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SUBURBAN RUNAWAYS: A FOLLOW-UP STUDY

by

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of the University of Maryland in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
1976

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ABSTRACT

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Lucy Olson, Doctor of Philosophy, 1976

Dissertation directed by: Marie Davidson, Ph. D.
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This study grew out of an investigation begun twelve years ago on runaway youth from a Maryland suburb of Washington, D.C. The children who participated in the original study have since grown up and the current research was undertaken to find out how they fared over this important interval.

The current study addressed itself to several aspects of social functioning among the young people in the sample. The questions were: 1) How have the former runaways experienced school, jobs, and "trouble"? 2) Do their experiences within these dimensions differ from those of their siblings? and 3) Do the former runaways differ among themselves -- repeaters from non-repeaters -- in their experiences at school, on the job, and "in trouble"? These questions provided the focus for the follow-up study.

The sample consisted of young people between 23 and 27 years of age who had been interviewed in depth during an earlier

study and their non-runaway siblings who were closest in age and, where possible, of the same sex as the former runaways. Both former runaways and their siblings were interviewed in depth using a fixed-schedule, open-response approach. Questions focussed on social development over the last dozen years and particularly on experiences in school, on the job, and "in trouble".

The data were presented in a series of composite "cases" or profiles taken from the experiences of several of the former runaways and their siblings. School, jobs, and "trouble" were each treated separately, and selected comparisons were made between the experiences of former runaways and those of their siblings.

The follow-up study revealed that those who ran away experienced considerable hardship during this twelve-year interval en route to adulthood. They curtailed their schooling because of difficulty and unhappiness in the classroom. They have worked only sporadically at menial jobs which have been experienced as frustrating drudgery. They have gotten in trouble with the law or have required the assistance of social agencies and institutions because of special problems they have had.

Differences between former runaways and their siblings were found in each of the areas of school, jobs, and "trouble".

The young people who ran away experienced greater difficulty in school than their siblings: they fared worse academically, had poorer grades, and more retentions. They also had greater difficulty in adjusting socially. They were more often dismissed from class, sent to visit the principal, and suspended from school.

Less than half of the former runaways have regular jobs today. The others have been unable to hold a job for more than a period of months. This finding contrasts sharply with that for their siblings all but one of whom are now working at regular jobs. Moreover, the siblings have more professional, higher paying jobs than the former runaways who work.

Finally, the former runaways have had a greater amount of trouble -- much of it more serious -- than their siblings. Most have been charged with offenses ranging in seriousness from "drunk and disorderly" to "burglary" and "assault and battery". Two are now serving jail terms. In contrast, only two siblings have been arrested and, in both cases, the charges were dropped. The findings were similar for nervous and emotional troubles.

In all the areas of functioning that were examined, the young people who ran away from home repeatedly appear to have fared worse than those who ran only once.

A further, serendipidous finding, not anticipated in this study, was a class difference: middle-class runaways appear to be functioning more poorly than their working-class counterparts.

To my parents

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study would not have been possible without the help of many people. Without the generous assistance, guidance, and encouragement of Dr. Elliot Liebow, of the Center for the Study of Metropolitan Problems, it never would have been begun. I am especially indebted to Dr. Marie Davidson, chairman of my dissertation committee, whose extensive and incisive suggestions were most helpful. I owe special thanks to Dr. Milton Shore and Dr. Vincent Mannino of the Mental Health Study Center for their helpful suggestions and support. I am also grateful to my husband for his indispensable comments, criticisms, and editorial assistance. I wish also to express my appreciation to Drs. Laura Dittmann, Charles Johnson, Richard Matteson, and Saul Rogolsky, members of the committee, for helping to find and correct some of the flaws in the study. Finally, I am very fortunate to have had the help of Julie Gilbert in putting the study together in its final form, and I am most grateful for her generous help.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Running away has become a prominent feature of contenporary American life and a baffling social problem as well. Since the 1960's the runaway youth phenomenon has had an unprecedented impact on families and communities across the nation. This impact has been two-sided, for running away not only tears the family apart, but more important, it endangers the health and welfare of the child. The runaway is a vulnerable child: Outside the presumed security of his home, he is without resources and typically in need of support and assistance.

Leaving aside the questions whether the runaway child is driven by rational or irrational motives or is better or worse off for running away, the act itself is precipitous, often desperate, and likely to alter abruptly and radically the child's circumstances and his relationship to the world. The costs of running away from home, even when the action appears to be a rational response to an intolerable situation, are potentially very great -- to the runaway, his family, and society at large.

context of a society so mobile that almost anyone can board a bus anytime and go anywhere. But it may also be that in the microcosm of his own home and family, the runaway is virtually a refugee, reacting to real or threatened acts of terrorism and cruelty. Such a child may act out of purely self-preservative instincts and have no choice but to flee.

Background of the Problem

Currently there are two widely-held beliefs about running away and its consequences. The first (and majority) view holds that running away is a destructive act with damaging consequences to the runaway, his family, and to society at large. The second (minority) view holds that running away is a step toward independence and self-hood, autonomy and personal growth. Unfortunately, both views -- the first, heavily tinged with moral indignation at a deviant act seen as violating social norms, and the second, a view laden with romanticism and ideology -- are rooted more in speculation than empirical evidence. The long-term consequences of running away from home have not been examined systematically from either viewpoint.

Moreover, the questions whether running away is good or bad or has destructive or benign consequences, in reality, are too global to have much utility. Approaching the issue in this manner not only lumps all runaways into a single

In recent years, the general problem of runaway youth has received considerable attention from public and private agencies, youth specialists, and the press. Yet, despite this attention, the exact nature of the problem has not been well defined and surprisingly little has been learned about it or its long-term consequences. Not only is it uncertain who runs away and why, but there are not even accurate statistics on the numbers of children who run away. Estimates range from about ten to seventeen percent of all youth for a single year. The Runaway Youth Act of 1974 and other federal and state legislation purportedly addressing the problems of runaway children have been carried out despite a general lack of understanding of the subject.

Moreover, there is little agreement on the meaning of running away. There appear to be multiple meanings and causes and also many different kinds of children who run. From a subjective standpoint, running away from home is a uniquely personal act, deriving its special meaning and significance from the context in which it occurs: What for one child may be a critical, decisive step, a complete break with family, friends, and the past, may for another child be a cooling off, an effort to get away for a time to think things out. The episode may seem more radical, more serious, and more profound to parents or to outside observers than to the child himself. Moreover, running away may be almost routine in the

category, but it categorizes all consequences as if they were of equal significance (for example, "damaging" or "self-actualizing"). Given the variety of children who are classified as "runaways," their different backgrounds, their various talents, abilities, and reasons for running away, it would be remarkable, indeed, to discover that all of them experience a shared fate simply for having run away.

Finally, the issue of subsequent functioning and adjustment of young people who run away from home has hardly been addressed in the literature. Yet, our understanding of runaway behavior, its importance, its meaning, and its policy implications, depends directly and fundamentally on clarifying the question of long-term consequences. The development of effective strategies for prevention and intervention and the provision of services to runaways requires a longitudinal perspective on the problem.

The Problem

This study grew out of an investigation begun twelve years ago on runaway youth from a Maryland suburb of Washington, D.C. The children who participated in the original study have since grown up, and the current research was undertaken to find out how they have fared during the intervening interval.

The current study has addressed itself to several aspects of social functioning among young people in the sample. Three indices of social adjustment -- schooling, jobs, and "trouble" -- were explored. The questions were: 1) How have the former runaways experienced school, jobs, and "trouble"? 2) Do their experiences within these dimensions differ from those of their siblints? and 3) Do the former runaways differ among themselves -- repeaters from non-repeaters -- in their experiences at school, on the job, and "in trouble"? These questions provided the focus for the follow-up study.

This study's concern with selected aspects of social functioning rests in part on considerations of scope: all aspects of the individual's functioning as an adult could not be treated here. But the focus reflects empirical considerations as well. Each dimension -- education, work, hardship -- appears to tap a critical area of social experience and social functioning in the life of the young adult.

Rationale for the Dimensions

The adolescent's passage out of the family circle and into the wider social arena begins as a family drama. This normally intense, intergenerational drama of passage involves a complex interplay of parent-child attachments and dependencies which gradually take on new meanings as the young

person matures. The outcome and significance of the adolescent's separation and passage into adulthood is reflected in the nature and extent of his enmeshment in the wider community and in the place which he makes for himself amidst the pressures, opportunities, and contingencies out in the world. It is reflected in his ties outside his family, originally in school, and later in his work and even in his income and social status.

School, to take the first dimension explored in this study, is an inevitable part of every person's life in this society. After the family, it is probably the most important socializing agency in the young person's life. It also provides a normal conduit for the youth in his passage into adult life.

Work is also a universal necessity and it further draws the young person into society. On the job, the individual becomes enmeshed in a complex network of social relationships, responsibilities, and obligations. Work and the workplace directly or indirectly provide a structure and focus for social intercourse and determine, or significantly influence, the character and quality of adult life.

"Trouble". Finally, everyone sooner or later in life encounters trouble. What kind of trouble it is, how serious, how extensive, and how it is handled, of course, vary greatly.

But trouble, too, has a socializing effect. It brings people into contact with others and is the focus for important, perhaps critical, human interactions. Under certain circumstances it may result in the formation or imposition of a new structure. The individual may "learn from his mistakes". More ominously, he may be forced out of society and be required to restructure his life in order to conform to the special constraints of institutional life.

It is the character of the adjustment beyond the family circle, in the areas described above, that is the focus of the follow-up study.

The Original Study

In the original study (to be described in detail below) on which the present work is based, Robert Shellow and his associates at the National Institute of Mental Health set out to learn why unprecedented numbers of children were fleeing their homes during one of the most affluent periods of American history.

Begun in 1962 and resulting in a 1967 monograph, Suburban Runaways of the 1960's, this study was generated in the common interests of the Adolescent Process Section of NIMH and of several agencies in Prince George's County, Maryland. The Prince George's County Police Department and

the county juvenile court, pressed by demands to locate increasing numbers of missing persons, among them growing numbers of girls, cooperated in the project from the beginning, helping to develop research goals and actively providing data.

The Shellow study set out to answer a great many questions: Who ran away, why, where, how, and under what circumstances? Shellow and his research team chose to concentrate on the period of one year, 1963-1964, during which some 600 youths between the ages of ten and seventeen ran away from home and were reported missing by their parents or guardians to the Prince George's County Police Department. (The children were classified as runaways if they left home voluntarily with the knowledge that they would be missed. Children reported missing for other reasons were not so classified.)

The entire population of runaway youths in Prince George's County that year was studied. Data included: 1) missing person's reports filed with the police; 2) follow-up interviews with parents, covering events surrounding their child's absence from home, as well as descriptive information from them about family structure, family history, experiences and difficulties at home, at school, and with peers; 3) police, court, and school records; and 4) intensive interviews conducted with some 70 of the 600 children to obtain their

perspectives on the runaway episode, as well as their views of themselves, their families, peers, schooling, and plans for the future. All of these loosely structured interviews, averaging two hours each, were tape-recorded and the material obtained was used to interpret some of the results.

One major conclusion of the Shellow study was that the runaway population is not homogeneous but consists of two analytically distinct groups: one-time runaways, who are in the majority, and repeaters, a small minority. The overt act was the same, but its social and psychological meaning differed for each group. For the one-time runaway, the act appeared to be a simple expression of acute dissatisfaction at home or at school.

These children showed no signs of unusual stress in their family or peer relations, in school, or in other fundamental aspects of their lives. But for the repeater, running away was associated with serious and pervasive personal or family disturbances, with difficulty in school, and with frequent involvement with law enforcement agencies. It was the repeater who had high visibility in the community and was likely to come to the attention of public agencies.

The Shellow study was unique in many ways and it was certainly the largest project of its kind ever undertaken. It avoided some of the pitfalls of previous studies which,

almost without exception, drew samples from clinic or agency populations and frequently relied on secondary data.* Shellow and his associates, in contrast, cast a broad net to obtain their sample: Any child reported missing to the Police Department during the study year was included. Information about the runaway episode, the child, and characteristics of his family was collected first-hand and supplemented by secondary sources of data. The result was a refined and differentiated profile of the runaway child, never before presented in the literature on runaway behavior.

The Shellow monograph actually anticipated an enormous public investment in solving the problem of running away which followed in the wake of the highly publicized Texas murders.** Suddenly, running away from home became an important issue and a social problem of high priority. Federal funds were made available in a national effort to prevent children from leaving home, or once having left, to protect them from the dangers they might encounter out in the wide world. And while running away has received notoriety, it remains a baffling social problem. Very little has been learned about it, its causes, or its long-term consequences.

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* Such as records of children who had long since left the agencies in which they were originally assisted.

** During 1973, 27 boys -- labelled as "runaways" -- were murdered by a "homosexual madman" and his two accomplices in Houston, Texas.

Theoretical Significance

The literature on adolescent development has focused on identity consolidation and the struggle for autonomy. During adolescence, according to prevailing views, the young person is primarily engaged in the related tasks of separating from the family and becoming independent. His success in achieving independence from his parents and interdependence with others determines, to a large extent, the outcome of identity formation. Moreover, how the separation is actually accomplished, whether precipitously and prematurely or gradually and deliberately, according to schedules and time-tables that are built into the social structure, has enormous significance for later development.

Growing up and entering the adult world usually imply leaving home. But the manner and spirit of this departure mean the difference between an ill-timed, perhaps futile, and even illegal flight in which survival is precarious and uncertain, and a smoother, more gradual entry into a more predictable arena. The formation of strong and lasting associations outside the family and a commitment to some kind of legitimate work are crucial parts of this process. With the ground prepared in advance, passage into the adult world may be relatively untroubled.

But running away, even when it seems a rational response to an intolerable situation at home, usually involves

considerable costs to the runaway, his family, and to the community at large. In running away, the child not only disrupts personal and family life, but he forfeits the protection, security, and supports of his home (however unimportant or inadequate these supports may seem at the time). He is absent from school and is catapulted into an unknown environment in which his youth and lack of resources make it difficult for him to survive for very long.

One ever-present danger is the possibility of entanglement with the law. Typically hungry, frightened, tired, and alone, the runaway is more likely than otherwise to resort to illegal means to meet his needs. Being in difficult, perhaps desperate, straits, he becomes an easy target for persons who might exploit him. Even if he avoids legal entanglements, exposure to the pressures and contingencies of the street, to drugs and casual sex, poses a serious threat to his welfare.

Also critical is the interruption in school which the runaway suffers by leaving home. Running away invites a host of academic problems and conflicts with school authorities which, in turn, may restrict the young person in his choice and pursuit of a career. In summary, the child, simply for having run away, may experience a mixture of concurrent crises and later hardships which arise directly or indirectly from leaving home before the "socially approved time".

One of the most dramatic and positive developments of the last twelve years has been the growth of both traditional and non-traditional services for runaway adolescents and for troubled youth in general, especially those agencies which handle a broad spectrum of youth and family problems, and those with a range of alternative services such as runaway houses, communes, and other "counter-cultural" living arrangements.

The legal status of the runaway child has also changed dramatically over the same twelve-year period. In many jurisdictions, including the county where the original study was conducted, runaways are no longer automatically subject to arrest if apprehended, denied access to youth social services, and liable to incarceration, detainment, or forced return home.

Yet these many positive developments have not kept pace with the growing magnitude of the problem, partly because they deal with the problem after the fact, leaving the matter of prevention untouched, and partly because the services are being delivered without the benefit of a longitudinal perspective. (Virtually no long-term follow-up studies have been conducted on runaway children during recent years despite the unprecedented concern about the problem.) It is important, therefore, to examine the adult outcomes among runaway children, since our knowledge of the nature and practical

implications of running away depends ultimately on clarifying the issue of subsequent adjustment.

Summary

With objectives thus both critical and urgent, this study was designed to explore selected aspects of subsequent development among the now grown-up young people who during the mid-1960's ran away from their suburban homes near Washington, D.C. This study compares the former runaways with their non-runaway siblings and with each other along certain dimensions of social functioning. It explores the patterns of adaptation to and enmeshment in society by focussing on the three dimensions of school, jobs, and "trouble". Each area is intended to reflect an important and more or less universal aspect of growing up and adapting to adult life.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Most research on runaway children has been conducted on male subjects. With few exceptions, previous research deals with samples from clinics, institutions, or homes for emotionally disturbed or delinquent children. What is known about running away thus comes mainly from very select populations already defined as pathological or delinquent, children who happen to have fallen into medical, legal, or other agency nets. This anchoring of our knowledge of runaway behavior in special populations reflects a particularly serious flaw in our understanding. Because these runaways represent only a minor fraction of the total runaway population, it is important to investigate the base majority who do not fall into these special categories.

Consensus among the authors of earlier studies is rare, but there is almost universal agreement about one aspect of the subject: The greater frequency and intensity of discord in the homes of runaways as compared with non-runaways. Previous studies are also in agreement that runaways more often tend to come from broken homes than do non-runaways. A frequent assertion is that children raised in such disturbed family settings cannot fail to be disturbed themselves.

There is less uniformity of opinion concerning other aspects of running away, but perhaps some of the disagreement is attributable to differences in sampling procedures. Thus, for example, studies of delinquent samples emphasize the poor personal and social adjustment of such delinquents and suggest they show more deviant and pathological tendencies than do normal adolescents.*[2,11,18,30,45,46,47,50,74,76,84,97] Similarly, studies conducted on samples drawn from employment and social service agencies emphasize economic pressures and financial hardships of their subjects.[60,63,64,65,66,77] But to some extent the discrepancies in opinion about runaway behavior also reflect differences in theoretical viewpoint. The differences are more implicit than explicit, for in the majority of studies theoretical concerns are secondary to practical ones. In general, the research reflects rather specific aims and interests, and grows out of an effort to find practical answers and solutions to immediate social problems.

Nevertheless, two major theoretical trends are discernible in this literature -- a psychodynamic orientation and a socio-environmental orientation -- which in turn reflect a deep division in viewpoint on the causes of all human

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* A major difficulty in interpreting conclusions from studies of delinquent samples is that runaways tend to be labelled delinquent, and it is not clear whether they are so labelled because they ran away or because they committed some other delinquent act. Recent trends toward formally distinguishing between runaways and delinquents may resolve the problem for the future.

behavior. The psychodynamic viewpoint, which centers primarily on the internal dynamics of the runaway, is widely represented in the literature; while the socio-environmental viewpoint, emphasizing external variables as determinants of running away, is less well represented. It may be helpful to discuss some of the general formulations and conceptualizations before considering specific studies.

Sociological Perspective

The sociological perspective on runaway behavior has been formulated in two competing theories, each emphasizing different pressures and pulls which originate in the environment. One theory, addressing environmental pressures, is represented in Merton's strain theory (or anomie). The other, addressing environmental pulls, is presented in Sutherland's theory of differential association.

Strain Theory

According to this theory, runaway behavior results from conditions associated with poverty, deprivation, and other external limitations and constraints in an opportunity structure with limited access to success. Runaway behavior results from specific strains in the relationship between goals (to which all persons are indoctrinated and which place great stress on success) and the legitimate channels of access to such goals. When opportunities for personal, social, and economic rewards are blocked, the child is cut

off from conventional goals and becomes frustrated, discontented, and alienated from his environment. Running away is both a response to external constraints and an effort to achieve satisfaction elsewhere. It is a way of reducing tension arising from this disjunction between goals and means.

Various social-economic variables have been cited in the literature as the causes of blocked opportunity and strain among adolescent runaways at different periods of history and under different social conditions. Among these are the effects of war, depression, and other economic and social upheavals.[60,62,63,64,77] The pressures and strains of life in a modern technical society are also cited, as are affluence, social and geographic mobility, lack of stability, and cohesiveness of traditional social institutions[14,31,32,81,83]; and poverty, bad neighborhood, fractured home life, parental cruelty, and neglect.[2,6,18,20,40,41,57] A number of authors have argued that pressures originating in the social structure and reinforced in the family may cause children to become alienated from conventional goals and values and to be lured away from their homes in the belief that life is better and opportunities more plentiful elsewhere.[1,4,7,58] When family and neighborhood ties are attenuated, and when transportation is cheap and fast, this belief is easily translated into action.

Support for the view that runaway behavior results from strain induced by environmental pressures has come from studies conducted during the Depression and World War II. Newcomb(60) estimates that there were a quarter of a million youths on the road during the Depression years. He cites financial pressures and lack of employment as primary factors in running away. Outland(63,64,65) in his study of some 3,000 adolescent boys registered with the Federal Transient Service of Southern California also found runaway behavior to be motivated by economic hardship and the search for employment. Many of these runaway youths -- one third of the sample -- came from families in which the main wage earner was unemployed or families on relief. Similarly, Skinner and Nutt(77), in their study of nearly 5,000 runaway boys appearing in juvenile courts during World War II, also located the cause of runaway behavior in socio-economic conditions. They concluded that youths left home during the war years in search of jobs (in war-related industries). Economic hardship was also found to be the primary factor in Lowrey's study of 3,000 clients observed during the war at the New York Traveler's Aid Society.

More recently, a number of authors have taken the view that social ills and existing social policies and institutions foster conditions which directly or indirectly encourage children to leave their homes. Lubeck and Empey's research

on approximately 100 runaway boys in correctional institutions concludes that runaway behavior is fostered by an "unresponsive social system". Bock and English view it as the result of socializing agencies which are "depersonalizing" and which place the child in an "intolerable situation".(5) Others, suggest that runaway behavior is an attempt to rebel or strike out against the environment.(56)

All of these findings point up a discrepancy between goals (such as freedom and economic stability) and means (such as jobs and absence of restraints) which lead to specific strains and, ultimately, to running away. In the "strain" model, running away is instrumental behavior. It is an adaptive response to external pressures through physical avoidance and involves the choice of non-conventional avenues to both freedom and fortune.

Differential Association

The accounts cited above all assume that the child is socialized to conventional social goals, aspirations, and expectations, but that conditions in the environment differentially block him from successfully attaining these goals. Running away represents a "solution" to the child, for it enables him to "break clean," to withdraw from the situation, and also to express hostility and aggression without harming the sources of his frustration. He is simply turning his back on a whole constellation of pressures and stresses in life.

The theory of differential association, in contrast, states that the child is not originally socialized to legitimate social goals, but is differentially exposed to influences in the environment which help to activate and reinforce faulty behavior patterns. The child is handicapped in the attainment of conventional goals by systematic exposure to inadequate behavior models which leave him ill-prepared and poorly motivated to achieve such goals. Running away is not in any sense a "solution" for the child but is simply one example of a whole pattern of ineffective or faulty behavioral responses.

This theory has received support from research emphasizing inadequate family relationships as important factors in runaway behavior. Several investigators have argued that the child who runs away tends to be poorly socialized and that running away is itself a maladaptive response.(45,46,47, 76) Jenkins and his associates found from their analysis of data on 300 boys at the Warwick (New York State Training) School in the 1930's that the child who runs away repeatedly tends to come from a disturbed family environment and that his behavior is closely associated with strong peer group influence. Many authors have pointed out that poor economic and social conditions at home (e.g., poverty, fractured family, poor neighborhood) may adversely influence the child and pre-dispose him to run away. In fact, if there is

consensus among the many disparate views on any aspect of runaway behavior, it would be on this very point of greater disturbance and discord in the homes of runaways as compared with other adolescents. Most authors agree that runaways frequently come from troubled family settings (though there is no unanimity on the extent of the impact of the home environment on the child).

The deleterious effect of unhappy home life on the child's development is discussed in the early studies of Armstrong who attributes runaway behavior to an "unwholesome" home environment characterized by "cruelty, immorality, disease, poverty, and mental deficiency".(2) Balser(20) and Lowrey(57) also stress inadequate and troubling parent-child relationships as the primary factors in runaway behavior. More recently, Hildebrand(40,41) concluded that poor home environment, family instability, low income, and low level of education all contribute to runaway behavior. Similarly, D'Angelo,(62) in his study of 82 runaways from institutional settings in Franklin County, Ohio, concluded that running away is a symptom of the escalating incidence of family breakdown. He found that runaway children tend to come from "multi-problem families with unstable relations between family members aggravated by poor interpersonal communication, great insecurity about the future, and living for the satisfaction of present needs".(62, p.129) Family instability, conflict, and inadequate parent-child relationships have been

cited by many authors, across multiple sample bases and from differing theoretical orientations, as primary determinants of runaway behavior. Most of these authors mention defective patterns of communication within the family. Some also mention instances of physical abuse in the home.[2,6,18,40,41] Several researchers point up the fact that runaway children more often come from broken homes than the general adolescent population.[20,29,32,50,55,63,64,75] In the view of many investigators, inadequate socialization of the child in his home make him particularly susceptible to pulls -- attractions and temptations -- in the environment and effectively invite him to run away.

The most extensive discussion of disturbed and damaging family relationships is presented in the work of Stierlin and his associates who studied adolescent "underachievers" in a hospital setting.[14,81,82,83] These investigators found runaway behavior to be symptomatic of a "disturbance in intergenerational transactions and the negotiation of separation between parent and child". Running away is interpreted as a pathological mode of separation, and the child who runs is believed to be enmeshed in a family dynamics which push him to premature autonomy. Stierlin and associates suggest that the child runs in response to covert directives communicated by the parents. In running away, the child may be acting out a covert parental wish for adventure and escape

("delegating mode") or the runaway may be enmeshed in an expelling (centrifugal) dynamics which force him out of the family orbit. A third possibility is a binding (centripetal) dynamics which, despite the runaway's repeated precipitous efforts, pull him back into the family orbit, "as if he were on an invisible rubber leash".(14) The different transactional modes and the different parental signals and sanctions result in very different forms of runaway behavior (e.g., abortive, casual, lonely schizoid, and crisis). Each runaway pattern reflects an enduring constellation of specific parent-child interactions. For example, in the expelling family, there is an enduring pattern of neglect, rejection, and abandonment of the child, who is frequently considered a nuisance and hindrance.

This picture of the runaway child as the product of disturbed associations with family members provides some support for the theory of differential association. Runaway behavior is assumed to be learned in the context of intrafamilial communication or parent-child interaction. The child is effectively isolated from standard or appropriate behavioral models by belonging to a non-conventional or pathogenic community (his family) which fails to teach him effective ways of behaving.

Stierlin, considers certain patterns of family interaction to be psychologically damaging to the child. The

runaway is a disturbed child, though his psychological condition reflects a total family picture of disorganized relationships. Many authors share this general view and assert that the runaway child, a product of a pathogenic family environment, is himself disturbed, and that running away is but one manifestation of this underlying pathological process in the individual.

Some of the studies cited above claim that the child runs away because he is poorly socialized and selects maladaptive or deviant modes of response to environmental stimuli. Other studies suggest that the child runs away because he is the victim of an opportunity structure from which he is excluded. But it would be misleading to assume a simple cause and effect relation between environmental variables and runaway behavior. For most children do not run away, even during periods of great social and economic upheaval, or from severely disturbed family settings. On the other hand, many children do run away from intact and seemingly stable families in which opportunities and avenues to success appear to be plentiful.

Psychodynamic Orientations

Stierlin and his associates try to give a differentiated profile of the runaway by delving into the subleties and complexities of family dynamics. Other clinicians have focussed

on the internal dynamics of the runaway himself and have concluded that intrapsychic factors (e.g., conflict, problems of impulse control, low frustration tolerance, low self-esteem, etc.) are the primary variables in runaway behavior. These authors tend to view runaway behavior as a symptom of an underlying pathological process.

The principal method of the psychodynamic perspective has been the small-sample, case-study approach applied most extensively in the work of psychoanalytically oriented clinicians. The main body of this research is published in a group of articles appearing in the early 1940's.[67,73,78, 79,80] The runaway is seen variously as suffering from a "severe narcissistic disorder";[67] as involved in an Oedipal crisis, the "solution" to which is a form of "self-banishment";[73] or as reacting to the "romantic urge to become a hero".[78] A later series of studies conducted at the Worcester Child Guidance Clinic associated runaway behavior with problems of control.[26,52,53,86,87] Levanthal and his associates in their study of 42 children at the Worcester Clinic found "evidence of prepsychotic functioning," indicated by the children's "overconcern with control" over both ego (inner) and non-ego (outer) forces.

Other authors outside the psychoanalytic tradition have arrived at similar conclusions about the psychopathological functioning of runaway children. Evidence of personal

maladjustment was found in Armstrong's early (1930's) studies of 660 children at the New York City Court. Armstrong concluded that runaway behavior was symptomatic of a "psychoneurotic reaction," characterized by a more or less continuous state of fear, distress, and insecurity, and crystallizing in an "unstable make-up".(2,18) Foster (1962) found his 100 runaways referred to the clinic of the Los Angeles Juvenile Court to possess "limited coping abilities".(50) He hypothesized that children run away to avoid dangerous (aggressive) impulses. Still others supporting the individual psychopathology viewpoint consider runaways to be fearful of parental rejection, to be depressed, anxious, overcome by inner tensions, hostility, and revenge. There appears to be general agreement that runaway behavior represents a premature attempt to achieve independence and autonomy.

The view that runaway behavior is a manifestation of a behavior disorder is also reflected in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual II which classifies the "Runaway Reaction" as a mental disorder:

> Individuals with this disorder characteristically escape from threatening situations by running away from home for a day or more without parental permission. Typically, they are immature and timid, and feel rejected at home, inadequate, and friendless. They often steal furtively.(45, p.169)

The inclusion of this diagnosis in the handbook was largely the work of Richard Jenkins, who based his description of the syndrome on a study of boys at a New York State training

school cited earlier. [45,46,47,76,84] He concluded that chronic running away was a "maladaptive response" among unsocialized children with poorly organized personalities. (In the next edition of DSM, the "Runaway Reaction" will be included as a subdivision under the "Hyperkinetic Syndrome".)

Two salient problems with the psychodynamic research are the self-selected and perhaps deviant nature of the samples (all subjects were in special institutions, clinics, or in private psychotherapy) and the very small sample size. It is questionable whether general inferences can be drawn from the data obtained from such groups. Though theoretically interesting and heuristically valuable, the conclusions have limited applicability to the general adolescent runaway population.

Other Perspectives

Somewhere between the psychodynamic and socio-environmental orientations is a third perspective on runaway behavior which draws on both psychological and sociological considerations. Several investigators have pictured running away as a form of protest against social ills, injustice, and victimization by society. This view, though not strictly clinical, assumes that the social structure is somehow "pathogenic". Social institutions -- in particular schools and the legal system -- are viewed as contradicting the needs of youth and runaway behavior is interpreted as a

rational response to an unenlightened social structure. Publications appearing during the late 1960's and early 1970's, and especially those intended for the general public, illustrate this point of view.(1,3,4,5,6,12,33,38,43,75,81, 102,103,104)

Studies on samples drawn from agencies that specialize in problems of people in flight (Traveler's Aid Society, runaway houses, and other emergency shelters) arrive at conflicting conclusions about runaway adolescents. Traditional agencies tend to place more emphasis on personal characteristics than on environmental factors and conclude that the runaway is more disturbed than his non-runaway counterpart.(31, 39) Youth-oriented "alternative" services, on the other hand, see running away as a positive response to a sense of personal uprootedness and dislocation fostered by middle-class American values and life styles.(3,4,5,27,33,43,66,100,102,103)

Similarly, contradictory conclusions are found among studies conducted on samples drawn from populations of missing persons reported to police departments in various localities.(40,41,75,85,96) For some investigators, the runaway from this population is considered to be a "second generation delinquent".(41) Others, including Shellow and his associates, deny that running away can simply be interpreted as a manifestation of a delinquent or clinical problem.(75,85) (The Shellow study will be discussed in more detail below.)

Follow-Up Studies

Despite the fact that the literature on running away has grown substantially during the last decade, only one follow-up study, a retrospective account by Howell, Emmons, and Frank,(43) exploring life-adjustment following the runaway episode, has appeared in print during this period. The authors report on subjective impressions of 41 runaways from stable, middle-class, two-parent families who visited Project Place (a multi-service agency in Boston) during the year 1970. The runaways -- ranging in age from 12 to 17 years -- were interviewed by telephone a year or two after leaving home. The majority of the youths in this sample described themselves as being more satisfied with their lives than they were before they ran away. (Significantly, when asked if they would advise other children to run away, most of them answered in the negative.) The authors suggest that running away may promote individual growth and resolution of family conflict.

Some shortcomings of their study are the limitations of the sample, the subjectivity of the self-reports, and the lack of a comparison group. Importantly, the study does not tell us in what specific ways the life-situations of the adolescents were felt to be improved. Finally,not enough time had elapsed between the runaway episode and the time of the interview to permit a useful comparison.

The most important follow-up study on runaway youth was conducted in the late fifties by Robins[70] and Robins and O'Neal.[69] In two separate publications these authors present findings from a 30-year-follow-up of former patients seen in a child guidance clinic between 1924-1929. The first paper compares the adult psychiatric status of 56 male patients who were runaways as children with other clinical and normal controls. Among the three groups, former runaways were found to have the highest incidence of mental illness.

The second paper presents findings on a predominantly male sample of 246 former patients, 96 of whom had run away as children. The authors report that on follow-up, runaways had more frequent arrests, incarcerations, divorces, and diagnoses of sociopathic personality than controls (former patients who were not runaways). Two earlier studies by Keogh,[50] and O'Connor[11] also suggest that runaways from institutional settings have a poorer adjustment to adult life than non-runaways.

The relevance of these research findings to contemporary problems is uncertain since they were obtained from a distant generation of runaways (mid-1920's) and from institutional populations. In view of these facts, it is perhaps misleading to infer that all adolescents who run away have subsequent difficulties in adjustment.

Chapter III

METHOD

This study was a long-term follow-up examination of the life histories and life experiences of an available sample of young adults who as children ran away from their homes in Prince George's County in Maryland. The research was designed to describe how the lives of these young people unfolded after running away twelve years earlier and also to describe what kinds of changes -- educational, occupational, and socio-economic -- had occurred during this important interval. More specifically, it was designed to determine whether runaways differed from others (their siblings) or among themselves in terms of their social development and functioning.

The Original Study

During the original year of the Shellow Study, 1963-1964, 731 youths between the ages of ten and seventeen were reported missing to the Prince George's County Police Department. Of these, 631 were classified as "runaways" according to the definition given in the original monograph: "The runaway is the child who leaves home voluntarily with the knowledge that he will be missed."(75) The other 100 youngsters were reported missing to the police because of misunderstanding

about the time they were expected home or because of lateness from an event or activity or for other miscellaneous reasons, but they were not actually runaways.

Two kinds of interview data were gathered on both runaways and non-runaways. One set of data came from intensive interviews with parents immediately after they had filed a Missing Persons Report. These interviews focused on: a) the events surrounding the child's absence from home; and b) the child, his family structure and history (including socio-economic variables), school experiences, interpersonal relationships, and emotional problems.

A second set of data came from taped intensive interviews, averaging about two hours each, with 96 of the 731 missing children in order to get their perspectives on themselves, their families and peers, their schooling, and their plans for the future. It was hoped that every third boy and every third girl from the sample could be interviewed. But parental resistance and lack of public transportation to the project center from different parts of the large and sprawling county made it impossible to complete all the desired interviews. Moreover, interviews conducted in the children's homes frequently proved unsatisfactory because of the lack of privacy and extraneous household noises which caused the quality of the tapes to be poor. Only 40 percent of the intensive interviews planned were completed.

For comparison purposes in the Shellow study a sample of 1,327 adolescents was drawn from eleven public secondary schools and administered an anonymous written questionnaire in the classroom. These students were asked, among other things, whether they had run away during the Study Year (1963-1964). By comparing the names of all students taking the questionnaire with the list of children reported missing to the police, it was found that only one out of every six self-reported runaways had been reported missing to the police. This formed the basis for the inference that the number of children who run away from home is as much as six times greater than the number of children reported missing to the police.

To the question whether the students had ever seriously considered running away from home, one out of three answered in the affirmative. This suggests that many more children wanted to run away and would have done so had the circumstances been right. It also suggests that the differences between runaways and non-runaways are perhaps less sharp than is popularly believed.

Shellow and his research team were able to distinguish two separate groups of children within the population of runaway youths they studied: one-time runaways, by far the majority, and repeaters, comprising a small minority. The distinction lay in the social and psychological meaning of

running away for each group. For those who ran away only once, the runaway act appeared to be a "plain, forthright expression of the dissatisfaction at home or at school".(75, p.29) These children showed no signs of unusual stress in their family or peer relations, in school, or in other fundamental aspects of their lives. But for the repeater, running away was associated with serious personal or family disturbances, difficulty in school, and frequent involvement with law enforcement agencies. These children appeared to be in need of special attention and professional care.

The Current Study

An important question arising from the previous research concerned the subsequent adjustment of the runaway children. One of the inferences drawn by the original investigators was that the great majority of one-time runaways are quite "normal" adolescents who evidence no symptons of individual or family pathology. The "repeater," in contrast, was disturbed and required psychiatric or other professional care. Yet, it seems entirely possible that on follow-up, the "normal" youngsters would also show mental health problems and a need for special attention. It is also possible that the repeaters would be able to overcome their problems and adjust normally to adult life. The original claim, about one-time versus multiple runaways, needed to be examined to see if it was borne out over time.

The follow-up study concerned itself, therefore, with the subsequent development and current status of the same children, now grown up, who twelve years ago had run away from home. The overall research question was: How do children who run away from home adapt to society? And how do they differ from their non-runaway siblings -- or among themselves -- in their subsequent social functioning?

For purposes of this study, three indices of social functioning -- school, jobs, and "trouble" -- were selected for detailed investigation. Each of these dimensions reflects an important aspect of the young person's socialization to and enmeshment in society and together they constitute an essential part of his experience of the world. Each represents a more or less inevitable source of external influence and social pressure which, in varying degrees, shape and alter the course of every life.

In this study answers were sought to the following questions: What have been the experiences of the former runaways at school, on the job, and "in trouble"? Do their experiences differ from those of their siblings? And do the former runaways differ among themselves -- do repeaters differ from non-repeaters -- along these dimensions?

In order to answer these questions, an attempt was made to locate all of the now grown-up men and women who had been interviewed in depth in the original study.

Much has happened over the last twelve years. The children have grown-up, gone their ways, and moved elsewhere. The homogeneity of the data which existed in the original study as a function of the children's closeness in age, common attendance at school, and close geographical proximity, no longer exists.

Location

The most serious procedural problem of the current study was that of tracking down the original participants. Because these young people were not drawn from a special population, self-selected into treatment, social service agency, or institution, their mobility was in no way restricted. Moreover, twelve years is quite enough time to move away and leave no trace at all. The post office, telephone book, and directory assistance can be very helpful when a change of residence is recent, but not when much time has elapsed.

The original group from which the sample for the follow-up study was drawn consisted of all of the children (N=73) who were classified as runaways and interviewed in depth following the runaway episode. Of this original group from Shellow's study, 20 persons were located by means of standard location procedures, including phone directories, registered mail, addresses from twelve years ago, and contacts with relatives and former neighbors. Fifteen of these persons

agreed to participate in the study. However, only fourteen are reported on here, since one of them had no siblings. Of the 73 original runaways, thirteen had no siblings (or if they existed, information was unavailable on them).

As far as could be determined, the rest of the group no longer lived in the Washington metropolitan area. This conclusion was arrived at after failing to find phone directory listings for any of those whose names had appeared in one or another of the area information or directory services twelve years ago. It seemed reasonable to assume that a family which had a phone twelve years ago would have a phone today as well.

That 50 out of 70 families should have moved away may sound implausible, but an important consideration makes the finding more credible. Prince George's County has had one of the most transient populations of any county in the U.S. During this twelve-year period, 1964-1976, it was also one of the fastest-growing counties, with over 800 new residents per week. But even by comparison with the general county population the families with runaway children were much more mobile.

The original study (1963-1964) found that 67 percent of the families with runaway children had moved at least once during the previous five years (as contrasted with 50 percent

of the general Prince George's population). Among the families with runaways, 34 percent had moved two or more times during the same period (as contrasted with 28 percent for other residents of Prince George's County).

During the longer twelve-year period until the follow-up study -- a time of great affluence, plentiful jobs, and numerous opportunities -- a much higher percentage of the families might be expected to have moved.

Former Runaways

From the group of twenty former runaways located for the present study, fifteen consented to participate. But one young man had no siblings and was, therefore, omitted from the study. The total sample of former runaways thus consisted of fourteen people (eleven men and three women). Of these, six came from middle-class backgrounds: Their fathers had white collar jobs and among them was a business executive, a government official, a journalist, and a guidance counselor. The rest came from working-class homes: Among the fathers of this group there was a truck driver, a welder, a printer, a maintenance man, and a street light mechanic. With the exception of one young black man, the young people were white. Six of them ran away repeatedly, while the rest ran away one time only.

There are commonalities in the sample, for in addition to their geographical proximity, closeness in age (24 to 28 years), and attendance in the same county school system, these young people had in common the experience of having run away from home. All of them ran away during the same year. But they ran away for a variety of reasons reflecting their very different circumstances and personal characteristics.

"Comparison" Group: Non-Runaway Siblings

Fourteen non-runaway siblings, also located for the present study, agreed to participate. Insofar as possible, they were closest in age to the runaway and also of the same sex. They were used both as sources of data and for purposes of comparison, for it was possible to obtain from them another perspective on the runaway child as well as information about their own lives. The former runaways and their siblings shared the same household. Their experiences, therefore, can be said to be comparable with respect to family size, family structure, social class, and, to a lesser extent, family dynamics.

Parents

In addition to the former runaways and non-runaway siblings, an attempt was made to locate and interview at least one parent in each family. Parents provided another perspective

on both the runaway and the non-runaway sibling and they were also a source of other relevant information that could not be obtained from their children. Other relatives and family friends were interviewed where it was relevant to do so.

Problems of the Sample

The overall study sample is almost certainly skewed because of the difficulties in locating subjects. It is also flawed because of the need to rely on the voluntary cooperation of the participants.

To take the first problem, those who participated in the study are clearly less mobile than the large numbers of persons who could not be found. But the direction of the probable bias introduced by lack of mobility among the participants is difficult to estimate. Their lesser geographical mobility may mean greater stability, greater occupational satisfaction, and greater upward social mobility. These families may be more established, rooted, and successful than their outwardly more mobile counterparts, whose mobility may be associated with family disruption and disorganization. On the other hand, lack of geographical mobility may also mean lack of opportunity or lack of social or occupational mobility. It may be that movement out of the suburbs represents movement upward on the social scale, while those who stayed were "stuck". Because of this variety of possible

implications of mobility, it is impossible to judge with precision the kind of distortion affecting the data.

Equally difficult to estimate is the nature and extent of the probable bias introduced by the reliance on voluntary cooperation of the participants. (The reader will recall that five of the twenty runaways who could be located declined to be interviewed.) In all probability the participants were more interested, more motivated, and had less to hide than those who declined. (See Table 1.)

Procedure for Data Collection

To answer the question about long-term outcomes, first-hand information was collected about the life-circumstances of the young men and women who were runaways twelve years ago and of their families. Interviews were conducted face-to-face using a fixed-schedule, open-response approach (see Appendix A for a copy of this schedule). Questions covered a range of areas about social development, especially during the last dozen years, and the educational, occupational, and socio-economic changes that had occurred en route to adulthood. Questions from the original 1963-1964 interviews were also included, permitting a number of comparisons between circumstances then and now.

Semi-structured interviews were decided upon as the best means of obtaining the rich, highly personal data desired.

Table 1

Selected Demographic Characteristics of the Families Participating in the Follow-up Study

Relation	Age	Marital Status	Race	Education Level	Occupation	Approximate Family Income**
Runaway-M*	26	D	W	10th grade	Housepainter (unemployed)	($ 9,100.00)
Father	54	M	W	8th grade	Mechanic, Gas Co.	$15,300.00
Mother*	51	M	W	10th grade	Housewife	
Sister*	27	M	W	High school graduate	Keypunch operator	$16,000.00
Runaway-M*	26	M	W	High school graduate	Construc. worker (unemployed)	($19,000.00)
Father	58	M	W	10th grade	Truck driver	$15,000.00
Mother*	51	M	W	10th grade	Housewife	
Brother*	29	M	W	High school graduate	Construc. worker	$30,000.00
Brother	30	M	W	High school graduate	Elevator repairman	$23,000.00
Runaway-M*	28	D	W	High school graduate	Mid-level sales manager	$15,400.00
Father*	69	D	W	8th grade	Retired postal employee	$ 8,000.00
Mother	56	W	W	R.N.	Nurse	$10,000.00
Sister*		S	W	M.A.	Social worker	$ 6,000.00 (Vol.)
Runaway-M*	23	S	W	High school graduate	Dock worker (unemployed)	none
Father	40	M	W	2 years college	Welder	$12,000.00
Mother*	40	M	W	9th grade	Housewife	
Brother*	24	M	W	High school graduate	Printer	$18,000.00
Runaway-M	27	S	W	10th grade	None	none
Father	52	M	W	High school graduate	Printer	$25,000.00
Mother*	47	M	W	High school graduate	Day care specialist	
Cousin*	28	M	W	High school graduate	Administrative Assistant	$22,000.00

* Interviewed in follow-up study.

** Incomes represent total income of each individual or if individual is married, and spouse is employed, their combined income.

Table 1 (continued)

Selected Demographic Characteristics of the Families Participating in the Follow-up Study

Relation	Age	Marital Status	Race	Education Level	Occupation	Approximate Family Income**
Runaway-F*	25	D	W	11th grade	Bartender	$29,000.00
Father	54	M	W	11th grade	Navy (munitions)	$15,000.00
Mother*	51	M	W	10th grade	School bus driver	
Brother*	23	M	W	11th grade	Butcher (unemployed)	($ 9,000.00)
Runaway-F*	27	M	W	10th grade	Housewife	
Father*	62	M	W	10th grade	Mechanic (electric co.)	$15,000.00
Mother*	49	M	W	8th grade	Housewife	
Sister	28	M	W	High school graduate	Legal Secretary	$16,000.00
Runaway-M*	23	S	W	10th grade	None	None
Father*	52	M	W	M.A.+	School principal	$25,300.00
Mother*	56	M	W	2 years college	Housewife	
Sister*	25	M	W	B.A., R.N.	Psychiatric nurse	$54,000.00
Grandmother*	73	W	W	M.S.W.	Retired social worker	$15,000.00
Runaway-M*	23	S	W	9th grade	None	None
Father	51	M	W	2 years college	Navigator (Navy)	$23,000.00
Mother*	29	M	W	High school graduate	Check-out (groc.)	
Sister*	20	S	W	High school graduate	Keypunch operator	$ 7,620.00
Runaway-M*	26	M	W	11th grade	Electrician	$18,000.00
Father*	48	M	W	2 years college	Budget analyst	$25,000.00
Mother*	48	M	W	High school graduate	Secretary	
Brother*	25	M	W	High school graduate	Business for self	$25,000.00

* Interviewed in follow-up study.

** Incomes represent total income of each individual or if individual is married, and spouse is employed, their combined income.

Table 1 (continued)

Selected Demographic Characteristics of the Families Participating in the Follow-up Study

Relation	Age	Marital Status	Race	Education Level	Occupation	Approximate Family Income**
Runaway-M*	28	M	W	High school graduate	None	$20,000.00
Father	56	M	W	Business school	Business executive	$100,000.00
Mother*		M	W	High school graduate	Housewife	
Brother*	25	M	W	M.A.+	College instructor	$12,000.00
Runaway-M*	28	Sep.	B	High school graduate	Staff Sargeant (Air Force)	$14,500.00
Father*	60	M	B	B.A.	Employee Relations, Postal Service	$35,000.00
Mother	52	M	B	M.A.	Guidance counselor	
Brother*		S	B	Ll.D. (exp)	Lawyer (exp)	
Runaway-F*	25	S	W	10th grade	None	None
Father	(deceased)		W	B.A.	Journalist	
Mother*	61	W	W	B.A.	Librarian	$16,500.00
Sister*	31	M	W	B.A.	Editor (journal)	$36,000.00
Runaway-M*	26	D	W	High school graduate	Electrician	$14,000.00
Father	51	M	W	High school graduate	Gen. Foreman, Facilities Operation	$14,600.00
Mother*	50	M	W		Housewife	
Sister*	30	M	W	High school graduate	Legal secretary	$16,000.00

* Interviewed in follow-up study.

** Incomes represent total income of each individual or if individual is married, and spouse is employed, their combined income.

This format provided a practical, direct means for finding out who these people used to be and have since become, what their school experience was, what their occupational goals, interests, and accomplishments have been, and what kinds of special hardships they have encountered and with what effects. Using this interview procedure it was possible to ask specific questions about various aspects of their lives without losing the spontaneity and free give and take. (The interview schedule was pretested and altered slightly before the study was begun.) The interviews, conducted during the winters of 1975 and 1976, marked the beginning of a continuing relationship with the participants.

Each interview session lasted from two to four hours and was conducted in the house of the interviewee, or, where complete privacy could not be achieved, was moved to a nearby office. An effort was made to visit the participant's home even if the interview could not be conducted there in order to gain some idea of how his family lived. Whatever their personal reasons, 44 participants -- former runaways and their families -- gave generously of their time and patiently allowed a substantial intrusion into their private lives.

The resulting deeply personal, detailed accounts provide an inside view of important experiences in these young people's pathways to adulthood and makes it possible to see them in

relief against the experiences of their siblings and even their parents. Moreover, in learning who and where they are, then and now, it has been possible to gain at least a rough notion of what kinds of adjustments they had made during their passage into adult life.

While interviews were the most convenient means of obtaining information about the young people in the sample, this reliance on self-report assumes that the perceptions of the individuals are accurately and honestly expressed. Fortunately, the observations and perceptions of each individual could be compared with those of other members of the family. But the foreknowledge that other family members were going to be interviewed may also have influenced responses.

Participants in the study came to the interviews with very different expectations and motives. Every effort was made to create for each participant a psychologically neutral, comfortable, and non-coercive atmosphere in which to talk. Still, it cannot be known how the varying conditions of the interviews may have influenced them, nor can it be known how much the psychological dynamics of the interview may have affected what was said.

The interview as presented in Appendix A was used for all participants and was strictly adhered to in all sessions. Each interview was taped and the transcribed data were sorted,

arranged, and tabulated according to pre-established categories (see p.32) according to speaker and subject. (Information concerning each variable was placed on file cards and transposed to aggregate or composite form.) There were no inconsistencies found in the information that appears in tabular form (which summarizes as many as four reports.) The inconsistencies in the composite treatments accurately represent different perspectives and experiences. These inconsistencies have been retained as part of a "true" account.

In summary, the basic procedure was to contact all potential participants first through the mail and later by phone and to arrange for an interview. Since all interviews were to be taped, consent from the participants was obtained in advance. Each person was fully informed about the study, about its nature, its scope, and its purpose, and each was free to withdraw from participation in the study at any time. Participants were assured of strict confidentiality and informed that no persons or agencies -- other than those directly involved in the research -- would have access to the data in any form. Finally, each participant was accorded full dignity and respect for his personal feelings and opinions.

Analysis of the Data

The follow-up study drew on two sets of materials. From the original study there were police reports, interviews

with parents, and taped intensive interviews with the children. Second, there were the taped intensive interviews and conversations with the same individuals, now grown up, and their families. Thus, there were two sets of data, and two different sources, for each former runaway. In all, 44 interviews were used, including two -- each twelve years apart -- for every former runaway.

In presenting the data here, an effort has been made to describe, illustrate, and compare selected aspects of the experience of former runaways and their siblings along the various dimensions of social functioning (school, jobs, and "trouble"). The resulting "self-reports" are actually composites, pieced together from the tape-recorded statements of the participants. The three dimensions are treated separately and a special section is devoted to each. Section One deals with school, Section Two with jobs, and Section Three with "trouble". Each "case" is a partial profile intended to highlight specific social dimensions of the young person's life and to address the overall question: How do adolescents who have run away from home adapt to later events in their lives? And the more specific questions: Are the experiences and difficulties which they face peculiar to them or are they shared by their siblings and even their parents? Finally, what differences exist on follow-up in the experiences of repeaters compared with non-repeaters?

Limits of Study

The individuals who participated in this study cannot be assumed to represent the general population of runaway youth nor can their families be considered representative. The experiences described in this study are those of a tiny group of young people who ran away at a specific time, who could be located, and who were willing to talk about themselves and their families. But is is difficult to find longitudinal data even under the best circumstances and it seemed important, therefore, to exploit the materials to the fullest.

Summary

This chapter has described the research method used in a follow-up study of social development and social adjustment of eleven men and three women who twelve years ago ran away from their homes in a Maryland suburb of Washington, D.C. The location procedures, the participants, the instrument, and the method for data collection have been presented. No assumptions have been made about the nature or representativeness of the sample.

Semi-structured interviews, covering aspects of social functioning, were used to obtain the data. Data are presented by the use of composite, first-person narratives exemplifying the experiences of some of the young people in the sample in the areas of schooling, of work, and of "trouble". The

particularity of the findings will be balanced, it is hoped by the heuristic value of the study, so that hypotheses can be formulated for further follow-up investigations of run-away children.

Chapter IV

THE DATA

This study addresses the question of how children who have run away from home subsequently adapt to society. More specifically, it examines how the former runaways have experienced school, jobs, and "trouble," and attempts to describe how they differ from their siblings and among themselves in their experiences at school, on the job, and "in trouble".

In this chapter the three areas of social functioning are examined and a separate section is devoted to each: Section One deals with school; Section Two, with work; and Section Three, with "trouble". Within each section the above questions are addressed anew.

Each section contains several "case" examples intended to describe, illustrate, and compare aspects of adjustment among the former runaways and their siblings. The "self-reports" are actually composites, pieced together from the tape-recorded statements of several speakers.

SECTION ONE: SCHOOL

School in contemporary America is an almost inevitable part of every young person's life. During the formative years, it plays an essential socializing role, shaping and influencing the course of life to fit the requirements of society. School draws the child into society by teaching him both technical and social skills required for adjustment to adult life. In addition, it channels his energies in particular directions and toward particular kinds of pursuits. The training he receives in school prepares him for "normal" functioning in adult life, steering him toward pursuits which are presumed to have social value and benefit to society.

In significant ways, the experience of school -- its meaning, its importance, and its effects -- varies with the individual characteristics of the child. In particular, the implications of achievement and failure vary enormously for different children. Many of the variations are visible very early in the child's behavior at school and are reflected in the details of his or her particular style of classroom performance, of making friends, of hanging around, and even of getting into trouble at school.

Summary of Findings

For those who ran away, school was experienced as a hostile and stressful environment. Unlike their non-runaway brothers and sisters (several of whom were exceptionally gifted students), none of the children who ran away did well in school. Most had borderline grades and their social adjustment, with perhaps one or two exceptions, was also considered poor. Even more important, the runaway children complained of boredom in school and took little interest in the academic, cultural, or recreational programs offered there.

Among the former runaway children, none went beyond high school. Eight dropped out (none of the siblings did) and those who did graduate from high school only managed to do so with difficulty. They were held back and did not graduate with their classes or they had to attend summer school to make up courses they failed during the school year. But three of those who dropped out have since taken and passed the equivalency exam.

Whatever else school may have been for these young people, only incidentally was it a place for learning. The classroom was not congenial to them and they quite effectively removed themselves from it by failing to show up for classes, or skipping school altogether, or spending their days in the principal's office, or getting suspended, or

simply dropping out. Some who were expected to go on to college, got through high school, stopped there, and refused to go further.

The school experience of their siblings was far more benign by comparison and also far less eventful. They had better grades and three of them were outstanding students whose abilities were acclaimed outside the classroom. Although some brothers and sisters complained of problems in adjustment at school, their social experience at school was relatively painless as compared with that of the children who ran away. Moreover, unlike the runaway children who were trouble-makers, the siblings tended to be well-behaved. They were not, like the runaway children, suspended from school, dismissed from their classes, or regularly sent to the principal's office.

But if the former runaway children experienced trouble in school, the problems appear to have been compounded for those who ran away repeatedly. These children had special difficulty in school. Their attendance was worse. They frequently failed to show up for their classes, and were instead to be found out in the parking lot or nearby woods smoking pot or drinking beer or "just fooling around, not doing much of anything". When they did go to class they tended to be passive and withdrawn. As one young person said, "I sat there like a ghost. It was as though I didn't exist." (See Tables 2 through 4.)

Table 2: Frequency Distribution of Length of Schooling

Groups	Dropped Out	Diploma Only	College
RUNAWAYS			
Repeaters	6	1	0
Non-repeaters	2	5	0
Total	8	6	0
NON-RUNAWAY SIBLINGS	1	8	6

Table 3: Frequency Distribution of Achievement Problems* in School

Groups	Achievement Problems	No Achievement Problems
RUNAWAYS		
Repeaters	6	1
Non-repeaters	2	5
Total	8	6
NON-RUNAWAY SIBLINGS	1	13

Table 4: Frequency Distribution of Behavior Problems** in School

Groups	Behavior Problems	No Behavior Problems
RUNAWAYS		
Repeaters	7	0
Non-repeaters	3	4
Total	10	4
NON-RUNAWAY SIBLINGS	1	13

* Refers to grades of D or lower, reports of academic problems, retentions, etc.

** Refers to reports of misbehavior in class, suspensions, visits with principal or other school authorities.

John: A High School Graduate

John Wagner,* who ran away once, is typical of the children who graduated from high school. For him school was a place to hang around, to get in on the action, and to get into trouble. But it was not a place to learn. At school John identified with the "grits" or "greasers," to use the local idiom of Prince George's County. He dressed, like many of his working-class contemporaries, in a style emulating the 50's: duck-tail haircut; leather jacket covered with emblems, stars, and painted ornamentation; "gabs" or gabardine pants; "chucks" or sneakers with sweat socks; and banlon shirt with the cable in front.

Like the other runaway "grits," John got into various kinds of trouble, ranging from disruption of classes to drinking on school premises. As one of the county principals said of John's gang,

> They were a rough bunch. They didn't get into very serious trouble, but they skipped a lot. In fact, they were the biggest skippers of all. The great thrill for them was to go out in the back of a van in the parking lot with a case of beer and throw everything to the wind and feel happy. "Let me be, I'm not coming back to school." And the school was a sanctuary for the kids. The police couldn't touch them while they were at school.

The classroom for John, far from being a place to learn, was a theatre for sometimes violent confrontations with

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* "John Wagner" is a composite personality and "his" name is fictitious, like all of the persons in this report.

teachers. It was a place to avoid, if possible; if not, it was a place to bide one's time, to goof off, or to sleep. The hallways, on the other hand, were the arenas for sometimes violent confrontations with other students.

During the late 60's, when John was in high school, student confrontations were dominated by the racial strife which came with the integration of the schools. John, like the other grits and greasers, was raised in a family in which racial prejudice was strong and opposition to racial integration openly expressed. (As several of the young people admitted, however, the racial conflicts provided them with a convenient opportunity to get out of the classroom where they had, in any case, little interest in being.)

Once herded into the classroom, John proved to be a hostile and unwilling learner. His interests did not focus on school work.

"It was always the same routine with John," his mother said. "The teachers said they couldn't teach him and that he was a thorn in their side. He would get up and wander around and do whatever he wanted to do and that wouldn't jell in with the class."

And John made it clear that he had no use for school:

> I can tell you how I was a BAD kid. I didn't go along with the program -- everybody sittin' there, keepin' quiet,

> readin' their books. If I felt like gettin' up and doin' somethin' else, I'd do it. And when the teacher hassled me on it, I'd tell her to go to hell.

As early as elementary school, John inspired fear in teachers and students alike.

> See, I was a rowdy little kid. I was mean and nasty and I beat everybody up. There wasn't nobody I couldn't beat up includin' some of the teachers. And if I didn't like somebody or somebody said something out of the way to me, I was ready to smack the shit out of them, and I did.

Which got John in trouble and sooner or later would land him in the principal's office.

> I spent many days down in the principal's office. We even went out to lunch, but there wasn't nothin' she could do. She'd sit down and tell me about "Why can't you do this?" and I'd try, but I just couldn't get out of my own way. I put forth the effort, but I somehow or another always did the wrong thing.

Later in high school, John threatened, conned, and humiliated his teachers.

> We had this great big greasy ol' history teacher, and I didn't like her too much, and she didn't like me too much, and we kind of let it be known. That class was early in the morning, and a lot of times I'd be burned out from the night before. So I went in there and slept. Once she started cussin' me out right in front of all them other kids. And she kept yellin' at me, so I said, "Look, you better quit

> yellin'," which she didn't stop. So I walked over to her and said, "Man, I'll knock you out." She just shut up and sat down, and told us to do somethin' else.

John was dauntless, and his ability to inspire fear may have been in part the result of his physical strength and size.

> See, I was pretty big for my age, and pretty strong, and the teachers were afraid of me. It got to the point they were afraid of givin' me a hard time 'cause I might flare up. So they kind of laid off of me.

By junior high, the school authorities had washed their hands of him.

> Finally, what happened, they completely threw me outta school. They sent me to correction school with all them nuns and stuff. I did real good there. Matter of fact, I had an A average. But the boys over there -- most of 'em -- were retarded, and my problem was strictly discipline. The nuns were pretty cool. I mean, if you did good, they let you know you did good, and I kind of liked that. It kind of gave you an incentive to continue. But I didn't stay there too long, and after a while I came back to regular high school.

When he returned, he continued to be "BAD," a fact in which he takes a certain pride, and for which he blames the school.

> Man, I did so many bad things in school. If they would of stopped 'em at the beginning, I wouldn't have to be a metal worker. I could be out doin' somethin' cool, dressed in

> a suit. But back then, man, you name it, I did it. I didn't mean to, you know what I mean? But you get a teacher who can't control the class, you take advantage of it. Like this real old teacher, she'd be standin' in the middle of the room givin' a lecture, and I'd get up and walk up to her and just put my arms around her and give her a big kiss, you know. It'd disrupt everything, it'd embarrass her something terrible, and she'd have to start all over again.

John took the vocational program in high school and graduated at the age of 20. (He was held back twice.) Speaking about his academic experience at school, John said,

> School never did a thing for me. I never did like it. The things they gave us, there wasn't nothin' I didn't already know, and it's a drag doin' somethin' you already know. The only way I'm interested is if I can do it on my own. 'Cause the book tells you somethin' and a lot of times it's not true. You get out there and get your hands on it, and it's two different things. And see, I had better things to do than sit around and read them books.

John had little interest in academics. But Psychology class was altogether exceptional.

> That's one class I never missed. Oh man, I dug that! As far as Sigmund Freud goes and them cats, they're all burned out. Their time is gone. But that class got me started to realizing how to look at chicks. I don't guess you need Freud and them to figure out about girls. But see, we had to team up. So I teamed up with this chick, and when the teacher left the room, man, me and her would start makin' out. The guy was pretty cool about it. He'd walk in and say, "Let's control yourself, John. The class is interesting but not that interesting." We had a lot of things to do in

> that one. But I never read any of the books, 'cause there wasn't nothin' inside of them books I didn't already know.

But other classes had a more soporific effect on John.

> Spanish, I just went to sleep in that one, and she'd call me and say, "Senor John," and tell me all I had to do was stay awake and she'd pass me. But I couldn't even do that because it was so boring.

John's academic performance was borderline, and he says:

> I'll tell ya: I got through school with D's, no better, no worse, just enough to get by. Not like Carl [his brother]. He was a whiz. He'd take his time to do his homework. But you go through seventh, eighth grade, you don't have to do anything -- just pass. Then you get a hard teacher or somebody who can call your bluff. Next thing you know, it's getting a little harder and you're startin' to have to do a little work. I could of been an A student and gone to college if I had of gotten myself down to do it. I could do dynamite in college, but I couldn't afford it for one; and for two, it wouldn't do me any good. You figure, the people out looking for jobs now, they have college educations. And to me, it don't make no sense if you have to sit down and work hard at somethin'. It ain't worth havin'. I didn't want no part of the hassle -- everybody fightin' each other to get a better grade.

John took pride in being tough, in being "BAD," and in sometimes being a "con artist". He spoke proudly of how

> ... I had teachers lying for me. I'd be with two girls at the same time, and they'd hide me in the closet and tell 'em that I left. And one time I got caught skippin'. The guy seen me. So I ran

> back to my classroom and I said, "Miss Duffy, I just got caught skippin'. Can You tell him I was here?" She said, "John, I don't want to lie." So I said, "Just don't say nothin'." So when the guy come up, she played dumb, and he took me down to the principal, which I've known for years. So I said, "He didn't catch me skippin'. I was sittin' in my class." So the guy left and the principal said, "John were you skippin'?" And I said, "Yeah, but I didn't want to let him know that he caught me." And the principal said, "Okay."

For the most part John saw his teachers as adversaries. The classroom was frequently the theatre for sometimes hostile, sometimes comical confrontations with teachers. It was, by contrast, in the hallways and cafeterias that the confrontations with other students took place. Reflected in them is another facet of John's personal style of "making trouble".

The most important of these student confrontations arose as a result of the racial integration of the schools which was taking place at the time. The bitter racial strife that broke out in the schools provided John a ready outlet for his anger and frustration and a ready out from the classroom. (Racial prejudice figured prominently in the attitudes and beliefs of his family, but he -- much more than his brother, for example -- believed that others, particularly blacks, were standing in his way.)

One of the teachers on the staff of John's school at the time remarked,

> When we integrated, it was 60-40. Many of the white kids came from working-class families. Their fathers had a high school education and held lesser white collar or blue collar jobs. They were carpenters, metal workers, and what have you, and we found they had very redneck attitudes. They were all against integration. They had been brought up with prejudice, and they passed it on. You know, "Blacks are no good," "They're stupid," "They smell," and "The highest type of black is not equal to the lowest white." This attitude was in the home and when we integrated it came out.

John expressed such redneck attitudes, and he also became a rallying point for other "grits" during the initial phases of integration.

> There was a conflict, I don't know if it was Nixon or who it was that did it. But they were takin' fire and water and tryin' to mix 'em together. See, I do not like colored, and I don't refer to them as colored. An' to put it to you bluntly, the niggers didn't want to be there, and we didn't want 'em there. And nobody wants to walk down the hall with their girlfriend and have some nigger or two or three of them walkin' around sayin', "Mother-fucker this and mother-fucker that." Aw, come on! Let's be a little civilized! And we didn't appreciate it neither when they'd take five of them and pick on somebody.

John, always quick to translate his feelings into action, was also quick to take matters into his own hands.

> This nigger just kept following my girlfriend, so I told him, "Look, don't talk to her again, or I'm goin' to punch you in the mouth." So he said, "We'll see about that," and he came back with a couple more of 'em. And I punched him in the mouth and they put me out of

> school for a couple days. But when I come back, this nigger girl just walks up to my girlfriend and smacks her in the mouth. So the principal comes along, and I says, "Look, we've reported this numerous number of times, and nobody's done nothin'." I wasn't calm like I am now, but I was trying to go about doin' it right, because it was my last year of school, and it got to be a hassle goin' so many years.* So I says, "I'm goin' to take the matter into my own hands." And right then this same nigger girl come along, and I said to the principal, "There's the colored...." I didn't say colored you know, and she says, "Son-of-a-bitch," and I said, "I'll beat your ass right here, nigger. You ain't talkin' to me like that." And there was a bunch of colored there, and I said, "All you niggers, let's git it on, right now. I don't want to hear no more out of ya'." So they hustled me away and took me down to the office. I go about it the wrong way sometimes, but it was like something they couldn't have, so they took it out on the people that had it. And I was just trying to handle the problem, 'cause everybody else was afraid.

John also became the grits' leader and standard bearer.

> There was one particular day we had a big fight. There must have been five or six hundred people, split down the middle. Half on one side and half on the other. The rest of 'em were women and children. Someone thought it would be cool to walk in between these two hundred niggers with this black leather jacket on. It had "Nigger Go Home" and a whole bunch of stuff painted on it. So I put on the jacket, an' walked through the middle of 'em and over to the other side; and I started selling war-bonds.** They started hollering back and forth, calling each other

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* John was twenty years old and he did not want to be kicked out of school again.

** John was preparing for "war".

> names; and then it kind of turned rough and a couple of guys got banged up. The police came and they threw me and two other dudes into the paddywagon and took us up to the police station.

John denies that he was "inciting to riot" -- with which he was charged by the police.

> Now don't get me wrong. I didn't start it. I was just following along with the program. I definitely wasn't going to get in there and start a fight. That'd been foolish. In the second place, you can wind up in jail for doing something like that, but I didn't 'cause the judge completely threw it outta court. 'Cause there wasn't no sense in chargin' three guys for somethin' that 600 people were doin'.

In John's opinion, if there was any problem at all, it was "reverse discrimination" or partiality toward the black students on the part of the school administration.

> See the way I look at it, there wasn't any problem. The niggers didn't bother me that much, and if one in particular bothered me, I took care of him. But as far as the group went, as long as they behaved themselves and acted at least half-way civilized, I didn't mind. But like, the principal asked me what I thought the problem was, and I said, "Why don't you treat me just like you treat them? Man, they get away with murder. Anything they want to do in school, they can." So he said, "Maybe we are showing a little partiality because of the way the times are." And he told me he was goin' to put me out of school for the rest of the week. I said, "No, you ain't puttin' me out. You ain't puttin' me outta school just because of them." So they called my mother, and she said, "John, just come on home.

> Don't let it bother you." What it was, they figured somebody would want to get back at me for calling them a nigger. But I was kind of mad, and it might have been better off it we'd whupped their asses right then and there. Maybe it would have stopped there.

John fought with his classmates, was a chronic trouble-maker inside and outside the classroom, and was a frequent visitor in the principal's office. Yet, despite his recalcitrance, his reluctance, and his resistance, he stuck it out and graduated.

John's Brother

John's brother, Carl, did not run away from home. He attended the same high school (a year ahead of John) and as Mrs. Wagner says of Carl, "He didn't do nothin' overwhelming. But he was fair."

Carl says,

> I liked school, even though I didn't take advantage of it. I was crazy about business, but I just went to sleep through things like algebra. I got C's and occasionally I'd catch a B. But I didn't follow through with academic. I wasn't bad. I didn't get in trouble or nothing like John did. But I think back now, if I had really buckled down and studies, I'd have been a lot better off.

Carl feels he did not study enough -- even though John describes him as a "whiz" who "took his time to do his homework".

But Carl places some of the blame for his school performance on his parents:

> Parents got to make their kids study. If my parents had put a foot in my ass, I think it might have been different. I blame myself, too, but my parents didn't make me. And consequently, I'm not the brightest or best-educated person in the world. And to be honest with you, I have a hard time reading and spelling. So if I had it to do over, I'd do my education over.

Carl regrets his school performance more than John does his. He feels that he failed to take advantage of an opportunity which could have meant a different, better life for him.

> I wasn't the type to get myself down and buckle into it. And we weren't financially able to send me through college back then. But that's the one thing in my life that I do regret, because I know that once I got to college, I could do something different, I could make something of myself and go into a different field. It doesn't matter how brilliant you are, if you don't have an education, it's going to hurt you.

It is not only considerations of status and career that inspire Carl's sense of regret:

> I have a good job. I make good money, but college is good for just makin' yourself feel that you've accomplished something. It's not just as far as makin' money and havin' a good career, but it helps you in your social life, too.

For John, social interests (or simply lack of interest) interfered in fundamental ways with learning and with school performance. This rowdy, boisterous, and obstreperous young man was busy with his buddies. He was experimenting with girls, with cigarettes, and with beer. Carl's school career was, by contrast, relatively benign and uneventful. He was a better student and was not, like John, considered a "behavior" problem. He "goofed off" occasionally, but he did not have major confrontations with either teachers or students at school. Moreover, today he looks back on his high school days with a poignant sense that an opportunity was passed up. Today, he feels that he was "just wasting his time": If he "had it to do over again, it would be different. It would be a piece of cake."

Eugene: A High School Dropout

The school experience of Eugene Murphy, who repeatedly ran away from his middle-class home, left him deeply scarred. Although he was sometimes a better student than John,* Eugene suffered through school in ways that John did not. From the very beginning he had difficulty adjusting to the school regimen.

> I remember the first day. I cried and didn't want to leave my mother's side. I was petrified, and I didn't open my mouth. I just sat; didn't say a thing;

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* His academic career had both higher peaks and lower valleys than that of John whose grades remained quite consistently low.

> didn't cry; didn't laugh; didn't yell; didn't even look at the other kids. All I did was just sit at my desk.

Eugene's terror at school was compounded with the pain of failure.

> I stayed back two years. Whenever anyone asked me to do something, I remember I was very slow. And when they'd tell everyone to get out their crayons and color, I hesitated to get them out and begin. Eventually it got better. I began to talk a little bit in class. But I had a terrible reading problem, and in fifth grade I was held back another year because I wasn't advancing as fast as the other students.

And Eugene's difficulty at school was also made worse by the enormous pressure which he felt in his family.

> I had a lot of trouble and it was always worse when I got home and went over my assignments with my father. I'd take him the book and try to read out loud while he sat there is his easy chair; and I remember when he socked me in the stomach, because I didn't know a word. I was very shocked, because very seldom did he do anything physical. But he had been on me, going through the reading process, and the more hassle I'd get from him, the more trouble I had reading. It gradually got so I couldn't read the book no matter how hard I tried.

Eugene's torment at school was made worse by his brother's and sister's brilliance.

> I had the worst grades in the family. My grades were horrible. My brother and sister

> were very quick. My sister is so intelligent, it's unbelievable. She would never study or anything; she'd do whatever she wanted to do and walk into the classroom or test and always be beyond her class. She could argue up one side and down the other with Dad. And she'd prove him wrong; and then she'd stand there and laugh at him. She was the brilliant one in the family.

Even though Eugene's performance in school had improved by the time he reached high school, he was "over-age-in-grade" and by no means in a class with his siblings. Moreover, his academic performance increasingly became a sore spot with his high-powered and ambitious parents who expected all their children to attend college.

> My parents were constantly hassling me about my grades. Whatever kind of grades I got, they should have been better. By 10th grade, they sent me away to school, but I came back for my last year, and during that year the pressure was terrible. Jesus Christ! All this pressure was building up, and I couldn't see how it was going to work out. But by then I had already told them I was going to college and, in fact, I had actually decided to go. I knew if I didn't go, I would be the black sheep of the family.

Eugene was preparing to go to college until something rebelled inside him.

> I got my letter from college, and I remember the last three months of school, it seemed like something went wrong. I don't know what it was. I had an attitude problem: I wouldn't go to school, wouldn't study, wouldn't do anything. I didn't take any

> final exams. I know deep down inside me that I was trying to hurt my parents, and I was also trying to live my own life.

Eugene's paralysis had very much to do with feeling required to do something and be somebody that he did not, and perhaps, could not, do or be.

> For another thing, when they asked me what I wanted to be, I always said I wanted to be a farmer. And that really blew their minds. But that was what I wanted to be. I really wanted to do something outdoors. Then I thought I should go into forestry, but they wouldn't have that either, because, you know, you don't have to use your brain too much. So I didn't do anything at all.

Eugene hesitated; he balked; and then he decided to get out from under.

> I was very depressed, and I didn't have anybody to talk to. We had a family reunion during that spring, and everyone was there, my mother and father and aunts and uncles, and we were all sitting around. It was pretty cheerful for a while, until my aunt hit me with that question, "Well, are you still going to college?" And I said, "No." That shocked everybody, and I went upstairs, and I packed my bags. I wasn't worried about anything. I said, "Well, I'm going to be on my own. I'm going to be free at last." And I got out there, and it wasn't what I though it was going to be. I got into deep sea.*

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* By this time Eugene was eighteen years old and, therefore, was not legally running away.

Mrs. Murphy cared deeply about her children's education, and although she acknowledged their differences, she expected superior performances from all of them. She said:

> Eugene started out a bit slowly. But he took remedial reading, and he finally got over his reading problem. He began to do a little better, but he had a hard time adjusting. The other children used to tease him and he couldn't seem to shrug it off. In tenth grade he began to skip, and finally he dropped out. So we sent him to private school. It was a recommended school, very regimented, but also a total wipeout of a fairly comfortable trust for college. They had nothing to offer Eugene. The other boys weren't on an equal footing with him. They were quite disturbed, you see. They had a brutal father or something and they couldn't go home. I think we were poorly advised, and we followed the advice to our sorrow.

Eugene eventually ran away from school, returned home, and resumed public education. And his parents continued to feel disappointed with his progress. As Mrs. Murphy said:

> Of course, everyone expected him to go to college. He wanted to be a teacher. He was going to go, until the tide turned for him, and that was a great disappointment. He just shrugged it off, and said this is the way it is. But he's a quiet person. You don't know what he's thinking or feeling. I'm sure, if he'd worked at it, he could have handled it. It wasn't lack of ability -- more lack of effort, or not lifting his sights very high.

Eugene's younger brother, Michael, was an outstanding student in high school. He was a year ahead of his class and president of the student council. He is now a lawyer.

> I think Eugene was troubled and rather mixed-up. He had a hard time in school. He didn't do so awfully well, and I think he suffered during high school because my parents couldn't understand that he was a very different person from me. I think odious comparisons were made between us, and no one made any effort to accommodate to him. He was just considered difficult, troublesome, different. Also, there was a tremendous emphasis on learning -- good grades and that kind of thing -- and I think he felt there weren't any options open to him.

Michael had a reaction similar to Eugene's at the end of his senior year when he, too, hesitated and went into a "lull" for a time. But while Eugene stopped altogether and refused to be budged, Michael only paused briefly before resuming his normally high level of academic performance.

> I didn't do so awfully well either. I should have gotten straight A's, but I didn't. Before my senior year I didn't get anything lower than a B, and most of my classes were advanced. Of course, my parents still said I should have done better. I was quite susceptible to pressure at home and I towed the line quite a lot. But toward the end, I slacked off a bit and went into a lull. I got depressed. I wanted to break out, I wanted to be free. But there were all these imperatives.

And Michael also had some difficulties in adjusting socially at school.

> I was sort of a late starter socially. I didn't do much except stay inside and do homework, and when I got out of the house, I had a hard time adjusting. For

> one thing, I had a lot of baby fat. For another, I was intelligent and I seemed to be well-read, although I know I'm not. Well, the kids teased me and didn't accept me. Kids can be cruel, even in their innuendos -- and I didn't relate to girls that well. But I was encouraged by some teachers who thought I had something to offer. And when I became student council president, I had to speak in front of people and I became more outgoing and felt better about myself. It was sort of an ego trip. But I was also able to accept life more easily and not romanticize it. I began to feel greater harmony in my life, and I felt good about what I was doing.

Michael has gradually developed a sense of mastery and competence, a confidence in his own powers to do and to make, despite his initial doubts about himself.

> I think about my social fumblings at college, my fumblings trying to find myself, trying to reach out to other people. They were initial steps and they were painful. I was shy and wanted to be the nearest lamp post. I'm still shy, but I think that I am worth something. I'm quite educated; I'm capable of doing anything I want to do. I am at the point in life when I can do almost anything and make any amount of money I want. I think I've arrived. I think I have class. You see, my gut feeling is that class is within you and in what you think. You don't have to name-drop or have friends just because they've arrived.

Michael has a growing sense of the many possibilities and opportunities that are open to him. He is confident about the direction he is going in and about his future. His parents, too, have confidence in him and are pleased with the way in which he has developed.

Mr. Murphy, the father in this family, had the same ambitions for Eugene that he had for Michael and the other children. He expected all of them to go to college.

> You see, I thought with Eugene it was a stage that he was going through and that he would straighten himself out. I didn't have any fears that he wouldn't finish out his school. It seemed a temporary sort of thing, and adolescence is very, very difficult. It's a time that you have to be considerate. You have to be rational. But I never thought then that he wouldn't continue.

Mr. Murphy's hopes for Eugene were shattered.

> I told the kids all the way up, I said, I'm no millionaire, but I intend to send you to college. Ever since the kids were little, I had the ambition to send them to college.

Mr. Murphy is an ambitious man, ambitious also for his children. Today, he worries about his son's lack of education and the implications this has for Eugene's future.

> Now with a daughter I wouldn't be quite so concerned, because normally a woman can survive through marrying. But a man's going to have responsibilities. He has to support his family. I think Eugene realizes this. Things aren't just going to be handed to him. The things he wants, the things of value, cost money; and the people who make the money aren't the ones who use their hands. They're the ones who tell them how to use them. And Eugene knows this. He knows that in order to get somewhere, he has to have an education.

Comment on Schools

One of the most striking differences among the children who ran away -- and one which was not expected in this study -- is the apparent social class difference in their school experience. More than their working-class counterparts, school left the middle-class children deeply scarred. These children floundered, suffered, and failed in school more than the working-class youngsters did. Their pain was acutely personal. It isolated them from others, and instead of striking out like their working-class counterparts, they withdrew in shame, in desperation, or in (apparent) indifference.

Compared with their siblings who excelled in school, the middle-class runaways did relatively much worse than the working-class runaways. School for the middle-class runaways was an intensely pressureful experience. Not only were the middle-class children expected to do well, they were expected to pursue a profession in which scholarship was required. Their siblings responded for the most part in positive ways to this pressure, while the runaway children felt crushed by it.

Four of the six middle-class children who were doing poorly dropped out. All these children were considered insufficient in some way by their families. For the child of average ability in a household of very bright and talented persons, the experience may have seemed comparable to having

a learning disability. These children lived in the same household with brothers and sisters who were very competent, who were doing much better, and whose talents were appreciated. What talents and abilities the truant runaways did have could easily have been minimized, made light of, or disparaged. (Several of the siblings have commented to this effect.) And because they were less gifted, they created special problems for their parents who were ambitious for them to do well. The parents, unlike their working-class counterparts, would have been alarmed and worried about the child whose grades were only average. And it is possible that the child might experience this alarm and worry as further pressure upon him, as loss of confidence in him, or as rejection. Some of the children certainly had such experiences and they balked, lost interest, stayed away, failed, and ceased trying.

SECTION TWO: JOBS

Work is an almost universal necessity and it also has a powerful socializing influence on the life of the worker. On the job, the person becomes enmeshed in a complex network of social relationships, responsibilities, and obligations. Work and the workplace provide a focus for social intercourse and to a large extent determine the character and quality of life.

Summary of Findings

Excluding one housewife, only six of the former runaways today have regular jobs. The others have been unable to hold a job for more than a period of months. They appear to have little motivation and even less interest in finding a job. Of the fourteen young people, ten have been employed only sporadically and of these, four have no job histories to speak of.

By contrast, all but one of the non-runaway siblings are employed. They have not only worked regularly, but to a much greater extent, they appear to identify with and feel satisfied in their jobs. None of the former runaways does professional work, contrasted with four siblings who do. The others, with the exception of one chronically unemployed

young man, have steady jobs, and most consider their work to be a "career".

If the runaways generally have had greater difficulty than their siblings in finding and holding jobs, the young people who ran away repeatedly appear to have had even more difficulty. Only one of the former repeaters today has a regular job as contrasted with five non-repeaters who do, and it is the repeaters who have the most sporadic work histories.

All of the children who ran away also had school problems which created difficulty in later occupational adjustment. For the children who both ran away and dropped out of school, there may simply have been too little time, too little delay, or too little preparation, before assuming adult responsibilities. In addition, unconstructive work habits that were established at school may have persisted later on the job.

Most of the children who ran away entered adulthood and the world of work without career plans. Several said they wanted to be free and to keep their options open. They did not welcome the responsibilities and obligations of regular work on a permanent job and they came to the job unskilled and unwilling. (See Tables 5 and 6.)

Table 5: Frequency Distribution of Job History

Groups	Sporadic Job History	Consistent Job History
RUNAWAYS		
Repeaters	6	1
Non-repeaters	4	2
Total	10	3
NON-RUNAWAY SIBLINGS	1	12

Table 6: Frequency Distribution for Career

Groups	No Career	Career
RUNAWAYS		
Repeaters	5	2
Non-repeaters	3	3
Total	8	5
NON-RUNAWAY SIBLINGS	1	12

Out of Work: Roy Webb

Roy Webb, who ran away repeatedly from his working-class suburban home, is today without a job. He says he does not want to be tied down by a job, but wants to enjoy the good times and be free of obligations. Twenty-three years old, he has no skills and lives at home with his parents.

Mrs. Webb, his mother, contrasts her two sons:

> Donald was going in a different direction from Roy from the time he was sixteen. Roy was rattled. He just didn't have any plans and he wasn't ready to make any. He was going to be foot-loose and fancy-free, where Donald had a straight head on his shoulders.

Being unemployed is not altogether to Roy's liking. It presents certain problems. Indeed, as he says:

> That's my biggest problem right now. Matter-of-fact, I was supposed to see about a job this afternoon, but I ain't lookin' for just any job. I'm lookin' for somethin' I could stick with. I would appreciate the fact of findin' myself a good career-type job, where I could count on it from day-to-day. But I'm not in any type of hurry. I was thinkin' about goin' to sign up for unemployment and stay off all summer. Man, that's hard to beat! I know a couple of years from now something called "responsibility" is gonna hit me. So there ain't no reason not to have a good time now. See, my attitude is, "Wait until the future smacks you in the face." I'd like to have myself a good time and get it out of my system, and then I'll be ready for a regular type job -- because I'm startin' to get burned out by what I'm doing.

Roy feels acutely the confinements and restrictions of a regular job:

"I don't think I could like <u>any</u> job. The obligations, you know what I mean? Five days a week, eight hours a day."

Before his last layoff, Roy had been working as an electrician's helper and earning about $150 per week.

> That ain't too good now that I think about it. But, half the time I didn't show up. The boss was a drag. Everything was a complete, total drag. I went out there, and sometimes I dug in, and sometimes I didn't. It depended on the boss. If they gave me something decent to do and if the boss was decent about it, I didn't mind. But I can't stand bein' hassled. And most times the boss was a pain in the ass. He had a personal thing against me. See, he got married when he was 18 and he hates his wife. But that's his problem. That ain't my problem.

Roy sees the source of his trouble on the job as outside himself. He feels victimized on the job and also dissatisfied with the work. He has no plans, no specific plans, that is, and he does not think about the particulars of career.

> Now I'm in the process of figurin' out what to do. I want a job where I'm able to get up in the morning and enjoy goin' to work. See, I don't like electrical; 'cause you don't use your brain. I like to use my hands and my brain both. See, it got to like where, man, I was just gettin' fed up with it. Plus the guy on the truck with me -- I could of killed him! He would embarrass me in front of the

> customers. That didn't cut no ice with me. If you want to holler at me, that's cool for on the truck when we're by ourselves, but not in front of the customer. That makes somebody look bad. So I quit. I didn't tell 'em I quit. I just quit.

Roy has not stayed long on any job and, like others who ran away, he is constantly losing his temper, getting into fights, having accidents, and hurting himself.

> Before I started with the electric company, I was at Quinley Press. That's when I got my hand caught. I was out for six months, and when I went back to work, people just wasn't the same anymore. It was like they were tryin' to insinuate that I stuck my hand in there. See, I got paid for the time I was off, and I guess that's what it was. It was like a long paid vacation and they didn't get theirs.

Although Roy is unhappy with the routine and obligations of the job, he has enjoyed the (sometimes) lively camraderie of the workplace.

> See, me and this other guy was a team. It's kind of a buddy system, 'cause it usually takes two men to do it. And we'd yell at each other, call each other "dumb". Man, it's all in play. And you come in. You been out late, and you feel rough, and you say, "Man, I'm in a bad mood!" And you talk to him more than you talk to other people. And you can explain different ways to do it to each other. You say, "We oughtta do it this way." And somebody else'll say, "Goddam! Son of a gun! I got the idear!"

And the workplace provides a focus and structure for developing friendships.

> You work with these guys, you get friendly with them. One guy didn't talk to me for the first three weeks I was there -- not even "Hi". Man, he didn't like nobody. And you know, we were like right beside each other the whole time, sweatin' and workin'. So I asked someone, and what it was, he had just gotten outta jail about a year before for shootin' somebody. I was kinda scared of this guy. But he got to talkin' and we got to be pretty good friends. Here's the unfriendliest little guy, and he invites me over and introduces me to his girl, and to this day, if I see him someplace, we stop and have a beer.

Roy has worked sporadically at numerous jobs and has been fired many times for lateness, for not showing up, or for fooling around on the job. Before he began at Quinley Press, one of his many jobs was stock boy at a Montgomery Ward's store.

> The job had really good potential. My second day on the job, I met this trashy girl in the back room, and she just laid one on me. Man, I didn't care about the pay, I was havin' a ball! At the time, we had goldfish in the store, and some guy bet me $5.00 I wouldn't eat one. I said, "For $5.00, yes I will!" And I did, but I didn't know how mouthy these guys were. They started spreadin' around the story 'bout me eatin' goldfish. So next day, the manager of the store comes up to me and says that was my last day, because you can't have people goin' around doin' all them things. Man, a $2.96 goldfish! If you're goin'

> to fire me over somethin' petty like that.... See, I don't mind people tellin' me what to do once in a while. I know sometimes you got to. But everybody does somethin' bad once in a while.

Roy fights aggressively for his freedom. He does not want to be "hassled" by anyone or anything. He would like to cruise along in his carefree style and not be held accountable for his actions -- which too often have landed him in trouble on the job. Nevertheless, Roy does not worry. He is not concerned about the future, but expects things to take care of themselves:

> I think I'll just play along with the game and let it work out the way it's goin' to. Because if I decided I wanted to be this or that, and it turned out different, it would probably be a drag. It's goin' to pan itself out one way or another -- if I put my brain to it. There ain't nothin' out there, if anybody wants to, they can't do.

At the same time, and particularly when Roy is "down," he feels ineffective, depressed, and frustrated with the way things are "panning out".

> Every time I try to pull myself up, I get knocked down again. I'm sittin' here now, thinkin' bout the job I don't got and the girl I don't got. I guess I'm gettin' older but not wiser. There ain't no sense in it. Not that I want to reroute my life schedule, 'cause I ain't goin' to change myself. But anythin' I try to grab a hold of falls out of my hands. I ain't never had somethin' I could call a success.

Despite Roy's dissatisfaction with his life, he is not about to "reroute" himself. After all, Roy is not his brother, Donald.

"Now Donald gets on my ass, tellin' me what I should do, sayin' I'm stupid. I always figured I was intelligent. I had a fairly high opinion of myself. Well, Donald found his way early."

But Roy is sometimes simply bewildered by the chaos of his life and feels convinced he is getting a raw deal.

> Don't everybody shoot at once. That ain't fair. I can be pushed so far, but I can't piss up a wet rope, you know what I mean? There just ain't no such thing as robbery and fair exchange. Man, you get to the point, you feel like smackin' the shit out of someone. Outside you feel like cussin'; inside you feel like cryin'.

But, as Roy sees it, the problem is other people and other things.

> Things are so fucked up. It would be easier on me if it's somethin' I'm doin' wrong. But I'm findin' what it is: Maybe ten percent is me, but ninety percent is other shit. See, I don't need this rat race. I ain't goin' to fight it -- 'cause I can do somethin' else: I can go find greener pastures.

Roy sees himself as a victim of circumstance. But his life is sometimes so frustrating that he is ready to lash out at someone. He feels his efforts to pull himself up, to grab

hold of things, to find satisfying work are futile, and he prefers to withdraw from the rat race than to fight it.

Unlike his brother, an experienced printer, Roy does not identify with a trade or a job, or picture himself with any specificity in the world of work. In contrast, Donald is well-established, well-regarded, and contented in his work:

> I'm a pressman. I made my plans before I graduated, and I've finished my apprenticeship. But my training is still goin' on. You never learn it all. I love this work. I guess I like being master of the machine. I control what the machine does, and I like seein' different colors going down on paper and the problems that are presented by puttin' it on paper.

Donald decided to work in the best printing shop in town and he planned accordingly:

> The shop I'm at now has the best reputation in town. Without a doubt it's about the twelfth best in the United States. Most of what we print is high-quality commercial work, you know, brochures, annual reports, and stuff like that, and our customers demand perfection. Before I signed up with Heller's I had talked to a few guys who worked there. They told me what kind of a place it was and I made my plans. I let my application drop the first time I went to them 'cause I wasn't experienced enough. But when I showed up the second time, I had the experience.

The work is demanding and it can be quite exhausting.

> The one thing I could complain about at Heller's is too much overtime. Sometimes you can spend fifteen hours a day, seven days a week. And I've worked 24-hour shifts. I have a choice, but I feel responsible about my machine. That's the price you have to pay. See, the work has to go out. Being a commercial printer, the customer wants the job at such and such a date. You have to get it to him on such and such a date.

The character of the shop, the management, and the quality of the work are all very important to Donald, who has worked for lesser companies.

> Compared to Heller's, Midnight Printing Company was a mess. The shop was dirty and I was expected to run the thing even if my partner wasn't there. The attitude of the owner was horrible. Parts would fall off the machine, or it would need to be fixed, and he would say, "There's no doubt of that." He seemed to think that as long as he could get work off of it and make money, that was all that was important. And the hours were terrible. The pay wasn't anything to write home about either.

The character and esprit de corps of Donald's workplace are as important as the technical aspects of his work.

> Going to Heller's changed my life. It made all the difference. The guys in the shop are a fine bunch of fellows. Some of the printing shops you go into, the guys are cut-throat, but these guys are real nice to work with.

The money is a further consideration.

> We go by the hourly wage plus our benefits. Right now we average eleven or twelve dollars an hour. You give yourself a little time off, you should make $20,000 a year -- if you don't get sick, 'cause we don't have sick pay. Before the average was only $10,000. So it's gone up. And there's no financial stress now -- except Uncle Sam -- he has no pity on us.

Money happens to be an important focus for Donald, as his reputation in the family suggests.

> See, I'm known as the scrooge of the family, and I always go "Bah Humbug" to keep everybody happy. I started saving my money and investing it. I'm not real good at it, but what I invest with is something I can see or get a hold of, like our house. And I will say I'm a bit greedy. I like to have money in the bank to fall back on in case anything happens, and I guess that's where this scroungy thing 'bout money comes in. If I could do things without money, I would, but I can't.

The degree to which Donald finds satisfaction in his work is reflected in what he says about his future:

> I'd probably be content if my life continued like this for the next twenty years. I set my sights toward the future, 'cause I'm not goin' to change in a day. Someday, I'd like to be the pressroom foreman or maybe the superintendent. But I'm talkin' fifteen years into the future. I don't want to be boss. That don't appeal to me at all. I just want to be responsible for the men under me -- make sure everything goes smooth. But I don't want to stand over people with a whip and make 'em do things, 'cause that never got nobody nowhere. You

> shouldn't have to tell people to do things. They should do it naturally of their own selves, if it's their job.

The future also includes growing old:

> Sooner or later you're going to get old. That's a real bummer, but you got to do it. I haven't thought about it much, but I figure, now's too soon. I just take the punches as they come, ridin' right along with it, figurin' this is the way life goes, and it's just my destiny.

For Donald, in contrast with his brother Roy, life makes sense. It has an order and structure, and things have their proper places and times. And in the scheme of things, one must also grow old and meet one's destiny.

The paths taken by Roy and Donald, 24 and 25 years old respectively, have gone in very different directions. Twelve years ago, the differences were not so sharp: At that time neither man had any definite career plans, nor any notion of his "destiny". Today, the brother who ran away has no career and no plans, whereas the one who stayed home has launched a career for himself, started a family, and is settled in his own home.

Ralph Mitchell: "Work's not my bag."

Jobs have been a special problem for the children who ran away repeatedly from their middle-class homes. These

children have been unable to hold a job for more than six or seven months. They seem to have little motivation to work and even less interest in finding a job. Some have no jobs and no work histories to speak of. Others, like Ralph Mitchell, have had numerous odd jobs and a sporadic work history. But Ralph has never cared to work. As he said to his parents:

> You get up, you go to work, you come home, you eat, you watch TV, and you go to bed. I just can't see that. That's not my bag. I can't see living that way.

This attitude was unacceptable to the Mitchells and, therefore, Ralph was exiled from the house. As Mr. Mitchell, his father, said:

> We couldn't let him live here as long as he didn't want to work. He hung around with these kids who looked like they came from the slums. They didn't work. They "mooched," I guess, and somehow they always seemed to have enough money to buy beer. They had the attitude that they didn't need to work and that they couldn't care less.

By now, Ralph has been finally and irrevocably cut off by his family. He has been written off as a lost cause.

> I'm sure he feels we're being mean not letting him live here ever again. But he's 23, and it's time he stood on his own two feet. All kinds of people have tried to help him, but he doesn't care. Anyway, it's too late now. In this area

> his name is mud. I don't think he could get a job if his life depended on it. No one wants to hire a bum. And that's how people think of him -- a no-good bum.

Mr. Mitchell sees in his son's work history a characteristic pattern. His jobs always end the same way.

> He's had more jobs than I've had in my entire lifetime. He'd get a job, and for one week or two it would be okay. But, then he starts sliding back. Apparently he gets bored. He'll be late for work, or not show up at all, and they have to let him go.

Ralph has little motivation to work, not much initiative, and less interest in finding a job.

> If he would settle down, get a job, and stay with it, he could straighten out. But he doesn't seem to want to. He feels that he's beat here, and basically he's lazy. He wants somebody to find him a job, to take him there and pick him up. He doesn't want to help himself. There's work outside this area. There's construction work. But he says he doesn't want to ride a bus to work. He wants someone to wheel him there.

Mr. Mitchell is both puzzled and angered by his son's life-style.

> He always tells me how he doesn't like the square life. But deep down, I think he has to be unhappy living the way he does. I don't see how anyone can like that kind of life, not knowing where his next meal is coming from, not having any place to stay, not having any money in his pocket.

Ralph occasionally used to come by his parents' house to take a shower, get a bite to eat, and change his clothes.

> I said to him the other day, "Don't you want to be different?" He said, "No." I said, "Wouldn't you like to have a car and some decent clothes?" He said, "It doesn't make any difference." That was in the morning. He wanted to use the shower. He was sober, but he looked rough -- terrible really -- with that shaggy hair, his eyes all bloodshot. God, he looked bad.
>
> I lost my temper. I asked, "Why didn't he take a shower wherever he was living?" And he said, "I'm not living anywhere." I told him we didn't want him coming around if this is the way he wanted to be. If he was going to live like an animal, if he had no pride in himself, he could do it somewhere else.

Mr. Mitchell has given up on his son. He no longer believes his life can be salvaged.

> I used to feel sorry for him. I would wonder where he was and whether he was cold or hungry. But I don't anymore. I still worry about him, but I've reached the point where I don't even want to see him. I'm fed up. He's only gone downhill. He has no future. He has no values. He has no respect for anyone or anything. He's selfish. He calls when he needs money, and he expects me to bail him out. It drives me to despair.

Ralph clearly recognizes his parents' feelings toward him. But he has wanted to lead his own, very different life.

> My parents were kind of mad at me. Always were. When I was fifteen, I was on drugs. I had long hair, and I skipped school. I was trying to lead my own life. It was the hippie life. I was on the streets, hanging around, trying to get myself some beer and drugs. Getting myself out there and having a good time relieved my irritations, and I felt a little freer, kind of loose really, fooling around and not getting much done with myself -- drinking and smoking.

Work is incompatible with Ralph's life style, which is oriented around drugs and alcohol. He drifts along with the tide of drugs, and to get by, he steals and pushes drugs in the local high schools. This is not a secure life (he has been caught and jailed), but it is his life and there is a certain excitement to it and to being on the margin of life.

SECTION THREE: TROUBLE

In the normal course of events, everyone sooner or later encounters trouble. What kind of trouble it is, how serious, how extensive, and how it is handled, of course, vary greatly. But trouble also has social implications and effects. It brings the troubled person into contact with other people and is the focus for important, perhaps critical, human interactions. Under certain circumstances it may result in the formation or imposition of a new structure. The individual may "learn from his mistakes". More ominously, he may be forced out of society and required to restructure his life in order to conform to the special constraints of institutional life.

Summary of Findings

Most of the young people who ran away also had legal or emotional problems which, during the last dozen years, have brought them to the attention of public agencies. Of the fourteen runaways, charges were brought against nine, and each at some time was charged with stealing. Three young men have spent time in jail. Of those who have been treated for psychological problems, one person was twice committed to a mental hospital and three others have been

sent on court orders to institutions for emotionally disturbed children.

The children who ran away differ sharply from their brothers and sisters in the amount and kinds of trouble they have experienced. They have gotten in more trouble and had more contact with the court and with social agencies than their siblings. Frequently, the contacts were initiated by, or effected through, the parents during times of acute strain or crisis, as a means of controlling the children when they -- the parents -- felt powerless to do so. In most cases the trouble was originally school-related, and the courts, children's centers, and boarding schools were last resorts for parents confronting a recalcitrant or otherwise trouble-some child. Sometimes the police continued to play an enforcement role in the home. More often, these young people got into trouble independently and their parents had to bail them out or in other ways protect them from the law.

In the face of trouble, the children who ran away seemed quite casual and were unmindful of the legal or other implications of their behavior. Their siblings, in contrast, expressed concern about the propriety of their own actions and the possible consequences for their jobs, their reputations, and their futures. (See Tables 7 and 8.)

Table 7: Frequency Distribution for Legal Trouble*

Groups	No Court Contact	Court Contact
RUNAWAYS		
Repeaters	0	7
Non-repeaters	5	2
Total	5	9
NON-RUNAWAY SIBLINGS	12	2

Table 8: Frequency Distribution for Psychological Trouble**

Groups	No Problems	Problems
RUNAWAYS		
Repeaters	1	6
Non-repeaters	3	4
Total	4	10
NON-RUNAWAY SIBLINGS	14	0

* Includes any charges, regardless of disposition.

** Includes "bad nerves," drinking problems and other self-reported complaints, as well as diagnosed problems such as "Behavioral Reaction of Childhood".

Tom in Trouble

As a young child, Tom Wilkins got into minor trouble. For example, he and his brother both sniffed glue with a gang of other "little scamps" -- so called by his mother, who used to round them up and chase them home with a stick.

Tom, at the age of eleven, describes one such incident:

> Me, Timmy, and Darrell were up at Westchester Plaza sniffing glue. My mom came along, and she said, "You git home!" So we started runnin' fast as we could. And then she got a stick, and chased us home. Me and Timmy could have made a getaway if Darrell wouldn't have been there, 'cause necessarily, I didn't want Darrell to get in so much trouble like I did. I didn't want him to get sent to foreign school, 'cause I knew I was going to get sent there.

The prospect of being sent to a "foreign school" caused Tom some worry when he was eleven, for he had been in trouble before, and he believed he would be punished for his glue-sniffing.

> Pro'bly I'm in trouble 'cause the cops were quest'ning Timmy and he's goin' to tell. He'll say, "Yeah, that joker sniffed glue," and then they'll come after me, and then I'll get my neck cut. I'm just waitin' for the big spankin' to come. When my mom ketched us, she told us, "Listen criminals, if you try to get loose, you'll get kilt." And the bad part was when they took us down to the courthouse. You get so skeered. My mom turned

> us into the police. The judge had a broken arm, so he was in a bad mood. He was 'bout to send us to reform school when the clerk says, "Send 'em all to reform school." And my mom was sittin' there, and she said to my brother, "Don't worry, he won't send you. The first time, they always let you off." My brother was skeered like a leaf. I wasn't too skeered. But my mom told me they were goin' to lock us up in a cell. And the juvenile squad said so, too.

Later, Tom was indeed sent to reform school. First, however, he was placed "under observation" for a month at a center for disturbed and delinquent children. Looking back, aged 23, he describes it as:

> One big fight. That unit was mostly niggers and I think I fought a different one every day. They were gettin' new people all the time, 'cause they only stayed 30 days. An' everybody had to try somebody else out. I guess I wasn't no different, 'cause sometimes I picked a fight too. But they left me alone when I started whuppin' their asses.

Tom did not find either the accommodations or the regimen at the center salutary.

> They put me in a cell which must have been eight feet wide by twelve feet long, and locked me there overnight. No bathroom, no nothin', just a bed. Then come mornin' they let everybody out. That's like lockin' somebody in a cage and pokin' 'em with a stick and then lettin' 'em out to watch 'em fight.

But neither were the "psychotherapy" and other experiences with the staff very beneficial.

> They took me to see the psychiatrist -- I don't even remember if it was a dude or a chick -- but I think I sat in there for about twenty minutes, and they gave me a test and a few other funny little things and sent me back downstairs. They kept writin' papers on me. Told 'em how bad I was. "He's a bad kid."

Withal, his experience at the Center left Tom puzzled and he was glad to get out.

> I don't really understand the idea behind a place like that. It was kind of strange to me, 'cause if they wanted to figure somebody out they sure could have picked something better than to stick you in a room with a bunch of kids and watch you fight.

Tom has been arrested many times. So far, he has never been convicted. But, now and then, in the aftermath of a fight, he hands in jail.

> The next thing you know, everythin' flares up. For some reason, it's always blamed on me and I wind up in jail. It's been about three times -- but don't quote me on that. I can't understand it. I get drunk and somebody picks an argument with me and thinks I don't know what I'm doin'. But that's where they're gettin' fooled, 'cause I do know what I'm doin'.

Tom feels unfairly picked on, unfairly charged -- and unfairly incarcerated. But he has also been arrested while he was alone and when no one else could be blamed. Volatile and impulsive, Tom often loses his temper.

> One charge came to a trial. I got mad and went over to the police station and started bustin' the windows. They arrested me for destruction of property. But the charges were kind of dropped there.

During that incident Tom admits to having been drunk and solely responsible for the damage. Another time, the police were inadvertently the target of his aggression.

> I beat up a cop over by Stein's Liquor Store. See, I didn't know he was a cop, 'cause he just started on his beat. He had a gun strapped to his side, but I didn't see it, 'cause he had a coat over it. So he drawed the gun on me 'cause he thinks I'm messin' with his girlfriend. I wasn't. His girlfriend was messin' with me. He held his gun on me, see, and before he had time to pull the hammer back, I kicked it out of his hand. And I grabbed a hold of him and beat the shit out of him. So another cop came along and they arrested me; but they had to drop the charges. They didn't have a case 'cause, I mean, the man assaulted me with a deadly weapon and didn't show me a badge. So he would be the one to get in trouble. That time I got released on personal bond, and I didn't even see the jail.

Trouble also occurs with regularity at home, and family fights often lead to police intervention.

> We had an argument. See, if I've been drinkin' my mother gives me a rash 'a shit when I come home. What happened was, I lost my temper, and it broke out in a fight. My ma keeps swearin' that I hit her, but naw, that ain't true. I'll be honest with you: I don't remember. I don't think I did, 'cause you hit somebody, most times, you can see it the next day. Everybody's all bruised up. But ma, she goes and tells all the neighbors and she won't let me live that down.

Mrs. Wilkins, Tom's mother, is weary of all the trouble her son has caused and which she has endured. She feels she has borne the brunt of it all. For example, she did not so easily dismiss the incident to which Tom refers:

> He came in here. He bounded through the door. You never knew when he was going to come home drunk. Well, he ran into the bedroom and grabbed Cookies' (her husband) shotgun. He says, "I'm goin' to shoot myself." He still had a cast on from his hand injury, and I had a broken wrist at the time. Well, he just kept tryin' to shove me away. Me with my broken arm, and him with his hand in a cast. We wrassled one another, and I got him down on the floor, and I was tryin' to keep him away from Cookies. Goldie [her sister, who was visiting at the time] was hysterical. She kept running to the phone and trying to call the police and Tom would run over and grab it from her and hang up. When I finally got to the phone, the operator was on the line, and she said, "Madam, do you need assistance?" And I said, "Yes ma'm, I do!" It took the longest kind of time to get the police here. They got the address all screwed up. Meantime, I'm still tryin' to wrassle the shotgun away from Tom, and finally Cookies gets it and throws him on the bed.

> When the police came, Tom was headin' for a knife in the kitchen. I said, "Please, just get him out of here." They said I would have to press charges, so Cookies went and pressed charges for assault. We had the hearing in February, and I think that scared the hell out of Tom. See, we didn't tell him up until the mornin' he stood in front of the judge that we were going to drop the charges, yet he lived here under the same roof with us.

Despite the disruption and turmoil which Tom has brought to the household, Mrs. Wilkins continues to tolerate her son and cannot bring herself to turn him out.

> He knows that I'm not goin' to turn any child of mine out of the house. But it's a shame really, if you have to force somebody with a hammer over his head to half-way behave themself. And we'd been through all this stuff before. Seems like every time somethin' went wrong in his life he would take it out on someone. And every time Tom would show his hind parts [this means to get drunk and behave out-rageously] Cookies would say, "Why don't we kick him out?" And yet I couldn't bring myself to do it.

Mrs. Wilkins remembers another time when

> ... he got drunk and went over to his brother's shop tryin' to be a big shot. It was two in the morning. There was a feller that worked in the shop -- Big Mike -- they called him. He was takin' karate; and Tom went down there and told him, "I'll beat your ass and ten like you." Mike, of course, ignored him. He knowed he was drunk. But in truth and reality, if Mike had of wanted to take Tom outside, he pro'bly would have worked him over till there wasn't much left of poor ol' Tom. And Big Mike likes him, 'cause when he's sober there's

> not a better person in the world. But Tom gets somethin' inside of him, and he thinks nothin' of beatin' the shit out of someone.

Tom's brother, Darrell, didn't know what to do that morning. According to Mrs. Wilkins:

> Darrell called us from work, and he said, "Tom's makin' a complete ass of himself. And he's embarrassing me somethin' terrible." So Cookies and me went to get him. When we drove up, he patted Darrell on the back, "I'll see you later there ol' boy," and all that. But we got down to the corner, and I guess he contained himself much as he could. So he starts swearin' and cussin' in the vilest language. Cookies and me, we just sat there. We didn't even give him the satisfaction of knowin' we heard him. But see, then, he turned violent. He started swingin' and he blacked my eye and broked my glasses. He grabbed hold of me and tried pushin' me over the seat of the car. But my ribs just couldn't take it. (I had to sleep in a reclining chair for about a week, 'cause I was in turr'ble shape.) I was hysterical. I just couldn't believe this -- this animal -- was my son. I got out of the car, and I hailed a police car, and Tom got out and was leaning up against the back, and all of a sudden he just poured forth this vomit, and then he fell in it. These were the town police and they would have taken him to jail, but we had them take him to the hospital rather than have him locked up and have a police record.

To Mrs. Wilkins, it seems that, "Everything that happens, happens to Tom." Yet despite her trials with him, she has continued to feel protective toward him. Like some of the

other parents, Mrs. Wilkins relied on the protection and enforcement capability of the police, while at the same time she sought to protect him from the legal implications of the "trouble" he made. Today Mrs. Wilkins attributes some of her own "troubles" to Tom.

> My mother taught me that you don't kick your parents. Yet Tom was doin' that of his own self. I have bad nerves because of this. I have been taking tranquilizers for quite some time. I don't know what Tom will do next.

Tom's Brother: Darrell

Others in the Wilkins family have been in trouble: one uncle has been convicted of murder; another uncle, of forgery; and "granddaddy" is described as a "jailbird". By comparison, Darrell's minor scrapes seem hardly worthy of mention.

Unlike Tom, Darrell took his "trouble" very seriously. He clearly saw and appreciated the potential legal and other repercussions and sought to prevent any damage to his reputation and job. In addition, he recognized the suffering which trouble may bring.

Darrell said,

> My parents went through quite a lot with Tom. How would you like to be called up in the middle of the night and be told, "Your son's in jail!"? It might have been minor

> stuff, but I had to go and get him out of jail a couple of times, and I've been locked up myself.

Darrell was charged (once) with assault and battery on a policeman during an incident at D.C. Stadium.

> I just had too much to drink, I guess. I was watching Baltimore and Pittsburgh in the World Series. I was pretty drunked up, and the reason it happened was 'cause Pittsburgh lost. I was wrong, but the police officer was definitely wrong. He told me to get the hell out, 'cause the game was over. An' I walked up to him and said, "Who in the hell you talkin' to?" So when he went to push me, I pushed him and he fell over these seats, and the next thing I know, I'm handcuffed, put in a paddywagon, and taken to jail.

Darrell was in trouble. And he knew it. The first thing he did was get a lawyer.

> They gave me a choice: Either go in front of a grand jury or pay this cop $200. So my lawyer told me to pay him $200, because the grand jury would take up for the police officer no matter what. My father travelled all the way back from Florida just to make sure nothin' out of the way happened. And I ended up paying damages to the cop, $200 court fee, lawyer's fees, and time off from work. It cost me about $1,400 for a bum rap. The lawyer said he'd fix me up, and it was worth it if it kept my record clean, because it could have jeopardized my job. It could have completely jeopardized my future.

Both Darrell and his father fully appreciated the importance of the incident and saw the necessity for protection from further legal trouble. Darrell had understood the position of the court, but he felt he was not wholly in the wrong either.

> Don't get me wrong. I shouldn't have touched the police officer. I know they have certain time limits 'cause I worked down at the D.C. Stadium myself. But if I pay to get in the stadium and I want to talk to someone, I should be able to talk to him.

Already, Darrell has been haunted by the incident.

> Now I used to work for the government, and they investigate you. I didn't put this down on my record, 'cause it was all supposed to be dropped. But the investigator asked me about it, and I had to get them to contact my lawyer. I haven't heard nothin' more of it, but I could of lost my job. If you lie to the government, and you signed a paper, you could lose your job.

Darrell sees the experience as a costly mistake. He is glad that it has not had more serious consequences.

Richard in Jail

Richard Matthews came from a middle-class home in which "proper" conduct was expected and in which entanglement with the law was all but inconceivable. Today while his siblings

are successful -- even outstanding -- in their pursuits and achievements, Richard is in jail.

Mr. Matthews, Richard's father, is devastated.

> I don't know what happened to this guy. There was a lot of good stuff in there some place. Where he went wrong, I don't know. But this guy's worthless. He's my son. I've given him what I can, but I don't know what more to give him.

"Trouble" for Richard started early in his teens. Mr. Matthews continued:

> When he was twelve or thirteen, he started stealing. The manager of the store would call up and say, "Your son has stolen a record," or this or that. He used to sneak out of the house with a friend, steal cars, and go out joy-riding. One time they had an accident and, of course, they were caught. I had to go and bail him out. I remember, I picked up a broom and broke it over his backside. That did more for me than it did for him, believe me.

Mr. Matthews tried in vain to change his son's behavior.

> That very night that he went out and stole the car, I knew something was up, so I sat down with him, and we talked. At least I talked, and I thought I was getting through to him. But he would Always say, "Aw, you're too logical." Well, I've finally come to the realization that people aren't logical. It would be great if they were and you could predict behavior and set up the outcomes. It should work that way, but of course, it doesn't.

The apparent futility of his efforts left Mr. Matthews puzzled, disappointed, and, in the end, very angry.

> Every time I talked to Richard like this, he'd go out and do the worst possible thing. I was trying to discipline him and I'd be firm. But honestly, it was ineffective. I felt swindled. Maybe there's a logical explanation for it. For one thing, Richard thought he was a hippie, and he got caught up in drugs at that particular time. He would come home and spout about what they said in his dope groups -- his idealism and such things. And these kids who were so full of idealism, and would go out and steal if they thought they could get away with it. And they'd play on their parents about how they'd been mistreated. "When I was three years old you did this, you did that," which is a lot of bull.

Richard spent most of 1974 in jail serving a sentence for auto theft. When he got out, he wandered home, much to his family's distress.

> You heard about last year. He comes back from time to time. Last year was a terrible experience. He said he wasn't on drugs, but I'm sure he was, because there was a pattern. He'd get up in the morning, and he'd be mean and nasty. Then he'd go out, and when he came home, he'd be fine. And you see, in the final blow-up when he attacked Maurice [his brother], he had just gotten up.

Mr. Matthew's home became the scene of frequent domestic battles. As he describes it:

> This was the straw that broke the camel's back. Richard had an argument with Maurice over practically nothing, and he chased Maurice into his room, kicked the door, and broke the lock. Maurice jumped out the window and ran to the neighbor's. Richard had threatened before, but not gone as far as in this particular incident. We could see it getting progressively worse. Each crisis was worse than the previous one, and we just couldn't have this. So we called the police, and boy! They came right away. We knew we couldn't get them unless we had a big story, so we embellished it quite a bit. They got here within two minutes.
>
> The fool, he sat there and even got fresh with the police. He called them "pigs," the "fuzz," and I said, "Richard, this is an officer. Don't talk to him like that." Meanwhile, they were closing in on him with their billy clubs. So they took him downstairs -- we had put him in the basement while he was here -- and he got his stuff together. And I said, "Richard, I'm sorry. You've got to go." I looked in my wallet, and I had $8.00. I said, "Here's eat and drink," and I said, "Just don't come back. We've had it." And they took him away, and we haven't seen him since. He took off, apparently, and the next thing we know, he's in jail again. We tried to get the reason. We've had a couple of notes from him. He said he got mixed up with a bunch of boys. And, of course, that's what he always says.

Mr. Matthews has given up on his son. He sees only more trouble ahead and no hope for change.

Not so with Richard's paternal grandmother whom Richard used to visit at her quiet summer home in New Hampshire. The elder Mrs. Matthews said:

> When he came here, he always got in with these off-beat kids. Anything crazy was great. They liked "putting rubber on the pavement." He always managed to find these zonked-out kids, much worse-off than he. I think he sought out the underdog. He seemed to empathize with this kind of person, and they were like zombies, glassy-eyed, freaked-out on LSD or coke or amphetamines. Maybe being with these delinquent types made him feel superior. He had such low esteem, such terrible inferiority feelings. I think his father, when he got annoyed, used to tell him he'd never amount to anything. And something was always bubbling up inside him. Such an angry boy. He was so frustrated and resentful and angry, that even though he had a good mind, he was ineffectual. Probably he took drugs to correct this.

Richard brought havoc to her household, and also to the staid, upper middle-class residential community where she lived.

> He'd take off, never say where he was going, and break into houses, steal things, and then sell them. He had gotten beyond my control. Later, he was caught. I know the judge, so I interceded and was able to get him sent to the mental hospital here for observation.

Mrs. Matthews, highly respected in the community, also had considerable influence in town, but she did not, apparently, have much influence over Richard. Nor was there, in this relatively rural area, much that could be done to help him.

> I tried to get him to a doctor, but he refused to go. He wasn't at all receptive. He was very evasive and no one could reach him. There weren't any resources here, no place to go for help, except the police. So I was in a dilemma.

Recently, in the spring of 1974, during the same year that Richard returned to his parents' house, he lived for a time with his grandmother.

> I'm grateful to God that I have a very level temperament. He came here when he got out of jail in '74, and he had a terrible tantrum. For about an hour he threatened me. "Don't dare leave the house! Don't dare go near the phone!" He had fire in his eyes, and I'm sure he was very sick. I was completely baffled. A friend ran to call the police, and they wanted to arrest him. But I thought he should go to the hospital, so my doctor had him committed.

Despite the deep "trouble" Richard has gotten into, Mrs. Matthews persists in her characteristic optimism.

> At some point, I think, he lost his sense of direction. He went off the track. But I haven't lost hope. With the proper help he could lead a useful life, because it's in there somewhere. With someone to inspire him and with enough kindness, maybe a responsive chord will be struck.

Richard, just home from his recent confinement in the mental hospital in New Hampshire, described the same blow-up with his grandmother:

> I got mad at her one day. I just got through with the stretch in Vermont. I went to my grandmother's and one day we had a fight. She was hassling me about a job. I was kind of expecting it from her. She was getting fed up with me, and me with her, I guess. I got in a lot of fights with her, mostly about what I should do. 'Cause, when people get old they don't realize how they used to be when they were young. They're living in the past. Then she put me in a hospital but I kind of agreed to it because it was for the minimum amount of time.

Richard's life has been greatly altered by the trouble he has gotten into. His jail terms have removed him from the world, isolated him from his contemporaries, and interrupted the "normal" flow of events.

> I've spent a lot of time in jail. First time was because I borrowed somebody's car. I didn't have a license at the time and the police didn't like that. And so, my grandmother put me away in a mental hospital for awhile. It was either that or jail. But I escaped after about a month. I got out through an old door. It's such an old hospital that the door came right open. I came home, but then my parents put me away again. They thought I needed more treatment.

Richard's institutional experiences have varied, but his time during his confinement has essentially been spent waiting.

> They sent me to the "Country Club" after I'd broken into a couple of houses when I was house-painting.

> That was an easy jail. I was in that place six months. You were allowed radios, things of this sort. 'Course jail is jail. You just sit in your cell and maintain yourself.

And in the hospitals too, it was a matter of "maintaining oneself".

> The first day they tell you what is going to happen to you. Then after a month they say whether you're sane or not. And in-between there isn't much to do. They forget about you. There's a lot of card playing, TV, and waiting around. There's a lot of tension, but they feed you medication to help you get along in the day. They just pour it down your throat. A couple of hundred milligrams every day to hold you down. They call you "paranoid," "neurotic," whatever. They call you a lot of names.

The hospital regimen only caused Richard to grow angrier than he already was.

> I got very angry within myself. Sometimes I felt like bashing their heads in. I guess I've spent too much time in these places or too much time alone. I've had to shut myself in to survive. But it gets lonely, and in a way I'm always lonely now. I think everybody is. And there's a lot of frustration. I guess I'd like to be drunk most of the time. I don't know. I don't enjoy life otherwise. I get to feeling better that way; I feel less tense. But I don't want to be an alcoholic. Downers or anything else don't help me. Hospitals don't help me. Maybe I've got low blood pressure. It's been this way all my life.

Richard knows that something is terribly wrong in his life. He wonders if it can be attributed to "low blood pressure". He experiences his malaise in life as partly physical and alcohol seems to offer some temporary relief.

His brother, Martin, wonders too if there may not be a physical basis for Richard's trouble, but ascribes some of the difficulty to the failure of his parents.

> I think there has been a series of tragic mistakes with Richard. It's possible that he was hyperactive. In any event, my parents weren't up to handling him, and because they weren't up to it, they lost interest. Richard had trouble with his peers. He had no friends. He was very willful, and he had a stealing problem. He used to take money from my mother. I think he was punishing himself for certain things that happened. In fact, when he went to a psychiatrist, there was a tremendous breakthrough -- or so they thought -- when he had the "insight" that his problems stemmed from blaming himself for Peter's death [a brother who died when Richard was six]. But his problems preceded that, so there's a great deal more to it.

Although Martin's life has not been free of problems, he finds his brother's life hard to comprehend.

> I didn't have a painless adolescence. I am success- and goal-oriented, and I think my brother would be the same under different circumstances. But then, he doesn't seem to be subject to any kind of pressure. He just doesn't seem to have much interest in his own

life or what's happening to him. It upsets me very much to think about it. It scares me to death.

Comment on "Trouble"

Some of the young people, like Tom, who ran away from home were early identified by police, court, and school authorities as trouble-makers or delinquents. In their schools and neighborhoods they, and sometimes to a lesser extent, their siblings, were quite visible and were known as "toughs," "rednecks," or "hoodlums".

Some of them took pride in their "reputations". As one of the boys boasted at the age of fourteen, "All the neighbors know me. They know me good from my record." There is, even today, an element of braggadocio in the stories of these young people, in their descriptions of how "BAD" they were, of how they "tore up" the teachers and the school, or how they belonged to "Local 12," the neighborhood gang.

As they grew into adulthood, they continued to be more impulsive, more volatile, and more often in trouble than their siblings. The latter, in contrast, were concerned about their jobs, their reputations, and their futures. If they got into trouble they took great pains to keep their records clean.

The former runaways from middle-class backgrounds were not so visible or well-known in their neighborhoods as were the working-class young people. They were more withdrawn and isolated than their working-class counterparts. Richard came to the attention of the police department, but his neighborhood, unlike Tom's was not close-knit, and the "trouble" was not shared. It remained instead, a private family matter.

GENERAL SUMMARY

The personal narratives of the young adults presented in this chapter suggest that the former runaways have experienced considerable hardship during the twelve-year transition en route to adulthood, hardship which was not shared by their non-runaway siblings. They curtailed their schooling because of difficulty and unhappiness in the classroom. They have worked only sporadically at menial jobs which have been experienced as frustrating drudgery. They have gotten in trouble with the law or have required the assistance of social agencies and institutions because of their special problems. As adults they seem ill-prepared to realize their aspirations and goals for the future, and today appear seriously handicapped as they seek in various ways to work out their destinies.

Most of the children in some way withdrew from school, which almost certainly influenced for them the shape of things to come. For one more or less automatic effect of dropping out or not continuing in school is to limit the social and occupational field, to narrow the possibilities which are otherwise expanded for those who continue. Far from increasing their options and enhancing their freedom -- a wishful theme which they often reiterated, withdrawal from school may only have restricted their mobility and denied them access to certain goals. Unlike their better-educated brothers and sisters, the former runaways entered adulthood inadequately educated for life in a technical society. And because they are unskilled and inadequately prepared, they have found, not surprisingly, that the few occupational avenues open to them are unrewarding.

A further apparent effect of withdrawing from school is to end prematurely the socialization process in which school plays a crucial role. The child who runs away and drops out of school cuts himself off from the social environment of his contemporaries. Outside the school community, he may have few opportunities to form new relationships or share with his peers in common enterprises which focus and structure social intercourse.

These same children who experienced school as boring, as restrictive, and as a place to fail, also had difficulty later when they entered the world of work. School was not a place to begin to plan a career and to develop hopes and expectations for the future. They had difficulty projecting themselves into the world of work, and when they reached adulthood they still had no aspirations, schemes, or plans for a career. Unlike their brothers and sisters who are by now experienced and skilled workers and who identify with their jobs, the former runaways seem unable to picture themselves with any specificity in a career.

Perhaps, the former runaways (and especially those who dropped out of school) had too little time, too little delay, and also too little preparation before trying to assume adult responsibilities. Perhaps unconstructive attitudes and work habits that were established at school persisted later, on the job. Several young people said they wanted to remain free and keep their options open and their approach is appropriately summed up in Roy Webb's statement, "Wait until the future smacks you in the face."

They did not welcome the responsibilities and obligations of regular work on a permanent job and, if they came to a job at all, they came unskilled and unwilling. Today these young people feel acutely the confinements and

restrictions of regular work. They fight aggressively for their freedom and do not want to be "hassled" by anyone or anything.

There is, among the more alienated young people, a pervasive sense of futility and despair. They feel "beat". They feel things have conspired to work against them and that they cannot possibly "win". Hopeless and dispirited, they share Roy's desire to escape the "rat race" and "find greener pastures" elsewhere.

If one considers these young people's hopes and anticipations for the future twelve years ago, one is impressed by their lively expectations and by the promise that their futures held. Twelve years ago they expected to finish school, go to college, and become engineers, teachers, musicians, sailors, and Army men. Most indicated that they expected not simply to have jobs, but to have careers and do something interesting and even exciting. Today, there are few signs of such ambition. Instead, these same individuals talk vaguely about the forces which have operated against them on the job, their "bad luck," and the injustices which have blocked their way to success or limited their powers to do and to make. Like Roy Webb, they speak as though they had been destined to fail.

The developmental trajectories of the former runaways who ran away repeatedly reveal little or no progressive definition of self and anchorage in a community. Rather, as young adults, they seem overwhelmed, indeed paralyzed, by an avalanche of emotional problems as well as by problems of sheer survival. Despite all their movement, they have not succeed in "breaking clean" but continue to cling to the few and fragile footholds which they have in life -- in particular, their families. For some, like Richard Matthews, even these footholds have given way beneath them and have left them with no foundations for living. Today, both Richard and Tom Wilkins "get by," living makeshift, futureless, and ultimately frustrating lives. Despite all their movement, they do not seem to have arrived anywhere, and they appear, more than ever, immobilized and adrift. Yet they are not about to "reroute" themselves. They have grown used to their bitter lives and to the fate which has been "decreed" for them.

It is the middle-class young people who appear to have fared the worst in this group. Why this is so, is not at all clear, but one consideration might be helpful in understanding the findings: Membership in a middle-class community is precarious and entitlement to its rewards is conditional. It demands conformity to quite stringent expectations and standards which are difficult to meet and

maintain without middle-class supports. Any deviation from middle-class expectations -- for instance, running away, dropping out of school (or not furthering one's education), and entanglement with the law -- puts the young person from such a background at considerable risk. The middle-class child who runs away and drops out of school forfeits the special advantages to which he has claim by virtue of his class (including the social networks to which his family belongs, his education, and future earning power); lacking his normal props he may land in a street environment or other arena where his skills and experience simply are not appropriate, but where, in contrast, his streetwise lower-status counterpart would know how to get by. Eventually, such a child is likely to "fall out" of the middle class. If he does, the disjunction between what he expected to become and his actual circumstances may generate further difficulties for him. Given the high premium on middle-class skills, he will probably experience a sense of failure and disappointment in himself for not having achieved what was expected of him.

The middle-class child in this study who could not, or would not, keep pace or meet the standards and schedules set by his family was a disappointment to his parents and he early became the focus for escalating family tensions. While many of the pressures and tensions may have been mitigated by

running away, dropping out of school, and finding an alternative life-style, the psychological costs have probably been great.

One such possible cost may be the psychological strain accompanying downward mobility. The child who grows up with the pressures of high expectations and who is unable to fulfill them, is likely to perceive himself as inadequate (the more so as he watches his siblings navigate their courses with relative ease). The middle-class children of this study are today painfully aware of not having become what they were expected to become, and their sense of failure and frustration with themselves only makes their situation all the more bitter. As little at home in their present circumstances as they were in their middle-class settings, they are, in effect, classless outsiders, for they have neither the protection of the working-class community nor the cushioning of middle-class supports.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

SUMMARY

This study grew out of an investigation originally carried out in 1963-1964 on runaway youths from a Maryland suburb of Washington, D.C. The children who participated in the earlier study have since grown up and the current research was undertaken to find out how they have fared over the intervening twelve years.

The current study has been addressed to several aspects of social functioning. The questions were: 1) How have the former runaways experienced school, jobs, and "trouble"? 2) Do their experiences within these dimensions differ from those of their siblings? and 3) Do the former runaways differ among themselves -- repeaters from non-repeaters -- in their experiences at school, on the job, and in "trouble"? These questions provided the focus for the follow-up study.

The sample consisted of 14 young people between 23 and 27 years of age who had been interviewed in depth during an earlier study and 14 of their non-runaway siblings who were

closest in age and, where possible, of the same sex as the former runaways. Both former runaways and their siblings were interviewed in depth using a fixed-schedule, open-response approach. (See Appendix.) Questions focused on social development over the past dozen years and particularly on experiences in school, on the job, and "in trouble".

Data were summarized and presented in a series of composite "case profiles" taken from the experiences of several of the former runaways and their siblings. School, jobs, and "trouble" were each treated separately, and selected comparisons were made between the experiences of former runaways and those of their siblings.

Differences were found between former runaways and their siblings in each of the areas studied. In school, for example, the young people who ran away experienced greater difficulty than did their siblings. They fared worse academically and had poorer grades and more retentions. They were more often dismissed from class, sent to visit the principal, and suspended from school.

Similar differences exist in the area of work. Fewer than half of the former runaways have regular jobs, while the others have been unable to hold a job for more than a period of months. This finding contrasts sharply with the

situation for their siblings, all but one of whom are now working at regular jobs. Moreover, the siblings have more professional, higher-paying jobs than do the former runaways who work.

The young people who ran away have also had a greater amount of trouble -- much of it more serious -- than their siblings. Most have been charged with offenses ranging in seriousness from "drunk and disorderly" to "burglary" and "assault and battery". Two of the former runaways are now serving jail terms. In contrast, only two siblings have been arrested and, in both cases, the charges were dropped. The findings were similar for nervous and emotional troubles. The former runaways complained of "bad nerves," anxiety, and other forms of psychological distress, while their siblings did not.

One finding not anticipated in the study was in the area of social class. If the runaway group as a whole -- and particularly the repeaters -- had difficulty in making the transition to adulthood, these difficulties appear to have been compounded for the four middle-class children who ran away repeatedly.

All four middle-class young people dropped out of school, and all were treated for psychological problems. Two were committed to mental institutions, and two have served jail

terms. Only one of them is self-supporting at this time. The other three have neither trained for nor mastered a trade. They have drifted around since dropping out of school, frequently getting into trouble and being caught up in one or another of the public agency nets. Unskilled and jobless as they are today, their prospects for employment are poor.

DISCUSSION

The Sample

The original group from which the sample for the follow-up study was drawn consisted of all the children (N = 73) who were interviewed in depth following a police-reported runaway episode during 1963-1964. From this original group studied by Shellow, 14 participated in the follow-up.

In the original Shellow study, the actual runaway population was estimated to be as much as six times greater than the number reported to the police. (See p. 41 above.) It is reasonable to suspect that the police-reported and unreported (or self-reported) children represent two distinct runaway populations. One can only speculate about their differences. Perhaps the police-reported group represents a more disturbed runaway population than the unreported group. Or perhaps it reflects greater concern, worry, or helplessness on the part of the parents. It may even be that these families had a spe-

cial relationship with the police. Unfortunately, we know only that some parents contacted the police and that the other parents did not. Without more data it is impossible to know in what way the police-reported group fails to represent the actual runaway population.

The sample for the follow-up study may represent still another runaway population since a bias may have been introduced by the voluntary participation of the individuals in this study. It can be hypothesized that those who have the most to hide are least likely to have agreed to participate. Thus, the study may tend to have understated the severity of the long-term outcomes.

The Findings

The children of this study who ran away during the 1960's bear little resemblance to those described by Newcomb,[60] Outland,[63,64,65] and Skinner and Nutt,[70] whose subjects left their homes during the 1930's and 1940's in search of employment. The young people in the current study were not motivated by economic hardship and a desire to work. But like the great majority of runaways described in previous clinical studies, these young people were apparently fleeing situations of intense family strife in which the tensions were primarily focused on them.

The finding that the children who ran away are not faring as well as their non-runaway siblings was not expected from the original Shellow study. Shellow and his associates concluded that runaways looked "very much like their non-runaway counterparts," and, though perhaps troubled, were troubled in ways that characterize adolescents generally. It is when we look at the repeaters that the findings of this study and the original Shellow study appear to point in the same direction: "Among ... the frequent repeaters, we did run across evidence of personal and family disorganization, serious difficulties in school, and consistent involvement with law enforcement agencies." (p. 28) Shellow and his associates go on to consider the possibility that running away may be almost incidental in the context of very serious and pervasive personal and family disorganization. Other researchers would agree with such a conclusion. Gold (101) and Jenkins, (45) among others, suggest that running away reflects more general and deep-rooted problems, and that the runaway population may be more appropriately located in a much larger clinical population of people "in need of special and professional help with many aspects of their lives." (p. 28)

When we consider the young people who ran away repeatedly today, we see again individuals whom Shellow earlier described as "damaged and badly in need of individual and expert care."

(p. 28) It may be, however, that the distinction between the one-time ("normal") runaway and the ("pathologically driven") repeater is less sharp than one would like to think. If the children in this study are at all typical, running away even once may signal trouble and should alert concerned parties to the possibility of later disturbances. It may be, indeed, that running away has a psychological meaning beyond the act itself, and beyond any passing discomfort of adolescence.

IMPLICATIONS

Society largely dictates when a person reaches adulthood -- when he is ready to assume the rights, privileges, and responsibilties of adulthood. Until this "socially approved time" arrives, a child is expected to remain under the parental umbrella, and parents are expected to provide for and protect their children. The child who has been "appropriately" trained will presumably have acquired the experience, resources, and abilities to make the transition to his new and independent status and will be in a position to move out on his own and establish and maintain his own household. A certain amount of faltering and wavering is to be expected during the transition, for the social definition of adolescence includes the notion that the young person may behave in somewhat deviant ways that set him apart from his elders.

But the child who runs away abandons his place in the world. He forfeits the protection, security, and supports of his home and enters an unknown environment where his youth and lack of resources are assured liabilities. Apparently, such a child cannot endure the normally long period of dependency which constitutes childhood in this society. Clearly, the difficulties, whatever their source, which the runaway faces in his family are much worse than those of his non-runaway sibling, even though many aspects of the family climate are similar for both children. It is not surprising that some children have neither the faith nor the patience to "stick it out" until their departure is sanctioned by society.

The literature on adolescent development emphasizes the related tasks of identity consolidation and the drive toward autonomy. A. Freud,(156) Blos,(153) and Erikson,(154) among other psychoanalysts, have described many of the vicissitudes of adolescence, including the intensification of aggressive and libidinal drives, the reorganization of defenses, the realignment of significant human relationships, and the processes by which changing social expectations affect adolescent identity formation. In addition, Piaget,(161) Kohlberg,(159) and Kagan(158) have described aspects of

intellectual development during adolescence, including the capacity for formal logical thought, moral reasoning, and imaginative thinking.

Implicit in these authors' works is the proposition that adolescent separation from parents and movement beyond the family circle may optimally take place in accordance with a specific developmental schedule. The child must remain at home in order to leave home successfully. He must stay long enough to develop his capacities and talents and to acquire sufficient experience to depart in strength and confidence. The child who leaves prematurely invites uncertainty about his prospects for the future.

The work of Mahler[160] on the subject of separation and individuation during early childhood is also suggestive in this context. She points out that the infant ventures away from the mother only when he knows that he can return. Only when his explorations are firmly anchored in a home-base does he set out into the unknown. A parallel situation may hold for the adolescent. The adolescent also needs to have his feet firmly planted in order to venture forth by himself. The adolescent who leaves without secure moorings somewhere, risks everything.

Psychological Implications

The notion that running away may be in indication of severe and pervasive personal or family disturbance has been reiterated in the literature on runaway behavior. This study appears to support such a conclusion. Running away appears to be a signal both of concurrent distress and of later problems in adjustment. If the experience of the young people in the follow-up study is typical, running away is a gesture of turning abruptly away from the world or from particular pressures and difficulties encountered by the child. It is a simple act of physical withdrawal: It is "flight," instead of "fight". Far from being a resolution of the situation, running away appears to give dramatic expression to a quest for independence and for a sense of competence. As one young person put it: "Running away didn't solve anything. I was trying to increase my options, or at least get the feeling that I had more options and independence. I felt pinned down, and things weren't going well. I was hoping to get out of my penned-in, isolated world. I was so busy trying to establish my independence that I couldn't make it."

It may be that running away is both a reaction to an acute sense of frustration and also a hopeful expression of a wish to find satisfaction elsewhere. The child who runs desires greater freedom and more options. He feels "locked-

in" and "pinned-down". Even today, several of the former runaways continue to believe that life would be better and opportunities more plentiful if only they could go some-place else.

But, judging from their experience, little is changed by running away. Being on the move may provide a temporary sense of having more options, more possibilities, and more power than usual. Perhaps some can leave behind their old selves, their isolation, their problems and limitations, and feel for a time more like the independent, socially adjusted people they would like to be. But the allure of this hope-ful fantasy and its promise of personal transformation all too quickly dissolve in the face of reality. It becomes evident that the wish to be a new person and to have a different life cannot be realized by running away.

Implications for Later Development

Despite their dramatic gestures and efforts to become separated from their families, the former runaways ironically continue to have special difficulty in achieving the freedom and independence they originally sought when they left home. The runaway children have been considerably less successful than their brothers and sisters in becoming independent of their families and in moving out of the parental orbit to find their own places in the adult world.

In the course of growing up, the most troubled of the former runaways continued to turn away from the world, while their non-runaway siblings were already finding places and establishing themselves. For the children who ran away repeatedly, a pattern of withdrawal and escape appears to have persisted into adulthood: They withdrew from their families, from school, and from work. Some were aggressive and destructive in their renunciation of the world and they struck out against the environment. Others chose different ways to turn their backs on society, and some were forcibly removed to jail or to a mental hospital.

Far from resolving anything, running away for the young people in the follow-up study seems, rather, to have been an abandonment of the struggle to grow up. In fleeing, they appear to have surrendered before the avalanche of demands, pressures, and imperatives of adulthood.

Recommendations for Intervention

A major question arising from this study is how outside service intervention should be planned to serve the needs of children who have run away or are contemplating the act. For there is little question that running away presents both runaways and their families with a situation of crisis. Twelve years ago when the children in this study ran away, there was nowhere that they and their families could turn

for help. Today the situation is different, for runaway houses offer temporary comfort, reassurance, and understanding to at least some of the children who run.

But this study suggests that the need may go beyond the temporary crisis and, therefore, meaningful intervention will have to offer more comprehensive and permanent help. The problem is to present the child of high school age, embattled both at home and at school, with alternatives, such as a different home-base and another kind of education.

If running away cannot be prevented (and there is reason to believe that for some it cannot), at least the child should have somewhere to run to. Voluntary military service has traditionally been such a place for the boy of fifteen or sixteen who lies about his age. Better than the military would be a program modeled on the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930's and the Neighborhood Youth Corps of the 1960's which were both designed for unemployed or underemployed youths to give them modest employment, teach them useful skills, and prepare them for meaningful future employment. Both programs were aimed at accomplishing objectives of substantial public benefit, and though initiated to relieve unemployment, the essential idea behind them could be adapted to the needs of runaway youth. It may be that programs based on these models could offer meaningful alter-

natives to the child who is unhappy at home and at school, and wishes to abandon both.

Suggestions for Future Study

This study, describing aspects of the lives of some young people who ran away from home twelve years ago, raises several questions for further investigation. Why the former runaways today feel so beleaguered is not at all clear from the present study and should be studied in future research. Have organic, that is, neurological, problems handicapped these children from the start? Are there factors in the environment which have differentially placed the child at a disadvantage? In all probability, some combination of neurological and environmental factors is responsible for what we observe today.

But in order to understand both the outcomes and intervening processes we need to have more complete information about the families. We need to know how the family history and experiences of runaways differs from that of non-runaways. We need to have more data covering the early childhood experiences of runaways, as well as comparable data on non-runaways. Such information will place us in a much better position to understand the causes and consequences of runaway behavior.

The elucidation of social class differences among runaways will also increase our understanding of runaway behavior and its consequences. Class differences should be explored

systematically in future research as potential predictors of differential outcomes.

This study suggests the possibility that class variations exist, and specifically, that middle-class children may fare more poorly than working-class children. One consideration in attempting to understand this difference is that middle-class status is difficult to maintain without the resources and supports of a middle-class setting. The middle-class child, in running out into the world at large, forfeits these supports and enters an arena where his experience and skills may not be applicable. Such a child risks "falling" out of the middle class. But to experience such a fall, and to be aware of it, may introduce a different kind of psychological stress than that felt by runaways from working-class families.

The extension of the current research along these other avenues - and the replication of this study on a larger sample - should heighten our understanding of what it means to run away and what running away may mean for later development.

APPENDIX

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

INTERVIEW FACE SHEET

I.D. No._____

Name:_____ _____
(First) (Middle) (Last)

Current Address:_____

_____

How long at the current address:_____ Rent _____
Own _____
Board_____

Head of household (e.g., who pays bills., makes important decisions, etc.):

_____

Interviewee:_____

Relationship to subject: (circle one) Husband, Wife, Mother, Father,

Sister, Brother, Other: _____

Do you like the place where you're living now?

How would you describe it? (middle class, working class, in-between)

What about the people in the neighborhood?

Who lives there?

What kind of neighborhood is it? (young people, old people, civil servants, servicemen & families, etc.)

Do you like your neighbors?

Would you prefer being in a different neighborhood? Yes _____ No. _____
(Specify)

Have you moved during the last ten years? Yes _____ No _____

If so, about how many times?

/_Starting from runaway episode, get history of moves, reasons_/

HOUSEHOLD CHANGES:

Head of Household	Previous Addresses: City and State	Age when moved	Length of stay	Rent Own Board

Reason for move(s)

For each: Did you like the place?

What was it like?

What did you (didn't you) like about it?

Did it involve any major changes in your circumstances (e.g., separation from friends, spouse; divorce; other consequences)?

Since you were (age) have you ever been placed in a foster home, institution of any sort (correctional or psychiatric?) Yes._____ No_____
For what reasons?_____

If delinquency or criminal record: What did you do?

Where were you sent?

How many times were you placed there?

Age_____. Marital Status: _____ Date: _____

PRESENT HOUSEHOLD:

Who lives with you (in your household) now? (e.g., alone, father, mother, spouse, siblings (No. _____)

/If appropriate/ Are you pretty much on your own now?

/If appropriate/ Who is responsible for your support & welfare?

SUBSEQUENT RUNAWAY EPISODES: /For parents & siblings change "you" to (your son, daughter, brother(s), sister(s),_/

Now let's go back a little. Since the time you were first reported missing to the police when we made contact with you, have there been (other) times during the last ten years when you've been reported missing from home?
Yes_____ No._____ (How many?)_____
Had you intended to leave home without your parents' approval or knowledge?
Yes_____ No._____

(If so, what were the dates to the best of your recollection?)

For each runaway episode: Why did you leave?

How did it come about?

What particularly stands out in your mind about the episode?

What kind of consequences did it have (if any)?

How had you been feeling at the (se) time(s)? (E.g., anxious, angry, irritated, bored with life at home, threatened by someone in household, provoked, excited, sad, hopeless?)

How about your physical health? Good?_____ Poor?_____

Had you had any health problems around this (these) times?

EDUCATION:

I want to change the subject for a moment and ask you about school.
What's the highest grade you completed in school? _____

How old were you? _____

(If dropped out) How old were you when you left school? _____

Why did you leave school?

What grade were you in? _____

Did your parents express positive or negative feelings about your dropping out?

What kind of grades were you getting? _____

Did you remain in the same school or did you change schools (during last ten years)? Specify.

Did you like school? Yes_____ No _____

Your teachers? Yes _____ No _____

How did you find school work? (i.e., difficult, easy, in-between)

Did you miss a lot of school?

Play hookey?

Did you ever get into trouble at school? Yes. _____ No. _____

For what reasons?

What about activities at school: Did you take part in any of them?

Which ones?

Did you ever resume your education or get further training of any kind in some trade or develop some specialized skill?

What is it? How long?

VOCATIONAL

Do you have a regular job now? Yes. _____ No. _____

(If unemployed), When did you last work?

Do you like your work?

what do you do?

How long?

What do you like about it?

What don't you like about it?

What about the people you work with?

How does your job pay?

When did you get your first regular job?

What are the jobs you've had since?

JOB CHART

	Occupation	Industry	Duration	Best Salary	Reason(s) for leaving
Last job: Begun:					Quit Job over Fired, personal Fired, automatic
Out of work	Total Time:			Other time off:	
Last, but 1 Begun:					Quit Job over Fired, personal Fired, automatic
Out of work	Total Time:			Other time off:	
Last but 2 Begun:	Total Time:				Quit Job over Fired, personal Fired, automatic
Out of work	Total Time:			Other time off:	
Last but 3 Begun	Total Time:				Quit Job over Fired, personal Fired, automatic
Out of work:	Total Time:			Other time off:	
Last, but 4 Begun:					Quit Job over Fired, personal Fired, automatic
Out of work	Total Time:			Other time off:	
Last, but 5 Begun:					Quit Job over Fired, personal Fired, automatic
Out of work	Total Time:			Other time off:	
Last, but 6 Begun:					Quit Job over Fired, personal Fired, automatic
Out of work	Total Time:			Other time off:	

Why did you leave?

Which are the jobs you've liked most?

Which have you been least satisfied with?

Have you worked pretty steadily or have there been long periods when you've been unemployed?

How long?

Have you been in debt? Yes _____ No ____

Have you (your family) needed financial assistance? Yes _____ No. _____

If yes, how long?

Have you had help from any of the social agencies?

Have you served in the Armed Forces: (Status at discharge)

What did you do?

SOCIAL HISTORY:

If subject no longer lives at previous household:

How old were you when you left home (i.e., moved from parental home)?

What was the reason?

How close touch do you keep with your family (Parents, sibs., etc.)?

Whom do you see? How often do you see them?

What do you like to do together?

How would you describe the relationship between you and your parents?

What about with other members of your family?

Do you have a close relationship with any of your other relatives?

Whom?

What do you do together? (for each)

FRIENDS:

Do you have any friends?

How often do you spend time in the company of friends?

How many different people do you see socially on a fairly regular basis?

Do you have any close or best friend?

How many?

How often do you see them?

What do you like to do with your friends?

Do you consider yourself well liked? Yes. _____ No. _____

Why/Why not?

How would you describe your friends in general?

Have you gotten into fights with any of them? Yes _____ No. _____

Have any turned against you?

Why?

Do you consider yourself independent, as someone who gets along o.k. on your own?

Yes. _____ No. _____

Would you say you are a loner? Yes ___ No. _____

Do you get lonely if you don't see people quite often? Yes. ____ No. _____

What kind of things do you like to do by yourself?
Specify.

MARRIAGE & FAMILY

Is this your first marriage? Yes._____ No._____

How old were you when you were married?

How did you meet your (wife/husband)?

Where was that?

How long did you know each other before you were married?

Are you glad that you married? Yes _____ No. _____

And that it was your wife/husband? Yes _____ No. _____

Would you describe your marriage as pretty satisfactory for you?

Yes. _____ No. _____

(If appropriate), In which ways?

Do you have many disagreements or do you tend to agree on most things?

If many, what about a.) finances, b.)How to spend time, c.) child rearing d.) infidelity e.) etc.?

Do you spend most of your time together or do you tend to do a lot of things on your own?

Do you feel (there, these) are serious problems in your marriage, or do you think it's pretty harmonious?

(If appropriate): Do you think your marriage will break up?

(If divorced):How did your (first) marriage end?

Did you or your (wife, husband) want the divorce? Self_____Spouse_____

Both ____

Why did you (he, she) want it?

For subsequent marriages, repeat appropriate questions.

CHILDREN:

Do you have any children? How many? (Ages, sexes)

(If no children): Do you expect to become a parent? What are your feelings about this?

Are your children healthy?

How do you get along with them?

Do you spend much time with them?

What kinds of things do you do?

What sorts of problems do you feel there are with them? Reason?

Are they natural/step. legitimate/illegitimate?

SINGLE

Is there anyone that you're interested in at the moment? Yes _____ No. _____

(If so), have you seen him/her recently?

How often do you see him, her?

What kinds of things do you like to do together?

(If appropriate): Are you quite serious about each other?

Do you think you might marry?

Have you ever been engaged? Yes. _____ No. _____

(If not): Have you ever been interested in anyone?

(If so): When was that?

Was that the last time?

(If a number of different people): How many men, women do you go out with?

What kinds of things do you like to do when you go out?

Are you pretty content with the way things are as far as women, men are concerned, or do you wish things were different?

(If appropriate) What about sex? Do you think you might marry?

RECREATION:

What do you do in your leisure time?

at home _____ outside home_____ reading _____movies_____(how often_____

dancing_____family group rec. _____athletics (which ones)_____

clubs, societies _____ How often do you go, or attend meetings_____

regularly _____ occasionally _____. Have you held office?_____

Hobbies (what are they?)

RELIGION :

Do you consider yourself a religious person now?

Do you attend church? _____ Which one?_____

Have you attended church pretty consistently during the last 10 years?

AMBITIONS/GOALS:

Are you pretty much content with your lot in life?

What kinds of things make you feel satisfied?

What kinds of things make you feel dissatisfied?

What do you want to do with your life? Do you have any special plans for the future?

Concerning work

socio-economic status

education

family

other ambitions

How do you think you'll make out in life? Do you think you'll succeed in achieving your ambitions?

HEALTH & PSYCHIATRIC HISTORY
Childhood, Adolescence & Adulthood:

Did you ever have any of these physical conditions?

	Childhood	Adolescence 10-17	Adulthood
Severe headaches	_____	_____	_____
Frequent colds	_____	_____	_____
Asthma	_____	_____	_____
Serious illness	_____	_____	_____
Serious accident	_____	_____	_____
Skin conditions, rashes	_____	_____	_____
Stomach aches	_____	_____	_____
Hearing problems	_____	_____	_____
Childhood diseases (chicken pox, mumps, measles, whooping cough, other)	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____

Were you ever hospitalized for a serious illness or accident during:

_____ _____ _____

Did you ever have any of these problems during:

Restlessness	_____	_____	_____
Fits (blank spells, convulsions, attacks)	_____	_____	_____
Stutter or stammer	_____	_____	_____
Nervousness	_____	_____	_____
Nightmares	_____	_____	_____
Sleeping problems	_____	_____	_____
Terrible fright or fear	_____	_____	_____
Temper tantrums or bursts or anger	_____	_____	_____
Fear of dark	_____	_____	_____
Crying a lot	_____	_____	_____
Delinquency	_____	_____	_____
School misbehavior problems	_____	_____	_____
Family problems	_____	_____	_____
Drug problems (what kind?)	_____	_____	_____
Alcoholism	_____	_____	_____
Mental problem	_____	_____	_____
Epilepsy	_____	_____	_____

Have you ever taken drugs prescribed by a doctor or psychiatrist for nervousness, feeling depressed, or any other mental condition?

If yes, what kind of drugs?

Tranquilizers; sleeping pills; "downers"
Antidepressant stimulants, pep pills, "uppers" _____
Other _____
Not applicable

Who referred you: (Family Problems)?

Parent___
Teacher___
Social Worker____
Court____
Other_____

Have you ever had a nervous breakdown or felt that you may be having one as an adult?

Were you ever put into a hospital because of emotional troubles during childhood_____, adolescence_____, adulthood_____?

At some time in their lives most people have thought they couldn't go on and have considered taking their own life. Have you ever had thoughts of doing away with yourself?

Have you actually ever attempted to take your own life?

ARRESTS AND CONVICTIONS
(Including Traffic)

Ages	Charge	Which Court	Disposition	Time Served	Where
1.			Jail_____ Probation_____ Dismissed_____ Fine_____ Parole _____		
2.			Jail _____ Probation_____ Dismissed _____ Fine_____ Parole _____		
3.			Jail _____ Probation_____ Dismissed_____ Fine_____ Parole _____		
4.			Jail _____Probation _____ Dismissed _____ Fine_____ Parole _____		
5.			Jail _____Probation _____ Dismissed _____ Fine _____ Parole _____		
6.			Jail _____Probation _____ Dismissed _____ Fine_____ Parole _____		
7.			Jail _____Probation _____ Dismissed _____ Fine _____ Parole _____		
3.			Jail _____Probation _____ Dismissed _____ Fine_____ Parole _____		
9.			Jail _____Probation _____ Dismissed _____ Fine _____ Parole _____		
10.			Jail _____Probation _____ Dismissed _____ Fine _____ Parole _____		
Other:			Jail _____Probation _____ Dismissed _____ Fine _____ Parole _____		

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