Persuasion to Virtue

A Preliminary Statement

JUNE L. TAPP and FELICE J. LEVINE

American Bar Foundation and University of Chicago

With increasing incidences of deviance exemplified by campus disorders, community crime, civil disobedience, and interpersonal aggression, demands for law and order emanate from various segments of the general population. Concurrently, the search for effective means of assuring compliance to law becomes more fervent. Some policy-planners, legislators, policemen, judges, and educators seek new insights and greater understanding about obedience, but society's response is primarily expressed in terms of increased surveillance, detection, and punishment (which ironically may function to complicate compliance problems). In coping with disobedience, whether individual or collective, violent or nonviolent, little serious attention is paid to the origins of deviance and particularly to the antecedents of compliance. Yet it is from knowledge about the origins of obedience and the related ideas of normal populations about the legal process that the problems of deviance can best be understood and stratagems for social change most effectively realized.

In addressing the issues surrounding compliance to rules and laws, ultimately one must focus on what may be called legal socialization. To date, little is known about the "positive" or "negative" aspects of the legal socialization process on the attitudes and behaviors of the average citizen, i.e., how individuals learn both deviant and compliant modes. Socialization, rather than the threat of a particular legal sanction, is primarily responsible for compliance to social systems (Zimring and Hawkins, 1968). This process is perhaps society's central means of social control (Brim, 1963). Its primary objective is "to produce individuals who will not only conform to the socially prescribed rules [and roles] of conduct but will, as members of society, accept them as their own values" (Maccoby, 1968: 230).

Interest in how people learn to be rule-abiding is not an entirely new concern for the behavioral sciences. Developmental and social psychologists, as well as political scientists with interests in political socialization, have studied the growth of moral judgments and of ideas about law and government employing a range of techniques and in various settings (Piaget, 1932; Kohlberg, 1963; Almond and Verba, 1963; Bandura and Walters, 1963: Hess and Torney, 1967; Adelson, et al., 1969; Aronfreed, 1968; Easton and Dennis, 1969). Psychological theory and research in moral development provide an excellent perspective for initiating work on the development of legal values and law-abiding behavior. Both of the major psychological positions—the developmental, stage-theory viewpoint and the social-learning one—have had substantial influence on analyzing legal socialization. The moral development theorists emphasize the effect of maturational growth on all cognitive development, including moral development, while the social-learning theorists stress that the acquisition of moral behavior, like any other class of behavior, reflects the influence of training, modeling, and identification with socializing agents (Berkowitz, 1964).

From the perspective of internalizing legal values and behaviors, "both formulations turn out to be right to a degree" (Maccoby, 1968: 253). It is true that individuals at various maturational stages have different capacities for understanding, abstracting, and conceptualizing. Maturational processes are

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central in forming children's judgments of rules and laws as absolute or changeable, breakable or unbreakable. It is equally valid that modeling and reinforcement effects of parents and other socializing agents have a notably powerful effect on children's perceptions of and interaction with the legal system. The effectiveness of such characteristics of the authority as punitiveness and affection are differentially important for gaining legal compliance.

This paper looks at children's perceptions at various age levels in order to note, where applicable, maturational change as well as persistent, stable early learning apparently due to training and reinforcement experiences. Instead of studying compliance and deterrence in terms of criminality and the offender, the paper considers how ideas about rules, justice, authority, and punishment function in normal populations. Although socialization or resocialization continues throughout the life cycle, the present focus is on children because strong evidence indicates considerable persistence of values and modes of behavior learned early. In other words, societal reform may be needed to reach this group, but the young are also the ones most susceptible to change (Brim and Wheeler, 1966; Maccoby, 1968). Theoretically, an understanding of children's perceptions of authority, justice, and the role of law in society should illuminate (1) what is universal about compliance as distinct from cultural or situational, and (2) what conditions engender tendencies toward compliance. Practically, such findings should provide police, judges, parents, educators—the socializers of the legal system—with primal information in educating for responsibility, deciding about culpability, evolving mature (moral) ideas of law and fairness, and perfecting methods for effective compliance. The results might also reduce some of the pervasive tension between authority and citizenry across a wide spectrum of the population.

METHOD

SAMPLE

This analysis is stimulated in part by data collected for a six-country, seven-culture (Denmark, Greece, Italy, India, Japan, United States black and white) developmental study on children's perceptions of and behaviors toward authority, rules, and aggression in various "legal" compliance systems, e.g., home, school, government, community (Hess and Tapp, 1969: Minturn and Tapp, 1970). In the United States the two major racial groups, whites and blacks, were examined for assumed differential outlooks toward authority and the social order. The United States interview sample consisted of 124 preadolescents (middle school children) from three grade groups: 4, 6, and 8. The 61 white and 63 black United States subjects, with approximately 20 in each grade, were also equally divided between the sexes and socioeconomic status

(SES) groupings, representing high (professional and semiprofessional) and low (working) levels. The American children came from primarily inner-city and suburban communities within a large urban metropolis. The interview data was collected in late Spring 1965 during the early civil rights movement in areas where awareness of the problem was developing. The primary focus of this paper will be the responses of the United States sample groups. When the findings for the United States and other nations are similar, universal patterns will be noted.

INTERVIEW

The interview focused on 9 substantive areas: definition of rules and laws, nature of fair rules, breakability of rules (laws), consistency of rules (laws), function of rules (laws), power of enforcement and deterrence, inevitability of detection, worst deviations from rules and laws, and the justice of punishment. The interview was open-ended and contained 79 questions, of which 22 were analyzed using cross-national, empirically-derived categories. This paper will discuss 6 of the 22:

(1) What is a fair rule?

(2) What would happen if there were no rules?

(3) Is it ever right to break a rule?

(4) Who can make you follow a rule or law?

(5) Who is it worst to be punished by?

(6) Why is it worst to be punished by (that choice)?

These selected items provide an economical way of portraying children's conceptions of justice (fairness), legitimacy, enforcement, punishment, and the role of law.

The interviews were individually administered in school settings by experienced and trained personnel. Where possible, the interviewers were matched to the children by race, SES, and sex. The interview session was one to two hours long, depending on the culture and the child. All United States interviews were taped and transcribed verbatim; interviewers also took notes and recorded impressions. Since the questioning format was completely open-ended, children's responses may be assumed to reflect reliably their own associations and perceptions (or even myths).[1]

DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis of children's responses was based on percentages computed for total, age, sex and SES frequencies. Similarities and differences between blacks

and whites were examined. Total black-white differences for each response category were analyzed using *t*-tests, and for sampling variation between ethnic groups using *chi*-square. Only total ethnic differences are indicated since there were no significant black-white differences in the age, sex or SES groupings. Also age, sex and SES sampling variations were measured within each United States culture by *t*-tests. No sex differences emerged. When significant age and SES differences occurred in one group, they are discussed comparatively.

Other national patterns paralleling those of United States whites and blacks are included. Percentages are compared for trends between cultures; the concentration is on cross-national or general patterns. For the cross-cultural perspective, rank order and trend analyses are deemed more important, relevant, and fruitful than the analysis of significant differences because such differences may only represent national differences in response set and are therefore not as telling as an analysis of general patterns across national samples.

An examination of the similarities and differences between subcultures and cultures suggests criteria for distinguishing between the idiosyncratic, the culture-bound, and the universal (Minturn and Lambert, 1964). What is considered uniquely American may turn out to be oddly human.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Children's responses to "What would happen if there were no rules?" cogently expressed their ideas about the nature of man and the function of laws and rules in society. American children demonstrated a fearful, distrusting view of mankind; both blacks and whites most often thought violence and crime would erupt without rules. No significant differences appeared between the two cultural groups. Their reaction was typified by this boy's concern, "There would probably be all kinds of different murders and stuff like that. People would be going crazy. There would be all kinds of burglaries and stuff like that; stealing cars and stuff." Such ideas reflected internalization of American society's consuming sense that "violence lurks with us" (Toch, 1969). Children also thought anarchy, disorder, and chaos as well as personal desire would be rampant. Children from the other countries had a similarly somber view of the world. Although the United States children mentioned violence and crime more frequently than other national groups, the major predictions made by most children, despite national background, were that violence, anarchy, and personal gain would prevail in the absence of rules. The comment of this fourth grade American boy encapsulated the view of most children: "Well, it would be a lot of disorganizing in the world. You know, people would be going around killing each other. It wouldn't be

TABLE 1

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THERE WERE NO RULES?[a]
(U.S. blacks and whites by grade and SES)

Categories		Blacks		Whites	
		%	(n)	%	(n)
Personal desires, not principles	Grade 4	23	(5)	24	(5)
	Grade 6	33	(7)	10	(2)
	Grade 8	45	(9)	35	(7)
	Low SES	33	(11)	26	(8)
	High SES	33	(10)	20	(6)
	Total	33	(21)	23	(14)
Civil injury	Grade 4	9	(2)	24	(5)
	Grade 6	24	(5)	5	(1)
	Grade 8	15	(3)	10	(2)
	Low SES	21	(7)	13	(4)
	High SES	10	(3)	13	(4)
	Total	16	(10)	13	(8)
Violence and crime	Grade 4	50	(11)	67	(14)
	Grade 6	57	(12)	65	(13)
	Grade 8	65	(13)	50	(10)
	Low SES	58	(19)	64	(20)
	High SES	57	(17)	57	(17)
	Total	57	(36)	61	(37)
Anarchy, disorder, chaos	Grade 4	54	(12)	24	(5)
	Grade 6	19	(4)	55	(11)
	Grade 8	45	(9)	40	(8)
	Low SES	36	(12)	23[b]	(7)
	High SES	43	(13)	57	(17)
	Total	40	(25)	39	(24)
Wars	Grade 4	4	(1)	10	(2)
	Grade 6	14	(3)	5	(1)
	Grade 8	10	(2)	10	(2)
	Low SES	15	(5)	13	(4)
	High SES	3	(1)	3	(1)
	Total	10	(6)	8	(5)
Impossible to imagine world without laws	Grade 4	—	—	10	(2)
	Grade 6	5	(1)	—	—
	Grade 8	5	(1)	5	(1)
	Low SES	3	(1)	3	(1)
	High SES	3	(1)	7	(2)
	Total	3	(2)	5	(3)
Don't know, response not applicable, no response	Grade 4	4	(1)	—	—
	Grade 6	—	—	—	—
	Grade 8	—	—	—	—
	Low SES	3	(1)	—	—
	High SES	—	—	—	—
	Total	2	(1)	—	—

a. Categories "Property not maintained" and "No regulation of wealth or property" omitted because of few responses. Multiple coded; therefore, percentages total over 100.

b. Significant SES difference (t = 2.73, p $\leqslant$ .05).

organized, there wouldn't be any school or anything like that." One girl succinctly noted, "Everyone would do what they wanted."

Since socialization seeks to produce individuals who will want to comply, agents of socialization may teach children that without rules and laws, chaos and conflict would reign. This is to say that children's apprehension about the violent and aggressive nature of man may ensue from the emphasis placed on obeying rules and the reinforcement effects of calls for law and order from authority models as much as from a basically pessimistic assessment of man. And stressing such concerns may be particularly prevalent within middle-class—and perhaps even white—homes. For whites significantly more high SES children anticipated anarchy, disorder, and chaos. No comparable class difference emerged for blacks.

While training may amplify certain attitudes, apparently children in many countries sustain a Hobbesian, not Lockean, perception of human nature. Few can imagine a world without rules and few dare suggest that good might survive without law (Adelson et al., 1969). Rules and laws provide the boundaries and limits. Accordingly, there is a pervasive recognition that they control and deter man's "instinctually" aggressive, egoistic motives.

Children evidently have internalized a strong prolegal inclination the compliance-inducing effects of which may be diluted if the rules that are wanted turn out to be in some way unfair. If so, it is important to know what kind of rule—the kind of legal system—children consider fair and what aspects of a rule result in its being regarded as unfair. Although there was variation within the United States and between the United States and other countries on "What is a fair rule?" the open-ended response answers addressed three dimensions of "fairness": equality (distribution), rationality (justifiable reason), and consensus (participation). Children presented a remarkably acute summary of the attributes believed inherent in a constitutional democracy. On equality, a white child observed "We should both get yelled at for talking, but it's not fair for one person to get yelled at"; a black specified "A rule that would apply to everyone fairly and it wouldn't put one person out and another person in." For rationality, a fourth grader summarized, "Something that's all right to do, not something that takes away your freedom." And their position on the consensual aspect was very simply described by "Everybody likes it" and "When somebody suggests a rule and everybody thinks it's right, then it's fair."

The United States blacks and whites diverged in one significant regard. In contrast to nineteen percent of the United States black children, forty-seven percent of the United States white children cited equality. Perhaps, as a minority culture, blacks are more concerned with compensatory justice than equal justice as an equitable principle for eventually realizing the distribution of equal rights and opportunities. However, unlike children from any other culture, *both* blacks and whites thought justifiable reason an important dimen-

TABLE 2
WHAT IS A FAIR RULE?[a]
(U.S. blacks and whites by grade and SES)

Categories		Blacks		Whites	
		%	(n)	%	(n)
Equality	Grade 4	14	(3)	38	(8)
	Grade 6	24	(5)	45	(9)
	Grade 8	20	(4)	60	(12)
	Low SES	21	(7)	42	(13)
	High SES	17	(5)	53	(16)
	Total	19[b]	(12)	48	(29)
By authority	Grade 4	9	(2)	—	—
	Grade 6	—	—	15	(3)
	Grade 8	—	—	—	—
	Low SES	—	—	10	(3)
	High SES	7	(2)	—	—
	Total	3	(2)	5	(3)
Reasonable-rational	Grade 4	32	(7)	38	(8)
	Grade 6	43	(9)	40	(8)
	Grade 8	30	(6)	20	(4)
	Low SES	36	(12)	23	(7)
	High SES	33	(10)	43	(13)
	Total	35	(22)	33	(20)
Consensual-participatory	Grade 4	14	(3)	19	(4)
	Grade 6	38	(8)	35	(7)
	Grade 8	20	(4)	20	(4)
	Low SES	6[c]	(2)	19	(6)
	High SES	43	(13)	30	(9)
	Total	24	(15)	25	(15)
Institutional	Grade 4	4	(1)	10	(2)
	Grade 6	—	—	—	—
	Grade 8	5	(1)	—	—
	Low SES	6	(2)	6	(2)
	High SES	—	—	—	—
	Total	3	(2)	3	(2)
Absolute—all rules	Grade 4	4	(1)	—	—
	Grade 6	—	—	—	—
	Grade 8	10	(2)	—	—
	Low SES	9	(3)	—	—
	High SES	—	—	—	—
	Total	5	(3)	—	—
Don't know, response not applicable, no response	Grade 4	27	(6)	10	(2)
	Grade 6	10	(2)	—	—
	Grade 8	10	(2)	10	(2)
	Low SES	21	(7)	6	(2)
	High SES	10	(3)	7	(2)
	Total	16	(10)	7	(4)

a. Categories "One which favors the inherently disadvantaged" and "One which is not arbitrary" omitted because of few responses. Multiple coded, therefore, percentages total over 100.

b. Significant ethnic difference (t = 3.44, p ⩽ .05).

c. Significant SES difference (t = 3.47, p ⩽ .05).

sion of rule fairness. This decidedly American response may reflect a Deweyan ethos: Explain to children *why* something is done. Rules are rationalized, reasons articulated. This is consistent with Elder's (1963) research which found that, if parents explain rules, adolescents are more likely to use them as models. It may be an American "culture bound" trait to consider a rule fair if a "good" reason has been provided. Certainly this fourth grader's expression revealed early learning of the principle: "What makes it fair? Because it is a good thing and it is helping you from getting hurt."

Most surprising perhaps is the central role of consensus-participation in children's justice concepts in the United States and in other countries. That a fair system embrace participatory, mutual, and joint efforts has important implications for our legal authority system. Also the extremely low number of children in all cultures who saw fair rules as those made by a legitimate authority suggests, not that authorities are per se unfair, but that participation and power within the system are requisite characteristics of justice around the world. Perhaps if judges, law enforcement officials, and other community representatives are to be considered "fair" functionaries within a "just" system, they must bring children and adults together to confront problems of law-abiding behavior and develop programs for the control and prevention of delinquency. Such strategies emphasizing dialogue and cooperation, like the delinquency program in the San Francisco Bay area, may both reduce crime and resocialize a perception of "just" legal authority (Carter, 1968).

There was one significant SES difference on the consensus-participation response. Black, high social class children were more prone to define fairness in such democratic terms. The same difference, though not significant, was noted for United States whites. Presumably the high SES child has more exposure to democratic settings, greater opportunity for role-playing in participatory activities, and therefore favors this aspect of fairness (Maas, 1951; Tuma and Livson, 1960; Kohn, 1960; Kohlberg, 1963).

Children's views about rules were probed from an additional perspective; that is, "Is it ever right to break a rule?" United States children, like children in most other countries, thought rule-breaking might be right. A majority of both United States whites and blacks thought that breaking rules is permissible *if* the rule is less important than the reason for breaking it. Their position was concisely depicted in these answers: "Well, it depends on what's going on. If it's a matter of life and death or, you know, something pretty important, then it's all right. But it should be followed as much as possible," and "When you're hungry and you go in the store and steal something. When you need money [like for] someone kidnapped, someone in your family, and he stole it from the bank, paid the ransom and you try to pay the money back to the bank. Money and food could be replaced but the person in life couldn't." Substantial minorities of children in two other countries also felt rule violation could be legitimate when there is appropriate reason. Children even at

TABLE 3

IS IT EVER RIGHT TO BREAK A RULE?[a]

(U.S. blacks and whites by grade and SES)

Categories		Blacks		Whites	
		%	(n)	%	(n)
Yes, unspecified	Grade 4	—	—	—	—
	Grade 6	5	(1)	5	(1)
	Grade 8	5	(1)	5	(1)
	Low SES	3	(1)	6	(2)
	High SES	3	(1)	—	—
	Total	3	(2)	3	(2)
No rule is breakable	Grade 4	46	(10)	33[b]	(7)
	Grade 6	5	(1)	5	(1)
	Grade 8	25	(5)	5	(1)
	Low SES	33	(11)	23[c]	(7)
	High SES	17	(5)	7	(2)
	Total	25	(16)	15	(9)
If it is unfair	Grade 4	4	(1)	10	(2)
	Grade 6	10	(2)	10	(2)
	Grade 8	10	(2)	25	(5)
	Low SES	15	(5)	13	(4)
	High SES	—	—	17	(5)
	Total	8	(5)	15	(9)
Less important than reason for breaking it	Grade 4	32	(7)	48	(10)
	Grade 6	76	(16)	80	(16)
	Grade 8	55	(11)	65	(13)
	Low SES	42[d]	(14)	55	(17)
	High SES	67	(20)	73	(22)
	Total	54	(34)	64	(39)
Don't know, response not applicable, no response	Grade 4	18	(4)	10	(2)
	Grade 6	5	(1)	—	—
	Grade 8	5	(1)	—	—
	Low SES	6	(2)	3	(1)
	High SES	13	(4)	3	(1)
	Total	10	(6)	3	(2)

a. Category "It is all right to break a rule but not a law" omitted because of few responses.
b. Significant grade difference (t = 2.27, p ⩽ .05).
c. Significant SES difference (t = 1.75, p ⩽ .05).
d. Significant SES difference (t = 1.99, p ⩽ .05).

these younger age levels recognized that the law is not infallible and absolute in its sovereignty, but that there are just and legitimate reasons for transgressions. Their judgments indicated that developmentally they have moved

TABLE 4

WHO CAN MAKE YOU OBEY?[a]

(U.S. blacks and whites by grade and SES)

Categories		Blacks		Whites	
		%	(n)	%	(n)
Father	Grade 4	77	(17)	86	(18)
	Grade 6	67	(14)	70	(14)
	Grade 8	75	(15)	75	(15)
	Low SES	73	(24)	87	(27)
	High SES	73	(22)	67	(20)
	Total	73	(46)	77	(47)
Mother	Grade 4	96	(21)	86	(18)
	Grade 6	76	(16)	80	(16)
	Grade 8	80	(16)	70	(14)
	Low SES	85	(28)	90[b]	(28)
	High SES	83	(25)	67	(20)
	Total	84	(53)	79	(48)
Teacher	Grade 4	54	(12)	76	(16)
	Grade 6	52	(11)	80	(16)
	Grade 8	55	(11)	70	(14)
	Low SES	61	(20)	87[c]	(27)
	High SES	47	(14)	63	(19)
	Total	54[d]	(34)	75	(46)
Police	Grade 4	41	(9)	62	(13)
	Grade 6	67	(14)	70	(14)
	Grade 8	70	(14)	75	(15)
	Low SES	64	(21)	77	(24)
	High SES	53	(16)	60	(18)
	Total	59	(37)	69	(42)
Government officials	Grade 4	27	(6)	48[e]	(10)
	Grade 6	24	(5)	25	(5)
	Grade 8	15	(3)	10	(2)
	Low SES	21	(7)	32	(10)
	High SES	23	(7)	23	(7)
	Total	22	(14)	28	(17)
Relatives	Grade 4	18	(4)	10	(2)
	Grade 6	10	(2)	15	(3)
	Grade 8	10	(2)	20	(4)
	Low SES	15	(5)	23	(7)
	High SES	10	(3)	7	(2)
	Total	13	(8)	15	(9)
Self	Grade 4	4	(1)	—	—
	Grade 6	—	—	—	—
	Grade 8	5	(1)	5	(1)
	Low SES	3	(1)	—	—
	High SES	3	(1)	3	(1)
	Total	3	(2)	2	(1)
Others	Grade 4	27	(6)	48	(10)
	Grade 6	29	(6)	50	(10)
	Grade 8	30	(6)	45	(9)
	Low SES	30	(10)	36	(11)
	High SES	27	(8)	60	(18)
	Total	29[f]	(18)	48	(29)

a. Categories "Don't know," "Response not applicable," and "No response" omitted because of few responses. Multiple coded; therefore, percentages total over 100.

b. Significant SES difference (t = 2.19, p ⩽ .05).

c. Significant SES difference (t = 2.17, p ⩽ .05).

d. Significant ethnic difference (t = 2.44, p ⩽ .05).

e. Significant grade difference (t = 2.67, p ⩽ .05).

f. Significant ethnic difference (t = 2.18, p ⩽ .05).

beyond the stage of believing that rules and laws are fixed and unchangeable (Piaget, 1932; Kohlberg, 1963).

Significant and supportive developmental and SES trends in both United States groups were also illuminating. Younger American children were inclined to be more committed to the notion that no rule is breakable. This age difference was significant for whites and evident among blacks. The SES divergences coincided, perhaps predictably, with developmental differences. Low SES children were prone to believe no rule is breakable, while high SES preadolescents believed extenuating reasons justify rule-breaking. The former pattern was significant for whites; the latter, for blacks. Younger children as well as lower class children were likely to have internalized a more authoritarian conception of government, a rigid perspective on the absolute rightness of law, and an inflexibility about man's duty to obey (Kohlberg, 1963; Piaget, 1932; Maas, 1951; Dolger and Ginandes, 1946; Tuma and Livson, 1960). Paralleling Adelson and associates' (1969) findings on adolescents, older children were more willing to disavow or ignore an unworkable law while younger children felt obliged to obey authority or be subject to severe punishment.

Children's responses to the enforcement question: "Who can make you follow a rule?" suggested the efficacy of trust and affiliation over fear and distance. Blacks and whites differed only about the teacher; significantly more whites (75%) than blacks (54%) favored this figure. For whites, teacher perhaps represented a more nurturant individual with whom they identified more strongly.

Both black and white children in the United States, like children from all other cultures, indicated that authority figures with whom they share a closer relationship are most effective in inducing obedience. Children generally ranked mother first, father second, teacher third, and policeman fourth. Percentages for the more proximal parents were substantially higher than for the more distal policeman. In terms of societal role functions, it may be assumed that generally normal individuals experience a more affectionate and psychologically meaningful attachment to those who are in closer proximity.

Consistent with social-learning theory, strong affective attachment to authority is a more important feature than punishment power in enforcing rules and gaining compliance (Bandura and Walters, 1963; Aronfreed, 1968; Berkowitz, 1964). Affective attachment seems part of a general, pervasive loyalty to and identification with the authority figure, engendering feelings of support as well as resulting in modeling and obedience. Apparently, severe or hostile punishment, more typically meted out by less intimate figures, is not an effective technique for obtaining compliance. Close, personal affiliation may be the important element in the socialization process for encouraging the acceptance and internalization of social and legal norms. As Bandura and McDonald's (1963) experiment demonstrated, reward may not be enough;

TABLE 5

WHO IS IT WORST TO BE PUNISHED BY?[a]
(U.S. blacks and whites by grade and SES)

Categories		Blacks %	Blacks (n)	Whites %	Whites (n)
Father	Grade 4	32	(7)	14[b]	(3)
	Grade 6	19	(4)	60	(12)
	Grade 8	30	(6)	35	(7)
	Low SES	15[c]	(5)	29	(9)
	High SES	40	(12)	43	(13)
	Total	27	(17)	36	(22)
Mother	Grade 4	23	(5)	5	(1)
	Grade 6	14	(3)	25	(5)
	Grade 8	10	(2)	15	(3)
	Low SES	18	(6)	10	(3)
	High SES	13	(4)	20	(6)
	Total	16	(10)	15	(9)
Teacher	Grade 4	—	—	—	—
	Grade 6	—	—	5	(1)
	Grade 8	—	—	—	—
	Low SES	—	—	3	(1)
	High SES	—	—	—	—
	Total	—	—	2	(1)
Policeman	Grade 4	41	(9)	81[d]	(17)
	Grade 6	67	(14)	30	(6)
	Grade 8	60	(12)	60	(12)
	Low SES	64	(21)	64	(20)
	High SES	47	(14)	50	(15)
	Total	56	(35)	57	(35)

a. Categories "Don't know," "Response not applicable," and "No response" omitted because of few responses. Multiple coded; therefore, percentages total over 100.

b. Significant grade difference between fourth and sixth grades ($t = 3.06$, $p \leqslant .05$).

c. Significant SES difference ($t = 2.24$, $p \leqslant .05$).

d. Significant grade difference between fourth and sixth grades ($t = 3.30$, $p \leqslant .05$).

active participation in the learning process may also be necessary. Perhaps in the final analysis, it is the power of persuasion to virtue rather than coercion to virtue that induces compliance and institutionalizes deterrence.

The probable effects of physical and psychological distance on children's tendencies to comply suggest that the influence of formal, impersonal agencies is weak at best and can be altered only by dramatic or conspicuous events. If authority figures such as police, judges, and mayors are to have positive impact, it will be largely through strong and manifest displays of "good."

Conspicuously "bad" conduct by these figures, e.g., impoliteness, arbitrariness, brutality, is imposed on an already diluted and questionable position. If children are to exhibit "respect for law," parents—the key socializers—must also be persuaded that the law is respectable. Parents teach by example as well as by command; their styles and values are emulated (Berkowitz, 1964).

On the enforcement question, United States whites demonstrated significant developmental (age) differences for government. Younger children were more likely to think government was effective in obtaining compliance. The same pattern held for blacks. Also, for whites there were significant social-class differences in choosing both mother and teacher as effective enforcers. Low SES children more frequently chose these female figures. Although for blacks the social class frequencies were not significantly different, patterns for the figures were the same as those for the whites. Furthermore, pancultural SES patterns were indicated for mother, and strongly emerged in six out of seven cultures for teacher. These social class differences suggest the power of the matriarchy within the lower class milieu (Dolger and Ginandes, 1946; Maas, 1951; Tuma and Livson, 1960). Children from lower-class cultures have more direct influence exerted over them by female figures and perhaps also more positive reinforcement experiences (Berkowitz, 1964).

Children's ideas about "Who is it worst to be punished by?" further supported the notion that harsh punishment is *not* directly related to enforcement power. Consistent with the cross-cultural pattern, United States blacks and whites considered the policeman the worst punisher, substantially worse than any other figure. Since male authority figures are traditionally associated with punitive and severe disciplinary measures, it is not surprising that father was rated worse than mother or teacher. However, consistent with the enforcement power question, father—the proximal figure—was evaluated much more positively than policeman—the distal figure. The policeman was clearly the worst punisher, but on "Who can make you follow a rule?" was not the most effective enforcer. Overall, children seemed to define worst in punitive and severe terms. Although harsh authority figures may mete out the worst punishment, children are not motivated to obey.

For United States whites two significant age trends emerged. Unlike younger children, older children thought punishment by father was worst, but younger children were more inclined to feel that way about the policeman. Although there were no significant differences on these figures for blacks, a reverse age trend appeared on policeman. As for SES, two significant differences held for the blacks; parallel patterns held for whites. Unlike low-status children, high social-class children indicated father. But low social-class children more frequently believed that policeman was the worst punisher. Low-status children (and perhaps black children) may be reflecting the punitive, if not arbitrary, nature of their exchanges with police. High-status children may interpret worst in terms of the possibility of love withdrawal, a more preva-

TABLE 6
WHY IS IT WORST TO BE PUNISHED BY (PERSON LISTED AS FIRST CHOICE)?[a]
(U.S. blacks and whites by grade and SES)

Categories		Blacks		Whites	
		%	(n)	%	(n)
Power	Grade 4	9	(2)	5	(1)
	Grade 6	—	—	10	(2)
	Grade 8	5	(1)	20	(4)
	Low SES	3	(1)	6	(2)
	High SES	7	(2)	17	(5)
	Total	5	(3)	12	(7)
Severity of punishment	Grade 4	82	(18)	57	(12)
	Grade 6	90	(19)	60	(12)
	Grade 8	85	(17)	50	(10)
	Low SES	82	(27)	64	(20)
	High SES	90	(27)	47	(14)
	Total	86[b]	(54)	56	(34)
Source of love and help	Grade 4	—	—	—	—
	Grade 6	—	—	5	(1)
	Grade 8	—	—	—	—
	Low SES	—	—	—	—
	High SES	—	—	3	(1)
	Total	—	—	2	(1)
Resultant bad reputation	Grade 4	—	—	5	(1)
	Grade 6	—	—	—	—
	Grade 8	10	(2)	5	(1)
	Low SES	3	(1)	3	(1)
	High SES	3	(1)	3	(1)
	Total	3	(2)	3	(2)

a. Categories "It is Person You Love Most," "It is Person You Should Respect," "It is a Relative," "It is Not a Relative," "Don't Know," "Response not Applicable," and "No Response" omitted because of few responses. Multiple coded; therefore, percentages total over 100.

b. Significant ethnic difference ($t = 3.69$, $p \leqslant .05$).

lent middle-class socialization technique (Bronfenbrenner, 1958; Sears et al., 1957).

Responses to "Why is it worst to be punished by (that choice)?" confirmed the foregoing analysis on the relationship between enforcement power and punishment power. The United States blacks and whites, reflecting the cross-cultural pattern that held for six of seven cultures, emphasized the severity of punishment. Although both groups most frequently indicated severity of punishment, significantly more blacks (86%) than whites (56%) gave this

reason. This difference may reflect the greater exposure to, and resulting fear that black children have of punitive, harsh measures. The following are examples of children's ideas about police: "Because they can take you to the police office and you could be sentenced to live in jail for the rest of your life until you die"; "Because he can give harder punishments"; "Probably because they can do more to you, not more but worse things." The primacy of severe punishment is consistent with children's selection of policeman as worst punisher. While increasing the number or the severity of sanctions may in some cases deter deviance, there is little evidence that such procedures result in legal socialization *or* the resocialization of compliant modes. "Furthermore, a desirable outcome of the socialization process from the standpoint of the social group is that the individual will conform without constant surveillance from society's formal or informal policeman and, indeed, will be able to function as policeman and teacher of the norms to the next generation" (Maccoby, 1968: 241).

CONCLUSION

Black and white children in the United States with few exceptions were astonishingly alike in their views about human nature and the need for rules, the justice of rules, the legitimacy of rule-breaking, the power of enforcement, and the justice of punishment. Like children throughout the world, American children recognized the role of rules and laws in controlling crime and violence, as well as disorder and anarchy, and in establishing limits and boundaries for human behavior. They sought rules and laws to maintain order, but their motive for orderly compliance systems was not unconditional: with good reason, rules could legitimately be violated. Children required a fair system, one which was rational, emphasized equality, and stressed the importance of consensus and participation. Moreover, their perceptions of authorities were colored by their notions of justice (fairness). Figures to whom they felt attachment and trust were more likely to gain obedience than figures who were punitive, unilateral, or perhaps arbitrary. The latter were feared but certainly not revered or obeyed. Developmental processes affected children's conceptions of justice and of the role of law. Concomitantly, their perceptions of authority figures and the legal system itself were strongly influenced by social-learning experiences.

The impact of punitive figures may be diminished because of their enforcement techniques. Apparently trust, fairness, credibility, and affiliation as distinct from punitive power are important aspects for accepting the legitimacy of the authority system (Krause, 1968; Flacks, 1968; Gamson, 1968). Such characteristics influence the likelihood of obedience and may be even more crucial than power characteristics in obtaining compliance. Moreover, an

authority system cannot assure tight surveillance over every individual (de Charms, 1968; Asch, 1952). Emphasizing the trust-affiliative characteristics of the authority figures, increasing the consensual or participatory nature of encounters with the authority system, and creating a sense of civic responsibility for maintaining order appear to be more powerful than the threat of sanction or the risk of legal penalty in internalizing compliance. Ultimately, the model of the persuasive socializer may achieve greater success than the coercive one.

NOTE

1. The coding categories were based on an analysis of 12 interviews from each culture and represented an integration of national codes. The reliabilities, both intra- and inter-country, were calculated for pairs of coders using percentage agreement on the whole interview and by response category, codable and noncodable. For the United States the range for the nine areas was 71% to 80% for whites, 75% to 82% for blacks. Cross-nationally, the overall reliability was 77% for the 42 translated interviews. More detailed methodological information is available in Parts I and II of the initial research reports.

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