

Young Offenders

Dennis Challenger

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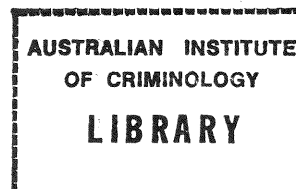
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YOUNG OFFENDERS

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UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE



VACRO
1977

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THE PROBLEM

There is no doubt that youthful offending has occurred throughout recorded history. Historians have established that severe penalties existed for children who misbehaved in early Greece. Both Socrates and Confucius are alleged to have bemoaned the behaviour of young people in comparison with the behaviour of their own generation in its youth. (33) And Victorian England with its abject poverty was certainly well-populated by more-than-mischievous youths. (34)

One early serious work on the subject was Morrison's "Juvenile Offenders" published in England in 1896. (64) Amongst other topics, Morrison mentions the existence of offenders whose parents are deserted, criminal or mentally ill, the effects of density of population on offending, the poor economic condition of offenders' families and the more lenient use of the law for female offenders. And these issues still attract attention today.

Morrison also wrote, "whether we look at the Old World or the New, we find that juvenile crime is a problem which is not decreasing in magnitude with the march of civilisation". (64:17) And this apparent increase in juvenile offending is still almost universally a cause for concern. Changes in population, social mores, police activity, legislation and education, must all have effects on this apparent increase, but isolating their specific

influences is difficult. Indeed the problem is doubly difficult, as the only readily available empirical data on juvenile offending is that collected by law-enforcement agencies, whose changing detection methods, man-power and utilisation of discretion themselves introduce changes almost impossible to measure. The vagaries of official crime statistics have been well documented, but these notwithstanding, a numerical increase in juvenile cases dealt with by the Victoria police has certainly occurred, especially so in recent times.

In Victoria, one of the earliest recorded comments about this increase was made by Probation Officer Meadows in 1943. He wrote "(w)e are likely to find higher figures for juvenile delinquency over the next few years unless conditions change". (61:17)

Meadows' use of the term 'juvenile delinquency' reflects the popularity of that term at that time. Some American States had incorporated the term into their legislation where it covered a large amount of juvenile misbehaviour, and where a child could be officially labelled a 'juvenile delinquent' by the Court. Labelling theorists like Schur (75) have documented the associated hazards and harmful effects of using this term. Today many writers purposefully avoid using the expression at all. Juvenile offending, a more realistic and unemotional term, will be used in this work.

Described in a brief history of the Victorian Children's Court as a "man with a very enquiring mind and enthusiasm for his work" (1:13), Meadows also produced statistical analyses of young offenders in the Annual Reports of the Children's Court. Some of his data was utilised in the report of the Juvenile Delinquency Advisory Committee set up by a concerned Government in 1955. (71) Under the Chairmanship of Mr. Justice (later Sir John) Barry, it was required to investigate the causes and extent of juvenile delinquency in Victoria, so that "the measures, legislative and administrative, which ought to be taken in the interests of the public, and of the persons involved, may be determined".

The Report of this Committee (commonly referred to as the Barry Report) included Meadows' data which revealed that school age offenders in 1943 were of below-average intelligence, predominantly from working class families and were frequent truants. Similar facts had been noted by Morrison in 1896. He pointed out that "a third of the juvenile criminal population would be below the average in general mental power", and that "almost all these children were descended from parents who were either mentally or morally unqualified, to perform the elementary duties of parenthood". He also described offenders' economic conditions as being bad and their education as being poor.

Similar stereotypes have resulted from studies of offenders in many places and at many times. The British stereotype for instance, received further definition from (amongst others) Burt in 1925 (15) and West in 1969. (89) In Victoria, similar features to those outlined by Meadows, were found by Challinger in 1974. (19)

The stereotype of the "juvenile delinquent" as a dull, badly educated working-class child from a broken home is one which many adults have come to know. It is also fairly well established and entrenched in more formal ways.

In an American text aimed not only at college students, but "police administrators and others in related fields who are concerned with the behavioural problems of youth" the following glib description can be found:

Delinquents are concentrated disproportionately in the city ... Delinquency rates are high among children from broken homes. They are similarly high among children who have numerous siblings ... Delinquents do badly at school ... Delinquents tend to come from backgrounds of social and economic deprivation. (48:7)

There is no disputing these facts - they can be gleaned from examination of records relating to officially detected juvenile offenders. The problem is that statements such as the above can become necessary pre-requisites for a child to be 'delinquent'. A youth who's doing well at school can therefore be tolerated even if his behaviour is bad. Such an attitude may make it harder for a boy from

a socially deprived home or area, who may be struggling academically.

In a recent Australian work, Braithwaite suggests that today's "dominant stereotype of the delinquent is a *socially disadvantaged* person - poor, black [sic] with uncaring parents, living in a 'bad' area and dropping out of school". (14:15) But far from supporting such a notion Braithwaite believes that stereotypes of this kind "only serve to cloud with irrelevancies our perception of the phenomenon".

But it is certainly not academic works alone from which the stereotype emerges. Fictional material, including that shown on film and television invariably portrays the 'typical offender' to the community. Dick's local novel tells of a lad living in a working class area in a dilapidated house with a heavy drinking father and having little success in, or time for, school. (31) And the stereotype is also perpetuated by the local media. Emotional press articles dealing with "young outcasts", "children bound for Pentridge [Prison]", and "thugs and louts", who may find themselves in the [Children's] "Court of despair", reinforce the idea of young offenders who are quite different from most other youngsters. In truth, the majority of young offenders tend to be little different from their peers, but those offenders who are formally dealt with by the police may indeed experience social difficulties additional, and perhaps contributory, to their offending.

These observations about stereotypes are made in order to point out the folly of assuming that the data in

this study define young offenders. They merely make one aware of associated factors existing in the life situations of offenders formally dealt with by the Victoria Police in 1975.

This is, then, a study of juvenile offenders whose behaviour has not only been brought to the attention of the police, but which the police have decided to censure formally. Studies of self-reported juvenile offending suggest that the sample under study here is but a fraction of the total population of offenders. It is not the typical juvenile offender who is described in the following pages, but the typical offender who has been formally dealt with by the police.

The Offender and the Police

Generally speaking, when a juvenile offender has been apprehended by the Victoria police, the officers involved contact the youth's parents. Subject to the particular facts of the case, the police may be able to exercise their discretion and, the parents having responded to the situation with guarantees of disciplining the child, the matter may be able to be left at that. This discretion allows the police to issue a quite informal warning to the child and his parents. No details are formally recorded about the child concerned and there

is a strong presumption that that particular child will not come into similar contact with the police again. Obviously, this informal police action cannot occur when a complainant insists that charges be laid, or when the offence is more than trivial. Nor can such action ensue if the child is known to have offended at an earlier time. It also requires some active parental effort to convince the police that the misbehaviour can be efficiently dealt with within the family. In cases where, for instance, the child's parents are antagonistic or unhelpful towards the police, the formal police procedures usually come into play.

Obviously then the initial interaction between the police officer and the young offender can have an influence on whether these formal procedures eventuate. Piliavin and Briar's formative study on police-juvenile contacts established that the juvenile's resemblance to the 'delinquent' stereotype, his demeanour and appearance were vital factors with respect to the consequence of that contact. (69) This is intuitively acceptable; a youth whose attitude to the police is unco-operative may well find himself being dealt with rigorously. And Giordano has shown that youths who have friends who have been involved in the system are more likely to have a bad attitude towards the police. (40) This could help explain some of the large numbers of youths apprehended in certain areas.

But a more likely explanation could arise from the fact that large numbers of young people 'hanging about' in the street are fairly certain to attract police attention eventually. Ensuing contacts which the youths often perceive as unfair or niggling can be generators of a great deal of ill-will as Gill established in his participant-observation study. (38) A similar Queensland study by Smith (78) had his gang of young offenders revealing a basic dislike of the police. While individual policemen from time to time are described as "good coppers", overall "the attitude of group members to the police is one of suspicion, disrespect, distrust, dislike, contempt, and occasionally even fear".

The problems of police-juvenile contacts are mentioned here because they are relevant to the data that follows. Hindelang has shown that groups of young offenders stand a higher chance of being formally dealt with, than single offenders. (43) Young people who gather in groups where they attract police attention are not typical of all Victorian youth, yet they may also be those most likely to be noted in studies such as this. Additionally, those offenders apprehended by the police who meet the public stereotype might also be included, in disproportionate numbers. Without observational studies of the Victoria Police in action, dealing with young offenders, these features can only be seen as possibilities.

The formal consequences of a young offender's being apprehended by the Victoria Police can be generalised in the following way. The youth's parents are required to attend at the Police Station during his formal interviewing. After he has been officially cautioned, if necessary in a simplified way that assures he knows of his rights, a statement of interview is typed, and signed by the offender. At, or about this time, the Police Form 276, a Childrens Court Prosecution form, is completed by the apprehending police officer. That form provides not only objective or biographical data about the offender, but allows police officers the chance to express their opinions about the case in answer to questions relating to "likely cause of lapse" and "any other details". This form constitutes the basic source document for this study.

This form is completed in triplicate, one copy of which is required to be sent eventually to the police officers permanently stationed at the Children's Court in Melbourne. Statistical details are extracted from these forms on receipt by these police officers and they are then stored. It was from this Court store that the Forms 276 relating to 1975 cases were extracted for analysis.

After the Form 276 has been completed by the apprehending officer, the police brief including that form, the statement of interview and relevant Informations is usually forwarded to the Officer in Charge of the District.

or Division. It is he who must decide whether the case will be dealt with at the Children's Court or whether a formal Police Warning should be utilised.

The formal Police Warning for young offenders is prescribed under Standing Orders 310 and 311 of the Victorian Police. These Orders state that the warning should be used for first offenders to save them from the stigma attached to a court appearance.

The actual method of warning is not formally set down in Standing Orders, but in practice the offender and his parents are required to attend the Station where each (alone and/or together) is subject to an address by a Senior Police Officer. The use of this method of dealing with young offenders has increased rapidly over the last few years as an inspection of the official statistics will show.

A recent amendment to Standing Orders requires Officers to endorse their "reasons for non-use of the discretionary warning provisions" on the brief that is subsequently sent to Court. Thus it is quite plain that current police policy is aimed at keeping first offenders out of the formal court system. The alternative warning system has been shown to have a good success rate in that only 37% of those warned in 1969 came to police notice in the following five years. And 17% of those warned in 1972 were similarly noted in the following two years. (44)

Unfortunately similar figures do not exist for first offenders who appeared at Court rather than received Warnings. Such figures would enable one to be positive about the effect of the official police warning. It may well be that merely being apprehended by the police, irrespective of further proceedings, might be sufficient to deter a young offender from further offending.

However, the Official Warning does allow the matter to be dispensed with at a less formal level than Court. American writers like Schur who believe that involvement in the formal court system can actually originate a lot of juvenile offending, would heartily endorse the Victoria Police Juvenile Warning System. Its savings to the Victorian community in terms of efficiently dealing with a problem without the lavish waste of court and police resources are beyond doubt.

The Police Standing Orders require Forms 276 relating to official police warnings to be endorsed "Warned by an Officer" on the back under the heading Decision of the Court. The remaining Forms 276 relating to court appearances are required to have details of the decision of the Court inserted in this section after the hearing. There is no way that these two groups can be confused when they are so marked.

At Court: Charges and Applications

In addition to the two ways - court or warning - the Police have with which to deal with cases of juvenile misbehaviour, there are two ways in which children can be brought before the Court. These comprise children being charged with offences proscribed under Acts of Parliament relating to crimes and offences, and those children being subjects of Care and Protection Applications under Section 31 of the Social Welfare Act. This is the offence-welfare dichotomy which makes the Victorian magistrate's task most difficult. (See Clunies-Ross (24) and Clunies-Ross and Foreman (26).)

The fundamental problem in this study is to decide which of the Forms 276 - which comprise both charges and protection applications - can be defined as 'juvenile offending' cases. The police attitude to Protection Applications can be gathered from the following extract from a Victoria Police training document.

... a Protection Application is not a charge for an offence A Protection Application is a 'cover-all' of a child's general behaviour. Where a child under 15 years has been detected committing a number of offences such as petty theft has a record of truancy, mixes with bad company, and the home environment is unsatisfactory, one has the perfect ingredients for a Protection Application. (82:4)

Leaper's study (54) of Victorian Protection Applications included a group of cases where offences originally listed on the Form 276 had later been replaced with a Protection Application, or vice versa, or both were noted. This indicates an overlap of some sort between these two, at least in the opinion of some part of the Victorian Juvenile Justice system. Watson and Austin (86) discussing British 'juvenile delinquency' point out that neither it nor 'juvenile deprivation' are statutory expressions, further to which they write:

But most of the juvenile delinquents have become delinquent as a result of being deprived of some important element in normal home life, and many juveniles brought before the juvenile courts on the ground that they are deprived have committed criminal offences - whether the authorities are aware of it or not Often it is not possible, save by noting the legal process by which they were brought [to attention], to distinguish one from the other. (86:10)

Leaper was particularly concerned with police use of two grounds for Protection Applications, these being "likely to lapse into a career of vice and crime" and "being exposed to moral danger". Both of these may not involve active offending against the law that is known to the police. All other grounds involve some measure of familial deprivation so can immediately be excluded from the juvenile offending category.

To include, or not to include as juvenile offenders those appearing in Court on either of these two grounds remains the question. There is no doubt that youths

before the Court on either of these grounds are engaging in behaviour of considerable concern to the police. It may simply be coincidental that no actual offending is detected, as Austin and Watson suggest. But a senior police officer has to be convinced that whatever behaviour has occurred is serious enough to warrant an Application at Court.

Clunies-Ross and Foreman have pointed out that 'moral danger' cases seem almost entirely based on girls' sexual precocity. (25) But there is a danger that written records, such as the Forms 276 on which that study was based, do not include all the information known to the police about the girl. If, as often happens, additional information comes forth in the actual court hearing, it may be information that identifies the girl as an offender in the true sense of the word.

In some ways the two protection application types in question would be classed as 'status offences' in the United States. Those offences, roughly speaking, can be classed as reasons for appearing at Court which are inapplicable for adults. Thus sexual precocity, truancy, 'lapsing' and the like are included. Recent discussion has taken place about the wisdom of removing status offences from the Court's jurisdiction in much the way

that it has been suggested the Victorian Children's Court might drop its welfare role, and deal only with crimes and summary offences.

A recent study by Thomas in Virginia has empirically shown the interlap between status offences and ordinary offences. (80) This study of 2092 juvenile offenders showed that of a group of status offenders appearing at Court 22.4% of them returned to Court in the following five years for an offence, and 15.5% returned on another status offence. In addition 39% of them had previously been to Court (before the noted status offence) for other than a status offence. Moreover, 15% of those whose noted appearance involved an ordinary offence were returned to Court within five years for a status offence.

This shows a large overlap between these two groups and suggests that status offenders are not distinctly different from ordinary offenders. Now the correspondence between American status offences and Victoria's two contentious protection applications is by no means perfect. But the foregoing provides sufficient support for including in this study of juvenile offenders, Protection Applications made for persons aged eight years (the age of criminal responsibility) or over, which are due not simply to their family's situation, but to their own behaviour.

THE OFFICIAL PICTURE

Official details relating to young offenders in Victoria are gained in the first instance from the Annual Reports of the Victoria Police. Yearly statistics are given in those publications but in recent years little attempt has been made to elaborate on the raw figures. In fact, the last statement about youthful offending other than a simple introduction to the statistics, is found in the 1972 Report. It reads:

Some of the causal factors of youthful crime (sic) largely originate from parental mismanagement, ignorance, and poverty or apathy. Liquor consumption continues to present a serious problem by stimulating juvenile bravado. (81:31)

These comments are speculative rather than explanatory. But they echo the concerns expressed in earlier reports. Not since the 1969 Report has any comment been made about the increasing nature of the figures. In that year an increase was noted although "(r)easons for this are not clear nor can they be calculated from available statistics". This plaintive comment is followed by a remark that "there is a need for more research to be conducted in this field to enable the Department to make full use of its resources".

Unfortunately this research did not eventuate, and the numbers of young offenders officially dealt with by the police continued to increase.

The rate of increase in the official police figures for young offenders from 1960 to 1975 is quite apparent from Figure B1. What is further obvious from that graph is the great increase in warnings over that period. From 13% of the 4,945 juvenile-police contacts in 1960, warnings comprised 48% of the 1975 contacts which totalled 13,234. The overall increase of 268% over those fifteen years resulted from a rise of 109% in court appearances, and 559% in warnings. The actual figures appear in Table B1.

The rise of 268% in formal police-juvenile contacts far exceeds the rise of about 33% in the juvenile population, and the rise of 57% in the actual number of police personnel over the same period. Obviously neither of these last two factors can explain the hefty increase shown in Figure B1.

Figure B1

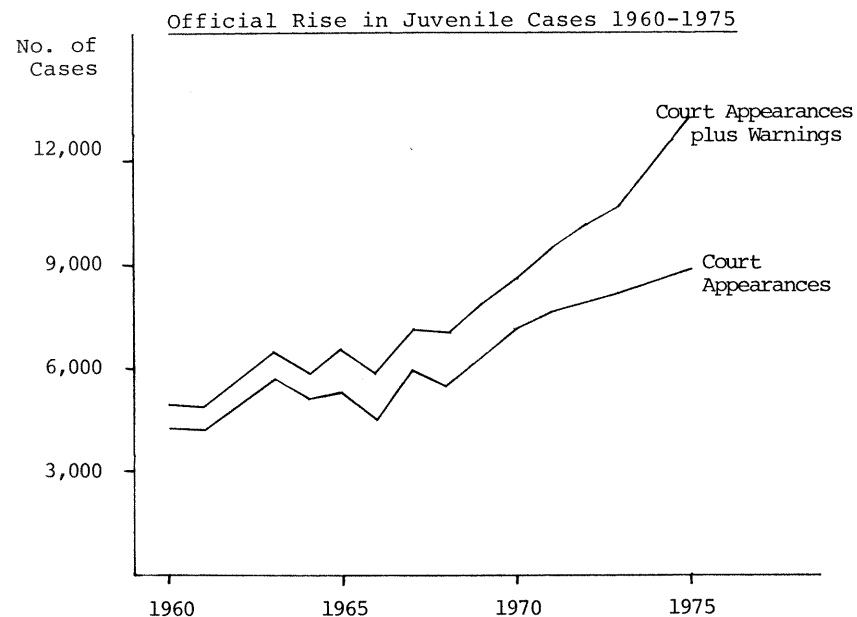


Table B1

Increase in Police-Juvenile Interaction 1960-1975

<u>Calendar Year</u>	<u>Children's Court Appearances</u>		<u>Official Police Warnings</u>		<u>Total Number of Police-Juvenile Contacts</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>% rise over 1960</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% rise over 1960</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% rise over 1960</u>
1960	4295	0	650	0	4945	0
1961	4352	+1	582	-10	4934	0
1962	4971	+16	721	+11	5692	+15
1963	5777	+34	735	+13	6502	+32
1964	5085	+17	914	+41	5999	+21
1965	5365	+25	1195	+84	6560	+33
1966	4554	+6	1413	+118	5967	+21
1967	5942	+38	1276	+96	7218	+46
1968	5590	+30	1486	+129	7076	+43
1969	6345	+48	1591	+145	7936	+61
1970	7106	+66	1642	+153	8748	+77
1971	7676	+79	1948	+200	9624	+95
1972	7982	+86	2283	+251	10265	+103
1973	8202	+93	2524	+288	10726	+117
1974	8576	+100	3440	+429	12016	+143
1975	8953	+109	4281	+559	13234	+268

As mentioned earlier, police officers received an instruction in early 1977 requiring them to use official warnings for first offenders, in the absence of extenuating circumstances. The effect of this instruction on the official statistics will be interesting. There is a distinct possibility that rather than informally warning a first offender as in the past, police will formally process him, safe in the knowledge that he will as a matter of course

not be required to appear in Court. This presumes that many police believe that a Court Appearance may have been either unnecessary or ineffective. It also means that offenders who may have been dealt with informally in the past, may now be formally processed with a resulting rise in the official figures.

This feature has in fact been noted in Britain where formal cautioning of juveniles was introduced in 1971.

According to one commentator:

Prior to the 1969 Act, many juvenile cautions went unrecorded by the police. Since the Act, cautions have more and more been recorded as a recognised alternative to a court appearance and included in criminal statistics. As a result, cautioning ... may have had some 'inflationary' effect on the totals of juvenile offences recorded as known to the police. (42:194)

Indeed, the accelerating increase in the official Victoria Police figures in the 1970's could be explained in part by the police officer in the field observing the increasing likelihood of first offenders being officially warned, and therefore formally processing offenders with that in mind.

It can be seen, then, that police action can have considerable impact on official juvenile offending figures. The effect of changes in police action towards young offenders, and the subsequent change in official figures is well illustrated by Braithwaite's discussion of the Queensland 'juvenile crime wave' of 1973. (14) He points out that increasing police activity forced the abandonment of his longitudinal research because of the artificial and astronomical rise of 162% in two years.

In Victoria the only notable change in police action has been the steadily growing use of official warnings discussed above. In fact the rise in the number of warnings between 1973 and 1975 parallels the above two-year Queensland increase with a rise of 170%. This raises the distinct possibility that those young people formally dealt with by the Victoria Police in 1975, constitute a much wider sample from the community, and this in turn indicates the importance not only of looking at the situation over a number of years but also bearing in mind the dependency of official figures on police action.

But increases in official figures may not only result from changes in police practice. Chilton and Spielberger have established that some amount of the increase in delinquency in Florida can be attributed to changes in the juvenile population. (23) Not simply the size of that population, but also its composition. They talk of high-risk age categories (7-17 years old) and state that 70% of the increase in Florida's official offending problem from 1958 to 1967 "could quite reasonably be expected as a result of changes in the number of children in specific age groups". (23:489)

It was mentioned earlier that the increase in the Victorian juvenile population was far less than that of the official offending problem. Florida's demographical

situation may in fact be quite peculiar, but there is an argument for a more precise examination of Victorian figures in this light.

Victoria Police Annual Reports provide more than just those figures reproduced in Table B1. Firstly, they provide details relating to the type of offences involving juveniles (except that such figures for those warned have not been published since 1972). The available data is summarised in Table B2 by reference to the highest, lowest and latest figures of percentages of offenders within each offence category. Thus those appearing in the Children's Court for burglary reached a peak of 21% of all offenders before the Court (in 1973), a low of 14% (in 1963), and 18% in 1975, the last year under examination. While the difference between the maximum and minimum figures appear substantial, in some cases the distribution of offences in fact remained fairly stable over the years.

Table B2

Trends in Offences Occasioning Juvenile-Police Contacts
1960-1975

<u>Offence</u>	<u>Court Appearances</u>			<u>Warnings</u>		
	<u>Maximum</u>	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>Maximum</u>	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>1972</u>
Breaking & Entering	21%	14%	18%	21%	14%	18%
Larceny	29%	19%	23%	64%	47%	55%
Illegal use of motor car	15%	10%	10%	6%	1%	3%
Other Indictable offences	11%	3%	11%	8%	2%	7%
Other Summary offences	42%	33%	38%	22%	11%	17%

Kraus in New South Wales has shown that juvenile offending in that State over the period 1959-1969 has undergone some changes. (53) He mentions the difficulty of comparisons between different jurisdictions, but compares his data with official overseas statistics. The changes he found in New South Wales with respect to types of offences he summarises thus:

of the six types of offence only the rates of 'assault or malicious damage' had a statistically significant upward trend. The rates of breaking, entering and stealing, of taking and using motor vehicle [sic], and of sex offences showed decreasing trends, the last a highly significant one. The rates of stealing and of robbery showed no specific changes, and no changes occurred in the rate of offences generally. (53:156)

Victoria's similar figures show less obvious trends on first inspection. The lack of confidence in their accuracy does not allow for elaborate analysis such as that undertaken by Kraus.

Most notable from Table B2 is the fact that most of the warnings in any year consistently comprise offences involving stealing, in one year, 1969, reaching 64% of all warnings given. With respect to court cases the largest group are the "other summary offences" which include street offences and other minor charges including trespass, by-law breaches, hoax phone calls and the like. Intuitively these too would seem to constitute good candidates for warnings, and it may well be that, with the increased emphasis on using warnings, such offenders may be warned more in the future.

The second factor provided in the Police Annual Reports relates to "factors contributing to the offence" but only for Court Appearances. These are listed in Table B3, and can be seen to be quite subjective. In addition these factors were not noted in all cases. In 1973, for instance, these factors appear for only 70% of all cases. Table B3 shows the distribution for those cases where factors are noted from 1966, when new categories were introduced.

Table B3

Percentage Distribution of "Factors Contributing to the Offence" for Offenders Before the Court, 1966 - 1975

	<u>Bad Company and/or lack of parental control</u>	<u>Environment</u>	<u>Mischief</u>	<u>Other*</u>
1966	70	9	12	9
1967	67	16	12	5
1968	68	16	9	7
1969	69	17	9	5
1970	67	17	10	6
1971	63	18	12	7
1972	58	19	15	8
1973	65	15	14	6
1974	66	13	13	8
1975	78	7	7	8

* Other factors include "clinical or medical, sexual or truancy". During the years in question these ranged from 1% to 3%, 1% to 5%, and 1% to 4% respectively.

The way in which these assessments are made is not known, so a great deal of importance cannot be placed upon them. The 'bad company/parental control' category is a very broad and easy explanation for most offences. Its 1975 peak may simply have arisen because of community, and thus police, feeling at the time. The same argument could be advanced to explain the 19% 'environment' figure appearing for 1972.

Apart from being recorded in the above official statistics, a young offender formally dealt with by the police, also acquires a formal record at Police Headquarters. That record may (and certainly should) be destroyed if the youth reaches adulthood without further offending. But for some young offenders the creation of a formal police record marks the start of a long career. A recent census of N.S.W. prisoners revealed that

for almost half of the prison population the incidence of criminal offending began before the age of eighteen, and for one third of the prison population, the disruption of enforced institutional living began with commitments to juvenile institutions. (17:23)

The official police statistics throw no light on the offenders whose commitment to a life of offending seems established. The juvenile recidivist does not spring up overnight, his career has made him known to the authorities over many years. (21) He should be society's main concern when juvenile offending is discussed. This report provides a less restricted description of young offenders than that provided by official police statistics alone.

THE SAMPLE

The total number of cases of juvenile police contact during 1975 collected for this study is 13,084. Of that number 1,930 were Protection Applications. Leaper's study, which also used Forms 276 as the source document, indicated some confusion with respect to the use of the various grounds for Protection Applications set down in section 31 of the Social Welfare Act 1973. Notwithstanding this, the following Table sets out the formal grounds for the 1975 applications. Somewhat subjective categorisation of these applications was made within each legal category. It is interesting to note the slight change between the distribution of grounds used in each of the years 1972 and 1975.

The Family Based Protection Applications in this study comprise all the 240 made under Section 31(b), the 194 under Section 31(c), the 137 under Section 31(f), the 292 under Section 31(h), and eight applications where the child concerned had not reached the age of 8 years (4 under Section 31 (j), 1 under Section 31(k), 2 under Section 34, and 1 unspecified application.) The deletion of these 871 cases leave 1,059 Offender Based Protection Applications, which in light of the earlier discussion, are included in the juvenile offending sample.

Table C1

Protection Application Grounds

Grounds	1975 (N=1930)	Categorisation	Leaper's 1972 Percentages (N=1834)
Found Wandering (Section 31(b))	240 (12.4%)	Unable to be classified 101, Runaway after family argument 61, runaway for excitement 26, runaway (other reasons) 52.	11.3%
No Visible Means of Support (Section 31(c))	194 (10.1%)	Unable to be classified 89, parents abandoned or deserted children 35, family's eviction or financial crisis 48, rejection of parent by child or vice versa 22.	15.8%
Not Provided For (Section 31(f))	137 (7.1%)	Unable to be classified 99, insufficient accommodation 11, insufficient food 12, ill- treatment 15.	6.2%
Unfit Guardianship (Section 31(h))	292 (15.1%)	Unable to be classified 96, inadequate care arrangements for child 94, parents' mental state 56, parents' drinking 35, parents' physical illness 11.	12.2%
Likely to Lapse (Section 31(j))	401 (20.8%)	Unable to be classified 114, child stealing or burgling 204, child committing other known offences 31, runaway with other misbehaviour 52.	22.1%
Exposed to Moral Danger (Section 31(k))	512 (26.5%)	Unable to be classified 170, runaway after conflict with parents 140, behavioural prob- lems 106, sexual misbehaviour only 96.	26.1%
Uncontrollable (Section 34)	14 (0.7%)		0.8%
Habitual Truant (Section 31(l))	21 (1.1%)		1.0%
Unspecified Appli- cations in Addition to Charges for Offences	76 (4.0%)		2.3%
Unspecified and Other Applications	43 (2.2%)		2.2%
<u>Total</u>	1930 (100.0%)		100.0%

The breakdown of the original sample is shown in Table C2 where the deleted protection applications are shown to be predominantly female.

The removal of these 871 applications reduces the number of cases under study to 12,213. However, this has to be reduced by another one on account of one youngster apprehended stealing from a shop, who had not reached eight years of age but was nevertheless officially warned by the police. [This offender had been caught stealing by the shop manager on at least two prior occasions, so there is no doubt he could be described as a juvenile offender.]

Thus the sample consists of 12,212 police contacts comprising 4,363 official police warnings of offenders over eight and 7,849 court appearances.

Table C2

Breakdown of Original Sample

Sex	Warnings	Court Appearances		Total
		Offences and Offender Based Protection Applications	Family Based and Under Age Protection Applications	
Female	1266	1265	512	3043
Male	3098	6584	359	10041
<u>Total</u>	4364	7849	871	13084

As the Forms 276 form the base data for this study, it is interesting to note the varying amounts of information provided by police officers on the reverse side of the form under the heading "any further details".

Most officers used this space to make some comment which they perceived would be of some assistance to the Court. In fact only 6% of the forms were blank in this regard, and a further 7% included nothing more than a brief description of the offence. Thus the Magistrate could read for instance that "the boy entered the shop and hid the pair of jeans under his schoolbooks in his bag", but discover nothing about the boy's homelife, school or friends. Table C3 indicates that female police officers were more likely to provide more written details for the Court than their male counterparts. But it is important to note one practical consideration before considering this aspect further.

During their tour of duty police officers are continually on call. A brawl or similar event with some element of physical danger has to be dealt with instantly. Generally speaking a policewoman is not expected to drop whatever she is doing immediately and attend such a call. Consequently, a policeman may find himself with less time to provide all the information about a young offender that he might wish to, and in fact he may well 'get behind' with his considerable paperwork to such an extent that his

reports might tend to be scanty. Notwithstanding this, most police officers try to make sure that the information provided is accurate.

Table C3
Sex of Police Officer by Details on Form 276

Extra Details Provided on Form 276	Sex of Police Officer			Total
	Male	Female	Not Known	
None	707 (6.7%)	60 (2.5%)	18	785 (6.0%)
Details Relating to Offence Only	895 (8.4%)	25 (1.1%)	10	930 (7.1%)
Details Relating to External Factors Only	1629 (15.3%)	224 (9.4%)	7	1860 (14.2%)
Details Relating to Offence & External Factors	7403 (69.6%)	2062 (87.0%)	44	9509 (72.7%)
<u>Total</u>	10634 (100.0%)	2371 (100.0%)	79	13084 (100.0%)

Additionally it is the Women Police who are usually required to deal with Protection Applications with their welfare connotation. It could be argued that considerable detail is necessary in the case of a Protection Application since it is vital for the Magistrate to be well-informed of the situation of the child and his family. The involvement of women police in this regard is clearly shown in Table C4 where 77% of the 1923 Protection Applications were handled by female police officers. This figure reduces to 65% when offender-based Protection Applications alone are considered.

Table C4

Involvement of Women Police in Various Police Contacts

<u>Police Contact Involving -</u>	<u>Percentage of Contacts Handled by Women Police</u>	
Theft	16.5%	(N=4320)
All Other Offences	2.5%	(N=6762)
Offender Based Protection Application	64.9%	(N=1053)
Family Based Protection Application	92.3%	(N=870)
<u>Total</u>	18.2%	(N=13005)

Note: Police sex not known in 79 cases.

Overall, women police dealt with 60% of all girls involved in police contacts during 1975, but with only 5% of all boys. But this fact does not help explain why women police provide more detail on the Form 276. Neither does consideration of police rank or location. The differences in provision of detail were primarily related to the sex of the police officer. This accords with some overseas research. Bottomley and Coleman in an investigation of crime reports in a North English city discovered a similar feature. (13) They write:

The accounts produced by the policewomen were invariably much longer, and tended to contain a wealth of personal detail about the victim, witnesses and the circumstances surrounding the offence. (13:40)

Just over half (51.1%) of the 13,049 cases for which information about police location was available emanated from a uniformed policeman stationed at a police station. In fact 34% of the total sample emanated from suburban police stations. This indicates that the local policeman is extremely active in the apprehension and resolution of juvenile offending cases. Only 21% of the cases were processed by members of the (plain clothes) Criminal Investigation Bureau. The (plain clothes) Crime Car Squad accounted for only 8% and uniformed Women Police for 17%. The remaining 3% of cases were brought to Court from a variety of units - the Mobile Traffic Section, the Stolen Car Squad, the Railways Police, etc. What is plain is that uniformed police officers were responsible for processing most juvenile cases.

Additional Source Documents

The diversity of comments made by police officers on the Forms 276 has been indicated above. The Magistrate hearing a case is able to utilise the information provided on the form to ask specific questions when he is contemplating the disposal of the case. In this way he is able to gather useful information using the police officer's comments as cues. The absence of police comments means the absence of such cues, and raises the possibility of important considerations being overlooked by the Magistrate. But this police

information is not the only externally generated information provided to the Court. In many cases, a Probation Officer may have compiled a "pre-sentence report" which is tendered to the Magistrate for his consideration.

In fact section 25 of the Act requires the Magistrate to "give consideration to any report tendered" which sets out details relating to the child's environment, habits, recreation etc.

Cairns has recently outlined how Tasmanian Children's Courts receive such material. (16) Other Australian studies have tried to assess the usefulness of such reports. Kraus, for instance, found an agreement between report recommendations and Magistrates' decision. (51) He believed that agreement indicated Magistrates placing great weight on advice in those reports. Yet persons preparing such reports are aware of the options open to the Court, and are themselves mindful of such factors as the number of previous times the offender has been dealt with by the Court. This last factor seems to be one which particularly affects eventual disposal of the case, and if both recommender and recommendee are mindful of such a fact, agreement should be expected.

In Victoria, the majority of probation supervision is undertaken by honorary probation officers and it is these persons who generally prepare pre-sentence reports for the Victorian Children's Courts. The variation in the quality, content and appropriateness of these reports is attributable to the fact that, as volunteers in the field, these honorary Probation Officers have quite varied skills and attitudes.

To complement the data from the Forms 276, a number of court files were examined to see whether additional documentary information was available to Magistrates, and if so, what additional facts were available from these extra documents.

In point of fact, court files were examined for 4292 of the 8720 court cases in the sample. This comprised 49% of all court cases and included both metropolitan and country cases. In the latter situation young offenders are dealt with by the local Stipendiary Magistrate or local Justices of the Peace. None of these persons would specialise in Children's Court work as do the Magistrates who sit solely on such cases in the City. At those court houses visited, formal documents relating to offences including dates of commission and property involved, were also noted.

It is not only honorary Probation Officers' reports that are tendered to the Court, but these are the most common. In the 4292 cases for which material was searched in courthouses, 649 (or 15.1%) included a pre-sentence report from a Probation Officer. Twenty seven of these cases occasioned in addition, the preparation of a Children's Court Clinic report.

The Clinic is physically adjacent to the Melbourne Children's Court and is staffed by psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers and nurses. Cases in which the Magistrate believes a psychiatric or psychological report

would be of value to him in deciding on disposition, are adjourned for a short period to allow such reports to be prepared. The preparation of these reports and the ongoing treatment of persons who have been through the Court constitute the work of the Clinic.

The Clinic reports are formalised documents which always include a recommendation. In these two ways they are quite different from other pre-sentence reports which may or may not recommend, nor reveal useful, as distinct from purely descriptive, information. Table C5 outlines the relative occurrence of reports in the 4292 cases where court files were examined.

Table C5

Additional Court Reports

<u>Report from:</u>	<u>No.</u>
Children's Court Clinic	175 (18%)
Clinic and another source	28 (3%)
Probation Officer (Pre Sentence Report)	601 (62%)
Probation Officer and another source	21 (2%)
Social Welfare Department	90 (9%)
Miscellaneous (school teacher, priest, employer, social workers, etc.)	52 (5%)
	<u>967 (100.0%)</u>
No Report	<u>3325</u>
Total Court Files Examined	<u>4292</u>

What is notable from Table C5 is that only 22.5% of the cases were found to have formal reports from some party other than the police. This low figure may mean that in many cases Magistrates could remain unaware of important facts of value to them. There is a local move to make sure that pre-sentence reports are prepared for all those appearing before the Court. But a youth appearing before the Court for the first time may not be disposed towards becoming involved with another part of the system. More correctly, his parents may not be minded to elaborate on their family's situation to a volunteer worker, especially if they wish to minimise the trauma of the event. Yet the Court should be in possession of relevant information, and the manner of its provision is a difficult problem. Details of value to the Magistrate may not be collected by police officers, but they are perhaps in the best position to find them. Yet if the spirit of the Victorian Children's Court Act is to be preserved with respect to the child's right to privacy and confidentiality, police officers by their very questioning of the offenders' social contacts may do the child an injustice.

Data For Previous Periods

This study is not the first to use Forms 276 as the basis for an exposition of juvenile offending in Victoria.

Forms 276 relating to 1966 Court Appearances were the subject of a study, the results of which were not formally published in totality. Two papers by Biles were based on data collected in that study by Greig and Biles together. (9,11). Forms 276 relating to Warnings in 1969 were analysed by Hornan in his study of the effectiveness of the warning system. (44) All 1972 Police Contacts were the subject of a monograph by Challinger based on an analysis of the Forms 276. (19)

In all these studies, characteristics were able to be noted for those juveniles coming into official police contact. These characteristics may not be noted in Police Annual Reports and an analysis of them throws further light on those juveniles involved. The comparison of the size of the samples in these studies with official police figures appears in Table C6.

Table C6
Sample Sizes and Official Statistics

<u>Group</u>	<u>Sample Size in this Study</u>	<u>Police Annual Report Figure</u>	<u>Sample as % of Total Police Figure</u>
1966 Children's Court Appearances	3562	4554	78.2%
1969 Warnings	1557	1591	97.8%
1972 Children's Court Appearances	7667	7982	96.0%
1972 Warnings	2290	2283	100.0%
1975 Children's Court Appearances	7849	8953	87.6%
1975 Warnings	4363	4281	101.9%

It will be observed that the 1966 sample is the least representative. Nevertheless, it is presumed to be typical, notwithstanding the possibility that odd or difficult cases are often those for which acquiring official documents is sometimes most difficult. In practice, it is Forms 276 from outlying (country) areas that sometimes take a long while to arrive at the Melbourne Courthouse.

The apparent over-representation of warnings in 1972 and 1975 is caused by Forms 276 being misclassified by police personnel. Forms for this study were collected after they had been processed by the police. In many instances Forms relating to warnings were found amongst Forms relating to Court Appearances. Only close inspection revealed this wrongful inclusion, and the simple counting operation engaged in by the police would not disclose this error. Similarly, triplicates of Forms forwarded by police officers some time after the duplicate of the Form had rightfully been received, were not detected. Only after the massive task of sorting all Forms for the year into alphabetical order was complete did the extra forms counted in this way come to light.

This fact in particular explains some of the difference between the size of the sample in this study, and the police figure. Another feature which is relevant in this regard relates to the non-receipt of Forms 276 at the Melbourne

Court House. Visits to some metropolitan and country courthouses revealed extra cases for which Forms 276 did not exist in Melbourne. Many of these related to driving offences for which completion of the Form was not mandatory on the apprehending officer's part. (And for which reason juvenile traffic offences are probably understated in this study.) But many related to offences which were undeniably part of this study. In most cases the number of extra offences so detected was small, but in a couple of Court Houses substantial numbers of extra cases were discovered (and then included). Those Court Houses not visited during the course of this study, might have extra cases (obviously) known to the Police, but unable to be included here.

The collected Forms 276 and supporting documents from a sample of outlying Court Houses was as extensive a gathering of data as time and resources permitted. It is confidently felt that the following analysis of that data is a solid portrayal of the characteristics of Victoria's official juvenile offenders in 1975.

THE OFFENDERS

The collected sample of 1975 juvenile offending cases can be analysed in one of two ways. Either the total number of cases (N=12,212) or the total number of individuals involved in those offences (N=10,292) can be used. The difference between the two is caused by some individuals receiving formal police attention more than once during the year, as can be seen from Table D1. In 1975, 8,924 individuals (or 86.7% of all individuals) came to the formal attention of the police only once. This is only marginally lower than the corresponding figure of 88.3% in 1972. The difference indicates a very slight tendency for the 1975 sample to include more individuals whose contacts with the police were more frequent than there were in 1972. This is emphasised in two ways. First 117 individuals in 1975 were formally dealt with four or more times during the year, compared with only 42 in 1972. Secondly, the average number of formal police contacts per person in 1975 is 1.19 compared with 1.14 in 1972 (when there were 9,957 contacts from 8,686 individuals). This particular measure is a useful one for further analysis. Any sub-group of offenders whose average contact is higher than the sample's average becomes a sub-group of concern since its contacts are more frequent.

Table D1Frequency of Formal Police-Juvenile Contacts in 1975

No. of official police contacts	No. of Persons	Total No. of Contacts
1	8924	8924
2	992	1984
3	259	777
4	78	312
5	23	115
6	13	78
7	2	14
8	1	8
<u>Total</u>	10292	12212

Average Number of Contacts per Person = 1.19

Two basic demographic factors that are most important are the sex and age of the offenders.

Sex of offenders in particular has been of great criminological interest since the advent of feminist movements over the last few years. The involvement of females in crime has shown an increase in Victoria over the last few years. The Victoria Police Statistical Review of Crime indicates that for "all crime" the percentage of females proceeded against has been edging up since 1972. In that year females comprised 16.5% of all proceeded against; in 1973 - 16.7%, in 1974 - 19.8% and in 1975 - 22.0%

Consideration of Tables D2 and D3 indicate a small increase in female participation in juvenile-police contacts over the periods of time for which data is available. More specifically 1730 of the 8686 individual juvenile offenders in the 1972 study were female. The corresponding figures for 1975 are 2322 and 10292. Thus females account for 19.9% of all individual juvenile offenders in 1972 and for 22.6% in 1975. This is a significant difference which does indicate increasing female involvement.

Table D2Sex of Warned Offenders 1969-1975

<u>Sex</u>	<u>1969</u> (N=1557)	<u>1972</u> (N=2290)	<u>1975</u> (N=4364)
Male	77.5%	70.4%	71.0%
Female	22.5%	29.6%	29.0%
<u>Total</u>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table D3Sex of Offenders Appearing at Court 1966-1975

<u>Sex</u>	<u>1966</u> (N=3562)	<u>1972</u> (N=7667)	<u>1975</u> (N=7849)
Male	84.1%	84.9%	83.9%
Female	15.9%	15.1%	16.1%
<u>Total</u>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

While there is an increase in female involvement in juvenile offending, it is still far less than male involvement. Jensen and Eve used a self-report inventory in California to question whether girls really were "less delinquent" than boys. (46) They controlled their data for such factors as parental supervision, attitude to police and school, but still found higher levels of self reported offending for boys. Some sub-samples of females did have offending rates close to some male rates. For instance, white females with high paternal supervision showed a similar rate to white males with low paternal supervision. These results are hardly convincing, but the work is just one example of the growing interest in the female offender.

As further evidence of this interest, a recent issue of Crime and Delinquency included five articles under a heading "Criminal Justice to Women: Not Fair!" (28) These articles tended to be what is now described as radical, condemning the sexist and paternalistic juvenile justice system. Chesney-Lind's article in that collection is particularly concerned with the over-representation of females in status offences. She would no doubt be highly critical not only of the Victorian "exposed to moral danger" protection application, but also of its inclusion in a sample of juvenile offenders. She had earlier suggested that American society believes the juvenile court can and should control young girls' (sexual) behaviour if parents are unwilling or unable to

control it. The catalogue of different treatment handed out to female offenders is certainly persuasive to the discrimination viewpoint. One such instance describes "girls [being] six times more likely than boys to appear before a juvenile-court judge on their first offence". (22) Differences in procedure make it difficult to compare this directly with the Victorian system. What is certainly true here is that girls appear far less likely to appear in court than boys, but are far more likely to be given an official police warning.

Table D4 shows the distribution by age of offenders in the 1975 sample. It also shows that there is little difference between the average ages of male and female offenders. Additionally the average contact figure for the girls was a significantly lower 1.09, indicating that girls were far less likely to be dealt with more than once during the year. This suggests that the behaviour for which the girls came to police attention was unlikely to be a continuing problem.

Sixteen year old boys comprised the largest single group of male offenders (as they also did in 1972). Similarly fifteen year old girls comprised the largest group of females, again agreeing with the 1972 study. This consistency with the earlier study indicates little demographic change over this three year period. The lower female average contact figure in each study indicates stability with respect to offending activity by sex.

Table D4
Age of Juvenile Offenders by Sex,
Showing Average Number of Police Contacts
During the Year

Age in whole Years	Male		Female		Total		Average No. of Police Contacts for each Age Group
	No. of Persons	No. of Police Contacts	No. of Persons	No. of Police Contacts	No. of Persons	No. of Police Contacts	
8	57	63	15	15	72	78	1.08
9	137	156	37	37	174	193	1.11
10	253	284	62	62	315	346	1.10
11	400	469	100	102	500	571	1.14
12	743	864	213	221	956	1085	1.14
13	1111	1310	428	458	1539	1768	1.15
14	1372	1687	474	520	1846	2207	1.20
15	1496	1882	521	588	2017	2470	1.23
16	1690	2130	371	415	2061	2545	1.24
17	474	564	54	61	528	625	1.18
18	2	2	-	-	2	2	1.00
Not known	235	270	47	52	282	322	1.14
<u>Total</u>	7970	9681	2322	2531	10292	12212	1.19
Average Age *	14.58		14.41		14.54		
Average No. of Police Contacts	1.21		1.09		1.19		

* Technical Note: Average age was calculated from known actual ages not the "whole year ages" shown in this table.

This stability is even further verified by consideration of Tables D5 and D6. Thirteen and fourteen year olds comprise over one-third of all those warned in the years under study. Sixteen year olds always comprised the largest single group of those offenders appearing at court. But despite this stability, there have been slight fluctuations in the average ages of offenders, which are documented in Table D7.

Table D5
Ages of Warned Offenders 1969-1975

Age	1969 (N=1557)	1972 (N=2290)	1975 (N=4364)
8 or less	2.1%	2.8%	1.4%
9	5.3%	3.3%	3.3%
10	7.0%	5.7%	5.2%
11	8.0%	7.6%	7.7%
12	11.7%	13.2%	14.0%
13	16.2%	18.2%	19.2%
14	20.5%	17.9%	18.3%
15	15.8%	16.3%	16.0%
16	11.4%	12.7%	11.5%
17	1.6%	2.4%	1.6%
Not known	0.4%	0.0%	1.9%
<u>Total</u>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

NOTE: Rounding-off errors in calculating percentages have not been adjusted to ensure totals of 100%. This holds for all Tables in this Report.

Table D6
Ages of Offenders Appearing at Court 1966-1975

Age	1966 (N=3652)	1972 (N=7667)	1975 (N=7849)
8	.6%	.4%	.2%
9	1.7%	1.0%	.6%
10	2.2%	1.7%	1.5%
11	3.1%	2.9%	3.0%
12	5.8%	5.6%	6.1%
13	10.6%	12.1%	11.8%
14	15.8%	18.5%	18.0%
15	23.5%	23.4%	22.6%
16	32.2%	27.5%	26.1%
17	3.9%	6.9%	7.1%
Not known	.6%	-	3.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table D7

Average Age (in Years) of Offenders

Year	Warned Offenders	Offenders at Court	Total Offenders
1966	N.A.	14.47	N.A.
1969	13.12	N.A.	N.A.
1972	13.25	14.52	14.23
1975	13.74	15.00	14.54

In all cases, the average age of offenders does not exceed the formal school leaving age of 15 years. This lends weight to McKissack's studies which suggest that the last year at school is always the time at which juvenile offending will peak. McKissack argues that a young person at work is better placed to satisfy his material needs legally, and has less time anyway in which to offend. (59) Restriction of motivation and opportunity, he suggests, cause offending to reduce for those aged over the school-leaving age. But in a situation of high unemployment it is conceivable this situation might change.

The overall lower average ages for offenders who were warned (in Table D7) simply indicates that it is the younger offender who is more likely to be dealt with in this way.

Victoria's population includes large numbers of persons born in other countries. Consequently numbers of juvenile offenders were also foreign-born, and these are enumerated on Table D8, which compares the 1972 and 1975 figures for selected countries.

The one feature of Table D8 that stands out is the increased involvement of Yugoslav-born juveniles in offending. Not only has their percentage involvement climbed from 1.4% of offenders in 1972 to a 1975 figure of 2.0%, but also their average contact figure in 1975 reached 1.25. This indicates more frequent offending than for most other major national groups. Within the 'other Non English speaking' group, there were other

Table D8
Birthplaces of Juvenile Offenders

<u>Birthplaces</u>	<u>1972</u>		<u>1975</u>	
	No. of Persons	Average No. of Police Contacts per Person	No. of Persons	Average No. of Police Contacts per Person
Australia	7111 (81.9%)	1.15	8552 (83.1%)	1.19
Britain	480 (5.6%)	1.19	542 (5.3%)	1.18
Greece	97 (1.1%)	1.20	122 (1.2%)	1.13
Italy	149 (1.7%)	1.19	160 (1.6%)	1.19
Yugoslavia	122 (1.4%)	1.15	209 (2.0%)	1.25
Other English Speaking Countries	67 (0.8%)	1.15	76 (0.7%)	1.05
Other Non English Speaking Countries	218 (2.5%)	1.18	244 (2.4%)	1.18
Asia and the Pacific	76 (0.9%)	1.12	97 (0.9%)	1.13
Unspecified	366 (4.2%)	1.03	290 (2.8%)	1.21
<u>Total</u>	8686 (100.0%)	1.15	10292 (100.0%)	1.19

instances of a high contact group. The most notable were the Turkish-born offenders who returned an average contact figure of 1.26, but their percentage involvement was low, and this should be borne in mind. It only needs a couple of persistent offenders in a small national group to give that group a very high contact rate. (Appendix 1 sets out the classification of birthplaces used in the tables.)

The increase in Yugoslavian-born juveniles becoming involved in the juvenile justice system is further highlighted in Tables D9 and D10. These show that for both warned offenders and those taken to court, significant increases have occurred since 1966. The distribution of other birthplaces has fluctuated slightly, but none show the magnitude of change illustrated by those Yugoslavian born. And it is the size of this change that isolates this particular national group in this study.

Table D9
Birthplace of Warned Offenders 1969-1975

<u>Birthplace</u>	<u>1969</u> (N=1500)*	<u>1972</u> (N=2161)*	<u>1975</u> (N=4242)*
Australia	86.5%	86.5%	84.5%
Britain	5.6%	4.9%	5.6%
Greece	1.0%	1.3%	1.4%
Italy	1.4%	1.4%	1.5%
Yugoslavia	0.7%	1.4%	2.2%
Other English Speaking Countries	1.7%	0.8%	0.9%
Other Non English Speaking Countries	2.6%	2.6%	2.6%
Asia and the Pacific	0.5%	1.1%	1.3%
<u>Total</u>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

* Birthplaces were not known for 57 cases in 1969, 129 cases in 1972, and 122 cases in 1975.

Table D10
Birthplace of Offenders Appearing at Court
1969-1975

<u>Birthplace</u>	1969 (N=3546)*	1972 (N=7419)*	1975 (N=7620)*
Australia	86.5%	84.7%	86.2%
Britain	4.9%	6.3%	5.3%
Greece	1.3%	1.2%	1.0%
Italy	2.2%	2.0%	1.7%
Yugoslavia	0.5%	1.5%	2.2%
Other English Speaking Countries	0.9%	0.8%	0.5%
Other non-English Speaking Countries	3.5%	2.7%	2.4%
Asia and the Pacific	0.2%	0.8%	0.7%
<u>Total</u>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

* Birthplaces were not known for 16 cases in 1966, 248 cases in 1972 and 229 cases in 1975.

Obviously the real significance of the changes under discussion can only be established given accurate population figures. Unfortunately National Censuses are five-yearly and mid-term estimates are limited. This means that statistics for National groups by age are simply not available to analyse the trends in the years shown on Tables D9 and D10. All that can be done is to note the obvious changes over these years.

A major problem relating to children born of migrant parents relates to the cultural pressures to conform to native customs and behaviour in the Australian setting. When a cultural conflict of such a sort was mentioned on the source documents, it was noted. Undoubtedly many instances of this conflict did not come to light in this study. This occurred mainly because of the fairly cursory investigation that appears to occur before the source documents are completed. So with this feature and the many that follow, the statistics here understate its actual occurrence.

Eighty seven instances of this cultural conflict were isolated, thirty five of which related to children actually born in Australia of migrant parents. Of the remainder, the three European countries separately listed on Table D8 accounted for most cases and achieved the following rates. In 8.7% of all contacts involving offenders born in Greece cultural conflict was observed, the corresponding figures for Italy and Yugoslavia being 5.8% and 4.2% respectively. There is no standard by which to assess these figures, but intuitively they seem quite high and, while not indicating a causal relationship, indicate that cultural conflict and offending in a juvenile from a migrant household may occur jointly.

This cultural conflict proposition receives some support from a recent study by Batta, McCulloch and Smith. (7) They found that half-Asian juveniles in a British multi-racial city had significantly higher delinquency rates than any other racial group. They suggested that this situation may be attributed to:

an intensity of confusion relating to personal identity. [The offenders] have neither the inherited Asian culture nor the white skin which would permit them to acquire full white status. (7:40)

Another ethnic matter noted in the present study related to Australian Aborigines, or more precisely those of Aboriginal descent. Of the 10,153 police contacts involving Australian born juveniles, 88 (or 0.87%) were noted as having some Aboriginal connection. Any comment on the source documents indicating Aboriginal ethnicity was noted positively in this study. Thus the stated involvement of the Aboriginal Legal Service or of Aboriginal Welfare personnel, along with "has Aboriginal father", were all presumed to indicate an Aboriginal contact. This broad definition makes it impossible to establish a population base figure. However, as just under one case in 100 involved an "Aboriginal" it is clear that the young Aboriginal population are becoming involved with police because of offending.

The latest available population figures relate to the 1971 Census where, for Victoria, 6371 persons considered themselves to be "Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders". This was 0.17% of the whole Victorian population at that Census. With that information the problem of young Aboriginal offenders can be stated to be a grave one. How much of the problem is of cultural origin can only be assessed by those working in this field. Certainly the experience of the Aboriginal Legal Service in this state leads one to be concerned about young

persons of aboriginal extraction and their involvement in the justice system.

Consideration of the occupations of the juvenile offenders reveals, not surprisingly, that most of them are students of some sort. Table D11, which examines this factor for warned offenders over a period of six years, reveals that 90% of those so dealt with were students. Again, an unsurprising result when it is remembered that the ages of warned offenders are generally lower than those taken to court. Additionally this indicates that police, when considering warnings, have in the period under question shown an inclination to adopt an attitude that a juvenile who is not at school has to learn to face up to his responsibilities and should therefore be dealt with more formally by going to Court.

Table D11
Occupations of Warned Offenders 1969-1975

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>1969</u> (N=1557)	<u>1972</u> (N=2290)	<u>1975</u> (N=4364)
Student	91.7%	90.7%	90.1%
Unskilled or Semiskilled	4.6%	5.6%	5.3%
Clerical or Sales	2.5%	1.6%	1.4%
Unemployed	1.1%	1.9%	3.1%
Not known	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%
<u>Total</u>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table D12 covers offenders appearing at Court and the most obvious feature on this table is the growth in the 'unemployed' category. The youth unemployment problem in 1975 was far worse than it was in 1972, and when it is estimated that the young comprise 40% of the unemployed (but only 12% of the work force) the prognosis for the young jobless person is poor. The connection between crime and unemployment has been the subject of some research. (2)

Table D12

Occupations of Offenders Appearing at Court 1966-1975

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>1966</u> (N=3562)	<u>1972</u> (N=7667)	<u>1975</u> (N=7849)
Student	53.2%	62.9%	58.1%
Unskilled or Semiskilled	36.1%	20.8%	19.4%
Clerical or Sales	N.A.	2.9%	2.0%
Unemployed	10.8%	13.2%	20.4%
Not known	N.A.	0.2%	0.1%
<u>Total</u>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The growing contribution of unemployed youth to the offending problem is also apparent from Table D13. In 1975 almost 12% of all police contacts involved those with no employment, in comparison with the 9.5% figure in 1972. Moreover in each of these years, the average contact figure for

such offenders is very high. For 1975 it stands at 1.43, by far the worst of any 'occupational group'. Thus the unemployed offender is also a frequent offender.

Table D13

Employment of the Juvenile Offenders

<u>Employment Type</u>	<u>No. of</u> <u>Persons</u>	<u>1972</u> <u>Average No.</u> <u>of Police</u> <u>Contacts per</u> <u>Person</u>	<u>No. of</u> <u>Persons</u>	<u>1975</u> <u>Average No.</u> <u>of Police</u> <u>Contacts per</u> <u>Person</u>
Student	5481 (63.1%)	1.12	6149 (59.8%)	1.14
Student with known part time job after school	683 (7.9%)	1.12	1311 (12.7%)	1.12
Apprentice	N.A.		378 (3.7%)	1.19
Unskilled or semi-skilled	1443 (16.6%)	1.19	1034 (10.0%)	1.25
Skilled	8 (0.1%)	1.13	12 (0.1%)	1.08
Clerical, sales	229 (2.6%)	1.11	186 (1.8%)	1.19
Unemployed	825 (9.5%)	1.28	1216 (11.8%)	1.43
Not known	17 (0.2%)	1.06	6 (0.1%)	1.67
<u>Total</u>	8686 (100.0%)	1.14	10292 (100.0%)	1.19

Additionally, those offenders employed in jobs of an unskilled or semi skilled nature also show a high average contact figure. The unfulfilling nature of many of these jobs could undoubtedly be a factor that encourages discontent but it cannot necessarily be seen as a factor causing

offending. It is more probable that those whose behaviour is of concern are often unable to find better jobs than these.

By contrast, the offender who is still a student is likely to be a once only offender as indicated by the low average contact figure. The slight difference between those students who had part-time jobs after school or at weekends, and those who did not, is not significant. The suggestion that those with formal calls on their leisure time are less likely to be involved in anti social behaviour is not rejected by these data. But neither can it be confirmed.

The last factor relating primarily to offenders themselves in the 1975 sample relates to previous contact with the police. The majority of offenders have not previously come to the formal attention of the police. The exact size of this majority was 73.4% in 1975, compared with 69.9% in 1972.

On the face of it this is not an alarming situation. But the converse of these figures indicates that 26.6% of the 1975 offenders are being dealt with for at least the second time although a second contact may not necessarily indicate a serious problem. Assuming that a third or later contact with the police does indicate a serious offender 1404 individuals can be so classed. This group accounted for 2501 contacts during 1975 giving them an average contact figure of 1.78, indicating an active commitment to offending.

Table D14 shows not only previous police contacts for the 1975 individuals but also the year in which the person first had formal contact with the police. Thus 245 people can be indentified as having been known to the Victoria Police for at least five years.

Table D14
Previous Police Contacts for Juvenile Offenders

<u>Year of First Police Contact</u>	<u>Number of previous police contacts</u>					<u>Total</u>
	1	2	3	4	5+	
Definitely no previous police contact						6671 (64.8%)
Apparently no previous police contact						887 (8.6%)
1975	192	20	1	1		214 (2.1%)
1974	589	163	49	20	14	835 (8.1%)
1973	272	158	83	44	34	591 (5.7%)
1972	162	119	74	39	41	435 (4.2%)
1971	69	51	43	26	37	226 (2.2%)
1970	23	25	25	7	39	119 (1.2%)
1969 or before	23	27	29	19	28	126 (1.2%)
Known to have record but details not specified on Form 276						188 (1.8%)
<u>Total</u>	1330 (13.1%)	563 (5.5%)	304 (3.0%)	156 (1.5%)	193 (1.9%)	10292 (100.0%)

An indication of the usefulness of using the number of prior contacts as an indicator of serious offending is provided in Table D15. Those persons with no previous record have a low average contact figure for the year of 1.05, indicating a low frequency of offending. Those with over five priors are obviously frequent offenders with an average contact figure of 2.34. But the more priors an offender has, the more likely a candidate for police attention he may become, which simply shows again that police practice has some immeasurable effect on this data.

Table D15

Prior Contacts and 1975 Average Contact Figure

<u>Previous Contacts</u>	<u>No. of Persons</u>	<u>Average Contact Figure</u>
None	7558	1.05
One	1330	1.35
Two	563	1.61
Three	304	1.68
Four	156	1.92
Five and Over	193	2.34
Actual Number Not Known	188	1.77
<u>Total</u>	10292	1.19

The possibility of an offender's re-offending is certainly of real concern to the police and is undoubtedly taken into account by a Magistrate. In 25.7% of the formal

police contacts the apprehending police officer made a written comment about the likelihood of the offender's recidivism. These were virtually equally divided between comments that re-offending was most unlikely, and comments stating the almost certain recidivism of the offender. Not surprisingly, these latter comments were more frequent when the offender had a number of prior offences, as can be seen from inspection of Table D16. The inclusion of such a comment is currently at the discretion of the police officer, so the data on Table D16 reflect current police attitudes rather than a definitive statement on recidivism.

Table D16

Percentage Distribution of Police Comments About Recidivism by

<u>Previous Contacts</u>	<u>No Comment</u>	<u>Recidivism Comment</u>		<u>Number of Cases</u>
		<u>(Probably) Will Not Re-offend</u>	<u>Probably or Certainly will Re-offend</u>	
None	73.6%	19.4%	7.0%	7913
One	78.5%	3.6%	17.9%	1798
Two	75.3%	1.8%	22.9%	907
Three or Four	74.0%	1.1%	24.9%	811
Five and Over	66.1%	-	33.9%	451
Actual Number Not Known	75.6%	0.9%	23.5%	332
<u>Total</u>	74.3%	13.3%	12.4%	12212

The Americans Garrett and Short followed up records of youths for whom police had made such predictions six years previously, at the time of the youths' first formal contact. (37) They found that 66% of the boys did not repeat, giving the police an 84% accuracy rate for this group. But "fewer than half of the predicted repeaters actually turned up in further contacts". Overall the police tended to over-predict recidivism, and for some police there was a noticeable tendency for 'lower-status' boys to be predicted as likely repeaters, and for 'high-status' boys not to be so predicted.

There is no way of telling if the police attitudes described above would match those of the Victoria Police. At present, mention of recidivism is quite voluntary on the part of the police officer. The Magistrate's reaction to such comments is yet another imponderable.

Additionally on the reverse of the Form 276 it was possible for the police officer to make any other subjective comment about the offender that he so wished. Recurring comments noted in this section were recorded under the headings "Character" and "Attitude to Authority" of the offender. It is not possible to tell what effect the inclusion of these comments had on the recipient of the Form - that is, the Children's Court Magistrate or the Warning Police Inspector. However the inclusion of such comments is obviously perceived by the apprehending police officer as being of value and for

that reason they are noted in Table D17. Reference to that table shows the classification of police comments into those regarded as positive and those seen as negative. It will be observed that slightly more positive comments are made about attitude to authority and considerably more negative comments were made about perceived character of the offender. Without a standard approach to the completion of the Form 276 these figures cannot be positively explained. The prospect of some police officers believing it to be important always to make such comments may cause the data in Table D17 to be quite untypical of offenders, and more a reflection of the attitudes of police officers to these forms. It will be noted that 85% of the forms included no comment on attitude to authority, and 64% no comment on the offender's character.

Table D17

Attitude to Authority and Character of Offender

<u>Comment about Attitude to Authority²</u>	<u>Comment about Character¹</u>			<u>Total (% of sample)</u>
	<u>None</u>	<u>Positive</u>	<u>Negative</u>	
None	7108	976	2335	10419 (85.3%)
Positive	355	449	163	967 (7.9%)
Negative	357	29	440	826 (6.8%)
<u>Total (% of sample)</u>	7820 (64.0%)	1454 (11.9%)	2938 (24.1%)	12212 (100.0%)

- Classification of Comments about Character:
 - Positive: includes honest, truthful, clean-living, good character, eventually told truth, etc.
 - Negative: arrogant, smart, unmitigated liar, troublemaker, sulky, liar, easily led, keeps poor company, etc.
- Classification of Comments about Attitude to Authority:
 - Positive: respectful, cooperative, etc.
 - Negative: insolent, aggressive, treats offence as joke, anti-police, contempt for police, no respect, etc.

A last feature about which police officers sometimes made comment related to the use of addictive or stimulating substances, including alcohol. Once again, these comments were only specifically included at the whim of the policeman involved.

A total of 468 police contacts were specifically noted by police officers as being in some part due to the consumption of alcohol. An additional 39 drinking offences (drunk and disorderly, and under-age drinking) were obviously due to the consumption of liquor, but not specifically noted, so that 506 contacts (or 4.1% of the total) were at least in some part contributed to by drinking. Additionally, in 154 contacts, the offender involved was stated to be a "known drinker" or to "frequent hotels". A further 86 contacts involved juveniles known to "over-indulge".

Notwithstanding the subjectivity of these comments, in a total of 747 contacts (6.1% of all contacts) alcohol was a factor of some sort. This undoubtedly under-estimates the true figure, as recent local studies have shown high levels of alcohol consumption by young people. For instance, a Geelong study shows a high level of adolescents under 14 who admitted to drinking beer daily. (63) And if Pearce and Garrett's old American finding is true for Victoria, 'delinquents'' intake of alcohol is greater and more frequent than that of 'non-delinquents'. (68)

When it is remembered that many offences, especially assaults, result from or at least are triggered by, intake of alcohol, the habit presents a problem. While no real solution is apparent, it is certain that more research could usefully be undertaken in Victoria on this issue.

West's recent study clearly shows the more frequent drinking habits of his sample of British 'delinquents' compared with his controls. (90) He also verifies that aggression resulting from drinking contributed to the "link with delinquency".

Two other types of involvement with stimulants were noted. The first, glue-sniffing, while the subject of much overseas literature, has not been as well publicised a problem in Victoria. Nevertheless in 22 cases mention was made of the offender's known participation in that habit. The loose term 'drug user' in this study includes not only those who were known marijuana users, but also those abusing softer (analgesics, relaxants, etc.) or harder drugs. With this definition 55 cases were noted. Additional to this there were a further 34 offences of drug use where a specific police-comment was not made. This raises the number of contacts where 'drugs' were a factor to 89. While still a relatively small percentage of all police contacts, it represents a cause for concern.

Thus, information derived from official documents about the offenders themselves covers a wide field. Problem areas relating to individual offenders have been identified, but the offender has to function in a social environment, about which comments follow.

THE OFFENDERS' FAMILIES

A great many studies have been undertaken dealing with the families of known young offenders. These have drawn attention to such features as large families, broken families, parental deprivation, erratic parental discipline, and parental rejection amongst others.

Of these, the broken family is the feature most well known, and most often publicly associated with the stereotype of the young offender. For many people, the fact that a child comes from a broken home is the obvious explanation for any of his behaviour that they find objectionable. Yet, while not empirically established, it has certainly been established in practice that children from an unhappy family, whether or not it is intact, are well represented in groups of offenders. Family happiness is, of course, a difficult attribute to measure, but definitional difficulties of this sort abound in discussions about families.

There are some features of families, however, that are not at all subjective. One of these relates to the size of the family, or more precisely, the number of children in the family. Many past studies of known young offenders have shown them to come from families larger than the community average. This certainly seems so in Victoria, as can be seen from Tables E1 and E2. For Official Warnings, offenders' family's sizes averaged 4.3 in each of 1969 and

1972, and 4.0 in 1975. For offenders appearing at court, the corresponding figures were 4.5 in 1966, and 4.6 in 1972 and 1975. These figures show consistently high family sizes over a period when the average Victorian family comprised only 2 to 2.5 children. The tendency for those offenders dealt with more formally (that is, those taken to Court) to come from larger families is interesting. A study of the population in a Victorian Youth Training Centre showed the average family size for the inmates to be 5.8 children. (66) Thus the temptation to describe those from large families as those most likely to be more serious offenders is provided by this data.

Table E1
Size of Warned Offenders' Family

<u>Number of Children in Family</u>	<u>1969</u> (N=1554)*	<u>1972</u> (N=2280)*	<u>1975</u> (N=4339)*
1	4.8%	3.2%	2.9%
2	16.9%	16.4%	17.9%
3	20.6%	22.0%	25.4%
4	18.5%	21.4%	20.9%
5	15.3%	13.3%	14.2%
6	9.4%	9.7%	7.9%
7	6.5%	4.9%	4.6%
8 or more	8.8%	9.1%	6.2%
<u>Total</u>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

* Note: Size of offenders' families not known for 3 cases in 1966, 10 cases in 1972 and 25 cases in 1975.

Table E2
Size of Family of Offenders Appearing in Court

<u>Number of Children in Family</u>	<u>1966 (N=3538)*</u>	<u>1972 (N=7610)*</u>	<u>1975 (N=7791)*</u>
1	4.3%	3.3%	2.1%
2	15.4%	13.7%	13.9%
3	19.1%	20.0%	20.0%
4	18.5%	18.5%	20.5%
5	14.3%	15.0%	15.2%
6	8.8%	10.7%	9.7%
7	7.2%	7.0%	7.3%
8 or more	12.4%	11.8%	11.3%
<u>Total</u>	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>100.0%</u>

* Note: size of offenders' families not known for 24 cases in 1966, 57 in 1972, and 58 in 1975.

It is worth noting here that some inconsistencies were found on the Forms 276 with respect to family size and family rank. While these inconsistencies were finally eliminated, their occurrence is further reason for cautious use of the data. In particular, what was found was that there was not always agreement about family size and rank when Forms 276 for the same offender, but completed by different police officers at different times, were compared. It appears this in some part arises from the police practice of asking questions of the offender and then simply typing his

answers on the Form. If in addition the police officer involved is not convinced the details required are valuable or beneficial to the recipient of the form, he would not be disposed to make sure that the details are accurate. This mode of completion of the form should be borne in mind by the reader during perusal of the following.

The overall family size for this study is 4.3 children. Table E3 sets out both family size and family rank for the 10,207 individual offenders for whom such data was available.

Birth order, or family rank as it has been referred to here, has been analysed in many different fields. In criminology the Gluecks were among the earliest to note that first-born, only, and youngest children had low offending rates.

(41) Locally Biles has shown that 'middle children' were over-represented in his 1966 Victorian offenders sample. (10) But not only does birth-order seem to have some relationship with official offending but it also extends to treatment.

For instance, Mullins' study of New York juveniles placed on probation during 1969-70 found that first-borns had a higher tendency to complete that probation successfully. (65)

The Biles result mentioned above was found to hold for the 1972 sample (19) and to be true for a study of institutionalised offenders. (66) But this last work brought a technical criticism from two Government statisticians. (47) Amongst other things, they pointed out that the youngest child in an incomplete family (that is, one in which more children are planned) only holds that position temporarily.

Table E3
BIRTH ORDER DISTRIBUTION OF JUVENILE OFFENDERS

Number of Children in Family	Place in Family												Not known	Total	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12+			
1	256														256 (2.5%)
2	785	837												1	1623 (15.9%)
3	736	847	730											2	2315 (22.7%)
4	437	613	571	471											2092 (20.5%)
5	217	314	352	329	298									1	1511 (14.8%)
6	99	150	203	163	158	138								1	912 (8.9%)
7	36	83	86	107	101	103	87							1	604 (5.9%)
8	11	42	39	64	56	55	52	57							376 (3.7%)
9	4	12	25	26	31	24	36	32	22					1	213 (2.1%)
10	5	4	11	19	10	16	21	20	10	14					130 (1.3%)
11	-	1	4	4	7	10	14	8	13	4	8			1	74 (0.7%)
12+	1	1	2	9	3	12	13	7	9	10	18	16			101 (1.0%)
Total	2587	2904	2023	1192	664	358	223	124	54	28	26	16	8		10207 (100.0%)

NOTE: Family size and rank not known in 85 cases

More importantly, not all members of a large family will find themselves subject to the juvenile justice system at the same time. It is unlikely that any more than six children from a family of, say, ten, would fall within the relevant age span of 8-17 at any one time. Such a situation means that quite specific statistics are necessary to deal confidently with the birth-order - offending relationship. Such statistics are not available at this time and while the data on Table E3 appears to uphold Biles' proposition, it is unable to be supported rigorously.

West has observed that

... it was the actual number of siblings that mattered, not whether they were older or younger, male or female. Being led astray by older brothers did not seem to be the reason why boys from large families became delinquent. (91:73)

That statement resulted from a thorough study of a number of British boys over a ten year period, and the offenders in this study may be similar. But it also seems that the behaviour of siblings, be they older or younger, may have some noticeable effect on other children in the family.

Victoria Police Officers are provided with a chance to comment on the Form 276 about other children in the offender's family. This can obviously be positive or negative. In this sample, police informants made definite statements about the offenders' siblings in 77% of the offending cases. The distribution of these comments can be seen in Table E4. It will be noted that high average contact figures appear for those families about which police have nothing favourable to say.

Table E4

Police Comments About Character of Offenders' Siblings

<u>Comment About Siblings' Character</u>	<u>No. of Offenders (% of total)</u>	<u>Average Contact Rate</u>
(Very) Good	5854 (73.8)	1.14
Average, Fair	821 (10.4)	1.28
Poor	314 (4.0)	1.39
Bad for one sibling	604 (7.6)	1.30
Bad for more than one sibling	236 (3.0)	1.40
Bad for all children in family	99 (1.2)	1.48
<u>Total</u>	7928 (100.0)	1.19

Note: No comments were made for 2364 offenders with average contact rate 1.19.

The preceding quotation from West's work concludes "More likely it was the inability of the overburdened mother to give adequate attention to each child that was the root cause of the delinquency". And the adequate attention West believes necessary is probably further reduced if the mother is out at work (for whatever reason). It obviously does not follow that a working mother cannot give adequate attention to her children, but there are those who believe juvenile offending could be reduced if mothers were always available to their children. Table E5 shows that 37% of the mothers of individuals involved in offences in 1975 were working - the majority in unskilled or semi-

skilled jobs. The corresponding figure in the 1972 study was 35% which is not significantly different in either size or type of occupation mothers were undertaking.

Recent labour statistics show that 42% of all married women were members of the work force in May 1977. (3) This indicates that the proportion of working mothers for this sample of juvenile offenders is not exceptional. It suggests that the popular belief that working mothers somehow contribute to juvenile offending is quite wrong. This is not the first time that hard data has caused this myth to be refuted (see, for instance, Yudkin and Holme (92)), but it easily fits into the popular stereotype and thus wrongfully survives.

The distribution of parents' occupations in Table E5 is similar to that in the 1972 study. Changes in categorisation cause there to be some differences, and this makes it impossible to compare exactly the data for the two years. However, the largest single group of offenders have fathers in unskilled or semi-skilled jobs, and mothers unemployed (therefore, assumed at home). In 1975 this group comprised 21.4% of all cases, in 1972, 23.6%. At the other end of the scale, offenders with both parents in "white collar" occupations accounted for 0.5% of all cases in 1975 and 0.47% in 1972.

In 5.6% of cases, natural fathers were said to be deceased, while the corresponding figure for natural mothers

Table E5

OCCUPATIONS OF PARENTS OF JUVENILE OFFENDERS

Fathers' Occupation	Mothers' Occupation								Total (%)
	Deceased, Retired or Pensioner	Unskilled or semi-skilled	Skilled trade	Clerical, Sales	Midrange management semi-professional	Professional Executive	Home duties	Not known	
Deceased, Retired or Pensioner	164	130	18	68	18	6	491	41	936 (9.1%)
Unskilled or semi-skilled	99	1211	61	242	73	9	2200	140	4035 (39.2%)
Skilled trade	46	465	68	197	62	12	1167	41	2058 (20.0%)
Clerical, Sales	15	101	13	129	23	7	353	18	659 (6.4%)
Midrange management semi-professional	19	117	13	141	139	10	699	27	1165 (11.3%)
Professional, Executive	6	29	10	55	30	24	210	5	369 (3.6%)
Unemployed	3	45	3	8	3	3	114	7	186 (1.8%)
Not known	83	157	14	68	30	5	381	146	884 (8.6%)
Total (% of Sample)	435 (4.2%)	2255 (21.9%)	200 (1.9%)	908 (8.8%)	378 (3.7%)	76 (0.7%)	5615 (54.6%)	425 (4.1%)	10292 (100.0%)

was 2.4%. (In 51 cases both parents were deceased.) However, these figures probably understate the true situation as re-marriages were not always detectable from the Form 276. That is, where a widow for instance, has re-married, and the children have adopted their new father's surname, there would be no way of telling that the child had suffered the personal trauma of losing a natural parent. But it is implicit in the above that loss of parents through death is of much importance with respect to a child's offending. Virkunen's work would suggest that this is not necessarily so. (84) He compared samples of offenders and recidivists and found that the recidivists more seldom had step-fathers or adoptive fathers after the death of their natural father. He implies that deprivation of a natural father is a trauma the consequences of which are worse if no substitute is forthcoming. Maternal deprivation (by death) and divorce of the parents were not found to be significant. So again, it seems that a happy or united family is of more importance than some prior breakdown. And it should also be remembered that in many cases family breakdown is a positive move on behalf of at least one of the parents. That is, changing an unsatisfactory home life may lead to family stability that seems so important.

The similarity in fathers' occupations between the 1972 and 1975 samples lessens when the different types of police contacts are examined. Generally speaking, more

Table E6

Occupation of Warned Offenders' Fathers

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>1969</u> (N=1557)	<u>1972</u> (N=2290)	<u>1975</u> (N=4364)
Retired/Pensioner	1.9%	2.0%	2.8%
Unskilled or Semi-skilled	42.5%	40.7%	36.7%
Skilled	26.0%	26.2%	21.3%
Clerical, Sales or professional	19.2%	20.3%	26.9%
Unemployed	0.3%	0.8%	1.6%
Dead or not known	10.2%	10.0%	10.7%
<u>Total</u>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table E7

Occupation of Fathers of Offenders Appearing in Court

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>1969</u> (N=3562)	<u>1972</u> (N=7667)	<u>1975</u> (N=7849)
Retired/Pensioner	2.6%	3.2%	4.2%
Unskilled or Semi-skilled	50.5%	41.7%	41.9%
Skilled	17.2%	22.1%	18.7%
Clerical, Sales or Professional	15.0%	14.8%	16.1%
Unemployed	1.5%	1.1%	2.1%
Dead or not known	13.2%	17.0%	17.0%
<u>Total</u>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

lower status occupations occur for fathers of offenders dealt with at the Children's Court, and more higher status occupations for fathers of those warned. This latter phenomenon has shown an increasing trend over the six years under study. While only 20% of those warned in 1969 had fathers who were "white collar" workers, the figure had climbed to 27% in 1975. This trend cannot be too precisely defined as slight differences in categorisation of occupations occur over the years in question. Additionally, trends may be explained by external factors. For instance, the general increase in the numbers of fathers unemployed probably simply reflects the worsening unemployment situation over the early 1970's. Table E6 and E7 provide the details of fathers' occupations. The data does seem to support the suggestion that children from higher status families are more likely to be dealt with by a Police Warning. With the advent of across-the-board warnings for first offences this bias should disappear. Its occurrence is intuitively obvious - the recommendation to warn by the apprehending police officer is based in most part on his perception of the offender and his family. Higher status families present a better image.

The normal living situation of the individuals involved in the offences appears in Table E8 with similar figures for 1972. The majority of offenders were living at home with both natural parents in each of the years under consideration. But again, consideration of the different types of police

contact shows significant differences in that those offenders warned were far more likely to come from nuclear families, as can be seen from Tables E9 and F10.

Table E8
Normal Living Situation of Juvenile Offenders

<u>Normal Living Situation</u>	<u>1972</u>		<u>1975</u>	
	No. of Persons	Average No. of Police Contacts per Person	No. of Persons	Average No. of Police Contacts per Person
Both natural parents	6261 (72.1%)	1.13	7147 (69.4%)	1.14
With one natural parent and other(s)	346 (4.0%)	1.20	547 (5.3%)	1.23
With one natural parent alone	1489 (17.1%)	1.18	1570 (15.3%)	1.23
Other relatives or foster parents	206 (2.4%)	1.17	295 (2.9%)	1.26
With others in flats, etc.	95 (1.1%)	1.18	268 (2.6%)	1.28
In institution	152 (1.8%)	1.36	257 (2.5%)	1.77
In Hostel or Boarding House	91 (1.0%)	1.16	79 (0.7%)	1.48
No fixed place of abode, or not known	47 (0.5%)	1.15	129 (1.3%)	1.25
<u>Total</u>	8686 (100.0%)	1.15	10292 (100.0%)	1.19

Returning to Table E8 it will be observed that more offenders were living other than at home in 1975. In that year 7.1% of offenders lived with others in flats, institutions, hostels, boarding houses, or, had no fixed place of

abode. The corresponding figure for 1972 was 4.4%. And in each year the average contact figure for these individuals was well above the average. Institutional inmates scored the highest average contact, 1.77 in 1975, and 1.36 in 1972. But this is unsurprising in that Victorian Youth Institutions tend to accommodate those whose offending record is extensive. Their absconding or release from an institution sadly seems likely to be quickly followed by their re-appearance at Court. This relatively small number of individuals (152) were responsible for a disproportionate 257 of the 1975 police contacts.

Table E9
Living Situation of Warned Offenders

<u>Living Situation</u>	<u>1969</u> (N=1557)	<u>1972</u> (N=2290)	<u>1975</u> (N=4364)
With both parents	81.8%	81.2%	79.7%
With one natural parent and others	2.8%	2.6%	3.7%
With one natural parent alone	13.7%	13.7%	13.2%
With other relatives or foster parents	0.7%	1.4%	1.7%
Other (flats, boarding houses, hostels, institutions, etc)	0.8%	1.1%	1.0%
Not known	0.2%	0.0%	0.7%
<u>Total</u>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table E10

Living Situation of Offenders Appearing at Court

<u>Living Situation</u>	1969 (N=3562)	1972 (N=7667)	1975 (N=7849)
With both parents	66.7%	67.9%	59.6%
With one natural parent and another	4.3%	4.6%	6.5%
With one natural parent alone	20.4%	18.8%	17.3%
With other relatives or foster parents	2.9%	2.7%	3.8%
Other (flats, boarding houses, hostels, institutions, etc.)	4.8%	5.2%	11.1%
Not known	0.8%	0.7%	1.7%
<u>Total</u>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Apart from this group there is cause for concern in the high average contact figure for those living away from home. An individual's moving from home may indicate some high family discord which caused the move, but be that as it may, living with even one parent suggests a reduced frequency of offending.

The family discord referred to above is usually gleaned from the police officer's response to the question on the Form 276 "Do they [the parents] live together?" While this situation need not necessarily indicate a previous discord there is often a further comment by the informant to indicate discord did indeed exist. The nature of this comment may be in the context of "domestics known to occur in this household" or may be inferred from the fact that "father had deserted

on several occasions". Therefore the discord-comment is usually quite subjective. Nevertheless, its inclusion on a police-form indicates the officer concerned believes the factor to be of some relevance. And the literature certainly supports that belief.

Table E11

Evidence of Family Discord

<u>Evidence of Family Discord</u>	1972		1975	
	No. of Persons	Average Contact	No. of Persons	Average Contact
Yes	1847	1.19	1888	1.28
No	6839	1.14	8404	1.17
<u>Total</u>	8686	1.15	10292	1.19

Table E11 summarises the situation with respect to discord, but the 1975 figure also incorporates documents from courthouses. Even so, only 18.3% of the individuals were identified as coming from families where discord had existed compared with 21.3% in 1972. In each year the bulk of these cases were where the natural parents were noted as separated or divorced - 77% of the 1888 cases in 1975. In each year, however, the discord-affected offenders had a significantly higher average contact figure.

Precise classification of discord proved to be extremely difficult. For instance, it was hoped that desertion of either the mother or father would be able to be identified. Yet in cases where there was a possibly corroborating court document it was often found that agreement as to the deserting party was not present. Such an occurrence does not cast doubt on the fact that some discord was present, but merely prevented a finer classification which could have been interesting.

It is this discord taken in conjunction with the offender's living situation that would allow the offender's family to be classified as broken. However, the difficulties in discussing "broken families" has been mentioned. In an interesting work on this topic Wilkinson points out that blaming broken families for offending has phases of public and professional acceptance. (87) She concludes that consideration of the relevant social and cultural conditions are essential before the true effect of broken homes can be established. Notwithstanding this, workers in the field continue to provide commentary in this regard. For instance Datesman and Scarpitti found that 58% of their female 'delinquents' as opposed to 46% of males came from broken homes. (29)

The data in the current study does not inspire confidence in the definition of broken homes, nor in the further use of such a factor. The above figures indicate a high

occurrence of internal family problems of one sort or another. These are probably contributory to a child's offending, but without precise case-analysis cannot be said to cause such behaviour.

There are further comments made about the family situations of offenders by police and others providing documentation for the Court. In the 1975 study, these comments related to family relationships and parental interest in the child. These factors were noted from comments made by police in answering the three questions on the Form 276 reading:

"Do they [the parents] exercise control over child?

Did they contribute to the child's lapse?

Do they show interest in the child's future?"

These questions allow the police to elaborate on the situation - there are two lines provided for the answer to the second. Many police officers however, do not over-extend themselves in answering them and by far the majority of responses were a simple 'yes' or 'no'. Some officers elaborated on these factors on the reverse side of the form under the "additional circumstances" heading. Using such data, only definite sentiments were utilised in the compilation of Tables E12 and E13.

All families with adolescent children undergo conflict at various times, and this situation would plainly be known by police officers. It is then assumed that only in cases of fairly grave conflict would an officer mention it on the

Table E12

Strained Family Relationships

<u>Relationship</u>	<u>No. of Offences involving male offenders</u>	<u>No. of Offences involving female offenders</u>	<u>Total No. of Offences</u>
Known conflict with father	134	38	172
Known conflict with mother	44	57	101
Arguments, conflict at home	93	68	161
Parents unable to communicate with child	100	45	145
Conflict leading to runaway	129	133	262
<u>Total</u>	500	341	841

Form 276. Assuming this is so, the 841 cases, constituting 7% of all 1975 cases, comprise a sizeable population. Internal domestic relationships are obviously the key to the stable and happy family, and here there is a high degree of strained relationship. Studies of relationships between children and their parents have long been popular with researchers in this field.

A recent comprehensive work by Riege examined the relationships in intact families between 25 offenders, 25 non-offenders and their parents. (72) As Andry before him, this researcher showed definite differences between the two groups, with the offenders, for instance, receiving less strong and open parental love. Such results indicate that positive help

to many young offenders involves strengthening family relationships. In many cases in this sample, parents were stated to have little or no interest in their children, as can be seen in Table E13.

Table E13
Parental Interest

<u>Interest in Child</u>	<u>Number of Cases</u>	
Definite positive interest	3610	(64.9%)
Only one parents shows interest	1098	(19.7%)
No interest, parents don't care	740	(13.3%)
Parents "given up"	117	(2.1%)
<u>Total cases with comment</u>	<u>5565</u>	<u>(100.0%)</u>
<u>Cases without comment</u>	<u>6647</u>	

In 46% of all cases, some definite comment about parents' interest in the child was made. In 65% of those cases the comment was positive - the parents' concern about their child's behaviour was beyond doubt, and the police officer noted the great interest of the parents on his report. The remainder of the comments noted were quite negative. The numerically small 117 cases where parents were described as having given up are that group about which the prognosis for the future is most bleak. Whilst a present lack of parental interest is probably damaging, it does not have the finality

and harshness of parents having "given up". Such an attitude suggests little chance of repairing family relationships in the short term, but it should be remembered that police record information around the time of the offence, and it may be that an exasperated parent's "I give up" comment to a policeman might be literally interpreted by that officer.

There are further serious forms of family pathology that have been noted in other studies of children before the court. Leaper's local work is such a study, (54) although it covered only children presented to the Court on Protection Applications. Intuitively greater degrees of family disturbance would be expected in what have been described earlier in this work as family-based Protection Applications. Indeed in many such applications details of extreme family pathology are virtually mandatory. The following four tables include such applications to enable comparison between that group and the offending sample, with respect to particular family problems.

The data in the following tables undoubtedly underestimates the actual incidence of such problems. Police officers, especially for minor offences which are dealt with by an official warning, may not be disposed to establish, or record, father's drinking habit, for instance. Others providing information for the court, with more time at their disposal and a particular perception of the needs of the Court, may be sure to include such items. This is supported by Table E14 which indicates

that large numbers of the Court files revealed family problems which were not noted by the police on the Form 276. This differing emphasis in provision of data for the Court makes it quite impossible to lock on the data here as anything more than indicative of the existence of problems.

Table E14
Particular Family Problems

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Number of Cases</u>			<u>Total</u>
	<u>Identified on Form 276 only</u>	<u>Identified on both Form 276 and court file</u>	<u>Additionally identified from court files</u>	
Father's abuse of alcohol	460	30	102	592
Mother's abuse of alcohol	263	7	17	287
Father's criminal activity	346	6	11	363
Mother's criminal activity	121	-	1	122
Father's mental ill-health	65	2	15	82
Mother's mental ill-health	223	12	28	263

The problems noted on Table E14 are elaborated further in the next three tables, where the particular descriptions of the problems are shown. These are necessarily subjective but all indicate that some problem is obviously present with respect to internal family functioning. The criterion employed

in this study was that the problem mentioned had to be of some real concern. Thus, if a policeman made some remark about a nervous mother, this by itself was not sufficient to occasion the problem being noted. If, however, it was further added in the policeman's comments that mother's nerves were causing great friction at home, or making it impossible for her to care properly for her children, then it was noted.

Table E15
Parents' Alcohol Problems

<u>Description of Problem</u>	<u>Number of Cases in</u>		
	Juvenile Offending Sample (N=12212)	Family-Based Protection Applications (N=872)	All Police Contacts (N=13084)
Minor problems, e.g. police find parents drunk on visit	55	43	98
Drink causes 'domestics'	21	24	45
Father 'heavy drinker'	271	59	330
Mother 'heavy drinker'	91	48	139
Father alcoholic or has severe problem	156	34	190
Mother alcoholic or has severe problem	51	26	77
<u>Total</u>	645	234	879
Percentage of cases in which problem noted	5.3%	26.8%	6.7%

The damaging effect that parental abuse of alcohol has on family life is well known. The effect that such behaviour has on young offenders is of course impossible to define, but the presence of such behaviour is shown definitely to exist in 1 in 20 offenders' families. There is no way of comparing this figure with any standard for the whole community owing to the subjectivity of the descriptions used. But Table E15 in conjunction with the earlier comments about the offender's own involvement with alcohol suggests that alcohol consumption within offenders' families may well be a contributory factor to offending.

Table E16
Parents' Criminal History

<u>History</u>	<u>Number of Cases in</u>		
	Juvenile Offending Sample (N=12212)	Family-Based Protection Applications (N=872)	All Police Contacts (N=13084)
Father in prison, or ex-prisoner	53	38	91
Father has record	98	80	178
Father known to police or come under police attention	57	21	78
Mother in prison, or ex-prisoner	2	5	7
Mother has record	24	25	49
Mother known to police or come under police attention	22	17	39
Mother and/or father participated in child's offence	41	2	43
<u>Total</u>	297	188	485
Percentage of cases in which history noted	2.4%	21.6%	3.7%

It is the contaminatory effect or the encouragement of illegal behaviour that is the underlying concern in Table E16. Recent British work on the familial transmission of criminality concluded quite positively that "crime runs in families". (35) That is, children of parents known to the police were themselves more likely to come to the attention of the police. The study showed the high likelihood of a child being officially dealt with by police if the father had a criminal record, apparently irrespective of the gravity of that record. But while this police selection was important it alone did not explain the difference in admitted offending activity between boys with or without criminal fathers.

Boys whose fathers have some sort of prison record might appear to be even more likely to be closely watched by the police. This could result from a genuine concern 'to keep the kid in line to stop him becoming like his old man' but it seems likely formal action would result from any such child's offending. Just over one offending contact in every 250 involved an offender whose father had some prison record. This seems a higher average than would be expected from Victoria's prison population. Moerk has established that children of prisoner fathers tend to have psychological profiles more similar to 'juvenile delinquents' than to normal children. (62) His study was based on children whose fathers were absent either through imprisonment or divorce, and strongly makes the point that discordant family relationships

before father actually left the family were a very important, but often overlooked, factor relating to the future behaviour and attitudes of the children.

Perhaps the most disturbing feature of Table E16 is the group of 43 cases where parents were actually involved in their children's offending. The two such cases in which Family Based Applications resulted came about through parents encouraging, and holding proceeds from, their quite young children's thefts. A quicker way of helping children into the criminal justice system is hard to imagine. To emulate parents' behaviour is one thing, to be schooled by one's parents in illegal behaviour is quite another.

The mental health category is one where subjectiveness is particularly high. For inclusion in Table E17 the comments made by those providing information for the Court had to be beyond doubt. A hint or suggestion of a mental health problem was ignored. Quite definite commentary of fact was required.

Once again, there is no community standard by which to judge the data on Table E17, which seems to indicate some psychiatric difficulties within offenders' families. From time to time, studies have looked at such matters. For instance a recent small study by Sanderson found that the mothers of a sample of boys who steal were more neurotic and introverted than mothers of a normal group or a group of matched boys from a psychiatric clinic. (74) Such studies mask the real

Table E17
Parents' Mental Ill-Health

Description of Mental State	Number of Cases in		
	Juvenile Offending Sample (N=12212)	Family Based Protection Applications (N=872)	All Police Contacts (N=13084)
Father has "bad nerves" or "seems mental"	11	2	13
Father abuses tranquilisers or has had medical attention	10	9	19
Father has had period in mental hospital	19	20	39
Father has been institutionalised	11	-	11
Mother has "bad nerves" or "seems mental"	51	33	84
Mother abuses tranquilisers or has had medical attention	24	40	64
Mother has had period in mental hospital	45	58	103
Mother has been institutionalised	9	3	12
<u>Total</u>	180	165	345
Percentage of cases in which mental health history noted	1.5%	18.9%	2.6%

issue which is the tension that eventuates from living with someone with mental health problems. And some offenders in this study appear to have such difficulties which may be connected with their own behaviour.

Not surprisingly, the preceding three tables all show that the incidence of severe internal family pathology is high in the Family Based Protection Applications. In order to compare these with Leaper's figures for the occurrence of these problems in 1972, it was necessary to consider all 1975 Protection Applications, irrespective of their being Family-Based or Offender-Based. The results of this comparative analysis follow in Table E18.

Table E18
Pathology of Families of Children the Subject of Protection Applications

Pathology	Percentage of Children Affected	
	Leaper 1972 (N=1834)	1975 (N=1930)
Recorded Alcohol or Drug Problem	14.5%	17.9%
Recorded Criminal History	14.6%	13.3%
Recorded Mental Health History	14.0%	10.8%

The differences shown on Table E18 are not explainable, but indicate a high level of occurrence of social problems in families from which children appeared "in need of care and protection" at Victorian Childrens Courts in 1972 and 1975. Only a meticulous study of the families involved could show the exact occurrence of these various factors, as Police

officers when completing the Form 276 are under no obligation to provide such detail. In practice, especially with Family Based Protection Applications, the police officer (usually female) has learnt through experience that the Magistrate is keen to learn of such factors, and therefore investigates them. But the fact remains that the figures on the preceding table undoubtedly underestimate the situation. Such a state of affairs suggests that a report compiled after investigation by, say, welfare personnel, could be of value to a Magistrate, over and above that provided by the Police Form 276.

That is, issues which would undoubtedly be relevant to the Court hearing may not be able to be canvassed by a police officer hard pressed for time and bogged down in paperwork. Quite how to get such valuable information to court remains a problem. There is no guarantee that a simple interview with the offender himself would reveal it anyway. But, at risk of sounding simplistic, one feature which should somehow come to light is whether the offender's family is happy and whether his relationships with his parent(s) are positive.

EDUCATIONAL FACTORS

It has earlier been pointed out that the majority of the 1975 offenders, in fact 72.5% of them, were students at the time of coming to police attention. But simply being a student makes no allowance for commitment to, progress at, or attitude towards, school. And each of these is meaningful when offenders are investigated. It has been well established that many offenders, especially those in institutions, suffer from some degree of educational retardation. While this last statement cannot be validated by reference to this data, some reference to educational factors was made in some of the source documents, and these are summarised in this section.

A large amount has been written about educational factors and youthful offending. The interested reader is referred to the fine literature review in McKinna's recent local work. (57) That review points out that many studies have shown a negative school experience (for whatever reason) as being highly associated with official offending. McKinna's own study set out to find differences between students of 'progressive' and traditionally-run secondary schools. She found no differences between the schools with respect to the amount of offending, but that offending itself was significantly related to school misbehaviour, school commitment and truancy. As this study was undertaken in Victorian State Secondary schools, the result is worth bearing in mind when the following data is considered.

Those involved in the 12,212 police contacts during 1975 came predominantly from State High and State Technical Schools. This is hardly surprising when the average age of offenders is recalled to be 14, and when 84.5% of the Victorian secondary student population attend such schools. In the past Technical Schools in particular, have appeared to be responsible for a larger number of the police contacts. Table F1 indicates little difference between the contribution of those schools and State High Schools with respect to all police contacts.

Table F1
Type of School Attended for Those Involved in Each Police Contact

<u>Type of School</u>	<u>Students' Current School</u> (% of total)	<u>Ex-Students' Last School</u> (% of total)	<u>Total</u> (% of total)
Primary	1102 (13.0%)	43 (1.2%)	1145 (9.4%)
Special	98 (1.1%)	55 (1.5%)	153 (1.2%)
State High	3198 (37.7%)	1315 (35.3%)	4513 (37.0%)
State Technical	2821 (33.2%)	1777 (47.8%)	4598 (37.7%)
Roman Catholic Secondary	490 (5.8%)	151 (4.1%)	641 (5.2%)
Private Secondary	235 (2.8%)	30 (0.8%)	265 (2.2%)
Interstate, Overseas, or Unknown	548 (6.4%)	349 (9.3%)	897 (7.3%)
<u>Total</u>	8492 (100.0%)	3720 (100.0%)	12212 (100.0%)

However, it is clear from inspection of Table F1 that those who have left a Technical School are responsible for almost half of the police contacts with non-students. High or Private School students appear on the face of it to be more likely to offend whilst they are at school. This leads to consideration of the fate of a Technical School student who has left school and may be seeking employment.

The data shows 17.1% of the Technical School group were unemployed at the time of their police contact. The corresponding figure for those with High School experience was a significantly lower 14.0% which in turn was close to the overall 14.2% unemployment rate in the sample. In total Technical Schools had produced 45.4% of the unemployed sample, and High Schools 36.4%.

Table F2 eliminates the unknown and interstate school group from Table F1 and compares the distribution of school types for the remaining 11,315 contacts, with figures for 1972. The changes are not significant. What is plain from Table F2 is that Technical School students (both past and present) have a significantly high average contact rate, indicating a frequency of offending. The only other school type with a high average contact figure is the fairly small special school group. These schools cater for children with mild retardation or particular learning difficulties. Their offending poses a treatment challenge for the authorities as they are often a recurring problem as offenders.

Table F2
Police Contacts by School Type

Type of School Attended by Offender	No. of Police Contacts	1975 Average Police Contact	%	1972 %
Primary	1145	1.14	10.1	11.7
Special	153	1.91	1.4	1.6
High	4513	1.15	39.9	38.3
Technical	4598	1.25	40.6	40.5
Other	906	1.07	8.0	7.9
<u>Total</u>	11315	1.19	100.0	100.0

Tables F3 and F4 provide distributions of schools by contact type for the earlier years. The two school types mentioned above - Special Schools and Technical Schools - show a distinct tendency to be over-represented in cases at Court and under-represented in contacts resulting in warnings. There is some movement over time with respect to these distributions but overall they remain fairly stable.

Overall, 7,460 separate students were involved in 8,492 police contacts, giving an average contact rate of 1.14 compared with the non-students' rate of 1.31. And within that student group 6,101 individual secondary school students could be identified. (The rest of the students' sample comprised 982 primary school students, 45 special school students, and 324 students with insufficient detail to classify them further.)

Table F3
Type of School Attended by Warned Offenders

Type of School	1969 (N=1557)	1972 (N=2290)	1975 (N=4364)
Primary School	25.8%	23.1%	21.3%
Special School	0.9%	0.3%	0.2%
High School	35.6%	37.7%	39.1%
Technical School	27.5%	27.9%	27.7%
Roman Catholic Secondary School	7.4%	7.0%	7.1%
Private Secondary School	2.2%	3.3%	3.3%
Technical or Business College	0.2%	0.0%	0.1%
Not known	0.3%	0.6%	1.1%
<u>Total</u>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table F4
Type of School Attended by Offenders Appearing in Court

Type of School	1966 (N=3562)	1972 (N=7667)	1975 (N=7849)
Primary	13.9%	8.3%	9.2%
Special	0.8%	1.9%	1.8%
High School	31.8%	38.5%	35.7%
Technical School	45.2%	44.3%	43.2%
Roman Catholic Secondary School	7.5%	4.2%	4.2%
Private School	0.8%	1.7%	1.3%
Technical or Business College	NA	0.1%	0.2%
Not known	NA	1.0%	4.5%
<u>Total</u>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

These secondary school students are classified by school and level in Table F5 where the largest single group of secondary students were in third forms at High Schools. In 1972 the third formers at Technical Schools formed the largest single group. In each year the third form level was the level from which most offenders come. Although it is noticeable from the Table that those from Roman Catholic schools are more likely to come from a higher form than those at State schools. And those from Private schools tend to be in higher forms again.

Table F5

Secondary Student Juvenile Offenders by School Type and Level

<u>Type of School</u>	<u>Form</u>							<u>Total</u> (% of sample)
	1	2	3	4	5	6	<u>Not known</u>	
State High School	604	841	768	481	157	12	25	2888 (47.3)
State Technical School	510	687	693	358	87	-	25	2360 (38.7)
Roman Catholic Secondary School	75	112	114	74	50	9	32	466 (7.6)
Private Secondary	19	44	47	56	54	2	9	231 (3.8)
Not known	38	47	35	28	6	-	-	156 (2.6)
<u>Total</u> (% of sample)	1246 (20.4)	1731 (28.4)	1657 (27.2)	997 (16.3)	354 (5.8)	25 (0.4)	91 (1.5)	6101 (100.0%)

A more meaningful way of looking at offenders still attending secondary schools is to compare their distribution by school type with the State figures. This is done in Table F6, from which the Technical Schools can be seen to be significantly over-represented.

Table F6

<u>Type of Secondary School</u>	<u>% Distribution of secondary student Juvenile Offenders</u> (N=5945)	<u>% Distribution of Victorian secondary school population</u> (4)
High School	48.6%	53.5%
Technical School	39.7%	19.4%
Roman Catholic	7.8%	17.3%
Private	3.9%	9.8%
<u>Total</u>	100.0%	100.0%

Tables F7 and F8 summarise the highest educational levels whether current or completed, reached by offenders since 1966. Clearly Form 3 provides the bulk of secondary school offenders. There is a distinct tendency for the younger children at Primary School and for those who have reached Fifth Form level or higher, to be dealt with by official police warnings.

The situation with respect to truancy in the 1975 sample appears to be not as serious a problem as it was shown to be in the 1972 study. In that year the truancy rate of 22% was derived simply from the answer to the Form 276 question "Was truancy a contributing factor?" In the 1975 study, note was made of further, or more specific comments appearing on the

Table F7

Educational Level Reached by Warned Offenders

<u>Educational Level</u>	1969 (N=1557)	1972 (N=2290)	1975 (N=4364)
Primary	25.9%	23.2%	21.3%
Form 1	14.5%	15.5%	16.6%
Form 2	20.1%	20.0%	22.3%
Form 3	23.2%	20.3%	20.3%
Form 4	11.9%	15.4%	14.4%
Form 5 or above	3.9%	5.1%	4.8%
Not known	0.5%	0.5%	0.2%
<u>Total</u>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table F8

Educational Level Reached by Offenders Appearing at Court

<u>Educational Level</u>	1966 (N=3562)	1972 (N=7667)	1975 (N=7849)
Primary	15.9%	8.6%	8.8%
Form 1	15.0%	10.3%	11.4%
Form 2	27.8%	23.5%	24.6%
Form 3	27.4%	35.0%	34.4%
Form 4	11.3%	17.4%	16.6%
Form 5 or above	2.6%	4.3%	3.5%
Not known	-	0.9%	0.4%
<u>Total</u>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

reverse of the Form 276. If truancy had not contributed to the specific offence to which the Form 276 referred, the answer to the question might be 'no', but comments on the reverse might indicate, for instance, that truancy had been a past problem. Table F9 shows that 'yes' answers in 1975 identified 13% of all individuals as truants. The additional comments listed increased the 1975 truancy rate to 17%, which, whilst still concerning, is significantly lower than the 1972 figure.

The average contact figures for 1972 and 1975 indicate that truants have far higher figures than do non-truants. In particular, the high contact figure of 1.48 for those with an identified severe truancy problem at the time of offending constitute a particularly disturbing group.

Table F9

Truancy Records of the Juvenile Offenders

<u>Evidence of Truancy</u>	1972		1975	
	No. of Persons	Average Police Contact Figure	No. of Persons	Average Police Contact Figure
No	6857	1.11	8511	1.16
Yes on front of Form 276	1829	1.27	1319	1.34
Odd days mentioned	-	-	158	1.18
Severe problem now	-	-	125	1.48
Has been a severe problem	-	-	179	1.24
<u>Total</u>	8686	1.15	10292	1.19

There is no accurate base-data concerning truancy in Victoria. However, a small recent study of two Victorian schools showed remarkable results which suggest the truancy rate shown in Table F9 is really quite respectable. The study, by McKinna and Reynolds, involved accurate roll marking over a two week period in a Technical and a High School. (58) They found that 49% of students in the lower three forms of those schools had unexplained absences from classes during the two week period. Further, 16% of the students were absent from school for at least twenty percent of the time.

This raises the quite real problem of defining truancy. The above study would suggest that data collected by police in this regard undoubtedly understates the real situation. Nevertheless, Tables F10 and F11 provide details of truancy records for those warned and taken to court over the years under examination. It will be noted that the truancy rate amongst those warned is significantly less than that for offenders appearing at Court.

No specific place is provided on the Form 276 for the provision of detail about the offender's school experience. Given that overseas research has plainly shown that teachers are in an excellent position to predict delinquency, it seems that they may also be in a position to comment about the offender. This could be done by a teacher's attending court, but locally this is a rare event, although DeLargy-Healy (30) has found that many teachers would be most interested in attending

Table F10

Evidence of Truancy Amongst Warned Offenders

<u>Evidence of Truancy</u>	1969 (N=1557)	1972 (N=2290)	1975 (N=4364)
Yes	9.7%	11.3%	12.1%
No	90.3%	88.7%	87.9%
<u>Total</u>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table F11

Evidence of Truancy Amongst Offenders Appearing in Court

<u>Evidence of Truancy</u>	1966 (N=3562)	1972 (N=7667)	1975 (N=7849)
Yes	17.4%	26.8%	25.7%
No	82.6%	73.2%	74.3%
<u>Total</u>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

court to help one of their pupils. Alternatively, they could provide information through the apprehending police officer but there are problems involved in this. An approach out of the blue from an unknown police officer about a student might appal a teacher, or even prejudice his future behaviour towards that student. Be that as it may, some additional comments about educational factors were gathered in this study and they have been grouped under general headings as follows:

Good Comments

Attends regularly, no problem at school, progressing well, average student, likes school, keen, interested doing well, bright student, hopes to go to Uni., studying for trade.

Bad Comments

Unhappy at school, rejected, not interested, hates or doesn't like school, troublemaker at school, not been for months.

Achievement-related Comments

Backward at school, remedial classes, behind with his work, illiterate.

Offence-related Comments

Committed offences while truant, during lunchtime, while home 'ill', or at school.

Attendance-related Comments

Refuses to go to school, has applied for school exemption, or has been exempted, truancy history, expelled or suspended.

These comments cover a wide spectrum of attitudes towards, and performance at, school. Yet in under 10% of the 1975 Forms 276 was any such comment included. (1,175 comments were found.) Inspection of Court House documents increased this number to 1574. But the extra 399 comments so extracted do not indicate more information about that many individuals. From Court Files one comment was noted for 233 contacts, and two comments for 83 contacts. Moreover, 30 and 12 of these respectively had been noted on the Form 276. Thus the 1574 comments distributed on Table F12 actually involved only 1449 separate contacts.

Table F12Educational Comments

<u>Comments</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>(% of total)</u>
Good	345	21.9
Bad	292	18.6
Achievement	210	13.3
Offence	391	24.9
Attendance	336	21.3
<u>Total</u>	1574	100.0

One fact which is apparent from Table F12 is the relatively low number of positive comments that are made about the offender's educational situation. It seems that if there is not a negative factor to volunteer, those providing information are unwilling to say anything. Yet steady, satisfactory academic progress and an interest in school are surely indicators of a happy and involved student, which bodes only good for the future.

If the truancy comments are also included in this discussion of educational aspects the numbers of comments increase. In some 578 cases where a truancy comment is made further comments were also available, (sixteen of which fell into the 'good' category). These are presented in Table F13.

Table F13
Educational Comments and Truancy

<u>Educational Comments</u>	<u>Non-Truant Contacts</u>	<u>Truant Contacts</u>	<u>Total</u>
Good	279	51	330
Bad	112	168	280
Achievement	134	63	197
Offence	118	271	389
Attendance	125	128	253
Total Contacts with Comments	768	681	1449*
Total Contacts without Comments	9079	1684	10763
Grand Total	9847	2365	12212

* The comments as listed provided a ranking by which to reduce each of the 1449 cases to a single comment.

One interesting feature of Table F13 is the large number of truant contacts where the additional educational factor that was noted related to the occurrence of offence. This figure tends to support the offending-while-truant theory. But it should be remembered that that combination is more likely to be noted by a police informant.

Overall then, most available educational comments are simply factual (form, school, etc.) or negatively oriented. This negative

orientation is seldom directed at the school, but McKinna suggests that many local schools actually contribute to their students' offending. Wilson and Braithwaite tend this way in their study of truancy and offending. (28) They conclude that truancy is a peer group activity (like some offending), that arises in much part from students' perception of school as irrelevant.

These views are not as radical as they seem and there are educationists arguing for changes that will make schools more attractive and utilitarian. Locally, Knight suggests changes to streaming, rationalisation of school rules and realistic and appropriate curricula amongst others, as appropriate in this regard. (49) It does seem that the positive aspects of schooling could well be powerful agents in controlling juvenile offending.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF OFFENDERS

Ecological, or geographical analyses of the distribution of offending have been the focus of many researchers. Baldwin's fine review of such British studies refers to them as "areal" studies. (5) This is possibly a better term than ecological as such work is usually based on both official data and officially defined areas, as distinct from naturally occurring phenomenon plotted according to their normal place of occurrence in the true ecological sense.

The major criminological work in this field was undertaken by Shaw and McKay in Chicago where they discovered over three decades ago, that there were concentric zones of increasing levels of offending activity about the city centre. (77) Moreover, they found that areas of the metropolis maintained their high rates over the passage of time. Such features have been found to occur in many other places, not least of which is Melbourne. (18) But before considering the current data in this light, some caution must be expressed.

Areal studies invariably use rates of offending as their basis. Yet calculation of such rates based on the number of official police contacts generated by the relevant youthful population in a given area, is fraught with difficulties. Firstly, an accurate population figure is needed for that area. In Victoria, the quinquennial Census of Population may be used as a basis, but for intervening years, population projections (of dubious precision) must be used. When relevant population

figures are small, any change in them can generate substantial changes in the offending rate, which is usually given per 1000 population.

But accurate population figures themselves take some time to emerge. The rates that follow were calculated in May 1977 after preliminary single age population figures became available from the 1976 Census. However, in the middle of August, the Bureau of Statistics announced that they had "found" another 68,000 Victorians resident in suburban Melbourne. Worse, the biggest changes - of the order of 5% - occurred in inner-city areas, which traditionally have had high offending rates. But age-specific figures were not available at that time. This means that the rates that follow may be very slightly higher than they really are as they are still based on population figures that are simply not accurate. Nevertheless, fairly confident comparisons of areas can still be made.

Secondly, it is vital to be precise in collecting data, making sure that the relevant number of police contacts are correctly plotted in their right area. In this study Local Government Areas are utilised as the basis for calculating such rates. But unfortunately some suburbs are not completely included within one municipality. One particular Melbourne address, for instance, could fall in any of three different Municipalities. Careful plotting of police contacts occurring within that suburb shows the majority of such contacts

fall in one of those three areas. For this reason, those involved in police contacts whose home addresses did not fall into one municipality clearly, were allocated to a municipality by reference to maps.

A combination of wrongly allocating police contacts to an area, and underestimating its relevant population can obviously bring disastrously misleading results. Even a slight error in each can compound as an error of some gravity in the calculation of a rate. And when rates are compared between areas, the miscalculation can give a misleading picture.

For these technical reasons, precise rates for individual municipalities are not provided in this report. Roughly speaking, the larger the relevant population, the less sensitive to such errors the rate will be. Thus the 1975 juvenile offending rate for the State of Victoria can fairly confidently be stated to be 18.2 police contacts per 1000 juvenile population. More specifically, males have a rate of 28.5 and females a rate of 7.8. (All rates are calculated per 1000 relevant population.)

Technically it should be possible to compare these offending rates with those at other times or in other places. However, in practice this is made difficult because of legislative and definitional differences. Notwithstanding this, a number of juvenile offending rates are provided in Table G1.

It can be seen in that table that the male rates for England, New South Wales and Victoria in 1972 are fairly close,

with New South Wales having the highest rate. With respect to females, Victoria has a rate far higher than the others, a fact which defies any explanation. Japan's low rates, as with that country's crime rate, are very much a function of the closeness of Japanese society.

The situation between New South Wales and Victoria is virtually the same when figures for 1975 are examined, although each place has higher rates than in the earlier year. But the 1975 South Australian figure needs some comment. (A 1972 figure for that State was not readily available.)

Table G1
Juvenile Offending Rates for Selected Places

	<u>Male Rate</u> <u>(per 1000)</u>	<u>Female Rate</u> <u>(per 1000)</u>
England & Wales (1972)	26.0	2.7
Japan (1972)	17.6	2.5
New South Wales (1972)	29.2	3.7
Victoria (1972)	23.9	5.7
South Australia (1975)	57.1	15.6
New South Wales (1975)	31.7	3.8
Victoria (1975)	28.5	7.8

Source: Criminal Statistics, England and Wales, 1972, Juvenile Justice: An International Survey, UNSDRI, 1976, Annual Report of the NSW Department of Youth and Community Affairs 1975, Challenger 1972, Fourth Annual Report of the Administration of the South Australian Juvenile Courts Act, 1971-1974.

Trying to explain the extraordinarily high South Australian figures leads to a frustrating exercise in manipulating official criminal statistics. The Annual Reports of the South Australian Police Force provide statistics relating to "the number of juvenile offenders dealt with" during each year. These Reports give a figure of 3007 under this heading in the 1964 report, and a corresponding figure of 16,697 in 1975. Reference to Table B1 shows the comparable Victorian 1964 figure was twice the South Australian, and in the later year only four-fifths the size. This indicates a quite remarkable change between the two States.

To complicate the issue further, the Annual Report of the South Australian Juvenile Court from which the rates in Table G1 were obtained, shows only 7,843 offenders in 1975. (Court Appearances involving 4,309 and Juvenile Aid Panel hearings involving 3,534). This suggests that the Police Reports are actually referring to offences rather than offenders. But assuming the number of offenders can be estimated from the number of offences, there is still an increase in juvenile offenders that eclipses Victoria's.

A study of South Australia's young offenders from 1954 to 1971, showed a rise in the juvenile offending rate from 5.3 to 21.1 over that period, arising from an increase in the number of offences dealt with from 1502 to 10,802. Yet the author writes:

... after examining the data available from the official sources we have to conclude that there is little reliable evidence of any significant increase in juvenile delinquency from 1954 to 1971. The increase which is believed to have occurred seems to indicate, above all, an increase in the volume of legislation, changing attitudes in the community, and an intensification of law-enforcement procedures. (45:136)

One recent change in the above factors in South Australia was the introduction of the Juvenile Aid Panel - a semi-formal way of dealing with the young offender. This move may have caused an increase in the number of formal police contacts. South Australia's Court rates alone for 1975 were 34.8 for boys and 5.0 for girls.

The foregoing discussion emphasises the folly of directly comparing rates from one jurisdiction to another. Oddities in both the local situation and local criminal statistics prevent an outsider from fully comprehending a foreign situation. The high South Australian rates in Table G1 are caused by such peculiarities.

Returning to the Victorian situation in 1975, it is possible to be a little more specific with the offending rates. The majority, in fact 75.6% of all 1975 police contacts, involved persons resident within the Metropolitan Area of Melbourne. (The comparable figure for 1972 was 71.8%.) The overall offending rate for that area is found to be 20.0; derived from a male rate of 30.9 and a female rate of 8.6. Obviously then, the country areas of the State have lower rates

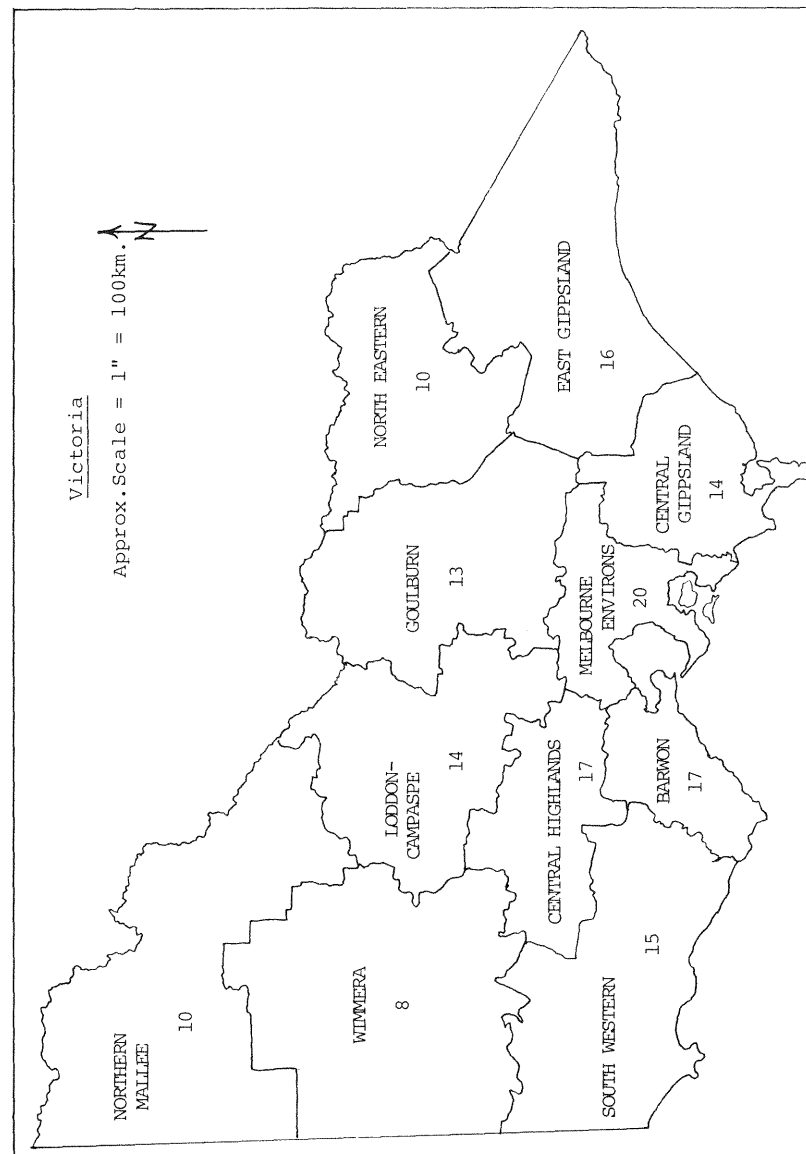
and these are presented in Figure G1. The regions denoted are the standard Bureau of Statistics regions, and are defined in Appendix 2. It will be noted that those regions with large towns, most notably Ballarat (in Central Highlands) and Geelong (in Barwon) have higher rates than the other country regions, but rates that are still modest in comparison with the City rate.

Two features which are of particular interest concern the percentage of female offenders and the usage of official police warning within different areas. There are no significant differences between the Country regions with respect to the ratio between male and female offenders. The State average is 80:20%, the Country regions' figures range only from 78:22 to 85:15.

For the whole State 36% of all police contacts concluded with official warnings, but the variation within Country regions on this measure is considerable. One country region, Central Gippsland, had a significantly lower warning usage, namely 16%. On the other hand, Barwon Region had a 43% warning usage, and South Western Region the highest usage rate of 46%. The variation in use of warnings is even more pronounced in urban areas and a discussion of this phenomenon occurs later.

Figure G2 shows the "Melbourne Environs" region with metropolitan regional offending rates. The definitions of the regions also appear in Appendix 2. The significantly higher rate for the inner-urban region including the City of Melbourne is obvious.

Figure G1
Juvenile Offending Rates for Regions of Victoria



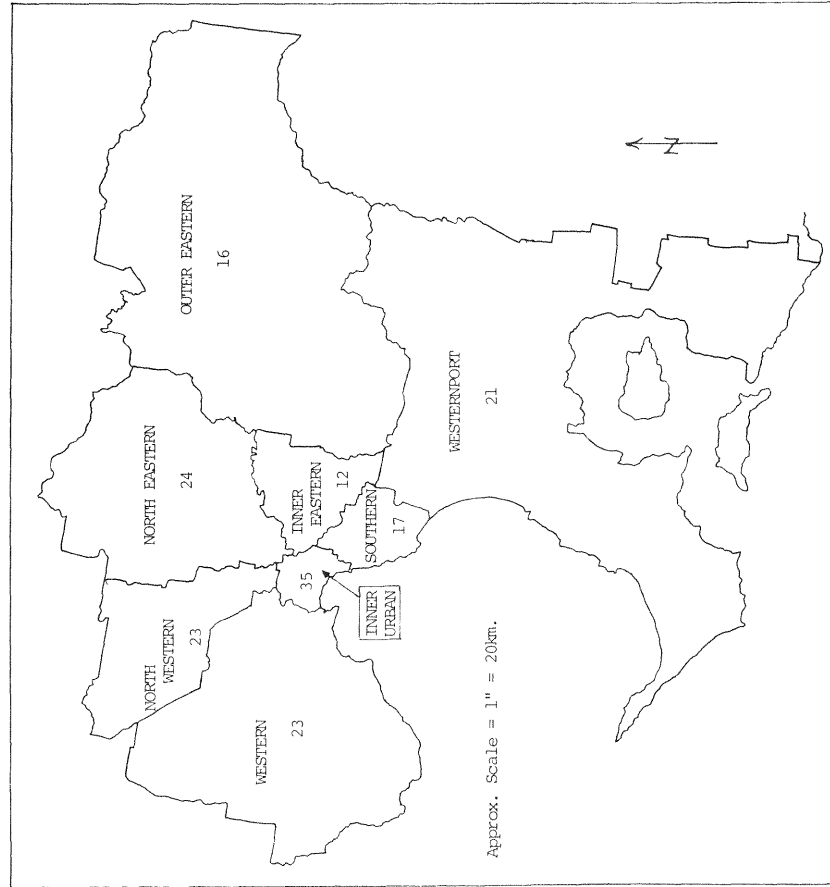


Figure G2
 Juvenile Offending
 Rates for Melbourne
 Environs

The 'Metropolitan Area' mentioned above consists of 55 Local Government Areas which are listed in the following three tables. These show the ranking of these municipalities by reference to their total, male and female offending rates for 1975. The grouped format of the tables has been adopted because of the dangers in comparing precise rates. This method however, does not really indicate, in particular, the sizeable difference in rates between the highest and lowest ranking areas. For the total offending rate, Collingwood, the municipality with the highest rate of over 50, was over eight times the rate for the lowest ranking municipality, Healesville. But Healesville is predominantly rural, with a population of less than 1500 adolescents, while Collingwood, an industrial area in the late nineteenth century, is now populated in large part, by residents of Housing Commission high-rise flats. The difference in the two areas could scarcely be greater.

Another great difference appears between Collingwood, again the top ranking area with respect to the male offending rate, and Kew, the area with the lowest male rate. The City of Kew shares a common boundary, the Yarra River, with the City of Collingwood. But Kew is an exclusive area with expensive properties and a primarily professionally occupied population. Collingwood's male rate is only slightly short of 100. That is, there was almost one police contact for every 10 adolescents resident in Collingwood in 1975. This rate is again over eight times that of the lowest rate.

The female rates again involve Healesville (the lowest), but the highest rate occurred in Fitzroy, Collingwood's neighbour on the western side. Here, Fitzroy's rate exceeds 20 and is well clear of the second highest municipality, the City of Melbourne. This rate is over 14 times that of Healesville, but the small adolescent female population in Healesville makes their rate a little unreliable.

Differences of this dimension between areas have been previously discovered in Britain as Baldwin points out. (5) Collection of similar data for smaller, and more sociologically homogeneous areas would undoubtedly show even greater differences. Power, Benn and Morris found that their range of "neighbourhood rates" was at least as wide as that reported elsewhere between municipalities. (70) The identification of small pockets of high offending rates in Melbourne is possible, but it would require precise plotting of all home addresses on a very detailed map.

Table G2

Juvenile Offending Rates for Metropolitan Local Government

<u>Areas</u>	
<u>Rate per 1000 juvenile popula- tion</u>	<u>Local Government Areas (Rank in brackets)</u>
35 and over	(1) Collingwood (2) Fitzroy (3) Richmond (4) Melton (5) Williamstown (6) Melbourne
30 - 34	(7) Port Melbourne (8) Footscray (9) St. Kilda (10) Preston
25 - 29	(11) Chelsea (12) Frankston (13) Berwick (14) Brunswick
20 - 24 (Average 20.0)	(15) Sunshine (16) Box Hill (17) Broadmeadows (18) Heidelberg (19) Northcote (20) South Mel- bourne (21) Whittlesea (22) Prahran (23) Oak- leigh (24) Bulla (25) Sandringham
15 - 19	(26) Eltham (27) Dandenong (28) Sherbrooke (=30) Coburg (=30) Essendon (=30) Lilydale (=30) Springvale (=33) Mornington (=33) Werribee (35) Hawthorn (36) Altona (37) Knox (38) Mord- iallic (39) Keilor (40) Flinders (=41) Brighton (=41) Croydon (43) Moorabbin (=44) Caulfield (=44) Cranbourne (46) Ringwood
Under 15	(47) Malvern (48) Diamond Valley (49) Nunawading (50) Hastings (51) Camberwell (52) Waverley (53) Doncaster and Templestowe (54) Kew (55) Heale- ville

Table G3

Male Offending Rates for Metropolitan Local Government Areas

<u>Rate per 1000 juvenile popula- tion</u>	<u>Local Government Areas (Rank in brackets)</u>
60+	(1) Collingwood (2) Fitzroy (3) Richmond (4) Port Melbourne (5) Williamstown (6) Melton
50 - 59	(7) St. Kilda (8) Melbourne (9) Footscray
40 - 49	(10) Preston (=11) Berwick (=11) Brunswick (13) Chelsea
35 - 39	(=14) Box Hill (=14) Sunshine (16) South Melbourne (17) Frankston (18) Broadmeadows (19) Prahran
30 - 34 (Average 30.9)	(20) Northcote (21) Oakleigh (22) Heidelberg (23) Coburg (24) Bulla (25) Essendon (26) Sand- ringham (=27) Dandenong (=27) Springvale
25 - 29	(29) Werribee (30) Whittlesea (31) Eltham (32) Hawthorn (33) Lilydale (34) Brighton (35) Sherbrooke (36) Knox (37) Croydon (38) Altona
20 - 24	(39) Flinders (40) Malvern (=41) Caulfield (=41) Moorabbin (43) Keilor (44) Mordialloc (45) Ringwood (46) Mornington
20 and under	(47) Diamond Valley (48) Cranbourne (49) Nunawad- ing (50) Camberwell (51) Waverley (52) Doncaster and Templestowe (53) Hastings (54) Healesville (55) Kew

Table G4

Female Offending Rates for Metropolitan Local Government

Areas

<u>Rate per 1000 juvenile popula- tion</u>	<u>Local Government Areas (Rank in brackets)</u>
16+	(1) Fitzroy (2) Melbourne
13 - 15	(3) Frankston (4) Whittlesea (5) Melton (=6) Footscray (=6) Heidelberg (=8) Chelsea (=8) Richmond
10 - 12	(10) Mornington (11) Northcote (12) Preston (13) Cranbourne (14) Berwick (15) Brunswick (16) Sherbrooke (17) Broadmeadows (18) Colling- wood (19) Williamstown
7 - 9 (Average 8.6)	(20) Eltham (=21) St. Kilda (=21) Sandringham (23) Lilydale (=25) Sunshine (=25) Box Hill (=25) Mordialloc (27) Dandenong (28) Hastings (29) Diamond Valley (30) Keilor (31) Altona (32) Essendon (33) Flinders (=34) Prahran (=34) Ringwood (36) Springvale
4 - 6	(37) Coburg (=38) Bulla (=38) Knox (=40) Moorab- bin (=40) Port Melbourne (=43) South Melbourne (=43) Caulfield (=43) Oakleigh (=46) Croydon (=46) Brighton (=46) Doncaster and Templestowe (48) Hawthorn (49) Nunawading (50) Malvern (51) Werribee (52) Camberwell
1 - 3	(53) Kew (54) Waverley (55) Healesville

A spatial representation of Metropolitan offending rates for 1975 appears in Figure G2 where it will be observed that the inner-city is the focus for all offending. Melton, an

area undergoing fairly rapid development in the West, has brought also an influx of young people and a very high offending rate.

The preceding tables also reveal definite differences with respect to the situation in various municipalities with respect to male and female offending. For instance, Port Melbourne ranks fourth for male offenders and equal fortieth for females. Conversely, Whittlesea ranks fourth for females and thirtieth for males. In each case there are slightly more boys in the relevant youthful population so this alone cannot explain the difference. Close examination of constituent police contacts is the only way to explain these differences. As an example in 1972 the Shire of Flinders scored the highest female rate, in 1975 the Shire ranks thirty-third with a rate of half its previous level. Inspection of the particular 1972 police contacts reveals a simple explanation. A number of girls from the area, which had a comparatively low female adolescent population, were apprehended in another area of the State on a shoplifting trip. The high rate was therefore a peculiar and quite untypical situation although on the face of it, there was a serious problem.

This example serves to show the dangers of drawing conclusions based on data applicable to one year only. Table G5 gives an indication of the total offending rate for Metropolitan Municipalities over the last nine years.

Table G5
Comparison of Total Offending Rates 1966-1975

Local Government Area	1966	1969	1972	1975
Altona	***	**	****	**
Berwick	-	-	***	****
Box Hill	*	*	***	****
Brighton	*	*	*	**
Broadmeadows	****	*****	***	****
Brunswick	***	****	****	****
Bulla	-	-	**	***
Camberwell	**	***	**	*
Caulfield	***	****	****	**
Chelsea	***	***	**	****
Chelsea	**	****	**	***
Coburg	****	****	****	****
Collingwood	****	****	****	****
Cranbourne	-	-	*	**
Croydon	**	***	**	**
Dandenong	*	*	**	***
Dandenong	**	**	**	*
Diamond Valley	*	*	*	*
Doncaster & Templestowe	*	*	*	*
Eltham	**	*	**	**
Essendon	****	****	****	****
Fitzroy	****	****	****	****
Flinders	-	-	****	**
Flinders	****	****	****	****
Footscray	****	**	****	****
Frankston	****	**	****	****
Hastings	-	-	*	*
Hawthorn	****	****	**	**
Healesville	-	-	*	*
Heidelberg	****	***	****	****
Heidelberg	****	****	***	**
Keilor	*	**	*	*
Kew	**	**	****	**
Knox	**	**	***	***
Lilydale	*	**	**	*
Malvern	*	*	**	*
Melbourne	****	****	****	****
Melton	-	-	**	****
Melton	**	**	**	**
Moorabbin	**	*	****	**
Mordialloc	-	-	*	**
Mornington	**	***	**	****
Northcote	**	*	*	*
Nunawading	*	*	**	**
Oakleigh	***	**	***	***
Port Melbourne	****	****	****	****
Port Melbourne	****	****	****	****
Prahran	****	****	****	****
Preston	****	****	****	****
Richmond	****	****	****	****
Ringwood	**	*	*	*
St. Kilda	***	****	****	****
St. Kilda	***	**	****	**
Sandringham	-	-	*	**
Sherbrooke	****	****	****	****
South Melbourne	****	**	****	**
Springvale	**	**	***	****
Sunshine	**	**	**	**
Sunshine	*	***	**	*
Waverley	*	**	**	*
Werribee	-	-	**	**
Whittlesea	***	***	**	****
Whittlesea	****	****	****	****
Williamstown	****	****	****	****

KEY

Very low:
*
Low:
**
Average:

High:

Very high:

Another way of looking at changes over time is to look specifically at those areas that have the highest rates. These often tend to remain the same for periods of time, as Shaw and McKay originally pointed out. Table G6 ranks the ten Municipalities with highest total offending rates in 1966, and provides their respective ranks in the later years. It will be seen that the four contiguous inner-city municipalities of Melbourne, Fitzroy, Collingwood and Richmond are in the 'top ten' for each year in question. Four of the others (plus St. Kilda, which was not in the original ten) ranked very highly in three of the years under study. These five areas are also inner-city areas, which indicates that Melbourne's inner city area is an area of considerable and disproportionate official juvenile offending activity.

It is interesting to note that South Melbourne and Prahran, the two municipalities which dropped out of the ten highest areas in 1975, are two areas which in recent times have become attractive areas to live for young city workers. And this highlights another problem with analyses such as this. Namely, that the artificial (official) areas for which rates are calculated, may have no sociological homogeneity. Prahran, for instance, includes expensive mansions occupied by Melbourne's high society, as well as Housing Commission high rise accommodation. Thus the Prahran rate may be affected by either group's possible involvement in juvenile offending, yet only an overall rate can be calculated.

Table G6

The Ten Metropolitan Municipalities With Highest Total
Offending Rates 1966-1975

<u>Local Government Area</u>	<u>1966 Rank</u>	<u>1969 Rank</u>	<u>1972 Rank</u>	<u>1975 Rank</u>
Collingwood	1	1	1	1
Pichmond	2	2	7	3
Port Melbourne	3	9		7
Melbourne	4	8	2	6
Footscray	5			8
South Melbourne	6	4	8	
Fitzroy	7	10	3	2
Prahran	8	6	6	
Williamstown	9		5	5
Keilor	10			
New Municipalities replacing above in highest ten		3. St. Kilda 5. Hawthorn 7. Broadmead- OWS	4. St. Kilda 9. Preston 10. Flinders	4. Melton 9. St. Kilda 10. Preston

Yet another problem with the previous two tables is caused by the fact that the rates reproduced here for 1966 and 1969 are based only on Children's Court Appearances. And it may be that inclusion of official warnings, even though numerically small in those years, may alter the rankings shown.

This is a distinct possibility, as there is a tendency for those from areas with lower rates overall to be more likely to receive an official warning from the Police. The variation in use of the official warning is mostly a function of the police officer in charge of the police district. In 1975 it was he who had to decide whether the young offender should be dealt with at Court or officially warned. His decision depended on the offender, the offence, and his attitude towards warnings. Horman has shown that Victorian police officers, in deciding whether to warn in 1972 had no formal guidelines. Even the interpretation of the phrases "first offender" and "minor offence", which are embodied in the Standing Order relating to warnings, varied considerably between officers. (44)

Small wonder, then, that variations in use of official warnings occur from place to place. But this situation is by no means unique to Victoria. Ditchfield has shown a great difference between 46 British Police Forces with respect to their use of cautioning provisions for juveniles. He found 70% of juveniles being warned in one area, and 16% being warned in another, which happens to be an "industrial" area. (32)

Table G7 shows the relative use of warnings, as a percentage of total contacts, within the municipalities of Metropolitan Melbourne. It shows that an offender in the Shire of Sherbrooke was over three times as likely to be warned as an offender resident in the City of Richmond. The exercise

of this police discretion has been touched upon earlier in this paper. The definite differences between areas may moderate in the future with the latest Police directive with respect to warning all first offenders.

Table G7

Warning Rates for Metropolitan Local Government Areas

<u>Percentage of Warnings in all Police Contacts</u>	<u>Local Government Area (overall rank in Brackets)</u>
over 50%	(1) Sherbrooke (2) Doncaster and Templestowe (3) Healesville (4) Diamond Valley (5) Camberwell (6) Hastings (7) Croydon (8) Frankston
45 - 50%	(9) Chelsea (10) Cranbourne (11) Ringwood (12) Warrisee (13) Morningside
41 - 44%	(14) Keilor (15) Knox (16) Lilydale (17) Whittlesea (18) Waverley (19) Pulla (20) Eltham
38 - 40%	(21) Malvern (22) Oakleigh (23) Altona (24) Box Hill
35 - 37% (Average 36.1%)	(25) Coburg (26) Nunawading (=27) Ferwick (=27) Kew (29) Melton (30) Northcote (31) Brunswick (32) Prahran
30 - 34%	(33) Hawthorn (34) Caulfield (35) Flinders (36) Mordialloc (37) Moorabbin (38) Heidelberg (39) Broadmeadows (40) Springvale (41) Essendon (42) Erihton
25 - 29%	(43) Port Melbourne (44) Sunshine (45) Fitzroy (46) Sandringham (47) Collingwood (48) Preston (49) Williamstown
under 25%	(50) Dandenong (51) Melbourne (52) Footscray (53) St. Kilda (54) South Melbourne (55) Richmond

Studies of population density and various aspects of human behaviour have been popular of late. Specifically it has been suggested that juvenile offending is highly associated with overcrowding in certain areas. But Gillis (39) has shown that with respect to Canadian juvenile delinquency rates, building type is far more important. The distinction in building type exists between multiple dwellings and single detached houses, and the subsequent internal overcrowding. More common usage of the term overcrowding relates to the population per area of land. Table G8 examines the ten most densely populated Melbourne municipalities. It is clear that there is no obvious connection between this overcrowding and juvenile offending in Melbourne.

Table G8

Total Juvenile Offending Rates for Densely Populated Municipalities

	<u>Persons per square km.</u>	<u>Rank of Population Density</u>	<u>Rank of Juvenile Offending Rates</u>
St. Kilda	6086	1	9
Fitzroy	5587	2	2
Prahran	5074	3	22
Brunswick	4349	4	14
Richmond	4278	5	3
Collingwood	3482	6	1
Caulfield	3349	7	=44
Hawthorn	3330	8	35
Northcote	3208	9	19
Coburg	3120	10	=30

There is an increasing tendency to subject data of the sort gathered in this study to complex statistical manipulation. The dubious nature of police-record based data has been discussed here, as it is in most studies of this sort. Yet keen mathematical technicians still use it in complicated analyses. As an example, consider Basilevsky's sophisticated statistical work which uses Wallis and Maliphant's original data. (6) This work investigates significant relationships which exist amongst the original variables. That is, while two factors may be both correlated with delinquency, they may also obviously be correlated with each other, and only one of them should be isolated as an important factor. After the mass of mathematics, Basilevsky concludes that "social class or status explains a very large part of the inter-borough variation of delinquency but there also exist 'secondary' cultural and historical influences".

Kraus in New South Wales also undertook sophisticated analysis of this sort, for male juvenile delinquency rates. (52) Kraus' confidence in his offending rates exceeds that in the present study. His confidence also extends to other sociological rates that he uses. And some of these factors too are not universally accepted as truly representative. For instance, alcoholism and psychiatric illness as described by Kraus both require admission into a State psychiatric hospital. Those who have the resources can often avoid entering a public institution for treatment, and the resulting rate of

alcoholism' may well be quite inaccurate for municipalities in which such people live. Using such rates in an individual-social-economic alienation score makes it most unlikely that areas with no alternative resources, or of low 'socio-economic' status, will be further isolated as grave problems.

The Metropolitan Area of Melbourne can be split into eight distinct socio-economic groups according to a 1974 Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works study which uses similar factors to Kraus. (55) Thus, in a limited way, Basilevsky's statement with respect to the importance of social class can be tested with the current data. The police-contact rates for each socio-economic area appear on Table G9. It will be observed that there is an obvious tendency for the rate to be higher in lower socio-economic areas. But these areas, based on such factors as unemployment, municipal rates and house prices, are obvious continually changing and the areas defined in the report are based on 1971 data which may by now be quite outdated.

The recent work of Vinson and Homel in New South Wales is the most formative Australian work relating to area-analysis. (83) They established that existing social statistics relating to social disadvantage could be analysed to identify clearly areas with grave social problems. The substantial effect of juvenile offending rates in their analyses indicates that a high rate on this measure is a very good general indicator of social difficulties.

Table G9

Offending Rates and Socio-Economic Status

	<u>Socio-Economic Status</u>	<u>Total Offending Rate</u>	
↑ ↓	Low	1	36.7
		2	26.5
		3	26.3
		4	26.0
		5	19.5
		6	22.8
		7	15.9
	High	8	12.4

If this finding can be applied to Victoria, it means that the ranking of Melbourne's Municipalities in Table G2 can be seen to approximate their ranking according to social disadvantage. And the problem with statements such as this is that many may tend to use the Table to indicate whether an area has no, or few, problems. All areas of Melbourne have their problems, in some they are more apparent, and more easily measured by official intervention of one sort or another. In this case, the data simply indicates areas of Melbourne where official police action against young offenders is concentrated.

THE OFFENCES

The 12,212 official police contacts with offenders that form the 1975 sample involve more than that number of offences. A police officer apprehending a shoplifter for instance, may discover that the offender has in his possession stolen goods that he has been given by another (unknown) person. Thus, the offender may be charged not only with theft, but also with receiving, or handling stolen property. The most frequent pair of offences that occur in this way are the theft of a motor car - unlicensed driving combination.

Similarly, a juvenile who has been on an extended spree of offending may be charged with a list of offences. A typical instance would result in charges for burglary, theft and wilful damage. This offending event occasions three separate types of offences. A juvenile who is charged with, say, ten counts of burglary will be charged on each of those counts, but in this study the case will be noted as involving only one offence type - burglary. In practice, most of the police contacts involve only one offence type, as can be seen from Table H1.

While some contacts occasioned over three different offence types, only the most serious three were noted in this study. The total number of offence types noted is the 16,274 which averages out to 1.33 offences per contact.

Table H1Number of Offence Types Involved In Each Police Contact

<u>Number of Offence Types</u>	<u>Number of Contacts</u> (% of total)	<u>Total Number of</u> <u>Offence Types</u>
1	8867 (72.6)	8867
2	2628 (21.5)	5256
3	717 (5.9)	2151
<u>Total</u>	12212 (100.0)	16274

This is slightly below the corresponding figure of 1.38 in 1972, which indicates the presence of slightly more single offence contacts in 1975.

It is convenient from the point of view of further analysis to describe each police contact in terms of the major offence involved. This categorisation appears in Table H2. The allocation of offence type to each police contact was completed in the following way: any contact involving a Protection Application was so classified, regardless of whether it replaced or was made at the same time as charges for offences were laid. All contacts were then sorted according to the hierarchy shown on Table H2, which is adapted from the Victoria Police Major Crime Index. Thus a contact involving an assault and indecent language charge was classified as an assault. And a contact involving a theft and a rape was classified as a sexual offence.

Table H2

Reason for Police Contact by Listed Offences

<u>Reason for Police Contact</u>	<u>No. of Offence Types Listed</u> (% of total)		<u>No. of Police Contacts</u> (% of total)	
<u>Offences</u>				
Assault	612	(3.7)	467	(3.8)
Robbery	63	(0.4)	42	(0.3)
Sexual Offences	239	(1.5)	181	(1.5)
Minor Sexual Offences	71	(0.4)	63	(0.5)
Breaking	2603	(16.0)	2479	(20.3)
Larceny	5151	(31.6)	4346	(35.6)
Motor Vehicle Offences	1265	(7.8)	953	(7.8)
False Pretences, etc.	110	(0.7)	61	(0.5)
Other Offences Against Persons	169	(1.0)	144	(1.2)
Other Offences Against Property	1689	(10.4)	971	(8.0)
Offences Against Good Order	1025	(6.3)	577	(4.7)
Road Traffic Offences	2218	(13.6)	869	(7.1)
<u>Protection Applications</u>	1059	(6.6)	1059	(8.7)
<u>Total</u>	16274	(100.0)	12212	(100.0)

Obviously, then, the number of contacts involving minor offences was a smaller percentage of the total number of contacts than the minor offences were a percentage of all offences listed. The majority of 1975 contacts (55.9%) were classified as burglaries or thefts, comparing well with the 1972 figure of 54.8%. The only cautionary note relates to

Road Traffic Offences, which are undoubtedly under-represented because Forms 276 are not required to be completed for these offences.

Kraus engaged in statistical analyses to see if judicial labels such as those used here, had any typological meaning. (50) He discovered that only sex offences, carnal knowledge, and behaviour problems were statistically separable types. This indicates that there is a great overlap between all other offences and that many offenders run the gamut, for instance, of all property offences. The classification used here then has most value as a convenient means of handling the large amount of data.

When the 1975 contacts are further split into either warnings or court cases, there is considerable difference between the offences involved. Warnings are given predominantly for larceny cases, and this situation has plainly held since 1969. Tables H3 and H4 outline the various offences for which warnings and court appearances have been given in the past period under study. The predominance of property offences in all these tables indicates the real nature of most officially detected juvenile offending. This is somewhat in contrast to the popular stereotype discussed earlier, but this is not to deny that serious and shocking offences are committed by some young people.

Table H3

Offences for Which Warnings Given 1969-1975

Offence	1969 Official Police Figures* (N=1591)	1969 (N=1557)	1972 (N=2290)	1975 (N=4346)
Assault	0.6%	0.6%	1.3%	1.4%
Sex Offences	1.0%	1.3%	0.7%	0.8%
Breaking	13.6%	14.3%	17.0%	17.1%
Larceny	64.0%	62.3%	57.6%	58.2%
Motor Vehicle	3.4%	4.2%	3.5%	2.8%
Traffic	N.K.	1.5%	4.0%	3.7%
Other	17.4%	15.3%	15.8%	16.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

* From the 1969 Police Department Annual Report.

Table H4

Offences for Offenders Appearing at Court
1966-1975

Offence	1969 (N=3562)	1972 (N=7667)	1975 (N=7849)
Assault	3.5%	3.9%	5.2%
Robbery	.6%	.5%	.5%
Sex Offences	4.2%	2.7%	1.8%
Breaking	20.9%	25.7%	22.1%
Larceny	24.7%	23.1%	23.0%
Motor Vehicle	12.3%	13.7%	10.6%
Traffic	6.5%	5.2%	9.0%
Other Offences	9.9%	12.2%	14.3%
Protection Applica- tions	17.3%	13.0%	13.4%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

A precise breakdown of the 16,274 offences or applica-
tions which result from the 12,212 police contacts in 1975
follows:

1. Protection Applications N=1059

The 1059 protection applications still included in the
juvenile offending sample comprise:

511 applications on the grounds of being "exposed to moral
danger".

397 applications on the grounds of being "likely to lapse
into a career of vice or crime".

76 applications made in conjunction with charges for
offences, and

75 unspecified applications.

The separation of these applications was described in the
first section of this report.

2. Major Offences against the Person N=985

Assault N=612, comprising:	Sex Offences N=239, comprising:
Assault police 44	Carnal knowledge 64
Assault causing grievous bodily harm/malicious wounding 82	Rape or attempted rape 10
Unlawful assault 313	Indecent assault on a female 124
Assault by kicking 78	Miscellaneous 3
Assault with knife or weapon 81	Buggery and gross indecency 25
Assault with intent 14	Indecent assault on a male 10

Robbery N=63, comprising:	Lesser Sex Offences N=71, comprising:
Robbery (undefined) 46	Wilful exposure 56
Robbery in company 10	Indecent phone calls, letters 12
Robbery under arms or with weapons 1	Loiter for homosexual purposes 3
Robbery with violence or wounding 6	

In line with the popular stereotype of the juvenile offender is the idea that he is violent and dangerous to anyone he meets. The above offences against the person account for only 6% of all the offences listed. Not only that, but many of the assaults occur between young persons and are often alcohol-generated. The robberies are often menacing acts against others, rather than the popular idea of the big bank-heist. Carnal knowledge charges usually involve a consenting though under-age girl. Indecent assault of a female can be a mild but spontaneous grab. And wilful exposure is often the act of an immature lad.

This is not to deny that serious and savage assaults on innocent males and females are never committed by juveniles. But it is true that those indulging in such outrageous behaviour are a very small minority of the juveniles that the Victoria Police deal with in any year.

3. Major Property Offences N=9129

Burglary N=2603, comprising:	Motor Vehicle Offences N=1265 comprising:
Unspecified 1748	Stealing car 982
Factory breaking 51	Stealing (family) car 50
Garage breaking 32	Stealing motorcycle 105
House breaking 697	Tamper with motor vehicle 120
Shop breaking 53	Stealing/illegal use other vehicles (bikes, boats, etc) 8
Store breaking 22	
Theft N=5151, comprising:	False Pretence Type Offences N=110 comprising:
Unspecified 2109	False pretences 46
Shoplifting 2308	Forgery and uttering 53
Larceny of bicycles 398	Imposition, embezzlement, etc. 11
Larceny from motor cars 313	
Larceny as a servant 23	

The offences listed above constitute 56% of all offences recorded for the 1975 sample. Inclusion of Addition of the minor property offences (which follow) raises that percentage to 67%, emphasising the property-orientation mentioned earlier. Self-report studies have indicated that property offences are a frequent form of adolescent misbehaviour. Belson's recent English work clearly indicates the commonness of theft by the young. (8)

The large number of unspecified thefts and burglaries result from the Police no longer being required to define the offence explicitly on the Form 276.

Nevertheless, it is clear that within the two groups, housebreaking and shoplifting were responsible for many police contacts. And for each of these particular offences it is often heard that juveniles are the major offenders. In fact juveniles represent the majority of offenders who are apprehended for these offences. But juvenile housebreakers and shoplifters undoubtedly lack the panache and skill of their adult counterparts and therefore are more likely to be detected.

The same comment also applies to motor cars. Biles has indicated an apparent dominance of juveniles in this offence. (12) He points out that 49.4% of Victorian car thieves apprehended in 1972 were under 16 years old. But youths of this age would surely attract the attention of police if they were seen driving a car on the road.

The 50 cases of stealing the family car probably understates the occurrence of this somewhat novel offence. Pressure from insurance companies who would not pay repair claims until the known offenders were charged explain at least some of these. The unlicensed-driving aspect of the use of the family car is probably the most alarming feature of such an event. And one which is rightfully dealt with in a court of law, since good attitudes to driving amongst the young are surely important to foster.

The growth of charity donation collecting by young people has brought with it a number of dishonest youngsters

who have practised deception by collecting and keeping donations from householders. While still a relatively small number of offences are involved, these and the ease with which some members of the public cash or accept cheques from others ensure a living for some young people.

4. Other Offences Against Persons N=169, comprising:

Drug offences	69
Throw stones or missiles	87
Blackmail, abduction, etc.	13

This small group of offences includes a large number of charges of throwing stones or missiles. These may seem somewhat minor, but generally involved a high probability of harm, or actual harm, to others. Dropping rocks from freeway pedestrian bridges, throwing them at trains, or throwing bottles from trains, are certainly dangerous to the public. And there is no doubt that the police would receive generous support from the public for formally proceeding against such offenders.

Drug offences are included in this category because of the potential harm to others that can come about from those offences, most notably selling or peddling.

5. <u>Other Offences Against Property</u>	N=1689, comprising:
Arson	94
Loiter with intent	38
Malicious damage	123
Wilful damage	641
Unlawful possession	46
Receiving	360
Possess house-breaking implements	27
Unlawfully on premises	345
Other miscellaneous	15

The greatest number of offences within this category relate to damage to property. Instantly the word vandalism springs to mind, and the sub-stereotype of the 'delinquent', the 'vandal', is well known to readers of the local press. The topic itself has been subject to much research of late. See for instance, Ward (85) for an architectural perspective, or Cohen (27) for a criminological viewpoint. But a solution to the problem is not visible. The difficulty in producing such a solution is shown in Mawby's work on telephone-box vandalism. (60) Using rigorous data and painstaking analyses he concludes only that the rate of such vandalism is higher in 'council areas' and in particular, in 'council areas' with high offender rates.

The second largest group of offences within this category relate to receiving or handling stolen property.

It seems that some young people may entertain the idea that accepting or buying stolen goods from others is not itself an offence. Belson's study indicated that 69% of his sample of adolescent boys "had something that (they) knew was stolen" (8:73), indicating wide acceptance of this behaviour by the young.

6. <u>Other Offences Against Good Order</u>	N=1025, comprising:
Indecent language	108
Offensive behaviour	121
Carrying offensive weapon	66
Resist arrest	39
Hinder police	30
Underage drinking offences	93
Drunk and disorderly	20
Escape legal custody	129
Fire gun without permission	50
Other firearm (including airgun) offences	247
Miscellaneous	122

The main group of offences within this category are those most frequently referred to as street offences. A large number of these appear to have arisen from consumption of alcohol, the contact occurring with a policeman who may have been called to a disturbance of some sort.

The fairly high number of offences involving youths and firearms is one which should concern the community. There are obviously large numbers of adolescents

in possession of airguns, for instance. It is only in the case of accident or complaint that police may become aware of an underage firearm offence. Parents have an obvious responsibility to the community in this situation. Condoning the offence or even encouraging it, is counter-productive at the very least.

7. Road Traffic Offences N=2218, comprising:

Unlicensed driving	1196
Unregistered motorcycle and other offences involving motorcycles	624
General traffic breaches	398

It was pointed out earlier that this category is probably understated as police officers are not required to complete a Form 276 when proceeding against such offenders.

Notwithstanding this, the majority of the unlicensed driving charges occurred jointly with car-theft charges. The large number of motorcycle offences reflects the high ownership of trail bikes by young people with no legal place to ride them. Some offroad areas have been set up by community groups and others to relieve this situation, but such motorcyclists are still attracting police attention in many areas. Unfortunately, police intervention in many of these cases is perceived not only by the youths, but by their parents also, as unwarranted and ridiculous. It is obviously not only young people whose attitude to road safety matters needs to be improved.

Group Offences

Another feature relating to the offending events under study is the high proportion of events that involve more than one offender. The Americans in particular have spent much time and effort concentrating on what they call "gang delinquency". And if a gang may be described as a pair of offenders or more, then it would appear from Table H5 that Victoria's offenders operate in such a way. But Hindelang has recently pointed out that because of the actual police-juvenile interaction, there is far more chance of group-offenders being registered in the official statistics. (43) That is, a police officer may be treated with less co-operation by a group of offenders than by a lone offender. And this co-operation may have a definite effect on the police officer's decision to proceed formally.

Table H5
Co-offenders Involved in each Offending Event

<u>No. of Co-offenders involved</u>	<u>1975</u>		<u>1972</u>
	<u>No. of Events</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
0	4278	35.1	33.8
1	4032	33.0	31.0
2	2313	18.9	19.1
3	963	7.9	9.7
4	358	2.9	3.4
5	153	1.3	1.9
6	75	0.6	0.8
7+	40	0.3	0.3
<u>Total</u>	12212	100.0	100.0

Notwithstanding this criticism of the official figures, the following Tables H6 and H7 indicate group involvement in offending over the last few years. It will be noticed that warnings are more often given to groups of offenders. This tends to lend more weight to Hindelang's argument above by indicating that many offences for which warnings are given may be minor offences involving groups of offenders. Indeed, minor offences which may not have been formally proceeded against if a group had not been involved and the offender had appeared to the police officer to be immediately contrite.

Table H6

Number of Co-offenders for Warned Offenders 1969-1975

<u>No. of Co-offenders</u>	<u>1969</u> (N=1557)	<u>1972</u> (N=2290)	<u>1975</u> (N=4364)
None	24.1%	22.7%	29.1%
One	37.3%	41.2%	37.6%
Two	21.7%	21.9%	20.5%
Three	9.6%	9.8%	7.5%
Four or more	7.3%	4.4%	5.3%
<u>Total</u>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table H7

Number of Co-offenders for Offenders Appearing in Court 1966-1975

<u>No. of Co-offenders</u>	<u>1966</u> (N=3562)	<u>1972</u> (N=7667)	<u>1975</u> (N=7849)
None	36.6%	37.2%	38.3%
One	30.7%	27.9%	30.4%
Two	17.5%	18.3%	18.1%
Three	10.0%	9.7%	8.1%
Four or more	5.2%	6.9%	5.1%
<u>Total</u>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Value of Offences

The high percentage of property-oriented offences raises the question of the sort of property involved in those offences. In this study legal documents at Court-houses provided details of property involved and its value. These were noted, provision being made for three distinct types of property to be accommodated. Thus, if a house-breaker stole cash, clothing and jewellery, all three could be noted. A thief stealing only a bicycle had just that item of property recorded. In this way a total of 5242 items of property involved in 3881 offences were recorded. (Three property items were noted in 342 cases, two in 677 cases, and one in the remaining 2862.) This excludes cases of theft of a motor car where obviously in each offence, a

motor vehicle was involved. There were 1032 such separate offences of stealing motor vehicles. In addition, 185 cases involving theft of a bicycle, and 56 cases of theft of a motorcycle did not formally have an item of property noted during the data collection. The inclusion of the appropriate goods involved in these offences produces a total of 6515 items which are tabulated in Table H8.

Table H8
Items of Property Stolen in 5100 Offences

<u>Type of Property</u>	<u>No. of Times Property Type Noted in 5100 Offences</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Motor car	1032	15.8
Motor car accessories	110	1.7
Motorcycles	149	2.3
Bicycles, & bicycle accessories or parts	512	7.9
Clothing	648	9.9
Televisions, radios, electrical appliances	350	5.4
Stationery	232	3.6
Jewellery	401	6.2
Cash	1163	17.9
Foodstuffs (confectionery and groceries)	440	6.8
Alcoholic drinks	123	1.9
Sporting goods, toys	398	6.1
Cigarettes	244	3.7
Tools, hardware	360	5.5
Cosmetics	171	2.6
Records	94	1.4
Miscellaneous (weapons, livestock, medical goods, etc.)	88	1.3
<u>Total</u>	6515	100.0

It should be remembered that the items of property listed on Table H8 are not exhaustive, and only cover less than half of all the offences in this study. The predominant property types can be explained as follows: cash, the largest single type of offence results from both petty theft (from parents, friends, schools, etc.) and from burglary. The figures do not allow further precise explanation. Vehicular offences are the next substantial group of property offences. Thefts of electrical goods and jewellery are usually the result of burglaries where readily saleable goods (and cash) are the target. Some clothing is also included in this category of offence, although a sizeable number of thefts of clothing appear to result from shoplifting. This offence also accounts for most of the thefts of cosmetics, foodstuffs, toys and confectionery.

A further consideration with respect to the offence relates to its 'value'. Specifically the value of property stolen or damaged through the offence. Such values are invariably noted on the legal documentation available at Court Houses, and data was collected at those locations. However, this data does not inspire confidence since an estimate of value is often provided. This is by no means objective - a victim of a theft, with a future insurance claim in mind, may well overestimate when providing information to the police. On the other hand, a theft from a shop is of

definite and marked value. (Although it could be argued that the retailer's loss is the cost price of the property rather than its selling price.)

The difficulties in attaching accurate values to the offences are compounded by the selection of goods that might be stolen, and their true representation in this study. For example, the theft of a diamond necklace (value \$600) and \$5 cash in a housebreaking would be noted in this study as a burglary of value \$605 involving jewellery and cash. The individual value of each property type is lost through coding. Consider further the situation where a police contact involving a thief who steals a television set (value, say, \$500), vandalises the house from which he has stolen it (to the estimated value of \$4000) and assaults the householder as he leaves. This would be described in this study as an assault-contact with value \$4500 comprising damage to a house, and a television set. Thus it can be seen that the values of offences are somewhat precarious factors with which to proceed.

This last comment is supported by consideration of the range of values identified in this study. The lowest value offence involved the theft of a two-cent packet of confectionery from a shop. The highest involved substantial damage to a factory and motorcar, with the theft of foodstuffs valued in all at \$16,715. There were in total, ten contacts where the value of the offence was \$10,000 or greater, and

all except one involved damage to property. But these were only in the subsample of 3663 cases in which values were able to be documented.

Given the difficulties in interpreting values that have been outlined above, calls for care in using the variable. For this reason the only details that appear with respect to value relate to the specific theft cases where only one charge was laid. From the 4346 contacts identified as thefts, only 1973 involved one offence and had a value recorded. The average juvenile theft was then valued at \$44.23, but the variations within this category are wide and are set out in Table H9. The different types of theft listed on Table H9 are not legal definitions, but accord with the old definitions used prior to the introduction of the Victorian Theft Act 1973, and still used in the Victoria Police Annual Statistical Review of Crime. The high number of unspecified thefts is caused by an inability on the researcher's part to allot the offence to any category.

Table H9

Value of Goods Stolen in Simple Thefts

Larceny of bicycles	\$79.02	N=190
Larceny from motor cars	\$91.92	N=75
Shoplifting	\$15.13	N=1128
Larceny as a servant	\$61.71	N=14
Unspecified theft	\$83.78	N=566
All 'simple' thefts for which value noted	\$44.23	N=1973

A significant difference with respect to values stolen by males and females is obtained. Males stole goods valued at an average of \$55.20, females averaged \$44.99. The only simple theft in which females steal higher value goods than males is shoplifting. In that case the difference is not significant, but females stole goods of average value \$16.14 and males, \$14.04.

The distribution of police contacts by the formal reason for their occurring allows further analyses using factors described in earlier sections. Obviously masses of statistical tables cross tabulating all previous data with the distribution of offences could be generated. However this is obviously of little use so only factors of some importance in this respect are provided here. The first appear in Table H10.

It can be seen from that table that with the exception of larceny and false pretence type offences, female offenders account for no more than 10% of 'real' offenders. Females, however, comprise the majority (63%) of the offender-based Protection Applications. This indicates a distinct tendency on behalf of police officers to deal with adolescent girls who are acting-out in this particularly serious way. Clunies-Ross and Foreman's study of girls presented on 'exposed to moral danger' Protection Applications in 1972, points out how the police seem to utilise such an application. They suggest

the police use it as a "catch-all" category to "bring before the Court a group of girls who need care and supervision which they are not likely [in the view of the Informant] to receive without State intervention". (25) By far the majority of females in this sample who appear on Protection Applications do so on the above grounds. The criticisms made by the above authors appear no less true today and the data here supports their concern for the over-use of protection applications for young girls.

Additionally Table H10 shows that robbery and burglary are more likely to be group offences for juveniles. Whereas sex offences, assaults and offences against good order are more likely to be committed by a youth alone. Students are more likely to come into formal contact with the police for larcenies and burglaries. Those offenders with a history of truancy are over-represented amongst those who commit robberies.

Unemployed youths are more frequently involved with assaults, motor vehicle thefts, offences against good order and false pretence type offences. In view of the seeming relationship between local rising unemployment and crime, (2) it might have been expected that the offences involving the unemployed would be those which could provide some sort of income. In fact the first three offence types listed appear related to boredom and idleness rather than to money-generating ventures. This seems to indicate that for some unemployed youth at least eking out the day may be their sole current aim.

Table H10

Reason for Police Contact and
Some Offender Characteristics

Reason for Police Contact	Percentage Males	Percentage Offending Alone	Percentage Students	Percentage Unemployed	Percentage With Truancy Problems
<u>Offences</u>					
Assault	92%	52%	45%	26%	10%
Robbery	100%	12%	52%	19%	29%
Sex Offences	98%	53%	55%	18%	12%
Breaking	95%	17%	79%	13%	18%
Larceny	66%	33%	83%	8%	16%
Motor Vehicle	97%	25%	47%	24%	17%
False Pretences	71%	43%	43%	38%	13%
Other Offences Against Persons	88%	41%	63%	18%	6%
Other Offences Against Property	92%	26%	67%	14%	12%
Offences Against Good Order	92%	51%	44%	23%	8%
Minor Sex Offences	97%	94%	78%	8%	3%
Road Traffic Offences	98%	70%	41%	15%	4%
<u>All Offences</u>	83%	33%	70%	12%	17%
Protection Applications	37%	54%	67%	22%	47%
<u>Total</u>	79%	35%	70%	14%	19%

And simply passing time invariably leads to drinking of some sort.

The known consumption of alcohol by offenders has been mentioned earlier. The classification of offenders by type of offence now allows this factor to be re-examined. The assault group showed consumption of alcohol, in 22% of the 467 cases. This figure, if anything, is a little lower than that which might be expected. Ots' local study showed that almost three-quarters of the 1971 assault cases in her sample involved (usually heavy) drinking. (67) That sample however, included adults, or more importantly, persons able to acquire and consume alcohol legally being over the age of 18. And Ots found that over a quarter of the assaults occurred within the vicinity of hotels. But returning to the present sample, twenty four percent of the police contacts for other offences against good order also involved alcohol consumption. Again, this is not surprising as almost 10% of these offences comprised underage drinking offences, and the other street offences in the group could very probably have come to the attention of the police through the offender's obvious drunken behaviour. Eleven percent of the other offences against property and ten percent of motor vehicle thefts also involved offenders whose drinking behaviour occasioned a police comment. All other offences had low figures in this regard - 5% for robberies and sex offences, 3% for burglaries, 2% for larcenies.

But in 10% of the protection applications alcohol usage was mentioned. This may be because the police officer providing information believed that the Court would be interested in this fact. Or it may simply be that underage drinking is often just seen as one of the unsatisfactory indicators of the life-style of those so taken to Court. But the above figure does not by itself indicate a massive problem. It does suggest that immoderate drinking practices exist amongst young people who come to formal police attention. This in turn suggests that there is a need for education programmes outlining problems that can result from intemperate consumption of alcohol.

However, education, at least in the formal sense, has been shown to be a field in which many offenders have trouble. And this leads back to consideration of the schools of the young offenders, now analysed by type of offence. This data appears in Table H11 and variations from the average offence distribution are noted for some school types.

Almost half the offences committed by those with only Primary School education comprise larcenies. Those High School educated also favour larcenies and are noticeably under-represented in breaking offences. In a similar way non-State School educated offenders are more likely to be dealt with for offences of theft.

Those with a Technical School education show a distinct tendency to come to police attention in connection with

Table H11

Percentage Distribution of Reasons for Police Contact by

Type of School Attended

Reason for Police Contact	Type of School Attended					Total
	Primary	Special	High	Technical	Non-State	
<u>Offences</u>						
Offences Against Persons ²	4	11	7	8	6	8
Breaking	28	39	17	21	20	20
Larceny	46	24	39	30	44	36
Motor Vehicle and Other Property Offences	12	13	15	20	13	16
Offences Against Good Order	2	4	5	5	4	5
Road Traffic Offences	1	3	6	9	7	7
<u>Protection Applications</u>	7	6	11	7	6	8
<u>Total</u>	100 (N=1145)	100 (N=153)	100 (N=4513)	100 (N=4598)	100 (N=906)	100 (N=11315) ¹

1. Type of school attended by offender, not known, overseas or interstate in 897 cases.
2. Group comprises all offences against the person including assault, robbery and all sex offences.
3. Figures in table adjusted to ensure column totals of 100%.

offences relating to motor cars. But the most obviously different distribution occurs for those whose formal education occurred in Special Schools. The high figures in this group for offences against the person and breaking offences should however be interpreted cautiously in view of the number of contacts actually falling in this group. The group comprises only a little over 1% of all contacts and in fact less than 1% of all individuals concerned in those contacts. This caution in dealing with small sub-samples should be remembered when inspecting Table H12 which analyses offence type by place of birth of offender.

It can be seen from that Table that there are variations from the total offence distribution. Notably, all non-British or Australian born offenders showed a tendency to be involved in thefts. The tendency for those born in Greece to be over-represented in offences against the person and under-represented in burglary offences must be considered in conjunction with the small number (1.2%) of such offenders in the total of this table.

Another variable that was discussed earlier was the offender's previous contact with the police. Table D15 showed the number of previous contacts with the police that were recorded on the Form 276. In 332 contacts (involving 188 individuals) no precise details appeared on the Form 276 but it was apparent that some previous offending had occurred. If these 332 contacts are disregarded,

Table H12
Percentage Distribution of Reasons for
Police Contact by Place of Birth

Offences	Police Contact by Place of Birth							TOTAL ¹	
	Australia	Britain	Greece	Italy	Yugoslavia	Other English Speaking Countries	Other Non-English Speaking Countries		Asia and the Pacific
Offences Against Persons ²	7	8	11	9	5	9	7	5	7
Breaking	20	20	12	23	25	13	17	23	20
Larceny	35	36	49	44	43	52	50	49	36
Motor Vehicle and Other Property Offences	17	14	13	11	13	13	10	15	16
Offences Against Good Order	5	5	5	3	3	-	4	1	5
Road Traffic Offences	7	6	3	4	3	7	4	-	7
Protection Applications ³	9	11	7	6	8	7	8	7	9
TOTAL ³	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	(N=10153)	(N=642)	(N=138)	(N=190)	(N=261)	(N=80)	(N=287)	(N=110)	(N=11861)

1. Country of birth of offender was not known in 351 cases.
2. Group comprises all offences against the person including Assault, Robbery, and all Sex Offences.
3. Figures in table adjusted to ensure column totals of 100%.

Table H13

Average Number of Previous Police Contacts for Each
Police Contact Reason

<u>Reason for Police Contact</u>	<u>Average Number of Previous Police Contacts</u>	<u>Number of Contacts</u>
Motor Vehicle Offences	1.43	905
Major Sex Offences	1.29	180
Assault	1.27	453
False Pretences, etc.	1.26	58
Offences Against Good Order	1.06	530
Breaking	.99	2396
Robbery	.92	39
Protection Applications	.77	1030
Other Offences Against Property	.70	946
Other Offences Against Persons	.67	141
Road Traffic Offences	.59	851
Minor Sex Offences	.47	62
Larceny	.45	4289
<u>Total</u>	.77	11880 *

* Actual number of contacts not known in 332 contacts.

the average number of previous convictions for those involved in each offence type can be calculated. The variation in these figures can be seen in Table H13 where they are ranked in descending order. The top three offences become those types of offences that are generally more often committed by known offenders. Conversely, the bottom two, larceny and minor sex offences, can be seen as offences which are more likely to be committed by first offenders. Specifically, 77% of the larcenies and 72% of the minor sex offences were committed by first offenders in 1975 compared with 65% of all police contacts in that year.

Thus there are obvious and significant differences between those involved in different offences. The somewhat crude classification of offence types in this study does not permit the sophisticated analysis necessary to pinpoint typological differences. But it is quite plain that in excess of 30% of the police contacts in the 1975 sample can be identified as involving young people (usually students) whose misbehaviour (usually theft) has attracted police attention only once. And these people bear little resemblance to the popular stereotype of the young offender.

THE DELAYS

Quite obviously there is a delay between the formal apprehension of the young offender and his being formally dealt with, either by an official police warning or by an appearance at court. On the other hand, an informal police warning is immediate. And such a warning may be most effective because of the conjunction of the offending and its consequence. This is particularly likely in the case of young people who often find difficulty recalling past events because of their perception of time. Indeed, the younger a person the harder they seem to find it to remember what to them were unimportant events. Given this, it is necessary in order to achieve any positive result from formal action to do it fairly rapidly.

In the collection of data for this study, note was made of a number of dates which allow some analysis of the inherent delays in officially processing young offenders. Firstly, the date on which the Form 276 was completed, was recorded. To all intents and purposes this can be called the date of apprehension. Police officers often complete this form when they have the offender at the Police Station after formal interview. There are occasions when the form is actually completed some time after the first formal contact with the offender, but these appear to be a small minority. Secondly the date of the official warning or court appearance was noted. There is little doubt as to the accuracy of that date.

Lastly, during the data-collection undertaken in Victorian Court Houses, dates of offending were able to be noted from the official police Informations and Warrants. Many offences took place on only one day, but in other cases a time period is defined. Thus an offender can be charged with having "between the 1st of March and the 20th March" stolen goods from certain specified places. In the study these dates will be referred to as the date of first offence and the date of last offence. The difference in days between these two dates can thus be referred to as the duration of the offence. In this study, this measure ranges from 0 (when a simple offence occurred on one day) to 948. This last figure relates to an offender who was charged with thefts and burglaries that had occurred between "1/1/73 and 9/8/75". And admission of earlier thefts after apprehension is a not uncommon event. Most of the lengthy durations of offence can be explained in this way.

A further confusion arises in consideration of the 'duration of offence' when multiple offences are committed by the offender. As an example an offender might have stolen a bicycle in May, used an airgun in June, but before appearing at Court, been drunk and disorderly in August. That contact would be classified as a larceny with a duration of offence of over three months. Obviously this is misleading when considered as simply relating to a larceny offence. It is not misleading if the duration of the offence is interpreted as the time period for which the offender has been engaging in formal anti-social behaviour.

Bearing in mind this proviso, the average duration of a sample of 1975 offences was found to be 11.5 days. (The duration of offence was able to be calculated for only 3,893 contacts excluding Protection Applications.) Offences against good order averaged a duration of 0.43 days, indicating that most of them occurred on one day only, as would be expected of street offences. At the other end of the scale, sex offences averaged a duration of 57.32 days. But this undoubtedly occurs as a result of Informations relating to carnal knowledge cases in particular, which read along the lines "did between the 1st of May and the 31st August carnally know ...". Such a time span is generally described in order to encompass all events of which the offender has some recollection. This sort of occurrence obviously makes it difficult to compare duration of different offences for which reason no further data is provided here.

A more useful measure is provided by consideration of the time between the date of the last noted offending and the date of apprehension. This will be called the apprehension delay. It too can adopt the value zero, as in the case of a shoplifter who, after detection, is held in the store until the police arrive. There were five police contacts in this study where apprehension delays of over 300 days were found. One related to a charge of escaping from legal custody and it was over a year before the

offender concerned was re-apprehended. The remaining four cases concerned thefts. Two of these were processed not by the Victoria Police, but by the Investigations Section of the (then) Post Master General's Department. The Prosecution Form (identical with the Form 276) was not completed for these contacts until almost one year after the offences occurred. The offenders concerned were dismissed from their employment with the PMG. The usefulness of also taking them to Court over one year later is dubious in this case. Comments that follow with regard to the delay in processing cases will still be directed to Police Officers as external agents such as above are quite rare. The remaining larcenies simply appear to have come to police attention at a much later time.

Table II shows that property offences were those offences coming to police notice most quickly. The Victoria Police Annual Report for 1975 indicates that only 31% of all burglaries, thefts and motor car thefts were cleared up, so the data on Table II simply indicate that if a property offender is apprehended he is likely to be apprehended fairly quickly after the event. It will also be observed from the table that 68% of all police contacts occurred one week or less after the last commission of the offence, and that the average apprehension delay was 13.8 days. The sample of contacts for which this information was available can be split into those contacts concluding with an official warning and those which concluded

Table II

Percentage Distribution of, and Average, Apprehension
Delay by Type of Offence

<u>Offences</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1-7 days</u>	<u>Over 1 and up to 4 weeks</u>	<u>Over 4 weeks</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Average (in days)</u>
Offences Against the Person	31%	36%	19%	14%	100% (N=380)	15.86
Breaking	22%	45%	19%	14%	100% (N=953)	15.01
Larceny	40%	33%	16%	11%	100% (N=1215)	12.12
Motor vehicle and other property offences	31%	39%	18%	12%	100% (N=808)	12.12
Offences Against Good Order	28%	41%	19%	12%	100% (N=177)	15.36
Road Traffic Offences	30%	29%	18%	23%	100% (N=372)	20.48
<u>Total</u>	31%	37%	18%	14%	100% (N=3905)	14.13

with a court appearance. The average apprehension delay for those later warned was 10.0 days, and for court appearances 14.2 days. This difference is significant ($t = -2.27$, $df = 4074$, $p < 0.05$). It is probably explained by the different sorts of offences for which warnings are given. Table J6 in the next section shows this phenomenon, with the quickly solved larcenies being frequently dealt with by warnings.

But even more important than a low apprehension delay is a low finalising delay. This is defined as the delay between apprehension and either formal warning or court appearance. As each of these relevant dates should be recorded on the Form 276 the finalising delay should be available for all police contacts under study. However, one or other of the dates was missing from 239 of the forms and on some Forms the date of finalisation of the case occurred on or before the date of apprehension. The 692 cases in which this anomaly occurred are obviously not included in the following analysis. The reason for the anomaly occurring would seem to be carelessness. It increases the previously expressed concern about the accuracy of the police-generated information.

A basic logistic issue arises here. If the Police Officer In Charge of the District after reading the brief record of interview decides on an official warning, that finalisation can be arranged very quickly. Indeed some Officers expect to deal with the offender within seven days or so. While practicable in a small and fairly compact police district, it may simply not be feasible in other larger and less well-manned districts. If the decision to proceed to a court appearance is made, another agency, the Law Department, is involved, and the listing of the case will not only have to fit in with Court schedules, but a sufficient time to inform all parties to the hearing must be

allowed. Obviously then the finalising delay for a warned offender would logically be expected to be less than that for an offender appearing in Court.

This in fact is the case. The finalising time for warned offenders was 43.40 days. The corresponding figure for the Court group was 49.69. This difference is highly significant ($t = 6.28$, $df = 11342$, $p < 0.01$). And if it is important for young offenders to be dealt with quickly, then those warned are significantly better off.

The differences in these two categories can be further inspected in relation to the reasons for the police contacts. This data appears as Table I2. The Protection Applications included in Table I2 are quite a special situation. By their very nature it is essential for these Applications to be dealt with quickly after coming to police notice. Thus the overall nine day delay is unsurprising. If anything, it is even longer than might be desirable since pending the Application being heard the young person is usually housed in an institution. The six Applications for which warnings were given comprise a peculiar sub-group where the Form 276 could well have been modified to apply to a particular offence. It seems that this group should really have been re-classified as offences since Official Police Warnings are available only for offences.

Removing Protection Applications for the purpose of further discussion widens the gap between the two groups.

Table I2

Average Finalising Delay by Reason for Police Contact

Reason for Police Contact	Average Finalising Delay in Days for			No. of Contacts
	Warned Offenders	Offenders at Court	All Contacts	
<u>Offences</u>				
Assault	49.3	55.3	54.5	428
Robbery	-	35.9	35.9	38
Sex Offences	59.7	60.5	60.4	170
Minor Sex Offences	41.6	70.3	58.6	61
Breaking	45.6	41.8	42.9	2327
Larceny	41.4	59.2	48.9	4005
Motor Vehicle Offences	47.6	48.7	48.6	882
False Pretences, etc.	37.3	51.8	41.5	55
Other Offences Against the Person	43.2	59.1	53.0	139
Other Offences Against Property	47.0	67.9	59.0	921
Offences Against Good Order	44.8	49.5	47.9	530
Road Traffic Offences	43.3	86.4	78.2	796
<u>Protection Applications</u>	56.7	9.3	9.6	992
<u>Total</u>	43.4	49.7	47.4	11344

With the revised total of 10,352 contacts, the warned group have a finalising delay of 43.38 days. The 'court group' have a significantly higher delay of 56.00 days.

Most noticeable from Table I2 is the extremely long delay of 86 days in processing Road Traffic Offenders at Court. A study of the conduct of the Melbourne Children's Court during 1975 pointed out that long delays in police bringing cases to the Court are frowned upon. (20) Indeed long outdated cases have been known to be dismissed by a Magistrate simply because he saw no effective purpose in hearing them. Many of the Road Traffic Offences in this study related to the use of motorcycles. A youth stopped by the police for unlicensed driving of an unregistered motorcycle in a suburban street may initially be greatly concerned. When he hears nothing of that event for three months, his perception of the seriousness of the offence and the role of the police undoubtedly decreases. It is reasonable to suggest that after the passage of a month or so, when he is convinced the police are not proceeding, the offender may revert to his earlier behaviour. Being taken to Court subsequently for an episode long since superseded would simply convince the offender the law is indeed inefficient and cumbersome.

It is essential that offences committed by young people are dealt with as rapidly as possible. This statement is not made in ignorance of the ever-increasing workload of the

front-line Victorian policeman. But the attitudes to police of future citizens are being shaped by their treatment today. Minor offences are every bit as necessary to process with speed as they should not be seen to be of less importance to those involved in administering the law.

While the above figures indicate that lengthy delays do still occur in dealing with young offenders, it does appear that the Victoria Police are improving in this regard. Horman's study of warnings comprises the only similar data available. (44) His figures for 1969 and 1972 appear on Table I3 with corresponding figures from this study. The table shows that more of the offenders who were warned in 1975 were dealt with more quickly. Almost half of them were dealt with within four weeks of apprehension as compared with 37% and 35% in earlier years. It thus seems that the Victoria Police are in basic agreement with the preceding paragraph. Continuing quickening of the pace can only be of long term benefit to both the police and this community. Nevertheless Table I4 remains the indictment of the current system.

Table I3
Finalising Delays for Warned Offenders 1969-1975

Percentage of Offenders Warned-	1969 (N=1551)	1972 (N=2281)	1975 (N=4050)
Within two weeks of apprehension	13%	12%	15%
Within four weeks of apprehension	37%	35%	45%
Within eight weeks of apprehension	69%	66%	77%
Within twelve weeks of apprehension	87%	81%	89%

Table I4

Delay Between Last Offence and Finalisation of Contact byType of Offence

<u>Type of Offence</u>	<u>Delay Offence-Finalisation (in days)</u>	<u>Number of Contacts</u>
Assault	70.07	200
Robbery	28.53	15
Sex Offences	83.36	72
Minor Sex Offences	66.17	23
Breaking	54.39	911
Larceny	64.54	1167
Motor Vehicle Offences	58.29	445
False Pretences, etc.	74.44	25
Other Offences Against the Person	68.16	58
Other Offences Against Property	69.96	305
Offences Against Good Order	59.49	173
Road Traffic Offences	100.97	367
<u>Total</u>	65.75	3761

THE RESULT OF THE POLICE CONTACT

Official police warnings and appearances at the Children's Court have been introduced as the ultimate results of a formal police contact with a juvenile. A Court appearance can, of course, result in one of a number of dispositions which are set out in the Children's Court Act. They comprise eight distinct types which are briefly discussed here.

Youth Training Centre Sentence - a fixed term of incarceration in a juvenile corrective institution for offenders aged over 15 years. Conviction formally recorded.

Social Welfare Department Admission or Return - an order making a juvenile a ward of the State, as the result of a protection application or in the case of an offender under the age of 15. This category also includes wards returned to the Department's care after a further offence or protection application.

Probation - an order placing the juvenile under the supervision of (usually an honorary) probation officer. (Includes supervision orders which extend to the juvenile's family.)

Fine - a monetary penalty not exceeding \$100 for any one offence. Conviction recorded at Magistrate's discretion.

Bond - a conditional discharge requiring the juvenile to be of good behaviour for a fixed period of time. Conviction recorded at Magistrate's discretion.

Adjournment - an order adjourning proceedings for a specified period requiring the juvenile to be of good behaviour during that time. [Rinaldi believes this

disposition was originally introduced to allow parents time to "whip" their offending children, followed by the Court's later assessment of the sufficiency of such whipping. (73)]

Dismissal - a formal dismissal of the charge even though it has been proved to the satisfaction of the court.

Withdrawal - simply, the withdrawal of the charge by the police prosecutor.

In disposing of the case in one of these ways, the Magistrate is required by Section 25(4) of the Act to "firstly have regard to the welfare of the child". One study which tried to establish whether this was done was conducted by Loftus who followed-up male South Australian juvenile offenders for four years after their court appearance. He decided that "it is clear that the Magistrate does make an attempt to tailor the Court Order to the needs of the child". (56)

Obviously the result of a case involving two or more charges can result in a multiple-disposition. For example, a youth charged with larceny and wilful damage could be placed on probation with respect to the first charge and fined \$50 on the second. In this study the disposal type for each Court appearance was taken to be the highest ranking disposition as listed above. The above example would then be classified as resulting in probation.

Table J1 sets out the distribution of warnings and Court dispositions for the sample, by sex of offender involved. It will be observed that significantly more

females were given warnings than were males (50% as compared with 32%.) This is a similar situation to that in 1972 where the corresponding figures were 37% and 20%. This apparent leniency shown towards girls may be a function of the type of offence they commit, but it supports the view that females are often more generously dealt with by the police.

This generosity does not appear to extend to the Court. There, far more girls than boys are likely to be committed to the care of the Social Welfare Department, (26% to 13%). But this is certainly due to the fact that a large number of girls who are taken to Court are the subjects of protection applications. Apart from that, only 3% of girls (as compared with 15% of boys) are fined after their Court Appearance.

Overall, the majority of Court appearances resulted in probation orders or adjournments; of all 1975 appearances, 61% concluded with these findings. By contrast, only 5.5% of all appearances concluded with a Youth Training Centre sentence. These figures are similar to those for 1972 which were 67% and 6% respectively. This stability of court decisions is not well-reflected by Table J1. Comparison of this table and its 1972 counterpart shows that the increased use of warnings in 1975 is almost matched by a decrease in the percentage of probation orders made by the Court. The figures actually show warnings rising from

Table J1
Primary Disposition of Juvenile Offenders
by Sex of Offender

<u>Disposition</u>	<u>Sex</u>		<u>Total</u>
	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	
Warning	3097 (32.0%)	1266 (50.0%)	4363 (35.7%)
Youth Training Centre Sentence	405 (4.2%)	23 (0.9%)	428 (3.5%)
Committal or Return to the Social Welfare Department	840 (8.7%)	326 (12.9%)	1166 (9.7%)
Probation	1779 (18.4%)	370 (14.6%)	2149 (17.6%)
Fine	1010 (10.4%)	36 (1.4%)	1046 (8.6%)
Bond	142 (1.5%)	13 (0.5%)	155 (1.3%)
Adjournment	2201 (22.7%)	437 (17.3%)	2638 (21.6%)
Dismissed or Withdrawn	205 (2.1%)	60 (2.4%)	265 (2.2%)
<u>Total</u>	9679 (100.0%)	2531 (100.0%)	12210* (100.0%)

*Note: Two cases were not dealt with by the Children's Court.

23% to 35.7%, and probation orders falling from 28.2% to 17.6%. These figures suggest that those who had been officially warned by the Police in 1975 may well have received probation orders had they been taken to Court.

The large decrease in the percentage of cases resulting in probation is the greatest difference between the decisions of the Court in 1972 and 1975. The precise breakdown of such decisions in these two years appears in Table J2.

Table J2
Percentage Distribution of Court Disposals by Sex of Offender 1972-1975

<u>Court Disposal</u>	<u>Males</u>		<u>Females</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	1972 (N=6508)	1975 (N=6582)	1972 (N=1159)	1975 (N=1265)	1972 (N=7667)	1975 (N=7847)
Youth Training Centre	7.0	6.2	0.3	1.8	6.0	5.5
Social Welfare Department	10.2	12.8	18.4	25.8	11.4	14.8
Probation	35.0	27.0	45.9	29.3	36.6	27.4
Fine	12.4	15.3	2.2	2.9	10.9	13.3
Bond	0.6	2.2	0.3	1.0	0.6	2.0
Adjournment	31.0	33.4	29.4	34.5	30.8	33.6
Dismissed, etc.	3.8	3.1	3.5	4.7	3.7	3.4
<u>Total</u>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

In terms of raw numbers, and notwithstanding problems of data-collection mentioned earlier, there is not a great increase in the number of court cases in the 1972 study and this. Male court cases have risen by only 1% compared with the 12% in all police contacts. And it is with respect to probation orders that the main change in court dispositions for males is evident.

It is possible to group the dispositions into three categories for comparison. Admission to the care of the Social Welfare Department in the first instance, means admission to an institution. This disposition with Youth Training Centre sentences comprise those which mean the offender's detainment. Probation (or supervision) orders result in the offender's supervision. And the remaining dispositions can be loosely described as being a penalty for their offending. That is, the court fines the offender or places him on a bond, or adjourns his case as long as the offender behaves himself. The small number of Section 28 dismissals, and withdrawal of charges, are also included in the penalty category as it is the most appropriate one. Using these new categories, Table J3 is the consolidated form of Table J2.

It will be observed from that table that the increase in detainment occurred mostly through the increase in females being so treated. The bulk of such detainment dispositions must have resulted from Exposed to Moral Danger protection applications. But numerically the number of such applications in each of 1972 and 1975 was almost identical. Therefore, it appears the Court had adopted a harder line to the girls involved in such applications in 1975, or else the grounds for the applications in 1975 were quite different. Only precise case-analysis of these applications could explain the increase. Overall, it will be noted from Table J3, the majority of court cases results in a penalty-type disposition.

That is, the Court, whilst bearing in mind its charge firstly to consider the welfare of the child, has decided to reprimand the offender simply by implementing a penalty.

Table J3
Percentage Distribution of Court Disposition Categories by Sex of
Offender 1972 and 1975

<u>Court Disposition</u> <u>Category</u>	<u>Males</u>		<u>Females</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	<u>1972</u> (N=6508)	<u>1975</u> (N=6582)	<u>1972</u> (N=1159)	<u>1975</u> (N=1265)	<u>1972</u> (N=7667)	<u>1975</u> (N=7847)
Detainment	17.2	19.0	18.7	27.6	17.6	20.3
Supervision	35.0	27.0	45.9	29.3	36.6	27.4
Penalty	47.8	54.0	35.4	43.1	45.8	52.3
<u>Total</u>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

When the offence is found proven or the application is approved, Section 25(1) of the Children's Court Act provides for the Magistrate's consideration of

any report tendered which sets out an account of the results of investigation into the antecedents, home environment (including parental control), companions, education, school attendance, employment, habits, recreation, character, reputation, disposition, medical history and physical or mental defects (if any) of the child and any other relevant matters.

In addition, the Magistrate has the power to refrain from making a decision until he is in possession of such a report, if he believes that will assist him. Reports from

the Children's Court Clinic are usually prepared under this provision. Obviously to some extent the Police Form 276 provides details of the sort prescribed above, but Police Standing Orders provide for the compilation of a probation officer's pre-sentence report by requiring such a person to be notified of offenders who will be appearing in Court.

In view of the small number (967) of pre-sentence reports found during collection of the 1975 data, it appears that at least in that year, either probation officers were not being so notified, or else these officers were simply not able to provide such reports.

The usefulness of pre-sentence reports in Children's Courts has been the subject of some research. In New South Wales, for instance, Gamble established that there was a statistically significant relationship between Magistrates' decisions and "district officers'" recommendations. (36) Gamble, however, believes that this does not necessarily mean that Magistrates are strongly influenced by the recommendation. Instead, she suggests the agreement could be explained by external factors - the welfare officer's anticipation of the Magistrate's likely intention, the 'obvious' identification of some offenders as supervision or detainment cases, or the similar attitudes to certain factors of both welfare officers and Magistrates. And indeed the influence of these three factors does make it difficult to state unequivocally that the Magistrate is strongly influenced by the pre-sentence report he receives.

Kraus had earlier reached the same sort of conclusion. (51) He found 83% agreement where probation was recommended by N.S.W. welfare officers. The corresponding figure for institutionalisation was 79%, for fines 71%, and for discharge (which compares with Victoria's adjournment) 65%. He then argues that these figures are "spurious" and their simple interpretation "fallacious" in view of the above factors. Notwithstanding this, the pre-sentence reports located in the study of 1975 cases can be examined in a similar light.

Of the 4,292 cases where court files were examined, 967 (or 23%) included extra documentation (see Table C5). Of those 967, 728 or 75% included recommendations to the Magistrate with respect to his disposal of the case. As with the two New South Welsh studies mentioned above, there was a high level of agreement between such recommendations and the court's actual disposition. The actual level of agreement can be seen from Table J4 which indicates 69% agreement with respect to categories of disposition as previously defined. In 149 cases (or 20%) a 'lighter' disposition was made by the Court. In the remaining 77 cases a 'harsher' disposition resulted. An estimate of agreement would intuitively be fairly high. Whether 69% indicates high appreciation of pre-sentence reports by Magistrates is open to conjecture.

Interestingly, Kraus found that where no Child Welfare Officer's pre-sentence report was available, the Magistrate was most influenced in his decision making by the child's

Table J4

Report Recommendations and Court Disposition

<u>Category of Recommendation</u>	<u>Detainment</u>	<u>Court Disposition</u>		<u>Total</u>
		<u>Supervision</u>	<u>Penalty</u>	
Detainment	109	4	22	135
Supervision	56	190	123	369
Penalty	8	13	203	224
<u>Total</u>	173	207	348	728

previous court appearances. Such a finding is hardly surprising. In Victoria at least, the Act requires Magistrates after first having regard to the welfare of the offender then to have regard to the nature and circumstances of the offence, the offender's character and his prior offences, when disposing of the case. The unsurprising connection between prior convictions and dispositions is clearly shown in the following table.

The most severe disposition available to the Court is the Youth Training Centre sentence. (It is also available to adult courts for convicted persons aged under 21.) Most offenders who received such sentences in the Children's Court in 1975 had previous convictions. In fact only 6% of those so sentenced had no earlier convictions, a further 9% had one, and another 11% two previous convictions. The majority

Table J5

Result of 1975 Police Contacts by Prior Convictions

<u>No. of Prior Convictions</u>	<u>Result of Police Contact</u>				<u>Total</u>
	<u>Official Police Warning</u>	<u>Court Appearances Resulting In Penalty</u>	<u>Supervision</u>	<u>Detainment</u>	
None	54%	30%	12%	4%	100% (N=7912)
1	4%	47%	34%	15%	100% (N=1798)
2 - 3	1%	40%	30%	29%	100% (N=1417)
4 - 6	-	33%	15%	52%	100% (N=604)
7+	-	22%	9%	69%	100% (N=147)
Not known*	3%	30%	16%	51%	100% (N=332)
<u>Total</u>	36%	33%	18%	13%	100% (N=12210)

* Cases where it appeared some prior convictions did exist but were not listed.

of the offences for which such persons were sentenced to a Youth Training Centre could be fairly described as serious. The remainder (74%) of those made Youth Trainees by the Court had substantial previous offending records. They would constitute a group of persistent offenders for whom all previous dispositions had proved ineffective.

Rinaldi's wrongful criticism of this simple description of Youth Trainees as either serious or persistent offenders, is based on official Social Welfare Department statistics. (73) In fact those statistics show that most trainees received in any year, are entering a Centre for the first time rather than being first offenders. The Departmental phrase "first conviction" actually means 'first Youth Training Centre sentence'. Thus in the fiscal year 1974/1975 73% of the 443 individual Youth Trainees received were undergoing their first such incarceration. This would seem to indicate that such sentences were successful in that returns to Centres are fairly low. Unfortunately, such a statement cannot be made as many failures of the Youth Training Centre system do not return to it, but to the prison system. The distortion of Youth Training Centre statistics is, then, obvious.

Inspection of Table J6 indicates the relationship between offences and disposition in the 1975 sample. The minor nature of many larcenies is reflected in their being mainly disposed of by official warnings. Likewise a large number of other (minor) offences against property concluded with such a warning. Contrariwise, significantly more robberies and burglaries concluded with detainment of some sort. The inclusion of wardship decisions in this last category causes the high detainment figure for protection applications.

Table J6

Reason For, and Result of, 1975 Police Contacts

Reason for Police Contact	Official Police Warning	Result of Police Contact			Total
		Children's Court Penalty	Court Appearance Resulting in Supervision	Detainment	
<u>Offences</u>					
Assault	13%	54%	21%	13%	100% (N=467)
Robbery	-	43%	33%	24%	100% (N=42)
Sex Offences	20%	43%	22%	15%	100% (N=180)
Breaking	30%	25%	26%	19%	100% (N=2479)
Larceny	58%	23%	13%	6%	100% (N=4346)
Motor Vehicle	13%	43%	26%	18%	100% (N=953)
False Pretence	26%	31%	25%	18%	100% (N=61)
Other Offences Against Persons	37%	42%	17%	4%	100% (N=144)
Other Offences Against Property	42%	40%	13%	5%	100% (N=970)
Offences Against Good Order	33%	47%	7%	13%	100% (N=577)
Minor Sex Offences	41%	42%	14%	3%	100% (N=63)
Road Traffic Offences	19%	73%	3%	1%	100% (N=869)
<u>Offence Sub-Total</u>	39%	16%	34%	11%	100% (N=11151)
Protection Applications	1%	54%	3%	42%	100% (N=1059)
<u>Total</u>	36%	33%	18%	13%	100% (N=12210*)

* Note: Two cases dealt with in Country Court

There are many other interesting relationships that can be investigated using these dispositions and factors which have been noted earlier. Not least of these is the relationship between age and disposition. It is plain from Table J7 and J8 that the probability of being warned and thus not being taken to court is high for younger offenders.

Examination of the figures relating only to court appearances in the two years indicates that around half of all cases heard at the court fall into the 'penalty' group. That is, the court decision is adjournment, fine, bond, dismissal or withdrawal. The variation through age groups for this group is shown on the Tables. It will be observed that there is an increasing likelihood for these dispositions to be used as those appearing at court get older.

These two tables summarise the data which is reproduced in full for the interested reader, in Appendix 3. One fact that can be seen in the tables relates to the large percentage of police contacts which conclude with minimal disturbance to the offenders' lives. More precisely in 1975, 69% of all offenders were either officially warned or left the Court with a 'penalty'. With respect to age, 81% of those aged 11 or under, and 80% of those 17 and over, suffered this minimal outcome. The lowest such figure was 64% for the 14 year-olds.

Thus, in the majority of cases, there is no continuing involvement of the young person in the juvenile justice system. The offender and his family after the undoubted trauma of

Table J7

Result of 1972 Police Contacts by Age

Age	Result of Police Contact				Total
	Official Police Warning	Children's Court Appearance Resulting In Penalty	Supervision	Detainment	
8 - 11	49%	20%	20%	11%	100% (N=908)
12 - 13	35%	24%	29%	12%	100% (N=2072)
14	22%	31%	35%	12%	100% (N=1825)
15	17%	38%	30%	15%	100% (N=2168)
16	12%	46%	26%	16%	100% (N=2399)
17 - 18	9%	65%	18%	8%	100% (N=585)
<u>Total</u>	23%	36%	28%	13%	100% (N=9957)

Table J8

Result of 1975 Police Contacts by Age

Age	Result of Police Contact				Total
	Official Police Warning	Children's Court Appearances Resulting In Penalty	Supervision	Detainment	
8 - 11	64%	17%	9%	10%	100% (N=1188)
12 - 13	51%	21%	16%	12%	100% (N=2853)
14	36%	28%	21%	15%	100% (N=2207)
15	28%	37%	21%	14%	100% (N=2470)
16	20%	46%	19%	15%	100% (N=2544)
17 - 18	12%	69%	13%	7%	100% (N=626)
<u>Total</u>	36%	33%	18%	13%	100% (N=11888)

Note: Age of offenders not known in 322 cases; two cases dealt with in County Court.

official intervention are effectively left alone to deal with the situation. It has been argued that initial contact with the formal system brings about further involvement, and this may well be true where some continual reminder of the event is present. It is suggested that salutary intervention of the sort employed in 69% of the 1975 cases, is probably all that many offenders need to cause them to conform in the future. The large number of offenders who do not come into official contact with the police invariably receive similar salutary intervention from their parents, teachers, or others. That intervention too, may well have the desired effect.

Another feature that appears to have some relationship with the result of the police contact is what has earlier been described as the value of the offence. It is certainly popularly believed that Courts will not be 'too hard' on the thief who steals goods of little value, but that large value thefts attract a more hefty penalty. Indeed, local retailers reflect this belief in their tendency to decline to report to police shoplifting offences of minor value. (79) Table J9 shows the relationship between result and 'value' for the 3662 cases in which the latter information was available. It shows a distinct tendency for the use of warnings to decrease, and for the Court's use of detainment to increase, as value increases. Not an unexpected result, but one which is open to varied explanation.

For instance it could be argued that 'experienced' offenders may be more likely to engage in high value thefts. Their past record rather than the value of the stolen property would then explain the result of their appearance.

Table J9

'Value' and Result of a Sample of Police Contacts

<u>Value of Goods Involved in Police Contact</u>	<u>Result of Police Contact</u>				
	Official Police Warning	Children's Court Appearance Resulting In			Total
		Penalty	Supervision	Detainment	
\$10 and less	60%	23%	10%	7%	100% (N=1318)
Over \$10 to \$50	42%	31%	14%	13%	100% (N=1074)
Over \$50 to \$250	15%	39%	28%	18%	100% (N=770)
Over \$250	7%	29%	37%	26%	100% (N=500)
<u>Total</u>	38%	30%	19%	13%	100% (N=3662)

It would be more concerning if the configuration in Table J9 had not looked as it does. The community would be concerned if large value offences were not seen by the Court as meriting stronger action, (notwithstanding the Children's Court charter to have prime consideration for the welfare of the child). Overall, what the data in this section indicate is that the way in which young offenders are formally dealt with by the official system is clearly related to certain characteristics of those offenders.

POSTSCRIPT

The data presented in this report provide a solid and factual basis for further consideration of the topic. All too often in criminology, there are complaints about the non-availability of hard statistics on which to elaborate theories, explanations and programmes. Here, then, are such statistics which not only cover 1975 formal police contacts with young offenders, but also compare many features with data collected up to nine years previously.

Overall, there is little change in the juvenile offending situation in Victoria in those years. Certainly the numbers of cases formally dealt with by the police have increased but this may well reflect changing police methods rather than an actual increase in such youthful activity. It was mentioned that a 'juvenile crime wave' may be suggested by future police figures compiled after the new Victoria Police Cautioning programme is fully operative. If the expected numerical increase does occur, the media no doubt will give it considerable attention. This in turn may cause a law-abiding youngster to feel he is odd if his anti-social behaviour has not been persistent or serious enough to bring him to police attention. And then, perhaps, the increase in youthful offending may really be established.

But for the present, most of the offending that results in formal police contact is directed against property by lower

secondary school students whose police contact generally concludes in a salutary, but relatively minor, manner. The main difficulty in a conclusion of this sort is that it is based (necessarily) on formal police records. The number of juvenile offenders who are dealt with at the discretion of the police officer concerned is simply not known. Nor are individual police officers keen to indicate the rough number of juveniles who receive the benefit of an informal warning under Standing Order 979. This encourages officers to "exercise forbearance and discretion in dealing with minor offences committed inadvertently or in ignorance". In fact, many citizens might be gratified to hear that Victoria Police Officers are using stern informal warnings as the belief that a few choice words will effect a change in a minor offender's future behaviour is still popular. While formally recording the number of such informal warnings might cause another artificial increase in official figures, it would allow more accurate measurement of juvenile offending.

This would make it even more difficult to compare the Victorian situation with that in other places. But without common legal systems, police practices and offender handling methods, this is well nigh impossible anyway. These last factors also complicate comparison of literature and research from other places. But the worst part of such a comparison is simply caused by the bulk of such material available. The information explosion in this field is massive, and showing no sign of abatement. This study of course adds to the mass,

and in doing so refers to only a minute portion of the other available material. As a rule, reference was made in this report only to particularly relevant and interesting material. The reader should therefore not assume those references attached to this report are typical of the current literature.

Indeed the reader should also not assume the complete accuracy of the data in this report. It seems that the completion of the Form 276 by a police officer is often seen to be a chore and just another piece of paperwork. A strong belief that the Form is a useful and important document for its recipient, seems the exception rather than the rule. And without that belief there is a good chance that data on the Form may be inaccurate, or at least carelessly recorded.

Some reduction of the possible impact of such inaccurate data is achieved through consideration of a large sample. And the absence of any other information means that this data-source is the best available. Notwithstanding these possible slight inaccuracies, this data undoubtedly provides a good basis for future social planning. It is hoped that such planning might occur and that its effect on a similar study in ten years time might be obvious.

APPENDIX 1

CLASSIFICATION OF BIRTHPLACES

Any grouping of countries in order to obtain reasonable sample sizes is open to criticism. The following classification is a subjective grouping that provided a convenient data base in this instance. After each birthplace are shown the number of individuals born in that place and, in brackets, the number of police contacts involving natives of that place.

Australia 8,552 (10,153)

Victoria 7616 (9070), New South Wales 285 (333), Queensland 96 (112), South Australia 92 (111), Tasmania 98 (131), Western Australia 29 (33), Northern Territory 2 (3), Australian Capital Territory 8 (8), Unspecified 326 (352).

Britain 542 (642)

England 425 (495), Wales 19 (24), Scotland 79 (99), Northern Ireland 22 (24).

Greece 122 (138)

Italy 160 (190)

Yugoslavia 209 (261)

Other English Speaking Countries 76 (80)

Canada 9 (11), Eire 5 (5), Malta 32(34), South Africa 5 (5), U.S.A. 12 (12), Other "Commonwealth" African Countries 13 (13).

Other Non English Speaking Countries 243 (287)

Albania 1 (1), Austria 9 (10), Belgium 3 (3), Czechoslovakia 8 (9), Cyprus 7 (11), Denmark 3 (3), Egypt 11 (15), Finland 3 (3), France 13 (15), Germany 29 (41), Hungary 5 (5), Holland 25 (26), Israel 2 (2), Lebanon 22 (27), Other African countries 6 (6), Poland 5 (5), Portugal 2 (2), Rumania 1 (2), South American countries 16 (17), Spain 14 (14), Sweden 4 (4), Switzerland 2 (2), Syria 1 (1), Turkey 50 (61), USSR 2 (2).

APPENDIX 1 (ctd)Asia and the Pacific 97 (110)

Burma 1 (1), Ceylon 14 (15), China 8 (9), Fiji 1 (1), Hong Kong 4 (4), India 12 (17), Japan 1 (1), Malaya 6 (6), Nauru 1 (1), New Caledonia 1 (1), New Zealand 27 (30), Pakistan 1 (1), Papua New Guinea 7 (7), Singapore 2 (3), Other Asian countries 1 (2), Other Pacific Islands 10 (11).

Unspecified Birthplace 290 (351)APPENDIX 2CONSTITUENT LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS FOR GEOGRAPHICAL REGIONSMELBOURNE ENVIRONS

Inner Urban: Collingwood, Fitzroy, Melbourne, Port Melbourne, Prahran, Richmond, St. Kilda, South Melbourne.

Western: Altona, Essendon, Footscray, Keilor, Melton, Sunshine, Werribee, Williamstown.

North Western: Broadmeadows, Brunswick, Bulla, Coburg.

North Eastern: Diamond Valley, Eltham, Heidelberg, Northcote, Preston, Whittlesea.

Inner Eastern: Box Hill, Camberwell, Doncaster and Templestowe, Hawthorn, Kew, Nunawading, Waverley.

Outer Eastern: Croydon, Healesville, Knox, Lilydale, Ringwood, Sherbrooke, Upper Yarra*.

Southern: Brighton, Caulfield, Malvern, Moorabbin, Mordialloc, Oakleigh, Sandringham.

Western Port: Bass*, Berwick, Chelsea, Cranbourne, Dandenong, Flinders, Frankston, Hastings, Mornington, Pakenham*, Phillip Island*, Springvale, Wonthaggi*.

RURAL VICTORIA

Note: Cities and Shires of the same name are only listed once in the following.

Barwon: Bannockburn, Barrabool, Bellarine, Colac, Corio, Geelong, Geelong West, Leigh, Newtown, Otway, Queenscliffe, South Barwon, Winchelsea.

South Western: Belfast, Camperdown, Dundas, Glenelg, Hamilton, Hampden, Heytesbury, Koroit, Minhamite, Mortlake, Mount Rouse, Port Fairy, Portland, Wannon, Warrnambool.

Central Highlands: Ararat, Avoca, Bacchus Marsh, Ballan, Ballarat, Bungaree, Buninyong, Creswick, Daylesford and Glenlyon, Grenville, Ixton, Ripon, Sebastopol, Talbot and Clunes.

Wimmera: Arapiles, Birchip, Dimboola, Donald, Dunmunkle, Horsham, Kaniva, Karkaroc, Kowree, Lowan, Stawell, Warracknabeal, Wimmera.

Northern Mallee: Kerang, Mildura, Swan Hill, Walpeup, Wycheproof.

Loddon-Campaspe: Bendigo, BetBet, Castlemaine, Charlston, Cohuna, Eaglehawk, East Loddon, Echuca, Gisborne, Gordon, Huntly, Kara Kara, Korong, Kyneton, McIvor, Maldon, Marong, Maryborough, Metcalfe, Newham and Woodend, Newstead, Pyalong, Rochester, Romsey, St. Arnaud, Strathfieldsaye, Tullaroop.

Goulburn: Alexandra, Benalla, Broadford, Cobram, Deakin, Euroa, Goulburn, Kilmore, Kyabram, Mansfield, Natholia, Numurkah, Rodney, Seymour, Shepparton, Tungamah, Violet Town, Waranga, Yea.

North Eastern: Beechworth, Bright, Chiltern, Myrtleford, Oxley, Rutherglen, Tallangatta, Upper Murray, Wangaratta, Wodonga, Yackandandah, Yarrawonga.

East Gippsland: Avon, Bairnsdale, Maffra, Omeo, Orbost, Sale, Tambo.

Central Gippsland: Alberton, Buln Buln, Korumburra, Mirboo, Moe, Morwell, Narracan, Rosedale, South Gippsland, Traralgon, Warragul, Woorayl, Yallourn Works Area.

* The "Metropolitan Area" comprises all LGA's under Melbourne Environs except those marked with an asterisk.

DISPOSITION BY AGE OF OFFENDER (1975)

DISPOSITION	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17+	NK	TOTAL
WARNING	59	142	225	335	610	840	798	697	500	72	85	4363
YOUTH TRAINING CENTRE								153	235	32	8	428
SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT	7	23	33	58	110	233	333	201	140	9	19	1166
PROBATION	5	11	27	62	159	302	457	511	473	84	58	2149
FINE				1	2	12	51	226	481	217	56	1046
BOND				1	2	10	18	33	61	22	8	155
ADJOURNMENT	6	16	57	105	192	353	501	585	583	168	72	2638
DISMISSED/ WITHDRAWN	1	1	4	9	10	18	49	64	71	22	16	265
TOTAL	78	193	346	571	1085	1768	2207	2470	2544	626	322	12210

APPENDIX 3 (ctc)

DISPOSITION BY AGE OF OFFENDER (1972)

DISPOSITION	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17+	TOTAL
WARNING	63	76	131	174	302	417	409	373	290	55	2290
YOUTH TRAINING CENTRE								180	242	38	460
SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT	11	21	29	35	65	188	225	152	141	9	876
PROBATION	5	22	52	105	198	403	635	648	633	106	2807
FINE					2	12	46	192	406	176	834
BOND			1		2		4	6	28	5	46
ADJOURNMENT	11	28	49	78	150	297	445	561	576	163	2358
DISMISSED/ WITHDRAWN	2	6	3	6	10	26	61	56	83	33	286
TOTAL	92	153	265	398	729	1343	1825	2168	2399	585	9957

APPENDIX 3

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Note: This is not a bibliography on juvenile offending. Such a document would be immense. Listed are only those documents referred to in the text.

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