mother had a very poor reputation, having neglected her family and the responsibilities that went with caring for children. She too finally deserted the children in 1937. She had previously been to the Reformatory for Women in 1934 for vagrancy and bore a court record from a training school in another state.

Of all of her siblings, Delia was the only one who showed Negro blood. At the time that Delia and her next youngest sister were placed in the care of the Division of Child Guardianship an older sister was sent to the training school in the state. Since being placed in the care of the state, Delia claims that she has been made to feel that she was of colored extraction. She maintained that her parents were white, and at the same time realizes that she is illegitimate.

At the age of eight Delia was placed away from her mother and father as a neglected child. This hurt her very much, because she loved her mother and father. Delia remained under the guardianship of the Division of Child Guardianship until she was sixteen. The years in between, though, found her shifted from one foster home to another always feeling that she was unwanted. She found it difficult to cooperate with the families that she was placed with. There was always a burning question in her mind as to why she had been placed in Negro foster homes in which the parents were very light skinned but Negro nevertheless. She carried a deep complex regarding this matter and had a feeling of resentment against people who did not explain this to her. She remembers her childhood as having been a very hard one.

Delia completed one and one half years in a Massachusetts high school. Her attitude was indifferent, she played truant and altogether showed little interest at all in her studies. The school physician found her to be a congenital syphilitic.

Delia became more of a placement problem when at the age of fourteen she learned that her mother had been murdered by a jealous suitor. Della began keeping a scrapbook of all the newspaper clippings regarding the
tragedy. She became rebellious of authority and belligerent in her attitude. She ran away from the foster homes, pilfered money and small articles from her foster mothers, disregarded any regulations as to hours and was completely defiant. It was reported that she had jumped out of the windows of some foster homes and remained out roaming the street until all hours. In school, she presented a problem because she would circulate vicious stories about other children. Teachers reported her because she made vile vulgar remarks and was caught lifting the skirts of other girls.

The result of all this was that when Della was sixteen years old, she become so unmanageable that her foster mother asked the Division of Child Guardianship to remove her from the home. She was taken to court and sentenced to the Industrial School for Girls. This did nothing more than increase her bitterness and she did not adjust well to the training school routine. Della's older sister was at the industrial school at the same time but they did not have much of an opportunity to associate with each other. After a period of 21 months in the industrial school, Della was paroled. She failed to adjust and was returned to the school on revocation of parole. This situation repeated itself twice until summer of 1941 when she was again paroled. At this time, she was placed out for domestic service in a small community in Massachusetts. Six days after being sent to this placement, she ran away. She became friendly with a Negro woman in the Roxbury district of Boston, lived with her in her home and associated with her son. She secured work at a grille as a singer and enjoyed for the "first time this type of life and mode of living." She had relations with her friend's son and they were planning to be married after he secured a divorce from his first wife. Della became illegitimately pregnant by this man but had a miscarriage in February soon after being returned to the Industrial School in January on a charge of revocation of parole and a filed charge of lewd and lascivious cohabitation. She was transferred from the industrial school to the Reformatory for Women in March of 1942 and she is to remain under the jurisdiction of the state until she reaches majority.

Della has always wanted more than anything to be a part of a normal family unit and wanted to be reunited with her mother whom she considered a good woman. She professes that she had always been exceedingly fond of her mother. She felt that the authorities, either the Division of Child Guardianship or the Industrial School always attempted to keep her away from her mother. The day that her mother was murdered she had visited her secretly and had procured money from her with which to go to the movies. One half hour after she left the tragedy occurred.
This following statement made by Della might give some insight into the problem that was weighing upon her mind. "I had a white mother. I didn't know I had some colored blood in me until I was placed in colored foster homes because all of my sisters were placed in white homes." She further states that it has always been her ambition to be a white girl and assumed that she was, and now she has a "guilty conscience."

These facts about the life of Della leave no doubt that she was, by the time she reached adolescence, a very mixed up and confused child. Having come from a home in which the morals were not any too good and which later was broken, she naturally carried resentment towards those persons who later were directing her life. The traumatic shock of her mother's death only served to intensify her difficulties. The element of color cannot be wholly ignored here, because her reactions are like those of many Negroes who are not one race or the other. Della felt both emotionally and racially insecure.

Case #4

Vera.-- Vera is the youngest daughter of southern parents. They had little schooling but both of them were able to read and write. Vera says her father owns an express business and a farm in Palm Beach. Vera has six siblings, four brothers and two sisters. Her mother moved to New York when Vera was six weeks old and the father remained in Florida. Vera can offer no explanation for this separation on the part of her parents.

Vera and her sisters and brothers attended schools in New York and New Jersey, but as soon as they were able to work, they left their mother and settled by themselves. One brother obtained a college education and attended one of the higher rated Negro colleges for two years with the desire to become a doctor. He married young, however, and joined his brothers in the management of several beer gardens in New York and New Jersey.

Vera's sisters, meanwhile were working as waitress and domestic and her mother returned to Florida. Vera has not contacted her mother and has no idea of her whereabouts. It was felt that the mother had not really been a vital influence in the life of her children.
Upon graduation from elementary school in New Jersey, Vera worked during the summer for several families as a domestic. She then attended high school for three years and answered that she "got tired" when questioned as to her reasons for leaving when she only had one more year to complete. All the while she was attending school in New Jersey she was under the not so rigid eye of her siblings.

Vera did not remain for any period of time in any of her domestic placements because she does not like "cheap work." At the same time she was soliciting in the streets and did not make her home with any of her siblings. She explained this by saying that they would not approve of her conduct. There were no doubts in her mind that they knew the sort of life she was leading but it was better "not to do it around, you know." Vera's behavior was due to certain friends who did certain things and in order to keep their friendship Vera did the same thing. She knows that many other decent people would have befriended her but she has never liked to do "dirty work" nor to wear "cheap things." By soliciting she was able to get all of the lovely things she wanted. Proudly she states that she had never received less than $2.00 for her services. Vera feels that she has never had a chance and wants a "good job." She claims that "if I can buy the things I want I will not have to solicit. I only do it for the money, you know."

For the past seven years, Vera has been leading this sort of life, having been reported by the F. B. I. as being arrested in 1940 for Grand Larceny and in 1941 for loitering and disorderly person. Vera at the time of her previous arrests used aliases.

In June 1941, Vera came to Boston to visit with a friend. She continued making a living in her accustomed manner. In August the police raided the apartment in which there was a party in progress and found Vera with her friend in the company of two soldiers from a nearby camp. She admitted prostitution was her means of livelihood. She was committed to the Reformatory as a "lewd person" and as "keeping and maintaining a certain disorderly house."

This brief picture of Vera's life indicates pretty clearly that she puts great value on having "pretty things." This could be due to an earlier life spent in comparative poverty, and an early childhood in which she was left to her own designs. It could not be thought for a moment that her siblings could have provided her with the proper care and guidance she required. The early separation of her parents and her mother's rejection of the children did nothing towards making her emotionally secure.

Case #5

Esther.—Esther was an illegitimate child born in Boston. Her mother, in order to marry the man of her choice accused him of being the
the child's father. They were married but when Esther was nine weeks old she was boarded in the home of an elderly friend of her mother's. Here, her mother paid $4 a week for her support and she received this rather indifferent care until she was five years old.

Her mother removed her from this home and carried her to Providence where she was placed in the Providence Shelter. She remained there until 1931. All the while her mother was working as domestic in Providence and was reported as leading a very questionable life. In 1931 her mother removed Esther from the shelter and together they returned to Boston where they found the father living in a common-law relationship with another woman. The mother initiated non-support proceedings against the father. Esther lived with her mother and watched a succession of boy friends come and go.

The mother was found murdered in the early part of the following year. She had been killed by one of her boy friends. Esther's father took her to live with him and the woman with whom he was living. A complaint was sent into the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children that Esther was living in a bad environment. She was also staying out nights with men and had refused to attend school. The woman with whom she and her father were living worked out of the home every day and offered no supervision to the girl. Contact with the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children revealed that Esther was staying away from the house for periods of two and three days and when questioned about her whereabouts answered that they should mind their own business.

The father finally appealed to the court to have Esther placed in some institution because he could not do anything with her and he wanted her placed "someplace out of mischief". When this request was made, Esther was out of the home living with a man. In court she claimed that she had left home to live with this man because her parents did not want her at home. She denied having had relations with this man stating that her status was that of housekeeper. She was found to be a lewd person and was sent to the Industrial School.

The social worker who had worked with her reported that she was uncontrollable, that she liked to dramatize herself and could put on an act of hysteric at a moment's notice. She had danced and sung at various night clubs in the south end of Boston. She also admitted having had intercourse with a variety of men.

At Lancaster Esther was found to be irresponsible, lazy and secretive. In March of 1934 she was paroled to a foster mother of good character who became immensely interested in the child. She found housework to do by the day but was disobedient and insisted on keeping bad company. She stayed out all night, drank and became involved with various men. She became pregnant and was returned to the Industrial School where it was found that she had also contracted gonorrhea. Her baby was sent to her grandparents, who up until this time had remained completely out of the picture, but who desired to have the baby. Esther, incidentally had not seen him since that time nor has she made any effort to contact
her grandparents who are reported to be very respectable people living in a small coastal town in Massachusetts.

A second parole period, during which Esther was placed with Negro employers was not any more successful than the first one. She was willful and defiant and neglectful of the baby. On some occasions she refused to work and there was also some question of her relationship with her employer's husband. This period ended with her being returned to the Industrial School.

She remained in the school for five months and was paroled again to her foster mother to whom she had been paroled the first time. After a short period she became dissatisfied and left to live with her father whose own standards in the meantime had not improved any. She returned to her foster mother, though, and continued to live a rather restless life, until 1938 she became of age and married. This marriage was an unhappy one since there were continuous quarrels and reconciliations. Esther states that they were "too much alike to get along." Every time she left her husband she would go to live with the foster mother who remained her friend throughout and from whose home she was arrested as a suspicious person on a larceny charge. She was released but again in 1941 she was arrested on a charge of drunkenness, having been in an altercation in the south end of Boston. She failed to report regularly while on probation and in April of 1942 she was reported by the Board of Health as a source of infection. Finally she was apprehended in a drunken condition again at the restaurant where she was working part-time and was committed to the Reformatory on a charge of drunkenness and for treatments.

Esther's long period of institutionalization, rejection by her mother and poor environmental experiences could be considered as contributing to her future behavior. She was rejected, too, by her father stating that she was not wanted at home. Her truancy indicated too that she was unadjusted. Her drinking could be considered as an escape mechanism from a situation that was entirely too frustrating for her.

These illustrative cases have shown better than figures the conditions to which these five women were exposed. Parental rejection was featured in at least three cases. There was evidence of lax discipline in two, and excessive discipline in one. Life in a normal family setting was not experienced by any of them. Attempts to utilize substitute parents and foster homes were not successful as is evidenced by the number of replacements which were made. Behavior problems such as stealing, lying, excessive sex
curiosity, and aggressiveness were manifestations of their maladjustments and feelings of insecurity.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The anti-social behavior of these women is not something recent or inexplicable without basis but something that has its roots, partially at least, in the childhood and adolescent periods of their lives. Two conclusions might be reached as to the part heredity plays. Although it is not measurable there is possibly some relationship between it and the low moral standards of parents to which the women were exposed. The limited mental capacities of the women were also due somewhat to heredity.

From the data presented, there were found to be certain common factors or forces which contributed to the delinquent behavior of the women studied. These factors were broken homes which led to childhood experiences which were not satisfying, low economic status, limited educational achievements, low moral standards of parents, cultural conflicts between southern born parents and northern born children or northern cultures. Underlying all of these factors and resulting from them were personality maladjustments and insecurities.

It was found that with the removal or desertion of one parent, usually the father, it was left upon the mother to care for the children or in some instances to let a "friend" or grandparents, often tired and unable to keep up with the children, care for them. In most instances mothers were working and assuming the role of breadwinner. They were therefore usually forced to neglect their duties to children and homes. Their absence from the home also made it almost impossible for them to train the children or supervise their activities. The children's fundamental needs were not satisfied. There were resulting conflicts within the children, and antagonisms and resentments against the parents.
The brief pictures given of the family groups of these women have shown that the moral standards were not of the highest. Condemnation and criticism cannot be heaped too heavily upon them for this though, because actually many parents were incapable of giving the children instructions of high moral standards.

Southern parents migrating north would naturally have their behavior and mores in the north, colored by their own cultural background and traditions. This is particularly true in the case of the mothers, who it was noted, were the strong figures in the lives of these thirty two women. Over one half of these mothers had to make adjustments from simpler ways of living to more complex urban communities up north and could not help their children, who like the parents became bewildered by new demands and expectations made of them.

A study of the economic status of these families revealed that they lived a marginal existence. Their parents' occupations were at the bottom of the ladder and did not offer enough remuneration for them to provide outside activities and proper physical care for the children.

The women themselves possessed limited educational achievements. The majority of them were retarded in school. This retardation serves as an indication of further conflicts and maladjustments in the lives of the women. Von Hentig states that:

There was a time when education was believed to be a major factor in preventing criminality. We have since abandoned such exaggerated hopes and we know that the emotional set-up is much more important in the genesis of human actions than the intellectual equipment. Nevertheless it is true that many better paid jobs require some kind of education....

If the women had been better equipped to fill well paying jobs, there would have been less cause for them to resort to the sordidness of prostitution and like practices.
The influencing factors dwelt upon in this study were socio-economic ones, but the presence of a biologic handicap cannot be overlooked when studying a group such as this. The authors of a study of delinquency, in discussing the significance of biological handicaps states that:

It cannot as yet be concluded by even the most ardent exponent of economic determinism that these handicaps are exclusively caused or conditioned by economic forces. Many of the handicaps of mental deficiency, psychopathy, neurasthenism, and poor physical health appear to be innate, and hardly susceptible of eradication by existing measures, though in part capable of control. However perfectly society might be organized from an economic point of view, all crime would not disappear. As long as the springs of human nature continue to spurt forth anger, hatred, fear, jealousy, and like primitive emotions, we may expect aggressions on the part of certain members of society against their fellows.2


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