THE STUDY OF THE DELINQUENT AS A PERSON

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ABSTRACT

The general theories of criminality, both the different unitary explanations of Lombroso, Tarde, and Bonger, and the pluralistic interpretation of Ferri proved to be of little or no value in the control of behavior. The Study of the Delinquent as an Individual: Healy substituted for the methods of general observation, speculation, and statistics the all-round study of the individual delinquent. Trained in psychiatry and psychology, he emphasized physical examinations and mental tests without ignoring social factors. However, he relied upon the experience of the social worker instead of calling into service the technique of the sociologist. The Person as the Individual with Status: The study of individual behavior falls in the fields of psychiatry and psychology. The study of the person, as the product of social interaction, lies, primarily, in sociology. In the explanation and control of delinquency, it is significant to determine the nature of the participation of the person in the social organization, as in the insecurity or degradation of status, the type of personal behavior pattern, the degree of mobility, the change of the social environment and the collapse of the social world of the person. In the study of delinquency, the psychiatric, psychological, and sociological methods of investigation are not in conflict with each other, but rather complementary and interdependent.

The study of the delinquent as an individual was introduced by the epochmaking volume, The Individual Delinquent, by an American psychiatrist, William Healy.

Before Healy, the delinquent was studied statistically or was made the subject of general observation. Lombroso, Tarde, Bonger, and Ferri, to mention certain European criminologists,

1 For an excellent survey of theories of criminality see Bernaldo de Quiros, Modern Theories of Criminality (Boston, 1911).
organized general theories of crime and of the criminal upon the basis of observation, speculation, and statistical data.

The general theories of crime, although imposing and apparently substantial when considered separately, tended, when compared, to undermine and weaken each other, and thus to imperil the entire structure of the European style of interpretation. In effect, this has been the outcome. A brief examination of the theories of Lombroso, Tarde, Bonger, and Ferri is all that is necessary to show how they tend to destroy each other.

GENERAL THEORIES OF CRIMINOLOGY

The systems of criminology of Lombroso and Tarde are at logical extremes; they stand in absolute and final contradiction to each other. To Lombroso the criminal was a biological variety; to Tarde he was a social product. The main points in the criminology of Lombroso in its latest form have been concisely analyzed by Näcke, a German criminologist:

The real criminal, that is, the habitual criminal
(a) is a "born" criminal;
(b) is the same as the moral insane;
(c) has an epileptic basis;
(d) is to be explained chiefly by atavism; and
(e) constitutes a biological and anatomical criminal type.

The criminal man of Lombroso, with his stigmata of degeneracy, i.e., low forehead, outstanding ears, powerful, prognathous jaw, receding chin, etc., if reconstructed pictorially would resemble quite closely the primordial human being, Pithecanthropus, or Neanderthal Man in Wells’s Outline of History. Lombroso had no doubt that the criminal as a subspecies of the human race was actually the persistence of, or reversion to, a savage type, as irresistibly and innately impelled under conditions in modern society to criminalism as is the epileptic to epileptic seizures.²

Tarde held that the criminal was not born but made. He challenged at every point the conclusions of Lombroso. To Tarde


² Lombroso in the later editions of L'Uomo delinquente concedes the rôle of social factors without, however, quite relinquishing the position that "all criminals are born criminals."
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the criminal was not a madman, nor a savage, nor a degenerate, nor an epileptic, nor a combination of all these, but a professional type created by society partly as the result of his own crime and partly as an outcome of criminal justice.¹ The principle of imitation, Tarde held, provided a complete explanation of crime as of all social phenomena.² Crime conformed to the laws of fashion. As crimes and vices were formerly propagated from the nobles to the people, so now they spread from the great cities to the country.

Bonger's theory of criminality as a result of economic conditions may be classified as a special type under theories of social causation such as Tarde's. The explanation by economic determinism shows also how readily general observation and statistical data may be manipulated to construct a comprehensible and systematic theory of delinquency even upon a narrow and particularistic basis. Bonger, a Dutch socialist, sought to explain crime in terms of Marxian economics. He massed statistics to prove that in the capitalistic organization of society, members of the proletariat were forced into crime, either as victims of the economic and political order or as rebels against it.³

Ferri, writing before Bonger, is mentioned last because his system of criminology is eclectic. Avoiding the biological extreme of Lombroso and the social extreme of Tarde, Ferri took a middle-of-the-road position. Instead of constructing his system of thought upon the narrow basis of one cause, he sought rather the broad foundation of many causes. Harmonizing, then, at least by inclusion in a more general system the narrower points of view of Lombroso and Tarde, he formulated a comprehensive classification of causes of crime and types of criminals. The following excerpt gives a statement of Ferri's theory in his own words:

Crime is the result of manifold causes, which although found always linked into an intricate network, can be detected, however, by means of careful study. The factors of crime can be divided into individual or anthropological, physical or natural, and social. The anthropological factors comprise age, sex, profession, domicile, social rank, instruction, education, and the organic and

¹ Gabriel Tarde, Penal Philosophy (Boston, 1912), pp. 218–65.
² Ibid., pp. 331–42.
³ William A. Bonger, Criminality and Economic Conditions (Boston, 1916).
psychic constitution. The physical factors are: race, climate, the fertility and disposition of the soil, the relative length of day and night, the seasons, meteoric condition, temperature. The social factors comprise the density of population, emigration, public opinion, customs and religion, public order, economic and industrial conditions, agricultural and industrial production, public administration of public safety, public instruction and education, public beneficence, and, in general, civic and penal legislation. . . . . All criminals can be classified under five groups which I have called (a) criminal lunatics, (b) criminals born incorrigibles, (c) habitual criminals or criminals from acquired habit, (d) occasional criminals, and (e) emotional criminals.1

Ferri’s eclectic theory of criminology may be taken as illustrating the net result of the method of general observation and statistical data. Avoiding the extreme generalizations of Lombroso and Tarde, he had the good sense to substitute a pluralistic for a single explanation of criminal behavior. But assigning many causes to crime, he devised no way of gauging the weight of the different factors involved. Indeed, the omnibus inclusion of all possible factors of delinquency into a system of explanation with no fundamental point of view and no method of determining relative significance tended to confusion more than to explanation. So while Ferri’s theory corresponds closely with what common sense would expect, it went little beyond the findings of common sense.

THE DELINQUENT AS AN INDIVIDUAL

General theories of crime, whether generalizations of extreme standpoints, like those of Lombroso and Tarde, or elaborations of common sense, like Ferri’s, proved to be of little or no practical value in the treatment of the individual and in the understanding of his behavior. Healy states his own experience:

It is quite fair to speak of most previous works on this subject as theoretical, for their marshallings of statistical and individual facts often may be likened to the gathering of building stones for an edifice of opinions already designed. Not only have many theories been published at great length, but volumes have, in turn, been written in review of them. Our experience is simply that we found the facts too much for the theories. Through the detailed study of cases, under good conditions for getting at the essentials, the path of preconceived etiology and classification was seen beset with difficulties. The intri-

1 Quoted in Bernaldo de Quiros, op. cit., pp. 20, 22–23. See also Enrico Ferri, Criminal Sociology (Boston, 1917), pp. 125–94.
cacies of causations appeared manifold. It was then that the plan of making straight for the facts, all the facts available, showed itself of significant worth to us. It was clearly evident that classification by crimes leads only in special instances to knowledge of the criminal; that statistics of seasons, and races, and head-measurements, and alcoholism, and so on, mean almost nothing for the fundamental understanding of the individual case; that epileptic and atavistic theories could not be substantiated by case histories; that refinements of psycho-physical measurements sometimes used on criminals need a tremendous amount of overhauling before they can be regarded as valid for conclusions; that the elders, who spoke so glibly of "the criminal" as a born type, had not the means of investigating whether he was not rather a born defective, and a criminal through accident of environment.¹

Brushing aside the general theories of crime, Healy emphasized the necessity of intensive study of the individual case. He says:

The dynamic center of the whole problem of delinquency and crime will ever be the individual offender. Nothing is shown by our data more convincingly than the predictable inadequacy of social measures built upon statistics and theories which neglect the fundamental fact of the complexity of causation, determinable through study of the individual case. Studies of individual cases, and final summary analysis of these cases, form the only way of arriving at the truth. Most serviceable to us is the conception of the individual as the product of conditions and forces which have been actively forming him from the earliest moment of unicellular life. To know him completely would be to know accurately these conditions and forces; to know him as well as is possible, all of his genetic background that is ascertainable should be known. The interpretations that may be derived from acquaintance with the facts of ancestry, ante-natal life, childhood development, illnesses and injuries, social experiences, and the vast field of mental life, lead to invaluable understandings of the individual and to some idea of that wonderful complex of results which we term "personality."²

Thus Healy set up for himself the ideal of the complete study of the delinquent. In place of the method of general observation, theoretical speculation and the amassing of available statistical data he substituted the method of case study. This new technique wrought a revolution in criminology. The study of behavior was now placed upon an empirical, inductive basis.

Healy's research, based upon the investigation of a group of youthful recidivists, brought out one significant point, namely, that

² Ibid., pp. 22-26.
the study of the criminal is a study of human behavior, and not the study of a special biological variety of the human race as Lombroso held, nor of a separate social class, as Tarde maintained.

Healy conceived his task to be a search for all the influences, factors, and forces which determine behavior. That he was more successful in analyzing the criminal as an individual than as a person was only natural. His own special training was in psychiatry and psychology. Accordingly his technique was highly developed in the individual aspects of the behavior of the delinquent, namely, in the physical examination, anthropometric measurements, and mental tests. With no sociological training, indeed with little that was pertinent in sociological literature aside from the suggestive viewpoint of Cooley, we may rather wonder that Healy gave as much attention as he did to social influences. The explanation however, is simple. First of all, he found the modified form of psychoanalysis which he employed of distinct worth in arriving at the explanation and control of delinquent behavior. His search for the concrete materials of the mental life of the individual led necessarily to some appreciation of social influences. Secondly, through the use of the case-study method he could not if he would ignore the play of social forces. Healy quite naturally recognized the value of the experience of the social worker in securing facts about the family history and social environment, but apparently perceived no place for the technique of the sociologist and of sociological research. His appreciation of the rôle of social factors went little farther than common sense. In other words, his actual procedure was the study of the delinquent primarily as an individual instead of as a person.²

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In sociology the distinction is now clear between the individual and the person. The study of the individual, of the reaction of the organism to its environment, falls in the fields of psychiatry and


psychology. The study of the person, the product of social interaction with his fellows, lies in the domain of sociology. Park thus defines the person:

The person is an individual who has status. We come into the world as individuals. We acquire status, and become persons. Status means position in society. The individual inevitably has some status in every social group of which he is a member. In a given group the status of every member is determined by his relation to every other member of that group. Every smaller group, likewise, has a status in some larger group of which it is a part and this is determined by its relation to all the other members of the larger group.¹

The significance of this distinction between the individual and the person for the study of behavior is indicated by the following case.² Here the individual handicap, a special defect in mathematical ability, gets its meaning in its effect upon the status of the boy in his social group.

CASE I

George, a boy of fourteen years, is the eldest of three children, all of whom are living. The other children are girls—one twelve, in grade 7B; the other ten, in grade 5B. Both girls are bright-eyed, alert, keenly interested children. George can do seventh-grade work in all subjects but arithmetic. For this reason, he was placed in the subnormal room in one of the city schools. He at once became truant, disobedient, and much given to fighting.

George is a tall, well-built boy; looks his age, and "holds his own" physically among boys of the same age. He is not interested in school, nor in anything that goes with it, and was very anxious to quit school when I first saw him. He told me rather scornfully that he hated the school and the teachers. "They put me in the feeble-minded room," he said, "and I ain't feeble-minded; I just can't do fractions."


²For the cases in this paper the writer is indebted to Mr. James Bredin, Miss Mary Dixon, Mrs. Lorraine Green, Mr. Charles S. Johnson, Miss Hazel E. Schmidt, and others. These cases were written in simple, narrative style. The art of sociological case-writing has yet to develop. The argument for precision of analysis in case study has been convincingly and concretely put by Mrs. Ada E. Sheffield in a paper read at the Milwaukee meeting of the National Conference of Social Work and published in the Survey of November 12, 1921, under the title "Clue Aspects in Social Case Work." An excellent model for sociologists of analytical description is offered in two case studies of delinquent girls in a paper "Some Problems in Delinquency—Where do They Belong," read by Dr. Jessie Taft at the Pittsburgh meeting of the American Sociological Society and published in the sixteenth volume of its Papers and Proceedings, pp. 186–96. See also the Judge Baker Foundation Studies.
His mother is an intelligent woman; she was a school teacher before marriage. She is keenly alive to George's need for careful supervision at this particular time. She recently passed a civil service examination, and is now employed at the post-office. As a girl she was always good in all subjects but arithmetic; she managed, however, to do the work required. The children's father died five years ago of heart trouble. His only living relative, a brother, is a minister with a small church.

George, since he was ten years old, has sold papers after school and on Saturday. He recently won a prize for selling the second highest number of copies.

When I talked with him about fighting, he said, "O, you don't understand, I've got to fight. I don't want to, but you see, these here boys say I'm feebleminded, and I'm going to fight 'em 'til they quit saying it."

George worked manfully with me to bridge the gap between fractions and seventh-grade arithmetic. He made rapid progress at first, due both to interest as well as to the novelty of having a tutor; but as the work became more difficult, his progress was slower. One day he came to me with a badly battered face, and acknowledged that he had been "licked," but felt confident that he would "lick the whole school tomorrow." "But why waste your energy that way, George?" I asked him, "why not put it on arithmetic?" He had never thought of that; but he didn't think it would work; those boys had not only to "be shown," they had to "be beat." He struggled and perspired and accomplished very little that day.

Now, after three months of hard "digging," he is beginning to feel rather hopeful. The teacher says he may leave the subnormal room at the end of the year, and if his progress continues, he may make his grade next year. His truancy has become negligible, and his fighting has perceptibly diminished. He declares he has "come near licking the whole school, single-handed, and they are beginning to think I ain't feeble-minded after all."

In this case the distinction between a diagnosis of behavior from the standpoints of psychiatry and sociology is clear. As an individual the boy had a special defect in mathematical ability; as a person he had suffered a degradation in status in his group. Although from superficial observation he had charged against him the delinquencies of truancy and fighting, actually he was putting up a desperate struggle to maintain his status.

Among the types of mutation in status, the simplest example is perhaps that caused by movement, as by change of residence. Moving from one group to another in order to acquire a new status is a familiar fact. A person who has lost status in his home town by failure, misconduct, or crime, may take refuge in a distant
community "to make a fresh start" or "to begin life over again."

Healy found, in cases of delinquent children, that a change of neighborhood by the family was correlated with a high ratio of success in reformation.¹

The person, as previously defined, is the individual with status. Personality may then be regarded as the sum and co-ordination of those traits which determine the rôle and the status of the individual in the social group. Certain traits of the individual—as his physique, mentality, and temperament—definitely affect his social standing. Primarily, however, his position in the group will be determined by personal relations such as his group participation, his character, his personal behavior pattern, and his social type. The following outline offers a scheme for studying behavior in terms of individual and personal traits.

**OUTLINE FOR THE STUDY OF INDIVIDUAL AND PERSONAL TRAITS**

I. STUDY OF THE INDIVIDUAL

1. Physical examination
2. Mental tests
3. Affectivity score
4. Will profile
5. Temperamental type

II. STUDY OF THE PERSON

1. Participation
   a) Extent of membership in groups
   b) Intimacy of membership (social world)
   c) Rôle in groups
2. Character
   a) Stabilized
   b) Unstabilized
3. Personal behavior pattern
   a) Objective or direct
      (1) equable, (2) enthusiastic, (3) frank, (4) aggressive
   b) Introspective or indirect
      (1) imaginative, (2) secretive, (3) sensitive, (4) inhibited
   c) Psychopathic or perverse
      (1) eccentric, (2) egocentric, (3) emotionally unstable, (4) psychic inferior

¹ Report of Cook County Juvenile Court, 1916.
4. Social Type
   a) Practical or Philistine
   b) Liberal or Bohemian
   c) Idealistic or Religious

5. Philosophy of Life.

The technique for the study of the individual is naturally much further developed than the technique for the study of the person. The physical examination now represents a diagnosis based upon the latest researches of medical science. Since 1905–11 when Binet and Simon devised a scale for the measurement of intelligence, mental tests have been undergoing a process of constant revision and standardization. Pressey's affectivity test may be noted as one of the attempts to gauge emotional reactions. Dr. June Downey on the basis of handwriting material has worked out what promises to be a valuable method of measuring will reactions. For example, her tests differentiate twelve volitional traits, namely: volitional perseveration, co-ordination of impulses, interest in detail, motor inhibition, finality of judgment, resistance, reaction to contradiction, motor impulsion, speed of decision, flexibility, freedom from load, speed of movement. Attempts to determine or measure experimentally temperamental types are still in the tentative stage. Shand, Jastrow, and others have, however, at least restated the problem. The tendency seems to be to accept the classic names for different temperaments—the choleric, the sanguine, the melancholic, and the phlegmatic—and to redefine these permanent moods in terms susceptible of measurement.

The outline suggested for the study of the person includes aspects of behavior for which no standardized technique of measurement has been accepted. It may be that the description of factors like participation in groups, character, personal behavior patterns, and social types will always remain primarily a matter of qualitative definition. Our investigation here is too recent, however, to abandon at the start the hope of securing quantitative indices. For illustration, the extent of membership in groups may be stated as the ratio of the groups with which the person is affiliated to the total number of the groups in which membership lies open to him. Or the degree of intimacy of membership in one group may possibly
be expressed by the fraction of his total leisure time devoted to the life of this particular group. The classification of character in terms of stability is obviously relative to the social norms of particular groups or to the social standards common to all forms of group life.

The threefold division of personal behavior patterns into objective or direct, introspective or indirect, psychopathic or perverse, is one made tentatively by the writer of this article. These differential types of behavior are not personality, and are not even the spontaneous expressions of temperament or other traits of human nature. They seem to be what the general term personal behavior patterns implies, namely, characteristic types of the behavior of the person fixed in the matrix of social relations in infancy and childhood. Naturally original differences in mentality, in temperament, and in volition enter into the determination of the form of personal behavior patterns, but their organization and fixation occur in social interaction.

Mentality, affectivity, temperament, and will are not uninfluenced by social experience. They are all more or less profoundly modified by education and social contacts. But personal behavior patterns like egocentrism, instability, and secretiveness take form and become fixed in the social interactions of the family and of the play group. These personal patterns of behavior are not biologically transmitted as temperament seems to be. Nor are they derived by imitation of others as is the social type or the philosophy of life of the person. The personal reaction of the individual to his social world is the resultant of the play of social forces in infancy and early childhood. Whether the fixed responses of the person to his social environment will be in the main (a) direct, (b) indirect, or (c) perverse are apparently determined by the rôle which he assumes, or which is forced upon him in his earliest social interactions. In the molding of a social type of personality and in the acceptance of a philosophy of life the influence of the group is definitely exerted.

William James made the distinction between objective and introspective types in his contrast between "tough-minded" and "tender-minded" persons. Compare also the extroverted and introverted types of personality differentiated by the psychoanalysts.
At the same time, the social copies which the person takes for models appear to him to be but the realization of his most ardent wishes.

The operation of social processes in the formation and development of personal behavior patterns is partially revealed in the following two cases. Unfavorable comparison by others, which results in the sense of inferiority and the mechanism of withdrawal, may create the imaginative introspective type of personality.

**CASE II**

Mary was more or less the "ugly duckling" of her rather good-looking family. Her two sisters and two brothers, pretty children that they were, received more attention both from their parents and the world outside. Plain Mary was usually completely ignored—her pug nose and freckled face were made the butt of many a family joke. Consequently, Mary withdrew somewhat from her family and their interests and developed about herself a shell—a wall difficult to penetrate. Perhaps this wall of isolation would have not been so hard and so fast had not a certain incident occurred. One day when Mary was eleven years old, she and her two sisters attended a birthday party. When it came time to choose partners for the supper every girl was provided for except Mary. The hostess said to the odd little boy (the rest were already paired off), "Now, Jimmy, there's Mary here, take her." Jimmy sullenly replied, "That homely old pug-nosed thing? I guess not." Mary's dreams were shattered—her little ship had gone on the rocks. She was hurt, terribly wounded. Needless to say, that was the last party she ever attended. Her two sisters laughed at the incident, and made fun of her at home. This aggravated her still more.

Mary made few friends; she felt herself odd, out of the group. She developed a taste for reading, and built about herself a world of her own, in which she and the "nice" characters in the books lived in an atmosphere of rosy pleasantness. She would have little to do with her family—they received none of her confidences—and she made no friends. This sensitive little girl withdrew into a world of her own making and there found the happiness which she longed for.

The egocentric behavior of the "only" or of the "favorite" child, empirically recognized by common sense, forms a chapter in the literature of psychoanalysis. There may be, who knows, an inherited predisposition to egocentrism. Unquestionably, however, a condition of its development as a personal behavior pattern, is the complex of family sentiments and attitudes centering around the "only" or the "favorite" child.
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Case III

Marietta lived in the prettiest brick home in the block. “Six rooms and bath, hardwood floors, electric lights and even laundry tubs in the basement,” the ambitious real estate agent might describe it. Her father was just one of a large group of ordinary men who might be seen running for his train any morning, and her mother was just one of the many women of the suburb who delighted in displaying shiny windows and highly polished floors. But the significant fact about Marietta was that she had no brothers and sisters. She was one of the army of “only” children.

Marietta’s father and mother had been married seven years when she was born—hence they were well established, well prepared and anxious to care for her more or less indulgently. From babyhood on she was decidedly spoilt: for the first seven months of her life she was very ill, often hovering between life and death. Each little cry, every slightest whim and whimper, was carefully watched and analyzed. Once on the road to recovery, conditions did not change. If things did not go exactly as she liked them to, she let out a terrifying yell and scream; so her wishes were always respected.

At the age of three she began to show signs of all the characteristics which she later exhibited more fully. She was decidedly selfish, high-tempered, jealous, vain, impulsive, emotional, and at times peculiarly kind-hearted. She developed a rebellious mechanism, revolting against all forms of control. Often while in a high temper, angry at her father or mother, Marietta would bite them fiercely, and then, in an impulsive act of regret, kiss them passionately. She was never severely punished—a few good spankings might have aided in changing her—but the casual reprimands, to use the vernacular, “went in one ear and out the other,” they made no permanent impression. At times when she had accidentally broken some choice curio or some valuable bit of china she would lie to her mother and tell her that she had not broken it. Her father, in order to shield her, would often take the blame upon himself.

Every spare penny was used to make Marietta attractive. Her little coats and frocks were the best that could be bought, luxuries for the middle-class family. Her mother devoted a certain amount of time each day curling her hair. Marietta could not help but feel her superiority over the other children. I remember an incident which occurred when Marietta was four; she was visiting a family with her parents, radiantly bedecked in a flowing red accordion pleated dress, and little red shoes to match. Marietta remarked to the other little girl, “Oh, you haven’t a pretty dress like mine, I won’t play with you!” and turning up her nose scornfully, walked away. No amount of strategy, coaxing, or commanding could make Marietta play with the little girl.

Marietta loved friends and playmates as long as they carried out her commands. She would bring all the little girls up to her playroom, and once there, they would have to do as she authorized, or she would order the offenders
to go "right straight home!" She had the most and the prettiest toys of any little girl in the block. All the children loved to play with them; so rather than go home they would do as Marietta bid them. Marietta's grandfather, who lived near by, also aided in spoiling her. In the rare cases when her parents refused to do as she wished, her grandfather would pet and fondle her.

At school Marietta proved herself an apt pupil: she learned quickly and well, and found herself as she climbed from grade to grade always at the head of the class. She could not help but assume a superior air, the "I know it all and more than you, anyway" attitude. She became a teacher's "pet" quite naturally, of course, for the teachers always prefer the brightest pupil. At school, just as at home, her selfishness and her vanity developed.

At the age of thirteen, with Marietta just beginning high school, her mother died. This changed entirely the course of Marietta's life. She might have developed normally and have grown up a selfish and rather arrogant person, without any further difficulty. But an unforseen crisis occurred.

For a few months after her mother's death, Marietta and her father were together constantly, the best "pals" in the world. But her father soon began to realize the burden of keeping up a house with an inefficient housekeeper. He realized as the only solution of the problem that he must remarry. He talked it over with Marietta, now fourteen, but she simply exploded in a fit of anger. For once in his life her father did not heed her words; her will was crossed.

Marietta became jealous of her father. All her life she had been more or less jealous; her father had never dared to kiss her mother without kissing Marietta too. Marietta quieted down and realized that there was nothing she could do but obey. Her father remained the same kind, indulgent father, satisfying her every whim. The woman he married was very kind to Marietta, and sought to win her confidence. Marietta had a serious conflict with her father before she would call her stepmother "mother."

The hardest part for Marietta was telling her friends that her father was married (her high school friends did not live near her home; so they knew nothing of it). Day after day she made up her mind to tell them, but just as surely it was put off from one day to the next. She became bitter, irritable, and extremely unhappy. She was frightfully jealous of her father. His remarriage meant giving up the dear old comradeship she so loved; there was always, for Marietta, the third undesirable person to be considered. Yet she could not exactly hate her stepmother and be mean to her face to face, as the latter seemed always anxious to be helpful to Marietta.

Marietta became more restless. At about this stage she began to steal although she had a good-sized weekly allowance of her own, and had no need for more money. At times it was only nickels, dimes, or quarters from her father's pockets. Then, as time went on, it developed into more serious thefts. The climax was reached one day when at a friend's house a valuable
ring was found missing and traced to Marietta. She could give no particular reason for her theft. She "just took it, that's all."

But Marietta's father was a far-sighted man and he did not punish her. Instead, he tried to discover the cause and the case was analyzed. Marietta's father moved to the opposite side of the city, sent her to a new school to make entirely new friends, and in the course of time the situation became adjusted. Marietta gradually became adapted to her home life, which on the whole was not unhappy, for her father was still the same overindulgent parent, and her stepmother tended to follow in the father's footsteps.

While both individual and personal traits enter into the organization of personality, its essential mark is to be found in social relationships, that is, in the status and rôle of the person in the social group. In an article in the Journal of Abnormal Psychology and Social Psychology, the Allports, Floyd H. and Gordon W., give explicit recognition of this fact.

The true criterion of personality is without doubt to be found in the field of social interaction. We are incapable of giving a complete popular description of personality without indicating the manner in which the personality in question stimulates or influences other human beings and the manner in which the behavior of other human beings produces adjustments or responses in the personality in question. In describing this personality we inevitably take the viewpoint of those "other human beings."

Robinson Crusoe, alone on a desert island, undoubtedly displayed a very measurable degree of intelligence in his adaptation to his environment. It was only with the advent of Friday, however, that his personality could be said to stand forth in its full significance. Not only is the language of personality a social one, but the problems arising from the interaction of various personalities are in the truest sense social problems. They include every form of social maladjustment—from the whims of the eccentric to the worst deeds of the criminal. In general it may be said that the aim of personality measurements is the establishing of adjustments between an individual and his fellows which are a benefit to both.¹

COMPENSATION AS A MECHANISM TO MAINTAIN STATUS

The status of the person in the social group is in the last analysis a matter of social attitudes: (a) the individual's conception of his own rôle, and what is even of greater significance (b) the attitudes

toward him of the fellows in his group, of the community and of society.

This complex of the attitudes of others toward one is subject to change. These changes may be gradual or abrupt. Gain or loss of status is naturally of absorbing interest to the person. Since all of us begin life as infants, and since in some one trait at least, if not in many, every one of us is surpassed by his fellows, it is inevitable that consciousness of inferiority is a universal experience. The inferiority complex tends to become organized about deficiency in a characteristic that has a value in the group which constitutes the social world of the person. The possession of this trait gives superior status in the group. Adler in the *Neurotic Constitution* analyzes the phenomenon of compensation in instances of constitutional or psychic inferiority.

The following case indicates how a Negro lad through the mechanism of compensation for physical and mental inferiority organized a personal behavior pattern that secured for him leadership and a superior status in his social world of the gang.

**CASE IV**

Harry M. is a colored lad, fourteen years old, and forty-nine inches tall. He is perceptibly stunted in growth, and slightly deformed in his legs, not enough, however, to interfere with walking. He is "knock-kneed," walks with a swaying gait, and is sensitive of his difference from the physique of normal boys. Both his two brothers, ages twelve and seventeen, are well developed. Harry dresses mannishly, and assumes a studied air of self-composure. He does not talk freely even in play. His behavior suggests an attempt to conceal his physical weakness and deformity with the prestige which his unexpressed thoughts and possible strength might inspire.

Between Harry and his elder brother there has been rivalry for leadership in their common group. Harry carries a scar on his head as a result of a former dispute.

On his father's side there are indications of alcoholism. His parents have been separated for a number of years. One of his early recollections is of appearing in Court with his mother and father when divorce proceedings were in progress. He remembers distinctly that his parents were debating who should keep the children, each with emphasis on a preference to be relieved of the responsibility. It was finally decided that two of the boys should stay with the grandmother. He doesn't believe his grandmother had a husband. He dislikes his father, whom he accused of "staying drunk a lot and cussing,"
and is moderately fond of his mother although he sees very little of her, living as she does at another address in the city.

Harry has only reached the third grade in school. He thinks his teachers like to "peck" on him. His teachers declare him dull and slow, and devoid of interest. He has a very shallow knowledge of arithmetic, and reasons poorly. For example, he says that a horse weighing 400 pounds standing on four legs, weighs 300 pounds standing on three legs.

His grandmother works out during the day and he and his brother are left to their own devices. The family lives in the section of the Negro community that produces the largest number of delinquent colored children. The boy has never been in the Juvenile Court, but a number of his chums have. His manual training instructor asserts that he is a gang leader, although the smallest in the bunch. On several occasions he has been tempted to leave home, "to go to work somewhere," he "reckoned." This feeling came over him usually while he was chafing under the injuries done him by his father and larger brother.

His grandmother has drilled into him an assortment of moral precepts and practices like saying his prayers and grace before meals. He has a good sense of judgment between right and wrong, but when he plays he "forgets sometimes." One complaint of his grandmother is that he has a mind of his own, going out when he feels like it, and acting generally as he pleases. Incorrigibility, fighting, truancy, and lying are his principal delinquencies. His success in fighting is due largely to the fact that he can induce his pals to do his fighting for him. The boy has a remarkable influence with his "bunch," and can take an interest in useful as well as destructive activities. A test of this came recently when his instructor made him squad leader to shovel snow. Mental conflicts appear to have resulted from his dislike for his father and his rivalry with his brother. This perhaps accounts for his impulse to run away from home.

Although he seems to have compensated for his physical disability through his power over the gang, his school record could be improved by striking his interests and perhaps by placing him in a school with male teachers, since women teachers "make him sick."

Behavior tendencies in this case are clearly in the direction of juvenile delinquency. Although the boy has been able to secure a superior status in his play group he remains in a position of irritating inferiority in the family with no compensation through success in the academic subjects of the school. Mental conflicts, as this case indicates, are significant in their relation to status. Tendencies to delinquency, as running away from home, would undoubtedly be prevented if certain obvious adjustments were made in the social situation.
THE SOCIAL WORLD OF THE PERSON

Status, as has been indicated, is to be studied from the standpoint of social attitudes, social forces, and social processes. Wholesome conditions of normal social development require a congenial social world in which the wishes of the person find expression. The attempt at absolute suppression of the wishes tends to their expression in perverted form. The technique of social work devised from the common-sense observation of a situation has too often lacked the refinement requisite for adaptation to differences in folkways and mores, for detection of subtle personal attitudes, or for appreciation of the surging and changing wishes of the person. The kind of sympathetic insight which literature gives into the manifold expressions of human nature so perplexing in their multitudinous superficial variations, so alike in their fundamental simple patterns does not come from the typical training in the narrow routine of the principles of case-work. Too often the "blame" is placed by the social agency upon the refusal of the person or of the family to co-operate in spite of the many "good chances" offered. In the case of a delinquent girl who was said by a welfare agency to have had as many "chances to reform" as any girl in its history, a sympathetic analysis clearly proved that not a single one of the alleged "good chances" afforded a real opportunity for reformation. The following case is a telling illustration of the difference between the surface and the reality of a so-called "good" environment for a delinquent girl:

CASE V

I walked down the avenue looking for the house number, wondering how the poor little waif whose sordid history I had just read could have come from such a neighborhood. "This is scarcely the setting I expected to find. Truly," thought I, "the child is a degenerate." By that time I had come to my number. Before me was a little frame cottage, set in the midst of a soft, green lawn, shaded by big old trees, a veritable haven from the hot July sun.

My knock—there was no door bell—was answered by a gray-haired woman. "Mrs. Brown," said I, "I am Miss James. I have come to talk to you about Elsa." I had been given the information that Mrs. Brown was the grandmother, but it did not seem possible that she could be a relative. She was in fact not the grandmother, but the foster mother. She greeted me warmly. "How is little Elsa? Where is she? My dear, come right in." I walked into a house of a generation ago, and through my mind flashed, "Turn back the
universe and give me yesterday." "What a delightful home," I exclaimed.
"Yes, it is, and just as it was when we came here thirty years ago. And this
was little Elsa's room. My home and my heart are so empty without that
child." I answered her eager questions, told her that Elsa was in the industrial
school, that I was investigating home conditions so as to ascertain if she should
be returned to her old environment, asked her what kind of a woman Elsa's
mother was, what sort of home the child had. She broke in, "That home!
In that home there was no washing day, no ironing day, no mending day, no
cleaning day, no baking day, no Saturday, no God's day. How could a girl
be good?"

She told me in her own way, which I should like to quote, but which would
make too long a story, of the mother's being left a widow when Elsa was four
years old; of the mother's poor health, their struggle with poverty, the mother
doing what work she could with her little strength, the child at times almost
starved, her lips bloodless. Then, when Elsa was eleven, of the mother's
second marriage to a "dronken brute," of the two small crowded rooms in
which they lived, of Elsa's "seeing too much," and her subsequent delinquency;
of the mother, frantic with anxiety, walking the streets at night looking for
her child, of her trying in her own way to amuse the daughter, taking her to
picture shows—any place where there was excitement—taking the worst way
to reform her, giving her no healthy interest to take the place of the unhealthy
ones she had; of her misdemeanors and punishment at school, and of her
commital to an institution; of her mother's grief and of the daughter's desire
to commit suicide. Then how she, Mrs. Brown, with legal aid, had gotten
the girl out of the institution, had taken her into her home and kept her seven
weeks, teaching her to cook and serve meals, to wash and iron and clean, to
say her prayers, to stay at home in the evenings, with no playmate but a pup.

Then abruptly she led me to the back porch. "Recite the Twenty-third
Psalm," she said, and to humor her I began, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I
shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." "Here is the
green pasture," and I looked at the soft green grass with its border of old-
fashioned flowers. "Go on," she said, and I continued, "He leadeth me beside
the still waters." She pointed toward the lake, very quiet and blue in the after-
noon sun. "How could little Elsa run away? How could she be unhappy?
I can't imagine it." But I could imagine it. I could imagine little Elsa sitting
on the back porch, depressed by the monotony of the quiet of it all, and think-
ing, "Be good and you'll be happy—but you won't have any fun," for Elsa
is of the class for which this expression originated—and weighing against this
comfortable home with its cleanliness, order, and restrictions; her mother's
home, with its dirt, its squalor, its freedom and fun. No more satisfying and
sufficing to a child of fourteen are interests of good housekeeping and cooking,
exclusively, than those of running around with strange boys, sleeping in hall-
ways for the sake of adventure. If there could have been a mixture of the two,
the good home of Mrs. Brown with its practical training, with some of the
mother love to soften, some playmates, some amusements, some diversion, perhaps Elsa could have developed into a moral and industrious young woman. But Elsa ran away to her mother. Mrs. Brown got her to come back, but the seed had been sown. Elsa was discontented and impudent. Mrs. Brown would keep her no longer and returned her to the court.

By this time her mother had degenerated, followed her husband and had taken to drinking, had become, not immoral, but "lower than a nigger," and taught Elsa to steal. She would take Elsa to the grocery stores during rush hours and while the mother was making a small purchase, the daughter would pick up any packages which had been tied up for other shoppers.

"I want Elsa when she is out of school," said Mrs. Brown as I was leaving. "There is good in that girl, and I can bring it out." I promised to call again if I could find time, or at least to write her regarding Elsa's progress at school.

Judged by conventional standards the foster home was an ideal social environment. From the standpoint of the wishes of even the normal girl, not to consider Elsa with her delinquent career already begun, it was nothing other than a prison house.

The poolroom has often been indicted, not without reason, as "a breeding place of crime." A discerning analysis of the pool hall from the standpoint of the social attitudes and the wishes of youth reveals it as the young man's social world. The life-history of Jerry discloses how the poolroom attracted him, gave expression to his wishes and determined and fixed his philosophy of life.

CASE VI

Jerry is a bright, energetic Irish boy who got into trouble because of his emotional temperament, lack of home control, and bad associates. He has been arrested for fighting, gambling, and petty stealing two or three times, but he has not yet been sent to any reformatory institutions.

Jerry's parents do not appear to have any great interest in him and there is a marked lack of respect on Jerry's part toward them. His father is to him "the old man" and his mother "the old lady." He comes and goes just about as he pleases; if the front door is locked when he comes home he goes through the window into his own room. There is little religious life in the home. Grace is said at meals when company is present, and on Sunday afternoons Jerry's sister plays hymns on the piano while his mother sings. Jerry quit going to Sunday school when he was fourteen, two weeks after he learned to play pool. He now spends most of his spare time in the local poolroom, playing when he has money and lounging around when he is "broke." In his early life Jerry was frequently whipped by his father; but when he grew too large for this sort of control no other form was devised, and now he goes unpunished.
He left high school in his second year to go to work, but he only works two or three months in one place. When he has accumulated a little money, he quits and loaf around until it is spent. Mentally he is bright, and being a good talker he has little trouble getting work. In the poolroom where he has made most of his friends he is popular; but he is a follower, not a leader. He is quick-tempered and quarrelsome, but his anger disappears almost as quickly as it flares up. He acts on the spur of the moment and has never shown much foresight or ability to plan. He has much physical courage, and is usually good-natured and agreeable.

Jerry is not ambitious. He used to envy the firemen, who sit around all day in armchairs and talk and play cards. At other times he wanted to be a life guard on the beach or a rich man's chauffeur.

Jerry's misconduct and failure in life are not due to a "bad" character or low ideals but rather to his lack of character and his aimless drifting nature. Lack of home discipline and the free and easy pool-room life have kept him from advancing.

Social analysis of the case reveals conversion, in the sociological sense of a sudden mutation of attitudes, here from the Sunday school to the poolroom. The poolroom is discerned as a social world with its peculiar canons and codes of conduct satisfying the wishes of the person. For example, in the poolroom there is participation and response in the good fellowship of the fellows, of recognition in success at the game, of new experience in the dare-devil and sometimes dangerous exploits of the gang. And finally Jerry's philosophy of life was fixed in "sliding through" existence in the easiest way, in the "softest snap of a job" he could find.

THE COLLAPSE OF A PERSON'S SOCIAL WORLD

A final case deals with a situation which becomes significant when the career of a delinquent is considered as a person and not as an individual. Sudden loss of status or "the collapse of one's social world" is perhaps the greatest catastrophe in the life of the person. Few persons ever recover, or in slang parlance "come back," after a complete loss of status. The following case is an illuminating example of a life "wrecked" through an assault upon the standing of the person among his fellows.

CASE VII

This is the case of a young man about twenty years of age whose character has been very much affected by unusual home conditions. He bids fair in spite of excellent qualities to develop an anti-social attitude. All of his family
with the exception of his mother have the reputation for exceedingly irregular moral behavior. The father is a notorious gambler and a man who has always gone with "loose" women openly. He is a man of fine presence, large, powerful, bold, with a straightforward "devil-may-care" attitude. He spent several adventurous years in South Africa and acquired a courage and strength of will that make him feared and admired. He is a most agreeable and friendly man, but has a violent quick temper. An older son and daughter have also both been sexually irregular, but the conduct of the younger son as a high-school boy had been irreproachable.

Difficulties arose because the young man has naturally made friends with boys of respectable families and associated with them down town, but was seldom asked to their homes. In the last five years he has become more and more bitter. The older brother had poor physique and all of his father's bad habits with none of his good ones. This young man is a youthful image of his father, has vigorous health, is strikingly good looking, and as for intelligence was able to keep near the head of his class all through high school without doing much work. He has such a frank, honest, sportsmanlike way with him that he makes friends everywhere he goes. But he is proud as Lucifer, more so than his father. Generosity with money is one of his outstanding qualities. He went to college with some of his high school friends and was greatly enraged, humiliated, and deeply hurt because their parents did everything in their power to prevent the boys going to the same college with him.

This incident brought to a head all the long series of little snubs and cuts that had not made so much difference when the boy was younger. I saw him the day before he left and it was evident that nothing in his life had ever affected him so deeply. He seemed to feel that some tragedy had occurred from which he could never recover. He was furiously bitter about the whole affair. He had some reason to feel resentment, for his own conduct had been almost beyond reproach. The only possible bad habits of which he could be accused were smoking and gambling. He did not practice either to excess. None of his family were drinkers and he seemed to be free from their common disposition to sexual irregularities.

He did excellent work in college but he could not get over the injury to his pride. He became morose and would not accompany his friends to social functions, although, of course, he was far away from all slanderous tongues. His friends almost unconsciously, perhaps, were not as cordial and intimate with him as before. At any rate, on his part, or on theirs, a change in attitudes had taken place. He began to frequent gambling and disorderly places. But he was too clever to lose money. However, it got him into trouble. Although his college work was more than satisfactory he was called before the officials because he had been present at a time when the police raided a place. His pent-up rage burst on the dean and other faculty men who were present. His natural courage served him well and in a torrent of profane and abusive language he told them that nobody could tell him with whom he could or could
THE DELINQUENT AS A PERSON

not associate. He denounced them with all the curses he could lay his tongue to, blindly abusing them for all his misery. There were papers lying on the table relative to his case. He snatched them up and tore them into pieces, swore they couldn’t expel him because he was going to leave.

He came home and secured a first-class position very soon, and has held it ever since. But he is going rapidly on the downward path. He has taken to drinking heavily, frequents disorderly resorts constantly, and is badly diseased. He is not able to do as his father has done—defy the world’s standard of morality and enjoy life in his own way.

THE SOCIOLOGY OF DELINQUENCY

Sociology is now undergoing a transformation like that which has almost completely changed psychology from metaphysics to an experimental science. From a philosophy of society sociology is emerging into a science of society. Consequently the interest of the new sociology is now turned to defining the experimental point of view, to classifying problems for investigation, and to developing a technique of research.

Not only criminality, but all social problems, indeed the entire area of group behavior and social life, is being subjected to sociological description and analysis. The person is conceived in his interrelations with the social organization, with the family, the neighborhood, the community, and society. Explanations of his behavior are found in terms of human wishes and social attitudes, mobility and unrest, intimacy and status, social contacts and social interaction, conflict, accommodation and assimilation.¹

The study of the delinquent as a person opens up a fertile field. Materials in the form of case-records, personal documents, and life-histories, are now available for analysis. Psychiatry and psychology in attacking the problem of the criminal from the standpoint of individual behavior have made contributions of high value, which have prepared the way for sociological research. The psychiatric, psychological, and sociological methods of investigation are not in conflict with each other but rather complementary and interdependent. The sociologist will continue to rely upon the findings of these other sciences of behavior for a knowledge of individual differences in mentality and temperament, while they

in turn will be disposed to look to sociology for light upon the adjustment of the person in the social organization.

In conclusion, the point may be raised that this article deals with the sociology of personality rather than of delinquency. The criminal, however, is first of all a person, and second a criminal. Therefore, it is well to study him primarily as a person and secondarily as an offender against the laws of organized society. The basic fact to an understanding and control of the behavior of the criminal seems to be that the lawbreaker is a person, that is, an individual with the wishes common to all human beings and with a conception of his rôle in group life.