Male Adolescent Crime

and Demographic Characteristics

The fact that court rates in Midcity showed regular variation by social status level suggests that criminal behavior by male adolescents may be conceived as a behavioral practice which is related in a regular fashion to other social and cultural characteristics. One way of further exploring this possibility is to examine the degree of statistical association between male adolescent court case rates and community demographic characteristics. What was the nature of this association, and what does it reveal as to the origins of gangs and youth crime?

Chapter One examined some 50 demographic characteristics – first in comparing Midcity and Port City, and second in comparing social status levels within Midcity. There was no attempt to treat systematically the intercorrelations of these variables, neither to derive clusters (“factor analysis”) nor to determine the regression of one against others. One exception occurred in the case of the class-race issue, when three characteristics (education, occupation, race) were treated as “dependent” variables and correlated with 10 traditional features of low-status populations, to show that class status carried more weight than race. The present section will pursue a similar method – taking as a dependent variable the several measures of youth crime just examined, and analyzing the statistical association.
between these and a range of demographic characteristics. This kind of undertaking – the determination of the degree of statistical association between measures of crime on the one hand and demographic characteristics on the other – is quite common in sociology. Several classic studies of this type have been made, and it is one of the few areas of sociological inquiry where the much recommended but seldom executed practice of “replication” has been undertaken. One reason for the popularity of this enterprise is that while details of execution are often complex, the underlying notion is extremely simple, and the appropriate methodology readily indicated. One simply collects measures of various demographic characteristics on the one hand (income, education, etc.) and one or more measures of crime on the other (police contacts, arrests, court cases for adults, youth, juveniles, etc.), chooses an appropriate measure of association, and proceeds to correlate one with the other.

In the face of the great abundance of findings derived from this obvious and popular exercise, it is undertaken once again for several reasons. First, most of the studies apply this method to relatively large and/or undifferentiated populations – generally a whole city; in the present instance examination is confined to a single urban district – one which has been examined in depth with respect to a wide range of features, may not include in the usual demographic repertoire. Second, as will be seen, a significant portion of the findings derived from the present examination are sufficiently divergent from those of other studies as to warrant reporting, and to raise the question of the reasons for these differences. Third, and most important, the interpretation of the correlational findings is quite different from those of most analogous studies; the use of classic demographic measures and classic correlational techniques as evidence for the thesis that criminal behavior comprises an intrinsic

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228 Following the practice of Chapter One, statistics for both dependent and independent variables will, for the most part, be derived from 1950-1960 averages. In a few instances only 1960 figures were available, and where used will be so indicated.

229 Reference to major studies: Shaw and McKay, Landers, Bardua, Schmid; ref. to summaries in President’s Crime Report, 1967.
part of an organized subcultural system is sufficiently novel as to merit presentation.\textsuperscript{230}

Interpretation and understanding the following tables, as well as comparison with analogous studies, requires brief discussion of selected methodological considerations, although no extensive treatment on a more technical level will be included here. Several points will be discussed briefly; the definitions of the dependent and independent variables, the measure of association, and the scheme of presentation. The dependent variables (court case rates) used in Tables 1.6 and 2.6 were derived in a somewhat different manner from those used in frequency Tables 3.4 and 4.4. This difference might theoretically affect the character of the findings, but spot comparisons showed that such an effect was small.\textsuperscript{231}

\textsuperscript{230} Ref. to Pre. Comm’n section on demog correlated. Ch IV: Crime and Its Impact: An Assessment. Significantly, of four explanations forwarded to account for good associations in different cities, is no mention at all of explanational position that both crime statistics and other measures reflect a relatively organized subculture. In fact, even the term “social class” is not even mentioned, let alone subculture. Four explanations presented are:

1. Social disorganization
2. Criminals attracted to area, come in from outside
3. Denial of legitimate opportunity and presence of illegitimate
4. Attributes of urban-ness as such

\textsuperscript{231} For Tables 3.4 and 4.4 the formula for the numerator of the dependent variables was:

\[
\text{No. ct. appearances } (1949+1950+1951/3) + \text{ no. ct. appearances } (1959+1960+1961/3) \text{ divided by } 2.
\]

This formula was used so that the same computations could be used separately for comparisons of the 1950 and 1960 periods, to be presented in the following section. For Tables 1.6 and 2.6 rate numerators were computed on the basis of the formula No. Ct. appearances 1950+1951+1952…+1960/11. This formula was used on the basis of the finding, reported (elsewhere) (earlier) (later) that the use of the maximum number of values available for a given time period, affords a more accurate picture of the total periods, since it tends to correct for fluctuations due to possibly atypical periods or subperiods. For the latter as well as the former tables the population figures used as rate denominators were derived from the formula pop’n 1950+pop’n 1960/2. Table 1.6 uses as a dependent variable court rates for juveniles only, in contrast to Tables 3.4 and 4.4 which use “youth” and “adolescent” rates as well. This is due primarily to practical limitations; Table 3.4 and 4.4 were compiled at a later period on the basis of data prepared for computer processing, while all the associational computations were done by hand at an earlier time when “youth” and “adolescent” figures were not available. Table 2.6 does present some associations with youth and adolescent rates; these were computed separately for the specific analysis of that table.
Measures of the demographic characteristics used as independent variables are similar to those used in Chapter One. Most of the variables appearing in Table 2.6 also appear in the earlier chapter, and are defined identically. Most Table 4.4 variables have not previously appeared in exactly the same form, and are defined in the Table footnote. In a few instances where measurers of the variable were available only for 1960 or where 1950 and 1960 census definitions differed significantly, correlations are for the 1960 period only, and are so indicated.

The technique used here for determining statistic association reflects several considerations relating to the explanatory model of the present work. Statistical analysis is frequently employed in connection with what might be called a “linear-causality” model of explanation; the maximum number of independent variables are brought to bear in an attempt to “account for” the maximum amount of variation in one or more dependent variables; the relationship between dependent and independent variables can be expressed in the form of the formula \( X = f(Y + A^2 \div \sqrt{B} \log \ldots) \) etc. This model can also be described as an attempt to “predict” \( X \) or the variation of \( X \) from \( Y \) or the variation of \( Y \). The present work, as discussed earlier, employs a different kind of explanatory model. It perceives both criminal behavior and demographic characteristics as integral parts of a complex system of mutually interrelated elements wherein it is very difficult to determine “linear” relationships, or to ascribe causative primacy along the lines of the “\( X \) causes \( Y \)” model. Moreover, many of the variables seen to play a vital role in the total systemic complex are either extremely difficult to quantify (“religious orientations” “unconscious motivation”) or, if quantifiable, not generally available in usual statistical sources (numbers, sizes, frequency or congregation of youth gangs; frequency, circumstances of use, of non-school-taught linguistic forms). The statistical association data presented in this section, then, are conceived as providing one body of evidence among several, (some in very different conceptual forms or on different levels of analysis) adduced in support of a more generalized explanation of the role of subcultural influences in the generation of gangs and youth crime. They are
intended as a statistically rigorous attempt to demonstrate causality via statistical association. In addition, the model which attempts to “account for” variation of dependent variables in terms of variation of independent variables is also employed in the present work, particularly in those sections which adduce subcultural factors in an attempt to “explain” gang delinquency. The use of such a model in such instances can be seen as an heuristic device to order and facilitate the task of explanation, in cases where one selects for special attention one of the interrelated elements of the complex. From this perspective the interrelated complex model may be conceived as more closely representing the “reality” of the analyzed phenomenon, and the linear-causality model as an artificial construct useful for analytic purposes.

Several features of the associational method reflect these considerations. The measure of association is Spearman’s rho – a non-parametric statistic. Correlation coefficients in all cases are computed on the basis of 21 units – the 21 census tracts of Midcity. Coefficients are computed on an item-by-item basis; there is no

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232 Complex issues involving mathematical models, causality and explanation; can’t go into. Present work if predicated on the thesis that for certain types of explanation the interrelated-complex model is more appropriate, or affords greater explanatory adequacy, than the linear-causality model. No claim that this is the case for all or even most explanations. Case can be made for position that interrelated complex model merely represents a more “primitive”, less developed, more “generalized” version of the linear-causality model – one in which variables are not sufficiently well defined or isolated, and/or relationships of variables involved in the generation of criminal behavior are this far so poorly known or isolated so that the attempt to restrict explanatory approaches only to those variables or bodies of data which can feasibly be handled within a mathematical framework would severely constrict the development of adequate explanations.

233 Spearman’s rho, the oldest and best-known of the rank correlation coefficients, is related to (and can be derived from the formula of) Pearson’s product-moment correlation coefficient, which is more powerful but computationally much more involved. See, for example, S. Seigel, Nonparametric Statistics, McGraw Hill 1965, pp. 202-213, and E. A. Maxwell, Analysing Qualitative Data, Methuen and Co. London 1961, pp. 115-117. Since present dates were hand-processed, computational simplicity was a major consideration in the choice of an associational measure. It was possible, however, when some of these data were later prepared for computer processing to compare Pearson and Spearman coefficients for some of the same variables, and results in most cases were quite close (Seigel states that rho is 91 percent as “efficient” as r, the most “powerful” of the correlation coefficients.) For example. 1960 juvenile rates and annual income under $6,000, rho=.52, r=.43. While the Pearson coefficients are lower in actual magnitude, significance levels are about the same (e.g., rho. 52, sig. lev. Between .01 and .05; r .43 sig. lev. Between .01 and .05). Pearson coefficients run for all of Port City (152 census tracts as units) were also in many cases close to those based on Midcity alone.
attempt at “cluster” analysis along the lines of one of the several factor analysis techniques – a method more consistent with the more rigorously mathematical models of explanation. Nor is there any direct use of significant levels as such – a usage which is also more consistent with these models, where “support” of specific hypotheses involves “testing” against designated levels of statistical significance. Instead, the correlation coefficients are grouped into four general categories, as follows: “Excellent” association, \( \rho = .75 \) or over; “good”, .60 to .75; “fair” .45 to .60; “poor”, .40 or less.\(^{234}\) Only a small fraction of all computed correlations will be presented here. In the course of examining a range of demographic variables for association with court rates, over 500 separate rank order correlations were computed by hand. A major objective of this examination was to ascertain which characteristics showed the best association and which the worst. On the assumption that the meaning of the large number of middle-range coefficients (generally between .4 and .6) was too ambiguous to warrant much attention, tabulated coefficients were selected from the higher and lower extremes. Table 1.6 presents characteristics which showed the “poorest” association with court rates, and Table 2.6 those showing the “best”.

Table 1.6 lists 14 demographic characteristics which were poorly associated with juvenile court rates in Midcity during the 1950-1960 period. The correlation coefficients range from +.38 to -.35, indicating “poor association” under the present scheme. The fourteen characteristics reflect various aspects of seven more general

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\(^{234}\) These categories were developed on the basis of a number of considerations, including, most prominently, the distribution of hundreds of computed correlation coefficients and the significance levels for \( \rho \). Since the major objective of this analysis was to ascertain which of a wide range of variables showed better or worse associations with court rates rather than to “test” any specific hypothesis via statistical methods, the direct use of the significance levels to characterize the degree of association was not deemed appropriate levels is not given, but depends instead on how “harsh” or “soft” the investigator wishes to be in testing hypotheses. In the present instance, with the design as a whole falling well along toward the “soft” end of the scale, the decision was made to categorize results according to considerably “harder” criteria than are afforded by the conventional one or five percent levels. Thus, the present scheme requires a coefficient of .60 or more for “good” association, while a coefficient of .55 is “significant” at the .01 level. Approximate two-tailed significance levels for \( \rho \), \( n=21 \), are as follows: .10, \( \rho=38 \); .05, .44, .01, .58, .005, .66.
features – residential movement and stability, housing circumstances, household size, age composition, sex compositions, racial status, and national origin. Each of these is or has been held to be directly associated with youth crime, and some have shown good association in other studies.

The “social disorganization” explanation of delinquency, authored principally by the “Chicago School” of the 1930’s, holds that residential transiency and/or recency of in-movement into an urban area are directly related to crime rates. No such relationship was apparent in Midcity in the 1960 period. The association of court rates with residence of five years or more was -.35, and with movement to Midcity from outside the greater Port City area in the previous five years, -.04. The propensity of youth to appear in court apparently had little relation to whether their families were recent or long-term residents. Similarly, it has been held that living in older houses and renting rather than owning are conducive to delinquency. In particular, the prevalence of renters has shown strong associations with delinquency rates in several well-known studies (e.g., Shaw and McKay, Chicago; Lander, Baltimore; Bordua, Detroit), as has residence in older housing units (e.g. Schmid, Seattle).

Legend for Table 1.6

Extended Residence: Percentage of residents five years and older living in the same house for five-year period; Prevalence of Children and Youth: Proportion of males and females 19 and under to all residents; Households with Young Children: Primary families with one or more children 18 or under; Prevalence of Negroes: Proportion of non-whites to all residents; Large Households: Dwelling units containing 6 (1950) or 7 (1960) or more persons; Prevalence of Irish: percentage of persons born in Ireland; Prevalence of Italians: Italian birth, as above; Recent Inmovement: Percent persons moving to community from outside Metropolitan area within previous five years. No. Persons in Household: Self-explanatory;

235 Op. cits
Not Owning Own Home: percent residents renting; Prevalence of Jews: percentage of residents born in Russia or Poland; Residents in Older Dwelling Units: Percentage 1960 residents living in buildings built 1939 or before; 1950 residents, 1929 or before.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Association with Court Rates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proportions of Population in Households</td>
<td>0.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevalence of Blacks</td>
<td>0.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households with Younger Children</td>
<td>0.25*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevalence of Male Negro Youth</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of Persons not owning own Home</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevalence of Italians</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Household</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevalence of Negro Children and Youth</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recent Inmovement from outside City</td>
<td>-0.04*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence in older Dwelling Units</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevalence of Irish</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Persons per Household</td>
<td>-0.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevalence of Jews</td>
<td>-0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended Residence</td>
<td>-0.35*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*1960 only

From Youth Crime in an Urban Lower Class City City Gangs, Chapter Three
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Both the conventional and scholarly wisdom indicate that a preponderance of young people in an urban slum, large families, and crowded housing conditions create fertile grounds for youthful malfeasance. In Midcity the associations between juvenile court rates and a cluster of measures reflecting these conditions were generally low. The association between juvenile rates and the proportion of

Poss. Ref. to Calif. Aerospace Study and age-class frequency reason for increase in j. d. rates Referred to by J. Wison in Pub Interest Article.
primary families with children under 18 was .25; with the number of persons per household, -.22; with the proportion of dwelling units containing six or more persons, .08; with the prevalence of Negro children and youth, .06; with the prevalence of male Negro youth, .25. As already shown (Chapter One) the generally accepted notion that the lowest status families have the most children did not hold in Midcity, and the relationship between family size and social status was weak. Table 11.1 does, however, show a better association between the number of young children per family and educational status than appears here between similar measures and court rates. Similarly, somewhat better associations appeared between dwelling units with an average of more than one person per room and education/occupation, in comparison with the low association shown here with large households. With respect to family size and density of residential occupation, present findings are less clear-cut than those relating to other low-association characteristics.

The relation of racial status to delinquency rates was of particular interest in the 1960’s – the era of the Poverty-and-Civil Rights Movement. As already mentioned, both the supporters and opponents of increased resources for Negroes took as a premise that crime rates are higher in Negro communities – the former to support their contention that deprivation and discrimination produce crime, and the latter to support the factual assumptions common to both positions and this diverge quite sharply from generally-accepted premises. In Midcity during the 1950’s the association between the proportion of Negroes in the several neighborhoods and juvenile court case rates was poor (.28), as was the association between court rates and the proportion of male Negro youth (.25).

These findings are, however, in direct accordance with those of Table 11.1, which show similarly poor associations between the prevalence of Negroes and a variety of sum-population characteristics. The explanation in both instances is indicated the data of Table 10.1, which show that Midcity Negroes – despite a disproportionate representation in the lower status levels – were found at all levels,
and were more prevalent in middle class than lower class I neighborhoods. Thus, the case of juvenile delinquency as well as other characteristics, the presence of higher status Negroes in any number tends to wash out the traditional association between Negro prevalence and those population characteristics which in fact reflect social status subcultures rather than race-related propensities.\footnote{Ref. to other correlations, e.g., Lander. For the 1960 period only associations between prop of Negroes and juvenile rates only were somewhat higher – in the “fair” range. However, associations with youth and adolescent rates were low on the basis of computations for 1950, 1960 and the combined period. Add, here or elsewhere, ref. to Sylvester study: Independent processing of some data, similar results, include “adult” criminal records.}

Findings with respect to delinquency rates and national origin reflect earlier findings with respect to the social status distribution of Midcity’s ethnic groups; associations are low and negative coefficients in the case of Italians and Jews reflect the fact that persons with foreign backgrounds were found in higher status areas. Arguments have been forwarded to the effect that the solidarity and firm controls of Jewish and Italian family life insulate their offspring from delinquency. In the case of the Italians, the force of the argument is somewhat diluted by the fact that the relative scarcity of Italian juvenile delinquents is balanced by the relative abundance of Italian adult criminals; in any event, present data fail to provide evidence for the purported delinquency-inhibiting capacity of Italian and Jewish families, but suggest instead that ethnic influences affect crime insofar as they find expression in the differential likelihood of finding different ethnic groups at different social status levels. The relationship between Irish prevalence and juvenile court crime, for example, is very low, reflecting the existence of Irish at the highest and lowest status levels in Midcity.\footnote{Weakness of ethnic associations vs. earlier “unassimilated ethnic” position; e.g., Shaw and McKay, r of .60 with Irish.}

With measures of housing circumstances, residential stability, race, and national background showing poor association with youth crime, what kinds of measures showed good association? Table 2.6 lists twelve measures with correlations of .60 or more, here categorized as “good” or “excellent”. These
measures reflect five more general features – occupational status, educational status, expenditure patterns, income, and child-rearing arrangements. The importance of the Table is clear; measures of education, occupation and expenditure showed strong and consistent association with crime rates; measure of income showed good association, and measures of child-rearing arrangements fairly good but less consistent association.

Measures of education, occupation, and rent payment showed consistently high association with all three measures of crime – juvenile, youth, and adolescent. In most cases juvenile rates appeared more sensitive than youth rates to those status-related characteristics, in line with the findings of Table 2.6. Associations with adolescent rates, as would be expected, generally fell somewhere in between, but were in most instances closer to the juvenile figure. Particularly impressive is the correlation of +.91 between juvenile rates and the prevalence of male manual laborers. This coefficient is the highest of the many hundreds computed, with the exception of the association of +.93 between manual laborers and failure to finish high school (Table 2.6).

This finding, which reflects numerous other high associations between juvenile rates and similar occupational measures not reported here, is of particular significance because the characteristic at issue -- a measure of the character and skill-level of customary occupational involvement -- represents a normal and essential feature of human life which does not involve pathology or disorganization in any direct fashion. There is no simple or obvious link between working in manual jobs and engaging in crime.
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The fact that the best statistical associations of this study were involved between the proportion of male manual laborers and juvenile court rates poses a task of explanation quite different from what would have been involved had characteristics such as over-crowding, dilapidated housing, large families, race, ethnic status, or residential transiency shown the best associations. After occupational status, the best associations with crime rates were shown by educational measures. This is to be expected, since the two characteristics are themselves well associated. Failure to complete high school, one of the defining
characteristics of status level, shows the best association of the educational measures. This characteristic with the highest level of association is rent payment. This accords with findings reported in Chapter One; they are good, but not as good as those shown by occupational and educational measures.

The fifth set of “good association” measures - - those associated with child-rearing arrangements - - are of interest in that they are the least well associated of the high-association characteristics. Of the various measures examined, only those reflecting the proportions of separated an/or divorced women showed association in the “good” range; related measures such as female-headed families, proportion of single males, children living with both parents, fell below that range. Some showed “fair” association with crime measures, but none showed associations as strong or consistent as (those shown by) measures of occupation and education. This finding will be discussed in the next section.

Demographic Correlates and Subculture Bases of Delinquency

A major thesis of the present work is that the practice of criminal behavior by low-status urban youth derives in large part from the combined influence of a specific set of subcultures, with subcultures associated with social-status levels playing a prominent role. How do we present findings as to demographic correlates of court rates? Bear in mind that census-derived demographics data are not here considered as direct measures of subcultural characteristics, but rather as “indexes” thereto or “locators” thereof. However, despite the indirect nature of the evidence, and despite some areas of ambiguity or even contradiction in the complex pattern of statistical correlations, the general picture presented by the data is surprisingly consistent. To what extent does this picture support the notion that youth crime is systematically related to social-status-based styles of life?

The 26 measures presented in Tables 1.6 and 2.6, along with hundreds of others which were computed but are not tabulated here, may be taken as indexed to
13 more general features of social-status-based subcultures which may vary from class to class. These are: educational status, occupational status, income, expenditure patterns, household and child-rearing arrangements, sex composition, age composition, racial composition, national origin, residential movement patterns, housing occupancy, household size, and physical aspects of housing.\(^\text{239}\)

In the present context, two questions may be asked with respect to each of these features. First -- to what extent does the feature bear a logical relationship to a theoretical model of social-class-based subcultures; that is, to what extent can it be expected logically to show variation between status levels? Second, how good was the statistical association between each feature and male adolescent court-crime in Midcity? Present data indicate a division of the 13 into four categories. “Central core” features are those which court crime: for example, juvenile rates with proportion of male manual laborers, +.91, with adults who did not complete high school, +.89, and with moderately low rents, .87. These analogous indexed to the same three features also differentiated well among the status level of Midcity, including the three intra-lower-class levels (See Tables 2.6, 11.1). In general, indexes to the same features also show good statistical associations with crime indexes in most comparable studies, although occupational and educational characteristics do not, for the most part, show as strong a pattern of association as obtained in Midcity.\(^\text{240}\)

Indexes of two features -- income levels as well as household-and-child-rearing arrangements -- do show good logical and empirical relationships to the subcultural model, but not as good as the “central core” characteristics. Income, as discussed in Chapter One, is the most obvious and commonly-recognized criterion

\(^{239}\) For some of these, large numbers of “measures” per “feature”; e.g., occupation -- seven levels, both sexes, employment both sexes, for other features are fewer or even one measures - e.g., sex-composition. Thus, for multiple-measure features, characterizations represent major thrust of measures relating thereto, many of which not tabulated here. For a somewhat different listing of subcultural features of low-skilled laboring class see 10 characteristics in “Elimination of LC” paper, 1969.

\(^{240}\) On other study results; e.g. Lander, education, .51; Schmid med’n sch. 55 Schm male unem .85, but % laborers only. 38 etc.
for distinguishing social status levels, and does, in the present instance, show relatively good associations with court-crime. Since income is, in general, commensurate with occupational skill and training, it would follow that low-skilled laborers would receive commensurately low incomes. But, the relationship between income level and subcultural status, also discussed earlier, is not nearly as directed as that of the educational and occupational measurers and its relationship to status level is less “linear.” For example, as is well known, skilled and unionized manual laborers often are paid more than lower echelon clerks, teachers, and similar “white collar” workers. Expenditures, as shown, serve more sensitively than income to discriminate social status levels. Indexes to income status, in general, show somewhat lower associations with court crime than is the case for the “central core” features; some indexes, in fact, show rather poor associations. Findings of other studies with respect to income resemble those presented here; good associations often appear, but the complexities of the relationship between income and social status prevent a clearly-defined pattern from emerging.241

The situation with regard to child rearing and household arrangements (often referred to, here and elsewhere, as “families”) in some respects resembled that of income. The present theory postulates a general relationship between social status and the form of the child-rearing unit; at the lowest levels the attachment to the child-rearing unit of a male acting in the role of parent and assuming the responsibility for the conduct and welfare of the household is less frequent and less consistent than at higher status levels.242 However, statistical associations shown here between indexes to “female based” households and court crime are not nearly as strong as the theory would predict. There are several fairly good associations between juvenile rates and some indexes of female based households - - for example, percentage of women living without husbands (.65) and (“separated”) females (.63),

241 On other studies, e.g., Schmid, mdn inc .53
242 References to Implications paper, Chapter on Fem Sex and Mating, Chapter I “Elimination” Paper
but associations with less indirect indexes are weak. Several reasons for this may be cited.

The first related to the distribution curve for female-based units and the associational measure used here. Evidence in other chapters indicates that the distribution of female-headed households is considerably less “linear” than is the case for other “central” characteristics -- that is, prevalence is greatest at the lower class III level, dropping off quite sharply as social status increases, so this form quite rare even in lower class II populations, and becomes almost non-existent in lower class I. The form of the child-rearing unit (although not its functioning) thus shows very little variation from lower class I through middle class. Even in lower class III populations, as shown in Chapter Eight the “pure” female based unit is far from universal, and its prevalence varies in different kinds of lower class III communities.

Consequently, the fact that the particular associational measures used here (Spearman’s rho), is considerably less sensitive to non-linear variation than are others (e.g., Pearson’s “r”) is partly responsible for the absence of strong associations between indexes to female-based households and crime. Of considerably more importance are deficiencies in the nature of available indexes to female based households. As shown in Chapter One, measures provided by the U.S. Census are relatively insensitive to female-based households, and are considerably less efficient in “detecting” their existence than in the case of characteristics such as educational and occupational status. Further, the least indirect measure to such units, “families headed by persons other than the wife of the primary hear” was not available for 1950, thus ruling out the possibility of obtaining the stronger associations obtained here by using the full 1950-1960 period as the basis of computation.

However, despite the fact that present associations are not as strong as those shown for education, occupation and expenditures, for the reasons given, child-rearing and household arrangements are still considered a “central” feature of social-class-based subcultures. In face of cited deficiencies in available measurers,
this feature was well associated with social status levels, and fairly well with educational and occupational characteristics. This existence of field-recorded data presented elsewhere is used, in this instance, in an attempt to correct for the deficiencies of census data in characterizing household and child rearing arrangements as a “central” feature of class-based subcultures in Midcity.

Three of the demographic features examined here may be considered “extrinsic” to social status subcultures, in that they show no direct relationship, logical or empirical, to their central features. All relate to housing; the size of households, the age of dwelling units, and the length of residence in a particular residential area. Each of these features has shown good to excellent associations with crime rates in other studies: Why do they fail to show significant associations in Midcity? Some of the reasons have already been suggested. With respect to the size of households, it has been shown that the conventionally-accepted association between large families and lower status populations did not obtain in Midcity and the larger Port City area. Logically, both higher and lower status communities can contain both larger and smaller families, and this situation appeared to obtain in Midcity. Similarly, the conventionally-accepted association between “residential instability” and lower status was not in evidence. Lower status residents of the central city areas moved around a good deal within particular residential zones, but appeared no more prone, in the 1950’s, to move out of these zones than did higher status people. Measures which reflect movement between residential zones rather than movement within such zones were not sensitive, in Midcity, to social status differences. Likewise as already suggested, the age of the dwelling units in which one lives bears no intrinsic relation to social status subcultures. While there may be a tendency in some communities for poorer to live in older houses, this was not the case in Midcity. Many lower status residents lived in newly-constructed housing projects, and many higher status residents were proud to occupy Midcity’s “old” houses built anywhere from Colonial times onward.
A forth “low association” factor, home ownership, requires special consideration. This characteristic figures among the best correlates of crime and delinquency in several well-known studies. The poor association between home ownership and crime rates shown here is readily understandable on the basis of knowledge of the community, but presents some difficulties with respect to more general considerations concerning class and subculture. As already shown (Table 14.1), Midcity was predominantly a community of renters. The absence of association between home ownership and social class status differences is readily explainable on the grounds that there were two principal kinds of “renters” in Midcity -- lower class III people whose subculture is not compatible with home ownership, and middle class adults who were not raising children and who occupied the relatively “good quality” residential apartments. Numbered among the latter were older couples (often Jewish), whose children lived in other areas, and unmarried staff members of the nearby medical center (nurses, interns, secretaries). With both the highest and lowest residents of Midcity numbered among the “renters” class related associations are not in evidence.

What fails to fit the present theory is the low percentage of home owners (16%) in lower class I neighborhoods. Home ownership and the conscientious maintenance of the dwelling unit are central aspects of lower class I life. One possible reason for the lack of evidence of the phenomenon in Midcity relates to the nature of the dwelling units in lower class I neighborhoods. Most of these were three-unit structures (“triple-deckers”) owned by the occupants of one of the units who had purchased the house with an eye on the rental income of the other two. Many of those who rented these units were lower class I married couples who lives as renters until such time as they could accumulate enough money to buy their own house -- a major ambition. Those who did achieve this objective moved out of the community to purchase small single-family units of a type that was all but unavailable in Midcity. This would account for the low percentage of home owners
in lower class I areas, but in the absence of concrete evidence must remain speculative rather than proven.\textsuperscript{243}

Indexes relating to age groups, sex composition, national origin and racial status show relationships to social status subcultures and associations with court rates, which are, in the present study, “ambiguous”. None show a clear-cut pattern of good or poor association; some show correlations which are mutually consistent, but in the “fair” or “fair to poor” range; others show moderately good associations for one index but fair or poor associations with others; some show fair but conflicting associations. The age and sex composition of different communities often figure in explanations of differential crime rates. Both conventional wisdom and some scholarly studies indicate that communities with disproportionate numbers of youth, particularly male youth, will be more likely to have high rates of youth crime. One influential study of the 1960’s concludes that changes in the proportion of younger people (14-29) to total population were the major cause of apparent increases in juvenile delinquency rate.\textsuperscript{244} The popular notion that lower status communities swarm with disproportionate numbers of unrestrained youth has obvious implications for explanations of crime.

In Midcity, as shown in Table 6.6, there was no marked concentration of adolescents and young adults at the lowest status levels, and, except for some over-representation of young adults at the lowest status levels, and, except for some over-representation of young children (0-9) at lowest levels, little differentiation of the several age classes by status levels. Associational statistics accord with these findings. Associations with a variety of indexes to the prevalence of children, youth, and young adults cluster around .40 to .50, a level characterized here as “fair”. There is little differentiation by race or sex; associations with proportions of male children or adolescents, Negro adolescents, or male Negro adolescents are similar to

\textsuperscript{243} Oct. ’68 article, survey of age-group and housing types. Sid life-cycle was major determinant of house-type. Locate if possible. (Transaction ?)
\textsuperscript{244} Space-General Corporation for the California Youth And Adult Correction Agency Prevention and Control of Crime and Delinquency 1965
those for these age groups as a whole. There would thus appear to be some tendency to find higher court rates in neighborhoods with higher proportions of youth, but nothing approaching an established trend.

Similarly, the proportions of males and females in different kinds of communities are frequently seen as relevant to crime. There are at least two conflicting theories. The first posits higher crime rates in areas where males predominate. In cities such areas are likely to be of the “skid row” type, with high rates of alcohol offenses, petty theft, and related violations. The second theory expects higher rates in communities with an excess of females. These areas are frequently visualized as containing higher proportions of fatherless families, with the “absent father” situation engendering uncontrolled behavior by youth and consequently high delinquency rates.

Midcity data supports neither of these theories. Correlations between adolescent court crime and the relative prevalence of females were consistently low, indicating little association between sex ratios and delinquency rates. Several correlations in the .30 to .40 range were, however, negative, indicating a slight tendency to find lower rates in areas where the preponderance of females was greater. As already shown, females predominated in all parts of Midcity, with the ratio of women to men increasing with age. There was, however, no evidence for higher ratios at lower status levels; in fact, ratios were slightly higher at higher levels.

Reasons for female predominance differed at higher and lower levels. At lower levels it was due largely to the prevalence of female-based households; at higher levels to the prevalence of older widows, nurses, secretaries, and other “white collar” workers of the nearby medical complex. The preponderance of females was slightly greater in the latter instance, resulting in some association between higher status and the percentage of women (Table 9.1). This association was sufficiently in evidence as to account for the slight negative association between
female prevalence and youth crime, but not strong enough to indicate a significant relationship.

The relationship of national origin and race to social status and crime has been discussed several times in past chapters, and will be discussed again in connection with gangs and gang delinquency. Evidence presented in Chapters One and Two indicates that subcultural characteristics associated with particular racial or other ethnic groups manifested themselves primarily as they reflected differences in social status. Chapter One showed a slight inverse relationship between foreign origins and lower social status, and surprisingly weak associations between the prevalence of Negroes and ten classic characteristics of low status urban slums. Chapter Two showed that some portion of each of Midcity's major ethnic groups (Irish, English, Jews) manifested subcultural characteristics of different status levels at different time periods and that some portion of Negroes manifested subcultural characteristics of each status level, including middle class, during earlier and later periods.

Data relative to the association between ethnic status and court crime accord with these findings. The classic Chicago studies of the ‘20’s and ‘30’s show good associations between “foreign-born or Negro family heads” and delinquency rates. Such associations were not in evidence of national groups such as Irish, Italians, Jews, and English Canadians were consistently low. However, despite the fact that national origin was related to social status and crime neither logically nor empirically, this feature is characterized as “ambiguously” rather than “poorly” associated primarily because of the negative associations shown by national origin, with correlations in some cases falling into the range categorized here as “fair.” This was due, as shown, to the tendency for people with relatively recent foreign origins to live in the higher status sections of Midcity.

Similar considerations prevail in the case of the Negroes. Statistical associations between the prevalence of Negroes and juvenile, youth, and adolescent court rates were consistently low (Table 1.6), as were associations with most of the
demographic characteristics generally associated with slums (Table 11.1). However, the relationship of crime and other subcultural characteristics to Negro status is characterized as “ambiguous” because of the good association between the prevalence of Negroes and intra-lower-class status levels (Table 10.1), and because a few of the computed correlations fell into the range characterized as “fair”. The higher associations were found in the case of juvenile rather than youth or adolescent rates, further evidence for the conclusion that racial differences manifested themselves primarily as they reflected social status differences.\textsuperscript{245}

An additional consideration relates to the character of demographic characteristics as “indexes to” rather than as direct measures of social-status-based subcultures. Analyses of the Port City metropolitan area as a whole show that positive association between crime and the prevalence of Negroes often do not mean that the crimes are committed by Negroes, but rather that areas containing higher proportions of Negroes are more likely to be lower in social status. This phenomenon emerged clearly in a correlational analysis of 42 Port City suburbs whose Negroes population averaged well below 1%, with only two communities containing over 2% non-whites. Some computations showed fairly good associations between crime rates and the percentage of Negroes, but since the number of Negroes was negligible, it was quite obvious in this case that the associations were due to the fact that lower status communities contained more Negroes rather than the fact that Negroes committed more crimes.\textsuperscript{246}

The conclusion afforded by the present examination of statistical correlates of youth crime and delinquency rates in Midcity, despite areas of considerable complexity and some ambiguities, is surprisingly clear. Court rates, in general, showed the best associations with indexes to those demographic features which are most closely related, logically and empirically, to social-status-based subcultures, and which serve most sensitively to discriminate social status levels. The practice of

\textsuperscript{245} Ref. Sylvester thesis. Similar findings, different and independent analysis of materials -- including “adult” crime data. See, e.g. Table I, also p.17 passim.

\textsuperscript{246} Ref. to “Suburban Delinquency” study; cite “ecological fallacy”.

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crime by male adolescents in low status communities thus appears to comprise an intrinsic element of the subcultures of those communities, and to be related in a systematic and orderly fashion to other subcultural characteristics.

How, then, does one account for divergent findings in other studies - particularly with respect to characteristics such as race, national origin, housing, age and sex distribution, home ownership, and residential movement? This complex issue cannot be explored in any detail, but it is clear that one major factor relates to differences in the character of various urban lower class communities. As shown in Chapter One, Midcity in the 1950's was predominantly lower class, mixed residential and commercial community containing Negroes and other ethnic groups at all status levels. Most of its households were engaged in the rearing of children.

It did not contain a substantial skid-row population, which could have produced better associations between crime and the proportion of males. It did not include colonies of bohemians, which would have increased the degree of social-class mixed in local neighborhoods. It did not contain any substantial number of higher-status home-owners, which could have resulted in better associations between home-ownership and crime. Many of its lowest-status residents occupied relatively new public housing, reducing the possibility of good associations with the physical condition, crowding, or age of dwelling units. The fact that the majority of residents of Midcity shared a common involvement in the work, child-rearing, and other customary practices of the lower class residential community made it possible for statistical measures of lower class subcultures to show a high degree of concordance with one another with measures of youth crime.

Male Adolescent Crime and Demographic Change

The present examination of youth crime and demographic characteristics in Midcity has, thus far, deliberately ignored the element of change. The attempt to find out which population characteristics showed the best associations with court rates was predicated on the assumption that information covering longer time periods provides a better picture of existing relationships. This was particularly important in the case of court rates, which, as already mentioned, tend to fluctuate considerably on a year to year basis, but which level out substantially when longer time periods are taken into account.

The element of change is, however, of considerable importance, and merits examination. Chapters One and Two cited numerous changes in the social circumstances of Midcity, of greater and lesser magnitude, before and during the decade of Midcity gangs. Among changes prior to the 1950’s were in-and out-movements of several national groups, increases in population, and changes in technology. Among changes noted for the decade of the 1950’s were a decrease in population, an increase in the proportion of Negroes, increases in income levels, and considerable construction of new housing. A central assumption of this work - that crime rates are closely related to particular community characteristics - has several implications with respect to social change: significant changes in relevant community characteristics should be accompanied by significant changes in crime rates; changes in “central” subcultural features should have the most direct effect on crime rates; and such effects should be detectable through available measurement techniques.

Unfortunately, the kind of examination indicated by these expectations cannot be undertaken here, for several reasons. A sound statistical analysis of change trends in this area is enormously complex, and requires resources not available on the present study. A second and related reason is that it was not possible on the basis of the relatively simple techniques which were afforded by available resources to arrive at results whose validity was comparable to that of
other aspects of the study. Thirdly, it would appear that a particular local community such as Midcity is less appropriate as a basis for an examination of changes in crime rates than is the case for most of the analyses of this study. Many of Midcity’s court-rate trends during the 1950’s paralleled national trends reflecting developments in many different kinds of communities.

The present analysis would benefit greatly through the use of equivalent data on a national level, or by careful comparison with other analogous communities. Fourth, sound conclusions as to change trends, as shown in Chapter Two, require examination of a considerably longer time period than the ten years which form the basis of the present analysis; while some important conclusions can be derived from the examination of a single decade, many others could not reasonably be expected to emerge in so brief a period. For these and other reasons the length and development of this analysis of change trends will be commensurate with the importance of the issue.

The decade between 1950 and 1960, as already mentioned, was considered by some as a period of radical change in Midcity. This perception was based primarily on several of the more visible manifestations of a complex pattern of change and stability - - a decrease of about 25% in the number of residents, an increase from 23% to 47% in the proportion of Negroes, a substantial exodus of lower class I and II white residents, and considerable movement by lower status persons into higher status residential areas. Concomitant with these changes was a rise in the rate of adolescent court appearances. It seemed obvious to many that these trends were directly related - - particularly the increase in the percentage of Negroes and the amount of court-handled crime. The very obviousness of this assumption calls for some attempt, however curtailed, to assess its validity, and to examine, in addition, the relationship of these obvious changes to other aspects of community life -- particularly those related to social status levels and their subcultures.

The present brief examination will be based primarily on the period between 1950 and 1960, with 1940 data cited in a few instances. Three principal questions
will be addressed: What were some the changes affecting the major community characteristics under consideration? What changes occurred in the volume of male adolescent court crime? And what relationships could be detected between changes in demographic characteristics and the volume of court crime? Of particular concern will be implications of these findings for the issue of subculture and the generation of criminal behavior.

Changes in Demographic Features

Associations between court rates and thirteen demographic features of Midcity during the decade of the 1950's have just been presented. The present section will summarize briefly 10-year trends affecting these features both for the community as a whole and, selectively, for the several intra-community social status levels. Midcity numbered about 107,000 persons in 1940; about 113,000 in 1950 and about 85,000 in 1960. The 25% loss between 1950 and 1960 did not, however, markedly alter the social status composition of the community. With the exception of lower class I areas, both the numbers and proportions of persons at different social status levels remained quite stable. Residents of lower class II areas numbered 18,000 in 1950 and 20,000 in 1960; of middle class areas, 12,000 in 1950 and 11,000 in 1960. The major change affected lower class I areas; these carried the burden of population loss for the whole community, with population dropping from 28,000 to 7,000. Changes thus ranged from 8% (gain) to 13% (loss) for all levels except lower class I, which showed a striking 75% loss. Lower class II areas experienced some, but not much, loss.

Changes in the proportions of persons at different social status levels reflected the substantial loss of lower class I residents, but otherwise were relatively slight. The proportion of Midcity residents living in lower class III areas

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248 Fifteen detailed tables showing numbers and percentages for 1950 and 1960, and percentage differences between 1950 and 1960 provide the basis of the present analysis. Data will be summarized rather than presented in full.
rose from 16 to 23% the proportion in lower class II areas from 47 to 54%; in middle class areas, from 11 to 13%. The percentage in lower class I areas fell from 25% to 9%. The 1960 community thus contained relatively larger proportions of residents at the two lower status levels and in middle class areas.

Age and sex distribution also changed little over the decade. The proportions of old people and children increased slightly (8% to 11%; 18% to 21%) but the other age classes showed high stability (e.g., adolescents 1950, 15.0%, 1960, 15.3%). Distribution among the several social status levels also changed little; in general there was remarkable stability in the proportions of persons of different ages (e.g., percent older adults: middle class, 25.3 to 23.2; lower class I, 23.0 to 22.5; lower class II, 18.8 to 18.4; lower class III, 18.4 to 20.4). The ratio of females to males increased somewhat during the decade, with the bulk of increase occurring in middle rather than lower class areas. Otherwise ratios remained similar (e.g., Percent Female: lower class I, 55.6% in 1950, 56.0% in 1960; lower class III, 52.9% in 1950, 53.8% in 1960).

Changes affecting the Negro community are of particular interest. As already mentioned, many Port City residents believed that Midcity had changed radically during this period due to a massive influx of Negroes, and had become an almost entirely black community. It was true that the number of Negroes did increase by about half during the decade - - from 25,000 to 37,000 -- but Negroes still comprised a minority in 1960. Further, the increase in the proportion of Negroes from 23% to 47% was due more to the outflux of white lower class I residents than to an inundation of black immigrants. The proportion of Port City’s Negroes living in Midcity remained about the same -- about 10 times that of the larger metropolis. Furthermore, the distribution of Negroes in the various neighborhoods of Midcity remained remarkably stable; the correlation coefficient for the percentage of Negroes living in each of the 21 census tracts in 1950 and in 1960 was .90. The tendency to find greater concentrations of Negroes at the lower status levels also remained similar during the decade. At the same time, the numbers of Negroes in
middle class areas increased somewhat, this accentuating the bimodal distribution noted in Chapter One.

The tendency for persons of more recent foreign origins to live in higher status areas, noted earlier, changed little during the decade. A small in-movement of Puerto Ricans raised the percentage of foreign-born in lower class III areas from 6% to 9%, but otherwise proportions of foreign groups remained similar. There was little change in the distribution of groups such as the Irish, Jews, or Italians. How did the population movements of the 1950’s affect the central criteria of social status in Midcity -- occupation and education? Both these characteristics showed remarkable stability in the face of population shifts. The percentages of manual laborers in each of Midcity’s three intra-lower class status levels varied by less than two percentage points between 1950 and 1960. Median grade completed was 8.3 for both years. Similarly, the distribution of adults who failed to complete high school among Midcity’s lower class social status levels remained virtually unchanged (lower class III, 75 to 78%; II, 65 to 66%; I, 56 to 59%). These figures provide impressive statistical documentation for the process of “class stability via ethnic replacement”, described in Chapter Two as a major feature of Midcity’s historical development.

The nature of available information as to the other three demographic features of “central” relevance to social status -- income, expenditure, and child-rearing arrangements -- does not provide an adequate basis for reliable comparisons of 1950 and 1960. As discussed in Chapter One, the financial indexes present difficulties related both to differences in data categories for the two periods and changes in dollar values; the child-rearing indexes suffer primarily from the absence of equivalent census categories. Taking these difficulties into account, the income figures of Table 12.1 show that the relative distribution of income among the several social levels in 1960 was quite consistent with that of 1950; this is despite differences in the purchasing power of the dollar and the identity of the reporting units. Similar considerations obtain in the case of rents; a comparison of the several
levels for 1950 and 1960 (Table 14.1) shows a persisting consistent relationship between social status levels and rent payment. It should be noted, however, that there was no evidence for an increased in “poverty” between 1950 and 1960 -- even for the lowest status populations. To the contrary, the available evidence indicates increases in income at all social status levels.\textsuperscript{249}

Available data with respect to household and child-rearing arrangements, categorized as “central” to social-status-based subcultures, are too meager to support accurate conclusions. For most of the more direct indexes comparable data were not reported for 1950 and 1960. However, what data are available indicate little change during the decade. For example, the percentage of the population living in households was almost identical in 1950 and 1960. The number of persons per household declined slightly in the ten year period (less “crowding”), and the distribution of household size throughout the community remained very similar.\textsuperscript{250}

The demographic “shape” of Midcity with respect to demographic characteristics of central relevance to social status -- occupation, education, and the like -- was surprisingly unaffected by the substantial population loss occurring during the decade. Changes in characteristics related more directly to housing were more in evidence, but even here the degree of stability in general distributions was surprising. Most changes in this area reflected a phenomenon already mentioned -- the substantial out-movement of lower class I whites. Housing data reveals that the exodus occurred among both owners and renters. The number of homeowners in lower class I areas dropped from 1,200 to 400 in ten years; the number of renters from 6,500 to 1,700. For the other status levels, however, both numbers and percentages of owners and renters remained similar. The community as a whole contained 4,425 owner-occupied units in 1950, 15% of the total, and 4,390 in 1960 -- 17% of the total. The 26,000 rental units in 1950 comprised 85% of all units, and the 22,000 in 1960, 83%. With the exception of lower class I, the several social status

\textsuperscript{249} To H. Miller references in “Elimination” paper.
\textsuperscript{250} Household data in “Demographic Char’s by Census Tract: 1950, 1960; 1950- 1960; Poss. add data on % fem. div. and sep.
levels manifested little change in the numbers and proportions of owners and renters. The percentage of owners in middle class areas fell slightly, and rose due to bargains in low cost units vacated during the decade.

Room occupancy showed similar trends. The low percentage of “crowded” units (over one person per room) in 1950 (16%) became even lower in 1960 (11%), with incoming and remaining residents spreading themselves out among the units vacated by those who left. The rather weak relationship between room occupancy and intra-lower-class status levels shown for 1950 (higher percentage of “crowded” units at lower levels) disappeared entirely in 1960, with all three lower class levels showing virtually identical percentages. Middle class areas showed lower percentages of “crowded” units in both years. The percentage of “older” buildings dropped slightly during the decade as the result of some “urban renewal” construction, but the distribution of older units throughout the community changed very little.251

This brief examination of demographic change appears to indicate, in the face of a widespread conviction that Midcity had altered radically between 1950 and 1960, that most of its major characteristics showed remarkably little change. The one really marked change was a substantial out-movement of lower class I whites, whose effects were felt in several other areas; for example, a moderate numerical increase in the number of Negroes produced a large increase in their relative proportions in the community. There was a general spreading out of the resident population, particularly those of lower status, as those who remained took over the vacated housing units. This resulted in a lowering of the already low density of residences, and has as a further consequence the lessening of the concentration of lower status persons in particular areas; Midcity as a whole became somewhat more homogeneous with respect to social status, and this homogeneity was in the direction of somewhat lower status for the community as a whole.

251 Trends with respect to residential duration, the 13th feature examined in the last section, could not be ascertained due to the absence of comparable data for 1950 to 1960.
Despite these changes, there was surprising stability with respect to features of central relevance to social status -- education and occupation. Nor was there much change in age or sex distribution, and distribution of Negroes and other ethnic groups, or patterns of renting and home ownership. Data were inconclusive with respect to changes in income levels, expenditure patterns, child-rearing arrangements and residential duration, but what data was available did not indicate marked changes. To the casual observer, a high degree of stability is a fundamental characteristic of the community.

**Trends in Crime Rates**

What changes occurred between 1950 and 1960 in the propensity of Midcity’s adolescent males to appear in court in connection with crimes? Rates presented in Table 3.6 would appear, at first glance, to indicate a substantial increase in court-handled crime. In the years 1949, 1950, and 1951, the yearly number of court appearances among boys between 7 and 20 averaged about 7% of their numbers; ten years later, about 13%. It would thus appear that rates almost doubled. This appearance is, however, deceptive. As indicated earlier, court rate statistics may serve most effectively, at a given point in time, to indicate relative relationships between one set of rates and another, or between rates and other characteristics, but are quite unreliable as indicators of the “true” volume of criminal behavior. This generally has little effect on the validity of relational findings based on the same time period, but may substantially affect direct comparisons of crime at different time periods. Considerations relating to statistical trends in court rates between 1950 and 1960 resemble those relating to income. In fact, the two sets of trends are quite similar, both with respect to percentage changes and distribution among status levels. The major contrast is in the direction of trends; income figures appear to indicate a substantial drop in the percentages of low-income persons, while court figures indicate a rise in crime rates.
Table 6.1 shows a decrease from 63% to 27% in the percentage of persons with incomes under $3,000, while Table 3.6 shows an increase from 7% to 13% in court case rates. The discussion of income interpreted these figures as reflecting some actual increase in income, but attributed the bulk of the substantial increase primarily to changes in the value of the dollar, and differences in methods of tabulating data. Similarly, it would appear that 1950-1960 trends in court rates reflected some actual increase in crime, but that the bulk of the change was due primarily to differences in methods of handling and recording court cases.

A year-by-year examination of male adolescent court rates shows that the increase from 67.0 to 128.3 per thousand did not occur evenly throughout the decade. Between 1950 and 1956 rates showed a relatively gradual increase; juvenile rates rose from 38 to 44 per thousand, and youth rates from 155 to 202. Between

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status Level</th>
<th>1950</th>
<th>1960</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lower Class III</td>
<td>94.3</td>
<td>157.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Class II</td>
<td>68.5</td>
<td>128.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Class I</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>89.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Class</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>91.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midcity</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>128.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. See text for definitions
b. No. cases per 1,000 males 7-20
c. No. cases 1949 + 1950 + 1951/3 per 1,000 males 17-20 1950
d. No. cases 1959 + 1960 + 1961/3 per 1,000 males 17-20 1960
1956 and 1958 both sets of figures showed a radical jump; juvenile rates from 44 to 67 per thousand, and youth rates from 202 to 329. After 1958 rates again became fairly stable. There were, on the other hand, several quite pronounced changes in the policies and procedures of law-enforcement agencies which fell precisely during this period. The chief of police was dismissed due largely to his laxness in record keeping, and his successor instituted a new computerized crime-recording system. The Port City police department established a juvenile bureau for the first time in history, and its chief instituted a policy of more stringent enforcement which increased juvenile arrests. These changes had some indirect effects on court rates; a far more direct effect, however, was a change in record-keeping procedures of the central state criminal records agency. Prior to 1956 cases which were “continued without finding” were not included in the official statistics of the department, on which present results are based. In that year the decision was made to include such cases in subsequent tabulations. In the case of Midcity, the number of juvenile cases “deleted”, in the words of the agency, prior to 1956, ran from about 100 to 150 per year, or about one-third of all court-handled cases. A rough recomputation of rates for several years prior to 1956, including available figures on the number of “continued” cases, virtually eliminates the rate differential of the earlier and later periods, and in fact indicates a slight decrease in rates (-2.4%) rather than a radical increase from the 1956-58 period. It would thus appear that there was some increase between 1950 and 1960 in the volume of court-handled adolescent crime in Midcity, but how large it was is difficult to ascertain on the basis of available data. The increase was certainly less than indicated by the figures of Table 3.6, probably substantially less, and was, in all likelihood, rather modest.

Within the community the larger increase appeared at the lowest and highest status levels. Middle class areas showed the largest relative increase, although the

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252 Not feasible to recomputed all data systemically. All nec. data available, lack of comparability between officially-released figures and in-house data of agency.
253 Ry ASR Juv. Article: rate & rate
actual amount of change in rates in middle class areas was about the same shown by lower class III. Reasons for the relatively greater increase in middle class rates have been discussed. Within the lower class, increases in lower class I areas were considerably lower than in the two lowest levels, making lower class I rates more stable than those of any other levels. In fact, areas which were lower class I in both 1950 and 1960 showed virtually identical rates in the years 1950 and 1960 (31.0/1,000 and 31.8/1,000); considering that the former figure did not include “continued” cases, this actually represents a drop in rates for these areas. It will be recalled that it was these areas which experienced the greatest loss of population, at once suggesting the possibility of some relationship between changes in population size and changes in court rates. This possibility, along with others, will be examined in the next section.

**Demographic Change and Change in Crime Rates**

During the decade of the 1950’s certain of Midcity’s demographic characteristics changed in greater or lesser degree, while others remained quite stable. At the same time official indexes of male adolescent court rates showed a general increase. The question logically arises – what was the relation between the pattern of demographic change and changes in the volume of court crime? Answers to this question bear directly on the issue of the causes of youth crime. On the basis of theories which ascribe central importance to factors such as overcrowding, racial injustice, unemployment, overproduction of children, and the like, one would expect to find associations between increases in crime and increases in room crowding, Negro prevalence, employment rates, the proportion of young people in the population, and the like. On the basis of present theory, one would expect to find increases in youth crime only where there is good evidence for a general lowering of social status -- as evidenced primarily by changes in educational and occupational levels. What does present evidence show?
One obvious aspect of change analysis has to do with the magnitude of observed changes. One set of gross changes can be shown to be associated with another set of gross changes by the use of relatively crude statistical techniques. If changes in either or both sets of changes are relatively small, the discovery of associations which may exist requires statistical techniques sufficiently sophisticated to be sensitive to such changes. Implications of this for present findings will be discussed in the course of their interpretation.

Table 4.6 shows statistical associations between changes in crime rates and changes in selected demographic indexes for the period between 1950 and 1960. The measure of association, Spearman’s rho, is the same used in previous sections to ascertain associations between indexes to crime and demography during the same time period. Post sections have shown that substantial changes affected one set of demographic characteristics during 1950’s, while another, including characteristics of central relevance to subcultural status, showed little change. The more pronounced changes were: a population loss of 25%; an increase in the proportion of Negroes from about one-quarter to about one-half; substantial out-movement of lower class I and II whites; and movement by lower status persons into dwellings vacated in higher status areas. Changes in central indexes to social status such as education and occupation, on the other hand, were quite minor. On methodological grounds, then, one might expect the “high change” characteristics to provide the

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254 On Methods. Issue of ascertaining changes when “rates” or percentages involved. When raw numbers, simple. Subtract ’50 from ’60 figure, compute differences as a percentage of ’50, rank 21 tracts in order of magnitude of difference. When rates, more complex. Two alternatives, considered, among others, differences between % and ratio between two percents. Both have disadvantages, no evident solution. After consid consultation w statisticians and experimentation w dif methods, decided on ratio. For magnitude of change, census tracts ranked acc’g to ratio of rate or percentage in 50 to rate of % in ’60. For example: Tract A, juvenile rate ’50 44.96/1,000; rate ’60, 50.88. Ratio ’60/50, 1.08. Tract B, rate ’50, 38.76; rate ’60, 38.04, ratio ’60/50, 0.98. In the case of most characteristics, as in the above example, some tracts showed increases and other decreases. For purposes of linear ranking, all tracts were ranked on the basis of one direction of change, usually the dominant direction. Thus the designation “Increase” in crime, manual laborers, etc., might include tracts which showed decreases; in such instances “decreases” are actually non-increases, with the larger decreases ranked as the larger non-increases. (Poss other consids, if nec). Overall increase 50-60 due to records change has little, import on synchro analysis, still hold.
best possibility of good associations, and on theoretical grounds, the “culture-
central” characteristics. In point of fact, neither set showed statistical associations
of any real significance. Coefficients of associations between changes in these areas,
along with scores of other indexes examined, were uniformly low. What is most
impressive about Table 4.6 is the magnitude of the associations. With one exception,
all fall into the “poor association” category. The one exception, a -0.60 for population
loss and juvenile rates, and the highest among the many indexes computed, still
remains within the limits of the “fair association” category.

Correlations between “central” indexes to social status levels and court rates
are low, although a few of these are among the higher of the low associational
figures. The correlation of +0.36 between the increase in the proportion of male
workers in the lowest two occupational categories and juvenile rates was the
highest of the “positive” correlations computed. This relates to social status, but
changes in the proportion of male manual workers – the characteristic best
associated with crime rates as a “stabilized” basis (Table 4.6) is only +0.14. Similarly,
a change index combining educational and occupational criteria of social status
showed an association of only 0.23. These “low association” findings are, however,
directly consistent with the subcultural thesis forwarded here. The magnitude of
change in the “central” was low; the association between changes in these
characteristics and changes in crime rates was low; there is thus no evidence for
any significant independence of association between the two sets of characteristics.

The situation with respect to race is quite different. The increase in the
percentage of Negroes in Midcity was among the most marked of all the changes of
the 1950’s. Assuming first that changes of the greatest magnitude provide the best
possibility of good associations, and second that the prevalence of Negroes and the
volume of crime are related, one might then expect good associations between the
increase in Negroes and crime increases. In fact, the association between the
increase in proportions of Negroes and changes in juvenile rates was only 0.19. To
further check this finding, associations with increases in the actual numbers of
Negroes were also computed, producing a virtually identical figure of +.18. These findings are consistent with many others of the present study which indicate that racial status was not independently associated with central aspects of lower class subcultures, but found associations only as it was related to social status.

Table 4.6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Changea</th>
<th>Association with Increase in Juvenile Ratesb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase in proportion of lowest skilled male workers</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in proportion of persons of lower educational and occupational status</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in proportion of Negroes</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in number of Negroes</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in proportion of low-skilled female workers</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in proportion of male manual workers</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in proportion of male white-collar workers</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in proportion of “crowded” units</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of male adolescent population</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in proportion of “long-term” residents</td>
<td>-0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population loss</td>
<td>-0.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. “Increases” in some cases are “decreases.” See text
b. Rates averaged; see notes c and d, Table 3.6

From Youth Crime in an Urban Lower Class City City Gangs, Chapter Three
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The most pronounced change in Midcity between 1950 and 1960 was the decrease in its population from 113,000 to 85,000 – a loss of 25%. It is not surprising then, on the basis of considerations just discussed, that the best of the consistently
low “change” associations involved this phenomenon. With the exception of the “male white collar workers” indexes, representing the obverse of the “positive” occupational associations, each of the “negative” associations shown here in some way reflects the overall population loss. The general relationship was: the greater the population loss, the smaller the increase in juvenile rates. Some of the “high loss” areas, as seen above, actually showed decreases in rates. Each of the other “negative association” characteristics of Table 4.6 reflects the “loss” phenomenon. Those areas with greatest population losses showed relatively greater losses in the proportion of adolescent males, since whole families moved; greater losses in the proportion of long-term residents, since most movers were “old residents”, greater losses in the proportions of “less crowded” units, since those who left had occupied the more spacious dwelling units. Each of these characteristics thus showed negative relations, albeit weak ones, with crime increases.

Two of these latter three associations – the fewer the male adolescents the less crime, and the fewer long-term residents the less crime – accord both with common expectations and research findings. The third – the more “crowded” units the less crime – runs contrary to expectations. The magnitude of association in this case is too low to warrant serious considerations, but the direction of association suggests that simple relationships like “the more crowding, the more crime” must be regarded with considerable caution, and that characteristics such as room crowding have little direct influence on crime rates independent of other related demographic changes.

The correlation of -.60 between population loss and increase in court rates – indicating that those areas of Midcity which lost most residents experienced the least rise in rates -- is the one finding of the “change” analysis which merits consideration. Compared to correlations along “stabilized” characteristics and crime rates it is only “fair”, but it is uniquely high relative to all other “change” correlations. Reasons for this association are by no means obvious. No simple or direct relationship was found between the extent of population change in the
various parts of Midcity and any other demographic characteristic. Further, evidence with respect to possible correlates was ambiguous, and in some cases contradictory. Moreover, even though the majority of census tracts in Midcity showed losses between 1950 and 1960, the loss figure for each tract represented the final balance between those who moved out and those who moved in. It is not possible on the basis of available data to know the size of these two components of the loss figure, nor the social characteristics of either the emigrants or the immigrants.

General knowledge of the circumstances of Midcity, along with some clues furnished by available data, provide a possible explanation based on the relationship of population size, concentration, and geographical extent to youth crime rates. Those areas of Midcity which experienced the greatest loss in population were, as has been shown, lower class I. These areas also showed the lowest increases in both juvenile and youth court rates. In 1950, lower class I areas comprised 28.5 thousand persons – about one quarter of Midcity’s population and one-third of its geographical area. In 1960 they comprised 7.5 thousand persons – under 9% of the total population and about one-sixth of its area. Incentives for youthful criminal behavior inherent in lower class I subcultures are less compelling than those of lower class III, but considerably more compelling than in middle class subcultures. Lower class I sections in Midcity contained numerous corner gangs whose members customarily engaged in violative activity – albeit the less serious forms, and with less frequency. The reduction in the size and population of the lowest class areas – both absolutely and relatively – diminished the force of those incentives for engaging in criminal behavior which derived from the extensive visible presence and proximity of others sharing a similar subcultural tradition.

255 Relation between loss in population and crime rates in other studies. If opposite – more the loss, the more the increase – cite implications for “social disorganization” position.

256 A more extensive analysis of forms of lower class I youth crime and its subculturally-based incentives is undertaken in Suburban Delinquency Study, op. cit.

257 Poss. role of gangs, thinning out of reduced gang membership component of crime incentive.
Similar considerations prevail in the case of lower class III areas, although in the reverse direction. In 1950, these areas, with a population of 18.3 thousand, comprised about 16 percent of the population of Midcity and about one-fifth of its geographical extent. In 1960 they comprised 19.7 thousand persons, about one quarter of the total population and one-third of its area. One consequence of this gain was to increase the numbers and geographical spread of persons manifesting a lower class III subculture, thus serving to reinforce its well-developed incentives for engaging in violative behavior. However, while lower class I areas ranked consistently lowest in court rate increases, lower class III areas did not rank consistently highest. They did show the highest rate of increase for youth rates, but showed ambiguous standings with respect to juvenile rates. Juvenile rate increases in middle class areas, already discussed, were equal to or greater than lower class III increases. This was due in part to the statistical phenomenon whereby a given magnitude of change computed from an initially low baseline results in a much higher percentage of chance than when computed from an initially high baseline.

For the rest, it must be assumed either that influences undetectable by the present analysis were in operation, or that the influences of discoverable change processes themselves was not sufficiently strong as to provide a basis for good statistical associations. The -.60 figure at issue here, while larger than any other change-analysis coefficients, is still considered statistically to “account for” only about one-third of the “variance” in the associational analyses. The process whereby subcultural reinforcement produced increases in crime rates cannot therefore be considered to have been supported by the present evidence, but remains as a possible explanation which is not discordant with present data.258

The finding of some degree of association between population loss and crime rates, albeit a weak one, along with the finding that different social status levels showed differential losses, raises the possibility that the population shifts of the

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258 Further examination of this process in Suburban Delinquency Study, op. cit.
1960’s might have affected the strong relationships between social status and crime shown in previous analyses. To test this possibility, the lower class areas of Midcity were divided into three “population loss” categories – “high”, “medium”, and “low”. Results are shown in Table 5.6. In general, the amount of loss experienced by the several social status levels between 1950 and 1960 bore surprisingly little relationship to juvenile court rates in 1960. On the basis of a “social disorganization” hypothesis one might have expected higher rates in areas that experienced the most loss; there is no evidence for this. The “medium loss” areas showed somewhat higher rates, figures for lower class I and III run opposite to the social disorganization thesis, in that areas with higher population losses show lower rates – which accords with the “more-loss-less-increase” phenomenon just discussed. Areas whose population remained most stable during the 1950’s showed higher rates in 1960.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Status Level</th>
<th>High (32% and over)</th>
<th>Medium (18-31%)</th>
<th>Low (0-17%)</th>
<th>1960 Rates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lower Class III</td>
<td>68.8</td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td>___ b</td>
<td>78.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Class II</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>60.2</td>
<td>62.3</td>
<td>60.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Class I</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>38.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Lower Class</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>65.4</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>59.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Rates averaged; See Notes c and d, Table 3.6
b. No lower class III tract with “low” loss

Table 5.6
Population Change and Juvenile Court Rates in 1960 by Social Status Level
Degree of Population Loss 1950 to 1960

From Youth Crime in an Urban Lower Class City City Gangs, Chapter Three
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What is most significant about this table, however, is the evidence it presents as to the influence on court rates of population loss as compared with that of social status. Rates for high, medium, and low change areas were, respectively, 58, 65, and 55 cases per thousand; for lower class III, II, and I areas, 79, 60, and 39 per thousand. These findings suggest that social status differences exert far more influence on crime rates than changes in population size, in that the tendency to find higher rates at lower levels was virtually unaffected by the amount of population loss experienced by the several levels. There is a further possibility; that the changes of the 1950’s might have weakened the strong associations reported earlier between court rates and demographic characteristics central to social status subcultures. Table 6.6 presents measures of six such characteristics, showing correlations separately for 1950 and 1960 as well as for the full decade. Results are surprising.

In every instance associations computed on the basis of the extended time are higher than those of the shorter periods – in some cases considerably higher. Some influences of change is indicated; for five of the six characteristics associations are lower in 1960, reflecting some decrease in the correspondence between social status and residential locale during the decade. But far more impressive is the evidence for stability in a crucial area – the relationship between crime and social status. One should bear in mind that Micity during this period experienced a substantial loss in population, a substantial increase in the proportion of Negroes, a marked loss in the population of “working class” areas. In the face of these changes – seen by some as the most radical in over a century - - statistical associations between crime rates and the central measures of social status not only failed to weaken, they became

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These are six of the 10 “good association” characteristics of Table 11.1; the other four were not computed. As explained earlier, crime rate numerators for the single-year periods were the averaged rates for that year, the preceding, and the following years; denominators were census figures for that year. The numerator for the full-decade period was the average of all years of the decade, and the denominator the sum of the 1950 and 1960 figures divided by two.
significantly stronger! This is indeed compelling evidence for the strength and durability of the link between social status and crime.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Association with Juvenile Rates(^b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Manual Laborers</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Unemployment</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults failing to complete high school</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults failing to enter high school</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual income $3,000 or less</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual income $6,000 or less</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Rates averaged; see notes c and d, Table 3.6
b. Spearman’s rho: 21 census tracts

From Youth Crime in an Urban Lower Class City City Gangs, Chapter Three
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This finding may be better understood on the grounds that none of the changes involving out-migration, intra-community movement or radical composition sufficiently altered the range of social status differentiation or the degree of correspondence between social status and residential areas as to significantly reduce the capacity of the statistical measures to discriminate social status differences. It was therefore possible, given this capacity, for a method of analysis which utilized longer-term rather than shorter, measures of both crime rates and demographic characteristics to reflect more accurately the closeness of the
relationship between crime and social status, and to detect, through the complex of
welter of change, the essential stability of this relationship.

A final point with respect to change trends: findings of the “change” analysis
of the present section stand in marked contrast with “extended duration” analyses
of previous sections. The latter yielded a large number of good to excellent
associations; the former virtually none. For example, the association between
juvenile rates and the proportion of male manual laborers was .91 (Table 2.6), but
the association between changes in juvenile rates and changes in the proportion of
male manual laborers only .14 (Table 4.6). This contrast has important implications
for theoretical formulations concerning the role of social change in the genesis of
criminal behavior.

One major tradition in American sociology customarily attributes to origins of
certain social phenomena – particularly those defined as “social problems” – to
changes in social and economic conditions. This tendency was particularly
pronounced in the well-known “Chicago School” of criminology discussed in Chapter
One. A major generative paradigm of this school, one which still maintains
considerable currency, proposes that social changes produce social disorganization
which produces “anomie” which produces crime. Thus changes such as immigration
and emigration, movements of Negroes and other ethnic groups, fluctuating
employment rates, increases in room crowding, and the like, produce a climate of
unrest, malaise, uprootedness and frustration which finds a logical culmination in
criminal activity. A corollary of this position suggests that crime rates fall as the
prevalence of such “disruptive” change diminishes. The present work, by contrast,
suggests that the more fundamental sources of criminal motivation are to be found
in persisting characteristics of certain well-established subcultures. Changes
directly affecting subcultural conditions will, of course, affect crime rates, but the
independent generative potency of such changes is low compared to that of the
originating subculture.
The failure of the present analysis to obtain significant associations between demographic changes and changes in crime rates by no means establishes that such associations do not exist. As stated at the outset of this chapter, available resources were not commensurate with the requirements of a sophisticated change analysis. Had appropriate resources been available it is quite probable that associations would have been higher. But this fact in itself is of direct significance. As it happened, and enormous amount of effort was expended in the fruitless effort to tease out significant correlations between changing characteristics -- far more than was devoted to the analysis of extended – term correlates.260 It is most significant that relatively simple statistical techniques were able to produce excellent correlations between measures of crime and demography analyzed as “endemic” characteristics, but that techniques of the same order of simplicity failed almost completely to produce significant associations between changes in crime and demography. This would indicate, as already suggested, that relationships between “endemic” subcultural characteristics and crime are sufficiently direct and sufficiently patent to be detected by relatively simple methods, while relationships between changing characteristics are sufficiently subtle, elusive, and complicated as to require far more elaborate and sophisticated techniques.

The meager evidence concerning the change process produced by the present analysis lends little support to the social disorganization thesis as to change and crime. If one were to ask, “what single change contributed most to the general rise in Midcity court rates between 1950 and 1960?” the answer would have to be “a change in the method of recording court crime by the Central Records Agency.” Other studies indicate that similar changes in other cities also played a part in the marked rate increases shown nationally during this period. The only other factor showing any noteworthy association with court rates was the population decrease; this indicated that areas experiencing the greatest population changes showed the

260 The research assistant responsible for most of the present computations was a dedicated advocate of the “social-change-generation” position, and pursued all possibilities of documenting this position with great vigor and persistence.
least increase in crime - - a finding running directly counter to the assumptions of the change-and-disorganization position. The volume of court-handled youth crime in Micity in the 1950's was associated most directly with population characteristics of direct relevance to subcultural status; these varied little during the decade, and crime rates, in consequence, showed little variation attribution to changes in other demographic characteristics.

Summary: Youth Crime and Demography: Theoretical Relevance

A major objective of the present work is the development of a general explanation of criminal behavior among low-status urban youth - - particularly gang youth. The empirical findings of the present chapter therefore serve the purpose, in addition to providing descriptive data, of bringing evidence to bear on relevant theoretical issues. The process of relating complex bodies of empirical data to theoretical formulations is never easy. It is particularly difficult in a subject area where there is so little agreement either as to the identity of the major relevant variables or their definition, let alone their casual relationship to the object of explanation. Further difficulties result, in the present instance, from the rather primitive character of analytic techniques. The attempt, therefore, to render this extensive body of findings as a set of relatively direct statements, and to relate them in any unequivocal manner to theoretical issues, must necessarily involve oversimplification, and impart an artificial degree of consistency to the thrust of hundreds of varied findings, some which were ambiguous or even contradictory. The following summary should be interpreted with this in mind.

The community of Midcity during the decade of the 1950’s provided the basis of the analysis. Two major bodies of data were utilized-- the first comprising measures of criminal involvement by male adolescents (7-20), the second measures of demographic characteristics. It is important to reiterate that neither of these were particularly direct measures of the actual forms of behavior or population
characteristics at issue. The “court case” used as a measure of criminal activity relates in a complex way to actual behavior, and reflects only frequency of illegal involvement, not form or seriousness. Many of the census figures used as measures of population characteristics are similarly indirect, and few of them are adequate indicators of the kinds of subcultural characteristics which figure importantly in the theoretical analysis.

It should be noted, however, that the two bodies of data-- some of whose constituent measures showed extremely good statistical association-- were quite independent, having been compiled at different times, under different circumstances, by different methods and by different agencies. The demographic data were collected by the Federal Bureau of the Census primarily by means of questionable administered every ten years; the court data were recorded by the state corrections division on a yearly basis. The demographic data were derived largely from answers to questions; the crime data were based on events (court appearances by individuals) recorded as they occurred. Both bodies of data were subject to both “synchronic” and “diachronic” processing. The first provided the basis for “extended duration” analysis by averaging figures over the decade; the second compared figures at different points in time and to ascertain change trends.

Findings with respect to the volume of court-handled youth crime were clear. They indicated that male adolescents in Midcity engaged extensively in behavior which results in court action. Youth rates (age 17-20) were substantially higher than juvenile (7-16), both because older adolescents are far more active criminally, and because statistics based on the “juvenile” category included a large percentage of “non-contributing” younger children. The number of court appearances every year among older male adolescents in Midcity was equivalent to about one-third of their number. This figure is well above national rates (about 7% for 18-20 year olds in the 1960’s), and marked higher than the 2-3% figure cited in some FBI reports. Incidence figures of this order indicate clearly that the practice of violative behavior was not confined to a small or “deviant” minority, but was instead sufficiently
common and sufficiently widespread as to constitute an established and customary feature of urban lower class life. This becomes even more evident when one considers that the number of offenses acted on by the courts is smaller than the number acted on by the police, and that the latter, in turn, is substantially smaller than the number of offenses actually committed.

A second finding of central theoretical relevance emerges clearly from these data. There was a direct community where offenders resided. Midcity rates were higher than those of Port City, and well above those of higher-status Port City areas. Moreover, there was a similarly direct relationship between crime and social status within Midcity itself—with rates increasing directly from the highest to the lowest of a set of intra-community social-status levels. The fact that differences of this order were found on the basis of social-status differences as refined as those between lower Class I, II and III is one piece of evidence, among others, that the higher rates found at lower levels are not a consequence of more stringent law enforcement, but reflect instead the actual existence of more crime, and more serious crime. The ubiquity of youth crime at the lowest levels is forcefully attested by the finding that yearly court rates among older youth in the average lower-class III area were equivalent to well over one-third of the populations, and in the lower class III area with the highest rates, well over half! Findings of this kind make it difficult to avoid the conclusion that the roots of a phenomenon so widespread and so clearly related to social status must be sought in the subculture of these strata rather than in the idiosyncratic motives or deviant behavior of individuals.

Figures showing that crime rates are clearly higher at lower status levels provide a statistical basis for positing a close association between social status and crime, but say nothing as to the nature of that association. Evidence bearing on this latter issue is presented here through an examination of the degree of statistical association between court rates in Midcity and a range of measures of demographic characteristics. While the general conclusion of this analysis is relatively clear, many of the individual findings are considerably less definitive than in the case of
the prevalence statistics. Several methodological reasons for this are indicated. The likelihood that close empirical relationships between subcultural characteristics and criminal behavior will be reflected in good statistical associations is weakened by the fact that many of the available measures of both sets of variables are far from satisfactory; few are sufficiently direct or sensitive as to support definitive conclusions. Moreover, for some characteristics of central theoretical relevance such as the nature and prevalence of kinship networks, religious beliefs and practices, the number and size of street corner groups, measurers are very poor, or even lacking entirely. Additional methodological problems arise from the fact that the relationship between crime and subculture is conceptualized, on a theoretical level, in terms of mutually interrelated complex characteristics, while the present analytic techniques relate measures of crime and demography on a one-to-one basis.

Despite these methodological problems, however, the general thrust of the associational findings is surprisingly clear. The best associations were shown by measures of those characteristics which are most central to a model of social-status based subcultures; characteristics seen as peripheral to or independent of this model showed poor or ambiguous associations. Measures of educational status, occupational status, and expenditure patterns showed strong associations with rates of youth crime. Measures reflecting intra-community movements, length of residence, age of housing, and size of households, showed poor or indifferent associations. Of special interests were associations with racial status and national origin. These showed statistical association with crime primarily insofar as they reflected social status differences, but otherwise showed little independent relationship with illegal behavior.

These associational findings would thus appear to support two additional generalizations with respect to youth crime and subculture. The high statistical association of crime rates and central indexes to social status suggests that the practice of criminal behavior by male adolescents is itself a “central” component of the subcultures of low status populations. Second, the findings suggest that the
relationship between youth crime and other central components of the subculture is hardly casual, but sufficiently close and intimate as to indicate the profit of exploring the logical as well as the statistical relationships between crime and culture. They also suggest that such explorations require information derived from more direct and intensive observation of actual behavior than is afforded by census-gathering methods.

The decade of the 1950’s witnessed a number of marked changes in Midcity. Prominent among these were a substantial loss in population -- primarily in lower class I areas; an increase in the number of Negroes, and a considerable amount of intra-community movement. The occurrence of these changes afforded the opportunity to address an additional set of questions of relevance to a general explanation of gangs and delinquency. Were changes in demographic characteristics accompanied by changes in the volume of youth crime? If so, which characteristics? Did the increase in the size and proportion of the Negro population affect crime rates? Did demographic changes diminish the direct correspondence between lower social status and higher rates of crime? Did they weaken the strong associations between crime rates and central measures of social status subcultures? In the face of some expectations that rapid social change disrupts the kinds of relationships found in more “stable” communities, that more Negroes mean more crime, that change in itself may generate a criminal response, many of the present findings were surprising.

Three major conclusions emerged from the analysis. First, despite the highly visible nature of the changes just noted, there was remarkably little change in the “central” indexes to social status -- particularly indexed to educational and occupational status. Second, there were marked increases at all status levels in the volume of youth crime handled by the courts. Third, there was little significant statistical association between changes in crime rates and changes in any of the demographic characteristics examined. How are these findings to be interpreted?
The rise in crime rates noted in Midcity was paralleled in many other American cities during this period, raising the possibility that adequate explanation requires consideration of nation-wide trends. In the case of Midcity itself, the factor most obviously related to the increase was a change in official methods of recording court cases. About half way through the decade a category of cases not previously included was added to the yearly totals, increasing the number of tabulated cases by about one-third. The failure of the analysis to show significant associations between crime increases and changes such as the increase of Negroes is noteworthy. One minor exception to the “low association” findings was the “fair” association between degree of population loss and crime increase -- indicating that areas which suffered the largest population losses experiences the smallest increases in crime. This finding runs counter to the notion that the “disorganization” resulting from social flux enhances crime, as do other findings bearing on changes in population size and racial composition.

The finding of consistently low association between measures of demographic change and measures of crime change accords directly with the “subcultural generation” position of the present work. On the basis of this theory one would expect to find good associations only in the event of substantial changes in the “central” measures of social status or other relevant subcultures since these are seen to bear a “casual” relationship to crime rates. Changes in non-central characteristics, on the other hand, would not be expected to show significant associations, since they are seen relatively independent of criminal activity. Results accord directly with these expectations. Since “central” measures of social status as occupation and educational status showed very little change, there was little statistical association with crime trends. In the case of non-central characteristics such as racial status and internal population movements, changes even of substantial magnitude failed to produce good statistical associations with crime rates.
Two additional findings provide important evidence as to the relationship between crime and subculture. To test the relationship of higher crime rates and lower social status over time, rates were compared for areas showing high, medium, and low population loss, and associations were compared for longer versus shorter analytic periods. Results in both instances indicated a high degree of stability in the relationship between crime rates and subcultural characteristics even under conditions of considerable change. The effect of high, medium or low population loss on rate differentiation by social status was negligible; associations between central measures of social status and crime rates actually became stronger as longer periods of time were encompassed by the analysis. It should be noted in the concluding summary that the present statistical evidence for good relationships between youth crime and subcultural characteristics relates primarily to only youth crime -- that based on social status. Evidence with respect to the subcultures, primarily those of sex and age, is presented in future chapters.