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DELINQUENCY AND THE YOUTH CULTURE: UPPER AND MIDDLE-CLASS BOYS*

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The present paper explores the youth culture and its influence on private and public school middle and upper-class boys. Limited self-reported data reveal that these boys are peer oriented and are interested in "social" non-academic affairs. Proportionately more private school boys report delinquent acts. A configuration of relatively consistent attitudes towards delinquent situations is evident and suggests, perhaps, new meanings of what is proper and improper among adolescents. Discussion concentrates on the significance of roles and rules in explaining much of this behavior.

Juvenile delinquency among upper-class boys remains shrouded in mystery. So scanty is our knowledge of this group that a public image of the upper-class adolescent is non-existent, and not the barest trace nor suspicion is available of him as delinquent. Although the hard knot of delinquency (behavior that is apt to try any public tolerance) is located in the bottom levels of the working class, limited studies (using self-reported techniques) have revealed delinquency throughout the class structure.[1] But nothing is known about the delinquency of boys who attend expensive private schools. Knowledge of the informal handling and special treatment by officials of upper-class boys, the inaccessibility of upper-class institutions, and the absence of a socially recognized image of the upper-class youth as delinquent has, perhaps, discouraged systematic theory and research. But if knowledge is to accumulate in this area, sociological research must pinpoint these boys for study. Both their legitimate and illegitimate conduct must be uncovered and made known, the frequency of their acts, the style that it takes and the conditions under which it occurs. Are there subcultural dimensions to upper-class delinquency? To what extent are these boys peer oriented? Is their delinquency related to the system of roles and expectations among these boys and to the social status of schools (both public and private) which they attend? Are the socially approved interests and activities of these boys the source of their delinquencies? To what degree are certain kinds of delinquency institutionalized among these youths? Answers to these kinds of questions (and these are only a few) are needed if we are to understand and explain the behavior of these boys.

The major focus of this paper is on the attitudes, delinquent acts, and selected aspects of the youth culture of upper-class boys attending private and public schools. But there is considerable overlap in the attitudes and behavior of upper and middle-class boys, and a comparative analysis of this material is presented. Little is known about the legal and illegal behavior of these boys which is good reason for cautious speculation. Our discussion takes us beyond the data offered here; however, an effort is made to bring together and expand some of the ideas discussed in previous work.[2]

As part of a larger study an anonymous questionnaire was used to gather data from boys (aged 13 to over 19) in five public schools and one upper-class boys' private school located in five Canadian communities. This group consists of all boys in the secondary grades at the time of our visits. However, this paper reports on boys aged 15–19 years only. The communities vary in size from an industrial city of over 100,000 population to residential suburbs and townships. The public schools are situated in typically middle-class areas, the private school in an upper middle-class residential area. Questionnaires were administered under similar

[1] Nye, Short, Jr. & Olson, *Socioeconomic Status and Delinquent Behavior*, 63 AM. J. SOC. 381 (1950); Vaz, *Self-Reported Juvenile Delinquency and Socioeconomic Status*, 8 CAN. J. CORR. 20 (1966).

[2] *See* Scott & Vaz, *A Perspective on Middle-Class Delinquency*, 29 CAN. J. ECO. & POL. SCI. (1963); Vaz, *Middle-Class Adolescents: Self-Reported Delinquency and Youth Culture Activities*, 2 CAN. REV. SOC. & ANTHRO. 52–70 (1965).

conditions in all schools. Multiple methods were used to guarantee anonymity of respondents and necessary precautions were taken to insure honesty and reliability of responses.

Most boys who attend private schools come from the upper end of the social and economic spectrum.[3] Today this includes boys from upper and upper-middle socioeconomic strata. Few middle-class families can afford to send their children to expensive private schools.[4] In our analysis three criteria were used for the socioeconomic classification of subjects: father's occupation, father's level of education and the size of organization in which father works. Three socioeconomic categories were established from the Blishen Occupational Scale.[5] Using father's occupation, subjects were initially classified into one of three categories according to the Blishen Scale. Cases that were unclassifiable (where father's occupation was omitted or reported ambiguously) were reviewed and classified according to father's education level. Respondents whose father had undertaken postgraduate university training were classified into category 2; those who had completed university (*e.g.* B.A., B.Sc., etc.) without postgraduate work were grouped into category 3. No difficulty was encountered in the classification of respondents into category 1. All category 1 respondents correspond precisely with the occupations listed in the corresponding category on the Blishen Scale. In this paper categories 1 and 2 are grouped and termed "upper class"; category 3 subjects are hereafter referred to as "middle class." The private school studied in this

project does not likely recruit students from the highest reaches of the upper socioeconomic strata. Very likely our private and public school "upper class" subjects come from mainly lower upper and upwardly mobile, upper middle-class socioeconomic levels.

A youth culture is not endemic to a society, but is apt to develop under special conditions. Institutional change in the social and economic spheres of Canada and the United States has made possible the emergence of a relatively prestigious youth culture. Cityward migration from rural areas and the decreasing size of families have characterized both countries.[6] The growth of unionization, which helps protect the semi-skilled and skilled from competition from new recruits, and the growth of professionalization which makes entry into these occupations dependent upon "educational qualifications" have helped foster the almost universal consensus that children should remain in school and be kept out of the labor market.[7] Thus, more children have remained in school for longer periods of time which has helped generate a youth culture.

Change has occurred also in family size, role structure,[8] and in the redistribution of power in the family. This has given greater individuality and freedom to family members and fostered the proliferation of peer-group contacts among young people. Furthermore, there has occurred an increasing "democratization" of family life in rural, but predominantly in urban areas with the resultant erosion of rules governing parent-child relationships in particular,[9] and adult-child contacts in general. Parents now experience considerable anxiety and uncertainty in the raising of children.[10] They turn to contemporaries for advice, to the mass media, to "experts," and ultimately, in desperation, to the children themselves.[11] Schools have grown increasingly "permissive" (reflecting change in educational "philosophies") and lack traditional authority. Baltzell writes, "The changes at the [private]

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[3] PORTER, THE VERTICAL MOSAIC 285 (1965).

[4] The private school discussed here is not to be confused with "Preparatory" or "Tutorial" private schools. Although it is not the most expensive of its kind in Canada its tuition fees run over $1,000 per year. The "highest standards" of propriety, personal appearance and "character formation" are stressed, and scholarship is strongly fostered. Discipline in school is regimented through a system of upper-grade prefects. Also a set of regulations for students is distributed to parents who are expected to adhere to its directions. Out-of-town students often live with "masters" which serves as a further control. Modelled after the British "public" school there is a quiet homogeneity about the private institution which is patently absent from the larger, heterogeneous public high school.

[5] BLISHEN, JONES, NAEGELE & PORTER, CANADIAN SOCIETY: SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES 477–85 (1961). Based on the Blishen scale, category 1 ranges from judges (90.0) to architects (73.0) and includes also occupations reported as "president of a company," category 2 ranges from statisticians (72.9) to transportation managers (60.1), and category 3 extends from dispatchers, train (58.5) to personnel service officer (50.5).

[6] MILLS, WHITE COLLAR 3–35 (1956); *see also* ELKIN, THE FAMILY IN CANADA 15–30 (1964).

[7] *See* Cohen, *Foreword* to MUSGROVE, YOUTH AND THE SOCIAL ORDER at xiv (1964).

[8] For factors contributing to change in the family *see* Ogburn, *Why the Family is Changing*, in Ross, PERSPECTIVES ON THE SOCIAL ORDER (1963); ELKIN, *op. cit. supra* note 6, at 95–112.

[9] For a review of work done in Canada involving parent-child relationships *see id.* at 105–06; REISMAN, GLAZER & DENNEY, THE LONELY CROWD (1955).

[10] HEISE, NEW HORIZONS FOR CANADA'S CHILDREN (1961); Reuter, *The Sociology of Adolescence*, 43 AM. J. Soc. (1937).

[11] COLEMAN, THE ADOLESCENT SOCIETY 291 (1961).

school since the war have been far-reaching and progressive. A less puritanical and more permissive atmosphere has been consciously created in order to set a more democratic, tolerant, and possibly other-directed tone to school life." [12] In some instances power seems to have been transferred from teachers to pupils.[13] The vacillation in attitude and policy of teachers and high schools towards students, the continual revision of curricula and standards, and the seemingly indiscriminate experimentation with teaching "techniques" mirror this vast social change. However, it also suggests, perhaps, not so much a commitment to "progressive" education and "scientific findings" as is often alleged, but a desperate search for purpose and stability in education.

A latent function of structural change in society has been the emergent prominence of the adolescent. As a target of exploitation adolescents have been cajoled, flattered, idealized, and have quickly become victim to the glamorizing significance of active participation in the teenage culture.[14] Of course this has greatly influenced the production requirements of big business. But the adaptability of corporate industry through publicity and the mass media has promoted the "needs" of adolescents, and reflects the strategic significance of sustaining the youth culture for the general economy.

Given a prominence perhaps hitherto unknown among young people, the public image of the adolescent has become his own role model. The undue attention and publicity given the fads and collective displays of teenagers and young people, besides their vociferous commentary on the "social ills" of society, serve to alert them to their own conduct and pronouncements as a growing source of power and recognition. Highly sensitive to adolescent affairs, almost any event or opportunity which conceivably might increase their publicity or improve their collective self-image seems to be legitimate prey for the teenage challenge. This has spawned a variety of groups among young people, many of which are perhaps irresponsible, often delinquent. Because standards and norms are in rapid

flux, final judgment of these youths and their actions is often postponed. To be a teenager today is to be supremely valuable, and adolescents know this. The status, rights and obligations of the adolescent have become legitimized, morally valid.

The notion of a mass youth culture suggests that it cuts across social class lines and that the majority of young people are unable to escape its dominant themes, interests and values. The "world" of upper-class boys is no longer all of a single weave. For an ever increasing number of adolescents the contemporary high school has become the great levelling ground where differences become largely neutralized, students homogenized.[15] Aloofness is the shortest path to social pariahdom among teenagers. Once a boy enters high school he becomes quickly absorbed with the interests and attitudes of peers and teachers from all social strata, and peers expect enthusiastic participation in their activities.

Not even the private school can escape the mainstream of the teenage culture. Although these institutions often emphasize training in leadership and "character formation" their purpose is subverted by the prevailing youth culture. Today there is often close coordination between private and public schools in education associations, outside programs and intellectual contests. Also the private school population is becoming increasingly diverse, and upper-class "courting mores" have changed, no longer is "steady dating" considered "middle class." [16] However, all this does not deny the importance of social class for understanding adolescent behavior.[17] But class variations in teenage conduct are apt to be more a matter of emphasis than of kind,[18] and in part mirror their respective adult class cultures. Typically this will be seen in the styles of teenage behavior from different classes. Nor does this preclude the emergence of adolescent subcultures, cultural pockets of values, interests and norms sufficiently distinct to set them off from their parent class culture. Although little Canadian data are available, some of these subcultures may be of a delinquent nature.

Previous studies have shown clearly that middle-class boys are often peer oriented, and that they are interested primarily in non-intellectual socially-

[12] BALTZELL, AN AMERICAN BUSINESS ARISTOCRACY 459 (1962). Although Baltzell writes of a very high level group, the private schools he discusses are of the kind studied in this project.

[13] See the paper by Cohen, *Teachers vs Students: Changing Power Relations in the Secondary Schools*, a public lecture given at the University of California, Berkeley, August 22, 1961.

[14] For an excellent review of the teenage culture *see* Bernard, *Teen-Age Culture: An Overview*, 338 ANNALS (1961).

[15] It is true that under such circumstances marginal differentiation likely takes on special significance.

[16] BALTZELL, *op. cit. supra* note 12, at 459–62; *see also* MAYS, THE YOUNG PRETENDERS 35–36 (1965), concerning youth in England.

[17] *See* HOLLINGSHEAD, ELMTOWN'S YOUTH (1961).

[18] Bernard, *supra* note 14, at 5.

TABLE 1

PEER ORIENTATION OF PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SCHOOL UPPER AND MIDDLE-CLASS BOYS

Response Category	Percentages for Boys Aged 15-19		
	Upper Class		Middle Class
	Private	Public	Public
Breaking with your best friend	69.0	60.8	54.9
Parents disapproval	31.0	38.5	43.5
Non-responses	0.0	0.7	1.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
N =	58	288	428

oriented activities.[19] Although our information is limited to three items it gives us a brief glimpse of these dimensions of upper-class adolescent life and allows us to compare upper and middle-class youths. The first item was used to establish the degree to which these lads were oriented to peers and parents. We asked: "Let us say that you had always wanted to belong to a special club in high school and then finally you were asked to join. But you discovered that your parents did not approve of the club. And since your best friend was not asked to join you would have to break up with your best friend. Which of these things would be hardest for you to take?" [20]

Table 1 makes clear that all three groups (especially private and public school upper-class boys) appear more oriented toward peers than parents. This seems to be a common characteristic among contemporary youth.[21]

The next item enquired into the dating habits of these boys. Each adolescent was asked the following question: "On the average how often do you take a girl out during the week?"

These data indicate that upper-class boys (private and public school both) more often date girls than do middle-class boys.[22] Eighty-five per cent of

[19] COLEMAN, *op. cit. supra* note 11. For Canadian data *see* Vaz, *supra* note 2.
[20] Some of the items used in this project were taken from COLEMAN, *op. cit. supra* note 11. We are much indebted to this study.
[21] *Ibid.* For data on younger children in England read MUSGROVE, *op. cit. supra* note 7, at 92-105. A preliminary analysis of data gathered among Swiss boys by the writer reveals that they are strongly parent oriented.
[22] Perhaps dating takes on greater significance among boys in a private school where girls are a rarity and students spend longer hours in school.

private school upper-class boys date at least once a week; less than 53 per cent of the other groups do so. The largest percentage of each group dates once a week; proportionately about twice as many private as public school boys date this often.

The following item provides some indication of the general interests and youth culture orientation of these teenagers. Each boy was asked to check those items which applied "to most of the boys here at school." Table 3 presents the selected items in rank order of response frequency.

Table 3 suggests five major points: (a) each group of boys is strongly oriented to girls, sports, cars, and "fun and kicks," (b) proportionately

TABLE 2

TIME SPENT DATING AMONG PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SCHOOL UPPER AND MIDDLE-CLASS BOYS

Response Category	Percentages for Boys Aged 15-19		
	Upper Class		Middle Class
	Private	Public	Public
Twice or more times a week	25.4	20.1	19.2
About once a week	59.3	31.9	27.3
Hardly ever or never	15.3	47.7	53.5
Non-responses	0.0	0.3	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
N =	59	287	428

TABLE 3

ORIENTATION OF PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SCHOOL UPPER AND MIDDLE-CLASS BOYS

Response Category	Percentages for Boys Aged 15-19		
	Upper Class		Middle Class
	Private	Public	Public
Interested in girls	77.9	74.3	77.6
Sports-minded	74.5	65.6	70.3
Out for "fun and kicks"	57.6	49.3	50.9
Crazy about cars	52.5	59.0	65.0
Studies hard	49.1	23.3	30.2
Snobs	28.8	13.5	18.5
Not much interested in school	25.4	37.1	33.1
Non-responses	0.0	0.0	4.0
N =	59	288	428
		$\bar{P} = .905$	

more private than public school boys are interested in "fun and kicks," (c) cars are considerably more important to public than private school boys, (d) proportionately more private than public school youths report that boys study hard in school, and (e) correlatively, public school lads are less concerned with academic matters than are private school boys.

The responses of these boys suggest a commonality of interest among them all. The evidence that considerably more private school boys report that boys "study hard" mirrors the enforced emphasis on academic matters in private school. However, this does not preclude these boys from being influenced by the youth culture. In contrast, the public high school is often the focus of youth culture events, but typically lacks a strong scholastic orientation.

DELINQUENCY AMONG PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SCHOOL UPPER AND MIDDLE-CLASS BOYS

In this paper the delinquent acts of boys are self-reported and are taken from an anonymous checklist of behavior items included in a larger questionnaire. Each item is a violation of the law or an offense which could result in official action being taken.

Table 4 indicates that of the 17 delinquency items, 14 are reported by proportionately more upper-class private school boys, two items (car theft and driving a car without a license) by upper-class public school boys, and one item (drunkenness) by middle-class boys. Two items, "serious" theft and "remained out all night without parents' permission," are disproportionately reported by upper-class private school boys. The responses of public school groups (upper and middle class) are very similar on almost each item. A few further points are noteworthy. Petty theft is reported by over 70 per cent and 64 per cent of upper and middle-class boys respectively. We suspect that this type of theft is practiced by all boys, at one time or another, irrespective of social class. Stealing for "fun" is not restricted to lower-class boys. It is more than this. The values of adventure, courage and masculinity are integral components of the male role. Notwithstanding differential class emphasis, they are taught early by all parents, and are something a youngster ought not to overlook to be accepted as a boy. Among boys courage is often an important indicator of masculinity, and petty theft

and varying kinds of vandalism usually validate a youth's claim to "manliness." In a private school where girls are absent the pressures to demonstrate one's masculinity are perhaps at a premium, and situations multiply where these kinds of behavior are encouraged, which helps explain why private school boys are more "delinquent" on most items. The data reveal that petty theft, "serious" theft, fist-fighting, and stealing money are considerably more prevalent among these boys. In the public schools the daily presence of girls very likely serves as social controls, not because girls are especially moral, but because youngsters will neither know (since theirs is a predominantly boy's "world") nor believe that girls steal, and will look upon them as virtuous. Girls define stealing as wrong, and although young boys may ridicule the femininity of girls they will likely respect their virtue and curtail their behavior accordingly.

Our data on petty theft are likely a reflection (in part) of the earlier years of these boys, but as they assume more sophisticated roles, petty theft, vandalism, fist-fighting, and stealing money decrease markedly. We note that gambling, taking a drink, driving beyond the speed limit, and driving without a license, assume more importance for older boys. This might be termed "sociable delinquency" since it tends to emerge from predominantly "social" events. Finally, the data suggest that breaking and entering, being placed on school probation, automobile theft, and purchasing liquor, are relatively unpopular delinquencies among upper and middle-class boys.

ATTITUDES OF PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SCHOOL UPPER AND MIDDLE-CLASS BOYS TOWARD SELECTED YOUTH CULTURE ACTIVITIES

To speak of a youth culture is to refer to a relatively coherent, integrated system of attitudes, norms and values that relates to a distinguishable body of interaction. Our material has suggested that upper and middle-class boys both are peer oriented and concerned mainly with non-academic, fun-laden interests, and that their self-reported delinquencies are often "social" in quality.[23]

The roles that individuals occupy lead them to classify objects, persons and activities in appropri-

[23] Recent research reveals that both boys and girls of the middle class commit similar kinds of delinquency. See Barton, *Disregarded Delinquency: A Study of Self-Reported Middle-Class Female Delinquency in a Suburb* (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Indiana University, 1965).

TABLE 4

SELF-REPORTED DELINQUENT BEHAVIOR OF PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SCHOOL UPPER AND MIDDLE-CLASS BOYS

Type of Offense	Upper Class		Middle Class	Upper Class		Middle Class
	Private	*Public*	*Public*	*Private*	*Public*	*Public*
	(15–19 years)					
	Per cent Admitting Offense			Per cent Admitting Offense More than Once or Twice		
Taken little things of value (between $2 and $50) which did not belong to you.........	37.9	15.5	15.2	8.6	4.8	2.3
Remained out all night without parents' permission.............................	42.4	27.3	25.9	11.9	11.1	8.4
Gambled for money at cards, dice, or some other game...........................	69.5	68.8	65.4	30.5	35.8	38.8
Taken a car without owner's knowledge......	10.0	13.9	11.3	1.6	3.1	3.0
Destroyed or damaged public or private property of any kind.......................	67.8	52.3	52.3	23.8	14.6	14.7
Taken a glass of beer, wine, or liquor at a party or elsewhere with your friends......	72.9	65.0	66.4	44.1	34.6	36.2
Tried to be intimate with a member of the opposite sex.............................	49.2	39.2	38.3	15.3	18.4	17.3
Driven a car without a driver's license......	59.4	63.2	61.5	30.6	28.9	27.8
Taken little things that did not belong to you..	74.5	71.5	64.7	27.1	19.8	15.4
Skipped school without a legitimate excuse...	57.7	41.0	41.6	17.0	12.2	14.5
Driven beyond the speed limit.............	69.4	57.1	48.8	59.3	42.1	38.6
Engaged in a fist fight with another boy......	63.8	53.0	58.2	13.8	8.0	9.6
Been feeling "high" from drinking beer, wine, or liquor..............................	37.2	38.9	40.4	22.0	17.8	29.4
Broken into or tried to break and enter a building with the intention of stealing.....	16.8	9.0	7.7	3.3	.07	1.1
Bought or tried to buy beer, wine or liquor from a store or adult....................	33.9	27.1	24.5	17.0	11.4	12.6
Taken money of any amount from someone or place which did not belong to you........	45.8	36.8	29.2	11.9	10.4	4.7
Placed on school probation or expelled from school................................	13.6	7.3	4.7	3.5	1.0	1.1
N =	59	288	428 P̄ = .956			

ate ways. Customarily the individual defines and evaluates everything in his environment in terms of the significance which it has for him and what he proposes to do with it. When attitudes are integrated about some general class of behavior or social "objects" and include an affective conception of the desirable properties of the behavior or "objects" we may legitimately refer to values.[24] If we think of values falling along a continuum, at one end we might have those values that are "true matters of conscience," at the other, values that deal with norms of expedience and technical efficiency.[25] Not all values and rules that circumscribe adolescent behavior are of the former kind, nor does their violation evoke feelings of guilt. But certain kinds of conduct traditionally defined immoral such as drinking, gambling, physical intimacy and sexual intercourse remain relatively serious matters in the eyes of the community although it seems increasingly unable to control them.

We believe that during an earlier period these kinds of behavior very likely generated feelings of guilt, and provoked considerable anxiety among

[24] Katz & Stotland, *A Preliminary Statement to a Theory of Attitude Structure and Change*, in KOCH, PSYCHOLOGY: A STUDY OF A SCIENCE 432 (1959).

[25] WILLIAMS, AMERICAN SOCIETY 402 (1960).

young people—more so than today.[26] Both the attitudes and behavior of young people have very likely undergone considerable change in these matters. We suggest that never before have these kinds of deviance been practiced on such a wide scale among middle and upper-class youths. And there is little reason to suspect that adolescents of a previous period were more adept at concealing their delinquencies. Firm family controls and the social organization of their everyday lives likely diverted these young people from extensive peer-group relationships and activities which, in turn, precluded them from engaging in widespread deviance of this nature. Discussing young people of the past the Lynds write, "[I]n 1890 a 'well-brought up' boy and girl were commonly forbidden to sit together in the dark. . . . Buggy-riding in 1890 allowed only a narrow range of mobility; three to eight were generally accepted hours for riding, and being out after eight-thirty without a chaperon was largely forbidden." [27] As for sex, Frederick Allen writes, "boys and girls knew they were expected to behave with perfect propriety towards one another and only rarely did they fail to do so"; indeed, boys followed a code under whose terms "a kiss was virtually tantamount to a proposal of marriage." [28] How odd these remarks seem when compared with accounts of the behavior and attitudes of contemporary adolescents. Indeed, the absence of anything resembling a youth culture in the past prevented adolescents from successfully claiming legitimacy for many of the behavior patterns accepted (albeit, sometimes reluctantly) by contemporary parents. Today, activities such as drinking, physical intimacy and other forms of heterosexual conduct are less often true "matters of conscience," and although adolescents are not "morally free-wheeling" their attitudes towards these types of conduct point to the emergence of a morality over which they have greater control.

[26] Admittedly this is an hypothesis that is difficult ot substantiate.
[27] LYND & LYND, MIDDLETOWN 137 (1956).
[28] ALLEN, THE BIG CHANGE 11 (1952). In discussing sexual patterns before marriage among adults Goode writes, "Cautiously stated, it seems likely that a considerable increase has occurred in the toleration of certain kinds of sexual or premarital behavior, such as petting or even sexual intercourse, before and after marriage with someone other than the marital partner." However, it is uncertain whether any change has taken place regarding sexual relations with the future spouse alone; *see* GOODE, WORLD REVOLUTION AND FAMILY PATTERNS 37 (1963); *see also* KINSEY, POMEROY, MARTIN & GEBHARD, SEXUAL BEHAVIOR IN THE HUMAN FEMALE 422-24 (1953).

As the youth culture develops and acquires greater importance in the lives of adolescents, particular kinds of conduct—some delinquent—become increasingly institutionalized. The large number of boys who do not disapprove of certain types of delinquency suggests an increase in the institutionalization of this activity, although this is perhaps not yet widespread. This is not to suggest the structural collapse in our system of morals. Nor is the gradual change in morality an adventitious dimension of the youth culture, limited to a segment of especially delinquent boys. Expectedly, the attitudes and values of the youth culture tend towards greater inclusiveness. There appears a configuration of relatively consistent attitudes and sentiments towards delinquent types of situation which reflect what is proper and improper, virtuous and wicked, ugly and beautiful among these youths. This is both cause and consequence of the larger structural change taking place—an emerging general system of rules and values congruent with the increasingly permissive forms of adolescent conduct. Thus its principal function is its practicality.

The following data, gathered from a set of five items, are hardly definitive, but suggest a direction for future research. Each item is designed as a "life-situation" geared to the level of everyday reality of adolescents and assumed to be typical of the youth culture. The closer one approaches the level of interpersonal relations, the press of circumstances and the fear of consequences become more immediate conditions of conduct. Perhaps these conditions are likely to be more meaningful to the teenager and thereby elicit attitudes correspondingly valid.

Table 5 indicates that approximately 75 per cent of all groups approve of this behavior. As many as 93 per cent of the private school upper-class boys find this acceptable. "Having a couple of beers" appears so widely acceptable one suspects that it is a normative pattern among these boys.

A second item focused on "social" drinking in the company of girls. It is customary, especially among the middle classes, that masculine kinds of conduct (*e.g.* drinking liquor) will be restricted in the presence of women. Responses to the following item point in this direction.

In this instance it is clear that the major difference in responses is attributable to private school boys who disproportionately favor "spending an evening like this." Yet approval is not limited to this group; over 53 per cent of all boys (upper and middle class) approve of this activity.

TABLE 5

ATTITUDES OF PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SCHOOL UPPER
AND MIDDLE-CLASS BOYS TOWARD "SOCIAL" DRINKING

Ralph and a couple of his 12th grade classmates have nothing to do Friday evening. They decide to go for a drive together. There isn't much doing in town, so they return to Ralph's house for a couple of beers, and shoot the breeze together. Later the boys go straight home to bed. How do you feel about this? (Check one.)

| | Upper Class | | Middle Class |
	Private	Public	Public
I do not approve that they spend an evening this way.	6.8	26.7	24.1
It is alright, I guess, to spend an evening this way.	30.5	30.6	33.9
It is OK to spend an evening this way.	62.7	42.4	41.1
Non-responses	0.0	0.3	0.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
N =	59	288	428

TABLE 6

ATTITUDES OF PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SCHOOL UPPER
AND MIDDLE-CLASS BOYS TOWARD "SOCIAL"
DRINKING WITH GIRLS

John, Jean, Frank, and Mary are grade 12 high school students. Saturday evening they go out driving together. Everyone is friendly, laughing and joking. Later the boys and girls begin necking in the car. Finally they all decide to return to John's house for a couple of beers and to listen to records. How do you feel about spending an evening like this? (Check one.)

| | Upper Class | | Middle Class |
	Private	Public	Public
I do not approve that they should spend an evening this way.	23.7	42.0	43.0
It is alright, I guess, to spend an evening this way.	40.7	35.4	32.7
It is OK to spend an evening this way.	35.6	22.6	24.1
Non-responses	0.0	0.0	0.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
N =	59	288	428

TABLE 7

ATTITUDES OF PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SCHOOL UPPER
AND MIDDLE-CLASS BOYS TOWARD DRUNKENNESS

You are attending a party at your friend's house Saturday night. His parents are away and he is having some of the boys and girls over. Everyone is enjoying himself. There are records and dancing. Cokes and beer are available and there is food to eat. Later in the evening one of the boys appears to be feeling "high" from drinking too much beer. He is *not* behaving rudely except that he is feeling "high." How do you feel about this boy feeling "high?" (Check one.)

| | Upper Class | | Middle Class |
	Private	Public	Public
I do not approve of his actions.	27.1	46.6	47.4
It is alright, I guess, since he is at a party.	33.9	19.4	22.9
It is OK. It happens to a lot of fellows.	39.0	34.0	29.2
Non-responses	0.0	0.0	0.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
N =	59	288	428

Among middle and upper-class families (especially in large urban areas) light drinking in the home among older adolescents is often permitted, seldom condemned, although drunkenness is strongly disapproved. Since a relatively large percentage of boys approve of drinking we should not expect to find drunkenness among peers tabooed altogether.

If private school upper-class boys strongly approve of boys drinking in the company of girls, proportionately few (27 per cent) condemn boys who get drunk occasionally. Although there is greater similarity in the responses of the public school groups, over 50 per cent of all groups approve of this behavior. It is very likely that parties are "special" events among all adolescents during which new attitudes and sentiments are expected and special sets of rules are operative. Under these circumstances drinking and "feeling high" may fall easily within the range of acceptable behavior. At the same time events such as parties and dances are integral to the youth culture and, as the data have shown, there is continuity (with other events) in the attitudes of these boys.

Today heterosexual relationships and dating among young people are considered "healthy" ac-

tivities, and are strongly encouraged (even during preteen years) by adults. Certain kinds of intimacy such as kissing and "necking" ("once it doesn't go too far") are permitted. Certainly among the upper and middle socioeconomic strata events such as parties, dances and "socials" are organized for early teenage participation. Given these conditions it would be surprising to find many boys (irrespective of social class) who disapprove of some kind of intimacy on a first date. Since boys are very likely to successfully challenge the rules of behavior, advanced kinds of intimacy (as suggested in the item) are apt to be acceptable among all groups. Table 8 shows that differences among groups are small, and that over 63 per cent of all groups approve, at least conditionally, that to "neck and pet" on a first date is acceptable.

We have suggested that a change in morality is emerging among these boys and much of our data points this way. But to talk of a developing youth culture and a change in morality is to imply a course of social change, a period of transition during which relatively stable values, attitudes and norms of an earlier era are being recast. It does not imply that all segments of the culture structure change at an equal rate, nor that the values, attitudes and sentiments of young people have been transformed overnight. Given our Puritan heritage

TABLE 8

ATTITUDES OF PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SCHOOL UPPER AND MIDDLE-CLASS BOYS TOWARD SEXUAL INTIMACY ON FIRST DATE

Janet and Bob are in grade 12 in high school. They know each other because they are in the same biology class. But Saturday night will be their *first* date together. After the dance, on the way home, Bob stops the car and kisses Janet. Soon he kisses her again and they begin to neck and pet. How do you feel about this? (Check one.)

	Upper Class		Middle Class
	Private	Public	Public
I do not approve of their actions.	37.3	35.4	31.8
It is alright, I guess, how they wish to act.	40.7	40.3	46.0
It is OK.	22.0	23.6	21.5
Non-responses	0.0	0.7	0.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
N =	59	288	428

TABLE 9

ATTITUDES OF PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SCHOOL UPPER AND MIDDLE-CLASS BOYS TOWARD SEXUAL INTERCOURSE

Carol is a good-looking, grade 12 student. But she has a bad reputation throughout the school. She is known to be pretty free and easy. Her classmate Robert takes her out on a date Saturday night. Before returning home Robert tries to get intimate (go the limit) with her, and *she* does *not* object. How do you feel about Robert's actions? (Check one.)

	Upper Class		Middle Class
	Private	Public	Public
I do not approve of Robert's actions.	55.9	50.3	48.1
Robert's actions are alright, I guess, since Carol did not object.	33.9	38.2	42.1
Robert's actions are OK.	10.2	11.5	9.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
N =	59	288	428

some especially "sensitive" areas, such as sexual conduct (rooted in deeply felt values), are perhaps more resistant to change. But as young people gain greater license from formal adult control, and assume the management of their own affairs, they shoulder greater responsibility for their sexual conduct. In the process their sentiments and attitudes are reshaped; regulatory codes evolve, which in turn influence the conduct of sexual matters.

The data reveal that a considerable percentage of these boys approve of relatively advanced stages of physical intimacy. This is not to say that they advocate sexual promiscuity. Sexual congress remains a delicate issue for these boys even with girls of "bad reputation." Table 9 shows that the majority of upper-class boys and 48 per cent of middle-class boys disapprove of the described behavior, and that only about 10–12 per cent approve outright. Yet 34 per cent of the private school boys, and as many as 42 per cent of middle-class boys, agree that sexual intercourse is more or less acceptable.

For centuries in Western society sexual intercourse has been associated with affection.[29] Emergent rules governing sexual patterns among young people are influenced by both previously estab-

[29] Reiss, *Sexual Codes in Teen-Age Culture*, 338 ANNALS 53 (1961).

lished and contemporary adult values and conduct. Among boys coitus continues to be associated largely with affectionate involvement. In high school, girls of "easy virtue" are apt to serve as relatively acceptable means of sexual release for a small segment of "outsiders," atypical older adolescents. Perhaps these girls have always served this service. But among adolescents generally sexual intercourse is likely associated with romantic love, and under special conditions is normatively tolerated. "Going steady" certainly legitimates sexual experimentation among teenagers. Perhaps sexual intercourse with love brings little discredit. Unlike the past when girls could "fall from virtue" today they are more apt to slip into womanhood—with confidence.

DISCUSSION[30]

In the past the restricted home life of upper-class children precluded the proliferation of peer-group relationships, and a youth culture as we know it did not exist. The rights and obligations of young people were confined to relatively specific age-sex roles, and the unequivocality of parental roles was well established. Having few outside contacts and associations the child was family-reared (often by a governess who over-emphasized patriarchal and class values),[31] and later in the less secular private schools which served principally to ascribe status and socialize their youthful populations. At this time sex was a matter largely hidden from children and physical intimacy among young people was tantamount to sin. Adult dictates for adolescent conduct were entrenched in Anglo-Saxon Protestant morality—a system of rules and values especially functional for a relatively stable class structure where legitimate authority resided in adult positions in the home, school and church. Goals for adolescents were relatively clear-cut and parents believed in the ideals which were taught their children and knew what direction behavior should take. Under these circumstances children were apt to be reared according to widely institutionalized rules, and parental dictates were likely meaningful to existing conditions of adolescent life.

In a fast changing technological world the upper classes have become increasingly "democratized"

and heterogeneous. Today adolescent life is much less divorced from extra-class contacts, and ambiguity is evident in parent-child relationships. The "increased concern of parents with *understanding* their children" very likely reflects a desperate bid by parents to do *something*[32] in the face of their moral ambiguity and the paucity of clear-cut rules for governing their offspring. In many cases schools and other organized clubs have taken over parental duties usually to the satisfaction of parents. In private schools regimentation is enforced by sets of rules for parents to follow with their teenage children. Furthermore, adult groups tend to support the values and sentiments that circumscribe "progressive" socially-oriented education and often endorse the institutionalized practices (dances, parties, dating, "socials," etc.) allegedly conducive to the development of "social competence" and adjustment of the child. In turn this helps sustain the adolescent culture.

The problem of rules is an important feature that helps explain delinquency among middle and upper-class children. Rules refer to classes of events, and as such are difficult to apply to specific situations. They can never be "legislated" (even within the family) to cover each act of the child for every occasion. Nor do we deny the need for discretion. Where uniformity characterizes adolescent roles, and where teenage activities are comparatively limited, widespread institutionalized rules may be more suitable guides for behavior. Such is not the case today. Often parental rules for contemporary adolescents seem especially inappropriate to the kinds and diversity of youth culture activities. For parents to encourage, and thereby legitimate in the child's eyes, active youth culture participation with only a blurred blueprint for behavior, is to leave uncharted a vast range of events for the child. Moreover it is risky to rely on discretion when rules are vague. Under such conditions motives become the sole criteria for establishing deviance. But motives are not always meaningful to others. Within the same social class failure to appreciate another's motives reflects a difference in socio-cultural "worlds." When a teenager explains his wrongdoing by reporting, "We were just havin' fun," adults often consider this meaningless or trivial. But fun can be serious business. What is trivial to the adult is often of consequence to the adolescent. Of course motives are often suspect as

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[30] For the ideas in this discussion I am indebted to Albert K. Cohen, his writings and lectures. Of course he is not responsible for their present formulation. *See also* COHEN, DEVIANCE AND CONTROL (1966).

[31] BALTZELL, *op. cit. supra* note 12, at 546.

[32] Naegele, *Children in Canada—Past and Present,* in HEISE, *op. cit. Supra* note 10, at 18–29.

when a high school student insists on wearing his hair long for "matters of principle."

When parents rely largely on the discretion of their children there is the presumption that it will not be used towards "bad" ends. But goals often emerge from ongoing situations. Social behavior is a progression of interrelated acts which rotate about the completion of goals. But usually goals are unclear, and in social interaction goals and means are oftentimes fused; what was momentarily a goal the next moment becomes the means towards new goals. Coitus among teenagers is apt to emerge from a relatively prolonged, emotionally packed process under specific conditions. At no point need either partner orient his (or her) actions initially to that end. Oftentimes the final state of affairs is a "shock" to both partners. In such a case motives are not directed towards "bad" ends. When the teenager explains, "I don't know how it happened" he is telling the only truth he knows, that is, sexual intercourse was not his original intention. Where intermediate goals and means are fused in process they are not easily distinguished nor readily recalled. It seems that rules must set limits to discretion. Where rules are unclear, and parents are ambiguous about their roles, yet report (as one father stated) that, "We trust our daughter," [33] this probably reflects more hope than confidence that "nothing will happen."

But unlike most children in the past, adolescents are no longer subject only to adult rules. Once a youth engages in the teenage culture he becomes partly subject to its norms. In contrast to parental rules peer-group norms have their origin in the shared mundane experiences of teenagers, and refer to relatively specific situations. Although the youth culture is especially susceptible to fads and fashions it would be wrong to characterize it only in these terms. The normative system not only influences its content, it implies and imposes limits on what is considered proper and improper, moral and immoral, and helps regulate what form social relationships will take. It is commonplace that youths look to peers in matters of fashion, but they are also peer-oriented in academic output, sexual matters, dating and drinking patterns and other delinquent activities. These differentially institutionalized norms reflect a newly emerging morality among adolescents besides implying role expectations of those who claim "membership" in the youth culture.

[33] Conversation with a middle-class parent.

A rule that is useful and appropriate at one time and for one purpose may well become useless and inappropriate at another time for the same purpose. For example, the broad prescription, "Be a good boy at the party," is apt to be much less meaningful today when applied to typical adolescent experiences. Yet these are precisely the kinds of gross indicators used by parents to guide their children. Does it mean that a boy ought not to hold hands with his girl friend, dance close, kiss good-night, practice different types of kissing and physical intimacy? Perhaps at this juncture peer-group norms become functional for youths, since they relate more precisely to their everyday "needs" and experiences, and also help relieve some of the anxiety of social interaction. Each of the above steps possesses its own shared understandings, and is important in the dating game, but parents are apt to overlook the normative significance of these "details"; rules are either nonexistent or go unspoken because parents are ambiguous about their validity.

To suggest that the freedom of today's adolescents is a result of their manifest maturity and evident sense of responsibility is false. We hold varying expectations about the ability of young people to police their own behavior and exert self-control. Responsibility and self-control are socially defined expectations and obligations of the roles that we occupy and they vary accordingly. But where uncertainty characterizes role expectations, and where the general norms governing adult-child relationships are under strain, this precludes agreed-upon criteria for evaluation. Adamant approval or disapproval of typical teenage conduct is apt to be an isolated posture among middle and upper-class parents since it mirrors role confidence and moral certainty. Parents will approve of the value of dating yet be of two minds regarding "heavy necking"; they will tolerate light beer drinking in the home yet be uncertain whether they are "doing the right thing"; they will endorse social events among young people, but reluctantly tolerate "close" dancing. At the same time no parent wishes upon his child the role of social pariah. Terms are cultural inventions and change over time. Self-control and responsibility are terms no longer easily defined. The adolescent who refuses to participate in typical teenage events because he defines them "irresponsible" is apt to be considered a case for the psychiatrist, not a model of "responsible" conduct. Since our conception of

an individual's responsibility for his behavior often corresponds to his self-conception, we might wonder at the standards according to which the contemporary teenager forms his self-image. The ambiguous responses of parents are hardly conducive to the growth of the adolescent self-conception in such terms. Among young people operating criteria for self-evaluation are likely peer-centered.

The conviction in one's own sense of responsibility, "moral fibre" and self-discipline is hand-maiden also to the kind of socialization that one experiences. When children are reared according to firm moral principles that highlight "character strength" and "moral fibre," as young men and women they will be expected to demonstrate self-control. Moreover, the social structure will tend to facilitate role conformity. Social distance in relationships may be highly valued, peer-group relationships will be minimal, the variety of adolescent roles restricted, and expectations will tend to overlap. Heterosexual contacts will be discouraged and physical intimacy strongly condemned. Dating in the popular sense is comparatively unknown. And behavior is likely defined in categorical terms; children will be either good or bad.

Today children are seldom reared according to clearly defined moral tenets, and the value of industry, moral integrity and "character strength" are often taught in a whisper.[34] If educational practices, rooted in fingertip awareness of moral considerations have grown wobbly, social cues have gained significantly in the socialization of children.[35] So alien have these values become that they carry an odd ring when discussing adolescent behavior. Since they are not crucial criteria for peer evaluation, the contemporary adolescent seldom defines himself in these terms.

This does not imply that children are reared in a moral vacuum. Remnants of the Puritan ethic still comprise the hazy moral milieu of most middle and upper-class families. But in the midst of rapid social change moral principles are difficult to teach convincingly. Given the danger of being thought radical in matters of propriety, comportment, and affairs political, it is perhaps equally ill-advised to

risk being different in morals. With this kind of training one's "moral fibre" becomes flexible, easily adjustable to emerging peer-group requirements. During this period of transition, when values and attitudes are still unclear in society, the majority of youths do not yet experience coitus nor do white-collar boys often engage in victimizing delinquency. We suggest that adolescents seldom undergo traumatic experiences in moral matters; stages of physical intimacy are learned through role occupancy and are usually taken comfortably in stride according to normative expectations. Moral flexibility allows for easy adaptation to normative teenage activities and relationships, and conformity helps fortify operating norms.

None of this denies the considerable compliance of upper-class adolescents with parental demands. Indeed teenage obedience remains necessary and helps the teenager adapt to the youth culture. Recurrent compliance with parental wishes helps convince parents of the responsibility, maturity and self-control of their children.[36] The comparative absence of assaultive delinquency among middle and upper-class children or the fact that adolescents often stabilize their physical intimacy at a point prior to coitus does not, however, necessarily reflect special self-control. But generally parents are unable to explain behavior in other terms. Reluctant to admit loss of control over their children, and the felt moral confusion of their own roles, they often cling to the time-worn concepts of "character strength," "moral fibre," and self-control. More likely, however, teenage conduct reflects conformity to operating peer-group norms which cover a wide variety of situations, relationships and stages of relationship. Intense participation in peer-group events increases sensitivity to cues, behavior subtleties, and norms of action. Coitus between adolescents is neither "accident" nor loss of self-control, but behavior which falls within a range of relatively permissible acts. If coitus is not prescribed among peers, "going steady" serves to cushion condemnation should it

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[34] We recognize that changes in "moral fibre" and "character strength" may be especially difficult to measure.

[35] The increased significance of "social" factors in the formal and informal socialization of children is seen in REISMAN, GLAZER & DENNEY, *op. cit. supra* note 9, and in SEELEY, SIM & LOOSLEY, CRESTWOOD HEIGHTS (1956).

[36] Since many of the "means" and "social objects" crucial for participation in the adolescent culture are either partly or completely controlled by parents, *e.g.* the family car, a boy's clothes, pocket money, and his time, compliance with parental demands becomes necessary. Relatively recurrent obedience to parental expectations leads to predictable accessibility to such "objects" which allows adolescents to plan ahead for future social engagements. Yet it is precisely such obedience to parental wishes that often confounds middle and upper-class parents when they learn of their sons' delinquencies.

become public knowledge—and teenagers know this. This suggests a further elasticity in the rules governing the conditions under which sexual intercourse between adolescents is partially tolerated.

What happens is that the upper-class gets the delinquency that it "deserves." The cardinal values and interests of adolescents contain the seeds of delinquency. It seems to be the case for many boys that attending dances *means* late hours, dating *means* varying degrees of physical intimacy, possession of an automobile *means* speeding, "dragging" and "parking," and "hanging" with the boys *means* rough-housing and special kinds of vandalism. Conformity and deviance among these boys very likely reflect the same set of values, interests and attitudes. What tips the scales in favor of drinking, drunkenness, sexual intercourse or "raising hell" is not likely a difference in values. A boy's commitment to *respectable* adolescent activities is especially important since it includes his self-involvement and his continuing effort to support status-role claims. Equally important, it engages the adolescent in a daily round of teenage events (opportunities for status gain) in which particular kinds of delinquency are potentially possible. We have in mind events such as parties, dating, dances, "socials," sports events, motoring along the highway, "hanging" about the drive-in— almost any teenage occasion where boys and girls participate jointly. At no time are these situations likely defined delinquent nor are their consequences perceived potentially delinquent. The boys' motives are seldom predatory; the interaction is neither shocking (and thereby not inhibiting to others) nor especially serious, but unfolds as a progression of increasingly self-involving and therefore self-maintaining steps. The adolescent is seldom faced with the choice between delinquent and non-delinquent behavior and therefore seldom initiates delinquent acts to help "solve his problem." There is no "problem." [37] The bulk of delinquency among these youths is an emergent property arising from daily youth culture activities. The effort to maintain one's status serves to support the activity and increase joint participation and behavioral innovation. The perceived risk of delinquency is minimal since the joint activity is seldom begun nor continued for ulterior

motives.[38] The prevailing teenage vocabulary helps structure perception under these everyday circumstances.

Active participation in the youth culture helps teenagers achieve status and increases opportunities for further social participation. It also supports parental expectations that their children be "popular," and becomes a major source of motivation for future peer-group activity. The socially active youth who is caught in this normative web of events is pressured to conform or opt out. This choice is not as easy as it may seem, especially where adolescent attitudes tend to reinforce operating behavior. Reversal of behavior at this stage is both difficult and costly for the adolescent. It means the loss of social standing among peers (and is perhaps equally painful to parents), it means the loss of cherished opportunities for desired events, it means the loss of close friends and increased difficulty in dating. It means, no less, a change in "worlds" for the adolescent, and ultimately leads to a transformation in self-conception.

The choice of behavior is not willy-nilly among these boys. The conduct of youths is often their attempt to meet peer-group standards. But it is more than this. There is more than a single role available to boys in the youth culture, and much of their behavior can be seen as an effort to claim particular kinds of roles, at the same time presenting carefully selected selves, or groping behaviorally for a self, for evaluation. The "swinger," the boy with a "style," the "terrific personality," the "grind," the "sports star," and the boys with a "smooth line"—these are social roles seemingly endemic to the youth culture. To be a successful claimant to a particular role means to act in prescribed ways, to hold the correct attitudes, to display the appropriate sentiments, and to avoid the wrong moves. One cannot possess a "smooth line" without accepting the opportunities to practice one's expertise; the role of "sports star" includes both athletic participation, social activities and heterosexual relationships. The "great guy" will be expected to "go along with the boys," "skip school," and engage in a "drag." It will be difficult to be a "swinger" and not "take a drink," or perhaps smoke "pot," while the boy who has a "style" is apt to be preoccupied with the

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[37] By this we mean that among middle and upper-class boys generally delinquency is not a "solution" to any particular common "problem" among them.

[38] The importance of risk-taking in deviant behavior is discussed in Lemert, *Social Structure, Social Control, and Deviation*, in CLINARD, ANOMIE AND DEVIANT BEHAVIOR (1964).

opposite sex.[39] Since peers occupy so much of a teenager's time and comprise a major source of his rewards they gradually become the lens through which he defines his self. What he is and who he is, that is, how successful he is in achieving his self-claims, depend on those sources of rewards, counsel and motivation, *i.e.*, those intimate relationships that help sustain the vital elements in his self-conception. Since the teenager wishes to be seen in as good a light as possible he will not want to jeopardize the allegiance nor provoke the antagonism of peers and thereby "risk losing himself in a total way."

We do not deny the importance of the family in the socialization of these youths, but we have recognized the obscurity of parental roles and rules, and we have seen that many middle and upper-class parents look to other institutions to "complete" the task. Parents are often defined "square" in teenage matters which means simply that their rules and counsel do not "fit" the reality of the adolescent "world." Today adults can seldom agree on what is deviant among many kinds of typical adolescent conduct in the middle and upper classes. Certain activities have become so widespread that society can do little to restrict such conduct. To increase the surveillance of teenagers or severely restrict their freedom is impossible. Given the strategic significance of the youth culture for society both men and boys would suffer. It would handcuff adolescent participation in the youth culture and dangerously jeopardize the economic and social success of newly emerged occupations and institutions. To impose a stricter moral code on youth (if this

were possible) would be to undermine seriously cherished values and beliefs concerning the education and socialization of children. The alternative seems to be to adapt to these conditions. The seriously considered proposal to lower the drinking age is one sign of this adjustment. The teaching of sex in schools is another example of society's adaptation to a situation it cannot otherwise control. The ultimate consequence of this instruction is caught neatly in the motto, "If you can't be good, be careful." [40] Use of the category "joyriding" as a less serious offense in handling juvenile cases in court is also to the point.

Finally, some writers have noted the sophistication of adolescents who acknowledge their own behavior as a "stage" in "growing up." [41] Yet the particular role of adolescent is not apt to be a tongue-in-cheek affair for the growing boy. Strong identification occurs in recurrent interaction with close friends, and disapproval, ridicule or loss of status carries more injury among peers than among others. There is too much at stake for the teenager to "work" his peers.[42] More likely is he to "work" one parent against the other to secure his own ends. The ambiguity of parental rules and their considerable ignorance of the adolescent "world" make this especially convenient.

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[39] Interestingly, however often a middle or upper-class boy "drags," truants from school or is "expert" with girls in one or another sexual activity, and irrespective of his court appearances for this kind of conduct, he is not likely to acquire the role of "delinquent". The process and functions of acquiring the role of "delinquent" among these boys is in need of research.

[40] Dr. G. F. Millar, chairman of the provincial subcommittee with the sex education program for the province of Saskatchewan, was asked why the new course (in sex education) is being attempted in an already overcrowded school program. He replied: "I readily agree that sex education is the proper function of the home. However, for various reasons, many young people are not receiving sex education from their parents. The result of this ignorance and inadequate standard among young people is frightening. Look, for example, at the statistics for illegitimate births among teen-age girls; they have gone up about 50 per cent in the last 10 years. Then there's the increased incidence of venereal disease." Reported in THE GLOBE AND MAIL, Toronto, Jan 21, 1967.
[41] Westley & Elkin, *The Protective Environment and Adolescent Socialization*, 35 SOCIAL FORCES 243 (1957).
[42] BERGER, INVITATION TO SOCIOLOGY 122–50 (1963).