

**The Disproportionate Overrepresentation of Minority Youth
in Secure Facilities:
A Survey of Decision Makers and Delinquents**

Technical Report

By

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page No.
Acknowledgements.....	i
Table of Contents.....	iii
List of Tables.....	x
Chapter One: A Review of Phase One of the Study.....	1
Research Sites.....	2
Sample Selection	3
Variables.....	6
Independent Variables.....	8
Analysis.....	10
Race Specific Findings from Phase One.....	10
Reanalysis of Decision Making at Judicial Disposition.....	12
Chapter Two: Phase Two of the Research.....	19
Rationale for Phase Two of the Study.....	20
Research Methods	23
Sampling and Distributions	23
Questions Contained Within Surveys and Interviews.....	25
Organization of the Report	25
Chapter Three: Adult Decision Makers Black Hawk County.....	29
Perceived Role of the Court and Views of the System	29
Rehabilitation/Legalistic Orientation	29
Race Differences in General	36
Crime.....	36
Family	37
Distrust of System.....	39

Race Differences in Processing.....	41
Police.....	41
Access to Counsel.....	43
The Disproportionate Overrepresentation of	
Minorities.....	44
Race Findings Specific to Study	47
Blacks/#Current Charges Referred to Petition	47
Blacks/Dropout Placement	50
Females Placement	51
Large Number of Youth Referred to Court.....	53
Feelings About the Study Overall.....	55
Suggestions for Change.....	55
Summary	58
Chapter Four: Youth Black Hawk County.....	76
General Perceptions.....	76
Discrimination.....	76
Opportunities	78
Trust.....	80
View of Police.....	81
Treatment.....	81
Respect	84
View of Probation Officer.....	87
Treatment.....	87
Respect.....	89
Problems in the System	91
Views of School	92
Educational Ambitions	92

Treatment.....	93
Blame	94
Summary	95
Chapter Five: Adult Decision Makers Woodbury County	108
Perceived Role of the Court and Views of the System.....	109
Rehabilitation and Protection of Society	109
Race Differences in General	121
Crime.....	121
Distrust of the System.....	122
Race Differences in Processing.....	127
Police	127
Access to Counsel	128
The Disproportionate Overrepresentation of	
Minorities.....	129
Race Findings Specific to Study.....	134
Younger Blacks Released, Older Blacks Referred	
to Court	134
Native American Indians Under Court Authority	
Released/Native American Indians With Serious	
Crime Released	137
Blacks, Native American Indians Less Likely to	
be Petitioned.....	141
Feelings About the Study Overall	142
Suggestions for Change	144
Summary.....	150
Chapter Six: Woodbury County Youth.....	168
General Perceptions	168
Discrimination	168
Job Opportunities	174

Future Opportunities.....	177
Trust.....	179
Summary	181
Perceptions of Police.....	182
Treatment	182
Respect	190
Perceptions of Probation Officers.....	194
Treatment.....	194
Trust and Respect.....	196
Problems in the System	199
Perceptions of School	200
Perceptions of Blame.....	205
Summary	205
Chapter Seven: Adult Decision Makers Polk County	219
Perceived Role of the Court and Views of the System.....	220
Protect Society and Hold Youth Accountable.....	220
Causes of Delinquency.....	223
Family.....	225
School.....	227
Race Differences in General.....	229
Crime.....	229
Distrust of the System	231
Race Differences in Processing.....	231
Police	232
The Disproportionate Overrepresentation of	
Minorities.....	233
Specific Findings.....	235

Blacks and Detention.....	236
Females Stay in the Community.....	237
Views of the Study.....	238
Suggestions for Change.....	238
Summary.....	240
Chapter Eight: Youth Polk County.....	257
General Perceptions.....	257
Discrimination.....	257
Equal Job and Pay Opportunities.....	260
Future Opportunities.....	262
Trust.....	264
View of Police.....	265
Fairness.....	266
Respect.....	270
Desire to be a Police Officer.....	272
View of Probation Officer.....	273
Fairness and Biases.....	273
Respect.....	275
Desire to be a Probation Officer.....	276
Problems in the System and in the Schools.....	277
Summary.....	279
Chapter Nine: Adult Decision Makers in Scott County.....	291
Rehabilitation.....	292
Views of Delinquency.....	296
Gangs.....	298
Race Differences in General.....	301

Crimes.....	301
Distrust of the System.....	303
Race Differences in Processing.....	305
Police.....	306
The Juvenile Justice System.....	309
The Disproportionate Overrepresentation of Minorities.....	313
Race Findings Specific to Study.....	318
Blacks Petitioned Less than Whites.....	318
Blacks Receive Consent Decrees Less than Whites.....	320
Females Placed Out of the Community More than Males.....	321
Feelings About the Study Overall.....	323
Suggestions for Change.....	324
Summary.....	326
 Chapter Ten: Youth Scott County.....	 343
General Perceptions.....	343
Discrimination.....	343
Opportunities.....	344
Trust.....	347
Views of Police.....	348
Treatment.....	348
Respect.....	351
Views of Probation Officers.....	352
Treatment.....	352
Respect.....	354
Problems in the System.....	355
Views of School.....	356

Educational Ambitions.....	356
Treatment.....	357
Blame.....	358
Summary.....	359
Chapter Eleven: Summary and Recommendations.....	372
Results and Themes from Phase Two.....	374
Role of Court and Views of System.....	374
Causes of Delinquency.....	374
Race Specific Differences.....	375
Race Differences in Processing.....	376
Suggestions for Change.....	378
Recommendations.....	379
General.....	379
Specific.....	385
Bibliography.....	394

LIST OF TABLES

Title	Page #
Summary of Research Design for Phase One.....	14
Significant Race and Gender Effects (Phase One- Summary of Results).....	16
Logistic Regression Results for Judicial Disposition (State Training School).....	17
Number of Self—Reports and Interviews, Differentiated by County, Status, and Race.....	28
Distributions of Decision Makers’ Demographics and Mean Time on Job, Black Hawk County.....	61
Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers’ View of Role of the Court, Black Hawk County.....	62
Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers’ View of the Role of the Court, Black Hawk County.....	63
Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers’ View of the Causes of Delinquency, Black Hawk County.....	65
Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers’ View of the Causes of Delinquency, Black Hawk County.....	66

Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers’ View of the Race Differences in General, Black Hawk County.....	69
Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers’ View of the Race Difference in General, Black Hawk County.....	70
Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers’ View of Police, Black Hawk County.....	71
Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers’ View of Police, Black Hawk County.....	72
Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers’ View of Race Differences in Processing in General, Black Hawk County.....	73
Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers’ View of Race Differences in Processing in General, Black Hawk County.....	74
Definition of Variables Used to Represent Youths’ View of Discrimination in General, Black Hawk County.....	97
Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths’ View of Discrimination in General, Black Hawk County.....	98
Definition of Variables Used to Represent Youths’ View of Police in General, Black Hawk County.....	99

Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Police in General, Black Hawk County.....	100
Definition of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Probation Officers in General, Black Hawk County.....	103
Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Probation Officers in General, Black Hawk County.....	104
Definition of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of School and Blame for Current Situation in General, Black Hawk County.....	106
Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of School and Blame for Current Situation in General, Black Hawk County.....	107
Distributions of Decision Makers' Demographics and Mean Time on Job, Woodbury County.....	153
Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Role of the Court, Woodbury County.....	154
Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Role of the Court, Woodbury County.....	155
Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Causes of Delinquency, Woodbury County.....	157

Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Causes of Delinquency, Woodbury County.....	158
Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Race Differences in General, Woodbury County.....	161
Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Race Differences in General, Woodbury County.....	162
Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of Police, Woodbury County.....	163
Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of Police, Woodbury County.....	164
Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of Race Differences in Processing in General, Woodbury County.....	165
Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of Race Differences in Processing in General, Woodbury County.....	166
Definitions of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Discrimination in General, Woodbury County.....	208
Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Discrimination in General, Woodbury County.....	209

Definition of Variables Used to Represent Youths’ View of Police in General, Woodbury County.....	210
Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths’ View of Police in General, Woodbury County.....	211
Definition of Variables Used to Represent Youths’ View of Probation Officers in General, Woodbury County.....	214
Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths’ View of Probation Officers in General, Woodbury County.....	215
Definition of Variables Used to Represent Youths’ View of School and Blame for Current Situation in General, Woodbury County.....	217
Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths’ View of School and Blame for Current Situation in General, Woodbury County.....	218
Distributions of Decision Makers’ Demographics and Mean Time on Job, Polk County.....	242
Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers’ View of the Role of the Court, Polk County.....	243
Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers’ View of the Role of the Court, Polk County.....	244

Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers’ View of the Causes of Delinquency, Polk County.....	246
Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers’ View of the Causes of Delinquency, Polk County.....	247
Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers’ View of the Race Differences in General, Polk County.....	250
Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers’ View of the Race Differences in General, Polk County.....	251
Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers’ View of Police, Polk County.....	252
Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers’ View of Police, Polk County.....	253
Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers’ View of Race Differences in Processing in General, Polk County.....	254
Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers’ View of Race Differences in Processing in General, Polk County.....	255
Definitions of Variables Used to Represent Youths’ View of Discrimination in General, Polk County.....	280

Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Discrimination in General, Polk County.....	281
Definition of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Police in General, Polk County.....	282
Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Police in General, Polk County.....	283
Definition of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Probation Officers in General, Polk County.....	286
Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Probation Officers in General, Polk County.....	287
Definition of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of School and Blame for Current Situation in General, Polk County.....	289
Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of School and Blame for Current Situation in General, Polk County.....	290
Distributions of Decision Makers' Demographics and Mean Time on Job, Scott County.....	328
Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Role of the Court, Scott County.....	329

Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Role of the Court, Scott County.....	330
Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Causes of Delinquency, Scott County.....	332
Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Causes of Delinquency, Scott County.....	333
Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Race Differences in General, Scott County.....	336
Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Race Differences in General, Scott County.....	337
Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of Police, Scott County.....	338
Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of Police, Scott County.....	339
Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of Race Differences in Processing in General, Scott County.....	340
Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of Race Differences in Processing in General, Scott County.....	341

Definitions of Variables Used to Represent Youths’ View of Discrimination in General, Scott County.....	361
Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths’ View of Discrimination in General, Scott County.....	362
Definition of Variables Used to Represent Youths’ View of Police in General, Scott County.....	363
Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths’ View of Police in General, Scott County.....	364
Definition of Variables Used to Represent Youths’ View of Probation Officers in General, Scott County.....	367
Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths’ View of Probation Officers in General, Scott County.....	368
Definition of Variables Used to Represent Youths’ View of School and Blame for Current Situation in General, Scott County.....	370
Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths’ View of School and Blame for Current Situation in General, Scott County.....	371
Summary of Themes and Trends from Phase Two of the Research.....	391
Distributions of the Number of Training Sessions Attended on Handling Minorities and Female Youth.....	393

Chapter One

A Review of Phase One of the Study

Two separate but interrelated research studies were conducted over the last three years to address the disproportionate overrepresentation of minorities in secure facilities. The first study or Phase one focused on the examination of case files for the purpose of assessing whether race/ethnicity may influence juvenile court processing and outcomes in four counties in the state of Iowa.

Phase two was a follow up to that research with the specific intentions of addressing the following question, “How do juvenile court personnel feel about phase one of the study, the findings, and race bias, in general? In this phase of the research, delinquent youth were also asked for their input concerning discrimination and treatment provided by the police and the juvenile court office. In this chapter, the sites, sampling techniques, statistical procedures, and the results from Phase one of the study are discussed. A more detailed presentation of the research is given in technical reports entitled, “Juvenile Justice Decision Making in Iowa: An Analysis of the Influences of Race on Case Processing in Three Counties” and “Juvenile Justice Decision Making in Iowa: An Analysis of the Influence of Race on Case Processing in Scott County”, authored by Michael J. Leiber and prepared for The Office of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning.

Research Sites

Due to the relatively small number of nonwhites in the state of Iowa, the determining factor for inclusion in the study was the size of the minority youth population residing in a particular county. On the basis of this criterion and available resources, the following four counties were chosen: Black Hawk, Woodbury, Polk, and Scott.

Black Hawk County : This county has a total population of 123,798 with persons age 17 and younger comprising 31,402 (Bureau of the Census, 1990). Minority youth comprise 13% of those age 17 and younger, with blacks making up 77% of that figure (Bureau of the Census, 1990). The largest city in the county has a black youth population of 19% (Bureau of the Census, 1990). The juvenile court services in County A handles only those referrals involving delinquent offenses.

Woodbury County : This county has a total population of 98,276 with persons age 17 and younger making up 27,579 of that number (Bureau of the Census, 1990). Minority youth comprise 9.36% of those age 17 and younger with blacks making up 21% and Native American Indians 22% of that figure (Bureau of the Census, 1990). The percentage of the minority population comprising Hispanics and Asian youth is 29% and 13%, respectively (Bureau of the Census, 1990). The largest city within the county has a minority youth population similar to that reported for the county. The juvenile court services in Woodbury county handle

referrals involving both delinquent offenses and cases pertaining to children in need of supervision.

Polk County: This county has a total population of 327,140 with persons age 17 and younger comprising 81, 971 (Bureau of the Census, 1990). Minority youth make up 10.25% of those age 17 and younger with blacks making up 47% of the population (Bureau of the Census, 1990). The juvenile court services in Polk county handle referrals involving delinquent offenses, cases pertaining to children in need of supervision, and incidents where mental health is at issue (chapter 229). Juvenile court services in this county also deal with parental termination rights and situations where families and their children need assistance.

Scott County: This county has a total population of 150,979 with persons age 17 and younger making up 42,187 of that number (Bureau of the Census, 1990). Minority youth comprise 11.91% of those age 17 and younger with blacks making up 69.74% of that figure (Bureau of the Census, 1990). The largest city within Scott county is Davenport with a black youth population of 12.82% (Bureau of the Census, 1990). This county deals with both CHINA and delinquency cases.

Sample Selection

All cases for this study were selected from juvenile court referrals over the twelve-year period from 1980 to 1991. A referral was defined as such if the situation involved a youth accused of committing a delinquent offense. In addition, a youth accused of committing more than one crime during a given incident

was counted as only one referral. The unit of analysis is the juvenile rather than the charge. Additional delinquencies were taken into account by the variable 'Current Number of Charges', which will be discussed later in the chapter. The study did not examine why youth commit crime or police decision making as it pertains to juveniles.

Each of the counties differ in their racial composition and in the number and type of referrals. Therefore, different sampling techniques were used to create racial comparison groups. The sample selection employed in each county will be discussed separately. Sampling procedures, variables, and the statistical procedures employed are presented in Table 1.

Black Hawk County: A total of 9,011 referrals were identified for the twelve-year period. Since the study focuses on racial differences, it was important to have adequate number of both whites and minorities represented in the sample. Therefore, disproportionate stratified sampling was employed to create racial comparison groups. A random sample of 1,218 referrals of delinquent cases involving white youths from a total of 8,111 was selected for the analyses. The entire population of black youths (n= 900) was targeted to provide a sufficiently large number for comparison purposes. Of this number, 823 were included in the study because the files for the remaining cases were missing or had been destroyed. The total sample for the analysis for this county numbered 2,030.

Woodbury County: A total of 10,331 referrals were identified during the time frame of the study. A random sample of referrals

of delinquent cases identified as white (n= 507) were selected for the analyses. The total number of whites identified was 8,282. American Native Indians referred to juvenile court services were also selected from random pool of referrals. Due to the relatively few number of studies of juvenile case processing involving these people (Pope and Feyerherm, 1990a), oversampling was employed (n= 985 out of 1,440). All blacks (n 475), Hispanics (n= 83), and Asians (n= 51) referred to juvenile court services during the designated time period were included in the analyses. The total sample used for Woodbury county is 2,101.

Polk County: As in Woodbury county, information was collected on Whites, Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, and American Native Indians. Due to the manner in which records are kept in this particular county, 5,000 to 7,000 files could not be located. It is believed these records have been either destroyed and/or misplaced. Thus, the number of referrals in Polk county is actually higher than the identified 9,353 referrals involving delinquent offenses. A random sample of referrals of delinquent cases identified as white (n= 1005) were selected from 7,515 for the analyses. Disproportionate random sampling was used for blacks (n= 788 out of 1,632). All cases involving Hispanic youth (n= 119), Asian youth (n= 66), and American Native Indians (n= 21) were also recorded. The total sample used for this county is 1,199.

Scott County: A total of 4,266 referrals were identified during the twelve year time frame. The small total was the

result of an active policy which calls for the destruction of files and informing youth of their right to have files sealed two years after the closure of the case. From this total, a random sample of referrals of delinquent cases identified as white (n= 713 from 2,854) were selected for the analyses. Black youth were also randomly chosen but oversampled to create a racial comparison group (n=710 from 1,225). All Hispanic and other minority groups were collected (n=187). The total sample for this county is 1,423.

Variables

Five stages were identified in Iowa's juvenile justice system. Each of these stages were treated as dependent variables. Eleven independent variables were included in the analyses. The inclusion of these variables was justified by: (1) past research and (2) preliminary analyses using chi-squares and zero—order correlations.

Dependent Variables: Most studies of juvenile justice decision making typically fail to treat detention as a stage in the proceedings. This omission has been criticized because detention status has been found to have a cumulative impact on later decision making (e.g., Bortner and Reed, 1985). Although this variable is of great importance, it could not be included a dependent variable in the study due to the small number of persons who were detained throughout the entire process.

Intake. Decisions at this point in the system are made by juvenile court officers. Here, a youth may be released, receive

an informal adjustment, or be recommended to go on to the stage of petition. “An informal adjustment” is a form of diversion where the youth avoids further processing by agreeing to participate in some type of service (e.g., informal probation, restitution, community service). Under this form of intervention, a youth may be redirected into the system if he/she fails to abide by the conditions of the agreement. State statute requires admittance of guilt as a prerequisite for this outcome. This stage is treated as a trichotomy with release coded 0, informal adjustment coded 1 and further processing coded 2.

Petition. The coding of the decision to seek further court processing is represented by 0 where petition equals yes. The decision not to file a petition or if the petition was withdrawn was coded 1.

Initial Appearance. This stage in the analysis is included because youth have the option here to agree to a consent decree or a formal adjustment rather than having to go on to the adjudicatory stage in the proceedings. This option is equivalent to the informal adjustment, though a petition has been filed at this point. Again, if a youth fails to adhere to the stipulated conditions he/she may be subject to further juvenile court proceedings. Further court processing is coded 0, while youth receiving a formal adjustment is coded 1.

Adjudication. For those youth who did not agree to or have offered to them a formal adjustment, adjudicatory outcomes consist of case dismissals, decisions to withhold adjudication, and adjudications of delinquency. The coding of adjudicatory

outcomes is as follows: adjudicated delinquent=0; case dismissed or adjudication withheld=1. Juveniles awaiting adult waiver hearings were not included in the analysis at this stage.

Judicial Disposition. As noted by Bishop and Frazier (1988:248) next to the death penalty, transfer to the adult court is the most severe sanction a youth can receive in the juvenile justice system. Therefore, cases that resulted in either a change of placement (e.g., training school, residential facility, group home) or transfer to adult court are coded 0. Referrals that involved a sentence of probation and/or treatment within the community are coded 1.

Independent Variables

The independent variables include extralegal or social characteristics and information pertaining to prior and current offenses and involvement with the juvenile justice system. The analysis was limited to whites, blacks, and when appropriate, American Native Indians. Other social characteristics are age (interval), gender (male=0, female=1), school status (attending=0, attending but academic or behavioral problems=1, and dropout=2), and family structure (two parent members present=0, one parent member present=1). Both race/ethnicity and school status were treated as dummy variables in the analyses, with whites and attending school the reference groups, respectively.

Prior record is a measure of the number of times a youth had past contact(s) with the juvenile justice system. The variable is interval.

Past research has indicated that the disposition of the previous offense may have a significant impact on the outcome of subsequent referrals (e.g., Sampson, 1986; Farrell and Swigert, 1978). Therefore, a measure was constructed as an indicator of that variable. Past disposition is defined as '0' where a youth was adjudicated a delinquent or waived to adult court and '1' where the individual received an outcome other than those two possibilities (e.g., release, an informal or formal adjustment).

Court Authority is a measure employed here to assess whether a youth may have been under some kind of supervision when he/she was referred to the juvenile court. Under court authority=0, no court authority=1.

The number of offenses a youth was charged with at the time of the referral was also coded. This is an interval—level measure.

A measure of offense severity involves the scoring of the most serious offense with which the youth was charged. The range of this variable was from 0 to 6, with the latter representing the most serious felony offense.

Although detention status could not be included in the analyses as a dependent variable, the independent effects were assessed and controlled for at various stages in the proceedings. The independent variable is coded as detained=0, no detention=1.

Analysis

The analyses followed the recommendations of Pope and Feyerherm (1990a,b) and the work of Bishop and Frazier (1988). Multivariate analyses were performed controlling for additive and interactive effects. Because each of the dependent variables is categorical (each decision making stage), logistic regression techniques within SASS were employed. In addition to estimating main effects in additive models, two—way interactions by race and each of the variables were performed for each outcome or decision making point in the proceedings. The use of interaction terms allows for the evaluation of the interactive effects race may have with social, legal, and case processing variables on each outcome. However, these were not be reported if their inclusion did not improve the overall chi-square fit of the model over the estimates of the main effects.

Race Specific Findings from Phase One

Each of the stages in the system or the dependent variables were regressed on the various independent variables controlling for their individual additive effects. The regression runs were estimated separately for each of the four counties. Although legal factors (e.g., the severity of the offense, prior record) were most often the strongest predictor of the severity of the outcome, race effects were present at a number of stages in a number of the counties. A summary of the race effects and gender effects are provided in Table 2.

Black Hawk County: At the stage of intake, blacks with more current charges were more likely than whites who were similarly situated to be referred on to petition. The second race finding was evident at the judicial disposition stage where black youth who dropped out of school were more likely than whites who dropped out of school and other youth to receive an outcome of a change of placement. The research from the first phase of the study also yielded a gender effect. Females were more likely than males to receive a disposition of a change of placement, controlling for all relevant legal and extralegal factors.

Woodbury County: At the stage of intake, an interaction existed between race and age. Younger blacks were released while older blacks were recommended to the stage of petition. Two additional effects were also present at intake. Native American Indians under court authority and Native American Indians charged with a more serious crime were released more often than other similarly situated youth. At petition, both blacks and Native American Indians were less likely to be petitioned than whites.

Polk County: No race effects were evident in this county. However, detention appears to be a very significant factor in determining case processing and case outcomes. Preliminary analyses also suggest that an indirect effect may exist between race and detention. That is, black youth seem to be subjected to detention more often than white youth and in turn, detention thereafter impacts with the likelihood of receiving a more severe outcome. Contrary to the finding in Black Hawk county, females are more likely than males to receive an outcome of community—based treatment rather than a change of placement at judicial disposition.

Scott County: At the stage of petition, blacks were less likely than whites to be petitioned. Black youth were also less likely to receive a consent decree or a formal adjustment than whites. Last, females were more likely than males to receive a change of placement at the stage of judicial disposition.

Reanalysis of Decision Making at Judicial Disposition

The federal mandate proposed by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention stipulates that inquires should be made to determine whether minority youth are disproportionately overrepresented in secure facilities. The operationalization of the stage of judicial disposition in the first phase of the study included youth sent to the state training school, residential treatment, waivers to adult court etc. To meet the stipulation, judicial disposition was redefined here to include only those youth placed in secure facilities or transferred to the custody of the state training school versus youth who received community-based treatment. Youth brought to adult waiver proceedings were dropped from the analysis (n=680). In addition, the race variable consisted of whites versus minorities (e.g., Blacks, Hispanics, Native American Indians, Asians). An additional variable was included to control for crimes against property versus persons (cseri). The results are presented in Table 3.

Minority youth are more likely than white youth to receive a disposition involving the state training school. As presented in Table 3, there are no race/county interaction differences to

account for this occurrence. Thus, the race effect is accumulative across all four counties. Legal variables are also statistically associated with this outcome (e.g., prior record, detention status, and severity of the offense). Of these effects, race is the weakest. Still, a race effect is evident. Overall, very few youth are sent to the state training school. On the basis of the sample for this analysis, however, a white's chances of being sent to the state training school is 1.98 percent in contrast to a minority which is 2.99 percent.

Table 1. Summary of Research Design for Phase One

Time Period	1980 thru 1989, 1980 thru 1991	
Sample Selection	<u>No. Referrals Delinquency</u>	<u>No. of Cases Included in Study</u>
<u>Black Hawk</u>		
(total)	9,011 ^a	2,030
White	8,111	1,218 ^b
Black	900	823
<u>Woodbury</u>		
(total)	10,331	2,101
White	8,282	507
Black	475	475
American		
Native Indian	1,440	985
Hispanic	83	83
Asian	51	51
<u>Polk</u>		
(total)	9,353 ^c	1,199
White	7,515	1,005
Black	1,632	788
American		
Native Indian	21	21
Hispanic	119	119
Asian	66	66

Table 1-continued.

<u>Scott</u>		
(total)	4,266 ^d	1,610
White	2,854	713
Black	1,225	710
Other	187	187

Variables

Dependent

Intake

Petition

Consent decree

Adjudication

Judicial disposition

Variables

Independent

Legal

Social

Prior Delinquency

Current Charge(s)

Race

Severity of past disposition

No. of charges

Age

Prior record

Severity of offense

Gender

Under Court Authority

Detention status

Family Status

Statistical Procedures

Procedure

Purpose

CROSSTABULATIONS

To examine differences in nonlegal, legal, and processing variables by county. To examine racial and ethnic composition of cohort of youth moving through proceedings or from one stage to another.

Table 1-continued.

<u>Statistical Procedures</u>	Procedure	Purpose
	ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE (ANOVA)	To examine mean differences in variables by county.
	ZERO-ORDER CORRELATIONS	To examine associations among two variables (bivariate comparisons).
	LOGISTIC REGRESSION	To make probability estimates of the influence of race controlling for other variables in the model for each stage in the proceedings. Outcomes are categorical dependent variables.
	INTERACTION TERMS	To assess the possibility that the effect of race may be conditioned by other variables. Only reported when the chi square fit of the model is improved over the additive model.

- a. This is an estimation. Minority youth other than black may be included in this figure. The number is unknown, but it is believed to represent a small percentage in comparison to whites given the small number of other nonwhite groups (including Hispanic) in Black Hawk County.
- b. A small number of files could not be located (N=77).
- c. All referrals involving delinquencies were not identified due to missing and/or destroyed records. Estimations are that 5,000 to 7,000 files were not found.
- d. The small total was the result of an active policy which calls for their right to have files sealed two years after the closure of the case.

Table 2. Significant Race and Effects (Phase One, Summary of Results) .

	Black Hawk	Woodbury	Polk	Scott
STAGES				
Intake	Blacks/Current # Charges (referred on)	Black/Older (referred on) Indians/Court Authority (referred on) Indians/Serious of Offense (referred on)		
Petition		Blacks (no petition) Indians (no petition)	-- ^b	Blacks (no petition)
Consent Decree		-- ^b		Blacks (no consent decree)
Adjudication		-- ^b	-- ^b	
Judicial				
Disposition (With waiver)	Blacks/Dropout (placement) Females (placement)		Females (community based treatment)	Females (place- ment)

Table 2--Continued.

Black Hawk	Woodbury	Polk	Scott
<hr/>			
STAGES			
Judicial			
Disposition (Without waiver)	Females (placement)		Females (place ment)

a. Race and gender effects only, legal and other extralegal variables were most often the strongest effects.

b. Too few cases in categories to do analysis.

Table 3. Logistic Regression Results for Judicial Disposition, Training School(N=760).

	Disposition additive model	Disposition interactive model
Race	- .409 ^a /- .112 ^b (.209) ^c 3.834* ^d	-.209/- .057 (.299) .488
Age	-.243/- .198 (.077) 9.914**	-.253/- .206 (.078) 10.526**
Gender	-.218/- .043 (.298) .536	-.207/- .040 (.300) .476
Attending School	-.229/- .057 (.231) .980	-.196/- .049 (.235) .695
Dropout	-.237/- .467 (.278) .725	-.239/- .047 (.278) .740
Family Status	-.233/- .064 (.206) 1.284	-.228/- .062 (.209) 1.19
Prior Record	-.273/- .409 (.039) 50.090	-.273/- .409 (.039) 49.339**

Table 3.-continued.

	Disposition	Disposition
	additive model	interactive model
Court Authority	.446/.121 (.218) 4.164*	.443/.120 (.220) 4.064*
# Current Charge	.000/.000 (.118) .000	-.001/-.000 (.119) .000
Offense Severity	-.127/-.115 (.063) 4.126*	-.122/-.110 (.063) 3.739*
CSERI	-.137/-.031 (.240) .325	-.162/-.037 (.242) .444
Detention Status	1.525/.278 (.280) 29.670**	1.542/.281 (.282) 29.933**
Woodbury	-.087/-.017 (.331) .068	.278/.056 (.580) .229

Table 3.-continued.

	Disposition	Disposition
	additive model	interactive model
Polk	-. 095/- .018 (.313) .092	- .197/- .039 (.460) .185
Scott	-. 732/- .165 (.259) 7.988**	-.348/- .079 (.410) .722
Race X Woodbury ^c		.145/.022 (.588) .060
Race X Polk		-.642/- .117 (.512) 1. 573
Race X Scott		-.572/- .098 (.672) .724
INTERCEPT	5.325 (1.294) 16.925**	5.344 (1.301) 16.883**

Table 3.-continued.

	Disposition	Disposition
	additive model	interactive model
AIC	702.896	706.449
Sc	777.029	794.482
-2 Log L	670.896	668.449

^a Parameter estimate

^b Standardized estimate

^c Standard error

^d Wald chi-square

^e Dummy variables for counties, Black Hawk county is reference category

**p less than or equal to .01; *p less than or equal to .05.

Chapter Two

Phase Two of the Research

Phase One of the research focused on the examination of files to assess the case processing and case outcomes of youth in four juvenile court offices. The primary focus was to examine the similarities and differences in the treatment of Blacks, Native American Indians, and other minority groups relative to Whites. The findings suggest that each of the four county juvenile court offices differ to some degree in what factors influence decision making. Common characteristics, however, are the presence of race and gender disparities in case outcomes at various stages in the proceedings. Most of the differences appear at intake, petition, and judicial disposition. Overall, minorities in all four counties are more likely than whites to be placed in the state training school. Because Phase One of the research relied on official and unofficial records at the juvenile court offices, little could be said as to why this could be occurring.

Phase Two of the research was conducted in an attempt to possibly answer why minorities are disproportionately overrepresented in secure facilities. An analytical framework was incorporated to look at juvenile justice decision making from a broad perspective. To accomplish this task, adult decision makers and youth in Black Hawk, Woodbury, Polk, and Scott counties were provided the opportunity to express their feelings on a variety of issues revolving around fairness, decision making, case processing, and case outcomes. The underlying

objective of this approach was to determine how decision makers' views on a variety of issues impact decision making. The purpose in doing this was to place the observed race and gender differences within the context of this larger view of decision making. The end result was anticipated to reflect a better understanding of the role legal and extralegal factors may have on juvenile justice decision making which may or may not include subtle forms of racism or bias.

In this Chapter, the rationale for the second phase of the study is discussed. The research method for Phase Two is also outlined. A discussion on the organization of the report comprises the final section of the Chapter.

Rationale for Phase Two of the Study

A limitation of the research design of the first phase of the study was the inability to assess what may account for the observed findings. The second phase of the research incorporated interviews in an attempt to identify both legal and extralegal factors that may provide a better understanding of juvenile justice decision making and the influence of race in each of the four counties.

It is possible that legal and extralegal factors not controlled for in the analysis in Phase One could account for the race and gender findings. That is, intricate factors that might have been present in the situation that may have impacted decision making may have not been recorded or captured. For example, the variable family structure provides information

concerning the presence or absence of parents in the household. This variable, however, fails to give any indication of the quality of supervision and/or support that may or may not be present in the household. The attitude and the willingness of the child and parents to cooperate were also not controlled for in the analyses. Each of these factors could play a very significant role in deciding what is in the best interests of the youth.

An additional weakness of the research design of the first phase of the study is the absence of input from decision makers and youth concerning a number of factors that may impact case processing and case outcomes. For example, no attempt was made to ask the decision makers for their views on the findings or what the youth themselves may have to say about the police or the juvenile court.

Concomitantly, the findings from the first phase of the research could reflect what it really going on in terms of decision making. That is, decision makers may be treating youth differently on the basis of their race.

Most individuals do not see themselves as racist or treating someone differently because of their skin color, ethnicity or culture. Yet, most individuals to varying degrees are influenced by people who are different from themselves. Our failure to recognize this, in part, stems from how we as a society generally define racism. All too often most individuals perceive the terms “racism” or “racist” in “black and white” terms without considerations of degrees. Thus, racism is generally viewed in a

negative light, represented by blatant attitudes or acts. The Rodney King incident and the beating of a truck driver in Los Angeles in 1991, for example, epitomize this type of mentality or imagery. While blatant racism may bring attention to the issue of race relations and the inequities that exist in education and employment opportunities, and in responses to crime and the processing within the criminal and juvenile justice systems, it prevents individuals and agencies of social control in the long run from recognizing the need to address the more hidden and quiet forms of racism.

Fortunately, acts of blatant racism are not the norm in our society. Unfortunately, subtle or indirect racism is much more extensive and not as apparent. Therefore, when the Rodney King incidents are forgotten or the images that they portray lose their frightening impact, persons and society in general, tend to think that everything is airtight. Or, that blatant deliberate racism exists elsewhere, not in our own backyard. In other words, blatant racism is much more visual in nature and easier to define, articulate, and feel relative to subtle racism. As a consequence, most people are not as willing to recognize or admit to subtle racism. Or, that they themselves could be unintentionally responding to individuals differently because of their skin color, ethnicity or culture.

Keeping this in mind, Phase Two of the research was conducted to assess for factors that were not captured in the first part of the research: legal and extralegal factors and subtle forms of racism or bias. In particular, the study was designed to examine

decision making from a broad perspective. The rationale for utilizing this approach was to possibly get a clearer understanding of the values and views of the decision makers. This in turn, was believed to allow for some insights into possible unintentional or indirect forms of biases in decision making.

Thus, my purpose was not to identify or label persons or agencies as racist. My goal was to arrive at some conclusions as to why blacks and other minorities receive different treatment relative to whites. These conclusions could be based on legal and extralegal factors and/or the presence of indirect forms of race or class biases.

Research Methods

Sampling and Distributions

All of the probation officers working at Black Hawk, Woodbury, Polk, and Scott counties participated in this phase of the research. Supervisors and the Chief Juvenile Court Officers at each of the four counties were also interviewed. Efforts were made to include public defenders, prosecutors, referees, and judges, though not all of these individuals agreed to participate in the study. Those that did participate, responded first to a series of questions where they chose from a set of answers. Next, the decision makers were interviewed and allowed to provide as much information as they wanted to on a variety of topics. These open ended interviews were taped and later transcribed.

Thus, the decision makers responded to both closed ended questions and open ended questions.

In the beginning stages of Phase Two, random sampling of delinquent youth from the four counties was attempted. This became a rather difficult task because many of the youth failed to attend their scheduled meetings and/or refused to participate in the research. Youth had the opportunity to volunteer for the study or decline to participate without repercussions from those in authority over them. As a result, random sampling, for the most part, was abandoned in favor of accepting youth who were willing to voluntarily participate. Delinquent youth who volunteered for the study came from the state training school, juvenile court offices, detention centers, group or youth homes, residential treatment centers, drug and alcohol treatment programs or hospitals, treatment programs for children with behavioral disorders, and YMCA independent living programs. Unlike with the adult decision makers, youth responded either to a closed ended survey or to a open ended interview.

In short, confidence exists that youth who participated in the study represent the spectrum of youth who have experience with the juvenile justice system. Youth who had not been officially recognized as delinquent did not participate in this phase of the research.

A total of 84 adult decision makers responded to interviews and self—reports. In some situations, a decision maker simply responded to either the self-report or the interview (n:6). Of the youth, 419 answered the self—reports and 193 were

interviewed. The distributions for the adult decision makers and youth who participated in Phase Two are presented in Table 1, differentiated by county and race/ethnicity.

Questions Contained Within Surveys and Interviews

Decision makers were asked a variety of questions, each of which is believed to be associated with decision making. A number of the closed ended questions focused on views of the juvenile justice system, causes of delinquency, and race and gender differences in crime, apprehension, and court processing. In the open ended questions, each decision maker was allowed to elaborate on his/her responses. Individuals were also asked for explanations concerning the findings from Phase One of the study and for their opinions on to how to alleviate the disproportionate overrepresentation of minorities in secure facilities.

Both of the instruments administered to the youth incorporated questions aimed at tapping their ambitions and views on discrimination and fairness, in general. They were also asked to comment on their perceptions of school, the police, probation officers, and the juvenile justice system. Last, youth were asked who they blamed for their current situation.

Organization of the Report

Chapters Three thru Ten present the results and interpretations of the responses from the closed ended and open ended questions. A chapter on the adult decision makers for a

specific county is first presented, followed by those of the youth for the same county.

The chapters on the decision makers are organized around views regarding: the perceived role of the court and the system (e.g., rehabilitation), race differences in general (e.g., crime, attitude), race differences in processing (e.g., police), reactions to the specific findings from Phase One, and suggestions for change. A summary is provided at the beginning and the end of each chapter. Again, the utilization of a broad approach to decision making was used in an effort to arrive at a deeper understanding of the factors that may impact decision making, including those factors that may contain subtle forms of bias.

No effort will be made in the various chapters to indicate that a particular response or view is bias in nature, blatant or subtle. The presentation of the material is descriptive and illustrative rather than interpretive.

The chapters on the youth are organized around views regarding: general perceptions (e.g., discrimination), the police (e.g., treatment), probation officers (e.g., treatment), school (e.g., treatment), and blame for the current situation. A summary is presented at the beginning and the end of each chapter.

The final chapter of the report presents policy recommendations. The recommendations are not county—specific. Rather, the recommendations are based on the suggestions provided

by the decision makers and the overall impressions of the results from both Phases of the study.

Table 1. Number of Self-Reports and Interviews, Differentiated by County, Status, and Race.

Adult (self-reports, interviews)

Race	County				<u>Total</u>
	Black Hawk	Woodbury	Polk	Scott	
White	17	23	26	14	80
Black	2	0	2	0	4
Total	19	23	28	14	84

Youth (self-reports)

Race	County				<u>Total</u>
	Black Hawk	Woodbury	Polk	Scott	
White	60	64	73	66	263
Black	33	40	29	54	156
Total	93	104	102	122	419

Youth (Interviews)

Race	County				<u>Total</u>
	Black Hawk	Woodbury	Polk	Scott	
White	20	26	30	26	102
Black	20	6	23	22	71
Hispanic		8			8
Native Americans		9			9
Total	40	49	53	48	190

Chapter Three

ADULT DECISION MAKERS BLACK HAWK COUNTY

Nineteen adult juvenile court decision makers were interviewed in this county. Juvenile court officers, a judge, two public defenders, and a prosecutor were interviewed. The demographics and mean length of time on the job for 17 of these individuals are presented in Table 1 at the end of the chapter. Of the 17 decision makers, 10 are male and 7 female. Fifteen are white and 2 are black. The mean age of the personnel was 38. The mean length of time on the job is 12 years.

The juvenile justice personnel in Black Hawk county appear to be guided by a rehabilitative/legalistic orientation. Holding youth accountable for their behavior emerges as a strong goal. A breakdown in family support and supervision, and overall distrust of the system are seen as possible explanations for the disproportionate overrepresentation of minorities in the system. Bias at the point of arrest was also cited as a contributing factor. Responses to closed ended questions and impressions from readings of the transcribed interviews were used to arrive at these conclusions.

Perceived Role of the Court and Views of the System

Rehabilitation/Legalistic Orientation

Almost all decision makers believe deterrence and the maintenance of social order range from very to somewhat important

in interacting with youth. The extent to which punishment should prevail as a goal, however, is somewhat distributed across the responses. Of the goals, a strong emphasis appears to be on rehabilitation and the protection of society. In responding to both questions, 14 of 17 persons answered that the individual goals are very important (Table 2, 3).

Although the protection of society and the rehabilitation of youth are important, decision makers do not see the juvenile court as too lenient, or that youth who commit violent crimes should be waived to adult court. Underlying this view, appears to be the belief that youth should be dealt with in a stern manner within the juvenile justice system. This feeling is illustrated by the findings that personnel felt delinquents must be dealt with strictly (76 percent answered strongly agree/agree) and held accountable for his or her actions (100 percent strongly agree/agree). There is also a strong emphasis on early intervention and a lot of intervention. Thus, a blend of rehabilitation (*parens patriae*) and adherence to the protection of individual and societal rights appears to exist in the juvenile court in Black Hawk county.

This rehabilitation/legalistic orientation reflects a view of delinquency that rests with the perception that this kind of behavior is caused by an inability to control impulses (100 percent responded very to somewhat important), a decision to commit crime, negative school performance, and a lack of positive ways to interact with others (Table 4, 5). A number of other

factors are also believed to be important, including a lack of parental supervision and a lack of parental discipline.

Each of these sentiments is evident when reading the interviews conducted with decision makers. In particular, the perceived changing behavior of youth to the lack of family initiative to the demands placed on the court by the state government stand out.

Many of the personnel believe youth entering the system are younger, committing more serious crime, and evidence multiple problems. The responses to the question, “Does your view of the job differ now from when you first became a probation officer?”, illustrate these beliefs.

Sure, one is that in the 12 years that I have been a probation officer, I think that our job has become more difficult. I think we really are working with more disturbed kids coming into the system, kids that are just more difficult in a lot of ways to deal with, not just from the criminal end, substance abuse end, poor school performance, so it very much multi-problematic kids that are coming in. We always had them before, but I think there are more numbers and I think they are coming at a younger age that requires more significant intervention.

There are kids who came into the system who kind of wander in for various reasons because they make bad judgment, wrong place, wrong time, impulsive behavior and that group of kids is always there. You always have a group of kids that for various reasons will come through the system and sometimes all they need is the system responding to them appropriately and then sending them on their way, kind of giving them a helping hand. That group of kids, I don't think they have changed all that much. They have changed in some ways because I think today's kids require more active involvement. I used to think that you could just sit down and talk to them and they would

end up being good and I learned over the years, well actually I learned that real quickly, that talking didn't get you anywhere and the thing that kids need most in their life is someone putting some limits on them and saying that this is how you have to run your life, slow them down a little, and get them under control and go from there.

Along these lines, there are those who believe that the youth lack adequate and appropriate supervision and discipline. Some indicated that families do not get involved and/or the families lack adequate parenting skills.

Q. Why do you think younger kids are getting involved sooner?

A. I think it is minimal parental supervision. Parents that giving either mixed messages or not giving clear messages that kids are not to break the law and this is what will happen if you do. So many parents say that they didn't want to do anything until they saw what we were going to do and I just tell them that whatever they do to their child is going to make a lot more importance than anything that I can do to them. . .A lot of parents tend to minimize law violations...They did that when they were younger and they just thought that the law would take care of it and they could sit back and watch.

Another example of a belief in poor parenting as a primary cause of delinquency is evident in the following quote.

...I think a lot of our parents mean well. However, I think a lot of the parents that we go through don't have good skills and they seem to fall in one of two directions. Now, there are some that are really on target but then you have some parents that have provided poor supervision, who defend their kids even when their kid gets involved in fight after fight rather than help their kid look at alternatives to that behavior, they reinforce that behavior.

Changes in the family structure and family dynamics are also seen as factors in the quality of supervision and discipline provided to youth.

Q. It has come up that there is an increasing number of teenagers having children. Do you think that element has always been there) that there has always been young kids having kids or do you think it is increasing?

A. Since I have been in the field there has been a dramatic increase. When I first got involved there were some kids in their early teens having children but families were helping them raise those children. Each year it is like it has multiplied, the number of kids having children younger and there are a whole multitude of factors you have. Most come from an economically disadvantaged background, their resources are limited and you just keep going and even though the system tries to plug all of these resources in, you are still lacking because they are young parents who are number one, they are children themselves, trying to parent another child and there aren't two parents in there working together.

Some believe this occurrence is generational and part of a subculture while others see it as a response to a need to be needed on the part of the females and as a status symbol for males.

It is for these reasons, one officer states that much time is spent in terms of holding the youth accountable for their actions.

trying to support the parent and trying to make sure the kid is in school and make sure they are held accountable because I see that as the starting point for everything. I think in terms of consequences, appropriate consequences...we don't care if the kid is on probation for civil charges and then goes and steals something for 50 cents. I don't care,

he is on probation, he knows the rules and he is out there stealing

In addition to the perception of changes in the youth and in family dynamics, there is also a belief that the court hold youth more accountable due to the demands placed on them by the schools and society in general.

Our referrals are up, some of our referrals I think are based in that 10 years ago never would have been referred to us. Some of the kids we are working with have gotten into fights at school. That used to be handled by the school authorities and now that becomes a disorderly conduct. Schools are depending on police for control.

. . . I think that young people are getting charged with more offenses now than in the past. I am talking about criminal mischief kinds of things and assaults. In the past, they were fights and they used to get warned and sent on their way but now they are getting charged. So I think they are getting charged more than in the past...They were doing the same things 20 years ago they just weren't getting charged with it, like playing with matches, setting fires, back then you would hear of it but you didn't hear a child getting charged with it.

In Black Hawk county, the juvenile court personnel expressed a tremendous amount of concern over state control and the impact of that control on their job. Here, the sense is that the state is holding the court more accountable for the youth, via paperwork, review of hearings, and reports to judges. Some dissatisfaction was also indicated regarding what the role of the officer should be when dealing with youth and within the office itself. The following statements support these points.

...for many of our officers, the kind of cases that they directly supervise are the much more

at risk kind of kids. But, the carryover is that it is a much more demanding job. I think we are held more accountable. I certainly think through the court we are held more accountable as probation officers. I think attorneys look more strictly. . .I think that the judges that we have right now expect that we report to the court when we have problems...

things are a lot more complicated...

Legal system is becoming increasingly cluttered and jammed up, resource poor..

It takes more energy and more effort to do less for a case..., responsibilities are increasing.

Funds, we can't get the resources

Programs created to maintain staffing levels— (so as to) not lose jobs (in the office)

I would say that ...processing the paper becomes more important than dealing with the kids.

We used to do preventive education kinds of things, do very little of that now. It used to be that we had a lot more, well, we were a lot more independent. I don't mean that so that kids couldn't have their rights, but 80 that they could be processed through or worked with in a more timely manner and in what I consider more of a humane manner, It used to be here in the office we had discussions about who we were, were we social workers, were we counselors, or were we probation officers, meaning that we were more law and order like policemen. We used to have these debates back and forth and people aligned with those certain groups and certain people including me, thought that we should be called juvenile court counselors. And other people thought that we were probation officers and probation officers to them were like part of the arm of the police department and we would go in different directions. But, we no longer have debates like that...I think that more people are aligned with the law and order part and it is almost like people are tired and look for what is thought to be some easier answer.

. . . level of supervision and administration could be better
...provide some assistance to officers.

Frustration with the state was more prominent of a theme than with the supervision of their own office. Most officers seemed to be content with their job and role as a juvenile justice decision maker.

Race Differences in General

Crime

Juvenile justice decision makers were asked if they believed blacks commit different crimes and more crime in contrast to whites. Responses to these closed ended questions and others are presented in Tables six and seven. A large percentage of the personnel did not agree with the statement that blacks commit different crimes than whites (76 percent strongly disagreed/disagreed) or more crime (58 percent strongly disagreed/disagreed). Twenty-four percent, however, agreed with the latter statement. The dominant theme from the interviews is that black youth do not commit more crime and/or more serious crime. There are some officers, however, who believe that minorities commit different kinds of crimes.

Actually, I would say that what I have seen here, it would seem that the minorities are involved in more of the petty charges, the theft, the shoplifting, the property crimes, whereas what I see...the typical white kid will be here on a car theft or a car stereo theft which is more of a higher value of a crime ... white delinquents ... are more serious.

Well, I guess yes and no. With the drug problem in the area we have had larger numbers of minorities that are involved then white kids. We also have more serious assault charges.

Much of the discussion from the interviews on race specific differences focused on the family and trust of the system.

Family

Some officers felt that black youth are more likely than whites to come from a dysfunctional family unit. In particular, the perception is that blacks are more likely to come from a single parent household. In addition, the family dynamics is also believed to differ for blacks in comparison to whites. The following responses to the questions, “Do you see any difference between minority, which is primarily black in this area, black families vs. white families who have delinquents?”, highlight these themes.

I would say that probably you would find a higher percentage of minority youth who are coming from single parent and nonmarried families...

I would say that their family is more important to them...Their kin, their aunts, uncles, grandparents,...I think the extended family is still there, the importance of family is still there.

Others disagree about the strength and importance of the extended family for blacks in contrast to whites.

Most officers did not mention black/white differences in teen—age pregnancy. There, however, were a few that see this as race—specific.

For the young black man it is a badge of their manhood to have children. We had had a boy who was 15. He had two kids and three more on their way from five separate girls and he is quite proud of this...So, you have got a fifteen year old that instead of this being something to avoid it is a mark of their adulthood and they don't really have any intent or knowledge that they can be a parent to this kid, the child that is coming along. And, again, you get that with white kids,...but it seems to be disproportionate.

...Much of my feeling is what we talked about before. Is that the lack of black male connectiveness to a proper family persons role, your obligation to your family and so on.

Q. Speaking of obligations to families, what about teenage pregnancies, does that factor into this?

A. Oh yeah. We talked about family traditions in the black community being different than family traditions in the white community. Young black females, who have been raised in their mothers home without the solid family connection would see it as more natural to raise children in a home without a father and therefore, may see it as being more acceptable to begin their family without a male counterpart in the picture.

Q. When you say begin with their family, that sort of makes it sound like it is intended, do you think that unintended female pregnancies are a factor here?

A. Yeah.

Although it may not seem consistent with their responses, both officers contend that the cause of this situation rests with economic factors rather what would seem to be adherence to subcultural values.

Differences in the single parent household were also believed to impact the availability of positive role models for black youth and in turn, create a sense of hopelessness and helplessness.

I suspect that white females see a brighter future for themselves as opposed to a minority female and if that is true...some of your minority females are more vulnerable and get tied into the relationships and for some there is also a money angle, freedom.

There were also those who believed the lack of a stable family created hostility for both blacks and whites.

Distrust of System

Most officers felt that black youth are more distrustful of the system than white youth. Much of this is believed to stem from the family and past discriminatory practices.

Well, I think that for some of our minority youth there are parents that aren't real trusting of the systems, either they have been involved in the system or for various reasons they are just not trustful and I think they provide an attitude for the kids that they don't have to do or isn't important that they do what we say down here.

...if I'm just dealing with the kid, it doesn't seem to be an issue.. .you get a lot of distrust of me being white from the parents or from the grandparents. They'll project a lot of that several different times in the situation. They think I'm sending the kid up the river because I'm white and part of the system...That's where you get a lot of the distrust, from the older generation. There's more history there.

Responses from the closed ended questions concerning black/white differences in trust of the system parallel the sentiments that emerged from the interviews (Tables 6, 7). Eighty-eight percent of the decision makers felt that black families are more distrustful of the system than white families

(47 percent answered most of the time, 41 percent answered sometimes).

Although most of the decision makers believed blacks may be distrustful of the system, they did not see youth as more likely to deny guilt or cooperate than white youth. Thirty-five percent agreed (sometimes) with the statement, while 65 percent responded with almost never to never. In fact, decision makers suggest that black youth may be more cooperative than white youth.

No, that isn't necessarily true because some of the black kids that I work with appear to have more respect than the white kids. People bring that up from time to time and I get angry at their prejudice because I have been treated far worse by some white people in this job than I have by blacks.

Well, I have never had a black youth be less cooperative than a white kid, never. I have never had a black youth threaten me in any way or refuse to do anything in any way. But, I sure have had white kids do that.

The finding that black youth are as willing or more so to cooperate as white youth is somewhat surprising, given that as a whole most decision makers felt that blacks are more distrustful of the system than whites. There are some decision makers, however, who felt that it may be a toss up.

I don't know, that is kind of a toss up. I see it on both sides. It has more to do with the kid than his ethnic background. On some things I see black kids who as they come into the office may feel that they have been singled out because of their race and the circumstances of the incident and we deal with some families that think we pick on them on a regular basis just because they are black. There are some whole families out there who

are crime oriented families and they tend to think that the whole system is after them because of the color of their skin. I do get families in here that are real sensitive to that issue and all you can do is check yourself so that you are as fair as you can be in your decision making and sometimes I have almost went in the other direction and become lenient because of that.

A small number felt that there were black/white differences in their actions.

I think that is true. A kid is more likely to be given the benefit of the doubt when they are arrested if they say yes sir and no sir and whatever you want sir than the kid who spits in your face and stomps on your foot.

Q. And, you think that the minority youth are more likely to spit in your face and stomp on your foot?

A. Yeah.

Race Differences in Processing

Police

In response to the closed ended questions, the majority of decision makers strongly disagreed/disagreed (53 percent) with the statement, “White youth are picked up less by police than black youth” (Tables 8, 9). Twenty—four percent strongly agreed/agreed with the statement. Yet, 59 percent agreed that police treat black youth differently than white youth.

A reading of the interviews suggests that juvenile court personnel appear to be split on the influence of race on police interactions with youth. On the one hand, there are some persons who do not see a bias. Differences in arrests are believed to be

the result of disproportionate involvement in criminal activity, patrolling patterns, and the attitudes of the youth.

. . . more attention on patrolling that area and if you put them there on the streets more often the chances are that they are going to see more and the chances are that they are going to arrest more, but then again the black community has requested that too.

No, I don't think that a racist cop would last long in Waterloo, not that we haven't had some. But, I think that they usually find a way to get them off the Street and get them somewhere else...Most of the arrests of juveniles come from the mouths of other juveniles.

To think that they go out and they see one person breaking into a car that is black and one person breaking into a car that is white and say that they are more likely to arrest the black man, I don't believe that. Once the interaction starts, attitude plays a role. I have had both white and black kids tell me where to go and what to do with myself. If I were to say who does it more I would have to say the black kids.

On the other hand, there are other decision makers who see the police treating black youth different than white youth.

Back when I first came to Waterloo, I saw police picking up blacks and it seemed that they were getting more serious charges than whites. It seemed like for a brief period that there was kind of a slow down on things like that but just like the race relations kind of things, for a while it seemed to cool down and now it is coming back so it is like a rolling ball. I actually think that these racial things make a difference. Because usually after something happens racial then there is a whole surge of police picking up blacks it seems sometimes just for nothing.

Well, I do. I hate to say it but certainly in the police force racism and sexism is alive and well with some of the officers...I

certainly believe that it occurs in their interactions with these kids.

In the past yes. But, I think there has been an improvement and I think part of it is with the current administration. The current administration has said that we will not be racist but I think that sometimes you still get that in some officers. Every once and a while you get the feel for a case and it is unspoken, but it is there and sometimes not.

Access to Counsel

Two questions were asked in the interview of the decision makers concerning access to counsel, “Are juvenile justice decisions affected by the youth’s access to certain resources, such as retained counsel?” and “Do whites get less severe sentences and more favorable plea bargains because they are able to retain private counsel?” Answers to these questions were about the same. The majority believed that counsel was not important and private counsel does not provide for better treatment for whites than blacks.

Yes blacks have a greater tendency to not be able to get their own counsel, but I don’t think that affects the outcome because the public defenders we have probably deal with more of those cases and have a better perception of the juvenile system.

There were a few officers who felt that the type of counsel did impact the case outcome.

They, however, did not believe differences were evident for blacks in contrast to whites.

Absolutely, and it isn’t necessarily because they defer to an affluent child’s socially prominent position but an affluent family could afford to put a kid into an expensive and elaborate treatment program that didn’t necessarily require the involvement of the

court whereas a person without those financial resources would not be able to show the court their ability to respond and therefore, would require the court's attention.

The Disproportionate Overrepresentation of Minorities

There appears to be a wide range of opinions regarding what factors may account for the disproportionate overrepresentation of minorities in secure facilities. The opinions are: not seeing it as an issue, blame the minorities themselves, unstable family environment and deficiencies in the juvenile justice system.

Well, I am sure that you are going to be surprised by the fact that I really don't have an opinion on that. I don't see that as an issue.

Yeah, I think there is probably race bias in the juvenile justice system and if anything, I think that the race bias at this point and time is probably pro—black than it is against black. I think that people are probably more sensitive to being called prejudiced and being called racist and that if we are doing anything we are probably being more lenient and giving more chances to blacks than we are to whites and I think that goes along with the whole minority hiring as well, management has to fill quotas and even if you are just as well as qualified you probably won't get it instead of the black. So, I think that there is reverse prejudice kinds of issues going on, sometimes. I believe that they are there, but I don't believe that they are significant or blown out of proportion but I believe that they are there and I believe that needs to be recognized. I believe that there are probably instances where blacks have encountered prejudice as well. I can only assume that is probably true. But, I don't think it is something that we intentionally do here but if you want to talk about the system overall, I think that in some cases it is true.

I don't know, that is something that we have talked about because that certainly holds true for BlackHawk county. The numbers of minorities on probation and secure institutions and on placements in general is far too high of a percentage of the minority population in this community. I have no scientific answer but it could be labeled racist and it isn't intended to be but one of the things that seems to be very common to the black youth that we see on probation is broken families and most of them are being raised in matriarchal families where it is either a mom or an aunt of grandma or some combination, so I certainly think that plays a part in it. Part of it, in my mind and this is very sensitive, is the role of self—victimization. The system is against me because I am black. To some degree, I think it is true, to some degree I do not buy it because I think that it becomes an excuse. I have seen it when it has been handled exactly the same for the white kid and the black kid, yet the black kid will scream. That is a very fine line to walk because certainly there is cause to believe that racism is alive and well, but sometimes it is almost like they are looking for it and the only reason something is racist is because there has been a bump in the road for them. It is going to be a very difficult process for both black and white to resolve because white or black, we all have our ups and downs and I think that is one thing that the black population itself is going to have to wrestle with and resolve.

I think that probably more of them are committing crimes. . . That isn't to say that society is color blind. I know it isn't and there might be some people that would be harder on a black but from personal experience, I would say that if there are more blacks in prison that either more blacks committed a crime and more got caught and for whatever reasons, the real question is why are more of them committing crimes.

Well, I think that it goes back to the fact that there is a lot of disintegration in the family unit and I don't know the statistics but I guess I think that there are a higher percentage of babies being born out of wedlock in minority populations. And when you see a family like this, you are looking at economics

and deprivation financially and then you are looking at where are going to live and how are they going to live and there is probably a lack of education and I think that those factors together are setting it up so that there probably are a disproportionate number of minorities.

First of all, ...there is tons and tons of bias out in the community and society that leads the African Americans to come into these types of systems...In the juvenile system, when you place a white child or a black child you are placing them in a group home or a residential facility that has white staff and has a concept of molding these kids into a white family setting, back into a white community. These black kids aren't going to do well in that type of setting. You talked about the sensitivity of the multicultural training. These people in these white residential homes or white group homes aren't going through that type of training but yet, they are expected to deal with these white youths and black youths that are being placed there. Well, when you complete a group home you go home and when you don't complete a group home you get locked up. If you are black and you are in these group homes and you aren't completing them, you are going to get locked up, you are going to get placed in detention or you are going to go the state training school and that has tons to do with the numbers being so out of whack...

...I think that you have to adapt some of your services to the population that you are serving and I do not believe that some of the traditional things we do probation wise, I don't think that some of our black youth can identify with that. They don't see it as important.

...I think where the race difference comes in, and it is probably more of an economic difference than it is race, to get out of security detention you need to have either the economics to have a phone or one or two parents who will stand up in court and say that they are going to control and supervise this kid 24 hours a day and I will report any violations and that is where the black kids come up short. They either come in and they can't get out because they have a single

parent and they don't have a phone or they have a single parent and the mom can't say that she going to be able to watch him for 24 hours and that she will report if he violates because she is going to have to be at work. So, what you have, is a lot of black kids in detention because they can't get out using the same exit devices that the middle class white kids can or even the poor white kids because they at least usually have a phone and poor black kids usually don't.

Overall, a large majority of the decision makers do not feel that the race of a delinquent influences the likelihood of referral (Tables 10, 11). A split, however, exists as to whether black youth are treated differently than white youth. Only a small minority of the decision makers believed race differences exist at any of the specific stages in the proceedings.

Race Findings Specific to Study

Decision makers were asked for their input or feelings concerning the findings from the first phase of the research. That phase involved the recording of information from case files on case processing and case outcomes for black youth and white youth in Black Hawk County.

Blacks/#Current Charges Referred to Petition

The first race finding was evident at the stage of intake, where an interaction existed between being black and the number of current charges and the likelihood of receiving a recommendation to the stage of petition (controlling for other legal and extralegal factors). Blacks with more current charges were more likely than whites with more current charges to be

referred on to petition. The responses to this finding varied. Some questioned the accuracy of the findings, while others suggested that an admission of guilt and the youths' overall functioning in the community and in the system may account for the race difference in outcomes. For example, youth and their family may not show for their appointments. The following quotes highlight these perceptions.

I don't know why that would happen.

I would like to see the statistics and all of the variables that was considered. I would have to look at it because on an individual basis I can't see that happening. I can't see that the intake officer would look at the kid and say that if you are black you are going to be more trouble for us. Because what we base our decisions on are certain guidelines and we all work within them.

...I wouldn't think that it would be a legitimate decision to go further into the court unless the child just came in and just adamantly denied the offenses. Then, there would be a more severe reaction by the court.

One thing that might contribute to that is, you have a white kid and black kid with three burglaries, you place them both into one of these white group homes or white residential treatment facilities. The white kid might do a little better than the black kid because of how the situation is set up so the white kid goes home. The black kid doesn't do well in the facility and has to move on in the system and the next place is usually being held in detention until you get to the state training school.. There could be other things, if you have a kid come in with two offenses we might give an informal adjustment agreement at intake, however, you need to have some level of trust for the system in order to just admit to the charges. Black families don't trust the system and then they have to go to court, so then they are further into the system than the white kid who just agreed with things.

I think there are a number of things that one could consider as contributing factors. The kid admitting the offense or not, the kid's cooperativeness, the family's cooperativeness.

Q. So, you think that varies on a black and white basis?

A. Yeah. I would have to say that I have a number of black kids on my case load that come in on offenses that shouldn't be a big deal but they end up being a really big deal because the kids don't come in for appointments, they don't do their community service, they don't go to school, they don't do that and when you don't have the family or their support.. .and because of the probation violations, not really the crime, because they don't do what is expected of them, they end up going away. A number of blacks tend to not be real time oriented, whites tend to be more so. Blacks may come in for their appointment a day late or a week late and it is no big deal.

They might receive less family pressure to get this thing cleared up. I think that a white family probably wants to keep their kid out of the court system. I think that is a big value to them and they will do stuff to keep the kid out whereas I don't think that a black family gives it that much weight. If it is a single parent black family and this is the fourth kid, what is it going to affect. So, again, it sounds racist but the economics and the social outlook of the family, I think it has a lot to do with whether or not the kid is going to admit. If my . . . year old comes in here after committing a crime and denies it and I know that he did it we are going to go and have a little chat and then he is going to come back in here and then he is going to admit it. I don't know if I would feel that way if I was a black male and didn't trust the system anyway and I thought my kid was getting tagged by the police and I tended to believe him over the rest of the world then I probably wouldn't even if I knew that he did it.. .So, I think that who brings the kid in and what their receptiveness is and their perception of the system has a lot to do with it and whether or not the kid admits has a lot to do with whether or not they will give an informal.

Blacks/Dropout Placement

The second race finding was at the stage of judicial disposition. Black youth who dropped out of school were more likely to be placed than white youth who dropped out of school. Again, this finding disappeared when those waived to adult court were excluded from the analyses. Explanations for this finding, however, were provided. The two more prominent explanations were the availability of community alternatives for blacks and cooperation, though some indicated that the quality of the home life could also be a factor.

I would say that it is based on what they have available in their home. A child from a two parent household has a much greater chance of staying home.

You know, mostly I would say that would not be true but then I am not sure what our stats would show for that.

Q. Do you think that there is a lack of community-based treatment for blacks?

A. I think there has been, yes. I think that has made it sort of difficult at times to ensure that the services are out there for the kids.

I wonder if what comes into play then is more community based things being available for white families than for the black families. If there are some of those opportunities available for the black families they might once again be more resistant to do that so we have to place them, they force our hand if they aren't going to take advantage of what is going on here in the community.

... I would speculate that the blacks probably have been more uncooperative and it has probably been well documented their lack of cooperation and adhering to the expectations. My experience has been that blacks on the whole will typically be more noncooperative.

Well, if you look in this office, we only have two black officers, so we are still dealing with the black/white issue when it comes to making decisions and I think that has a lot to do with it. It goes back again to the attitudes. In most cases whites will tolerate more from another white than they will black and that is the truth. I have seen it happen. They are more afraid of the blacks than they are the whites. And I have seen some of the same kinds of threats made to the whites and a black would come along and make the same kind of threat and it gets blown out of proportion.

I heard a fellow who sits on the advisory committee for this, Lement, a black guy who worked in our business for many years, says that family centered type services had a white Anglo-Saxon orientation to them because the bulk of the population was white Anglo-Saxon and the service providers were white Anglo-Saxon and because of these factors black families that came into the system who were to take advantage of the service alternatives out there were resistant to them. So, you can see the self perpetuating system there. Therefore, family therapy will likely be distrusted and discarded by black clients to whom it is offered and therefore, those kids eventually find their way to hard treatment sooner. I bought it 100 percent...

Females Placement

The research from the first phase of the study also yielded a gender effect. Females were more likely than males to receive a disposition of a change of placement, controlling for all relevant legal and extralegal factors. The explanations for this occurrence centered on the perceived differences between female and male delinquents and the youths' parents.

I think that has to do with the number of different things that they have to get into before they get here. A girl who is a 15 year old child in need of assistance, who refuses to come home and stays out all night long, who is into partying and does all kinds

of things doesn't get arrested she gets sent someplace else. I think it has to do with the way the community sees lady as opposed to men. Women are often looked at as the soft sex and they may be, I don't know.

Girls have more issues that need to be dealt with that can't be dealt with in the community. I also think that parents tend to give up on girls faster than boys. Boys are expected to have some trouble and so parents always tend to have a little more tolerance for delinquent behavior in boys.

I found that very interesting. We have such a low number of females and I think maybe the police are hesitant to refer them over to our agency. By the time they get here, or the ones they do refer are the hard core females. I don't mean ruthless killers but more advanced delinquents. One's that are going to need the more restrictive treatment. The ones that are going to need placement. They don't just refer females that need basic treatment. So I think that our penalties seem harsh because we are getting the ones that deserve that type of treatment as opposed to we just aren't seeing a lot that just need simple intervention. They are just being handled at home or the school is just handling it.

I think that sometimes, in my experience, it is more frequent for girls to ask to be put somewhere else. They don't want to stay at home. If you have a kid who is telling you that if you put them back at home they aren't going to stay, then we are going to place that kid and it more frequently happens with girls than it does with boys.

That might be some that the parents know the females are more independent and she won't fight it that hard as well as the parents saying that they can't control her and they don't know what to do.

We get so few females in here. That is kind of back to the point that when you get to the point to where you have to file on a girl, you have already exhausted all of the other services and therefore, they end up in placement a lot faster. Part of that is the out of control behavior and parents seem to wear out faster and want us to do something so

that she gets help and she doesn't get hurt. So, there is really a push from the parents. My only explanation for that would be that the parents come in requesting them to be placed out of the home because they can no longer control them and that goes back to that double standard that we talked about before. I would say about 60-70 percent of the girls who are placed out of the home, the families come in and say that they want them of the home.

Decision makers were also asked three additional questions in the interview. The first question was, "Why does Black Hawk county refer so many more youth onto petition than the other three counties included in the analyses?" The second question was concerned with their overall feelings of the study in particular, phase one of the research. Suggestions for changing the problem of the overrepresentation of minority youth in secure facilities was the third question. The responses to the first two questions are presented in this section. The impressions from the answers to the third question are provided in the next section of the chapter.

Large Number of Youth Referred to Court

Most of the responses focused on the emphasis of early intervention and holding youth accountable for the actions.

I think we are a pretty aggressive county in terms of reacting. I think there is a feel that you attempt to provide initial services informally and then if they come back into the system that is considered that they have ongoing problems and part of the way to deal with an ongoing problem is to initiate the court involvement. We are just more aggressive in our programming and more aggressive as far as services and intervention.

I think that traditionally Black Hawk county has had a service intensive mind set in dealing with juvenile offenders and I think that it goes to history for explanation that the presiding juvenile judge for many years here was a guy named Forest Eastman who is a past president of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, an organization of great notoriety in the nation and Eastman raised the juvenile court system over 15 year period of time that ended 7 or 8 years ago. . .intervene early and provide as much and as good of treatment as possible.

I don't know. It is sad for me to hear that. I don't know, I just feel like people are tired in this office. When we didn't have a detention center, we didn't have as many kids going to court, that might be some explanation. A lot of it might be the philosophy of the court too. They want that kid back if he or she violates again where other courts might say, you don't have to necessarily bring them back, especially if it is a misdemeanor. You would think that we wouldn't have as many go to court because we have all of these other diversion programs. But, I had a criminology professor up at college that had said that diversion programs are nets to get more children into the system, because then you have more services available and if you didn't have them then you just wouldn't have the resources to keep the kid or to get the kid into the system. So, by having all of these diversion things you can have all of these nets to gather more kids and they are all on the outside but then if they don't meet that standard then you draw in more, where before the kid would have been advised, warned, and released...

Q. Would you advocate more or less in terms of these diversion options?

A. Well, I am beginning to feel like I would advocate for less, because it is beginning to feel to me that it is being misused. It is like any bureaucracy and it becomes self—supporting and you just keep building on it. I just don't have a lot of faith in it's use. I think the idea is great but then it kind of becomes corrupt.

Feelings About the Study Overall

Most of the personnel indicated either that they felt the findings represented the reality in the juvenile justice system or they never really answered the question. There were some, however, who expressed some concerns. Some felt that the study did not accurately capture the quality of the family supervision and discipline as well as other factors in the youths life, such as school problems. Others stated that it should have been made more clear in the report that one explanation for black youth to be referred on at intake could be the unwillingness to admit guilt as required by state law. Still, others believed some of the explanations for the findings were not well stated and “reflected, I thought, a little bit of bias, a little bit of an inclination to define a problem that wasn’t necessarily there.”

Suggestions for Change

The last component of the interview involved asking the decision makers what they believed was needed to change the disproportionate overrepresentation of minority youth in secure facilities. Here, the responses ranged from cultural awareness to more programs to the hiring of more black personnel. Some officers also felt that it was not their responsibility. The following quotes highlight some of these diverse opinions.

...We need more programs that provide for skill development. . . I also think there needs to be more pride for our minority population, more programs where they feel a sense of accomplishment. That is very much a societal kind of thing that we have very little control over but I think that if you have parents that feel they are making a contribution to society, if they feel that they have a worth-

while job and they are contributing, I think that is going to carry over into the values that instills in the youth. So, some of the programs are not just for families of the kids in trouble I think some of the programs really need to branch out as a preventive kind of thing ideally so that there skills as parents are improved and what they see is that the opportunities for themselves are better so that helps in terms of raising their own families then.

We need to provide more positive role models

It is people's attitudes. You have to start with their attitudes, their thinking and their reasoning. That is the only thing that is going to change it. Until we decide within ourselves that we are all the same people, no black, white, Jew, whatever. That is the only thing that is going to change it...

Culturally specific treatment when the lack of it is a liability, but it isn't always. Many treatment modalities don't need to be culturally specific, we do restitution and community service work to hold kids accountable and race doesn't matter there. If it is a fact that we fail any segment of our population because we are not culturally sensitive to their needs and certain treatment modalities, then we need to work on that so that everybody has the same treatment opportunity before the bad things happen to them.

Q. Describe the sorts of programs you think might be effective in dealing with the needs of black youth?

A. Good decision making skills, finding positive alternatives to the negative behavior that are acceptable to the child.. There are opportunities out there that some kids are not plugged into for one thing, like Big Brothers and Big Sisters and the Boys and the Girls Club. . .We also have a program called Second Chance.

I think these studies are real interesting and I may not always like what I hear but I truly don't think we know sometimes what we are doing until you get more of a collective view point because we don't do that ourselves. We are too much into the business, and I think it is really valuable that someone come in and

make us think a little bit about what we are doing. I think we need to be sensitive about how we treat minorities and females, because I think the studies will show that there are those differences and what we think we can rationalize. But, when you get down to it we can't.

Short of providing phones or fathers, I am not sure that it is the courts business to cure all of the social handicaps of the country or the community. I don't think that it is the court's decision that is keeping the disproportionate number out. I think it is stuff that is out there like the economics and the social development of the family. I don't think it is an intentional thing. I am not trying to blame it on single parent families. . . I think that the main thing is that the black kids don't have the things that get the white kids out.

Q. Who, in the juvenile justice system, is most likely to be biased?

A. Low income blacks.

Q. Have you witnessed or been aware of race or ethnic bias influencing official decisions and, if so, at what stages in the processing is race bias most likely to play a role in decision making?

A. Like I said, if I would have to say race bias, I would almost be more inclined to say that sometimes we are more likely to give a black a break, especially if the NAACP is called here.

Q. Does that happen very often?

A. On occasion the NAACP will call and feel that we have unduly sanctioned a person.

Q. We're finally at the end and we wanted to get your input on what you think the courts role is in reducing the disproportionate representation of people of color in the juvenile justice system and in secure facilities?

A. Probably the thing that concerns me and the thing that alarms me the most and I can become quite upset on this particular issue when you read in the paper that there are more blacks in jail and we have to get the black population down and this and that. I get real concerned and real alarmed if we are going to say that we aren't going to hold you accountable because we have met our quota of blacks today. That is as prejudicial as can

be. If someone has done wrong and if the system is to correct their behavior and protect the public then you better damn well do it and I don't care what color you are. I don't know if it is the court's responsibility to do that. I think it is the family's, their responsibility to go back to family values and to teach them to their families and for society to teach better values.

Summary

In Black Hawk county, juvenile court personnel appear to operate under a philosophy characterized by an orientation that has a blend of rehabilitation and adherence to the rights of the youth and society. This orientation is highlighted by the emphasis placed on intervention and holding youth accountable for their actions. A history of such practices, a perceived breakdown in family supervision and discipline, and the growing number of single-parent homes are believed to justify this philosophy. Younger youth and more multiproblematic youth are also seen as a cause for intervention. In addition, there is a belief among juvenile court decision makers that society and in particular, state government requires them to provide help but also hold youth accountable for their behavior. Overall, they believe they are expected to do much more with less resources. There is a feeling that juvenile court decision makers are held much more accountable for their decisions than ever before.

The general perception is that the frequency and type of crime, for the most part, is not race—specific. Some decision makers perceived black families to be more dysfunctional than white families. The underlying causes for this perceived occurrence were believed to be economics and an increase in

teenage pregnancy among black females. Black youth and black families were also believed to be more distrustful of the system than white youth and white families. Some decision makers felt that this may lead to greater uncooperativeness among blacks. Most decision makers, however, did not believe that black youth were less likely to admit to the offense in contrast to white youth. Failure to appear for meetings and agree to intake/court stipulations were seen as primary factors that separate blacks from whites.

Decision makers were split on whether the police respond differently to black youth than white youth. There was also a wide range of opinions concerning what may account for the disproportionate overrepresentation of minorities in secure facilities. Some did not see it as an issue, some blamed the minorities themselves, while others pointed to an unstable family environment and deficiencies in the juvenile justice system itself.

There were a variety of opinions concerning the findings from Phase One of the study that black youth with more current charges at intake were more likely than other youth to be referred on to petition. Some questioned the accuracy of the finding. Others suggested that an admission of guilt, youth and family cooperation, and overall functioning in the community and within the family may account for the race differences. Explanations for the finding that black youth who had dropped out of school were more likely to receive a change of placement at judicial disposition than white youth and other black youth

also varied. The two more prominent explanations were the availability of community alternatives for blacks and cooperation on the part of the black youth and family. The quality of the home environment was also seen as a possible factor that may account for the race effect.

The last significant finding was that females more so than males were likely to receive at judicial disposition a change of placement. The explanation for this occurrence focused on the perceived difference between male and female delinquency and the desires of the youth's parents.

Suggestions for addressing the issue of disproportionate overrepresentation of minorities in secure facilities ranged from a need for cultural sensitivity and awareness programs to more innovative programs within probation services to the hiring of more minority personnel. A small number of the decision makers felt it was not their responsibility, rather the focus should be on the families themselves.

Table 1. Distributions of Decisjon Makers' Demographics and Mean Time on Job, Black Hawk County.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
Gender	Male	10	59
	Female	7	41
Race	White	15	88
	Black	2	12
Age		x= 39 std.dev.= 9.26 range= 24-56	
Years on job		x= 12.23 std.dev.= 7.24 range= 1-23	

Table 2. Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Role of the Court, Black Hawk County.

Variable Name	Definition
IMDETRNC	Important for system to achieve deterrence?
IMSOCORD	Important for system to maintain social order?
IMPUNMNT	Important for system to achieve punishment?
IMPRTSOC	Important for system to protect society?
IMPREHAB	Important for system to achieve rehabilitation?
JLENTRET	Juveniles treated too leniently by court?
DELPTFEL	Delinquents should be prosecuted to full extent of law?
ADULTPUN	Juveniles commit violent crimes should be treated like adults?
DELDELT	Delinquents must be dealt with strictly?
ACNTRCMS	Offenders should be held accountable for crimes?
PREDEL	To prevent delinquency identify and work with predelinquents?
MININTVN	Juveniles do better with minimal intervention?
INTRVNTN	Every juvenile should receive some kind of intervention?

Table 3. Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Role of the Court, Black Hawk County.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
IMDETRNC	Very important	9	53
	Pretty important	6	35
	Somewhat important	1	6
	Not too important	1	6
	Not important at all	-	--
IMSOCORD	Very important	8	47
	Pretty important	5	29
	Somewhat important	2	12
	Not too important	1	6
	Not important at all	1	6
IMPUNMNT	Very important	2	12
	Pretty important	3	18
	Somewhat important	8	47
	Not too important	3	17
	Not important at all	1	6
IMPRTSOC	Very important	14	82
	Pretty important	2	12
	Somewhat important	--	--
	Not too important	1	6
	Not important at all	--	--

Table 3--continued.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
IMPREHAB	Very important	14	82
	Pretty important	2	12
	Somewhat important	--	--
	Not too important	1	6
	Not important at all	--	--
JLENTRET	Strongly agree	--	--
	Agree	2	12
	Neither agree or disagree	5	29
	Disagree	7	41
	Strongly disagree	3	18
DELPTFEL	Strongly agree	2	12
	Agree	5	29
	Neither agree or disagree	7	41
	Disagree	3	18
	Strongly disagree	--	--
ADULTPUN	Strongly agree	--	--
	Agree	--	--
	Neither agree or disagree	2	12
	Disagree	11	65
	Strongly disagree	4	23

Table 3--continued.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
DELDEL	Strongly agree	4	23
	Agree	9	53
	Neither agree or disagree	3	18
	Disagree	1	6
	Strongly disagree	--	--
ACNTRMS	Strongly agree	15	88
	Agree	2	12
	Neither agree or disagree	--	--
	Disagree	--	--
	Strongly disagree	--	--
PREDEL	Strongly agree	3	17
	Agree	11	65
	Neither agree or disagree	1	6
	Disagree	2	12
	Strongly disagree	--	--
MININTVN	Strongly agree	--	--
	Agree	--	--
	Neither agree or disagree	3	18
	Disagree	10	59
	Strongly disagree	4	23
INTRVNTN	Strongly agree	3	18
	Agree	7	41
	Neither agree or disagree	3	18
	Disagree	4	23
	Strongly agree	--	--

Table 4. Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Causes of Delinquency, Black Hawk County.

Variable Name	Definition
IMPLSCON	Inability to control impulses causes delinquency?
PERCHMAD	Choosing to commit delinquent acts causes delinquency?
SCHLPERF	Negative school performance causes delinquency?
PSINTYTH	Lacking positive ways to interact with youth caused delinquency?
NEGPEERS	Negative, peer pressure causes delinquency?
SUBABUYT	Substance abuse by youth causes delinquency?
SOCOFYT	Failure to socialize youth causes delinquency?
LKPARSUP	Lacking parental supervision causes delinquency?
LKDISPAR	Lack of discipline by parents causes delinquency?
VIOLRES	Violence as way to resolve differences causes delinquency?
MEDIA	Violent destructive media images causes delinquency?
POVERTY	Being poor causes delinquency?
ECOSTRCT	Economic structure causes delinquency?
JOBOPTNY	Little job opportunity causes delinquency?
PSYCHPR	Emotional or psychological problems causes delinquency?
EVCOMCRM	Everyone commits crimes some just get caught?
DISINEQL	Discrimination and inequality cause delinquency?

Table 5. Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Causes of Delinquency, Black Hawk County.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
IMPLSCON	Very important	4	24
	Pretty important	9	53
	Somewhat important	4	23
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--
PERCHMAD	Very important	7	41
	Pretty important	7	41
	Somewhat important	3	18
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--
SCHLPERF	Very important	5	29
	Pretty important	6	35
	Somewhat important	3	18
	Not too important	3	18
	Not important at all	--	--
PSINTYTH	Very important	5	29
	Pretty important	8	47
	Somewhat important	3	18
	Not too important	1	6
	Not important at all	--	--

Table 5--continued.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
NEGPEERS	Very important	3	18
	Pretty important	9	53
	Somewhat important	5	29
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--
SUBABUYT	Very important	9	53
	Pretty important	6	35
	Somewhat important	2	12
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--
SOCOFYT	Very important	5	29
	Pretty important	8	47
	Somewhat important	4	24
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--
LKPARSUP	Very important	11	65
	Pretty important	5	29
	Somewhat important	1	6
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--

Table 5--continued.

<u>Variable Name</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
LKDISPAR	Very important	9	53
	Pretty important	7	41
	Somewhat important	1	6
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--
VIOLRES	Very important	3	17
	Pretty important	10	59
	Somewhat important	2	12
	Not too important	2	12
	Not important at all	--	--
MEDIA	Very important	3	18
	Pretty important	3	18
	Somewhat important	5	29
	Not too important	6	35
	Not important at all	--	--
POVERTY	Very important	1	6
	Pretty important	1	6
	Somewhat important	10	59
	Not too important	4	23
	Not important at all	1	6

Table 5--continued.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
ECOSTRCT	Very important	2	12
	Pretty important	5	29
	Somewhat important	7	41
	Not too important	3	18
	Not important at all	--	--
JOBOPTRY	Very important	3	18
	Pretty important	7	41
	Somewhat important	5	29
	Not too important	2	12
	Not important at all	--	--
PSYCHPR	Very important	1	6
	Pretty important	12	71
	Somewhat important	4	23
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--
EVCOMCRM	Strongly agree	1	6
	Agree	8	47
	Neither agree or disagree	--	--
	Disagree	6	35
	Strongly disagree	2	12
DISINEQL	Very important	1	6
	Pretty important	8	47
	Somewhat important	7	41
	Not too important	1	46
	Not important at all	--	--

Table 6. Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Race Differences in General, Black Hawk County.

Variable Name	Definition
RACRIMES	Black and white juveniles commit different type of crimes?
MINMOCRM	Ethnic and racial minorities commit more crimes?
BFAMDIST	Are black families more distrustful of system?
BYTGUILT	Are black youth less likely to acknowledge guilt?
BLYATTUD	Do black youth have poorer attitude?
JUVATUDE	How important is juveniles attitude in decision making?
PARATUDE	How important is parents attitude in decision making?

Table 7. Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Race Difference in General, Black Hawk County.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
RACRIMES	Strongly agree	--	--
	Agree	1	6
	Neither agree or disagree	3	18
	Disagree	6	35
	Strongly disagree	7	41
MINMOCRM	Strongly agree	--	--
	Agree	4	24
	Neither agree or disagree	3	18
	Disagree	6	35
	Strongly disagree	4	23
BFAMDIST	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	8	47
	Sometimes	7	41
	Almost never	1	6
	Never	1	6
BYTGUILT	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	6	35
	Almost never	7	41
	Never	4	24

Table 7--continued.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
BLYATTUD	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	7	41
	Almost never	7	41
	Never	3	18
JUVATUDE	Very important	2	12
	Pretty important	9	53
	Somewhat important	6	35
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--
PARATUDE	Very important	2	12
	Pretty important	9	53
	Somewhat important	5	29
	Not too important	1	6
	Not important at all	--	--

Table 8. Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of Police, Black Hawk County.

Variable Name	Definition
WHYTLENT	White youth picked up less by police than black youth?
COPTRBLK	Do police treat black youth differently than white youth?

Table 9. Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of Police, Black Hawk County.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
WHYTLENT	Strongly agree	1	6
	Agree	3	18
	Neither agree or disagree	4	23
	Disagree	8	47
	Strongly disagree	1	6
COPTRBLK	Always	-	--
	Most of the time	2	12
	Sometimes	8	47
	Almost never	6	35
	Never	1	6

Table 10. Definition of Variable Representing Decision Makers' View of Race Differences in Processing in General, Black Hawk County.

Variable Name	Definition
BLKTRIDI	Black youth treated differently than white youth in system?
REFEYRAC	Does race of youth play role in whether youth is referred?
RACDIFDT	Are there race differences in processing at detention stage?
RDINTAKE	Are there race differences in processing at intake stage?
RDPETITN	Are there race differences in processing at petition stage?
RDWAIVER	Are there race differences in processing at waiver?
RDINLAPR	Are there race differences in processing at initial appearance?
RDADJUD	Are there race differences in processing at adjudication?
RDDISPOS	Are there race differences in processing at disposition?

Table 11. Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of Race Differences in Processing in General, Black Hawk County.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
BLKTRIDI	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	3	18
	Sometimes	5	29
	Almost never	8	47
	Never	1	6
REFBYRAC	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	1	6
	Sometimes	3	18
	Almost never	7	41
	Never	6	35
RACDIFDT	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	5	29
	Almost never	10	59
	Never	2	12
RDINTAKE	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	3	18
	Almost never	7	41
	Never	7	41

Table 11--continued.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
RDPETITN	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	2	12
	Almost never	8	47
	Never	7	41
RDWAIVER	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	3	18
	Almost never	9	53
	Never	5	29
RDINLAPR	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	3	18
	Almost never	9	53
	Never	5	29
RDADJUD	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	4	24
	Almost never	7	41
	Never	6	35
RDDISPOS	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	6	35
	Almost never	7	41
	Never	4	24

Chapter Four

YOUTH BLACK HAWK COUNTY

Ninety-three youth from Black Hawk County participated in the self-report study. Of these, 60 were white and 33 were black. There were also 40 interviews conducted. Twenty of these interviews were black and 20 were white. Questions were asked concerning youth views on discrimination in society in general, police, probation officers, school, and who they blame for their current situation. The responses to the closed ended questions are listed in the tables at the end of the chapter.

Both blacks and whites believe discrimination is presently a problem but are optimistic about improving conditions in the future. On the whole, both races responded negatively toward issues on the treatment prescribed by the police toward minorities. On the other hand, all youth responded rather positively toward their probation officers. There seemed to be some indications of racial bias in the educational system. Finally, the majority of the youth placed the blame for their current situation on themselves.

General Perceptions

Discrimination

The majority of both blacks and whites believed racial discrimination is getting worse. Support for this view is found in Tables 1 and 2, and from a reading of the transcribed interviews.

Several black youth felt that white people were holding them back. As one black male stated, “CUZ it’s a white man’s world. . . We was slaves for too long, and there ain’t nothing really changed. Whenever a white person wanna get something that a black man wanna get and got the same education as a black man, the white man gonna get it.” Another black youth stated, “The white people really don’t want the black people to have nothing, like when you get a bar, then they try to say all this stuff going on, and they close you down. The white people don’t want the black people to move up in society.”

A white female believed that society perpetuates discrimination from one generation to the next, “A long time ago black people were nothing, if they did something wrong, white people could beat them up, and nothing could happen to them. And their parents go around telling their kids that black people aren’t any good and black people tell their kids that, so they just make it worse.” Another white youth indicated that racial discrimination persisted because society still judges people on the color of their skin. “Because nowadays it’s all about that. It’s people in the gangs and how people see one another because of their skin color.” A white male put the blame on the blacks themselves, “If they change their attitude they will probably get a lot more chances to do a lot of things and they would have a lot more friends.”

A small number of the youth were optimistic about racial discrimination. For example, a black male stated, “I was

brought up if you strive for what you want you're going to get it sooner or later.”

Opportunities

The youth were asked whether they felt blacks had as equal job opportunities as whites (Tables 1, 2). Eighty—three percent of whites responded that a black can get as good a job as a white. Black youth did not respond as strongly, only 63 percent indicated equal job opportunities were available for all.

When the youth were asked whether blacks have equal opportunities in the interviews, both races felt that blacks did not have as equal opportunities as those available to whites. This was conveyed through the topic of job competition: more blacks believed that a white would be hired first. A black female states, “Sometimes it seems like if you go for a job interview it seems like they pick the white person more than they pick the black person.” Another black felt that a white person would be hired first because, “...there's mostly white people running businesses nowadays.” Another indicated that not only would a white get hired first but, “. . .they would get paid lower and they (blacks) would have to do more work and get paid less.”

Whites held similar views to that of the blacks. One white youth felt that a white would get hired over a black because... “some of them white bosses are prejudiced and they'd rather have white people working for them.” Another white male felt that businesses are prejudice. “There's whole businesses that won't hire blacks or don't pay them as good as a white.”

Some individuals did believe that blacks had as equal opportunities as whites. A black female held a positive outlook on opportunities stating that anyone can achieve, “If they put their minds to it and go to college like all the rest of the people, they ain’t gonna have no problem. They can get a job.” The youth were also asked whether the opportunities for blacks would improve or worsen in the future. Responses from the self-reports indicate that 86 percent of whites believe that opportunities for blacks will improve or stay the same, while 66 percent of blacks responded in a similar way.

Even though some of the youth held a pessimistic outlook, the majority of both blacks and whites were positive about future job opportunities. This view is highlighted by a black male who indicates that the current situation will, “Improve because now blacks started getting along with white people.” A black female felt, “It should improve...because more blacks are trying to get ahead now, trying to grow up and get a better education.”

The current situation has improved according to a white male’s outlook, “... because nowadays people are getting it out of their systems, about discrimination and racial tension.” Another white male believed that black people have improved their social positions and “I think it’s going to improve.. .“

A smaller number of youth from both races did feel that the future situation for blacks was rather bleak. A black youth felt that it was due to a lack of goals. “I think they will get worse. All of my homies, they don’t want to work hard. They don’t have goals that they set.” A black male also suggests that

the future for blacks was hindered due to drug usage by blacks. “There’s too many drugs in the world, too many drugs coming over. The more drugs coming over the more black people that get into them.” Another black believed that the situation... “might get worse, cuz, I can’t say this for everybody, but, they might think that all blacks steal and sell drugs and fight and lie.” A white male blames the current economic situation for the unequal opportunities. “Get worse cause that’s just the way the economy is going right now.”

Trust

The final topic addressed in the section on general views was that of trust between blacks and whites. The self—report responses indicated that the youth trust some or most people, regardless of race. Ninety-three percent of white people and 85 percent of black people felt that they could trust some or most people.

The interviews reflected these same sentiments. This is stated clearly by a black male who believes he can trust... “some, not all. I can trust some people but not all people whether they are white or black. Some people when you tell them something they go and tell somebody else.”

A white male felt he had no problems with anyone. “Yeah. I get along with black people fine. I get along with white people, too. I get along with everybody.” Another white youth believed that trust can be established depending on the individual. “Yeah, some you can trust, and some you can’t”.

In summary both races felt that racial discrimination was getting worse and that blacks lacked the opportunities that are generally available to whites. Most often youths believed that a white would get hired before a black. In light of these views, it is surprising that the majority of the black youth and white youth have positive outlooks about their future. Both groups also felt that they could trust some people regardless of their race.

View of Police

Treatment

Tables 3 and 4 contain the results from the self—reports. Eighty percent of whites felt they were treated fairly sometimes/most of the time by the police, while 69 percent of the blacks responded this way. The interviews also reflect the same results indicating that a majority of youths from both races in Black Hawk County believe that on an individual level police are fair.

A black male felt this way, “Yeah, cause you know it wasn’t a big thing about it, like they didn’t try and embarrass or none of that. They just picked me up told me my charges and that was it.” Another black female admitted that she needed to be arrested to become aware of her actions. “Yeah. I think they should have arrested me because that’s making me think more better. That’s why I keep saying I wanna get myself out the system, where I should quit doing that.” A white male also felt that because he did something wrong, he should accept the

consequences. “Well, I did something wrong they’re going to have to do something.”

A small number of the youth believed they were treated unfairly. A black man felt he was treated unfairly due to his race because society tends to focus on the actions of black people. “Unfairly, because I figure it’s a black and white thing. It’s like wrote in black and white. But they figure it’s based mostly on a white situation, but they don’t like to listen to the black thing. That’s why if you read in the paper, it’s mostly blacks doing crimes instead of whites, it cuz they never go after them. Like that L.A. thing, when that dude got beat. That was unnecessary. They’re out for blacks.” Another black indicated she was treated unfairly because... “he pushed me down. He was really rude, he was getting smart and asking me questions over like I was lying to him. Calling me names and stuff.” A white youth perceived he was not treated fairly and suggested an individual officer may be bias. “...it depends on which one arrests you.”

Next, the youth were also asked if they believed the police treat all people alike. The responses from the self reports suggest that both races feel that the police do not treat everyone alike (84 percent of the whites and 78 percent of the blacks expressed that the police sometimes or never treat all people equally). The results from the interviews indicated that none of the youth felt the police treated all people alike. A number of reasons were provided for this belief.

A black male reasoned that blacks did not receive as many chances as whites. “They treat whites different than blacks because they give whites more chances than blacks.” Another black youth stated that the police treat people differently because of the color of their skin. “Nope, cuz of the color of your skin. I think they treat black people different than they treat the whites. I really can’t tell, cuz I ain’t ever seen them arrest a white person, but I just seen them arrest a lot of blacks.” Another black felt that the police do not always have cause for questioning blacks. “No they stop people just to be searching their car and to be messing with them. They pick on black males.”

A white male talked about Rodney King and how the police acted unfairly in this situation. “No, not when they beat up Rodney King, they should have just taken him right to jail.” Another white youth suggested that police base their decisions on race. “I feel they treat some people differently because...it depends on their race and stuff.” The view was also expressed by another white male, “No, cuz I guess they don’t treat young, black males as equal as they do white. . .“

Next, youth were asked if they felt the police pick on blacks. A majority of both races from the self reports indicate that the police pick on blacks. Seventy-seven percent of the whites and 72 percent of the blacks replied that they felt the police pick on blacks sometimes, most time or always. The interviews indicated some disagreement among black youth and white youth regarding this issue.

The majority of blacks felt that the police pick on blacks a lot, while the white youth felt that this occurs occasionally. The black youth who felt blacks were specifically picked on by the police had the following to say. "If they see blacks in the streets at 12:00 P.M., they say, 'Why ain't you at home,' or something like that. Even a grown up they will say that too."

Yeah, because when the police chief of Waterloo came to our school it was part of D.A.R.E. program and he was talkin' about drugs and stuff. He said he was really having a problem with black teenagers on the corner selling drugs, but he didn't say nothing about the white teenagers. And if you go over to the west side or out of town, you see white drug dealers on the corner and stuff, but he didn't say that. He just said specifically black teenagers.

I feel they watch blacks more than they watch whites. I know they're supposed to be doing their job, but I just think they're always watching blacks, every little step they make.

There were a few blacks who did not feel that the police picked on blacks. These individuals did not elaborate on their position.

The majority of white youth felt that maybe/sometimes, the police might pick on blacks. When asked this question, a white male responded, "Not always. Sometimes." Another white male believes that if blacks are picked on it is due to an individual racist officer. "Some, some of the more racial officers will pick on blacks."

Respect

The youths were also asked if they respect the police. According to the self reports, the results suggest a slight

variation in the responses. A majority of black youth have no respect for the police (57 percent), while white youth were split with some indicating respect for officers (33 percent) and some having no respect (30 percent). These differentials were also present in the interviews.

A small number of black youths indicated they respect the police. For example a black female believes respect should be mutual. “Yeah, as long as they give me respect, I’ll give them respect too.” Another black female said she respected the police and acknowledged that the police do provide a service to society. “I have respect for them. They give us protection and stuff.” Those white youth who said they respected the police did not elaborate on their responses.

Although some blacks had respect for the police a majority did not express this sentiment. A black male said he would not give respect to someone who did not respect him. “No, I don’t respect them, cuz I don’t feel that they respect us to a point, so I ain’t giving nobody respect if they don’t respect me.” A number of white males held similar views to those of the blacks.

Not really, cause it seems like I don’t like them, cause they get me in trouble, so I just stay away from them.

No. They don’t respect me. They think they’re like gods to us and they’re not. They’re regular people with badges on their chests.

No, I just don’t, they’ve always bugged me. I’ve just never liked them, they remind me of my probation officer and stuff.

The final question asked in this section was if the youth wanted to be a police officer. Neither race desired to be a police officer. From the self reports, 65 percent of whites said they almost never to never desired to be a cop. Eighty-five percent of the blacks responded in a similar manner. A higher percentage of whites desired to be an officer (35 percent), as opposed to only 15 percent of the black youth. The theme emerging from the interviews is that youth of both races do not desire to be a police officer. The sentiments of those individuals who did not want to be a police officer are presented below.

Black

No, because that's something where you'd put your life on the line. You could arrest somebody, and they didn't like it, so then they'd have to put a hit out for you.

No way, cuz the police are my enemies.

No because knowing me and how the blacks do things a lot, like if they see a cop they gonna run if they doing their selling or whatever. I probably couldn't pick up a live person. It'd be kind of hard seeing your own color going down.

No, because they (police) are unfair.

White

No, because I hate them (police), I wouldn't want to join them.

No, because most people don't like them.

Overall, the findings suggest that most youth felt they were treated fairly. The youths unanimously believed that the police do not treat all people alike, especially those of a race other

than white. Almost all of the black youth believed that the police picked on blacks while only some of the whites held a similar view. This may explain why more of the black youth stated they had less respect for the police than white youth. Finally, none of the youth desired to be a police officer. This appeared to be the result of their belief that officers are unfair.

View of Probation Officer

The youth were asked questions about their probation officers including treatment, respect, desire to become a probation officer, and perceived problems in the system. Responses to these closed—ended questions are provided in Tables 5 and 6.

Treatment

Youth were asked if they individually felt they were treated fairly by their probation officer. The results from the self—reports indicated that 96 percent of the whites and 84 percent of the blacks felt their probation officer treated them fairly. Results from the interviews suggested that some blacks felt they were treated fairly while others indicated they were treated unfairly. These results contrast the views of the whites. The white youth almost unanimously felt they were treated fairly.

A black female who felt she was treated fairly stated, “She (PO) did a lot. She worked with us.” None of the whites who felt they were treated fairly provided detailed information for their position.

One white male who felt he was treated unfairly said his probation officer was really not helping him. "After I got out, he threatened to set me in here, cause he was hoping I'd stay in here longer." Of the blacks who felt they were treated unfairly by their probation officer one black male said, " I thought training school was enough but they sent me here."

The youth were asked if they felt probation officers treat all people alike. Ninety-three percent of both the whites and the blacks replied sometimes or most of the time to always. These results contrast those from the interviews.

In the interviews, the black youth split: half feeling probation officer's treat everyone alike and the other half feeling probation officer's treated youth differently. Similar to the self reports, the interviews indicated that the majority of whites believed that probation officers treated all people alike.

A black female indicated that a probation officer will treat a youth in the same way that she treats the probation officer. "Yeah, the person when they first meet them and stuff they are nice to them at first and it seems like they are open and truthful about what they are saying but when there is a person who is kind of mean and rude and doesn't talk about something they might not let them off as easy."

Because of his experience with the system a black male believed that the probation officers treated people fairly. "I think they treat them the same, like when I came here I see a majority of whites being locked up, and maybe a month I'm in here

for a probation violation.” A white female said treatment will vary according to how the youth responds to the probation officer. “I feel they treat you like you treat them. If you treat them bad, then they treat you bad. If you give them respect, then they give you respect.”

A black felt that all people were not treated alike because whites are given more chances. “I don’t think you’ll find one white from Waterloo up here right now. I think they get more chances. They get to get out, if not then they get put in a group home. A white were gonna trust him.”

A white male also did not feel that probation officer’s treat all people alike. “No, because I’ve been lied to by my probation officer.” One white male got so disgusted with his treatment that he stopped going to see his PO. “They don’t treat me alike, so I just don’t go to his place anymore.”

Respect

When asked whether they had any respect for their probation officer, 92 percent of whites and 75 percent of blacks responded that sometimes or most of the time to always that they did respect their probation officer. The interviews reflected similar views.

A black female felt her PO was really trying to help her out of the system. “She’s just mainly concerned about me getting out. A person who is trying to help me out.”

Another black seemed concerned about her relationship with her probation

officer. "I like her, she's better than what I thought she would be. I hope she likes me."

There were a few youth who did not respect their probation officers. The white youth did not elaborate on their answers. A black youth not only disliked his probation officer but anyone involved with the law. "I don't like none. I don't like no one as mostly official to the law."

Next, the youth were asked if they wanted to be a probation officer. Results from the self-reports indicate that 76 percent of whites almost never to never wanted to be a probation officer, while 84 percent of blacks responded almost never to never. These results strongly contrast the results from the interviews. Interestingly, both races felt that they might like to be a probation officer.

A black male felt that being a probation officer would be an important and a respectful job. "I would and I would do my job. When P0's are good they get a lot of respect from the kids." Another black youth expressed a desire to help young black children. "That I might put into consideration, because I like helping youth, but I'm gonna help them in a different side. I'm gonna help mostly the black community, but if there's whites that want to get into, I'm gonna help them." A black female felt her experiences in the system would make her a good probation officer. "Yeah, cuz I like to see people back with their families. I can just think back when I was growing up and try to help them." A white male held a similar view. "Yeah, I would

get to associate with kids and help them because I know what they are going through.”

Those youth who did not desire to be a probation officer said the following.

No, it's just not my type of thing to do. I don't see how they can deal with other people's problems, and then go home to their families and then deal with their own problems. It's like you have to lead two different lives. Shut everything out when you go home. I wouldn't be able to do that. Nope, cause I don't like the field, I've had too many years of counseling.

Problems in the System

The final question addressed in this section focused on what problems the youth saw with the juvenile justice system. Several different answers and view points emerged. The majority of youth discussed problems with fairness and being too strict with young children. Some black youth also believed there is too much of an emphasis on removing the child from his or her home.

Sometimes it isn't fair because my first offense because it was just a little fist fight and I got put here for about three weeks.

I think that sometimes they don't treat everybody the same. Like when a case is the same they might give somebody more time than the other people. Like when two people go into court for the same thing they may give one more time than somebody else.

They send too many people away because they think they have family problems and they really don't know.

White

I think they put too many young kids on probation and work crew and stuff like that.

They put too much emphasis on you if you're a kid and get into trouble.

I don't think they should have to stay on probation that long.

In summary, although there appears to be some disparities between the views of blacks and whites on fairness of treatment, both races respected and indicated a desire to be a probation officer. The youth felt that their experiences in the system would allow them to be successful probation officers.

Views of School

Educational Ambitions

Of the youth who responded to the question on schools, the majority liked school and desired a college education. Some youth saw two-year vocational schools as a possibility, while others aspired to attend four—year educational institutions.

A black female indicates, "I want to go to college and be a black history teacher. At least four years of college." A black male states, "I would like to be an engineer, do drafting or something like that. Four years of college and probably start working after that." A white male desires to attend... "Hawkeye Tech for two years to become a mechanic." Another white male wants, ". . . a job that pays good money, like a corporate lawyer, I would probably have to go to college for four years."

There were a few youth who did not like school or desire higher education. A black male felt school was too difficult.

“It’s too hard for me. I don’t think I’ll be able to go to college.” Another black male said, “I don’t like the work.” A white males view, “I’ve been telling everybody that I don’t like school. I just might be dropping out.”

Treatment

When the youth were asked if they felt that teachers treated blacks and whites the same, the majority felt that the teachers were fair regardless of race or social class. Eighty—three percent of the whites responded that sometimes or most time/always that teachers treat everyone alike and 90 percent of blacks felt the same way (Tables 7, 8). These same results were supported in the interviews with the majority stating that they believed teachers to treat everyone alike.

A black male said, “I feel that teachers treat all students alike. I don’t see any difference in how they treat whites versus blacks or rich versus poor.” A white male simply responded, “No, they treat everybody the same.”

There were a few youth, however, who believed teachers treated students differently because of their color of skin. A black female experienced a teacher who admitted being prejudice. “Cuz we have this one teacher who told one of her classes that she was prejudice. That’s why she didn’t want as many black people in her class.” A white female felt that teachers feared blacks. “I think the female teachers are afraid of the black students. When a black student would...they’ll give black

students more chances before they send them to the office, because they know the black parents will be up there.”

Overall, both races had high educational expectations. Yet their expectations might be unrealistic relative to their current situations. In general, there was a positive attitude toward education and future aspirations. Both races perceived equal treatment of blacks and whites by teachers.

Blame

The youth were also asked who they blamed for their current situation. The self—report data indicated that both blacks and whites place blame upon themselves (60 percent of the whites and 60 percent of the blacks). The interviews also suggested that blacks and whites placed blame upon themselves.

One black female stated, “I blame myself because if you put your mind to it you can do it.” Another black female, “Yourself. If I really want to do something there shouldn’t be anybody else who can stop me.” A white male said, “Probably at first I’d blame society, but after I thought about it I’d probably go back and see what I did wrong and try to go for it again.”

There were a few youth who blamed others. A black male blamed society. “Society, yes but that would probably be a big part of it. Society messes up everything else. They rule over everything so you really have no say in what happens.” A black female who is pregnant blames her mother because, “she probably won’t let me get

married or nothing like that.” A white female blamed her step dad because, “he drinks too much and every time we run out of money I consider it his fault, because we’d have money if he didn’t drink all of the time.”

When asked whether or not they regretted committing the delinquent act, the majority felt a sense of remorse. The blacks did not elaborate on why or why not they regretted their actions. One white male said, “Yeah, now that I look at it, but at the time I didn’t really care.”

Overall, both races took personal responsibility for their actions. Most youth also indicated signs of remorse.

Summary

Both black youth and white youth feel racial discrimination is persistent and getting worse in our society. Youth also felt that blacks were not given equal opportunities in the workforce. Despite these feelings, all youth stated that they are optimistic about the future and believe that people can be trusted regardless of race or color.

The youth also expressed rather negative views toward the police. Both white youth and black youth felt the police treat people differently according to the color of their skin. Many of the youths felt that the police pick on blacks. Therefore, the youths did not entirely respect or desire to be a police officer.

Even though some of the youths felt they were not treated fairly by their probation officer, the attitudes toward probation officers were rather positive. Both races respected

their probation officers and felt that being a probation officer could be a possible career choice.

Many of the youth felt the treatment they received in school was fair. They also desired future plans of educational achievement. Finally, the majority of the youths blamed themselves for their current situation and expressed remorse.

Table 1. Definition of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Discrimination in General, Black Hawk County.

Variable Name	Definition
DISCRWRS	Racial discrimination getting worse?
BLKBREAK	Most white people want blacks to get a better break?
BLACKJOB	Feel blacks can get as good a job as whites?
FUTOPP	Black opportunities in the next five years?
FUTDISCR	Do you think there will be discrimination ten years from now?
TRUSTWB	Feel about trusting white or black people?
BLKRIGHT	Best way for blacks to gain rights?

Table 2. Frequency Distributions of Used to Represent Youths' View of Discrimination in General, Black Hawk County.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
DISCRWRS	Strongly agree	29	48	8	24
	Agree	22	37	14	42
	Neither agree or disagree	7	12	8	24
	Disagree	1	2	3	9
	Strongly disagree	1	2	--	--
BLKBREAK	Strongly agree	10	17	2	6
	Agree	20	33	11	33
	Neither agree or disagree	21	35	12	36
	Disagree	4	7	7	21
	Strongly disagree	5	8	1	3
BLACKJOB	Strongly agree	27	45	15	45
	Agree	23	38	6	18
	Neither agree or disagree	3	5	4	12
	Disagree	5	8	7	21
	Strongly disagree	2	3	1	3
FUTOPP	Improve	26	43	16	48
	About the same	26	43	6	18
	Get worse	8	13	11	33
FUTDISCR	Less discrimination	16	27	12	36
	Equal amount of discrimination	20	33	8	24
	More discrimination	24	40	13	39

Table 2--continued.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
TRUSTWB	Most	26	43	9	27
	Some	30	50	19	58
	None	4	7	5	15
BLKRIGHT	Laws and persuasion	17	28	9	27
	Nonviolent protest	42	70	16	48
	Use violence	1	2	8	24

Table 3. Definition of Variables Use to Represent Youths' View of Police in General, Black Hawk County.

Variable Name	Definition
COPFAIR	Do police treat you fairly?
COPATTD	Do you think police think are big shots?
COPBWSAM	Do you think police treat black and white alike?
RICHPOOR	Do you think police treat rich and poor alike?
COPPICK	Do you think police always picking on blacks?
COPHELP	If help needed would you go to police?
RESPCOP	Have a lot of respect for the police?
BECOP	Would you like to be a police officer when grow up?
COPACCUS	Do you think police accuse of things you did not do?
COPINNOC	Do you think police try to arrest innocent people?
MORECOP	Do you think city better off if more police?
COPCRIT	Do you think police criticized too often?
PREVTRBL	Do you think police pick on people who in trouble before?
BUYOUT	Do you think most police let buy you way out of trouble?
COPSTEAL	Do you think police can get away with stealing?
COPARRST	What do police place emphasis on in deciding to arrest?

Table 4. Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Police in General, Black Hawk County.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
COPFAIR	Always	9	15	4	12
	Most of the time	19	32	5	15
	Sometimes	20	33	14	42
	Almost never	9	15	4	12
	Never	3	5	6	18
COPATTD	Always	12	20	19	58
	Most of the time	18	30	3	9
	Sometimes	21	35	7	21
	Almost never	8	13	2	6
	Never	1	2	2	6
COPBWSAM	Always	4	7	3	9
	Most of the time	6	10	4	12
	Sometimes	31	52	10	30
	Almost never	12	20	8	24
	Never	7	12	8	24
RICHPOOR	Always	1	2	2	6
	Most of the time	6	10	2	6
	Sometimes	13	22	8	24
	Almost never	24	40	9	27
	Never	16	27	12	36

Table 4--continued.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
COPPICK	Always	8	13	5	15
	Most of the time	4	7	8	24
	Sometimes	34	57	11	33
	Almost never	10	17	--	--
	Never	4	7	9	27
COPHELP	Always	10	17	6	18
	Most of the time	12	20	3	9
	Sometimes	21	35	6	18
	Almost never	6	10	6	18
	Never	11	18	12	36
RESPCOP	Strongly agree	2	3	3	9
	Agree	18	30	6	18
	Neither agree or disagree	22	37	5	15
	Disagree	12	20	9	27
	Strongly disagree	6	10	10	30
BECOP	Always	3	5	2	6
	Most of the time	7	12	--	--
	Sometimes	11	18	3	9
	Almost never	9	15	2	6
	Never	30	50	26	79
COPACCUS	Always	5	8	6	18
	Most of the time	15	25	6	18
	Sometimes	22	37	16	48
	Almost never	12	20	2	6
	Never	6	10	3	9

Table 4--continued.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
COPINNOC	Always	3	5	2	6
	Most of the time	4	7	4	12
	Sometimes	20	33	15	45
	Almost never	19	32	6	18
	Never	14	23	6	18
MORECOP	Always	10	17	8	24
	Most of the time	11	18	1	3
	Sometimes	16	27	6	18
	Almost never	12	20	7	21
	Never	11	18	11	33
COPCRIT	Always	9	15	7	21
	Most of the time	10	17	7	21
	Sometimes	28	47	12	36
	Almost never	8	13	1	3
	Never	5	8	6	18
PREVTRBL	Always	18	30	18	54
	Most of the time	21	35	7	21
	Sometimes	13	22	6	18
	Almost never	5	8	1	3
	Never	3	5	1	3
BUYOUT	Always	--	--	1	3
	Most of the time	2	3	4	12
	Sometimes	10	17	9	27
	Almost never	24	40	7	21
	Never	24	40	12	36

Table 4--continued.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
COPSTEAL	Always	5	8	2	6
	Most of the time	9	15	8	24
	Sometimes	17	28	11	33
	Almost never	12	20	4	12
	Never	17	28	8	24
COPARRST	Recommendations of the victim	4	7	3	9
	Past prior record,	19	32	5	15
	Minority status	2	3	5	15
	Family considerations	6	10	4	12
	Seriousness of the offense	26	43	10	30
	Other	3	5	6	1

Table 5. Definition of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Probation Officers in General, Black Hawk County.

Variable Name	Definition
POFAIR	Do you think probation officers treat you fairly?
POACCUSE	Do you think probation officers accuse of things you did not do?
POTROUBL	Do you think probation officers pick on people who been in trouble before?
POWSAME	Do you think probation officers treat white and black the same?
PORICH	Do you think probation officers treat rich and poor same?
POWHITE	Do you think probation officers treat whites better than blacks?
POHELP	Would you go to probation officers if needed help?
POATTD	Do you think probation officers are big shots?
TRUSTPO	Do you trust your probation officers?
BEPO	Would you like to be a probation officer?
POTHINK	How much you care about what probation officer thinks?
POBAD	Probation officer thinks you are a bad kid?

Table 6. Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Probation Officers in General, Black Hawk County.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
POFAIR	Always	34	59	12	37
	Most of the time	17	29	7	22
	Sometimes	5	9	8	25
	Almost never	1	2	3	9
	Never	1	2	2	6
POACCUSE	Always	1	2	2	6
	Most of the time	2	3	2	6
	Sometimes	13	22	8	24
	Almost never	21	35	8	24
	Never	23	38	13	39
POTROUBL	Always	2	3	5	16
	Most of the time	8	13	7	22
	Sometimes	26	43	10	31
	Almost never	13	22	4	12
	Never	11	18	6	19
POWBSAME	Always	15	25	11	33
	Most of the time	15	25	7	21
	Sometimes	26	43	13	39
	Almost never	3	5	2	6
	Never	1	2	--	--

Table 6--continued.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
PORICH	Always	12	20	9	27
	Most of the time	16	27	4	12
	Sometimes	21	35	11	33
	Almost never	5	8	7	21
	Never	6	10	2	6
POWHITE	Always	--	--	1	3
	Most of the time	2	3	1	3
	Sometimes	16	27	7	22
	Almost never	16	27	9	28
	Never	26	43	14	44
POHELP	Always	7	12	4	12
	Most of the time	9	15	3	9
	Sometimes	22	37	9	27
	Almost never	16	27	3	9
	Never	6	10	14	42
POATTD	Always	2	3	4	12
	Most of the time	3	5	2	6
	Sometimes	25	42	13	39
	Almost never	17	29	7	21
	Never	12	20	7	21
TRUSTPO	Always	28	47	11	33
	Most of the time	16	27	7	21
	Sometimes	11	18	7	21
	Almost never	3	5	--	--
	Never	2	3	8	24

Table 6--continued.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
BEPO	Always	1	2	--	--
	Most of the time	1	2	--	--
	Sometimes	12	20	5	16
	Almost never	11	18	2	6
	Never	35	58	25	78
POTHINK	A lot	16	27	11	33
	Some	33	55	10	30
	Not at all	11	18	12	36
POBAD	Strongly agree	2	3	2	6
	Agree	3	5	4	12
	Neither agree or disagree	10	17	4	12
	Disagree	34	57	17	51
	Strongly disagree	11	18	6	18

Table 7. Definition of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of School and Blame for Current Situation in General, Black Hawk County.

Variable Name	Definition
TCBWSAME	Teachers treat black and white students alike?
TCRPSAME	Teachers treat rich and poor students alike?
BLAMSELF	Blame self for trouble with law?
BLAMFAM	Blame family for trouble with law?
BLAMPEER	Blame peers for trouble with law?
BLAMPOL	Blame police for trouble with law?
BLAMJCT	Blame juvenile court for trouble with law?
BLAMSOC	Blame society for trouble with law?

Table 8. Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of School and Blame for Current Situation in General, Black Hawk County.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
TCBWSAME	Always	11	18	11	33
	Most of the time	17	28	6	18
	Sometimes	22	37	13	39
	Almost never	4	7	1	3
	Never	6	10	2	6
TCRPSAME	Always	11	18	8	24
	Most of the time	14	23	6	18
	Sometimes	24	40	14	42
	Almost never	7	12	2	6
	Never	4	7	3	9
BLAMSELF	Strongly agree	16	27	8	24
	Agree	20	33	12	36
	Neither agree or disagree	13	22	3	9
	Disagree	4	7	8	24
	Strongly disagree	7	12	2	6
BLAMFAM	Strongly agree	--	--	1	3
	Agree	3	5	1	3
	Neither agree or disagree	8	13	2	6
	Disagree	18	30	16	48
	Strongly disagree	31	52	13	39

Table 8--continued.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
BLAMPEER	Strongly agree	2	3	--	--
	Agree	8	13	3	9
	Neither agree or disagree	19	32	3	9
	Disagree	16	27	19	58
	Strongly disagree	15	25	8	24
BLAMPOL	Strongly agree	3	5	1	3
	Agree	1	2	1	3
	Neither agree or disagree	8	13	5	15
	Disagree	18	30	14	42
	Strongly disagree	30	50	12	36
BLAMJCT	Strongly agree	1	2	1	3
	Agree	1	2	1	3
	Neither agree or disagree	4	7	4	12
	Disagree	22	37	12	36
	Strongly disagree	32	53	15	45
BLAMSOC	Strongly agree	--	--	2	6
	Agree	6	10	2	6
	Neither agree or disagree	5	8	5	15
	Disagree	23	38	10	30
	Strongly disagree	26	43	14	42

Chapter Five

ADULT DECISION MAKERS WOODBURY COUNTY

Twenty-three adult juvenile court decision makers were interviewed in this county. Juvenile court officers, two judges, two public defenders, and three prosecutors were interviewed. The demographics and mean length of time on the job for these individuals are presented in Table 1 at the end of the chapter. Of the decision makers, 16 are male and 7 are female. All of the decision makers are white. The mean age of the personnel was 40. The mean length of time on the job is 8 years.

When listening to the taped interviews and reading the transcriptions of the interviews, the themes of rehabilitation and the protection of society emerge. Underlying the rehabilitation and protection of society themes is the importance personnel place on youth and families to adhere to and respect the juvenile court and societal norms, in general. Behavior and attitudes that are in contrast to this philosophy seem to be interpreted by some decision makers as cause for court intervention. The failure to abide by middle-class standards and/or the belief that minorities commit more crime, are reported to account for the disproportionate overrepresentation of minority youth in secure facilities. Police, for the most part, are seen as providing equal treatment to all youth. A much stronger argument is made by the decision makers for minority groups to adapt to our culture rather than the recruitment of a

more diversified personnel to alleviate the disproportionate number of minorities in secure facilities.

Perceived Role of the Court and Views of the System

Rehabilitation and Protection of Society

In Woodbury county, juvenile justice decision makers appear to place much emphasis on rehabilitation and the protection of society (Tables 2, 3). In responding to questions of the importance of these roles, a vast majority indicated that they were very to pretty important. As in Black Hawk county, the delivery of punishment was seen as less important relative to the other roles.

A variety of factors are believed to be causes of delinquency (Tables 4, 5). The lack of parental supervision and discipline were by far believed to be the strongest factors associated with the likelihood of delinquent behavior (91 percent). The decision to commit crime, an inability to control impulses, delinquent siblings, substance abuse, negative school performance and violence as a means to solve things are just some of the other conditions believed to lead to criminal involvement. Interestingly, media advertising of material possessions and the portrayal of violent destructive media images were also cited as having varying degrees of importance. Only thirteen percent of the decision makers felt that media images of violence was not too important or not important at all. This is in contrast to Black Hawk county, where 35 percent indicated that this was not too important as a cause of delinquency.

An examination of the responses to the closed ended questions also reveals that juvenile justice personnel do not see economic factors, being poor, and discrimination as major causes of delinquency. In responding to these questions, roughly one-third of the decision makers perceived them to be very to pretty important. Fifty-seven percent, however, did believe that job opportunities were very to pretty important.

Although socio-economic conditions are cited as more important than indicated in the responses to the closed ended questions, changes in the structure of the family and in the family dynamics stood out as the dominant factors. The responses to two questions, “Are there any factors that hinder you from performing your job?” and “What factors do you consider when deciding a case?” illustrate the emphases placed on the family and rehabilitation/protection of society and the family.

Another thing we look at pretty seriously is what degree of control do the parents exercise over the child. Are the parents drug dealers who are never home, are they involved in the crimes with the kids, ..., what efforts have the parents made to alleviate the problems. Have they sought counseling, what has been the degree of involvement of the parents to control their kids and obtain services and follow through or have they sat back and basically made excuses for the kid. . .do the parents want the child and what degree of control can they exercise over this kid.. If it's not a very serious offense for which society needs to be protected, and it looks like the parents are capable of controlling the child, we would look to a less restrictive form of intervention. Maybe an informal adjustment with community service, but with an effort to try to keep the kid in the home with the family.

I have problems with the facilities themselves that deal with our kids, I'm quite distrustful

of. Many residential treatment programs and chemical dependency programs I'm not always sure that they are doing what is best for the child but rather for their own system. There definitely are systems,...., that do not have the type of care to rehabilitate kids. They just maintain kids in a semi—orphange type settings...But, for right now, I'd say if I had one big problem that I'd like to see overcome it's the advocacy of the parents of these kids. Years ago it would be like, we would recommend that the child be placed out of the home and the parents would be clambering to keep the child at home. Now, I find that the staff are wanting to keep the child at home and the parents just kick them out and say, you take care of them now...

Q. To what would you attribute the change in parents?

A. Other than the deterioration of families, I'd assume that there are a number of factors.

Q. To what do you attribute the deterioration of the family?

A. The families are willing to let the peer groups take over. Today's teenagers are more mobile, have greater access to everything from very violent TV shows to alcohol or other types of drugs. . . the parents don't spend a lot of time with the kids. . . For the most part, some it is cultural in terms of, let's say the American Indian, the grandparents tend to do a lot of the child—rearing. With the situation as it exists in Sioux City, that seems to be a very difficult situation for the elderly individuals to contend with these kids. They are out on the street and they are kind of like Street urchins. The delinquent kids that we see are pretty much disenfranchised from their own families. The school provides a pretty much unsuccessful setting. Schools are more than willing to get these kids out of the educational system here in town. The families habitually complain to the school system and it's sort of like one thing leads to another...

I think it's essential that everybody understands that we take serious our advocacy roles because these kids were from the most part disenfranchised from the schools, the communities, and the families of these communities...

Oh, I think there's, there's always quirks in the code and the standards that the court must follow. I think that a lot of times a lot of emphasis is placed upon the court and the court not doing enough but people don't understand that the court acts upon rules and guidelines that the code sets down...this is what the court can do. If the court could do something else, the court would.

Q. No, I think you're right. I don't think people appreciate that...

A. ...I think that's a part of the deterioration of, you know, of our society. The people don't, people don't adhere to standards like that. You know, where people that are involved with the court have the highest regard for the court and what it means and what the law means. That, you know, you see it so much when people come into court just in shorts and it's no, I guess it's the air about it that, you know, the court is a place of dignity and you're supposed to be, you know, act appropriately in court. I think a lot of that's diminished and along with it the respect for the court and what the court means. I think that has a lot to do with the effectiveness in court. Yeah, that's personally that's something that, you know, I've been brought up, I think, in a pretty respectable type of setting. I went to parochial schools and a lot of structure and, you know, respect for people involved in that setting and I think it just carries along when you respect the court and what it stands for...

Q. But, you see that other people don't have that same respect for that social institution, and maybe other social institutions which is reflected by their demeanor in court and their attire and all of that and maybe even the decisions may be the court. They don't respect that? Does that seem to follow gender lines or race lines? Or class lines?

A. I think class lines more than anything else, you know, you find, you know, and that may not even be true. I think, you know, just looking back at the parents that come to court with probably wearing a tie and dress shirt, tend to be part of the socioeconomic class that they're a part of and also what kind of upbringing what kind of background those parents have, you know, if you've got a pretty sound fundamental family that has some kind of guidelines and structure, then I think they

adhere to, you know, to the court's standards and, you know, understand and respect those things and, you know, so many times it doesn't have to be black, white, or green or yellow. If you have some kind of standards and understanding and structure in your life, then I think those people show up for court dressed appropriately and I think respect and fear have a lot to do with it, too. When people, all that types come into court real fearful and that is something that, I don't know if that diminishes the effect of the court or what not, and then there's other people who have absolutely no fear and when you have absolutely no fear, those are the people that have absolutely nothing.

The adherence to the role of advocate on the part of the juvenile justice decision makers, which seems to be another word for the best interests of the child, appears to have led to some tension and conflicts within the office. For some, this schism seems to have impacted their ability to adequately perform their job and their working relationship with the county prosecutors.

The changes in the code. They were initially put into effect to protect the rights of the children. . . Many of the safeguards that were put into effect to protect the children in the end, end up harming the children in the long run. As more restrictions are put upon the workers, we can't help children who are having an increase in need. It has becomes more difficult and time consuming.

Our office is probably different from other places. We have a pretty good working relationship with our supervisors. I believe that the JCO's primary responsibility is in advocating for their client in making sure that there are programs available for their families to be in that will help them. The responsibility of the supervisors is to advocate for their workers so that the workers have the tools that they need. I think that is a real strong thing here, that people try to take care of everybody that they are responsible for. I think we are good at placing the needs of the child first. What is

in the best interest of the child and how can we use what resources we have to accomplish that.

Q. Do you see the treatment and the rehabilitation as the most important work?

A. There's a balance between the best interest of the child and the best interest of the community. Sometimes what is in the child's best interest is not safe for other people, so you have to weigh those out. Hopefully, you can get those two things to meet and most of the time they do but there are sometimes when they don't.

Parents who are really difficult to work with. . . we think in this office, that the prosecutors file too many petitions. Not from the perspective of just numbers but in such picky situations...

I think sometimes we have disagreements with the county attorney or whatever, but other than that, that's usually the biggest hindrance would be the county attorney's office, how they would like to proceed with certain cases.

Q. Is it more likely that they want you to be tougher...?

A. Well, some weeks, yeah. And then other weeks they may call down and say, 'why are we going ahead with this particular case or kid' and I guess in all honesty when we do the social investigation, a lot of that stuff influences us as to what maybe needs to happen, whether we feel the kid needs to be placed out of the home, maybe he's been placed out of the home several times prior to his involvement down at our office, so we may ask to file on a charge that's a serious or simple misdemeanor and have to explain to them why we want to do that on certain kids. Because that information doesn't go up to them. They usually get just a face sheet with mom, dad, who has custody, so forth, so a lot of times if it's real involved, we'll dictate and say why we feel this kid needs to have a petition filed, especially if we think they're going to question it.

I strongly believe that the intake level, the intake unit should be under the direction of the prosecutor's offices in most states.

Q. Why?

A. Because legal decisions are being made. Basically, what the Iowa Code does is give

laymen, lay people the authority to practice law without a license make legal decisions without a license to do that...

A perceived increase in gang formation in particular, in Sioux City, and movement of people from different cultures into the area (e.g., Blacks, Hispanics, Laotians, and Asians) were also reoccurring themes expressed by a number of the staff. Some of the officers are very interested in gang activity, as evident by the asking of youth for information on gangs, requests for graffiti found at school, jackets, etc. Some officers also collect and listen to rap music to pick out gang themes. Films are also watched for similar reasons (e.g., New Jack City). There seemed to be a split among those who felt that gangs were race—specific.

One is that we have seen major influences of inner—city people moving to Sioux City for a couple of different reasons. Specifically, a large number of Hispanics have coming in because of one of our meat-packing plants have published in the LOS ANGELES TIMES for very cheap labor. They recruit. So suddenly we have a large number of people here. Housing is not adequate for them, social services are not adequate, not adequate interpreting services. So we have a large number of people who are committing more crimes and usually against their own population which suddenly sends them into a disproportionate crime rate. I think there are a lot of social reasons behind that also. I don't necessarily believe those biases are by the police. I think the police have had to adapt as well. We have seen a large number of people coming in from California, Chicago, particularly black people coming from Louisiana, and more recently Kansas City. These people are saying that they are tired of having their kids live in areas of drive—by shootings and shootings in their projects. They move their kids here to get them out of their gang involvements. Unfortunately, most of these kids only know

the poor economic conditions in projects that they are used to and, suddenly they are in a wide open territory and one of the first things they do is to begin forming gangs...

Q. Most of these gangs are minority youth. Are there any white gangs in town?

A. Yes.

Q. Black gangs?

A. Yes.

Q. And Hispanic gangs?

A. Yes. There have been also some indications of Asian gangs.

Q. And the police see each of those gangs as equally dangerous?

A. I think the police view gang behavior similarly. I think because of the intelligence that the police have gathered it has helped them. They have followed through their system and tracked individual known gang members and by the national criteria and state criteria (you know, there are certain criteria that are laid out before you can identify someone as an identified gang member.) They would probably treat a gang of fifty or sixty differently than they would a gang of seven or eight. The large gangs were black. There are at least two different white gangs that have been identified. . . White gangs are perceived to be as threatening as minority gangs and maybe more so in some ways.

It a combination.. .our gangs are multi—racial. They have whites, Hispanics, Blacks, and Indians...

Q. Who is more likely to belong to a gang in this town?

A. Either black or Hispanic youth.

Q. What about bringing them (police) in the first place? ... Can the police make it tougher if they see a gang? Are they more likely to stop a kid who is wearing all of the Raiders stuff?

A. You mean in general? No, because not all of the police are convinced that we have gangs in Sioux City. In fact, I would say that the preponderance of the police disagree with the fact that there are gangs in Sioux City.

Q. How do you explain that? How do you explain that some think there are and others think there aren't and how do you support your belief that there are?

A. Well, I think what the police, and I can only address what I think, there is something

called an original gang member. That is a gang member coming in from outside Sioux City and establishing something in Sioux City. From the respect that we do not have a lot of original gang members, we have some of those. What we don't have is our own Sioux City kids being original gang members. We still pretty much consider them on the wanna-be crowd. But we have enough of the original gang members coming in and trying to set up groups to start gang activity in Sioux City... . Our children from Sioux City really need to be protected from these individuals coming from outside and trying to set up gangs...

Because of the influx of different racial/ethnic groups moving into Sioux City and problems this may or may have not caused for the juvenile justice system, decision makers were asked if Blacks, Hispanics and Native American Indians have different needs than Whites. Most of the decision makers felt that each of the racial/ethnic groups do have needs that may be different than the needs of whites. Most of the personnel believed that underlying minority needs is a better understanding of our culture and language. A number of the decision makers also indicated that it is not necessarily their responsibility to change to accommodate the needs of the varying racial/ethnic groups. Some suggested that these differences not only have affected the likelihood of delinquency and contact with the system but have also led to problems within the schools.

Yeah. For example, Asian kids think that talking back to your parent is a crime, very serious and the child should be severely beaten for it. For black families that's considered a normal thing. In Hispanic families, to look up when an adult is talking to you is considered disrespectful. The way I look at it, is I don't think that they need to be treated differently. I just think that we need to know that they are different.

...I think that there may be different needs, so to say, but I don't think that requires any higher degree of attention. . . The tool needs to be a little bit different. I don't know what programs would be best. I think there's probably, without a doubt, would be pretty beneficial if there were programs set up for Hispanic kids in general. A lot of behaviors and things that might be exhibited in Mexico or other countries.. .programs could help kids understand the U.S. culture, the white culture, the other culture. I think that's where you get a lot of clash. I've run into a couple of confrontational situations with a mother who says that we need to be more culturally aware of the Hispanic, Mexican, Indian, or Black kids. I commonly respond to that 'so you want me to treat them differently.' I generally get a silent response to that...

Q. So if I understand what you 're saying, a program for Hispanic kids might help them to understand and conform to our culture?

A. Yes, or otherwise I think we need to consult our legislature and have them change the standards by which our laws are written, that 'hey, we better come up with a code for the Hispanic people and one for the black people' because the code doesn't say black or white or anything else.

Q. What do you think are the needs of African American kids that aren't being met by the current juvenile justice system?

A. The needs of the black population is probably so much different than the Asians or the Hispanics because of the culture. You've got fifth generation black families here. Boat people and others coming into the country don't even speak our language. So I think the problem is different.

Q. Is the reason black kids are in trouble more because they have needs that are not being responded to?

A. I think there are needs that probably are not being responded to, but a lot of those needs are based in the economic setting and the educational setting.

Q. So you think the economic structure, lack of opportunity, is a cause of delinquency?

A. I don't want to play toward society not giving them, black or any other population, opportunity. I think America being the land of opportunity. . . Do you go out and get the

opportunity, or do you wait for the opportunity to come to you?

Q. So to clarify and summarize what you're saying, black people do have needs, but they're the ones who need to take care of those needs. That we have given them the starting point, and if they fail to do better, it's because they fail to take advantage of the opportunities that they have?

A. I guess, you know, on ground zero, every kid goes into kindergarten on the same page...

The Indian children have very special needs, I think.

Q. Why they?

A. Well, the Hispanic kids, too. We have a terrible language problem. We have to have interpreters for a lot of these kids. We don't have any residential treatment centers to help understand the Hispanic culture. I don't know if you want separate facilities for the black, Indian, and Hispanic children. I don't think so. How are you going to get these people to come in and understand our culture? They have to learn to respond to the dominant culture, too. People have to understand the different cultures but at the same point in time they're going to have to understand what's going on culturally here just like you and I have to. The biggest thing with Hispanics is the language. The biggest thing with the Indians is the extended family. Most Indian kids are probably raised by grandparents. Usually you have all these people thrown into one or two houses together. They all become tied into each other. They don't expand beyond that family except to go to school. They have a self-destructive behavior. Alcoholism is rampant in the Indian culture. There's also a lot of sexual abuse. They are very stoic. They don't trust white men or the white culture. The reservations are one of the most destructive things that ever got put on this earth. Those are the worst ghettos in America.

I think one of the big things is the school system in Sioux City. I think we're in really bad shape there. I think the schools have a policy of exclusion. If you don't fit in exactly right they're going to start to look for ways to get you out of there. One thing leads to another, you're not in school, then you're not employed, you're going to be

hanging out and that sort of thing. Sioux City has always struck me as a place where education wasn't a real high priority. If it's not a high priority in the family to begin with and then you go to school and someone is saying, you don't quite fit in here, we're going to find someplace else for you to be during the day. I think that's creating some problems...

There were some decision makers who did not point to factors that hinder their job performance or have changed their outlook concerning their job. Others, however, indicated a lack of resources to increased caseload sizes as possible factors. The following quotes represent some of these sentiments.

I knew what the job entailed when I came here

It's pretty much what I thought it would be.. There is no hindrance. . .I love my job.

...increasing size of the caseload

...One of the greatest I've seen creating artificial restraints is the absorption of the juvenile justice system by the state government.. I think the techniques and the availability of services has changed considerably.

Paper work, lack of funds, lack of resources available to us. Placements, residential treatment centers. Funding of residential treatment centers would be the biggest, there's no money, no place to put the child.

...lack of residential treatment facilities close to Sioux City.

I am probably a bit more cynical over the years. There have been changes in clients. Clients have become harder to deal with. Their problems have gotten more severe. . . There is more of a need for services and types of services and less of funding coming in for those kind of services needed. So you see an increase in need but a decrease in ability to attempt to solve those problems...

...there's things that you did three years ago that you can't do now and one of those is the extent of your investigation. You can't spend nearly as much time. You don't know nearly as much about the people that you're dealing with simply because you don't have the time to do that.

Race Differences in General

Crime

Juvenile justice decision makers were asked if they believed blacks commit different crimes and more crime in contrast to whites. Responses to these closed ended questions and others are provided in Tables 6 and 7.

A very large percentage of the personnel did not agree with the statement that blacks commit different crimes than whites (83 percent strongly disagreed/disagreed). A majority of the personnel, however, strongly agreed or agreed that blacks commit more crime (57 percent). Thirty-five percent strongly disagreed/disagreed with the statement. The themes emerging from the interviews concur with those reported from the closed ended questions.

Reasons provided for the belief that blacks and other minorities commit more crime range from "they just do it more" to the perception that minorities live in the more crime ridden neighborhoods which are patrolled more often. The following quotes represent just a few examples of these views.

I can't see them being treated differently, so if they're committing the crime, they're caught...

I really don't think that they're more serious in nature. . .Just that number of crimes are greater.

...watched more closely. . . more black kids get a police complaint...

Yes, but I think it's due to socio-economic factors.

I wouldn't say more serious. . .yes they are involved in more delinquent act.

I think there seems to be more of them committing crimes and there seems to be more group activity crimes linked to more minorities than for white kids going out and shoplifting on their own. A group of kids, minority kids, going out and committing a burglary as opposed to one kid going out and doing a burglary. I don't know if minorities commit more serious crimes or not. Right now we have a phenomenon of gang activity in Sioux City. I think a lot of times if a minority kid comes in with a particular dress style they are pegged as a potential gangster. Whereas a supervisor's daughter comes in the same way and nobody thinks twice about it.

Distrust of the System

Officers were also asked about minorities cooperativeness with the juvenile justice system and if they believed there were differences between whites and minorities in terms of trusting the system. Three closed ended questions were asked to tap these dimensions (Tables 6, 7). Decision makers responded that blacks may be more distrustful (83 percent answered most of time/sometimes) but generally do not have poorer attitudes than whites (39 percent responded most of time to sometimes). Sixty-one percent answered that minorities almost never to never have poorer attitudes. Personnel also indicated that blacks are not less likely than whites to deny guilt (66 percent responded

almost never/never). Thirty-four percent did answer most to sometimes.

Similar themes to those from the closed ended questions emerge when reading the interviews. Some of the decision makers saw differences in trust, others did not. Very few of the decision makers saw differences in a willingness to admit guilt. Of those who believed that differences may exist in trust and cooperation (admission of guilt, attitude), the family more so than the youth were seen as the primary force influencing the behavior of the child and the decision makers perceptions of the situation, A list of quotes are presented to illustrate these sentiments and the complexities of the interactions between minority youth, their families, the juvenile court officer, and other court personnel. The theme of youth failing to adhere to certain expected standards is evident once again in some of the quotes.

Sometimes I think they may react that way because of distrust of the police and the system and authority. If, for example, a minority thinks they have been picked upon or treated differently in other aspects of their lives, when they come into contact with authority groups such as the police or juvenile court services, I think they may tend to be resistive to a point where it may have an impact on what later decisions are made. . . . I think there are major factors in the family. I think that minorities seem to have a lot more of a sense of family than maybe white middle-class America does today. White middle-class, with the 2.3 children are out running around at the mall wearing yuppie clothes and their parents are out working trying to make payments on them and trying to get ready for their college education. But one of the things you notice in the assimilation of the culture, we see black

parents, for example, using the same jargon that the kids do. They're very up on what the latest slang terms are. They seem to be much more involved in their kids lives. They may not necessarily be doing activities, but taking more of an interest involved along through the system with kids in a lot of ways. The kids feel a lot of support, and I think mixed messages come out that way. Parents come in and are very supportive of the child, not of the crime. I think sometimes misinterpret that support as validation or encouragement for committing crimes. Like, 'see I was right, distrusting the police and the system; so do my parents and they're not really that upset about me committing a crime, they're upset about the way I'm being mistreated by the system that's mistreated my family too.' I think sometimes that does the kids a disservice when that's the perception, whether it's accurate or not.

I think that with Hispanics, it's a language thing. Many of them don't speak very good English and don't understand. With blacks, I see a little bit of attitude but I've never had a disrespectful black kid on my caseload so I can't say that I see that to be happening.

I probably have more of a conflict with some whites, I mean really for the most part, I probably have more conflict with them than anybody else.

I think what happens with kids of color is that parents won't cooperate. They think that we do something just because the kid is black or whatever. Then they have no choice because if they send the kid home they know that the parents won't make the child abide by the rules.

They're alienated or feel that way, or unfamiliar with it, or probably fearful of it. I see it in all nationalities

I don't know if that's necessarily true. I think a lot of teenagers don't know when to keep their mouths shut, no matter what their race.

I think that may be apart of it. I think there might be a mistrust of authority. One of the more recent cases that I got, they skipped intake so that means that automatically a petition gets filed. I scheduled a meeting with them prior to the hearing, no show on that. That means that they aren't going to get a consent decree. The young man is thirteen years old. They missed some opportunities and that puts them right into the adjudication ballgame.

Q. Someone has told me that it is the minorities that tend to refuse informal adjustments...?

A. It seems to be. They are most likely to refuse on a simple charge.

Q. It's not all minorities, it's black.

A. Yeah.

Q. What do you attribute that to?

A. I think with those kids that they come in with the parent, the message is that when you offer an informal to a child on a simple charge, a simple misdemeanor, and the kid says they won't choose it because they're innocent. The message that you generally hear is racism. The family believes that the child has been selected by the police solely on the basis of race, that he is not in fact guilty. The child then, many times even if he wants to, can't admit because the parent has basically already told the kid already that they are not guilty and that everybody is out to screw them over and that they will stand behind them. They refuse the informal because they won't admit the of fence...then the court makes the decision. The problem is, in the majority of those cases the kids are found guilty. It's usually pretty clear that they are guilty. There are witnesses and everything else. So they're found guilty and now they are pulled into the court system which means the ultimate disposition is in the hands of the court and this places them in a situation that even on a simple misdemeanor they would be placed outside the home.

It's very important. I think that the minority kids are more suspicious. I don't know if that equates into having a bad attitude or not. It all goes back then to the family, to the parents. If you want to focus in on minorities, if you have a mom or dad or parents that are supportive of what the system

is attempting to do with their children, then you will normally see that same type of attitude in the child. If you have parents that are very hostile to the system, feels as though the system is prejudiced or biased or racist, that attitude then goes over onto the kids. That's very difficult to deal with...The problems in this city come from the Native Americans...

Q. My impression has been Hispanic.

A. I don't think so. I think it's more Native American...

At times, it depends on the kids. . .I think the race bias is definitely there. I think sometimes the cultural attitudes and backgrounds. . .I can't say comfortably that it's only be the police involvement because I really don't know what goes on in the intake unit. I know the intake officers down there and it wouldn't surprise me if there is race bias going on down in that office. I'm not sure if it would necessarily be intentional but it would not surprise me at all.

Q. Explain to me why you feel that way.

A. Because I see from some intake officers more of a almost revenge-type attitude for non-compliance. Things like, they set up an intake conference and these people didn't come in, therefore file a petition. Or, they came in and they didn't like the mother's attitude. Mom was questioning on every little thing. So it will come up to me with this statement that mom had a real attitude problem and I don't think she will be supportive in any kind of informal adjustment, therefore file a petition. Those are conclusions that I think sometimes intake officers make from a one time meeting with the family. I can think of a particular case where the officer met with a black mother and her child over a theft of some Jolly Rancher candy, two cents a piece, and I think the kid had five of them. And it ended up coming up here for a petition request because this mother's attitude really rubbed this particular intake officer the wrong way. It may not have bothered a different officer at all. Had someone maybe talked with this person they may have said, 'well, her kid's telling her he didn't do it and if you're going to have a parent-child relationship you got to have some level of trust in there. Maybe she goes home and talks to the kid some more after reading the police reports and changes her attitude. But based on the

one-time meeting with this family, we jumped to the conclusion that mom would not be supportive of any alternative hands-off training for this kid, so let's file a petition.

Race Differences in Processing

Police

In response to the closed ended questions, the majority of decision makers strongly disagreed/disagreed (56 percent) with the statement, "White youth are picked up less by police than black youth" (Tables 8, 9). Twenty-six percent agreed with the statement. In response to three additional questions that focus on their perception concerning police treatment of blacks, Native American Indians, and Hispanics, a majority of the personnel indicate that these racial/ethnic groups are treated differently than whites (57 percent to 61 percent answered most to sometimes). Thirty-nine percent of those responding answered almost never to never.

In reading the interviews, juvenile justice decision makers appear to view police officers as doing a good job. If race/ethnic differences exist, it is the result of minorities committing more crime. The police are simply responding to where the crime exists.

I think that is probably true because when I travel through the west side of Sioux City, you can always see a police car...

Q. What do you call it when the police watch one neighborhood more than they watch another?

A. Protection of the community...

...most things for police are pretty clear cut.

Where are the cops going to spend their time? They're going to spend their time where the action is and there is more action in the poor neighborhoods.

Q. You think it's based on social class rather than race. It just happens that minorities typically fall into this class?

A. I don't believe that it just so happens but I don't believe that it's the police force that is causing this to happen. I don't believe it's the juvenile justice system that is causing this to happen...

I don't know if it's because of bias, that, I mean the way the police assign their police officers, they're going to assign them in the high crime area. And my assumption is, is that high crime area is a poverty area and that's where a lot of your minorities or low income whites are gonna live and so they are going to be more apt to be caught because police are assigned to that area based on the crime. Their crime.

Overall, juvenile justice decision makers provided little information to suggest police are biased towards nonwhites.

Access to Counsel

Two questions were asked in the interview of the decision makers concerning access to counsel, "Are juvenile justice decisions affected by the youth's access to certain resources, such as retained counsel?" "Do whites get less severe sentences and more favorable plea bargains because they are able to retain private counsel?". The vast majority of decision makers felt that the type of counsel a youth does not make a difference in what would happen to the youth, irrespective of the race or ethnicity of the youth.

Very few retained counsel involved in our proceedings. . .our counsel do a fine job.

...no differences.
I don't think that enters into it
I wouldn't agree with that...
For legal representation, I think it's almost
all the same.
...we've got some pretty decent public defenders.

The Disproportionate Overrepresentation of Minorities

A large majority of the juvenile justice decision makers do not feel that the race/ethnicity of a youth influences the likelihood of a referral (Tables 10, ii). Seventy—eight percent, however, believed that blacks are referred more so than whites. Most of the personnel do not believe race/ethnic differences exist at any of the specific stages in the proceedings. Thirty percent indicate that sometimes there may be differences at the intake stage.

There were a variety of opinions concerning what factors may account for the differences in referrals and in particular, the disproportionate overrepresentation of minorities in secure facilities. Some of the decision makers responded by suggesting that it is: the result of committing more crime- which may be related to socio-economic factors, the large number of single parent families among minorities, the attitudes of minority youth and the family, and associations with gangs.

The real obvious part would be that either they commit more crimes or that they are arrested more often whether or not they are committing the crimes. Unfortunately, largely juvenile court services and the system is reactive instead of proactive, so they end up

dealing with whatever is sent to them by law enforcement contacts, is the first level of contact in the system. So I would presume, superficially at least, that is why they are overrepresented in the system is because they are arrested more often. If that's true it is because they are alleged to have committed more crimes.

I think that maybe it's because those groups are over represented, the correlation with income levels, and you're getting down into the lower income levels and I think that has a very strong correlation to delinquency and income level.

What could be going on here, again I have to go back to our economic development in this town. I think the minority population has gone up because of the recruitment of the packing houses and yet the packing house people, in my opinion, do not take care of their people to the point they don't pay them enough. They are not good jobs. They come in and they're going to be economically deprived. Which means they're going to have a higher potential to probably get in trouble. Because their kids are no different than my kids or any other kids...

Q. So what I think I hear you saying is that it's not that they're minority kids in particular, it's that they are in a low socio-economic class?

A. Which is why gangs are prospering so much these days and that's one of their big things.

...I suppose it would be economics, because of the blacks and the Indians, and the Hispanics. Probably, it would be because of lower economics, the background could be some of the reasons. Single parent homes would be a factor.

There are more single parent families in minority class. Lower incomes, breakdown of extended families. A lot of the things that we're saying all across the continuum probably might be a little bit more accentuated in the minority classes...It may be possible that we don't get to minority youth as quickly as we might get to white youth.

Q. At what point?

A. At the informal adjustment type stage. . . They may not become involved in some

of our diversion programs as quickly because we may not have parents that are supportive out there. That are saying 'your're picking on my child. Leave me alone'.

...Having a single parent in itself doesn't mean anything but it does translate into a lesser ability to supervise the child due to simply the time and energy that's available to a single parent... In some of the minority families we see a lack of male modeling. . . at the same time, I think they seem to de—emphasize education as being a value.

Other decision makers stated that they did not believe in the statistics that minorities are disproportionately overrepresented in secure facilities. Some also argued that blacks adhere to racist attitudes and because of the kind of music they listen to are likely to espouse values indicative of violence. Here, the underlying theme of the failure of minority youth to abide in general, to the white middle—class norms of society again emerges.

Blacks I don't agree with. I don't feel that they are disproportionately represented. I've only seen two to three blacks in the six months that I've been here. I've never had a black female, and I see very few blacks come through our office. So I have a hard time with that one. The Mexican community, I think a lot of it has to do with their cultural sensitivity. This was explained to me by one of the mothers. The Mexican male is supposed to be very macho. They have to prove themselves. They are taught that way by their parents, hence the gangs. Gangs encourage these kids to commit the crimes, they get into drugs, and we start seeing a lot of them. We've also had a high influx of the Hispanic community into this area because of IBP and John Morrell. A lot of these people come into this country and come right up here. They don't have a chance to get used to the United States or understand how we work.

Q. I wasn't referring to what's going on just in Sioux City. The disproportionate

representation of these kids in the juvenile justice system has been documented. When we do empirical studies, we find that they are over-represented. So the question is, are they doing something to get themselves there? Or is there something else going on? Do the police treat the Hispanics and Blacks differently?

A. No, I don't believe that at all.

Q. Your perception is that the system is colorblind?

A. I have never seen a racial incident with a police officer and a citizen. Throughout my twelve years at the police station and my time here. One of my co-workers came in and go, well, I 'ye got this black kid. You know, I've never heard a description of their color come into a conversation. Not once. So I have a real hard time with bias. The same with police officers, to have them say, 'Oh, I had this black kid...' they don't do it. They say, 'I had a 12-year old' and it never even, it doesn't play 9 into.. Now if there's a personal bias when they are out at the scene, I don't see it, I am not there. But when they come in, they don't talk about it being a racial issue and it is never brought up that way. Understand? I am looking at it from that point of view.

You know I agree with some of what you said. I think there's always racist people and they don't want to admit it, but I also think that blacks and Hispanics are racist against whites. It's a no win situation and I think that people use their race to get what they want. Poor me because I'm this color, poor me because I didn't get the education, poor me...But if you look at it, the government tries to help those minorities much more now than whites. And the white male is 'the minority' most of the time. I just hate that excuse. . .because they're black or they're Hispanic. I know people are born into poverty and I know it's a lot harder for them to get out of it than, say, a white middle-class child. But I think that excuses are used a lot for minorities.

Q. So to clarify, you believe children of color commit more crimes and that their treatment by the system, which is fair and objective, is being seen, purposely or not, as racism?

A. Yes.

Q. As an excuse for why they committed crime and why they're in the system?

A. Right, right.

I think there are a number of factors that play into that. I think that the attitude of the black community, as with rappers, has really slid. I think in the early 80's there were more positive things for them. I think that a lot of the trapped feelings of inner city youth have permeated on television. It 's just like our economy is geared by how we feel about it rather than how it actually runs. If there is a positive feel about the business climate then things are going to be better. So much of Wall Street is just a feeling. I think a lot of people do the same thing. I think a lot of the music plays a big part.

Q. It generates discontent in areas where there is no need for discontent?

A. Yeah, sure. In fact, Marian Health Center two years ago conducted a program where they gave kids any kind of music that they wanted for six months and then the next six months they took that music totally away. They found on that unit that their assaultive behaviors were reduced by three hundred percent by taking this music away. That is probably not a very scientific study but it was conclusive enough for them to say that this music generates violence. If kids are too tied into that then they are not paying attention to what they should be paying attention to like academics. I think that violence in television has played a role. I think it has played a role that we don't want to look at because of economics. It is like alcoholism. By the time a kid is eighteen they will have witnessed one hundred thousand beer commercials on TV. Those commercials program kids to use alcohol. They say that life is all fun, that it is sexy, everybody is good looking and I think it really orientates kids to think that life is all fun and if they are not having fun then the thing they are missing out on is alcohol. I think that has played a large part.

Q. I'm interested as to how it affects the children of color to a greater extent than white children.

A. Again, the trapped inner city feelings. Kids say, how do we get out? Well, the easy avenue is to deal drugs. That is a big part of it and that plays a role in gang activity.

Kids need affirmation and a lot of kids of color have found affirmation in negative ways and that is a real failing of our community. A lot of the ways they can get affirmation is through negative ways and a lot of those negative ways are through gangs.

Last, one juvenile court personnel suggested that the disproportionate overrepresentation of minorities in secure facilities may be the result of too much of an emphasis on prior record. Too little of an emphasis was believed to be placed on what crimes or activities comprise the prior record.

...I do think that some of that has to do with the police involvement. They know that certain neighborhoods are frequented by Native Americans or that groups of black kids hang out in one area of town. . . I think the entire juvenile justice system has a tendency to look at this kid's record is this long and this kid only has zero or one or two prior offenses. We tend to focus on that rather than on what brought them into the system this time. Maybe this kid has a record a mile long but it's only for curfew violations and smaller violations...

Race Findings Specific to Study

Decision makers were asked for their input or feelings concerning the findings from the first phase of the research. That phase involved the recording of information from case files on case processing and case outcomes for black youth, American Native Indian youth, and white youth in Woodbury county.

Younger Blacks Released, Older Blacks Referred to Court

The first race finding was evident at the stage of intake, where an interaction existed between race and age after controlling for other legal and extralegal factors.

Younger

blacks were released while older blacks were recommended to the petition stage. This effect was not present for any other race/ethnic group. Many of the decision makers did not respond or express any feeling to what may account for the finding. Other personnel did not believe in the finding.

Q. What about intake? Do you think, are you aware of any race bias there?

A. Honestly, I don't believe they are. I really don't. Well, we would be seeing greater numbers of black kids. I know, if we were to believe what the black population in this town is telling us, that their kids are constantly being harassed by the police, if intake were treating all of those cases as prosecute able, appropriately prosecutable, we would be seeing them up here and we're not... We do not get large numbers of black kids referred up here for prosecution.

Some decision makers suggested that blacks may at first be given lenient treatment but as they keep coming back they are then dealt with in a strict manner. Some felt that older blacks are more likely to be involved with gang activity which may account for the difference in treatment. Lack of cooperation was also cited as a possible explanation.

This may go back to when I said that we don't get involved with younger minorities at the intake stage. By the time they get our attention with more serious and multiple offenses, then they are brought in and made apart of the system.

I think it happens because we've done the same things with the blacks that we've done with American Indians. In terms of not doing anything with them when they first come in the first couple of times. Turning them over to their parents and when they do come in the third time we pound them...

I don't, I really don't know what to say. The first thing that I think of would be that people in the system are afraid to, that prejudice will, some people are afraid to strap a black youth, because they're fearful of the prejudice thing. They won't reprimand a black child or an Indian child or a Hispanic child for fear that there is racial bias. That they're doing it just 'cause he's black. Sometimes they're more lenient because he is a minority. That would be the only reason I could think of.. He has that record that's accumulating and before, and I think that's a fault of the system, instead of trying to deal with that particular child, even though there's a lack of communication and cultural differences and misunderstandings, instead of dealing with him at that level it's a lot easier not to. . . take that kid out of here, take him home. That type of behavior is done in our office all the time. They're given an informal. Just the lack of communication between the race...

Maybe they theorize that older blacks are involved in more gang activity than whites. I don't know that, I'm just throwing that out as a speculation.

Q. So you're speculating that because of the concern about older black kids and gangs, that might be a factor?

A. It might be, particularly if the charge has anything to do with weapons.

The gang thing could be a possibility...

The only thing I can think of is that a lot of the black kids hang around in the same group. I wouldn't call it a gang but it's like if you know so and so then you'll probably be coming to court. A lot of the white kids are in a lot of the diversion programs.

Q. Do you mean to say that if a kid is in a gang that he is probably more likely to be brought in?

A. Well, I think that would come into the interviewer's mind and I think that the kid would have to come up with some pretty positive things to offset the gang membership. That's the only thing I can think of...

The only factor I could really see there would be whether or not, again, that the family may

not be cooperative, it limits your decisions as what you're going to offer the people.. If they don't want to cooperate or if they want their day in court, they certainly have that right, so maybe they exercise that right more.

One individual believed that personnel at intake may have established standards or what was referred to as "lines drawn". These standards were believed to possibly result in different outcomes for certain youth.

...I think a large part of what's going on is bias and I also see a little different perception that the intake has lines drawn. You're up to this age, it doesn't matter what you did, you get this. If you're over this age, it doesn't matter what you're done, you get this. If it a juvenile partying out in Morningside, one of the more affluent neighborhoods, we just cite them all for frequent a disorderly house, send them ADAPT and we're done. I sometimes get the perception that there are these lines drawn and we just start with that instead of looking more into the situation. That's just a perception, and they would probably deny it...

Native American Indians Under Court Authority Released/

Native American Indians With Serious Crime Released

The second and third race findings were also present at the intake stage. There, Native American Indians who were under court authority at the time of the referral or were charged with a serious crime were more likely to be released or receive an informal adjustment than other similarly situated youth. Through the interviews and past discussions with personnel, these findings, for the most part, were accepted as reflecting current practices in this juvenile court office. The explanation for these findings rest with an agreement that exists between the

juvenile court office and an agency called Indian Youth of America (IYA).

Well, I guess I don't have a whole bunch of explanation. Other than I know we have, the Indians have another diversion program or another agency that we use a great deal (Indian Youth of America). That is specifically set up to work with them and we cooperate with them, I mean it's a cooperative type effort between the two agencies. It's been a nice marriage.

That doesn't surprise me about the Indians because they are almost always referred to Indian Youth of America...

The Indian findings are not surprising. I just think that people don't know how to deal with the Native Americans so they shuffle them of f into that program. I think they feel like their hands are tied in what they can do with Native American children.

I think that's right.

Q. Whether the Indian was under court authority or not did not make a difference as it did for whites or blacks.

A. That doesn't surprise me.

Q. But, Indians who committed more serious offenses were more likely to be released or to receive an informal adjustment than similar whites and blacks.

A. That doesn't surprise me either.

Because of the acknowledgement that Native Indians are diverted to Indian Youth of America, decision makers were asked why and for information concerning what the agency does with the referred youth. There appears to be some confusion as to how Indian Youth of America handles youth diverted from the juvenile court office. Some decision makers seem to be informed while others lack a clear idea of what occurs at Indian Youth of America.

Indian Youth of America is very different. There are, and I've asked some questions about that program because I'm not so sure that it doesn't allow these kids to get the idea that they can bypass the legal system because they're Indian and that's not a good message for them to get because once they pass eighteen, they can no longer bypass the legal system and go to some agency, these people are not trained people at Indian Youth, they're not trained to do the same thing that the probation people are trained to do. And we don't have any kind of a handle on what kind of a program they use over there. What authority they have to impose consequences on these kids.

Q. How would you characterize their treatment of the children?

A. We know nothing about that program.

Q. Does anybody?

A. I just wrote a memo last week to ask. I've been questioning it more verbally asking John Calhoun. What exactly, why are we referring these kids to Indian Youth? What are they doing with them over there? And he really didn't know. And so I wrote him a rather formal memo asking him to please find out. I mean we need to know what they do with these kids once we. . .The fact of the matter is I can come up with these victims, complainant forms where they have referred kids, on occasion, a kid for burglary, a Class C felony, a serious assault...

Q. And who's doing the referring?

A. The intake people. And that's a policy decision, that's not their decision. That was an agreement sometime back,...., that because of the number of kids at the training school, the number of Native American kids at the training school, exceeded their predicted numbers. And so they felt that they were being unfairly discriminated against and this arrangement was worked out but there's a lot of loose ends there...

I have no idea what goes on at Indian Youth. They just tell us that they were referred there and we don't know if they do community service or if they receive individual or family counseling, or if the school system is tutoring, or what they do. We have no idea...

Q. Do you ever learn the disposition of the children who are referred to that agency (IYA)?

A. They'll report back that they've offered services or that they tried to contact the family and that they've gotten no response or. . . Yeah, they respond back. Basically, the complaint is dismissed when we hand them off to them but that is for, it was quite often either a first time or a minor offense like a simple misdemeanor type offenses that we were giving them anyway. I mean it's nothing that we would have done much with anyway, other than maybe calling them in and talking to them and finding out, doing our social investigation and then dismissing it. But by referring to Indian Youth of America, they may have gotten extensive services. Much more than we would have done in the first place.

Q. In general that happens?

A. That they would get more services? The services are offered. How cooperative or how accepting the family was of them, I don't know. Indian Youth would have to answer that question. They would report back if they've contacted the family and offered services. We just would not be sure as to what extent that was accepted by the family...

Q. Do you receive a written report or something after each case you send them?

A. Mmhm (yes).

Q. And usually what they offer the family is more than what you would?

A. I would say so, overall.

Q. But you don't know if that's ever been followed up? And the family is under no obligation to do what this authority tells them to do?

A. Right. But I've gotten responses from the agency saying that they, they're contacting the family or they have contacted the family...

I've gotten a written referral back on every kid I've ever sent over there. But whether or not, I mean I don't follow up on those kids, so I really don't know how in depth they go,.. I'm not real familiar with their services other than they do go out to the homes and visit with the kids and the family, if the family will let them.

Blacks, Native American Indians Less Likely to be Petitioned

The next statistically significant race/ethnic finding was evident at the stage of petition. There, black youth and Native American Indians were less likely than white youth to be petitioned after controlling for legal and extralegal factors. In the interview, no differentiation was made between blacks and Native American Indians. Thus, the focus of the discussion was on the likelihood of receiving the more lenient outcome at this stage in the proceedings. Of the decision makers who responded, the theme that emerged was that the cases might have been dismissed because of legal insufficiency. One individual responded that this occurrence may be the result of the intake officers' concern with gang activity.

...not filed right, something missing or legal
insufficiency

Really, the only reason the county attorney would disagree or not file
would probably be because of legal insufficiency

Q. So it could be because intake doesn't file the problem right?

A. Yeah. . .won't file them, maybe they're
legally insufficient. That the police
investigation wasn't there or the evidence wasn't there.

They may be sending up what I believe are elevated charges. . .When I get
these cases, I don't know what race the kids are...

There is some thought that anybody who looks, or claims any gang
knowledge is going to be referred by certain entities in the intake office.
Whether or not there is a real basis for filing a petition. The crime may be

fairly minor but the elements seem to be there. He was wearing a Raiders hat at the time of the crime so perhaps this is a gang child and someone should be looking closer at him. I know that the county attorney's office may be less concerned with that than others in the office... I'm not a full believer in our gang problem.

Feelings About the Study Overall

Most of the juvenile justice decision makers in Woodbury county, especially the intake officers did not express positive feelings about the first phase of the study. Many of the personnel, however, chose not to express this sentiment on record. Of those who responded, some believed that the attempt to study their court with a standard survey instrument was inappropriate. The underlying rationale was that their particular county did things differently than the other counties.

Other officers did not agree with the operationalization of the term "informal adjustment." According to these people, many of the cases classified as an informal adjustment should have been considered a release. Some also questioned the qualifications and intentions of the personnel conducting the research. In addition, others questioned the terminology used in the final report on the findings of phase one. In particular, some took exception with the term "leniency" to describe the treatment Native American Indians received at the intake stage in the proceedings. Last, the primary project director (Michael Leiber) was seen as disrespectful for not appropriately dressing for a meeting in Sioux City between himself, other workers, and the juvenile court staff. The director wore shorts.

Overall, most of the decision makers believed the findings from phase one of the study did not accurately portray decision making in Woodbury county. Despite the negative attitudes toward the research and findings, all of the staff were extremely helpful in allowing the second phase of the project to be conducted. The quotes provided below illustrate some of the decision makers' views on Phase One of the study.

I don't think that referrals to programs were coded in the right way because most white kids get referred to ADAPT and to HANDS OFF. Most of the white kids have big high school parties and when they get busted there will be twenty to thirty kids at a time. Most white kids are minor thefts and they will get referred

Q. So the programs being coded as informals would misrepresent the number of white kids who were actually offered informals compared to the black kids.

A. I think basically what you said...There is a definition of an informal adjustment in the code and a diversion program is not what that is. So I don't think that that would define what happened to any of the kids who went through a diversion program. If you start with inaccurate statistics then whatever you would find would be inaccurate. I think the people who did the study were poorly trained and did a lot of guessing in the coding if they couldn't find a definite answer.

I question the validity of the findings, the high turn over of workers, their lack of training, and I estimate that approximately 20 percent of the data was coded in error.

...didn't like the study, it was a waste of the state's money.

Those people from last years study looked at the cards and it's right on the back of the cards, and a lot of that stuff wouldn't fit into what they were trying to study. Because they were asking us, well where does this fit in? They just put it in someplace. And also, there was also a lady who worked down there last year... the ... lady was black, and she

was very prejudiced. She feels that the blacks were treated poorly. She worked part-time at a juvenile detention center. I know this lady because I've had to deal with her sometimes when I'm on call. Her last three employers she's sued.

Q. Do you think she had enough understanding of the overall project to been able to purposely mis-code things?

A. Who checked the files after they did their work?

Q. Their supervisor did. And I also was told they tested and re-tested these people, that it was an ongoing thing to make sure things were being done correctly.

A. No, I don't think that happened at all. Because we heard comments, 'well we made a mistake, well, I'm not going to back that far.' So I don't think they really got a true story. Another thing, they did not see the kids in Eldora (state training school). It doesn't show for all the kids that are put into placement programs and we've left their charges open. If they complete their treatment, they may never brought up on the subsequent offense. I don't think a true study was done because I think there were a lot of mistakes.

Suggestions for Change

The last component of the interview involved asking the decision makers what they believed was needed to change the disproportionate overrepresentation of minority youth in secure facilities. To address this issue, personnel were asked what they thought the court's role should be, what programs could/should be implemented, and whether the hiring of minority staff would help in relating to youth of different racial/ethnic backgrounds. Keep in mind, there are no nonwhites on staff. There are also only three to four women in the juvenile court office. In addition, a large percentage of the workers within the juvenile court office are catholic and graduated from the

same schools in Sioux City. There are also number of the staff who work in the office who are related to one another (e.g., brothers, cousins, etc.).

A majority of the decision makers did not believe that the disproportionate overrepresentation of minority youth in secure facilities was their concern. A number of the decision makers believed they provided fair treatment of white youth and minority youth. Thus, most of these individuals argued that the hiring of minority staff would result in little if no change in their relations with youth. One person contended that “a minority will never work here,” Some indicated that even if they wanted to hire minority staff, no qualified minorities have applied for positions within the office or in other authority positions, in general.

Rather than hire minority staff, some suggested that there was a greater need on the part of the minorities to adapt to our culture and they themselves establish programs of their own. Others argued for programs that should emphasis family support and moral development. Still, some suggested that there are already enough programs out there to deal with the needs of the minorities. The following quotes highlight these views.

There aren't that many openings and I don't think we get many minority applicants. Yeah, I think that it might be helpful to have someone here like that.

Q. Do you think it would make any difference?

A. No. I honestly don't. There are a lot of people of color who are supervisors in the treatment centers that these kids look up to a lot.

...I don't know if they've ever had a minority person apply...

I think there are a lot of people out in the community that are working to help kids. I think there's a lot more than what people think. I think there are programs specifically for minority children...

Well, again, this is from my own observations, but the child that I see come in from the system and I ask them about their religious and spiritual background, and the ones that are repeat offenders and the ones that are really a problem are the ones that have no religion. . . I think that is reflecting upon their behavior and of the problems that they are getting into. Their spiritual growth. What I see and I think you can relate is, what I see is a black youth who just excels in sports, excels in music, but socially he's a misfit. Or he goes out and steals. That tells you something, something is not right. That involvement process isn't even. A child that should be excelling in all areas and he's only excelling in one particular area. I think we need more spiritual or religious guidance. Whether it be in the home or wherever, the child has to be exposed to it someplace.

Q. So, moral development?

A. Moral development. Yeah, there's got to be more moral development.

Q. Do you think if there was, say, an Indian or a Black JCO or intake person, do you think that would make a difference to the children who come in?

A. I guess I see our office, in particular, as being very nonprejudicial and very... I don't see them discriminating at all. We have the kids that come in and we have to work with them and we do it. And sometimes I'm amazed that, if we're talking about a particular kid, we may not recognize whatever his race is. I see people in that office not picking up on that necessarily. You can name a kid and someone else would say, is he Indian or Asian or whatever. And that intake officer would have to stop and think about it for a minute. That's not something that had been thought about in making their decision.

Q. What about the kids reactions?

A. Well, they're living in Sioux City, Iowa, which is ninety-five percent white. It's the community they're living in. If they're not used to that... It's a reality of life whether it's our office or the grocery store or in school.

Q. Do you think a person of color in a position of authority could serve as a role model to the kids?

A. Well, if we need a role model, if the blacks need a role model, one of our bosses is on the board of supervisors is... black and is very well-spoken. I wouldn't say outspoken meaning inappropriately. I think he speaks very appropriately and very clearly on his views. He is an excellent role model.

Q. So you think it's going pretty well here?

A. No, I guess I just see us plugging along. I guess when the study first came out, I probably am saying more than I should, but I did feel offended. I felt like I was being called prejudiced and I think myself as well as the rest of the people in the office work very hard to not do that.

Q. It's an offensive term. If you think it's being applied to you, it's very offensive. It also makes you very defensive.

A. Yes. I think, again, if the study was done in a couple of years, you'd have totally different results, not necessarily because you're gonna have different people, because I think there's very little turnover, even in our office. I think it's just the resources available, the lack of resources available, the whole system is so flexible and changing.

Well, I think a good example was the Native Americans. They have their own system and they try to really work with their children. I mean they'll try to have any kind of deterrent to not have their child placed in the system. For instance, the youth program that they have and I think that if the blacks and the Asians and I know the Asian population in Sioux City or the Laos population, they're coming up with those types of resources. I don't know where the money's coming from but I know resources are being brought up for these families and programs built for them. I know the blacks have very intelligent people, in that race, if they would come up with those types of programs and I guess the government won't give us money, but if those types of programs could be brought up for their

children, that could be some sort of deterrent for them.

Q. So, you're suggesting that Hispanics and Laotians do have a different culture. Do you think there's a definite black culture?

A. Yeah, I do. Yeah, I definitely do.

Q. Does the high number of minority children in the system reflect discrimination?

A. No.

Q. Do minorities commit more delinquency, which is also more serious than white youth?

A. No. I know I just contradicted what I just said. I think. I don't see this juvenile system going out and say that if this person is black or Hispanic then they must be doing something wrong because of being in a certain situation. What hit me was the number of the blacks that you said (that over 20% of those in the state training school are black). I never heard that statistic...

Some decision makers did indicate that there was need for alternative programming, especially those that focused on the family. They also believed there was need for greater diversity among the staff and for sessions on cultural sensitivity in Sioux City.

I think there needs to be job programs. There needs to be family involvement with these kids' families. The family needs to stress education...

I think we probably have to be culturally more sensitive. I think we have to a better awareness of what is going on, whether that be through philosophical things coming on through the administration on down through the system.

I sometimes feel that the court ends up being the parent. It could be a major function in terms of family situations. It's been that way in the last year or so. The only thing I would like to see is more programs, once the kid is in here, for the families as well as the kid. Some programs are doing that now.

Q. Do Blacks, Hispanics, Native American Indian youth have different needs than white youth?

A. Yeah, I think so. I think they keep getting the message that the system is skewed against them. I could see a kid for the first time and already he's labeled me as racist. He's already assuming I'm going against him because he's of color and I'm white. I think a lot of this depends on family situation. It's usually from the parents.

Q. How do you identify when there is actual racism and when it is just being used as an excuse?

A. That is why I think you have to target the family as well as the child. I think you have to have more of the same race working with the same race. I don't know if that would work. I know we don't have a class on cultural history. I think there needs to be some type of training in that area.

I'm recognizing more and more that we need to have minorities in positions of authority...My boss and I were talking...that if there was a way that we could take a student and try to sponsor them and help them get through school. That could be one way that we could do it. That's whether or not you can find the funds to do it. But, yes we need to do that. We need that.

...I think we need more positive role models for their culture...We don't have the role models or the people from their cultures present in our community. We don't have a lot of strong minority workers in treatment areas...

Q. What about recruitment?

A. I don't see it here. I don't see recruitment for minority social workers and I don't see it for the system in general. It may be going on but I don't see it. We've got white intake officers, we've got white prosecutors, we've got white social workers, we've got white probation officers...

...I think we do our part as best we can to see that kid gets treated fairly and knows he's been treated fairly. Whether he agrees with what we did or not. If we can do that then we've gained some little bit of ground. To say that we can do a whole lot, I don't think we can. I would like to be able to.

Q. Do Black, Hispanics, Native American Indian youth have different needs than white youth?

A. Kids have basic needs. Basic needs are basic needs. There are cultural differences.

Q. Are we meeting those needs?

A. I doubt it. We don't have enough facilities around here and we don't have the money to have them.

Q. One thing that I noticed in here is that everyone in the system is white and for all these children of color coming in here, do you think it would make any difference if you had some people of color among your ranks?

A. Probably would.

Summary

Two themes emerge from the responses to the closed ended questions and the interviews of the juvenile justice court personnel. The first is a concern with rehabilitation and the protection of society. The second and an interrelated theme is the emphasis placed on the adherence to white-middle class standards and values. The perception is that youth and their parents who fail to abide by these standards warrants differential treatment than those who conform or are perceived to conform to these set of criteria. Style of dress, perceived or actual gang affiliation, and parental cooperativeness appear to be factors indicative of defiance to these standards. Images of violence believed to be associated with rap music and other forms of media are also sources for nonconformity. Native American Indians are not necessarily expected to meet these standards. Blacks and other minorities, however, seem to be less likely to conform to these expectations.

The commitment decision makers have for respect and adherence to the dominant culture (beyond avoidance of delinquent activity) is not mutually shared by all. The strongest emphasis on this

ideological position is evident in intake and least emphasized by those representing the prosecution and the judicial branch. Although a working relationship exists, the schism between the two groups appears to have resulted in some tension.

Most of the decision makers feel socio—economic factors and the growing number of single parent households contribute to the disproportionate overrepresentation of minorities in secure facilities. Minorities are believed to commit more crime. Police, for the most part, are seen as doing a fine job. Arrests simply reflect responses to where crime exists. Black youth and other minorities in general, are believed to be more distrustful than whites but not less likely to deny guilt or have poorer attitudes.

Overall, most of the personnel either did not respond to questions concerning the phase one of the study or questioned the reliability and validity of the findings. Yet these people, as well as others acknowledged that Native American Indians are released via a formal agreement with Indian Youth of America. There seems to be some confusion as to what this agency does with the diverted youth. Recall, Native American Indians under court authority and those charged with a serious crime were less likely than others to be referred to petition at the intake stage.

As for the other finding at intake that younger blacks were more likely to be released than older blacks most of those who responded felt that reflected a reaction to previous practices of leniency. The youth received a number of “breaks” and now s/he will be responded to in a more strict manner. Others pointed to

the possible affiliation with gangs or an unwillingness to cooperate. One decision maker believed intake officers may have certain criteria that may result in different outcomes for certain youth.

Explanations for the finding that both blacks and Native American Indians were less likely than whites to be petitioned focused on the referral of youth on the basis of legal insufficiency. One individual believed this occurrence could be the result of intake's concern with gang activity which is not necessarily shared by the prosecutor's office.

Suggestions for addressing the issue of the disproportionate overrepresentation of minorities in secure facilities ranged from a view that the issue is not a concern of the court to the need for the recruitment of minority staff. Most of the staff, however, believed they interacted well with all youth, irrespective of their race/ethnicity. Thus, most of these individuals argued that the hiring of minority staff would result in little, if no change in their relations with youth. Rather than hire minority staff, some suggested that there was a greater need on the part of the minorities themselves to adapt to our culture and establish programs of their own. A small number of the decision makers indicated a need for alternative programming, such as family support and sessions on cultural sensitivity. These people also saw a need for the recruitment of minority staff.

Table 1. Distributions of Decision Makers' Demographics and Mean Time on Job, Woodbury County.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
Gender	Male	16	70
	Female	7	30
Race	White	23	100
	Black	--	--
Age		x = 40 std.dev. = 7.11 range = 26-50	
Years on job		x = 8 std.dev. = 6.80 range = 1-22	

Table 2. Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Role of the Court, Woodbury County.

Variable Name	Definition
IMDETRNC	Important for system to achieve deterrence?
IMSOCORD	Important for system to maintain social order?
IMPUNMNT	Important for system to achieve punishment?
IMPRTSOC	Important for system to protect society?
IMPREHAB	Important for system to achieve rehabilitation?
JLENTRET	Juveniles treated too leniently by court?
DELPTFEL	Delinquents should be prosecuted to full extent of law?
ADULTPUN	Juveniles commit violent crimes should be treated like adults?
DELDELT	Delinquents must be dealt with strictly?
ACNTCRMS	Offenders should be held accountable for crimes?
PREDEL	To prevent delinquency identify and work with predelinquents?
MININTVN	Juveniles do better with minimal intervention?
INTRVNTN	Every juvenile should receive some kind of intervention?

Table 3. Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Role of the Court, Woodbury County.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
IMDETRNC	Very important	16	70
	Pretty important	4	17
	Somewhat important	2	9
	Not too important	1	4
	Not important at all	--	--
IMSOCORD	Very important	13	57
	Pretty important	5	22
	Somewhat important	4	17
	Not too important	1	4
	Not important at all	--	--
IMPUNMNT	Very important	2	9
	Pretty important	6	26
	Somewhat important	7	31
	Not too important	4	17
	Not important at all	4	17
IMPRTS	Very important	20	87
	Pretty important	1	4
	Somewhat important	2	9
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--

Table 3-continued.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
IMPREHAB	Very important	18	78
	Pretty important	5	22
	Somewhat important	--	--
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--
JLENTRET	Strongly agree	--	--
	Agree	2	9
	Neither agree or disagree	6	26
	Disagree	14	61
	Strongly disagree	1	4
DELPTFEL	Strongly agree	1	4
	Agree	4	18
	Neither agree or disagree	11	48
	Disagree	7	30
	Strongly disagree	--	--
ADULTPUN	Strongly agree	1	4
	Agree	--	--
	Neither agree or disagree	1	4
	Disagree	16	70
	Strongly disagree	5	22
DELDELTA	Strongly agree	4	17
	Agree	11	48
	Neither agree or disagree	5	22
	Disagree	3	13
	Strongly disagree	--	--

Table 3--continued

Variable Name	Category	N	%
ACNTRMS	Strongly agree	16	70
	Agree	7	30
	Neither agree or disagree	--	--
	Disagree	--	--
	Strongly disagree	--	--
PREDEL	Strongly agree	8	35
	Agree	10	44
	Neither agree or disagree	4	17
	Disagree	1	4
	Strongly disagree	--	--
MININTVN	Strongly agree	1	4
	Agree	3	13
	Neither agree or disagree	6	26
	Disagree	10	44
	Strongly disagree	3	13
INTRVNTN	Strongly agree	4	17
	Agree	8	35
	Neither agree or disagree	2	9
	Disagree	7	30
	Strongly agree	2	9

Table 4. Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Causes of Delinquency, Woodbury County.

Variable Name	Definition
IMPLSCON	Inability to control impulses causes delinquency?
PERCHMAD	Choosing to commit delinquent acts causes delinquency?
SCHLPERF	Negative school performance causes delinquency?
PSINTYTH	Lacking positive ways to interact with youth caused delinquency?
NEGPEERS	Negative peer pressure causes delinquency?
SUBABUYT	Substance abuse by youth causes delinquency?
SOCOFYT	Failure to socialize youth causes delinquency?
LKPARSUP	Lacking parental supervision causes delinquency?
LKDISPAR	Lack of discipline by parents causes delinquency?
VIOLRES	Violence as way to resolve differences causes delinquency?
MEDIA	Violent destructive media images causes delinquency?
POVERTY	Being poor causes delinquency?
ECOSTRCT	Economic structure causes delinquency?
JOBOPTNY	Little job opportunity causes delinquency?
PSYCHPR	Emotional or psychological problems causes delinquency?
EVCOMCRM	Everyone commits crimes some just get caught?
DISINEQL	Discrimination and inequality cause delinquency?

Table 5. Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Causes of Delinquency, Woodbury County.

<u>Variable Name</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
IMPLSCON	Very important	8	35
	Pretty important	9	39
	Somewhat important	4	17
	Not too important	2	9
	Not important at all	--	--
PERCHMAD	Very important	13	57
	Pretty important	6	26
	Somewhat important	3	13
	Not too important	1	4
	Not important at all	--	--
SCHLPERF	Very important	7	30
	Pretty important	8	35
	Somewhat important	5	22
	Not too important	3	13
	Not important at all	--	--
PSINTYTH	Very important	9	39
	Pretty important	11	48
	Somewhat important	3	13
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--
NEGPEERS	Very important	7	30
	Pretty important	9	39
	Somewhat important	7	30
	Not too important	--	--

Table 5-continued.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
SUBABUYT	Very important	12	52
	Pretty important	6	26
	Somewhat important	4	18
	Not too important	1	4
	Not important at all	--	--
SOCOFYT	Very important	4	17
	Pretty important	8	35
	Somewhat important	7	31
	Not too important	4	17
	Not important at all	--	--
LKPARSUP	Very important	17	74
	Pretty important	4	18
	Somewhat important	1	4
	Not too important	1	4
	Not important at all	--	--
LKDISPAR	Very important	15	65
	Pretty important	6	26
	Somewhat important	2	9
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--
VIOLRES	Very important	8	35
	Pretty important	11	48
	Somewhat important	4	17
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--

Table 5-continued.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
MEDIA	Very important	4	17
	Pretty important	9	39
	Somewhat important	7	31
	Not too important	2	9
	Not important at all	1	4
POVERTY	Very important	2	9
	Pretty important	6	26
	Somewhat important	10	43
	Not too important	5	22
	Not important at all	--	--
ECOSTRCT	Very important	5	22
	Pretty important	4	17
	Somewhat important	9	39
	Not too important	5	22
	Not important at all	--	--
JOBOPTRY	Very important	3	13
	Pretty important	10	44
	Somewhat important	7	30
	Not too important	3	13
	Not important at all	--	--
PSYCHPR	Very important	7	30
	Pretty important	8	35
	Somewhat important	6	26
	Not too important	2	9
	Not important at all	--	--

Table 5--continued.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
EVCOMCRM	Strongly agree	3	13
	Agree	7	30
	Neither agree or disagree	5	22
	Disagree	8	35
	Strongly disagree	--	--
DISINEQL	Very important	3	13
	Pretty important	5	22
	Somewhat important	9	39
	Not too important	6	26
	Not important at all	--	--

Table 7. Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Race Difference in General, Woodbury County.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
RACRIMES	Strongly agree	--	--
	Agree	3	13
	Neither agree or disagree	1	4
	Disagree	13	57
	Strongly disagree	6	26
MINMOCRM	Strongly agree	1	4
	Agree	12	52
	Neither agree or disagree	2	9
	Disagree	7	31
	Strongly disagree	1	4
BFAMDIST	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	7	31
	Sometimes	12	52
	Almost never	3	13
	Never	1	4
BYTGUILT	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	1	4
	Sometimes	7	30
	Almost never	11	48
	Never	4	18

Table 7--continued.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
BLYATTUD	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	1	4
	Sometimes	8	35
	Almost never	11	48
	Never	3	13
JUVATUDE	Very important	5	22
	Pretty important	10	43
	Somewhat important	5	22
	Not too important	3	13
	Not important at all	--	--
PARATUDE	Very important	6	26
	Pretty important	12	52
	Somewhat important	3	13
	Not too important	2	9
	Not important at all	--	--

Table 8. Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of Police, Woodbury County

Variable Name	Definition
WHYTLENT	White youth picked up less by police than black youth?
COPTRBLK	Do police treat black youth differently than white youth?

Table 9. Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of Police, Woodbury County.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
WHYTLENT	Strongly agree	--	--
	Agree	6	26
	Neither agree or disagree	4	17
	Disagree	11	48
	Strongly disagree	2	9
COPTRBLK	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	4	18
	Sometimes	9	39
	Almost never	7	30
	Never	3	13

Table 10. Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of Race Differences in General, Woodbury County.

Variable Name	Definition
BLKTRIDI	Black youth treated differently than white youth in system?
REFBYRAC	Does race of youth play role in whether youth is referred?
RACDIFDT	Are there race differences in processing at detention stage?
RDINTAKE	Are there race differences in processing at intake stage?
RDPETITN	Are there race differences in processing at petition stage?
RDWAIVER	Are there race differences in processing at waiver?
RDINLAPR	Are there race differences in processing at initial appearance?
RDADJUD	Are there race differences in processing at adjudication?
RDDISPOS	Are there race differences in processing at disposition?

Table 11. Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of Race Differences in Processing in General, Woodbury County.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
BLKTRIDI	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	3	13
	Sometimes	7	31
	Almost never	9	39
	Never	4	17
REFBYRAC	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	5	22
	Almost never	6	26
	Never	12	52
RACDIFDT	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	3	13
	Almost never	12	52
	Never	8	35
RDINTAKE	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	7	30
	Almost never	9	39
	Never	7	30

Table 11-continued.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
RDPETITN	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	1	4
	Almost never	13	57
	Never	9	39
RDWAIVER	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	1	4
	Almost never	10	43
	Never	12	52
RDINLAPR	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	--	--
	Almost never	8	35
	Never	15	65
RDADJUD	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	--	--
	Almost never	9	39
	Never	14	61

Table 11--continued.

<u>Variable Name</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
RDDISPOS	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	3	13
	Almost never	10	43
	Never	10	43

Chapter Six

Woodbury County Youth

There were 154 youth from Woodbury county that participated in Phase Two of the research. Of those, 104 were self reports and 50 were interviews. The self reports were comprised of 64 whites and 40 blacks. Interviews conducted in Woodbury county included 27 whites and 23 minorities; 6 blacks, 8 Hispanics and 9 Native American Indians. Responses from the closed ended questions are presented in the Tables at the end of this chapter.

Questions concerning general views of discrimination were asked of youth in self reports and interviews, including general views on society, police, probation officers, school, and blame. Youth of Woodbury county did not express views of blatant race discrimination. On the other hand, they do have problems with treatment by the police that can be perceived as unfair. These perceived situations represent subtle forms of racial discrimination. All youth viewed their probation officers in a positive light and indicated fair treatment.

General Perceptions

Discrimination

In this section, youth were asked for their feelings regarding the extent racial discrimination prevails in Woodbury county. The core questions asked were, “Do you think racial discrimination exists? and is discrimination getting worse?” The attitude that

racial discrimination is getting worse is about the same for whites and blacks (69 percent of the whites, 68 percent of the blacks). Fifteen percent of the whites felt discrimination is not getting worse, while only 13 percent of the blacks felt discrimination is not getting worse. The rest of the youth neither agreed or disagreed with the statement (17 percent of the whites, 20 percent of the blacks). Tables 1 and 2 at the end of this chapter present these results.

Support for the responses from the closed ended questions can be found in the interviews. The majority of the black youth from the interviews indicate that they agree there is racial discrimination in Woodbury county. Unfortunately, most of these youth responded with a “Yeah” or provided short responses, such as “Some of them are prejudiced.” There were a few black youth who felt that there was little or no racial discrimination in Woodbury county. Again, youth seldom provided justification for their view. One black youth did respond by saying, “No, because there aren’t that many people going around with racial discrimination.” There was another black youth that believed racial discrimination was not a problem in Woodbury county, though it might be present elsewhere. This view was a common theme among all of the youth — “Not very much here. I guess in the big cities.”

The Native American youth agree with the black youth that there is racial discrimination in Woodbury county. Unlike the black youth, however, there was no variation on the responses to this question. Not one Native American youth, for example, believed racial discrimination did not exist. The views of the Native American youth are evident in the following quotes:

Q: Do you feel racial discrimination is getting worse?

A: Yes.

Q: Why?

A: Because of all of the things that we lose.

Q: Tell me about racial discrimination.

A: It is not always the case of the whites hating the blacks, but the fact that the blacks thinking that the whites hate them.

Q: How do you feel about Native Americans and discrimination?

A: Well, they always put them into reservations and if they do come into the city, a lot of them become bums and alcoholics.

Q: Do white people discriminate against Native Americans?

A: Some of them do.

Q: Have you ever had that happen?

A: Yes, when I was in grade school the kids would make fun of me, but I didn't care because I was proud to be Indian.

Q: Do you think there are barriers built right into the system to keep Native Americans or African Americans from being successful?

A: There's people who are prejudiced and that kind of thing. Mostly, it's people they are trying to stop, maybe even trying to end lives, just so they can't make it to that certain goal - out of hate or greed or something.

Q: Do you feel racial discrimination is getting worse?

A: I don't really look into it that much, but probably it might be. Just another group of people trying to get higher than the other. Competition is better and that kind of thing.

Hispanic youth, the third minority group of youth interviewed in Woodbury county, were split in their response to the question on racial discrimination. There were several youth who felt that racial discrimination was present and getting worse. It is interesting that the Hispanic youth see racial/ethnic tension as existing between blacks and Hispanics or between blacks and whites. There does not appear to be ill feelings coming from Hispanics toward whites. The following quotes demonstrate these youth feelings towards black youth.

I don't know. I just look how it is here. Two parts of town separated, I don't know. If a black person comes over to ... Avenue or whatever it looks awkward because it's all whites there.

Yeah, I do. I only think that it is because I just think it's a fad, like sexism, because of other people. Because I've met a lot of nice black people. But then they have a different attitude when they're like around their black friends. There's not that many black people in ..., so they try and stick together, and when they're not together, they got different attitudes. Well, some of them do. And when they're around their black friends, they do talk different and they walk different. It does get to me.

A: Yeah. I think it's going to get worse. I think it'll get worse before it gets better.

Q: Do you think it's going to get worse just for blacks or do you think, as a young Hispanic you might feel some of that?

A: I think, more or less, against blacks. Just the groups that they hang around in.

A positive response from one Hispanic youth on the issue of racial discrimination is centered on that s/he gets along with everybody. "I don't think there's any discrimination."

White youth interviewed in Woodbury county have varied perceptions of racial discrimination. These perceptions have developed due to various factors in the youths' lives. The most obvious of these is that many of the white youth have never experienced discrimination to a significant degree. They either live in all white neighborhoods or go to a school with an overwhelming majority of white students. One youth stated that there were only three blacks in the entire high school. These situations do not offer enough exposure to observe racial differences in order for the youth to formulate opinions on the issue.

Keeping this in mind, half of the white youth felt discrimination was worse. The other half were split between there not being any discrimination at all to discrimination is

improving. There was one twelve year old who did not even know what “discrimination” meant. When asked, “Do you feel racial discrimination is getting worse?”, there was a silence. The youth was then asked, “Do you know what I mean when I say racial discrimination?” The answer, “No.” When told that “Discrimination is when you treat someone different because of something about them, like their sex or their race. Some people say that black people in our country are treated differently because of that. Do you think that’s true?” The youth responded, “Yeah.” Asked, “Why is that so?” The youth claims that, “They always treat black people mean.”

Responses from white youth that felt racial discrimination was worse are:

Q: Do you feel racial discrimination is getting worse?

A: Yes. Just when you’re walking around in the streets and stuff, the way people will look at you if you’re different than them.

Q: If you’re a different race?

A: Yeah, and the way that they’ll treat you in school or the way that they’ll talk to you.

Q: Have you ever seen that happen?

A: Yes.

Q: Where?

A: At my school recently there was a kid who pulled a gun on another kid because he was a different color and because he didn’t like him.

Q: What color was pulling a gun on what color?

A: A Mexican was pulling a gun on a white.

Q: Usually when we think of racial discrimination we think about white people discriminating against people of color. Do you think it works the other way around?

A: I think it works both ways. It’s not just whites against blacks or whatever.

Q: Well, some other people say that blacks don’t have as easy a chance as being successful and achieving their goals as whites do. What do you

think about that? Do you think that there is racial discrimination that keeps black people down?

A: Well sure. I mean, there's some. I mean look at the stuff that they do. Everybody's going around wearing these "X" hats and stuff like that right now. They don't know what that is. That's Malcolm X. You know what

Malcolm X stood for, black supremacy against whites. They can turn around and do the same thing to whites as what we did to them. It's not like you're gonna go into a work place and they're gonna say, I can't hire you because you're black. I'm sure there are some places where it is like that, like Mississippi and that. But, there is just as much opportunity for them and there is a lot of discrimination for them, I will say that. Because even here in Iowa there's people that go around and older guys that go around calling them names and stuff like that. I get called names, you know and everybody does. It's just that they go a little bit more.

Q: Do you feel racial discrimination is getting worse?

A: Yeah.

Q: What are you basing that on? Where do you get that feeling?

A: I just see it a lot of places. I think it's pretty even on both parts. Some white people are racial against black people, but I see a lot of black people.... The... is not really a place to walk around at night time, cause there's just a lot of fights between black and whit people. A friend of mine got beat up by three black kids in the bushes while I was gone. For no reason apparently.

Q: Do you think white people beat up black people for no reason?

A: Yeah.

Q: Why do you suppose that is?

A: I think it's just that they wanna see who's better.

Q: Do you mean as a race or as an individual?

A: Sometimes as an individual and sometimes as a race.

Responses from white youth who felt racial discrimination is not getting worse are demonstrated in the following quotes:

Q: Do you feel racial discrimination is getting worse?

A: No.

Q: Why would you say that it's not getting worse?

A: I think everybody is getting along more.

Q: Do you feel racial discrimination is getting worse?

A: I think it depends on where you live. Here I think it is somewhat but not really.

Q: Do you feel racial discrimination is getting worse?

A: Not with me. Just as long as it ain't with me. It might be with other people but I get along with blacks, whites, Mexicans, anybody.

Q: Do you think racial discrimination is getting worse?

A: Maybe in other states. Like in Mississippi and California and stuff. Up here I don't really think so.

The following quotes are from white youth who believed there was not any racial discrimination.

Q: Do you feel racial discrimination is getting worse? A lot of people talk about different treatment on the basis of race. Have you ever seen any of that?

A: People being treated differently because of their color?

Q: Yes.

A: No. I only know about.... There's not anything going on over there. I haven't seen anything.

Q: But discrimination, that's treating someone different because they are black, not because they have an attitude. Do you think it's getting worse? Do you think that in society it's getting worse?

A: I don't think it's getting worse here. It might be in inner cities.

Q: Have you ever seen it? That people are treated differently just because they were black?

A: No.

It is interesting to point out that once again discrimination is perceived as a problem existing elsewhere like "Mississippi" or in "California." In their opinion, the racial discrimination that they have actually seen in Woodbury county does not exist or it is not really that bad. According to these youth, if racial discrimination exists it is the fault of the blacks because they "do stuff" to cause the discrimination against themselves.

According to several white youth, the “X” hats and the “attitude” that blacks have along with the “yelling” and being loud causes others to treat them differently.

Job Opportunities

Youth were next questioned on equal job opportunities for blacks (Tables 1, 2). A majority of youth questioned felt that blacks can get as good of a job as whites can (78 percent of the whites, 88 percent of the blacks). More whites felt that blacks could not get as good a job as whites (15 percent), while only 3 percent of the blacks questioned felt this way. The remaining youth neither agreed or disagreed with the statement (8 percent of the whites, 10 percent of the blacks). The impressions from the interviews concur with these results.

Nearly all of the white youth interviewed believe that in the workplace both blacks and whites are provided equal opportunities, such as getting hired and receiving equal pay. Oddly enough, nearly all of the black youth interviewed also agree with this perception.

There were very few white youth that felt blacks did not have the same employment and salary opportunities as whites. The following quotes support this view.

Q: Do you feel that a black person who has the same education and qualifications can get as good a job as a white person?

A: No. Because America is ... they came here and nobody liked them. Most of the people in the government are white. I don't know how to explain it.

Q: Well, do you think those negative feelings towards black people are getting more intense?

A: Yes. In different areas. A lot of people just don't like blacks because they are black.

Q: Do you feel that a black person who has the same education and qualifications can get as good a job as a white person?

A: Probably not.

In another interview, a white youth believes that job opportunities for blacks are equal but when probed further responds, “No, cause they don’t think that they could do that. They’re black. They’re different.” When asked what this statement meant, the white youth goes on to say, “Black people think they can. I think it’s the employers that think black people should or could not do that because they don’t want a black person working for them.”

A black youth responds to the question, “Is the system equal? If you have the same qualifications, education, can you get the job?” by saying, “I think so, but lots of black and white people say ‘you’re nothing but a nigger, you’re not going to make it’.”

There was one white youth who felt job opportunities were “better” for blacks than for whites.

Some black people have a better chance than white people just because, say a big corporation doesn’t have that many black people working for them, it’s smarter for them to hire a black person than a white person.

The Native American youth have different perceptions of the availability of job opportunities. The Native American youth, for the most part, believe that job opportunities for them is poor. The blame for the lack of opportunities, however, does not lie on racial discrimination. The youth overall have mixed emotions for the source of the problem. Several feel that many Native Americans have serious problems with alcohol and drugs. Another problem area is education. One Native American youth felt that whites had better opportunities because they (whites) like school. The implication here is

that if Native American children do not like school, they are not going to get employment. The quote that supports this idea follows:

Q: Do you feel that a Native American who has the same education and qualifications can get as good a job as a white person?

A: No. White like school.

One Native American youth when asked, “Do you feel that a Native American who has the same education and qualifications can get as good a job as a white person?”, responded with:

Yes, I guess. I guess it’s just how their employer might feel. How ever he feels against whites or whatever the color, it just depends on how he feels.”

The Hispanic youth in Woodbury county were not asked questions about job opportunities. Breakdowns in communication between the Hispanic youth and the interviewer were evident. Some of the Hispanic youth responded with “I don’t know.”

Future Opportunities

The question that was asked for this section was, “In the next five years, do you think that the opportunities for blacks to get ahead will improve or get worse?” This question attempts to provide indication of what direction racial discrimination is taking. The majority of youth questioned in the self reports felt that opportunities for blacks in the next five years would be about the same (47 percent of the whites, 48 percent of the blacks). More whites felt opportunities for blacks would improve (38 percent of the whites, 33 percent of the blacks). However, more blacks felt opportunities for them would get worse (20 percent of the blacks, 16 percent of the whites). The results indicated are found in Tables 1 and 2.

In the interviews, half of the black youth of Woodbury county believe that the opportunities for blacks will improve and half believe opportunities will worsen. Again, there is a lack of elaboration in the responses. The answers were often short, “Get better,” or “Get worse.”

The majority of the white youth feel that the opportunities for blacks is only going to improve. Some of the positive responses were:

Well, I think it's going to get better. The ones downtown are the only ones that bother me. They're not different, they just make people think of them different because of the way they act. If they didn't do it then people wouldn't say anything about it.

It looks like it might get better. Because I see more blacks staying in school.

I think the opportunities for blacks will open up.

I think it will probably improve.

Probably better.

Improve.

One youth offered an interesting perspective on racial problems by stating that, “Probably the next year or so it'll get worse but after that I think it'll get better.” When probed to find out why the youth thought it would get worse in the next year the response was:

Because there are a lot of problems right now and there are people who have never had problems in their life before that are saying, ‘Hey, look at what you're doing to my brother’ that I never met before. They will be thinking about it a lot more.

One white youth took the reverse approach in answering the question, “In the next five years, do you think that the opportunities for blacks to get ahead will improve or get worse?”

I don't know, with all the gangs and stuff. It depends on what happens. Five years from now it could be the other way around. It could be all blacks in Congress and none of us (whites) are. It could be equal. Blacks and whites and Mexicans.

It all depends on what they do. I think it might get worse, the violence for gangs and then people might start discriminating more and so their opportunities will get worse.

The following response to the question is frightening. Fortunately there was only one white youth who felt that things will never change one way or another. The response to the racial situation in five years was:

It'll be about the same. Because there will always be people that don't like blacks because they are black. You can't change that.

White youth seem eager to place the blame on the blacks for any racial problems that may exist. There is a recurring theme that there is always blacks with an "attitude" or behave "different." Even though the majority of the white youth do not see themselves as racist, subtle biases are evident. For example, "Because America is. . .they came here and nobody liked them" or "...they're not different, they just make people think of them different because of the way they act. If they didn't do it then people wouldn't say anything about it."

The question, "In the next five years, do you think that the opportunities for Native Americans to get ahead will improve or get worse?" was asked of the Native American youth interviewed. Of those that responded, opportunities were believed to "improve" or "stay the same."

Of the Hispanic youth that were asked the question, "In the next 5 years, do you think the opportunities for blacks to get ahead will improve or get worse?" The response was split between "getting better" and "getting worse."

Trust

The question asked in this section was, “Do you personally feel that you can trust most black/white people, some black/white people, or none at all?” In the closed ended questions, more whites felt that most black people can be trusted (37 percent) compared to blacks who felt they could trust most whites (15 percent). Most of the white youth felt that some blacks can be trusted (57 percent) and most blacks felt the same about whites (75 percent). Only 7 percent of the whites felt they cannot trust any blacks, while 10 percent of the blacks felt no white people could be trusted (Tables 1, 2).

The overall response to this question in the open ended interviews was pretty consistent. The youth appear to deal with the concept of trust on a different level. Trusting or not trusting a person is decided by a completely different set of criteria. Fortunately, one of the criteria is not the person’s skin color. The youth base their judgments and decisions of trust on a personal basis. And, most importantly, they hold all people to the same standards. The youth trust people only if they deserve to be trusted; black, white, or any other ethnic group. An example of quotes from the white youth highlight this view:

I think I can trust them. It depends on what their actions are or what they do, not just cause they’re black.

I can trust most of them.

I can trust some of them. Where I used to live I could trust them. We used to live with a whole bunch of black people.

Just a couple of them. There are very few people that I trust. A couple of them are black and some are white.

Yeah, it all depends on who they are.

An example of quotes from Native American youth are as follows:

I trust everybody, I feel equally about everybody.

Most all my friends are white and I get along with most everybody I can, cause I really don't like having enemies.

I can trust both. Most of them.

Black youth and Hispanic youth did not expand beyond "Yeah" or "Some."

Youth appear to have the perception of trust as something that is earned or deserved. Anyone can earn that trust, irrespective of race. There are, of course, a few that have had negative experiences in life that they will not give anyone the chance to be trusted. This particular case can be illustrated by a quote from one white youth, "I wouldn't really trust anybody."

Summary

The overall awareness of racial discrimination among the youth is fairly consistent. The trend seems to be that the white, Hispanic and Native American youth see racial discrimination occurring in Woodbury county. Black youth do not seem to think racial discrimination is a problem. The few that do believe there is racial discrimination feel that it is the same as it has always been and will remain that way. Job opportunities were seen as equal by the majority of all youth.

All youth seemed optimistic about the future. The one exception was Hispanics.

Immigration status appeared to impact their perceptions.

Trust of youth of different races, for the most part, is something that is believed to be earned. Nearly all of the youth were consistent in this particular belief. The Hispanic youth were the only group that expressed a slight lack of trust for blacks.

According to the Hispanic youth this was not due to race. Hispanic youth simply did not know any blacks or did not associate with them socially to any degree.

Perceptions of Police

In order to keep the following perceptions of the youth interviewed in perspective, some background may be helpful. Contact with the police seemed to be more frequent with the black youth, which would give them a broader base to draw from in their responses during the interviews. There was only one case in which this was the first offense for a black youth. The white youth interviewed in Woodbury county, as a whole, seemed to range from middle class to lower upper class youth. Only a very few of the youth were chronic offenders; many were first time offenders. All of the black and white youth claim they have overall respect for the police.

The majority of the interviewed Native American and Hispanic youth of Woodbury county have had extensive contact with the police. There were only a select few that were first time offenders and offered responses based on minimal contact with the police.

Treatment

The treatment youth feel they receive from police officers is the next topic to be addressed. Results from the self reports show that more whites, than do blacks, felt the police treat them fairly most of the time (47 percent of the whites, 23 percent of the blacks). Blacks (53 percent) felt they were treated fair sometimes

(45 percent of the whites), while only 11 percent of the whites felt they were never treated fairly by police. Twenty-six percent of the blacks felt they were never treated fairly by police (Tables 3, 4).

Most white youth, from the interviews, do not have a problem with the treatment they receive from the police. White youth who do not feel police treat them fairly are those most in trouble. Black youth have more to say on the topic of unfair treatment. However, there are some cases where black youth believe they are treated fairly by the police. Quotes follow from white and black youth in response to the question, “Do you feel the police treat you fairly?”

White youth

Yeah, I guess so.

Yeah.

They treated me like anyone else.

They were pretty big assholes, but they're paid to be that. They were as fair as they could be in a situation like that.

No.

No. I've had cops treat me like total shit.

Black youth

No. This one girl waited up in my yard for me because she wanted to fight me. And she was white so I went up there and she said ‘me and you are going to fight.’ I said, ‘I’ll beat you up.’ We had people in our house for DHS and they was out there and she pushed me so I punched her in the stomach and the are and the police came and asked about it. He said they (the daughter, mother and dad) are filing charges. I said ‘she waited in my yard for me and pushed me first.’ He said he didn’t care and wrote me up but did nothing to her. And at the park

he always yells at the black kids and not the white kids. And my mom said, 'wait .a minute, it takes two to fight....'

A:...I ran away from home. The cops were chasing me for some reason. They thought I did something, but I ran, not knowing why they were looking for me... I was kind of drunk... They chased me all over. I ran to a car in the alley. He looked and saw me and pulled a gun on me. Then he put the gun in my face and told me to get up. The he grabbed me from the car.

Q: Did you try to get away from him?

A: No, I was scared. I was like, 'Alright. Alright.' Then he started punching me in the back a bunch of times. Then he handcuffed one hand and started punching me on this side. Then he handcuffed this hand and started punching me on this side. My hands were in the handcuffs and he grabbed them and pulled my arms up my back, so I jumped up on top of the car and he started hitting me. I had witnesses standing there and they were like, ; Leave him alone. Stop hitting him. He's not fighting you.' He was like, 'You shut up or you're going to jail.' He threw me in the cop car and my foot was hanging out the door. I said, 'Hey man, watch my foot.' He said, 'What foot?' and he slammed the door right on my foot. When I got to JD, my ankle had a big old scar and everything. I told my mom about it and she was mad. She tried to press charges and stuff, but they said I was fighting them back. There was nothing I could do, cuz they're gonna believe the police officer over me anyway.

Yeah. But they wouldn't listen to what we had to say.

Kind of.

Yeah.

Verbal abuse is cited as the main justification for the perceived unfair treatment of white youth. This is in contrast to the justification perceived by black youth. Black youth indicate that their interaction with the police is physical in nature.

All of the Native American and all but one Hispanic youth feel they are treated fairly by the police. It is important to remember that these youth are responding to their perceptions of fairness based on their own individual treatment by the police and not to the fairness of treatment they feel they receive as a race. Quotes

from the Native American and Hispanic youth are as follows:

Native American youth

Yeah, they didn't really say anything to me.

Yes, they have.

Hispanic youth

They treated me nice. If you don't fight back to them or anything. Once they got you, just let them arrest you. They'll just put you in the car.

A: Well, I will be just walking down the street and a cop will pull over and say "Hi," all of these cops know me.

Q: Are they fair with you though?

A: Yeah.

Yeah, they have. I think they have. Except one time. I got really scared and that's when I got caught. This cop jumped out of a van and said, "Let's kick the shit out of him." And I remember exactly. And then this guy goes, "No, I remember him. He's only like some age." So he said, "I'll take him in." And he was really nice.

The one Hispanic youth who felt that the police did not treat him fairly is quoted as saying:

A: No.

Q: Why not? What did they do that wasn't fair?

A: When they came to school for us, I told them that I was two blocks away when the kid got hit but I still got arrested.

This Hispanic youth, and most youth in general, do not appear to understand the specifics of the law. That is, they do not know why they were arrested. As a consequence, the unfair treatment they feel is taking place may be due to a lack of communication between the adults and the youth.

Going beyond perceptions of individual treatment the interviewer next ask youth about perceived treatment of all people by the police. The self reports indicate that most of the youth felt that police only sometimes treat blacks and whites the same

(58 percent of the whites, 55 percent of the blacks). Only 18 percent of the blacks (compared to 23 percent of the whites) felt the police always treat blacks and whites the same, and 28 percent of the blacks (compared to 19 percent of the whites) felt that the police never treat blacks and whites the same (Tables 3, 4).

In the open ended interviews, for the most part, the responses to whether or not police treat all people alike are quite negative. The majority of the white youth believe that the police treat all people alike. Most minorities believe that the police do not treat all people alike. The following quotes are in response to the question “Do you feel that police officers treat all people alike?”

White youth

Yeah.

Yeah. Well, some don't care what they do just as long as they get them in jail and they get their job done so then they can go down to the donut shop.

No. Well, if you be nice to them they'll be nice to you.

It depends where you are. Some do and some don't.

No. The seriousness of the offense makes the difference.

Black youth

Some cops are racial.

A: No. They just like messing with you because they know you aren't going to do nothing back...

Q: Why do you think they mess with you? Or do you think they do that to all kids?

A: I think they be doing it to everybody. They like to follow you. Last night, my friend got followed. He was walking and the cops followed him in the car. He was walking for a long time and finally he stopped and the car went on by. They just chased him for the fun of it.

Q: Maybe they thought he was running from something? A:

No. They made him run. Every time you see the police

you're gonna run because you think they're gonna do something to you. So he said he saw them and then he ran and when he finally stopped they passed him. He just started walking regularly.

Q: What is there about those people that would make the cops act that way towards them?

A: Cause the way they walk...

Q: If you were white and walked and talked like that, would they stop a white person?

A: Not really.

Q: Why not?

A: Cause they think that mostly like black and Mexican people get in the most trouble, so they suspect they're going to do something wrong.

Hispanic youth

Q: Well, when people get arrested, I want to know this, do you think the police treat the white kids the same way they treat Hispanic kids?

A: Yeah.

Q: You think they treated you the same as they would have treated anybody else? You think if you were rich they'd have treated you that way?

A: Yeah.

Q: Do you think if you were white or black they would have treated you that way?

A: Yeah.

A: No.

Q: Who do they treat better and who do they treat worse?

A: Best, they treat the white people.

Q: Worst?

A: The blacks and Mexicans. And the Indians, too.

Q: You really think they pick on minorities?

A: Mmhmm.

Q: Do you think, aside from that gang problem, do you think that the police treat white people and Hispanic or black people or people from other countries, do you think that the police treat them just like they do white people?

A: No.

Q: Now, tell me why.

A: Cause if a white people have black, really black tinted windows, oh, it's okay. If a black people or a Mexican goes by with a black window or too dark of a window, oh, stop right away.

Q: How do you know that?

A: Cause they did it to my friend. One of my friends.

Native American youth

Q: You think they treat white people the same as they treat black people?

A: Probably meaner because they run from the police.

Q: Black people run from the police?

A: Yeah.

Q: Do you think that the police treat Indian people the same way they treat white people?

A: Yeah.

Q: Do you feel that police officers treat all people alike?

A: Probably.

Q: Have you ever had any of your friends tell you any different?

A: No.

Q: Do you feel that police officer treat all people alike?

A: No, not to my brother and my cousin. They were arguing and when the police came to get them, they were calling them minorities and cutting them down. But after they got them to JD the police told them they were sorry and not to mention it. My cousin was going to go along with it, but my brother didn't.

Q: Do you think that they would have done that to anyone or do you believe they did it because they are Native American?

A: No, I believe they would have done that to any minority.

Q: Do you feel that police officers treat all people alike?

A: No.

Q: Why do you say that?

A: Well, you know it's just like they try to be angry and stuff. They'll start throwing you around and slamming you on the ground.

This section of the interview asks the question, “Do you feel that the police are always picking on blacks?” The self report indicates that 28 percent of the blacks felt that police officers always picked on blacks, while only 11 percent of the whites thought blacks were always picked on. About the same number of whites and blacks felt the police sometimes picked on blacks (33 percent of the whites, 38 percent of the blacks), while 35 percent of the blacks felt police never picked on blacks. Fifty-seven percent of the whites felt the police never picked on blacks (Tables 3, 4).

The views found in the self reports can also be seen in the open ended interviews. In the interviews, the majority of the youth feel that police are not picking on blacks in their own community, however, it is believed to happen in other places. A few white youth think that police do pick on blacks in Woodbury county and their quotes are particularly meaningful. The rest have never witnessed this behavior. A sample of their quotes:

Black youth

No, ma’am.

I don’t know. I guess sometimes. I’ve never seen it but people tell me that.

White youth

I don’t know if they do here, but I’m sure that some do.

No. The Rodney King deal, yeah. I haven’t seen it around here.

No. But some of them act like, I’m a cop and I can arrest you if I want to.

Some do. Sometime they are a little bit rougher, like they might push them a little more.

No.

A: I think they treat black kids better sometimes, cause they’re scared maybe. I think cops are scared.

Q: You mean of physical harm or being accused of being a racist?

A: Physical harm and being accused of being a racist. You drive by ... about 12:00 at night. You'll see more black people sitting in that alley on that corner than you'll ever probably see in your life, and they do not do a thing about it. You'll see these black people sitting there getting drunk, getting in fights, doing cocaine right there on the street, and the cops'll just drive by and look away. They're scared.

Q: An you've seen this?

A: Oh yeah. I've had to by there before, every night, to go home.

Yeah, it depends, I've seen it in California and I've seen it here. There's a black guy calmly talking to a cop and he raises his hand for something and the cop puts his face down in the hood. Stuff like that, that they wouldn't do to a normal person. Very few do, but there are some. I mean, you can't go through a department and pick out one because there aren't that many. Maybe a couple.

It is interesting to point out the wording in the above quote. The youth says, "...that they wouldn't do to a normal person." One wonders if this youth views whites as "normal" people and blacks as "abnormal?"

Hispanics were asked, "Do you feel that the police are always picking on Hispanics?" Hispanics, as a whole, believe that, "Yes" they are picked on by the police.

The Native Americans were asked, "Do you feel that the police are always picking on Indians?" Their overall response to the question was "No." There was one Native American who did feel Indians were picked on. This quote states:

Yeah, they get arrested more, and if they try to fight them in jail, they always get beat up.

Respect

The responses varied to the question, "Do you have a lot of respect for the police?" It seems blacks, in the self report, have less respect for the police than whites. Forty percent of the blacks strongly disagree with the statement compared to only 28 percent of the

whites. Thirty-three percent of the whites strongly agreed with the statement, while only 20 percent of the blacks said they respected the police. The remainder of the youth neither agreed or disagreed with the statement (39 percent of the whites, 40 percent of the blacks). Tables 3 and 4 provide the results.

The feeling that emerges from the majority of the white youth interviewed is quite blase'. The police are not seen as very competent. This is demonstrated by the following quotes:

I don't know what you call respect. A lot of people think respect to the police is to not say anything to them. To just let them do their thing and listen to them. ...I'm not gonna be disrespectful in the normal way but if they ask me a question I'm not just gonna answer, I'm gonna give them a piece of my mind, too. They don't really know what's happening in a lot of situations.

The impression is that youth want the opportunity to explain the situation. In addition, the white youth think that the police do not have a clear picture on what is "happening" or "going on" in different situations. As a whole, the white youth do not feel that they get much, if any, respect from the police. Quotes like the following make this quite clear.

Sometimes. Unless they're being cocky. Because I've seen cops just stop kids and be cocky about it.

Yeah, as long as they respect me.

Yeah, if they show me some.

I'd just look at a cop, and if I wouldn't get in trouble, I'd probably spit on him. I don't like cops, that guy arrested me for the littlest things.. I don't think they're doing their job. They're going around telling these kids how big a losers they are and they're gonna go to prison for the rest of their life or something.

There are the two or three interviews from white youth that demonstrate respect for the police. In these cases, the interviewees simply responded to the question, "Do you

have a lot of respect for the police?”, with a “Yes” or “Yeah, I don’t hate them or anything. Like a lot of people.”

Black youth and Hispanic youth all claim to have respect for the police. Responses were limited to “Yes” and “Yeah.” These responses differ from the self reports. This could be due to the small sample of blacks that were interviewed in Woodbury county.

The Native American youth split on their views of respect. Some feel that the police are their “enemies” and “dicks.” Then there are others that respect the police.

The youth of Woodbury county do not see the police as desirable role models. Only a small number of youth in the self reports said they would like to be a police officer (16 percent of the whites, 6 percent of the blacks). A higher percentage of whites also responded by saying sometimes (27 percent) than blacks (8 percent). Nearly all of the black youth questioned (88 percent) said they would never be a cop, compared to only 58 percent of the whites (Tables 3, 4).

When asked in the open ended interviews, “Would you like to be a police officer?”, the overwhelming response was “No!” Some of the youth gave reasons for this response.

White youth

It just isn’t my thing

I don’t think I’d like it because of the danger or the people that don’t like police.

I did when I was little. I don’t think I want to now.

Not if my life depended on it. I don't like telling other people what to do. Busting people for stupid stuff.

Black youth

No. Police officers get treated dirty. People be throwing rocks at them.

No. You might get killed or something.

No. Because I see a lot of police getting shot. Hispanic youth

No. Because by the time I am old enough to be a cop there will be way too much crime and drugs and guns. I don't think I ever wanted to be one.

Native American youth

Mmhmn. A sniper.

I'd like to be one in a great big city. I like the violence.

When I was younger, I said, "When I grow up, I wanna be a police officer," cause every little kid wants to be the good guy, cops and robbers and that kind of think. It's still a little thought in my mind.

The Native American youth were the only group that actually wanted to be police officers. The Native American youth also appear to see the role of police officer in association with violence. If they become police officers, then it is okay to be violent (see quotes above).

The police in Woodbury county are sometimes seen as humorous characters by some of the white youth. At different times throughout the interviews the white youth convey that many times the officers are inept in their profession. A particular white youth, when asked, ". . .do the police do a fine job...?" sums it up by saying:

They do what they can because they can't catch us. Me and my friends just know the area too well and they could never catch us. We would leap fences, crawl into places, run on the tops of cars to get away. They don't patrol. . .well, they do, but never when anything is going wrong. Dominos would get there first.

Perceptions of Probation Officers

This section focuses on the youth perceptions of probation officers in Woodbury county. The majority of the white youth do not have extensive criminal records. Many of the youth interviewed are familiar with one probation officer. Responses were for the most part short and precise. Therefore, there is a lack of good quotes. All youth seem to have good relationships with their probation officers. There is only a select few that expressed negative feelings about their officers. The youth that do have negative comments have more severe records or have committed more serious crimes.

Treatment

In response to the question, “On the current referral, do you feel the probation officer treated you fairly?”, positive feelings are evident. These feelings are supported in both the open ended interviews and the closed ended self reports. The self reports show that most of the youth questioned felt their probation officers treated them fairly (72 percent of the whites, 80 percent of the blacks). Fifteen percent of the whites and 9 percent of the blacks believed their probation officer sometimes treated them fairly, while 13 percent of the whites and 12 percent of the blacks felt they were never treated fairly by their probation officer (Tables 5, 6).

The interviews reveal that the majority of the youth feel their probation officers treat them fairly. They do not have any lengthy comments on the topic, just “Yes” and “Yeah.” The communication level between the white youth and their probation

officers seems to be rather high. There are positive statements like: “She understand where I’m coming from a lot of the time” and “He listens to me.” On the other hand, there are some youth that expressed negative feelings. These answers were simply “No.”

All of the black youth feel they have been treated fairly by their probation officers. Again, in many cases, they have had only contact with one probation officer and only volunteer information on that specific officer. Quotes from some of the black youth include:

Yeah.

I think treats me fairly and she treats _____ (a white friend) fairly. She’s cool. I like her. She’s very nice.

All of the Hispanic youth and Native American youth feel they have been treated fairly by their probation officers. Each of their responses were brief and to the point. Just a simple “Yeah.”

When asked about the probation officers treatment of all people, the response was positive. Again, this feeling is supported with both the open ended interviews and the closed ended self reports. The question asked was, “Do you feel that probation officers treat all people alike?” The majority of youth in the self reports believe probation officers do not treat whites better than blacks (80 percent of the whites, 71 percent of the blacks). Only 2 percent of the whites and 8 percent of the blacks feel probation officers sometimes treat whites better than blacks. Only a small percentage of youth (2 percent of the whites, 8 percent of the blacks) felt probation officers never treat whites better than

blacks (Tables 5, 6). Generally, probation officers are perceived to treat blacks and whites equally.

There were two negative interviewees from white youth who felt they have been treated too harshly. One of the white youth was very good at saying exactly what the probation officer wanted to hear. This youth figured out how to satisfy the probation officer. This white youth said, "When they ask if everything's okay at home, you say, yes. Even if it's not. It's none of their business. They should want to know what's going on with you, not your whole family." The interviewer probes this and asks, "I think the idea is that the family does affect you." Youth responds, "It does, but some people have that problem, other people don't."

There was one Native American youth and one Hispanic youth that felt probation officers did not treat all people alike. The Native American youth refers to what he has heard from friends.

Well, not all. My friends, they're on probation also. I guess they say to me I have the best P0 out of them all, cuz some of them are nice and keep track of you and seeing you. From what I hear, I guess I must have a pretty nice P0. I'm grateful for it.

The Hispanic youth responds to the question, "Do you think they'd treat you the same way if you were white?":

Yeah. If we all were white. If one is Mexican, they'd treat him different. They think it's only Mexicans, blacks, and Indians in gangs.

Trust and Respect

The areas of trust and respect towards probation officers is examined in the following section. The self reports dealt with the area of trust and the open ended interviews looked more closely at respect. Most of the youth in the self reports felt probation officers could always be trusted (77 percent of the whites, 50 percent of the blacks). However, more whites trusted their probation officers than blacks. Fourteen percent of the whites and 22 percent of the blacks said they never trust their probation officer. The rest said their probation officer can be trusted sometimes (Tables 5, 6).

The open ended interviews asked the question, “What do you think of your P0?” The overall perception of youth in Woodbury is positive. They respect their probation officers. There appears to be a level of open communication and a certain amount of concern on the part of the officers. Some quotes that support the more positive feelings towards probation officers are as follows:

White youth

I think he does his job good. You don't just go down there and say, “I'm on home visit. Hi. I'm doing good,” and leave. You talk to him about it. He really gets into things when you talk to him about it. It ain't over real quick. He talks about it, sorts out all the details and stuff and you talk about those, too. I just think he talks really good. He know a lot.

He does a good job at what he's doing. He does a very good job. But sometimes he extends that too far. He goes out of his way to make sure that this kid stays on probation.

The idea is my probation officer is my friend and he's never going to do anything to me. And they might like you but they're going to do their job to do a good job.

I think he's a pretty nice guy. He does his job. Sometimes he forgets to do something because he kind of gets too busy.

He's nice. He does a good job.

Black youth

He's nice. He talks to you about your problems if you have any.

She thinks I'm honest with her. I can tell her anything. I trust her a lot.

She does a good job.

I feel he's like my friend.

He's a good person. He's nice. He listens to what you gotta say. He understands stuff.

Hispanic youth

I like him. I think that he does a real good job.

He did a good job for me. I wanted to come home. I like

it. He's really helpful. If I have a problem, I can talk to him. And if I'm stuck or something, he'll try to do everything he can to help me.

For one thing, I respect her. I think they're just doing their job.

Native American youth

He is doing a good job.

Yes, he does a good job. He's still going with what I need. Every time I come down here he's got something new

- it might be good advice or bad advice. Most likely it's good advice, something that can give me guidance.

I think he's alright. I think he's fair.

The idea of becoming a probation officer does not seem to appeal to the youth of Woodbury county. The self reports indicate that 74 percent of the whites and 94 percent of the blacks would never become a probation officer. Eighteen percent of the whites said they would sometimes be a probation officer and 13 percent of the whites said they would like to be a probation officer. Only 6 percent of the blacks said sometimes while 0 percent said they would like to be a probation officer (Tables 5, 6).

The interviews also support the above ideas. When asked in the interview, "Would you like to be a P0?", the answer was "No." There were not any quotes to really

substantiate this feeling. There were one or two that “might” like to try the job but the rest felt the job would be “boring,” they “couldn’t do that” kind of work or there was “too much paperwork.”

Problems In The System

This section deals with the overall feelings the youth have of the juvenile justice system in general. From the responses, youth do not feel that there are any problems with the juvenile justice system. Many of these juveniles have only experienced small segments of the system, have only been through once or have never had a negative experience with the juvenile justice system. The majority of these youth believe that they are guilty and deserved what they got.

There was one white youth who did voice a complaint against the system. This youth replied:

I think that they should read juveniles their rights because it is just unfair. Juveniles have rights too. I just think it is unfair because some people don’t know what their rights are.

There was also another white youth who felt that the system overreacts to situations.

Yeah. A lot of it was like attitude. You’re a drug addict, you’re an alcoholic, you beat your sister. I’m like, I kicked a car door, send me to jail.

There were two black youth who had some suggestions for the juvenile justice system. They felt that the system was fair but would like to see some minor changes.

The first black youth believed that he should be seeing his probation officer weekly. The interviewer suggested that the reason the youth didn't have to come as often anymore might be because the probation officer trusted him. This pleased the youth but he still responded:

I didn't know. Cause when I come to see _____ all the time, it makes me think all the time. And if I come see him every week, I'd be thinking every week.

The second black youth responded to the system by indicating that the system is too quick to remove them from their home.

I don't think they should take kids out of their homes, taking them from their families. Put them on probation and check in on them once in awhile and make sure that they get counseling and stuff.

One Native American youth offered a suggestion about children and treatment. In response to the question, "Should children be put into treatment?", the youth responded:

A: Yes, there are some children that really do need it.

Q: If you had to set up a system to deal with these types of children, would you do it the same way?

A: No, I would set it up so that the child could be with his family and talk to his family more about his problems and the problems that he has with his family.

Q: Do you think that some families cause the problems?

A: Yeah, some kids say that their family is the problem. Maybe the mom goes out a lot and the dad gets drunk a lot so the kid sees this and thinks that he should go out and do it to.

Overall, these youth do not see major problems with the system. They just feel there are some things that could make it easier for the youth and their families to conform to the demands placed upon them.

Perceptions of School

Perceptions of school are examined in this section. Racial problems, grades, college expectations and future goals are discussed with white, black, Hispanic and Native American youth. Treatment by the teachers is evaluated in the self reports.

Although most of the youth in the self reports thought teachers treated blacks and whites the same, more blacks thought they were treated differently (65 percent of the whites said blacks and whites were always treated the same, while only 41 percent of the blacks felt this way). Only 6 percent of the whites thought teachers never treat blacks and whites the same, compared to 23 percent for the blacks. The rest (36 percent of the blacks, 29 percent of the whites) said sometimes (Tables 7, 8).

The interviews conducted with the Woodbury county youth basically reflect the same results as the self reports. However, it should be noted that the white youth either do not go to school in areas where there is a high minority population or they are not exposed to any problems with racial discrimination. Several of the youth stated that there were only “two or three blacks” in their high school or that there were “no blacks” at all. Given this information, it is difficult to speculate on racial problems in the schools. The few that did say they were in school with blacks and other minorities felt that all students were treated the same. The white youth had not witnessed different treatment towards blacks. Whites believed that teachers were fair and gave equal treatment to all.

The Hispanic youth concur with the whites in their views of equal treatment in the school. There was only once instance where a youth felt somewhat discriminated against

because the teacher would not let s/he sit with their friends. It is not really apparent if this was due to race. The Hispanic youth did feel that the teacher would not let them all sit together because the teacher thought they might be in a gang.

Most of the Native American youth do not feel they are treated any differently at school. There were two Native Americans that believed race was an issue at school. The quotes from these youth are as follows:

Q: Did the teachers treat you pretty good in school?

A: Yeah.

Q: Do you think that teachers treat everyone the same way?

A: They might be nicer to some other kid than another.

Q: Do you think it has anything to do with what race you are?

A: Yeah.

The other quote from a Native American Indian youth follows a discussion about a fight that took place at school. The fight was between a white and a Native American Indian. The Native American was kicked out of school. The following questioning took place in the interview.

Q: Why did you get kicked out? Really, why do you think so?

A: They had a school board meeting and they said the only reason why they would do that is for my safety. They kick out the Indians and Mexicans but the other guys they don't.

Q: What other guys?

A: The whites. They don't get as much as us.

Q: Do you think racial discrimination really goes on in the schools?

A: Yeah. But not all the time, just sometimes.

Black youth have a different view of these situations than whites and other minorities.

These youth feel that they are treated differently in school. In many situations, they can not always articulate exactly what the problem is but they can effectively cite situations where they have experienced differential treatment. One must keep in mind that these youth (as with the white youth) have usually, in some way or another, caused a problem within the classroom or school and had experienced disciplined in some form. Keeping this in mind, quotes are provided that illustrate black youth feelings of frustration. The quotes are in response to the question, “Do you think you get treated different because you’re black?”

Yes. At my school I used to get into a lot of trouble for fighting. . . . one time this black boy slapped me. He came up in the hall when I was going for lunch and said, ‘you lied’ and I went in to tell the teachers and then they said okay we’ll do something, but they never did and that’s how it always went. Once this kid kept pushing me on the ground getting my clothes dirty and I said (to the teachers) ‘I’m not going to do nothin’ to him but you better tell him to quit’ because I was already in trouble and didn’t want to do nothing. ...they said, ‘well, clam down and we’ ll talk to ‘ but they never did. . . . when I did that to someone, they yelled and kicked me out of school. . . . the principal was prejudiced against all black, Mexicans and stuff.

They treat me different from all the rest. Like, just because I’m black they don’t believe me. I’m not supposed to be telling the truth. I don’t lie about big things and I get in trouble because I’m lying. Say, for instance, if another student hit me or something and I hit them back, I get in trouble. If I’m into it with a white girl, it’s my fault. But it really don’t matter to me because there will always be tomorrow. I don’t let it bother me a lot.

The following quote is especially interesting. The youth describes an experiment that he did at his school to see if people are prejudiced. The following details the incident

We did this one thing this year. Me and a bunch of friends had a black guy almost get in a fight with a white guy on purpose and have the black guy say he started it and see what kind of trouble he got into. We had an argument and had a teacher come. We had a black guy say he started it

and go to the principal's office. He got three days outta school. And then we did it again about in another month or so. It was totally two different people, totally different situation and everything. We had the white guy do it and he only got like a night's detention and that was it, for the same thing. I know a couple black friends of my sisters. They got in a fight. They got kicked out for three days. Two white girls got in a fight. They got two nights detention out of the whole thing. I do a lot of tests like that to see if people are really prejudiced.

The responses to whether or not the youth "liked school" were positive. Race did not enter into this response, but conditions affected the answer. If the youth were good students, then they liked school. If the youth were poor students and always in trouble in school, then they were either kicked out of school or dropped out.

College was in the future plans of the majority of the black youth and the white youth. This phenomenon seemed to be ingrained in these two groups. Their perceptions are that a college education is necessary in order to get good jobs and the "things you want." The problem enters when one looks at how realistic some of the goals are that the youth have selected.

For both the black youth and the white youth college aspirations seem realistic. The youth that have a specific goal (major) or career in mind tend to be the same youth that are good students and have parents that have some type of formal education beyond high school. These youth may very well succeed. On the other hand, one has to wonder how realistic college is for youth that have no direction in their lives, are struggling in school now or have dropped out. An example, one black youth who is constantly in trouble and has been kicked out of school wants to become a lawyer. Black youth who believe they are treated equally in school also tend to have more serious college plans with goals in mind.

The Hispanic youth and the Native American youth were split in their views about college. Some did not know for sure about college or did not want to go. The other half had college in their plans and specific career goals. The careers that the youth have selected seemed pretty much in align with what they could attain. The youth that knew they did not want to go to college also had specific jobs in mind. These jobs fit the capabilities of the youth quite well. Jobs such as carpenter, Navy, boxer, and auto body repair were among the goals of these youth.

Perceptions of Blame

The majority of youth in the self reports, as seen in Tables 7 and 8, blamed themselves for getting in trouble with the law (76 percent of the whites, 68 percent of the blacks). More blacks felt they were not to blame (25 percent) compared to the whites (14 percent). The rest of the youth neither agreed or disagreed with the statement (9 percent of the whites, 8 percent of the blacks).

In the interviews the question, “Who is to blame if you can’t get what you want?” is asked. This question is trying to find out if the youth perceive failures or lack of achievements as being their fault or someone elses. All of the youth unanimously blame themselves. Even when probed further, the youth did not blame society, parents, anyone or anything other than themselves for any misfortunate happenings in their lives.

Summary

The youth have taken into consideration discrimination from a broad perspective that entails job opportunities (present and future), trust of people, police officers, probation officers, school (present and future) and blame in general. Both white and minority youth agree that racial discrimination exists in many of the above areas in their own community. However, the youth believe that discrimination is probably worse in the “big cities” or somewhere else than in Woodbury county.

Job opportunities were seen by the majority of all youth as being equal. The few that saw racial discrimination in the job market felt it was due to the employers. All youth are optimistic about future job opportunities. The majority view future opportunities as getting better or improving. Hispanics, on the other hand, were more negative on this issue.

Trust, for the most part, is seen by youth as something that is earned. Nearly all of the youth consistently held this particular belief. Hispanic youth were the only group that expressed a slight lack of trust towards blacks.

Youth felt that they, as individuals, were treated fairly by police officers. Whites and minorities varied in their responses concerning how police officers treat all people in general. Minorities felt that they were picked on, while white youth felt that police picked on “kids” in general. Thus, for whites differential treatment was not viewed as a racial problem. All youth indicated a vast amount of respect towards the police. With the exception of Native American youth, youth unanimously would not like to be police officers.

Youth have positive relationships with their probation officers. They believe, for the most part, treatment from their probation officers is fair. Communication lines appear to be open between probation officers and all youth.

According to the youth, race discrimination is not a problem in the schools. Youth like school and many of them would like to go on to college. Most youth placed blame on themselves for their current situation.

Table 1. Definition of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Discrimination in General, Woodbury County.

Variable Name	Definition
DISCRWRS	Racial discrimination getting worse?
BLKBREAK	Most white people want blacks to get a better break?
BLACKJOB	Feel blacks can get as good a job as whites?
FUTOPP	Black opportunities in the next five years?
FUTDISCR	Do you think there will be discrimination ten years from now?
TRTJSTWB	Feel about trusting white or black people?
BLKRIGHT	Best way for blacks to gain rights?

Table 2. Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Discrimination in General, Woodbury County.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
DISCRWRS	Strongly agree	26	41	14	35
	Agree	18	28	13	32
	Neither agree or disagree	11	17	8	20
	Disagree	8	12	2	5
	Strongly disagree	1	2	3	7
BLKBREAK	Strongly agree	12	19	5	12
	Agree	17	27	13	32
	Neither agree or disagree	19	30	10	25
	Disagree	12	19	10	25
	Strongly disagree	4	6	2	5
BLACKJOB	Strongly agree	30	47	14	35
	Agree	20	31	21	52
	Neither agree or disagree	5	8	4	10
	Disagree	8	12	--	--
	Strongly disagree	1	2	1	2
FUTOPP	Improve	24	37	13	32
	About the same	30	47	19	47
	Get worse	10	16	8	20
FUTDISCR	Less discrimination	23	36	8	20
	Equal amount of discrimination	20	32	10	25
	More discrimination	20	32	22	55

Table 2-continued.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
TRUSTWB	Most	23	37	6	15
	Some	35	56	30	75
	None	4	6	4	10
BLKRIGHT	Laws and persuasion	29	45	11	27
	Nonviolent protest	32	50	26	65
	Use violence	3	5	3	7

Table 3. Definition of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Police in General, Woodbury County.

Variable Name	Definition
COPFAIR	Do police treat you fairly?
COPATTD	Do you think police think they are big shots?
COPBWSAM	Do you think police treat black and white alike?
RICHPOOR	Do you think police treat rich and poor alike?
COPPICK	Do you think police always picking on blacks?
COPHELP	If help needed would you go to police?
RESPCOP	Have a lot of respect for the police?
BECOP	Would you like to be a police officer when grow up?
COPACCUS	Do you think police accuse of things you did not do?
COPINNOC	Do you think police try to arrest innocent people?
MORECOP	Do you think city better off if more police?
COPCRIT	Do you think police criticized too often?
PREVTRBL	Do you think police pick on people who in trouble before?
BUYOUT	Do you think most police let buy you way out of trouble?
COPSTEAL	Do you think police can get away with stealing?
COPARRST	What do police place emphasis on in deciding to arrest?

Table 4. Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Police in General, Woodbury County.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
COPFAIR	Always	3	5	3	7
	Most of the time	25	39	6	15
	Sometimes	29	45	21	52
	Almost never	2	3	5	12
	Never	5	8	5	12
COPATTD	Always	14	22	14	36
	Most of the time	21	33	6	15
	Sometimes	20	31	19	47
	Almost never	6	9	--	--
	Never	3	5	1	2
COPEWSAM	Always	2	3	1	2
	Most of the time	13	20	6	15
	Sometimes	37	58	22	55
	Almost never	11	17	9	22
	Never	1	2	2	5
RICHPOOR	Always	1	2	1	2
	Most of the time	6	9	5	12
	Sometimes	25	39	14	35
	Almost never	17	27	10	25
	Never	15	23	10	25

Table 4-continued

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
COPPICK	Always	3	7	--	--
	Most of the time	6	9	5	12
	Sometimes	26	41	22	55
	Almost never	24	37	6	15
	Never	8	12	4	10
COPHELP	Always	7	11	7	17
	Most of the time	15	23	6	15
	Sometimes	21	33	14	35
	Almost never	14	22	6	15
	Never	7	11	7	17
RESPCOP	Strongly agree	3	5	--	--
	Agree	18	28	8	20
	Neither agree or disagree	25	39	16	40
	Disagree	14	22	10	25
	Strongly disagree	4	6	6	15
BECOP	Always	8	12	1	2
	Most of the time	2	3	1	2
	Sometimes	17	27	3	7
	Almost never	7	11	3	7
	Never	30	47	32	80
COPACCUS	Always	7	11	6	15
	Most of the time	9	14	3	7
	Sometimes	28	44	23	57
	Almost never	15	23	3	7
	Never	5	8	5	12

Table 4-continued

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
COPINNOC	Always	2	3	1	2
	Most of the time	3	5	4	10
	Sometimes	16	25	15	37
	Almost never	28	44	6	15
	Never	15	23	14	35
MORECOP	Always	6	9	3	7
	Most of the time	6	9	3	7
	Sometimes	28	44	17	42
	Almost never	16	25	4	10
	Never	8	12	13	32
COPCRIT	Always	5	8	9	22
	Most of the time	12	19	6	15
	Sometimes	36	56	19	47
	Almost never	7	11	2	5
	Never	4	6	4	10
PREVTRBL	Always	12	19	12	30
	Most of the time	18	28	11	27
	Sometimes	27	42	14	35
	Almost never	7	11	1	2
	Never	--	--	2	5
BUYOUT	Always	--	--	--	--
	Most of the time	2	3	3	7
	Sometimes	10	16	7	17
	Almost never	22	34	11	27
	Never	30	47	19	47

Table 4-continued

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
COPSTEAL	Always	3	5	3	7
	Most of the time	8	12	3	7
	Sometimes	17	27	13	32
	Almost never	21	33	6	15
	Never	15	23	15	37
COPARRST	Recommendations of the victim	13	20	10	25
	Past prior record	12	19	5	12
	Minority status	1	2	3	7
	Family considerations	4	6	1	2
	Seriousness of the offense	27	42	19	47
	Other	7	1	2	5

Table 5. Definition of Variables Use to Represent Youths' View of Probation Officers in General, Woodbury County.

Variable Name	Definition
POFAIR	Do you think probation officers treat you fairly?
POACCUSE	Do you think probation officers accuse of things you did not do?
POTROUBL	Do you think probation officers pick on people who been in trouble before?
POWBSAME	Do you think probation officers treat white and black the same?
PORICH	Do you think probation officers treat rich and poor same?
POWHITE	Do you think probation officers treat whites better than blacks?
POHELP	Would you go to probation officers if needed help?
POATTD	Do you think probation officers are big shots?
TRUSTPO	Do you trust your probation officers?
BEPO	Would you like to be a probation officer?
POTHINK	How much you care about what probation officer thinks?
POBAD	Probation officer thinks you are a bad kid?

Table 6. Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Probation Officers in General, Woodbury County.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
POFAIR	Always	28	46	20	57
	Most of the time	16	26	8	23
	Sometimes	9	15	3	8
	Almost never	6	10	2	6
	Never	2	3	2	6
POACCUSE	Always	2	3	2	6
	Most of the time	1	2	5	14
	Sometimes	12	20	12	33
	Almost never	27	44	7	19
	Never	19	31	10	28
POTROUBL	Always	4	7	6	16
	Most of the time	17	28	6	16
	Sometimes	16	26	12	32
	Almost never	14	23	4	11
	Never	10	16	9	24
POWBSAME	Always	19	31	12	32
	Most of the time	24	39	11	30
	Sometimes	18	29	7	19
	Almost never	1	2	4	11
	Never	--	--	3	8

Table 6-continued.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
PORICH	Always	20	32	9	25
	Most of the time	20	32	6	17
	Sometimes	18	29	10	28
	Almost never	4	6	5	14
	Never	--	--	6	17
POWHITE	Always	1	3	--	--
	Most of the time	1	2	2	5
	Sometimes	11	18	7	19
	Almost never	20	33	8	22
	Never	28	47	19	51
POHELP	Always	7	11	6	16
	Most of the time	8	13	7	19
	Sometimes	25	40	8	22
	Almost never	11	18	4	11
	Never	11	18	12	32
POATTD	Always	4	6	2	5
	Most of the time	6	10	2	5
	Sometimes	25	40	17	46
	Almost never	14	23	9	24
	Never	13	21	7	19
TRUSTPO	Always	21	35	8	22
	Most of the time	25	42	10	28
	Sometimes	6	10	10	28
	Almost never	4	7	2	6
	Never	4	7	6	17

Table 6-continued.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
BEPO	Always	2	3	--	--
	Most of the time	3	5	--	--
	Sometimes	11	18	2	6
	Almost never	13	21	3	8
	Never	33	53	31	86
POTHINK	A lot	22	36	9	26
	Some	27	44	17	49
	Not at all	12	20	9	26
POBAD	Strongly agree	3	5	2	6
	Agree	2	3	5	15
	Neither agree or disagree	12	21	9	26
	Disagree	25	44	13	38
	Strongly disagree	15	26	5	15

Table 7. Definition of Variables Use to Represent Youths' View of School and Blame for Current Situation in General, Woodbury County.

Variable Name	Definition
TCBWSAME	Teachers treat black and white students alike?
TCRPSAME	Teachers treat rich and poor students alike?
BLAMSELF	Blame self for trouble with law?
BLAMFAM	Blame family for trouble with law?
BLAMPEER	Blame peers for trouble with law?
BLAMPOL	Blame police for trouble with law?
BLAMJCT	Blame juvenile court for trouble with law?
BLAMSOC	Blame society for trouble with law?

Table 8. Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of School and Blame for Current Situation in General, Woodbury County.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
TCBWSAME	Always	21	33	10	26
	Most of the time	20	32	6	15
	Sometimes	18	29	14	36
	Almost never	4	6	5	13
	Never	--	--	4	10
TCRPSANE	Always	18	29	9	22
	Most of the time	21	33	6	15
	Sometimes	18	29	15	37
	Almost never	5	8	4	10
	Never	1	2	6	15
BLAMSELF	Strongly agree	22	34	14	35
	Agree	27	42	13	32
	Neither agree or disagree	6	9	3	7
	Disagree	6	9	4	10
	Strongly disagree	3	5	6	15
BLAMFAM	Strongly agree	2	3	1	2
	Agree	5	8	1	2
	Neither agree or disagree	10	16	3	7
	Disagree	24	37	13	32
	Strongly disagree	23	36	22	55

Table 8--continued.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
BLAMPEER	Strongly agree	8	12	5	12
	Agree	10	16	6	15
	Neither agree or disagree	10	16	3	7
	Disagree	25	39	12	30
	Strongly disagree	11	17	14	35
BLAMPOL	Strongly agree	1	2	3	7
	Agree	2	3	4	10
	Neither agree or disagree	7	11	5	12
	Disagree	30	47	11	27
	Strongly disagree	24	37	17	42
BLAMJCT	Strongly agree	--	--	1	2
	Agree	4	6	4	10
	Neither agree or disagree	3	5	5	12
	Disagree	27	42	12	30
	Strongly disagree	30	47	18	45
BLAMSOC	Strongly agree	1	2	2	5
	Agree	1	2	4	10
	Neither agree or disagree	8	13	3	7
	Disagree	28	44	14	35
	Strongly disagree	25	40	17	42

Chapter Seven
ADULT DECISION MAKERS POLK COUNTY

Twenty—eight juvenile court decision makers were interviewed in this county. The demographics and mean length of time on the job for these individuals are presented in Table 1 at the end of the chapter. Of the 28 decision makers, 19 were male and 9 were female. Twenty-six are white and 2 are black. The mean age of the personnel was 42. The mean length of time on the job was 10 years.

In general, decision makers from Polk county believe that youth choose to engage in delinquent activity. This assumption, coupled with heavy caseloads and demands for holding youth accountable for their behavior, may explain the adherence to a legalistic orientation. An emphasis on speed and efficiency, with minimal intervention is evident. Rehabilitation is seen as important but unattainable given the perceived views, orientation, and demands that are placed upon the decision makers. Personnel felt that blacks were more often than whites to be involved in drug offenses. Black families were also perceive to be less willing to cooperate with staff. A lack of trust towards the system was as an underlying factor for this occurrence. Concern was expressed by the decision makers regarding bias and discrimination at the level of the police. Suggestions for the hiring of more minority personnel was needed as a means to provide role models for nonwhite youth.

Perceived Role of the Court and Views of the System

Protect Society and Hold Youth Accountable

Almost all decision makers believe that maintaining social order and protecting society are very to somewhat important in interacting with youth (Tables 2, 3). In the personal interviews, juvenile court officers indicated they would like to be more involved in rehabilitation but have found themselves “stretched in too many directions.” As a result, less of an emphasis is placed on that part of the job, though it is seen as important.

Juvenile court officers had mixed opinions on whether the court treats juveniles too leniently (18 percent answered strongly agree/agree and 50 percent responded with a disagree/strongly disagree). Eighty-two percent, however, did believe it is very to somewhat important for the system to achieve punishment. Seventy-one percent agree that delinquents must be dealt with strictly, and 96 percent strongly agree/agree that offenders should be held accountable for their crimes. Thus, the emphasis in Polk county appears to be on holding youth accountable and dealing with them in a strict manner.

Each of the above sentiments is evident when reading the interviews conducted with decision makers. A few officers felt pressure from the legislators to be protectors of the community. The location of the Polk county juvenile court office in Des Moines seems to have impacted the officers perceived role. As indicated by some officers,

The legislature covers such a broad range of people and the rural countries have very different needs than the urban areas and each legislator is most concerned about the area that they represent. So, it does present some problems. . . I think they have more of a concern about protecting the community than rehabilitation.

I think we have always done a pretty good job of trying to weigh the best interests of the community against the best interests of the child but at times the community screams louder to be protected.

Another group of juvenile court officers feel their role has changed from the one of a social work emphasis from the earlier years to one of legalities and punishment.

When I started, the basic philosophy in juvenile court nation wide was *parens patriae* in regard to helping them and trying to assess and assist families as a wise parent would do. . . that system is disappearing from juvenile court work, and the juvenile justice system is moving more toward a junior criminal justice system with the accent on due process.

Today we are more involved in trying to determine the legal ramifications and requirements. In the past we were more social workers.

When juvenile court officers were asked about the factors that hinder their job, the lack of resources including such things as time, money, and the availability of placements were a recurring theme. High case loads and an insufficient number of case workers appears to have placed a strain on juvenile court officers causing stress, burnout, and even feelings of hopelessness. The lack of time to deal with youth due to the increased amount of paperwork was stressed by a number of the juvenile court officers.

There is extremely more paperwork and bureaucratic red tape, so to speak, that is required in order to process cases. As a juvenile court officer I spend much more time now doing paperwork and investigating whether the case meets the criteria of the code rather than actually spending the time with kids and their families.

I think that the system is overwhelmed with the numbers anymore. We don't have the time, just in the few years that I have been here I have seen a drastic change in the time JCOs can spend trying to make a difference. I don't know if we have much of a chance at all when all we are doing now is shuffling papers around because we have so many cases. It used to be a requirement when I first came here, that you had to meet with your probation kids at least once a week and I think that it was important to keep weekly contact to remind them that somebody is checking up on them otherwise it is silly. Probation is kind of worthless, if we are going to do it, just like the adults do and have them send a card every three months, and I know they do that because there are just too many numbers, but that is crazy and it isn't getting you anywhere.

Lack of financial resources was also seen as a major downfall of the system. One officer says,

I see resources as a big factor but at the same time I can appreciate and understand that we only have a certain size of pie to cut up and what I'm saying is that I don't believe that the children and youth in this community are getting a big enough piece of that pie. I think that our legislators are choosing to divide up that pie differently.

Overall, the issue mentioned most often when officers were asked about the deficiencies in the system was the extreme lack of placements available to juveniles, and especially for female youth. One juvenile court officer states,

There just isn't enough space out there. So, the only kids that really get detained are the ones that are so bad that they probably belong in adult court.

The number of beds available for a teenage female in the state of Iowa are preposterously low.

There are very few placements for girls.

Females are hard to place. Basically, we have the state training school in Toledo, a few other placements that I can't tell you right off hand and I used to have an out of state placement, which is probably not going to be available anymore.

Immediate consequences for a child are sometimes not possible to do. It can be months before they are seen at intake and by that time the kid has sort of forgotten what he did, some of them. Things that cause the system to slow down so bad are lack of placements.

Causes of Delinquency

Many different factors were mentioned as possible causes of delinquency by the juvenile court officers of Polk county (Tables 4, 5). The causes that stood out from the responses to the closed ended questions were: negative peer pressure (100 percent responded very to somewhat important), substance abuse (92 percent responded very to somewhat important), and negative school performance (93 percent responded very to somewhat important). Seventy-eight percent of the juvenile court officers also did not see poverty or economic structure as important explanations delinquency. Underlying these perceived causes of delinquency is the impression that youth choose to engage in delinquent behavior. This could then possibly explain why decision makers feel so strongly about punishment and a legalistic orientation toward youth.

As in the responses to the closed ended questions, peer pressure and hanging around with the wrong crowd are seen in the interviews as the most important causes of delinquency.

I think a lot of it has to do with peer pressure and the decision at the time. If they decide to get into trouble, it just kind of snowballs to the point where they're going to do it and they don't think of the consequences.

I think the youths that I have contact with are getting into trouble because they have fallen in with the wrong crowd. I think that a lot of them are just in the wrong place at the wrong time. I think peers play a big part in what is going on with our jobs here.

Ninety percent of the problem is hanging around with the wrong crowd. You are who you associate with.

Underlying these perceptions is the belief that delinquency is a personal choice; not a symptom of environmental factors. Low self-esteem, however, was another factor mentioned as a possible cause of delinquency.

There's a lack of communication out there between today's youth and the community itself. I don't feel that they're really needed for anything important. I think their self-esteem is low, there's nothing for them to do, their parents aren't there to boost their self-esteem or the parents are there to do everything for them to the point where they don't have to do anything, so they've got time on their hands and they just go out and get into trouble just to see if they can do it.

Although decision makers generally do not see economic factors playing a role, a few officers did point to the lack of opportunities and money as possible explanations of delinquency. Due to the lack of jobs and opportunities for further education,

some youth are believed to be turning to activities such as drug dealing as a means of obtaining material things they want and feel they deserve (e.g., a nice car, nice clothes, and house). “What teenager wants to go out and get a job at Burger King making \$4/hour when they can stand on a street corner and sell crack for \$350/hour.” Thus, this perception is consistent with the view that youth choose to engage in delinquency. Accordingly, it is perceived that money becomes available to youth who engage in drug dealing. As a consequence, immediate gratification is rewarded over patience and hardwork.

Family

Family and educational issues were also mentioned in the interviews quite frequently. Strong emotions were exhibited by the juvenile court officers concerning the effects these institutions have on either causing or deterring a child from becoming involved in delinquency.

Juvenile court officers feel that family values are not stressed. In fact, the perception is that parents are not teaching good values to their children.

We appear to have more families than we used to that spend less time together and are less interested in each other’s activities and encourage each other less, especially parent and child, and they are out doing things that aren’t directly related to family cohesiveness and togetherness and family identity.

Parents are also seen as less involved with their children’s lives and not instilling the drive or the will to succeed. This is especially seen in the school setting. “The school isn’t

getting the support from the parents that it needs.” Parents should work together with their children and take more responsibility for how well or poorly they do. Parents are seen as spending more time away from home and to be less involved in the lives of their children. Accordingly, youth look for love and attention in other places, such as gangs.

Decision makers also mentioned a lack of emphasis placed on education. Personnel believed that the lack of socialization toward educational goals might lead to a perpetuation of the cycle of uneducated and unemployed people.

Most of the parents are so unsocialized themselves that they have no idea how to help their child fill out a job application, how to present themselves for an employment interview, how to socially interact with their peers. They didn’t know and they can’t pass that along to their children and it is just a never ending cycle.

Juvenile court decision makers also saw a need for parenting training either in schools or included somehow in prenatal classes. This was believed to be essential for the prevention of child abuse.

I think that we need to put more of our efforts into child abuse prevention, early information to young parents or people of child bearing age on how they go about raising children and the kinds of things parents do. It seems like there are a lot of people who don’t understand any of those. I think that there need to be more classes in the schools but unfortunately a lot of those kids who need the classes are the ones who have dropped out. So, I think we are going to have to rely on our clinics and our hospitals to step up on the prenatal classes and we need to find a way to get all these people in for prenatal care so we can get them into prenatal classes.

School

Many juvenile court officers also saw dropping out of school as a cause of delinquency. According to the decision makers, dropping out of school gives teenagers “too much time on their hands”. It was also suggested that educated people find more socially acceptable ways to spend their time and solve their problems. One officer told, “We need to figure out how to keep kids hooked into the educational program because education is the key to our youth, no matter what color they are.”

The officers expressed concern with school discipline and programming. A lack of minority teachers and role models, as well as the lack of parent involvement in school activities were also cited as important factors in the explanations of delinquent behavior.

School discipline was said to be out of control in the Des Moines system.

Suspension was thought to be used much too often.

All it does is put them back out on the streets and makes it even worse.

They [teachers] don't think that a kid misbehaving in the classroom is their responsibility. It goes to the administration and they don't want the kid in school. I think 20 years ago they would keep you there. If you send a kid who is misbehaving home, what are you accomplishing?

The schools were described as very intolerant and pushing youth out of the school system who do not conform to the ideal model student.

I don't like the way schools tend to push behavior disorder kids out of the system.

They seem to want to turn the kids over to the court and let the court send them somewhere and fix them so that they can come back and be good students. I know that the kids are difficult to work with but I think that the schools need to make more of an effort to deal with the kids in the classroom and in the community more than they do.

Schools pass kids and move them on to the next grade even when they shouldn't be just so the school can get them out so they don't have to deal with them. Some kids graduate without even being able to read.

A few of the juvenile court officers believed schools were ineffective in providing alternative educational programs for students who do not conform to regular school programming. A need for more programs which would focus on problematic youth was expressed by a number of the officers.

I would like to see more testing to identify kids' strengths and programming along that line for them rather than the opposite, looking for all of their problems and then identifying those. Perhaps we need to go back to more kinds of vocational training for kids with strengths in those areas.

Decision makers also argued for an increase in the hiring of minorities within the school system. It is believed that these people could provide needed role models for minority youth.

Schools don't have enough minority role models within the system, particularly at the elementary level. I think that if we had more black people in education, in the roles of teaching, and that sort of thing, it would really help a lot.

I think the administration needs to hire more minorities.

Parents were also seen as not involved with their children and the school. "The school isn't getting the support from the

parents that it needs. Thus, parents should be working together with their children and taking more responsibility for how well or poorly they do in school.

Race Differences in General

In this section, questions were asked of decision makers regarding their views on crime and the attitudes of blacks and other minorities. Specifically, whether or not blacks and whites differed either in the types of crimes committed or the attitudes they displayed were the focus of the inquiry. For the most part, blacks are believed to be more frequently convicted of drug offenses but do not commit more or more serious crime. Also, blacks were not necessarily seen as being more disrespectful even though their families were less trusting of the system.

Crime

Juvenile justice decision makers were asked if they believed blacks commit different crimes and more crime in contrast to whites. Responses to these close ended questions and others are presented in Tables six and seven.

A large percentage of the personnel did not agree with the statement that blacks commit different crimes than whites (75 percent strongly disagreed/disagreed) or more crime (64 percent strongly disagreed/disagreed). Fourteen percent, however, agreed with the latter statement.

The dominant theme from the interviews confirmed the belief that black youth do not commit more crime and/or more serious

crime. There are some officers, however, who believe that minorities commit different types of crimes. A few juvenile court officers from Polk county suggest blacks are more often involved in drug offenses.

The majority of the crimes we see black youths getting into is usually possession with intent to deliver narcotics, controlled substance.

We get a lot of drug referrals from the police. Probably more on minorities than we do on others.

A few officers saw blacks as committing more crime than whites. Poverty in the black community was provided as an explanation for this occurrence.

There is a higher percentage of petty crimes going on in the lower economic areas than there are in other areas and that is probably very simply that the kids out there don't have to shoplift because they have cash.

the poverty that the minorities live in adds to all the rest of these problems, the helplessness, the hopelessness that everyone feels and it gets perpetuated from one generation to the next. I think that often that snowballs a lot of this other stuff.

A few of the juvenile court officers did not see any differences in either the types of crimes or in the number of crimes committed by black youth. "Black youth get caught more and turned in more but don't necessarily commit more or more serious crimes." On the other hand, there were a few officers who stated, "I believe that more blacks commit crimes and that is why there are more being detained." These individuals deny any effects of race bias or discrimination as possible factors.

Distrust of the System

Forty-two percent of the decision makers indicated that blacks are less respectful than whites (Tables 6, 7).

As a group, they [present themselves less respectfully than whites. I think that works against them and I think that is unfortunate but that is just the way, as a group, the blacks tend to react and in the long run it does hurt.

I think the kids who come from the inner city tend to be more disrespectful, they haven't learned the socialization that maybe some of the other kids who come from the suburbs have.

Black families were seen as those primarily more distrustful of the system. Yet, 82% responded that blacks are not less likely to admit guilt. This view is highlighted by the following statement,

I see the upper class kids in West Des Moines who think that they have the world by the tail because they have money and they don't give a damn what the heck they have done. So, I guess I would have to say that I see more inner city kids being more remorseful for what they have done.

Race Differences in Processing

In this section questions are asked about the stages of processing and the disproportionate overrepresentation of minorities in the system. Probation officers did not recognize race differences at any individual stage in the proceedings, except possibly at the police level. Police discrimination was provided as a possible explanation for the disproportionate overrepresentation of minorities in the system.

Police

In response to the closed ended questions, the decision makers were in disagreement over whether white youth are picked up less by the police than black youth (Table 8, 9). Twenty-five percent agreed with that statement while 39 percent disagreed. Sixty-four percent, however, responded most of the time/sometimes that police treat black youth differently.

In reading the interviews, the juvenile court officers from Polk county strongly believe that if there is any race bias in the system, it occurs at the level of the police. Many had comments such as these,

I think there is a lot more discrimination on the part of the police in this town.

The police are more likely to get upset with and arrest a black youth than a white.

I don't think there's any doubt that as a group the police are a pretty prejudiced group against blacks.

Law enforcement is where the most blatant discrimination occurs.

I don't see race bias in the system at least from the juvenile court point on. I see race as having very little to do with who gets filed on and what goes on. However, it could enter the system by the fact that if they [blacks] are in fact being picked up more often by the police or being targeted out there to get them here.

Juvenile court officers were asked to explain this occurrence. Two explanations emerged. The first suggested a lack of education on the part of the police officers.

The police force is not made up of college graduates and studies show that the more education you have, the more you view things with an open mind and that would allow you to be less prejudice.

The second explanation provided to account for the different treatment given blacks by police centered on police deployment patterns.

The police are concentrating in areas where most of the people living there are minorities. So, if that is where they are concentrating their effort, that is who they are going to arrest.

When police have to go into the same area over and over it makes them weary and therefore more apt to just go ahead and book them.

The Disproportionate Overrepresentation of Minorities

The decision makers gave a wide range of opinions regarding what factors may account for the disproportionate overrepresentation of minorities in secure facilities.

Their responses were usually “catchall” statements which named everything from racism and prejudice to gang activity and economics. They seemed to see it as a combination of many factors and were unable to narrow it down to a specific explanation.

Socioeconomic level, education opportunities, job opportunities, prejudice in society in general.

I don't know. I could never state that racism doesn't have something to do with it. If it does, that sickens me. It might. I don't know that there is any validity to the fact that , statistically in our society, black families tend to be broken more than whites or any other race. I don't know if minorities

tend to be drawn to gang activities more than whites.

A couple of decision makers, however, did indicate the focus by police on blacks and the inner cities may be a central factor.

When I first started here I noticed the disproportionate number of blacks in the system and I kind of compared the percentage of the population to what I saw come through here and I didn't see a difference here. I have heard those same statistics about other parts of the country and perhaps that is changing here also. But, I think that may have to do primarily with the fact that the inner city areas are mostly minorities and because of the conditions in those areas; economic, family structure, school. I think that the police focus more on those areas and I also think that there is a real difference between those kinds of crime blacks commit, violent crimes, and the white collar crimes that a lot of the white youth are committing.

There is a high proportion of minorities in the inner city. They are more visible and they are targeted, but it is not because they are black. It is because of where they live.

Overall, a majority (61 percent) of the decision makers do not feel that the race of a delinquent influences the likelihood of referral (Table 10, 11). Fifty percent said almost never to never are blacks treated differently than whites. The other 50 percent, however, said always, most of the time or sometimes blacks are treated differently. Only a very small minority of the decision makers believed race differences exist at any of the specific stages in the proceedings.

During the interview, the decision makers were asked if they saw race bias in the system. Some thought that bias does occur and that this is reflected by either harsher or different treatment of blacks. There were a couple of people, however, who

denied that any race bias whatsoever exists in the system. There were a number of officers also who did not answer the question.

I think that society tends to deal with their minority youth much more harshly for the same crimes as non-minority persons and that is evident by the number of minorities in prison. Society has chosen to deal with, and this is just my personal opinion, minorities and the problems they have and run into by locking them up.

I think that there is still, in our society, a perpetuation of the racist philosophy and the gender thing, the old values of society... that males and females are treated differently and that blacks and whites are treated differently. I think those persist.

I don't see any race bias in the system. We are professionals, trained and selected among several candidates. We are selected to look at the facts of the case and make that decision based on the individual and the facts of the case. If we weren't doing our job properly we wouldn't be employed very long.

When an individual is detained, at no point and time is there information given as to his race. He is detained on the basis of the crime he has committed.

Specific Findings

Decision makers were asked for their input or feelings concerning findings from the first phase of the research.. That phase involved the recording of information from case files on case processing and case outcomes for black youth and white youth in Polk county. For the most part, the results for Polk county were not very controversial and therefore most officers agreed with all of the findings. A few did have interesting comments or explanations for the observed effects.

Blacks and Detention

The first finding discovered in Polk county was that detention is an important factor in determining case outcome. In preliminary analyses, black youth were found to be detained more often in contrast to white youth, after controlling for legal and extralegal variables. Officers indicated that detention was used for those believed to be a poor probation risk, who have committed more serious crimes, or have responded badly in other situations.

When asked why they thought blacks were more likely to be detained, the decision makers pointed to the stability of the homes and the support of families. “Sometimes there is no one who wants to come down and get them.” Officers also believed there seems to be less supervision of black children by their parents.

Black families sometimes reach a point where there is so much disorganization and their resources are so restricted that their chances of being able to control a child at home are minimal and I think that is why many of them remain in detention.

I think that their homes are seen as less stable on the whole. Most white families come in and are very supportive of their youth, they want them home at all costs and will promise you anything. I think that sometimes the perception is that in the single parent black family there will be less supervision and some of these moms come in and say that they can't control them and if they tell us this then we don't want to send the youth back there.

Maybe the white parents took more ownership in supervising their kid until the hearing than what the black people do.

I don't know. Often, the bottom line for detention is whether or not their parents will take them or will somebody stick their neck out for them and they (blacks] have more parents that are fed up.

One thing required for releasing a child from detention is a parent who is willing and able to supervise. My experience is that I have had more black parents who have taken a firmer stand with their own kids saying that they wanted them to stay in detention because they wanted to make an impression on them. I feel that more black parents tend to be stricter in wanting something done with the child rather than trying to bail them out than some of the white parents that we deal with, that could be part of the reason there.

Another explanation for this finding rests with the current "crack down" on drugs in Polk county. The juvenile court officers also believed that blacks are more often suspected of drug charges and this automatically results in detention.

Because we have this new criteria now, blacks have a higher likelihood of being arrested for possession with intent to deliver. I think that is probably the system's way of dealing with a dangerous, dangerous situation. People get killed over these drug buys. People get poisoned, it's just not good. I think that's its way of trying to squelch some of the crime.

Females Stay in the Community

Another finding is that at judicial disposition females were more likely than males to remain in the community. Decision makers agreed with this finding. Many felt that, "there just aren't enough placements for females."

The resources are more limited for females.

There are fewer placement resources for females than there are for males.

The problem is availability. There's one girl's group home in Des Moines. We don't have the facilities to work with females.

A few of the officers also noted that they did not believe females commit as serious crimes as those committed by males.

It comes back to the 'my little girl' attitude. A lot of society doesn't believe that girls are necessarily as bad as boys. I think that you would find that more girls are starting to be placed now. But, again, we don't have enough placements for girls and that makes it a real tough problem. It is very difficult to place a girl because there are more facilities that are arranged for boys.

Views of the Study

Although decision makers in Polk county agreed with almost all of the findings and found nothing very surprising, they were reluctant to participate in this phase of the study. Individual staff members either refused to participate, were reluctant to provide concrete answers and/or refer youth for the interviews. Some officers objected to the questions on religion and the inability to respond to the closed ended questions. Concern was also expressed regarding the interpretation of the interviews and the presentation of the results.

Suggestions for Change

Juvenile court officers were asked about programs that could reduce the disproportionate overrepresentation of minorities in secure facilities. Many of the decision makers felt that there should be more than just two minority officers to deal with

the large number of minority youth that are confronted with in Polk county. The hiring of additional minorities was seen as a possible solution.

Minorities need to interact with people who understand their cultural background and who can act as role models.

Most of the kids that I see here come from different cultural and economic backgrounds and I certainly think that there are different types of things that those kids need. I think the administration needs to hire more minorities. I think, not only is it important to have those people to work directly with the youth, but I think it is important for us to have them. There is no way on Earth that I can know what it is like to be black but another black JCO could help me to understand and to deal with the youth and be there for a resource if I am going to be the JCO for that kid.

I think mentoring programs would be good because there are plenty of minorities out there succeeding. If we could see a real assertive effort on the part of those minorities to set examples and be more visible, that would be very positive.

Programs with a very strong black male role model which a lot of black youth are lacking in their home environment. Role models that will tell them to do as they do and set an example. This is what a lot of young black male youth are missing.

Other programs or ideas were also suggested. These focused on the creation of more community based programs, job opportunities, and recreational activities.

I think that some of these kids in the lower socioeconomic classes need to be given more job training and to be given that advantage to be able to go out and find a job.

I think there are some things that are going on in the community that can affect some of

the percentages. I don't know to what degree. If I had the money I would 1—4. There are problems going on at that age and we need to look at what we can do at that age.

I think the community falls short in job opportunities. I think that is one area we could spend more time and resources in.

I think recreational kinds of opportunities need to be constantly developed because that is one area I think there can be some very good things done.

Summary

In Polk county, juvenile court officers appear to operate under a philosophy characterized by the protection of society and holding youth accountable for their crimes. This orientation is a very legalistic in nature. Delinquent behavior is seen as a choice. Economic factors and poverty are seen as causes of delinquency but important explanations. Poor school performance and dysfunctional families were believed to be much more important in the scheme of things. The lack of time, money and placements has resulted in a de-emphasis on rehabilitation. The general perception is that blacks do not commit more or more serious crimes in comparison to whites. A few of the officers, however, believed blacks were more likely to be involved in drug offenses. Black youth and their families were also seen as more disrespectful of the system. No differences were cited in a willingness to admit guilt.

Juvenile court officers in Polk county saw race bias at the police level. They thought this might be due to either a lack of education on the part of the police or the concentration of police in the inner city.

Concerning the specific findings from phase one of the research, the officers pretty much agreed with the findings. The first finding indicated that in Polk county blacks were more often detained than whites. Explanations focused on the willingness of the families to get their children out of detention. They also cited a crackdown on drug offenses, which is perceived to be committed more often by blacks. Involvement in drug offending results in detention.

The second finding suggested females were more likely to stay in the community than similarly situated males. The decision makers felt that this was due to the fact that females do not commit as serious of crimes and/or there is a lack of suitable placement alternatives.

It was suggested by the juvenile court officers that more minority be hired both in the juvenile justice system and in the community as a whole, especially in the schools. Black role models were seen as particularly important in reducing the disproportionate overrepresentation of minorities in secure facilities and in the system in general.

Table 1. Distributions of Decision Makers' Demographics and Mean Time on Job, Polk County.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
Gender	Male	19	68
	Female	9	32
Race	White	26	93
	Black	2	7
Age		x = 42 std.dev.= 8.86 range= 24-55	
Years on job		x = 9.82 std.dev.= 7.06 range= 1-24	

Table 2. Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Role of the Court, Polk County.

Variable Name	Definition
IMDETRNC	Important for system to achieve deterrence?
IMSOCORD	Important for system to maintain social order?
IMPUNMNT	Important for system to achieve punishment?
IMPRTSOC	Important for system to protect society?
IMPREHAB	Important for system to achieve rehabilitation?
JLENTRET	Juveniles treated too leniently by court?
DELPTFEL	Delinquents should be prosecuted to full extent of law?
ADULTPUN	Juveniles commit violent crimes should be treated like adults?
DELDELT	Delinquents must be dealt with strictly?
ACNTRMS	Offenders should be held accountable for crimes?
PREDEL	To prevent delinquency identify and work with predelinquents?
MININTVN	Juveniles do better with minimal intervention?
INTRVNTN	Every juvenile should receive some kind of intervention?

Table 3. Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Role of the Court, Polk County.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
IMDETRNC	Very important	14	50
	Pretty important	10	36
	Somewhat important	4	14
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--
IMSOCORD	Very important	11	39
	Pretty important	13	46
	Somewhat important	2	7
	Not too important	1	4
	Not important at all	1	4
IMPUNMNT	Very important	3	11
	Pretty important	5	18
	Somewhat important	15	53
	Not too important	2	7
	Not important at all	3	11
IMPRTSOC	Very important	18	64
	Pretty important	8	29
	Somewhat important	2	7
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--

Table 3-continued.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
IMPREHAB	Very important	17	61
	Pretty important	7	25
	Somewhat important	4	14
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--
JLENTRET	Strongly agree	--	--
	Agree	5	18
	Neither agree or disagree	10	36
	Disagree	13	46
	Strongly disagree	--	--
DELPTFEL	Strongly agree	1	4
	Agree	8	28
	Neither agree or disagree	10	36
	Disagree	8	28
	Strongly disagree	1	4
ADULTPUN	Strongly agree	--	--
	Agree	4	14
	Neither agree or disagree	5	18
	Disagree	15	54
	Strongly disagree	4	14
DELDELTA	Strongly agree	4	14
	Agree	16	57
	Neither agree or disagree	6	22
	Disagree	2	7
	Strongly disagree	--	--

Table 3-continued.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
ACNTRMS	Strongly agree	14	50
	Agree	13	46
	Neither agree or disagree	1	4
	Disagree	--	--
	Strongly disagree	--	--
PREDEL	Strongly agree	5	18
	Agree	14	50
	Neither agree or disagree	8	28
	Disagree	1	4
	Strongly disagree	--	--
MININTVN	Strongly agree	--	--
	Agree	3	11
	Neither agree or disagree	8	28
	Disagree	14	50
	Strongly disagree	3	11
INTRVNTN	Strongly agree	3	11
	Agree	16	57
	Neither agree or disagree	3	11
	Disagree	6	21
	Strongly agree	--	--

Table 4. Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Causes of Delinquency, Polk County.

Variable Name	Definition
IMPLSCON	Inability to control impulses causes delinquency?
PERCHMAD	Choosing to commit delinquent acts causes delinquency?
SCHLPERF	Negative school performance causes delinquency?
PSINTYTH	Lacking positive ways to interact with youth caused delinquency?
NEGPEERS	Negative peer pressure causes delinquency?
SUBABUYT	Substance abuse by youth causes delinquency?
SOCOFYT	Failure to socialize youth causes delinquency?
LKPARSUP	Lacking parental supervision causes delinquency?
LKDISPAR	Lack of discipline by parents causes delinquency?
VIOLRES	Violence as way to resolve differences causes delinquency?
MEDIA	Violent destructive media images causes delinquency?
POVERTY	Being poor causes delinquency?
ECOSTRCT	Economic structure causes delinquency?
JOBOPTRY	Little job opportunity causes delinquency?
PSYCHPR	Emotional or psychological problems causes delinquency?
EVCOMCRM	Everyone commits crimes some just get caught?
DISINEQL	Discrimination and inequality cause delinquency?

Table 5. Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Causes of Delinquency, Polk County.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
IMPLSCON	Very important	7	25
	Pretty important	12	43
	Somewhat important	8	29
	Not too important	1	3
	Not important at all	--	--
PERCHMAD	Very important	12	43
	Pretty important	11	39
	Somewhat important	3	11
	Not too important	2	7
	Not important at all	--	--
SCHLPERF	Very important	5	18
	Pretty important	13	46
	Somewhat important	8	29
	Not too important	2	7
	Not important at all	--	--
PSINTYTH	Very important	5	18
	Pretty important	15	53
	Somewhat important	8	29
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--

Table 5--continued.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
NEGPEERS	Very important	11	39
	Pretty important	13	47
	Somewhat important	4	14
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--
SUBABUYT	Very important	12	43
	Pretty important	14	50
	Somewhat important	2	7
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--
SOCOFYT	Very important	5	18
	Pretty important	10	36
	Somewhat important	10	36
	Not too important	3	10
	Not important at all	--	--
LKPARSUP	Very important	15	54
	Pretty important	13	46
	Somewhat important	--	--
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--
LKDISPAR	Very important	12	43
	Pretty important	12	43
	Somewhat important	4	14
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--

Table 5-continued.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
VIOLRES	Very important	4	14
	Pretty important	9	32
	Somewhat important	12	43
	Not too important	3	11
	Not important at all	--	--
MEDIA	Very important	2	7
	Pretty important	9	32
	Somewhat important	12	43
	Not too important	4	14
	Not important at all	1	4
POVERTY	Very important	2	7
	Pretty important	4	14
	Somewhat important	16	57
	Not too important	6	22
	Not important at all	--	--
ECOSTRCT	Very important	3	11
	Pretty important	10	35
	Somewhat important	12	43
	Not too important	3	11
	Not important at all	--	--
JOBOPTRY	Very important	4	14
	Pretty important	11	39
	Somewhat important	10	36
	Not too important	2	7
	Not important at all	1	4

Table 5--continued.

<u>Variable Name</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
PSYCHPR	Very important	8	29
	Pretty important	15	54
	Somewhat important	4	14
	Not too important	1	4
	Not important at all	--	--
EVCOMCRM	Strongly agree	--	--
	Agree	12	43
	Neither agree or disagree	6	21
	Disagree	8	29
	Strongly disagree	2	7
DISINEQL	Very important	3	10
	Pretty important	10	36
	Somewhat important	10	36
	Not too important	4	14
	Not important at all	1	4

Table 6. Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Race Differences in General, Polk County.

Variable Name	Definition
RACRIMES	Black and white juveniles commit different type of crimes?
MINMOCRM	Ethnic and racial minorities commit more crimes?
BFAMDIST	Are black families more distrustful of system?
BYTGUILT	Are black youth less likely to acknowledge guilt?
BLYATTUD	Do black youth have poorer attitude?
JUVATUDE	How important is juveniles attitude in decision making?
PARATUDE	How important is parents attitude in decision making?

Table 7. Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Race Difference in General, Polk County.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
RACRIMES	Strongly agree	--	--
	Agree	3	11
	Neither agree or disagree	4	14
	Disagree	15	54
	Strongly disagree	6	21
MINMOCRM	Strongly agree	1	4
	Agree	3	11
	Neither agree or disagree	6	21
	Disagree	15	53
	Strongly disagree	3	11
BFAMDIST	Always	1	4
	Most of the time	9	32
	Sometimes	13	46
	Almost never	3	11
	Never	2	7
BYTGUILT	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	5	18
	Almost never	16	57
	Never	7	25

Table 7-continued.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
BLYATTUD	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	12	43
	Almost never	9	32
	Never	7	25
JUVATUDE	Very important	8	29
	Pretty important	11	39
	Somewhat important	8	29
	Not too important	1	4
	Not important at all	--	--
PARATUDE	Very important	5	18
	Pretty important	14	50
	Somewhat important	9	32
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--

Table 8. Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of Police, Polk County.

Variable Name	Definition
WHYTLENT	White youth picked up less by police than black youth?
COPTRBLK	Do police treat black youth differently than white youth?

Table 9. Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of Police Polk County.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
WHYTLENT	Strongly agree	--	--
	Agree	7	25
	Neither agree or disagree	10	36
	Disagree	10	36
	Strongly disagree	1	4
COPTRBLK	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	3	11
	Sometimes	15	54
	Almost never	8	29
	Never	2	7

Table 10. Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of Race Differences in Processing in General, Polk County.

Variable Name	Definition
BLKTRIDI	Black youth treated differently than white youth in system?
REFBYRAC	Does race of youth play role in whether youth is referred?
RACDIFDT	Are there race differences in processing at detention stage?
RDINTAKE	Are there race differences in processing at intake stage?
RDPETITN	Are there race differences in processing at petition stage?
RDWAIVER	Are there race differences in processing at waiver?
RDINLAPR	Are there race differences in processing at initial appearance?
RDADJUD	Are there race differences in processing at adjudication?
RDDISPOS	Are there race differences in processing at disposition?

Table 11. Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of Race Differences in Processing in General, Polk County.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
BLKTRIDI	Always	1	4
	Most of the time	3	11
	Sometimes	10	36
	Almost never	11	39
	Never	3	11
REFBYRAC	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	11	39
	Almost never	10	36
	Never	7	25
RACDIFDT	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	7	25
	Almost never	16	57
	Never	5	18
RDINTAKE	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	2	7
	Sometimes	8	29
	Almost never	8	29
	Never	10	36

Table 11-continued.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
RDPETITN	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	1	4
	Sometimes	8	29
	Almost never	10	36
	Never	9	32
RDWAIVER	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	1	4
	Sometimes	7	25
	Almost never	13	46
	Never	7	25
RDINLAPR	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	7	25
	Almost never	11	39
	Never	10	36
RDADJUD	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	6	21
	Almost never	13	46
	Never	9	32
RDDISPOS	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	1	4
	Sometimes	7	25
	Almost Never	11	39
	Never	9	32

Chapter Eight

YOUTH POLK COUNTY

The following information is based on research done with delinquent youth in Polk County. A closed ended multiple-choice survey was administered to 102 youth (73 whites and 29 blacks). The information from this survey can be found in Tables 1 through 8 at the end of the Chapter. Fifty-three youth (30 white and 23 black) were also interviewed.

The youth saw racial prejudices in society in general, as well as, among police officers. They did not feel their probation officers were biased. While both racial groups revealed some stereotypes about the other race, these youth seemed to be working toward a more accepting attitude in race relations.

General Perceptions

The youth were asked a set of questions about society in general. They were asked questions about the present state of discrimination, discrimination in the future, discrimination in the job market, and about their attitudes toward other races. The beliefs of both whites and blacks tended to be similar.

Discrimination

In general, it appears that both black youth and white youth feel discrimination is a problem. Up to 75 percent of both groups indicated in the survey that discrimination is getting

worse (Tables 1, 2). In the interviews, the whites showed a much wider variety of opinions on racism, and yet there was still a general consensus: they feel discrimination is a result of ignorance. As stated by a 17 year—old white female: “I think its getting bad because you got all these jerks out here that are like ‘Niggers, Niggers’. They are not niggers. They’re black.”

There are some whites who feel discrimination is getting worse, but it is not just by whites against blacks. These youth feel discrimination goes both ways and cite the growth of gang violence as an indication of rising racial tension. A 14 year—old white male said, “It’s getting so that, instead of all the white people being against black people, it’s the black people against white people now.” At least one black youth also believed both whites and blacks discriminate.

This Klu Klux Klan stuff has got to go. And the black people always messing with white people because they are weaker, that has to go too. Because if I see a black person at my school messing with a white person or something, I go on the white person’s side because I feel that is really stupid. I would fight for somebody if that happened and I was around.

Many of the blacks said they had little personal experience with discrimination. Yet, they are aware of it and feel it is getting worse. A 16 year—old mullatto male says, “I hear everybody talking about it.. .I feel it’s getting worse.” Another black youth bases his response on recent events covered by the media. He feels discrimination is getting worse

...because of the last past things that's been going on, Rodney King and everything like that. Things are starting to change.

Q: For better or for worse?

A: Worse. I don't think anything is getting better.

For the few youth who felt discrimination was not getting worse, a number of interesting justifications were provided. One white youth pointed to the increasing number of mixed communities as an indication of improving race relations. Another felt that discrimination is getting better, "because a lot of people are sitting down and realizing that we're all the same, human beings. Somebody's skin is darker than somebody else's. So what?"

A few black youth also indicated in the interviews that they did not see discrimination getting worse. One black male just did not see discrimination as a factor. He felt the only thing that could hold a black person back is "their past, not their race." A 14 year old black female picked up on a trend that made her think discrimination was improving.

Most of the white people these days are trying to be black, and if white people are trying to be black, then the white people won't fight with the black people as much.

At least one white picked up on this same trend, although he did not see it as an indication of lessening discrimination. As a matter of fact, he is a self—proclaimed racist who wants to see discrimination continue. He hates those "Vanilla Ice kids", who act black. He says, "I act like my color. I don't think it should be right for a white person to go around acting black."

It might be pointed out here that this youth was the most blatantly racist of all those interviewed. For the most part these youth were sensitive to unfair treatment based on race and wanted to see improvement in this area. In many cases however, while the white youth were saying things in support of blacks, certain stereotypes and biases often underlined their verbal responses. For example, one white youth said that qualified blacks could get the same job as a white person “if they are well groomed and stuff”.

Equal Job and Pay Opportunities

Despite the large consensus who felt that discrimination is getting worse, very few thought race would stand in the way of obtaining a job or a promotion. This is true for both whites and blacks; however, 20 percent of the blacks saw job discrimination as compared to 10 percent of the whites (Tables 1, 2).

Most of the youth seem to relate discrimination to acts of violence and hatred. For those who think of discrimination in this manner, prejudice is not perceived to occur on the job market. For example, the black youth quoted as saying, “I don’t think anything’s getting better,” feels that a qualified black can get as good a job or make as much money as a white person. Another black youth who felt discrimination is getting worse said, “If you’re black and have a good education, there ain’t nothing holding you back to do what you want to do.” Not even discrimination.

About 90 percent of the white youth did not believe that race would hinder advancement in the work place. Many of them felt equal opportunities exist despite the perception that discrimination is occurring. Government policy was seen as providing

equal opportunity; yet, youth were not always sure that equal opportunities exist. White youth, when asked if a black person with the same qualifications could make as much money as whites, responded,

They should be able to. I don't think it happens that way. I see a lot of white big companies with one black person there so nobody calls discrimination on them. For some reason I think that's wrong, but to them it's right, because there is other people working in with it.

I don't think it's fair, but it just happens.

There are those who felt that blacks are held back due to racial reasons. Stories of this type of discrimination were provided in the interviews by both groups. A 13 year-old black male, for example, stated:

When I was looking for a job they would always tell me to come back in four months or so and then like a week or two later when I was in there shopping with my mom I saw that they had new white kids working in there.

He said that it did not anger him though because, "it is their store and they can hire who they want." A 17 year-old white female supplied this example,

My boyfriend has a black friend and they're both graduated from high school. They both went to apply for the same job. My boyfriend got the job, and his friend didn't. They say it wasn't because he was black, but where he works there's no black people at all...I think they're racist.

When asked whether a qualified black person could make as much money as a white person she responded, "Probably not because they

think blacks should work for less because they used to be slaves.”

There were also those who expressed the idea that not all employers are prejudiced. When a black girl was asked if blacks could make as much money as whites she said, “Probably not, it depends on who the people are, the boss. There are probably some people out there who wouldn’t give the black person the same amount of money.”

Future Opportunities

In response to the closed ended questions, about 90 percent of all the youth indicated hope about the future (Tables 1, 2). In the interviews this optimism was reflected by both whites and blacks. Even if their circumstances are bad right now, or they do not know what they want from life, they are sure things will work out in their favor. They almost all seem to share the attitude of a black youth who said, “I see myself as having the opportunity to do whatever I want as long as I want to do it.”

There was a split in the self—report data concerning the outlook for race relations in the future. Only about 15 percent in both races thought that black opportunities would get worse in the next 5 years. And yet, when asked about discrimination in the future, 43 percent of the whites thought it would get worse. A similar contradiction occurs with the blacks, where 38 percent also felt discrimination would get worse (Tables 1, 2). Again, this would seem to indicate that these youth associate discrimination with violence and not with employment practices.

The trend in the interviews, for the most part, was one of optimism for blacks in the future. Most of the youth feel things will “settle down” and opportunities will improve.

Many of the whites who responded positively to this question elaborated very little. As one white youth said, “It’s pretty much up to them, the individual.” Yet some of the whites who chose to justify their prediction of a bright future for blacks held to some negative stereotypes. One white youth said, “Ever since slavery was abolished it has continued to improve.” And another said opportunities for blacks would “improve because they have that college fund and I think that there will be more of that coming around.”

While most blacks indicated that things would improve, some predicted the attainment of some sort of superiority. A black youth said, “We will be ahead of whites pretty soon.” When asked how black people would get ahead he responded, “More riots and all that.” He does not see violence as a good thing, “but that’s how it’s got to be since there’s no other way. That’s the way it’s working now.”

There were some blacks who did not feel there was any hope of improvement and approached life on a day—by-day basis. Interestingly enough, there was within each race an individual who did not feel things would get better and placed the blame on their own race. A black male felt things would get worse for blacks “because they cause a lot of trouble and don’t go to school as much.” A white female said that things are going to,

get worse, because there's so much racism now, with all the cross burnings and everything. I bet we're going to have slaves again. You talk to most white people, and they don't want nothing to do with black people. . . They're like, 'They should be slaves. That's what they were meant to be. That's what they should always be.

Trust

When asked whether they trust people of the other race, the youth in both groups indicated that they prefer to reserve judgment on the person until they know him or her. It seemed as though many of the youth were making a conscious effort not to draw conclusions based on skin color. As a white youth said, "All the ones that I know I can trust, but just like if you walked up to a white person on the street, you've got to get to know them before you can trust them." Even those whites who had experience with blacks in the past for the most part did not place their mistrust on the whole race but rather on the individual. This was the position taken by most blacks as well.

The sentiments that emerge from the interviews help understand the results of the self-report data. Fifty—one percent of the whites and 59 percent of the blacks said they trusted only "some" of the members of the other race (Tables 1 & 2). Apparently, indicating "some" rather than "most" or "none" was the best way for them to express their philosophy in the closed ended portion of the survey.

There were some blacks who do not see whites as individuals. These youth had bad experiences with a few white people which they transferred to all white people. As one black male said, "I don't feel I can trust none at all." The same applied to a few whites who simply stereotyped all blacks as druggies, gang bangers, or crooks. Also, there are definitely some racist whites in this age group, although they would appear to be

in the minority. Racism is indicated in some of the examples previously noted as well in the following statements by white youth,

I don't trust them at all. I don't like them.
I'm kinda racist.. I don't really like black people
and I don't go where they go.

In summary, these delinquent youth seem to have positive outlooks. They understand that racial discrimination is something that goes on but they see it manifested more in acts of violence than by other means. These youth want to be able to get to know everyone on an individual basis and yet they seem to fall unconsciously into the trap of making generalizations and stereotypes about individual racial groups.

View of Police

The questions asked in this section dealt with the fairness of the police, racism among police officers, respect for the police, and whether the youth are interested in becoming police officers. In general, neither whites nor blacks held positive views of the police. Both the frequency distributions and the interview information indicate that blacks dislike the police more so than whites.

Fairness

There is an immediate dichotomy in the views expressed about the police cutting across racial groups. Seventy—seven percent of the whites indicated that they felt sometimes to more often that police treated them fairly. In contrast, only about 39 percent of the blacks felt they were at least sometimes treated fairly while another 39 percent felt they had never received fair treatment from a police officer.

The variations in views reflect the information found in the interviews. Most of the blacks did not feel they were treated fairly by the police. Either it was because they were roughed up, “kicked and stuff,” or because they felt the police never gave them a chance to explain. Those whites who felt they had been treated unfairly responded in a similar fashion. As seen by whites, much of the unfair treatment is reflected by a view that the police intentionally harass young people.

Most of the whites, though, felt they personally were treated fairly. For example, there was a young man who, although he had heard of some people getting off easier than he for his charge, felt his treatment was fair because the police were nice and he got what the law required. Another youth indicated he was treated fair because he “didn’t get the club or anything.” He apparently equated unfair treatment with physical brutality because he did indicate that he was verbally abused. Another youth felt that he had been treated fairly but the police do not always treat all people alike. Indeed, just about every youth

could single out a group that they thought was discriminated against. Most of them felt that the police show a bias against blacks, poor people, previous offenders, youth in general, or some combination of these groups.

Several whites mentioned that the police will listen to rich people more than poor people. As one 15 year old male stated: “They could treat some rich guy nicer than a poor guy.” Another felt he had been arrested because of his reputation, “They think they can do anything that they want.” A black youth, who had an otherwise positive view of the police, felt he was arrested simply because of his past record. This youth was the only one arrested at the scene of a disturbance and felt he was only taken in because “they didn’t want to go home empty handed.”

Most of the white youth believed the police pick on young people. In the closed ended section, 75 percent responded that police sometimes pick on young people (Tables 3, 4). And yet, the impression given in the interviews is that many whites feel it happens more than sometimes, indeed that it is a constant occurrence. Many of the youth felt the only reason they had been noticed was because of their age. A 14 year old white male, when asked who the police pick on, said: “Kids and teen-agers . .

they don’t care how they treat them. But if it was an older person, they’re all nice to them and things.” A 17 year old male offered this perspective on why the police single out youth: “I don’t think they pick on them. I think they’re just more hard on them so they won’t ruin their lives.”

Seventy-nine percent of the blacks believe that at least sometimes the police pick on young people, but in the interviews this issue came up less frequently. Rather, their comments focused on the prejudice the police show towards blacks. Eighty—three percent of the blacks felt that at least some of the time blacks are arrested simply because of race. Forty-eight percent of the blacks indicated that this was the case most or all of the time. In contrast, 69 percent of the whites said blacks are picked on some of the time while only 20 percent responded most or all of the time (Tabled 3, 4). In sum, both groups see racial discrimination by the police, but the black youth feel it is worse than what the white youth think.

Examples of quotes from white youth concerning racial bias among police officers include:

Some of them are probably prejudiced. Like that Rodney King, they woke that dude up.

They beat blacks, I guess they are racist.

I saw a cop harassing a couple of black males. The cop just pulled up and asked them what they were doing.

Whites get more preferential treatment... I would like to put them in jail for a couple days so they could see how black people feel.

The interviews of black youth strongly support the information given in the self-report data. Several of the respondees felt the sole reason many blacks are arrested is due to their race. One youth, when asked what he thought the police had placed the most emphasis on when arresting him said, “We are black and we looked suspicious.” Another said,

I think it is because they are black and the police didn't watch them doing anything wrong and that is why they are mad because they didn't get them.

Another black youth tells a story of driving a car filled with a number of his white friends without drinking or drugs or anything. He was pulled over for speeding and he was the only one arrested. He says, "It was cause I was black." What he neglects to mention until later in the interview is that there was a gun in the glove compartment. He maintains, however, that police have always picked on blacks and always will.

Other black youth see discrimination in police attitudes. These youth feel the police stereotype blacks and then make things harder on them because of the stereotype.

A 16 year old black male explains it this way:

All black young males, they treat them as dope dealers or gangsters... I seen them arrest these black boys that act white. I seen them arrest them just because of what they wear. Maybe there's a crime going on and they be somewhere around there. They'll go arrest them and a white boy will be walking all around where the incident happened... If they see a black person walking slow, he's doing a crime. If they see a white person, they will speed past them.

The sentiment is that blacks get more undeserved attention than do whites. Police are also perceived as going easier on whites.

One of the more interesting charges that emerged is that it is not just white officers who act this way. A few of the black youth felt minority of icers show the same biases as white policemen. As one black youth said, "I seen prejudiced black

cops. I'd rather have a white cop arrest me than a black cop cuz black cops go all out."

There were those who felt that the police did not try to be unfair. They perceived that police are only human and might be expected to "mess up" once in a while. As one young black male said, "They treat people different. It's when they got you, it depends on what kind of mood they in. they're like regular people and if they are in the wrong mood, they're gonna get you." There were also those who felt that police pick on everyone regardless of race. A white youth stated, "They harass everybody if they want to." Another white was not sure if the police discriminate against blacks but did feel that the police are tougher on the inner city because that is where crime occurs with greater frequency.

Respect

Some of the black youth did not feel the police pick on blacks. For the most part, these youth also indicated that they felt they could respect the police. Justification for this view is illustrated in statements like: "They are only trying to do their job" or "It's dangerous, they have to protect themselves." In both races there were very few youth who felt they could respect and trust the police. Only 19 percent of the whites and 24 percent of the blacks agreed that they could respect the police. This was supported by the interviews where not a single white youth openly declared respect for the police.

There were a number of youth in both groups, 44 percent of the whites and 21 percent of the blacks, who would neither agree nor disagree with the idea that the police deserved respect. While there was a larger percentage of blacks than whites who felt they

could trust the police, there was also a much larger percentage (38 percent compared to 18 percent) who would absolutely never respect the police (Tables 3, 4).

Blacks had less of a middle ground. Their reasoning in the interviews would seem to be that there are some police who are consistently racist and some who are usually nice. Many of these youth had respect for police officers on an individual basis. One black youth said he respects some police “cuz all police ain’t crooked. It’s just the prejudice ones.” Another said,

There are a couple of cool cops on the force and they come over and sit and talk with us about just friendly stuff and they talk to us like we are people too. Every now and then they come by and check on us. Some police have attitude problems, that badge went to their head. they think that they are big shots.

He wishes that there were more of the nice ones.

Those who did not have respect for the police had a number of reasons for mistrusting officers. Obviously, those blacks who thought the police force is biased had a difficult time respecting the police. Others in both races could not respect the police because the police never respect them. A black youth said, “Every time they say something to you they just smart with you.” Some whites were upset because the police are always harassing people or, as one white youth said, “because they were being assholes when I got arrested.” A 13 year old white male feels that officers are stupid. He says, “I don’t even like cops. They are big old pigs, porkers.” In the same vein, some whites just see police as being lazy, doing what they want and abusing their power.

If someone does something wrong and this particular police officer wants to go through doing the paperwork, then something's going to get done about it. But if something goes on, and the police officer doesn't feel like doing the paperwork or bothering with it, just nothing happens, it's over with. So, when you call the cops, you have to hope you get one that will do something about it.

Desire to be a Police Officer

Most of these youth do not have a desire to be police officers (65 percent of the whites and 72 percent of the blacks responded "absolutely not"). Of the 101 total youth in the survey, only 10 showed strong inclinations toward entering the police force (Tables 3, 4).

Most of those who did want to be police officers chose not to comment on why they felt this way. Some would not consider it out of their basic mistrust of the police. A black youth said, "If I thought I'd be a police officer, they'd start telling me things and try to turn me into one of them." A white youth said he didn't want to be a police officer "because everybody thinks they are really bad."

Those who did want to be police officers generally felt that they could be a positive influence on a bad organization. They wanted to make sure there was at least one good cop out there.

As a young black male said, I might be able to change some things. I would treat everyone alike and make other police treat people better."

View of Probation Officer

In this section, youth were asked questions about the fairness and biases of probation officers. They were also asked to comment on how they viewed their probation officer and if they would like to be probation officers themselves. In both the black and white interviews, the youth tended to have very positive opinions of their probation officer. White interviews consisted of mostly one word and short phrased answers, Thus, while the same trends emerged for whites and blacks, most of what follows has been taken from interviews with black youth.

Fairness and Biases

In both races, a small percentage (13 percent for whites and 14 percent for blacks) felt their probation officers did not treat them fairly. The majority indicated the probation officer usually treated them with fairness and understanding (Tables 5 & 6). From the interviews, the impression was given that most of these kids had good, if not close relationships with their probation officer. Many of the answers were very general, like: “He’s nice. I like him a lot. I wouldn’t trade anything for him.” Some gave much more in depth answers, however. A 15 year old black girl said,

My probation officer is nice to me. I should be locked up but she is pretty nice to me. I don’t like my friend’s probation officer. I don’t know anything about probation officers except my own and she is nice to me.

A 17 year old black male stated,

I think he treated me better because I hear it a lot from his workers and from him that I am one of his best clients.

A 17 year old white male answered,

He kept trying. He didn't give up. He was trying to find a way where I wouldn't have to go to adult court because he knows that wouldn't be the best decision for me.

There were a few who felt probation officers in general are fair and yet do not like the one they have. Others felt all probation officers are unfair. A white youth said, "I don't think that either one of my POs is straight with me, I don't think that anyone is straight with me up here." A black youth said it seemed to him like probation officers "just decide things by how they feel about a person."

There was one black youth who was openly hostile towards his probation officer. This youth maintains he never really talked to his probation officer. Yet the officer recommended him to the court, based on preconceived stereotypes about blacks.

I don't really know anything about him, but I know he acts prejudiced, acts like he got a grudge against black people, from what I know. The way he looks at you and talks against you in court. He's your P0. Why's he trying to get you locked up? If he's supposed to be your P0 and you supposed to check in with him, he's supposed to get in touch with you. I haven't even talked to him. I truly can't stand that man...My P0 doesn't know who I am

and he spoke out against me, made me out as some kind of devil, what he wanted me to be or what he thinks all black people are, animals... He doesn't respect me as a person or my race. He doesn't respect my race, period.

This young man is an exception to the general responses from the youth. He was the only black to feel that probation officers have any racial bias. Only seven of the 73 whites in the survey felt that probation officers were prejudiced against blacks. One white youth said, "They treat some people some ways and some others." And yet this was about the harshest statement about bias in all the interviews (excluding the black youth quoted above).

In terms of economic and age bias, it would seem that the youth perceived it to be much worse among police officers than among probation officers. These youth believed probation officers give everybody a fair chance. A white youth summed up the attitude of probation officers like this:

If there's a kid who wants to work and try, they're really good to him, but if there's a kid who doesn't care about nothing, they are going to do the same thing. They're just going to put him in court, send him wherever.

Respect

Clearly, the youth tended to trust and respect their probation officers. Forty—three percent of the whites said they always trust their probation officer while only 14 percent said they could never trust their probation officer. Blacks responded a little differently, yet most feel a certain amount of trust. Sixty—three percent said they at least sometimes trust their probation officer while the other 37 percent said they could absolutely never trust their officer (Tables 5, 6).

A black girl said of her probation officer,

She likes me, we go out for ice cream all of the time. When I sell drugs I tell her. She says that she is going to help me find a job... I am not going to lie to her about nothing.

Others seem to have good relationships with their probation officers based on mutual respect. Many feel they can talk to their probation officer. Some even seemed to consider their probation officer a friend and a role model.

An interesting observation was made by a 13 year old black male when he was asked if a probation officer should be a role model in society. He said,

Yes, especially if they are black. He [black P0] is just selling out to the system. He is a sell out... He is a white man trapped in a black man's body.

Other blacks had different reasons for not trusting their probation officer. One youth felt an apathy towards the entire system, Another did not respect his probation officer, not because he disliked her, but because he did not care for her position.

Desire to be a Probation Officer

Despite the high esteem most of these youth had for their probation officers, most of them had no desire to be a probation officer. About 75 percent of both groups showed absolutely no interest in this occupation (Tables 5, 6).

Some of those blacks who did consider the possibility of becoming a probation officer believed it was a logical choice to work with delinquent youth due to their experience in the system. One black youth said, "I would help people out." Another said he would not mind being a probation officer but "would like to be a lawyer more because I think I would be able to tell what the truth is because I can understand the kids."

The rest of the youth had a variety of reasons for not being interested in this line of work job. One reason is that they do not want to have to interact with youth like themselves. As a white youth said, "I wouldn't want to go through that knowing that the kids are out there doing the same thing that I was doing." Others did not want to be in a position where they would have to do some of the things probation officers sometimes have to do. A black youth says,

I wouldn't want to lock nobody up cuz I know how it feels to be locked up. I wouldn't want to lock no other kid up.

A number of them were not interested because they had other careers in mind or just plain did not want to be a probation officer.

Problems in the System and in the Schools

There was a distinction between whites and blacks in terms of things they deemed wrong with the juvenile justice system. The white youth tended to show a sense of remorse for what they had done and therefore felt they were getting what they deserved. For the most part, the white youth blamed only themselves for

their situation. Blacks also tended to blame themselves and yet they also seemed more willing to cast blame in other directions as well (Tables 7, 8). As a result, many black youth picked up on problems in the system.

Probably the most frequent complaint against the juvenile justice system was that the police have little concern for individuals and are often unfair. Others felt that the whole system, or at least key aspects of it, is racist. A 15 year old black male said,

Mostly everybody is being seen as guilty. There are some people who didn't even do nothing and they were being seen guilty. I think a lot of innocent people are being found guilty.

Some white youth saw problems not in attitudes but in logistics. A 14 year old white male said the problem is,

Overcrowding, too many kids. There should be more treatment programs too. All the places have waiting lists and you could be waiting for up to four months for a place to open at a detention center.

As far as schools, about 80 percent of the youth in both groups felt teachers show very little racial or economic bias (Tables 7, 8). This sentiment was supported by the interviews where very little was said in reference to schools. Most of those who chose to comment on their teachers said very positive things. And yet, there are those who feel teachers are racist. A 17 year old white girl said:

They're very favoritist. Most of the rich kids get the favortism. They're totally rude to the black kids. I have a black girlfriend that was in my math class with me, and we'd be sitting there taking and I wouldn't get yelled at, but she would. She was always getting suspended for talking in class and stuff, but I would never get yelled at.

Summary

In general, most of the youth knew they had done something wrong and believed they were justifiably punished for their behavior. Yet, most of the youth indicated that they were being picked on. They felt that police officers were unfair. Both blacks and whites did not respect the police and believed they were abusing their authority. At the same time, however, the majority of both groups held a high regard for their probation officers. They apparently feel that they can communicate better with probation officers and that probation officers work more in their best interest than do the police.

Both blacks and whites recognize a great deal of racism both within the system and in society in general. However, they tend to see racism more when it is manifested in violence and not in other forms. There were extremists in both groups who wanted nothing to do with the other race, and yet for the most part, these youth were sensitive to racial tension and wanted to see it end. Both groups were very optimistic of a better future and seemed to be accepting of people regardless of race.

Table 1. Definition of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Discrimination in General, Polk County.

Variable Name	Definition
DISCRWRS	Racial discrimination getting worse?
BLKBREAK	Most white people want blacks to get a better break?
BLACKJOB	Feel blacks can get as good a job as whites?
FUTOPP	Black opportunities in the next five years?
FUTDISCR	Do you think there will be discrimination ten years from now?
TRUSTWB	Feel about trusting white or black people?
BLKRIGHT	Best way for blacks to gain rights?

Table 2. Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Discrimination in General, Polk County.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
DISCRWRS	Strongly agree	31	42	11	39
	Agree	20	27	11	39
	Neither agree or disagree	12	16	5	18
	Disagree	6	8	1	4
	Strongly disagree	4	5	--	--
BLKBREAK	Strongly agree	17	23	--	--
	Agree	19	26	5	18
	Neither agree or disagree	26	36	10	37
	Disagree	4	5	9	33
	Strongly disagree	7	10	3	11
BLACKJOB	Strongly agree	36	49	11	38
	Agree	19	26	7	24
	Neither agree or disagree	11	15	5	17
	Disagree	5	7	3	10
	Strongly disagree	2	3	3	10
FUTOPP	Improve	22	30	12	41
	About the same	39	53	13	45
	Get worse	12	16	4	14
FUTDISCR	Less discrimination	15	20	6	21
	Equal amount of discrimination	27	37	12	41
	More discrimination	31	42	11	38

Table 2-continued.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
TRUSTWB	Most	31	42	6	21
	Some	37	51	17	59
	None	5	7	6	21
BLKRIGHT	Laws and persuasion	26	36	9	31
	Nonviolent protest	41	57	14	48
	Use violence	5	7	6	21

Table 3. Definition of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Police in General, Polk County.

Variable Name	Definition
COPFAIR	Do police treat you fairly?
COPATTD	Do you think police think they are big shots?
COPBWSAM	Do you think police treat black and white alike?
RICHPOOR	Do you think police treat rich and poor alike?
COPPICK	Do you think police always picking on blacks?
COPHELP	If help needed would you go to police?
RESPCOP	Have a lot of respect for the police?
BECOP	Would you like to be a police officer when grow up?
COPACCUS	Do you think police accuse of things you did not do?
COPINNOC	Do you think police try to arrest innocent people?
MORECOP	Do you think city better off if more police?
COPCRIT	Do you think police criticized too often?
PREVTRBL	Do you think police pick on people who in trouble before?
BUYOUT	Do you think most police let buy you way out of trouble?
COPSTEAL	Do you think police can get away with stealing?
COPARRST	What do police place emphasis on in deciding to arrest?

Table 4. Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Police in General, Polk County.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
COPFAIR	Always	4	6	1	4
	Most of the time	25	35	4	14
	Sometimes	26	37	6	21
	Almost never	9	13	6	21
	Never	7	10	11	39
COPATTD	Always	23	31	17	59
	Most of the time	18	25	7	24
	Sometimes	24	33	5	17
	Almost never	4	5	--	--
	Never	4	5	--	--
COPBWSAM	Always	2	3	1	3
	Most of the time	7	10	1	3
	Sometimes	23	31	8	28
	Almost never	22	30	6	21
	Never	19	26	13	45
RICHPOOR	Always	2	3	--	--
	Most of the time	5	7	2	7
	Sometimes	16	22	3	10
	Almost never	31	42	8	28
	Never	19	26	16	55

Table 4-continued.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
COPPICK	Always	13	18	10	34
	Most of the time	9	12	7	24
	Sometimes	34	47	10	34
	Almost never	10	14	2	7
	Never	7	10	--	--
COPHELP	Always	17	23	4	14
	Most of the time	11	15	4	14
	Sometimes	19	26	8	28
	Almost never	15	20	4	14
	Never	11	15	9	31
RESPCOP	Strongly agree	2	3	2	7
	Agree	12	16	5	17
	Neither agree or disagree	32	44	6	21
	Disagree	14	19	5	17
	Strongly disagree	13	18	11	38
BECOP	Always	3	4	2	7
	Most of the time	5	7	--	--
	Sometimes	14	19	4	14
	Almost never	4	5	2	7
	Never	47	64	21	72
COPACCUS	Always	6	8	9	31
	Most of the time	14	19	6	21
	Sometimes	32	44	10	34
	Almost never	12	16	1	3
	Never	9	12	3	10

Table 4-continued.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
COPINNOC	Always	4	5	3	10
	Most of the time	6	8	5	17
	Sometimes	24	33	12	41
	Almost never	22	30	6	21
	Never	17	23	3	10
MORECOP	Always	6	8	3	10
	Most of the time	11	15	1	3
	Sometimes	31	42	5	17
	Almost never	11	15	3	10
	Never	14	19	17	59
COPCRIT	Always	10	14	5	17
	Most of the time	12	16	3	10
	Sometimes	31	42	10	34
	Almost never	13	18	3	10
	Never	7	10	8	28
PREVTRBL	Always	20	27	14	48
	Most of the time	29	40	10	34
	Sometimes	20	27	3	10
	Almost never	4	5	2	7
	Never	--	--	--	--
BUYOUT	Always	1	1	--	--
	Most of the time	1	1	3	10
	Sometimes	17	23	9	31
	Almost never	26	36	5	17
	Never	28	38	12	41

Table 4-continued.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
COPSTEAL	Always	5	7	6	21
	Most of the time	23	31	9	31
	Sometimes	22	30	11	38
	Almost never	8	11	2	7
	Never	15	20	1	3
COPARRST	Recommendations of the victim	4	5	4	14
	Past prior record	17	23	3	10
	Minority status	--	--	4	14
	Family considerations	4	5	1	3
	Seriousness of the offense	30	41	12	41
	Other	18	25	5	17

Table 5. Definition of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Probation Officers in General, Polk County.

Variable Name	Definition
POFAIR	Do you think probation officers treat you fairly?
POACCUSE	Do you think probation officers accuse of things you did not do?
POTROUBL	Do you think probation officers pick on people who been in trouble before?
POWBSAME	Do you think probation officers treat white and black the same?
PORICH	Do you think probation officers treat rich and poor same?
POWHITE	Do you think probation officers treat whites better than blacks?
POHELP	Would you go to probation officers if needed help?
POATTD	Do you think probation officers are big shots?
TRUSTPO	Do you trust your probation officers?
BEPO	Would you like to be a probation officer?
POTHINK	How much you care about what probation officer thinks?
POBAD	Probation officer thinks you are a bad kid?

Table 6. Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Probation Officers in General, Polk County.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
POFAIR	Always	30	42	10	36
	Most of the time	19	27	8	29
	Sometimes	13	18	6	21
	Almost never	1	1	--	--
	Never	8	11	4	14
POACCUSE	Always	3	4	3	11
	Most of the time	9	12	2	7
	Sometimes	22	31	5	18
	Almost never	12	17	7	26
	Never	26	36	10	37
POTROUBL	Always	11	15	5	18
	Most of the time	23	32	4	14
	Sometimes	19	26	9	32
	Almost never	10	14	5	18
	Never	9	12	5	18
POWBSAME	Always	10	14	6	21
	Most of the time	13	18	6	21
	Sometimes	37	52	8	29
	Almost never	7	10	7	25
	Never	4	6	1	4

Table 6-continued.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
PORICH	Always	8	11	6	21
	Most of the time	16	22	4	14
	Sometimes	24	34	10	36
	Almost never	12	17	3	11
	Never	11	15	5	18
POWHITE	Always	2	3	1	4
	Most of the time	5	7	--	--
	Sometimes	23	33	6	21
	Almost never	16	23	12	43
	Never	24	34	9	32
POHELP	Always	12	17	3	11
	Most of the time	13	18	4	14
	Sometimes	15	21	10	36
	Almost never	9	12	2	7
	Never	23	32	9	32
POATTD	Always	11	15	4	14
	Most of the time	8	11	2	7
	Sometimes	29	40	12	43
	Almost never	14	19	4	14
	Never	10	14	6	21
TRUSTPO	Always	31	43	7	26
	Most of the time	14	19	5	18
	Sometimes	9	12	5	18
	Almost never	8	11	--	--
	Never	10	14	10	37

Table 6-continued.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
BEPO	Always	1	1	1	4
	Most of the time	6	8	--	--
	Sometimes	8	11	4	14
	Almost never	10	14	2	7
	Never	46	65	21	75
POTHINK	A lot	32	44	8	29
	Some	17	24	9	32
	Not at all	23	32	11	39
POBAD	Strongly agree	7	10	1	4
	Agree	8	11	4	15
	Neither agree or disagree	12	17	7	26
	Disagree	25	35	9	33
	Strongly disagree	19	27	6	22

Table 7. Definition of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of School and Blame for Current Situation in General, Polk County.

Variable Name	Definition
TCBWSAME	Teachers treat black and white students alike?
TCRPSAME	Teachers treat rich and poor students alike?
BLAMSELF	Blame self for trouble with law?
BLAMFAM	Blame family for trouble with law?
BLAMPEER	Blame peers for trouble with law?
BLAMPOL	Blame police for trouble with law?
BLAMJCT	Blame juvenile court for trouble with law?
BLAMSOC	Blame society for trouble with law?

Table 8. Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of School and Blame for Current Situation in General, Polk County.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
TCBWSAME	Always	13	19	4	14
	Most of the time	22	32	6	21
	Sometimes	20	29	12	43
	Almost never	8	12	2	7
	Never	6	9	4	14
TCRPSAME	Always	11	16	4	14
	Most of the time	20	30	7	25
	Sometimes	20	30	10	36
	Almost never	9	13	6	21
	Never	7	10	1	4
BLAMSELF	Strongly agree	21	30	8	29
	Agree	30	43	9	32
	Neither agree or disagree	10	14	3	11
	Disagree	5	7	3	11
	Strongly disagree	3	4	5	18
BLAMFAM	Strongly agree	3	4	1	4
	Agree	7	10	3	11
	Neither agree or disagree	12	17	--	--
	Disagree	23	33	11	39
	Strongly disagree	24	35	13	46

Table 8-continued.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
BLAMPEER	Strongly agree	4	6	2	7
	Agree	13	19	3	11
	Neither agree or disagree	12	17	1	4
	Disagree	20	29	12	43
	Strongly disagree	20	29	10	36
BLAMPOL	Strongly agree	1	1	3	11
	Agree	6	9	1	4
	Neither agree or disagree	9	13	2	7
	Disagree	31	45	13	46
	Strongly disagree	22	32	9	32
BLAMJCT	Strongly agree	5	7	2	7
	Agree	3	4	1	--
	Neither agree or disagree	8	12	--	--
	Disagree	27	39	10	36
	Strongly disagree	26	38	15	54
BLAMSOC	Strongly agree	1	1	3	11
	Agree	3	4	--	--
	Neither agree or disagree	10	14	3	11
	Disagree	28	41	10	36
	Strongly disagree	27	39	12	43

Charter Nine

Adult Decision Makers in Scott County

There were twelve juvenile court officers, one judge, and one referee interviewed in Scott County. The demographics for these individuals are presented in Table 1 at the end of the chapter. Of the 14 decision makers, 7 are male and 7 are female. All 14 are white. The mean age of the personnel was 41. The mean time on the job was 12 years.

Through the self—reports and interviews, the overwhelming theme that emerged was that of rehabilitation, although holding youth accountable while adhering to the standards set forth by law were also important. The juvenile justice personnel stressed the fact that socioeconomic conditions play an important role in delinquent activity. Due to the importance of socioeconomic factors, blacks are generally believed to commit more crime, since they are more often in the lower socioeconomic groups than whites. Blacks are also believed to be more distrustful of the juvenile justice system due to past experiences and subcultural values. The decision makers were reluctant to place blame for race differences anywhere in the system, but most agreed that the arrest stage (police) was the most likely stage for race bias to occur.

Perceived Role of the Court and Views of the System

Rehabilitation

Although almost all decision makers in Scott County believe that deterrence, maintenance of social order, and protection of society are very to somewhat important in interacting with youth, rehabilitation appears to be the most important goal.

Punishment of youth is seen as less important (Table 2,3). Despite the fact that the rehabilitation of youth appears to be the guiding philosophy, decision makers are split on the question of leniency by the court. About half believe that the court is too lenient with juveniles. In fact, the majority of personnel feel that delinquents should be dealt with strictly by the system (57 percent agree) and held accountable for their actions (100 percent strongly agree/agree). There is also a strong belief in early intervention (70 percent strongly agree/agree). Although the staff is split on the issue of juveniles doing better with minimal intervention, all agree that diversion from the system can be an effective method of intervention. Thus, rehabilitation appears to be attempted through intervention and accountability.

Although only a few of the decision makers actually stated in the interview that the main goal of the juvenile justice system is rehabilitation, it was clear from their responses that rehabilitation was the primary emphasis. The emphasis placed on rehabilitation is evident in the decision makers' desire to counsel, oversee probation, and protect the community. Personnel indicated that it was especially important to keep probationers

from becoming recidivists and “growing up” in the system. According to one decision maker, philosophies of how to deal with recidivists have recently changed. The old philosophy was that if youth re-offended after two successful probation periods, it would be assumed that that did not work and they would do an automatic placement. The new philosophy, however, is that if they did well on probation before, they should be given another chance on probation. Rehabilitation is seen as the method to prevent recidivism rather than punishment.

The goals of the job are to protect the community and try to keep the kids out of trouble and help them get through adolescence and grow up to be law—aiding citizens.

We have to be more democratic in the way we deal with kids and what kids get what services. I think that we take into account individual needs, community needs. It is more comfortable to have that as a basis rather than just arbitrary values of one individual.

I think that I have grown into the job. I never came into this with a set agenda in my mind of what was supposed to happen. I just wanted to do what I could to help the system.

We're taking (what's right for the child) into account every bit as much as taking into account holding them accountable and protecting the community. A real big focus is looking for the welfare of the kid.

The purpose of the juvenile court system is to rehabilitate the people that come before it.

In addition to the emphasis placed on rehabilitation, a number of other themes emerged. These were: less time to spend with the clients due to an increase in paperwork, fewer services available due to a lack of resources, and the fact that the referee (substitute judge) is often treated with less respect than the judge and therefore . as effective in distributing justice and meeting the needs of youth. Each of these views are highlighted

in the responses to the question, “What factors have hindered you from performing your job efficiently?”.

Paperwork is the number one reason, not enough resources or money or sometimes not enough hours in a day.

I think it's a combination of things. I would have to say that we've never really had sufficient resources to do the job as we'd like to. I think a lot of times we don't know what to do. We're not real good at answering some of these youngsters' problems and providing the resources to undo those things that have happened to them and the deficiencies, the things that cause them to commit crimes.

I think the biggest factor that hinders me is that I am part time. As a part time juvenile court referee, I don't get the same respect that a judge does and because I am there on a part time temporary basis, I don't develop the same familiarity with dispositional alternatives as the judge has.

I guess money, basically. Ideally, we would like to have more probation officers because the caseloads are pretty large.

Time management, that's the biggest. Trying to fit a ton of paperwork into very little time. There's too much paperwork, probably not enough programs, parents and their attitudes. Our caseloads are horrendous.

Number one, you don't have unlimited resources. Number two, in many cases you can't get the parents to improve and be what they need to be and so many of the kids come to us so severely damaged that you can improve their situation but you can't cure it, you can't make it all go away and disappear. The other thing is that we are lucky to have many very good people and we have people in our community and the agencies and their staffs have a good working relationship with all the other agencies, by and large.

The paperwork. I think I do my best work when I am working with the kids and some of this piddley paperwork really gets in the way.

There's things you have to do that you just have to do, but it's like paperwork and it seems like some of it is pretty clerical, let's put it that way. I think that hinders, it's kind of like that you have to remind yourself to spend time with people as opposed to paper.

The volume of work maybe. But I really don't have anything that stops me from doing an effective and efficient job other than if I am over loaded.

Probably the ability to initiate services and follow through with services that are needed. After you identify the problem that is existing, being able to deal with that immediately and have some kind of services available for them.

Another factor that may hinder reaching the goal of rehabilitation is the change from a *parens patriae* approach to one of a legalistic orientation. Most of the decision makers felt this orientation restricted their ability to "change the youth".

I think the system has gotten, for delinquents, more legal, more rights-oriented, more complex in terms of the kinds of things we do with kids and the kinds of problems we see kids have. I think we are better at identifying substance abuse, sexual abuse, all of those things.

I have gone from more of a social work belief to more of a, 'you do the crime, you do the time' attitude. I would like to think I am more realistic now.

You become more realistic as time goes by. When you first start out, I think everybody has the idea that they are going to change things and make a big difference. But, you learn as time goes on that isn't possible. I think that we can make a difference with some

of these families and kids but I am not as hopeful as I once was.

I felt (when I was hired) that I would be expected in some ways to be more of a superior/monitor type person and now I see it more as an advocacy—type job. You're more advocating than you are being a tough guy or the enforcer. A real big focus is looking out for the welfare of the kid.

On the other hand, the emphasis on the legal orientation is perceived to have resulted in an increased ability to be more effective in their job. These individuals contend they are now able to take into account such things as the needs of the child and society. Personnel must look more closely at youths' background to justify requirements as stipulated by state statute. Thus, these people believe they are getting more at the root of the problem.

Views of Delinquency

Decision makers believed that delinquency is influenced by more than one factor. The rehabilitation orientation in this county reflects the view that delinquency is caused by living in a high crime neighborhood (93 percent responded very to somewhat important), substance abuse (100 percent responded very to somewhat important), being poor (78 percent responded very to somewhat important), and a victim of child abuse (100 percent responded very to somewhat important). Other factors cited as contributing to delinquency included: having a natural tendency for delinquent behavior, media advertising of material possessions, inability to control impulses, and few job opportunities.

By reading through the interviews with the decision makers, the results of the self—reports were supported. It is apparent that they hold some definite beliefs about the reasons youth get involved in delinquency. According to most of the decision makers, there are many risk factors that could potentially lead to involvement in delinquency. Among the most important are: economic conditions (especially living in poverty), living in high-crime areas, inner-city neighborhoods, poor parental supervision, and living in a single-parent family (Table 4,5).

A majority of juvenile court personnel said living with mother only is an important cause of delinquency (57 percent responded somewhat to very important), demonstrating the importance that is placed on family background at juvenile court. Economics was also an important risk factor for delinquency (71 percent thought few job opportunities and 86 percent thought economic structure were important causes of delinquency).

Overall, it is clear that most of the personnel believe that if the youth they deal with were given the proper upbringing, including economic, psychological, emotional, and physical support, they would probably law abiding citizens. The overall impression given by the personnel is that almost all of the juvenile delinquents' problems begin at home. If the root of their problems is fixed, they will likely be rehabilitated, but usually the system tries to help the symptoms of the problem, so the real problem is never solved. In Scott County, the decision makers seem to work hard to find out what the child's real problems are so they can help him or her as much as possible.

Peer pressure was al elaborated on as a cause of delinquency. Eighty-five percent of the decision makers believed negative peer pressure was either pretty important or very important as a cause of delinquency. The remainder felt it was somewhat important (Table 4,5). One decision maker stated, “I got into some trouble when I was a kid and so I can appreciate the pressures that induce kids to get into fights. I had an explosive rage temper so I know what it is like. It helps you to be able to judge but not to be judgmental, I think those life experiences helped to give me balance of judgment and helped me to be fair to the people.” In addition to encouraging youth to commit delinquency, peer pressure is also a major factor in attracting youth to join gangs, according to the decision makers in Scott County.

Gangs

The influence of peer pressure is perceived to have extended over to the perceived increase in gang activity in Scott County. It is interesting to note that the personnel did not appear to see any race differences in gangs or their treatment. However, this could be due to the fact that there are black gangs, white gangs, and Hispanic gangs in the area. Although the personnel disagree on how long gangs have existed in the area, most agree that they are a problem and are contributing to an increase in violent crime.

Some decision makers believe gang activity is not really new, because youths have always been in gangs; it is just labeled differently now because the media plays it up and the main purpose of gangs seems to be to commit crime. Others believe the

difference is that youth are now being used by adults to commit crimes and take the rap, thereby protecting the adults from more serious consequences. Other decision makers think gang activity is a relatively recent phenomena.

I don't know whether there is that much gang activity or it is just perceived to be there. I think that a lot of things are blamed on gang activity that aren't necessarily there. But, I do think that it is probably growing and it probably has a very negative impact on the behavior of juveniles.

I think (gang activity) is on the rise, but before the last two or three years, I don't think we had gangs. We had some groups do things, but there wasn't this same comradary and toughness. They didn't have the allegiance that they do now.

Some decision makers believe it is becoming more difficult to identify youth who are actual gang members. For decision makers, now, it is not important whether youth are gang members. Rather, it is essential to understand why they become or want to become gang members. Most of the decision makers agree that there are many reasons why youth decide to join gangs. Usually it is because the gang offers them one or more of the following: support, encouragement, self—esteem, power, a feeling of belonging, role models, money, etc. Each of these qualities is perceived to be lacking or are not provided at home.

For middle-class kids who join gangs, the motivation seems to be to rebel against their parents or to get attention from their parents due to a lack of supervision. Another important reason for joining a gang is because

it provides protection, usually from another gang. For example, if a kid is being beaten up by two gangs and he joins one, he will only be beaten up by one.

According to the decision makers, youth are getting involved in gangs at younger ages because the gangs give them the acceptance they want and need. Because the main purpose of gangs seems to be to engage in delinquency, there are many problems that are believed to be associated with gangs. One of the most important outcomes from the perceived increase in gang activity is the increase in violence and drug involvement.

(The gang situation) has gone from bad to worse. Twelve years ago there was nothing noticeable, nothing specific, then we had the gangs but no big problems. Then came the drugs and then the shootings. We knew it was coming. Once crack cocaine hit the streets in California, it moved here real fast.

We are seeing the kids involved in crack cocaine and we never saw that before. We are starting to see a lot more turf battles and shooting and stabbings and stuff. Drive—by shootings, that has happened in the last few years. We have a lot more senseless community violence, a lot more graffiti, a lot more intimidation. The schools themselves aren't too bad but the areas around the schools are pretty bad because the kids who aren't going to school, the gang kids and all their buddies, are hanging around and looking for trouble and causing trouble and it isn't on the school ground but it is within a block on each side of the school and those are some very real problems.

According to the majority of decision makers, it is better to prevent youth from participating in gangs than to try and get them out of gangs.

Parents need to take a lot of control back from their kids and spend time with their kids. We need to get the family unit back in

this country. I don't think it is there like it used to be. Prevention programs in schools would be a good idea.

There are some decision makers who believe youth who are in gangs can be helped. For instance, according to the decision makers, parents need to be more involved with their kids to help control the gang problem. They believe that if kids get all the love, support, and encouragement they need at home, they will not be as tempted to join a gang because there is less incentive. This belief correlates with the rehabilitation philosophy displayed by the personnel. One decision maker believes the best way to deal with the gang problem is not to glamorize it like the media, but to treat gang members like any other criminal. As she says, "Thugs are thugs."

Race Differences in General

There was quite a bit of variance among the decision makers in Scott County about racial differences as far as crimes committed, attitude, cooperation, and respect for authority. Juvenile justice decision makers were asked if they believed blacks commit different crimes and more crime in contrast to whites. The self-reports showed that the majority believed that blacks and whites commit the same types of crimes and attitude plays an important role in whether or not a youth is arrested (Table 6, 7).

Crimes

Most of the personnel did not agree with the statement that blacks commit different crimes than whites (64 percent strongly disagreed/disagreed). However, those that responded to the question were divided on the issue that minorities commit more crime than whites (35 percent agreed and 42 percent strongly disagreed/disagreed).

The blacks with the more extensive prior record, the charges have a tendency to be more serious than whites and that could be perhaps that whites are not in the economic situation that the majority of the minorities are in. I think that blacks have a tendency to have more violent crimes whereas whites have more of a tendency to shoplift or things like that.

Others think that for their population, minorities commit more delinquency, which is also usually more serious. The crimes, however, may be more violent, but not necessarily more serious as far as felonies.

Many of the personnel believe that overall, the percentage of black youth committing delinquent acts has increased in recent years.

The white kids that are in placement, also the parents are having a difficult time dealing with the kid. It's certainly true that there are some white kids who commit the same crimes that the black kids do, that the white kids aren't as prone to get put into placement. That's true, when you're talking about the severity of the crime. But when we're looking at everything overall, how things are going with that kid in his family and his schoolwork, and the community, it seems like the black families that have been referred for delinquencies are having a more difficult time dealing with those kids.

Adherence to cultural values espoused by the parents is often given to explain the possible differences in the types and severity of crimes committed by black youth.

According to some personnel, in some families, particularly minorities, youth are believed to be brought up that it is okay to steal, "so they learn delinquency at home".

Some officers also believe that often black families use the system to excuse their child's behavior. That is, they see it as a "white system"; a system "out to get them". For others, defiance is seen as a symbol of status.

I think some of them have to prove themselves in their own little community; they see who is the toughest and the meanest and I think it is just for show, status among themselves.

Distrust of the System

The decision makers in Scott County generally felt that attitude played an important role in the arrests of minorities. However, not all believe black youth are less cooperative or respectful toward the authorities. Half of the personnel believe that blacks sometimes have a poorer attitude than whites. But 42 percent believe that there is just as much trouble with white youth as minorities. Meanwhile, a majority of decision makers think that black youth are less likely to admit guilt (57 percent responded sometimes while 36 percent answered almost never). It is believed that this is due to the way blacks were raised and their overall distrust of the system (79 percent responded that blacks were more distrustful of the system always or most of the time, while the remaining 21 percent responded sometimes)(Table 6,7). This lack of respect and cooperation is perceived to increase the chances of an arrest and/or reduce efforts at rehabilitation.

I think they have a lack of respect for the system because they think it is discriminatory. And the purpose of the juvenile court system is to rehabilitate the people that come before it and if you don't get cooperation with the rehabilitation efforts, you are likely to get recidivism.

I think it goes back to the distrust of the system. Every time a police car goes through the neighborhood and people yell stuff at them it doesn't give children any respect for law enforcement. But then again, in my opinion, there are a lot of law enforcers who don't have respect for these people. And people treat you how you treat them.

A lot of the black minority youth are more suspicious of anybody in the system, have much less respect for any type of authority, and they're very, very verbal about what they say.

I think they have a lack of respect for the system because they feel it is discriminatory.

I think they are more suspicious of authority. I think they appear to be less cooperative, and yeah, I think they come more with an attitude. I think they look at us, another facet of the system. Looking at us, here just one more thing that is either going to not help us or is going to abuse us or mistreat us. I think that trust, at whatever other level, I think we look all about the same type of thing to the people who come to us. I think the parents' attitudes have an awful lot to do with how the kids are going to behave.

Interestingly, when attitude is considered, the parent's attitude is often believed more important than the child's because it is seen as an indication of the family's willingness to cooperate.

Their parents are the biggest impediment, I think because the kid who make it are the kids who have parents who love them and are supportive and are not just trying to cover up and minimize.

Some decision makers did not necessarily see black families as less cooperative.

However, these individuals believed that blacks often either expect the system to do nothing or do everything. In response to the question, "Are minorities less cooperative than whites?", the following statements highlight this view.

We are making a horrendous generalization, no. If you brought out all of the kids that are on probation and said pick out the cooperative ones versus the uncooperative ones, you would have a higher percentage of blacks because there are more here, but I don't think so.

I think they're about the same, I do. I think they're about the same in terms of respect. In both the black situations and the white, you'll find some who come in with a real snotty attitude and you'll find some who come in really wanting to work through what we're doing and get me out of their life. I can't say I see a difference.

Race Differences in Processing

Three topics comprised the discussion provided in this section of the chapter: the police, the juvenile justice system itself, and the disproportionate overrepresentation of blacks in secure facilities. The findings obtained through the interviews suggest that the arrest stage is the most likely stage for bias to occur in the system. This view correlates with the belief that being watched by the police more than whites is a major reason for the blacks being more prevalent in the system than expected.

Police

In response to the closed ended questions, the decision makers were split evenly (28 percent agreed and 28 percent strongly disagreed! disagreed) in response to the statement "White youth are picked up less by the police than black youth" (Tables 8,9). Forty—four percent refused to either agree or disagree with the statement. Ninety-three percent, however, agreed that police treat black youth differently than white youth at least sometimes (28 percent thought they were treated differently most or all of the time).

A reading of the interviews suggests that most of the juvenile court personnel believe the police are biased to some extent in their interactions with youth. Differences in arrests are seen to be the result of patrolling patterns. The disproportionate

involvement in criminal activity by minorities and black attitudes and respect toward authorities are also believed to account for this occurrence.

Many of the personnel in Scott County admitted that they believe there is some discrimination or bias by police at the arrest stage. Studying the results of the self—reports indicates that almost all of them chose the police as the stage in which bias is most likely to occur. Several reasons were provided to support this belief.

I've heard the word nigger, both here in our office and at the police, and I guess I consider that blatant racism, when blacks weren't present and also when they were.

The police are more likely to be biased because they are out there working with those minorities every day and they have to put up with the abuses. But, even minority officers get picked on by the minorities because they say they are turning against them.

There are more police officers and they have the potential to have more diverse opinions. More racism is possible if there are more people.

You like to think that all of the police are fair but when I talk to the kids I realize that they do discriminate. They stop blacks a lot quicker than they would whites and check them out, especially the juveniles, and after awhile you just realize that black kids will face police scrutiny more than the average white kid and even Hispanics unless they are in a neighborhood that is middle class.

Some think the police are just generally more prejudiced and that is why there is more bias at that stage.

My feeling is that the most common place for bias to occur is at the level of the police because I think the police are generally more prejudiced than people with more education. I think that education is a great tool in

overcoming prejudice and I think a lack of education results in more prejudice.

One decision maker felt sympathetic for the police. According to this decision maker, the police are more likely to be biased because they do not have a chance to get to know the youth and therefore are forced to go mostly on appearance, attitude, and actions. This is apparently due to the fact that the police endure a lot of stress and are under a lot of pressure to do their jobs and react quickly.

Many of the decision makers feel that blacks and minorities are watched more by the police, so they are caught more, which explains why there appears to be prejudice in the system. A majority of decision makers think they are watched more because of the neighborhoods they reside in, which tend to be high—crime areas.

I think that they are arrested more because they get caught in the act more because they are in a high crime rate area, so it is harder for them to get away with things.

I think that most of (the police) deal in the areas where there are a lot of high crime rates and the fact that there are a lot of low-income blacks and they do get into trouble, it starts coloring their thinking.

I think that law enforcement is more visible and more active in inner-city areas and low—income areas, so they catch more kids doing more crimes in those areas that are predominantly minority in this community.

I think part of that's probably prejudice, that they (minorities) go into a white neighborhood, boy they stick out like a sore thumb.

The higher number of priors means that the cops know them and they are going to be watched like a hawk, they will probably stalk them, they follow them around, and bother them on purpose. And it isn't necessarily blacks, but if they know them, they will bother them on purpose. And it really makes the kids mad, but I tell them, if they weren't in trouble, the cops wouldn't know (them) and they wouldn't be following (them) around. I don't really think it is race. I think they are just more well-known.

Some decision makers believe that the police expect a great deal of respect, and when they do not get that respect, they get upset and may tend to over-arrest.

We asked about black kids, especially responding to white authority. And I don't think they have much respect for white authority, and I think they tend to shoot off their mouths at police officers as they drive by. Whereas a white kid out in another neighborhood will tend to be more sneaky about it, maybe saying it under his breath, but he won't say it out loud. But these (black) kids will have the chip right here on their shoulder in full view. Police officers aren't very good at dodging that or ignoring that, I don't think.

Others think that working in the system itself and having to deal with abuse contributes to police officers becoming hardened and an increased reliance on stereotyping of people. This occurrence could possibly explain minority attitudes toward authority. As one decision maker stated, "Young black males don't feel part of the community because as soon as two or three of them are seen together, they're assumed to be a gang or delinquents of some kind. So, they tend to have a chip on their shoulder or attitude because they feel surrounded by people who seem to have it all."

The Juvenile Justice System

In response to the closed ended questions about race differences in the system, most of the juvenile court personnel thought there were rarely any differences in processing (84 percent responded almost never/never to overall processing) (Table 10,11). When asked if black youth were treated differently than whites in the juvenile justice system, the respondents split their answers. Forty-three percent said they were treated differently almost never or never while 57 percent said they were treated differently sometimes or most of the time.

Although the majority of decision makers believe that bias in the system is a rarity, at least in Scott County, it was apparent from the interviews that race bias is an inevitable aspect of the system. For instance, some think that if you start seeing a lot of minorities or females with bad attitudes, it is difficult not to place expectations on them and/or stereotype. Thus, decision makers believe it is important to treat each case individually.

We live in a community that is probably 90 percent white and when a community is that heavily one race, I think some discrimination is inevitable because people aren't perfect. I don't think that we will ever get everyone to be unconscious of race.

I think it's possible and I think that should be our goal. I think it's going to be very difficult to achieve. But, I think that should be our goal.

I don't think it's probable because the juvenile justice system is made up of so many different people, and I don't think you're ever going to get any kind of bias totally out of everyone, but you can learn how to work with it and control it.

It's rather difficult because the system is run by human beings, who bring all kinds of ideas into the system. One thing I try to keep in mind, and I think we're all doing it and we're reminded by others to do this, is to work with people from where they are rather than from where we think they ought to be. We've got to take into account what their culture dictates is Ok. We constantly have to take a look at that and make sure that we're not imposing our needless attitudes on them, there are certain things that the community has to insist on.

As far as being totally unbiased, in any situation, I think it's kind of tough not to have some prejudice, because we're raised with it. It's almost like original sin, like a tainted part of being white in America. And you really have to keep an open eye and try not to be that way, and work at that all the time. I don't know if it's possible not to have some innate or trained biases.

There were quite a few decision makers that believe it is possible for whites to get better and less severe sentences than blacks because they can retain private as opposed to court-appointed attorneys. These explanations range from the court trying to avoid intervention to economic bias.

When a family has resources, you are more likely to do less with them than an individual who has no resources whatsoever. As far as I'm concerned, if the court can keep out of someone's life, I think that we owe that to that individual to let them show the court that they do have the resources and if they don't follow through with it, then the court should get involved. Parents need to take action and get involved.

I have to classify it just to whites in general; there are some middle-class families out there that are black or hispanic or oriental or asian. I think it is more the economic situation and I don't want to say that it happens all the time, but it does happen. There are people who get out of crimes that they are charged with.

I have seen a couple of instances of that. I don't know why it happens, but I have seen a couple of instances. But we give real good court appointed attorneys so I don't know. Maybe it has more to do with the family and their ability to pay or it has to do with the economic stuff.

Sometimes (juveniles) might be able to have access to better treatment as a result of having money and therefore maybe having another alternative available for a court disposition that otherwise wouldn't be available under normal circumstances.

Finally, some decision makers feel that decisions can be affected by a youth's access to resources, not necessarily in terms of counsel but in terms of services. According to this view, the system will not intervene as much if the child can afford services. An example of this would be if a youth was caught drinking and driving. In Scott County, the typical response to a drug or alcohol related charge is to require the youth to attend some type of CADS (Center for Alcohol and Drug Services) program. It may or may not be residential. However, if a youth's family has the financial resources necessary for private treatment, the court may allow the family to take care of the matter privately, without being forced to do so by court order.

According to most of the decision makers, they have not seen blatant racism. However, there may have been some subtle situations in which bias occurred. Two juvenile court officers did admit to seeing blatant racism in the system when asked if they had witnessed or been aware of race or ethnic bias. In the interviews, blatant racism was defined as any action by a decision maker that was obviously made strictly on the basis of race. The question "Have you ever witnessed racism in the system?" was answered with a number of responses.

Yes, a previous judge that I worked for, but he isn't the judge anymore.

Yes, at the intake stage, not currently. That employee is no longer here, he retired. I won't mention his name. I have not seen in my six years here, blatant racism from a field probation officer. I have seen it at the intake stage though.

We don't see what goes on out there. Number one: we see what comes in here, but whatever goes on out there, then a report is written. If it was something I was going to see, it would be changed before it got here. It's not going to come out in that form, so I wouldn't see it blatantly come through. You may have your suspicions that it was that way, but it doesn't make any difference because whatever comes to us, when we go to the county attorney, if we see a wrong, we right it.

A couple of bias sorts of situations have come up and I have said that we won't do that. For instance, not having in-home detention because the parents or the kid doesn't have a phone or there is no parent. Either of those situations we would look at in-home detention and place a child with a suitable relative, so we have even arranged special things for kids out of state to guard against a bias of a poverty situation. But it is also because so many of the blacks or hispanics are poor, we don't want a situation where we are punishing them and maintaining them in detention because they don't meet some criteria that is in fact a racial bias.

(A friend observed that) black kids come in with a series of minor offenses and it's kind of slap, slap, slap on the hand. And then all of a sudden it's like on the fifth or sixth one, we've said, 'that's it, we've had it!' We hit them with a hammer. But they aren't maybe diverted out as much, the diversion programs are looked upon as more white. And I gotta think there's some truth to that. I'm really trying to look at that here and make sure that we're not doing that. I was delighted that the last Street Law program I taught was mostly black youngsters. And it was just delightful, they were very bright and articulate. So, I hope we're not doing that. But it's sure something I'm not willing to bet my next paycheck that we're not. But I don't know that we don't kind of go on minor offenses, 'Well gosh, he's 12 years old, he lives in the inner-city, of course he'd have 1,2 or 3 shoplifts. ' It's just crime is so acceptable and let's not do anything with this one. We almost excuse it.

The Disproportionate Overrepresentation of Minorities

Different responses were provided to explain the disproportionate number of blacks in secure facilities as compared to whites. Opinions ranged from subcultural differences to minorities being caught more often due to the neighborhood minorities live in. Many decision makers also believe that blacks tend to be more highly represented in all categories of the risk factors for delinquency.

Some decision makers believe there is a disproportionate number of blacks in the system because of the greater number of single—parent homes. In general, it is believed that a single—parent may have a more difficult time in effectively supervising his/her child. Thus, residential placements were looked at more closely as a viable option, especially in serious offense cases. Reasons ranging from discrimination to economics were provided as responses to the question, “Why are minorities disproportionately represented in the juvenile justice system?”.

I think that there is a tendency for non-whites to be more involved in criminal activity because of their economic differences. Minorities have a tendency to be poor and I think that a lot of them get into trouble by trying to get things that they can't get through normal means. I guess some of it is that and I think minorities are singled out, some of it unjustly and some of it justly. You have problems with attitude sometimes and I think that has a lot to do with it sometimes.

(They are) unable to secure a job at a young age or having no jobs available for them with their lack of skills, then they fill that void in any way they possibly can. I think that that's probably one of the biggest reasons that we have a lot of what we have go on in juvenile court. The kids are taking care of needs that aren't being taken care of by parents.

The fact of the matter is that while there is crime throughout our city, the high crime rates tend to be in certain geographic parts of the city where there are either large hispanic populations or large black population. But even though that is where our black and hispanic populations live, they aren't the major group in those neighborhoods. So, it isn't like it is all black or anything. The police patrol there in high concentrations because that is where the high crime rates are. That is where there are more burglaries, more assaults, more car thefts, more vandalism. . . and with increased supervision by the police there are going to be more arrests.

Some of it is due to economics, if that is true. The attitudes of any persons in the system could affect the treatment of a child differently because of their race.

I think it is economics and somewhat disillusionment with the system because of discrimination. I don't think that black people or minorities feel that they can get an even break in society and sometimes they use that as an excuse to commit crimes. But, primarily, I think it is an economic question. I think that society discriminates against minorities in relation to the availability of work and promotion, therefore they tend to have less economic opportunity than whites do. I don't necessarily think that it is intentional in every case, but I think that there is a certain amount of subconscious discrimination to what goes on.

It just goes to show that is all African—American kids in this community were from two—parent families, living in Eldridge (a small suburban/rural town outside of Davenport), going to North Scott High School, and their parents were employed, we wouldn't see them either. It's a combination of the risk factors, and because of their exposure to the risk factors we see more of them. It has nothing to do with the color of their skin in my mind. Just because you're poor doesn't mean you'll be delinquent, but you have to overcome so much more when you're poor.

One reason, obviously, they have been caught. Being at the lower end of the spectrum they probably don't have the coping skills that a lot of whites who come from a more middle class have. Although I think that if you look at low income whites, you will probably find a good balance of people who get in trouble from that unless they feel they can fight their way out of the system or Use the system. People feel discouraged and sometimes victimized by this system, especially minorities.

I think there's institutionalized racism in America. There's lots of reasons, I kind of attribute it to white people not understanding black people. I don't think they mean to. I think it's ignorance, not a lot of studying or understanding, not living around black people, listening to what they were told, believing in myths and other hypocrisies or stories. It's unfortunate, but I really attribute it to a lack of understanding on the part of white people. I think black people tend to understand white people a little better, because they've been in the minority so they can see how we operate. And not enough white people have been in a situation where they've been around a lot of black people, until later in life, and then sometimes their ideas are formulated and then they have to work at changing themselves. That's kind of where I believe a lot of the problem lies.

I think that the way society has treated non—whites has a lot to do with it but then I think that there comes a certain point when you can't blame society anymore and you need to take care of it on your own. I think it is because of the breakup of the family and the high incidence of poverty and the single—parent families and lack of education and unemployment and alcoholism and all of those things and I think that would certainly affect me.

An interesting point that was brought out through the interviews with the decision makers was that they believe there are definite cultural differences between minorities and whites. This is probably due to the fact that many of the youth they deal with are related to each other or are recidivists. Therefore, because many people in the same family seem to be involved in crime, it is assumed that they all learn it from their family; they are “taught to commit crime”. However, in reality, this phenomena could be due indirectly to economic problems. For example, if stealing is the only way for a family to eat, the family will probably steal, not because they believe stealing is right, but because they need to eat. The following quotes explain the personnel’s belief that subcultural values is one reason for the disproportionate overrepresentation of blacks in the juvenile justice system.

I think that a lot of our re-offenders are black kids that we have already been working with. I think that sometimes it comes down to a cultural thing with them and they are trying to establish who they are or it comes down to the black and white thing and they just allow that unresolved anger to stay there.

I think that the Hispanic culture seems to take care of each other better or more so than the other cultures do. But the black culture, I think that sometimes violence is an accepted norm or accepted way of living and if they want something and that is their means to get it then that is what they do. In Scott County, if the black population is only 12%, then they are going to tend to be more readily apparent to the system.

I think a lot of it has to do with the fact that they don’t have money, they don’t have jobs, they come from single-parent families, the way they are brought up that it is okay to steal, their role models are terrible, kids learn all of that behavior and they learn it at home and that is why we have a problem.

Race Findings Specific to Study

Decision makers were asked for their input or feelings concerning the findings from the first phase of the research. That phase involved the recording of information from case files on case processing and case outcomes for black youth and white youth in Scott County.

There were many different explanations given for some of the inconsistent race or gender effects found in the first phase of the study. The major findings of the first phase of the study conducted in Scott County were: (1) blacks were less likely to be petitioned than whites, (2) blacks were less likely to receive a consent decree than whites, and (3) females were more likely to be placed outside the community than males, with all legal and extralegal factors controlled for within the regression models.

Blacks Petitioned Less than Whites

Many of the decision makers explained why blacks were petitioned less by citing reverse racism, or giving blacks too many “breaks” due to guilt or trying to be non—racist. Thus, because the juvenile court personnel try harder to deal with the blacks, they may in effect end up treating them differently. The following quotes from interviews explain the reasons provided by the decision makers for this view.

I know that sometimes I bend over backwards to make damn sure I am not doing anything to a kid just based on the color of his skin and maybe sometimes I am trying to be so fair that

I give kids a break when they really don't deserve one. I would rather have it be that way though than the other way around.

I think probably it would be that we gotta make sure we're giving them a fair shake, that we aren't being prejudiced. So it would go totally opposite, to bend over backwards to make sure we aren't.

Most of the decision makers were somewhat surprised that blacks were petitioned less than whites because they expected the findings to be the opposite, Several different explanations were offered.

The (finding) about blacks being less likely to be petitioned as whites, that one strikes me as odd although there may be a feeling on the part of the juvenile court officers or the county attorney that blacks are likely to have more legal problems than whites and therefore they overlook more of them for black youths than they do for whites.

What this is actually saying is that we are sending more blacks proportionately to the diversionary programs than the whites. I guess the only thing I can think of is that the intake officers must be conscientiously offering more diversionary programs to blacks.

I've got to think that it's probably that our expectations are lower, sort of a watering down. I think that's kind of insulting to them. Giving them a second chance, or a third, or a fourth. Saying, 'Well look where they live, look what they've got going for them.' And I'm not sure that does them any favors.

A final reason for the disparity between races at the petition stage is that the juvenile court officer assigned may be familiar with the client's family. For example, if you are familiar with a family, you may have other options you expect will work other than petition. A lot of black families have a lot of children, often juvenile delinquents, so this could be why blacks are petitioned less.

Blacks Receive Consent Decrees Less than Whites

There were also several explanations for blacks receiving consent decrees less than whites. One person feels that blacks may be less likely to receive a consent decree because they are rarely given out in the first place, although it may also have to do with economics. This explanation is not very plausible simply because even if consent decrees are rarely given out, the fact remains that blacks still receive them less often than whites.

The most common justification for the finding of fewer consent decrees was that since blacks are apparently given more breaks, by being petitioned less, that by the time a consent decree may be a choice, they have too many prior offenses so they do not qualify for this more lenient outcome.

When you see that the consent decree is just the opposite (of petition)it makes some sense because if they are practicing systems patience with the black kids in the diversionary programs and giving them a second or third time, then when those kids are finally getting petitioned they aren't coming in with a clean slate. But if the white kids are getting petitioned early on, then they aren't coming in with a horrendous record and so they are looking pretty good for a consent decree. So, they aren't getting the diversionary program but they are getting consent decree, where the black kids are getting the diversionary programs and aren't getting passed on for just one or two mistakes. The system is practicing some patience but then when they do come before this court, the system is saying a consent decree isn't appropriate at all."

If they don't have an attitude that, 'I'm willing to work. I'm willing to do it,' then they aren't going to get it. They have to have a pretty good attitude, they don't have to be perfect. If you go along the reasoning that a lot more of the minority youth have a worse attitude, then it stands to reason they aren't going to get it.

Others feel that blacks receive less consent decrees because they are more likely to come from single—parent families. Therefore, these youth may have less cooperation or support from their families, which are necessary factors in an effective consent decree.

Some also feel that often times if blacks are given a break the first time they are brought into the system, then they commit another crime. When they are brought back to the system they do not qualify for a consent decree, because they are given only for serious first offenders.

Females Placed Out of the Community More than Males

The final major finding from the first phase of the study, and the one that seems to bring the most disagreement among the decision makers, is that females are placed out of the home more than males at judicial disposition. One of the most popular explanations given was that females tend to be more out-of-control and more problematic than males.

The only thing that really stands out is the one about the females being placed more often as a disposition rather than community—based. And that is because they are so out of control by the time we get the girls. And we have less facilities for females so we aren't placing that many. It's just that it's a

small minority we are dealing with so you are going to see more placed.

The (females) that go to court are more likely to have more serious problems than males at that same stage.

The most severe, severe detention cases I've ever had were females, and they've done more physical damage than any other boy I've ever had. I had one female that, after one 15—minute encounter with her at detention, she had one detention worker and one juvenile court officer at the physician being stitched.

Another explanation for the difference in treatment is that there are simply more community-based facilities for males to be placed in contrast to females.

It is easier to secure a placement for a boy than it is for a girl. Sometimes I have seen charges reduced or dismissed for a girl. There seems to be a reluctance with some officers to work with females and I am not sure what the reason for that is. Sometimes I think that the system must believe that the girls aren't as criminally active or aren't as dangerous as the males are, but that isn't true. I have seen girls come in with some very serious charges, like murder and attempted murder. And it's getting worse, we are seeing more girls come in.

Females are also believed to need protection and sheltering more than males. So, the reason they are placed out of the home more of ten could be to get them out of a bad situation. Other reasons provided by decision makers were: females tend to runaway more, put themselves at risk more, they are not as strong if attacked, and parents request placement more often for them in comparison to males.

In general, there appears to be a protective attitude towards girls more so than to boys. As a consequence, females end up treated more harshly. There is the held belief that if offenses of boys at Eldora were compared with girls' from Toledo, the girls wouldn't have as serious or as many crimes.

It's the protection thing. I also think they can really be obnoxious and nasty and everybody would say that. They drive their parents nuts and their parents kick them out, want them out, so you take them. And when they say that about boys, we just kind of say, "No, we're not going to." But girls, we worry about that responsibility. What if something happens to her? What if she is victimized?

There were a few of the decision makers that completely disagreed with the finding of a difference between male and female disposition. "I think a first time, if you put a male and a female with similar charges together, the boy's probably going to be the one that goes as opposed to the girl."

Feelings About the Study Overall

The decision makers held different views of the study. The majority thought the study was beneficial, in some way, to the system. Many were surprised but pleased that there were so few race differences that came out in their juvenile court office.

Overall, it's like it ought to be, which is kind of surprising because you like to think that you do it this way. I think we all try to be fair. I don't think that you would be in this job very long if you were racist because you just couldn't last in this system.

If no more came out of it than to have 13 people in this office take a look at how we deal with minority youngsters and think through what our biases are, calling into question some of our long held attitudes, I think that's still beneficial.

In response to the second phase of the study, a few of the decision makers had problems with the wording of the questions and the answers provided as choices. In addition, there was also a fear of misinterpretation.

Suggestions for Change

The final part of the interview involved asking the decision makers what they believed was needed to change the disproportionate overrepresentation of minority youth in secure facilities. The responses given ranged from cultural awareness and more treatment programs to the hiring of more minority personnel.

When asked if minorities have different needs than whites, the responses were evenly distributed. Some of the decision makers believed that minority and white needs were the same. These individuals believe that it is necessary to be aware of the specialized needs that a child has individually, but not on the basis of race.

Those who believe minorities have different needs than whites, and even other minorities, focused on the lack of male role models. Some solutions were suggested to meet the needs of youth from single—parent families who are lacking a male role model.

It has to be the community that does that and it has to be programs that the community will get involved in, like Big Brother and Big Sister, and churches providing programs. Helping these kids to develop social skills and working with kids that are struggling with school and are discouraged and ready to drop

out and trying to help them on a more one-to-one basis is important.

Other important needs for minorities, especially blacks, are more opportunities for education. The lack of education is related to many of the economic problems faced by many minorities; however, some decision makers admitted that minorities have a greater need for economic opportunity due to discrimination.

Still others suggest cultural differences lead to different needs. For example, some think minorities have different needs because they need to be able to establish their own identity within their own culture. Different minorities are also believed to have different needs, such as religion and child-rearing norms, because they come from different cultures. A few decision makers also believe that minorities have different needs than whites, but they believe that those needs must be met by the family, not the system. Therefore, they do not believe it is their responsibility to see that those needs are met.

According to some of the decision makers, on the other hand, the best way to prevent racial bias in the system is to have more sensitivity training and enhance the communication between whites and blacks. Sensitivity training is believed to educate whites how to deal and communicate with minorities by becoming more aware of their cultural differences. In addition, some argue there is a definite need for more black attorneys and black probation officers. The important question for personnel is how to get more minorities working in the system? The following quote highlights these concerns.

As a person who hires here, I almost become a believer in affirmative action, because I really believe in the importance of that. I've not been able, when I've hired, which isn't too often, to recruit minority applicants who have either the experience or the education to compete real well with the people that I've hired.

Summary

By talking with the juvenile court decision makers about a number of factors, ranging from their views of the juvenile justice system to reasons for the disproportionate overrepresentation of minorities in secure facilities, a theme of rehabilitation emerges. In Scott County, most personnel cited background characteristics, such as economics and the family, as reasons for youth involvement in delinquent activity. In keeping with this belief, the philosophy of rehabilitation stands to reason since it suggests that by fixing the problems in a child's life, he or she will no longer have reason to commit crimes. Thus, blacks are generally believed to evidence more indications of a dysfunctional background and a greater likelihood of participation in delinquent activity. Family distrust, police deployment patterns, and adherence to cultural values that involve nonconformity are all believed to contribute to the disproportionate overrepresentation of blacks in secure facilities. Some indications were provided that suggest police may somewhat bias towards minorities in comparison to whites.

A major portion of the interviews with the decision makers involved their explanations for the findings from the first part of the study. They explained the finding that blacks were petitioned less than whites by saying that blacks are given more breaks when they first enter the system to ensure that they are not discriminated against. They

explained the further finding that blacks are less likely to receive consent decrees by stating that since blacks are given a break at first, they no longer qualify for a consent decree when they re—enter the system. Female placement outside the community was seen as a result of a lack of placement facilities for females in the community. The personnel also provided suggestions for changes to improve the juvenile justice system and attempt to decrease the race differences that do occur. These ideas ranged from the hiring of more minorities in the juvenile justice system to implementing new treatment and diversion programs.

Table 1. Distributions of Decision Makers' Demographics and Mean Time on Job, Scott County.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
Gender	Male	7	50
	Female	7	50
Race	White	13	93
	Other	1	7
Age		x = 41	
		std.dev. = 7.50	
		range = 24-56	
Years on job		x = 12	
		std.dev. = 6.87	
		range = 2-24	

Table 2. Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Role of the Court, Scott County.

Variable Name	Definition
IMDETRNC	Important for system to achieve deterrence?
IMSOCORD	Important for system to maintain social order?
IMPUNMNT	Important for system to achieve punishment?
IMPRTSOC	Important for system to protect society?
IMPREHAB	Important for system to achieve rehabilitation?
JLENTRET	Juveniles treated too leniently by court?
DELPTFEL	Delinquents should be prosecuted to full extent of law?
ADULTPUN	Juveniles commit violent crimes should be treated like adults?
DELDELT	Delinquents must be dealt with strictly?
ACNTRMS	Offenders should be held accountable for crimes?
PREDEL	To prevent delinquency identify and work with predelinquents?
MININTVN	Juveniles do better with minimal intervention?
INTRVNTN	Every juvenile should receive some kind of intervention?

Table 3. Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Role of the Court, Scott County.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
IMDETRNC	Very important	5	36
	Pretty important	8	57
	Somewhat important	1	7
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--
IMSOCORD	Very important	3	21
	Pretty important	6	43
	Somewhat important	3	21
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	2	14
IMPUNMNT	Very important	2	14
	Pretty important	3	21
	Somewhat important	3	21
	Not too important	5	36
	Not important at all	1	7
IMPRTSOC	Very important	8	57
	Pretty important	6	43
	Somewhat important	--	--
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--

Table 3-continued.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
IMPREHAB	Very important	10	71
	Pretty important	2	14
	Somewhat important	1	7
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	1	7
JLENTRET	Strongly agree	--	--
	Agree	2	14
	Neither agree or disagree	4	29
	Disagree	7	50
	Strongly disagree	1	7
DELPTFEL	Strongly agree	1	7
	Agree	3	21
	Neither agree or disagree	6	43
	Disagree	4	29
	Strongly disagree	--	--
ADULTPUN	Strongly agree	--	--
	Agree	--	--
	Neither agree or disagree	--	--
	Disagree	7	50
	Strongly disagree	7	50

Table 3-continued.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
DELDEL	Strongly agree	--	--
	Agree	8	57
	Neither agree or disagree	4	29
	Disagree	2	14
	Strongly disagree	--	--
ACNTRMS	Strongly agree	9	64
	Agree	5	36
	Neither agree or disagree	--	--
	Disagree	--	--
	Strongly disagree	--	--
PREDEL	Strongly agree	5	36
	Agree	7	50
	Neither agree or disagree	2	14
	Disagree	--	--
	Strongly disagree	--	--
MININTVN	Strongly agree	2	14
	Agree	3	21
	Neither agree or disagree	3	21
	Disagree	4	29
	Strongly disagree	2	14
INTRVNTN	Strongly agree	4	29
	Agree	6	43
	Neither agree or disagree	--	--
	Disagree	4	29
	Strongly disagree	--	--

Table 4. Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Causes of Delinquency, Scott County.

Variable Name	Definition
IMPLSCON	Inability to control impulses causes delinquency?
PERCHMAD	Choosing to commit delinquent acts causes delinquency?
SCHLPERF	Negative school performance causes delinquency?
PSINTYTH	Lacking positive ways to interact with youth caused delinquency?
NEGPEERS	Negative peer pressure causes delinquency?
SUBABUYT	Substance abuse by youth causes delinquency?
SOCOFYT	Failure to socialize youth causes delinquency?
LKPARSUP	Lacking parental supervision causes delinquency?
LKDISPAR	Lack of discipline by parents causes delinquency?
VIOLRES	Violence as way to resolve differences causes delinquency?
MEDIA	Violent destructive media images causes delinquency?
POVERTY	Being poor causes delinquency?
ECOSTRCT	Economic structure causes delinquency?
JOBOPTRY	Little job opportunity causes delinquency?
PSYCHPR	Emotional or psychological problems causes delinquency?
EVCOMCRM	Everyone commits crimes some just get caught?
DISINEQL	Discrimination and inequality cause delinquency?

Table 5. Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Causes of Delinquency, Scott County.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
IMPLSCON	Very important	1	7
	Pretty important	8	57
	Somewhat important	3	21
	Not too important	1	7
	Not important at all	1	7
PERCHMAD	Very important	6	43
	Pretty important	8	57
	Somewhat important	--	--
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--
SCHLPERF	Very important	3	21
	Pretty important	8	57
	Somewhat important	2	14
	Not too important	1	7
	Not important at all	--	--
PSINTYTH	Very important	2	14
	Pretty important	10	71
	Somewhat important	2	14
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--

Table 5-continued.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
NEGPEERS	Very important	5	36
	Pretty important	7	50
	Somewhat important	2	14
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--
SUBABUYT	Very important	10	71
	Pretty important	3	21
	Somewhat important	1	7
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--
SOCOFYT	Very important	4	29
	Pretty important	4	29
	Somewhat important	6	43
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--
LKPARSUP	Very important	11	79
	Pretty important	3	21
	Somewhat important	--	--
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--
LKDISPAR	Very important	7	50
	Pretty important	6	43
	Somewhat important	1	7
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--

Table 5-continued.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
VIOLRES	Very important	4	29
	Pretty important	6	43
	Somewhat important	4	29
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--
MEDIA	Very important	1	7
	Pretty important	6	43
	Somewhat important	5	36
	Not too important	2	14
	Not important at all	--	--
POVERTY	Very important	2	14
	Pretty important	2	14
	Somewhat important	7	50
	Not too important	3	21
	Not important at all	--	--
ECOSTRCT	Very important	3	21
	Pretty important	4	29
	Somewhat important	5	36
	Not too important	2	14
	Not important at all	--	--
JOBOPTRY	Very important	3	21
	Pretty important	7	50
	Somewhat important	3	21
	Not too important	1	7
	Not important at all	--	--

Table 5-continued.

<u>Variable Name</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
PSYCHPR	Very important	4	29
	Pretty important	8	57
	Somewhat important	2	14
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--
EVCOMCRM	Strongly agree	1	7
	Agree	4	29
	Neither agree or disagree	1	7
	Disagree	6	43
	Strongly disagree	2	14
DISINEQL	Very important	1	7
	Pretty important	5	36
	Somewhat important	7	50
	Not too important	1	7
	Not important at all	--	--

Table 6. Definition of Variable Representing Decision Makers' View of the Race Differences in General, Scott County.

Variable Name	Definition
RACRIMES	Black and white juveniles commit different type of crimes?
MINMOCRM	Ethnic and racial minorities commit more crimes?
BFAMDIST	Are black families more distrustful of system?
BYTGUILT	Are black youth less likely to acknowledge guilt?
BLYATTUD	Do black youth have poorer attitude?
JUVATUDE	How important is juveniles attitude in decision making?
PARATUDE	How important is parents attitude in decision making?

Table 7. Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of the Race Difference in General, Scott County.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
RACRIMES	Strongly agree	--	--
	Agree	--	--
	Neither agree or disagree	5	36
	Disagree	6	43
	Strongly disagree	3	21
MINMOCRM	Strongly agree	--	--
	Agree	5	36
	Neither agree or disagree	3	21
	Disagree	5	36
	Strongly disagree	1	7
BFAMDIST	Always	3	21
	Most of the time	8	57
	Sometimes	3	21
	Almost never	--	--
	Never	--	--
BYTGUILT	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	1	7
	Sometimes	8	57
	Almost never	5	36
	Never	--	--

Table 7-continued.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
BLYATTUD	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	1	7
	Sometimes	7	50
	Almost never	3	21
	Never	3	21
JUVATUDE	Very important	3	21
	Pretty important	7	50
	Somewhat important	3	21
	Not too important	1	7
	Not important at all	--	--
PARATUDE	Very important	3	21
	Pretty important	6	43
	Somewhat important	5	36
	Not too important	--	--
	Not important at all	--	--

Table 8. Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of Police, Scott County.

Variable Name	Definition
WHYTLENT	White youth picked up less by police than black youth?
COPTRBLK	Do police treat black youth differently than white youth?

Table 9. Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of Police, Scott County.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
WHYTLENT	Strongly agree	--	--
	Agree	4	29
	Neither agree or disagree	6	43
	Disagree	3	21
	Strongly disagree	1	7
COPTRBLK	Always	1	7
	Most of the time	3	21
	Sometimes	9	64
	Almost never	1	7
	Never	--	--

Table 10. Definition of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of Race Differences in Processing in General, Scott County.

Variable Name	Definition
BLKTRIDI	Black youth treated differently than white youth in system?
REFBYRAC	Does race of youth play role in whether youth is referred?
RACDIFDT	Are there race differences in processing at detention stage?
RDINTAKE	Are there race differences in processing at intake stage?
RDPETITN	Are there race differences in processing at petition stage?
RDWAIVER	Are there race differences in processing at waiver?
RDINLAPR	Are there race differences in processing at initial appearance?
RDADJUD	Are there race differences in processing at adjudication?
RDDISPOS	Are there race differences in processing at disposition?

Table 11. Frequency Distributions of Variables Representing Decision Makers' View of Race Differences in Processing in General, Scott County.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
BLKTRIDI	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	1	7
	Sometimes	7	50
	Almost never	5	36
	Never	1	7
REFEYRAC	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	1	7
	Sometimes	5	36
	Almost never	3	21
	Never	5	36
RACDIFDT	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	2	14
	Almost never	6	43
	Never	6	43
RDINTAKE	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	5	36
	Almost never	5	36
	Never	4	29

Table 11-continued.

Variable Name	Category	N	%
RDPETITN	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	2	14
	Almost never	5	36
	Never	7	50
RDWAIVER	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	4	29
	Almost never	2	14
	Never	8	57
RDINLAPR	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	1	7
	Almost never	2	14
	Never	11	79
RDADJUD	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	1	7
	Sometimes	2	14
	Almost never	4	29
	Never	7	50
RDDISPOS	Always	--	--
	Most of the time	--	--
	Sometimes	6	43
	Almost never	1	7
	Never	7	50

Chapter Ten

Youth Scott County

There were 120 youth that participated in a self report study. Of these, 66 were white and 54 were black. Also, 48 youth were interviewed from Scott county. Twenty-two were black and twenty-six were white. Forty-one were male and eight were female.

Both races feel there is discrimination against blacks, however, both groups are optimistic about an improving future. When asked about police, both races responded negatively. They believed police used unfair treatment. The youth, however, believed their probation officers displayed fair treatment and responded more positively to questions referring to their probation officers. Results from the self—reports indicate teachers show equal treatment to all youth. Finally, both races blame themselves for their current situation.

General Perceptions

Discrimination

Questions were asked concerning general views of discrimination in our society, police, probation officers, school, and who they blame for their current situation. Responses to these closed ended questions are presented in Tables One and Two at the end of this chapter.

Both blacks and whites felt overall that racial discrimination is getting worse. A higher percentage of whites

responded that racial discrimination is a present problem (85 percent strongly agree/agree), contrast to blacks (65 percent strongly agree/agree). Some blacks felt society oppresses blacks. "If I went down South, there are prejudiced people around there." Another youth stated, "Black person's always looked down upon. Always has and always gonna be." A smaller percentage of blacks felt more optimistic, "The blacks are moving up. They aren't getting treated like they used to."

Although a majority of the white youth interviewed felt discrimination is getting worse, this theme was not as dominant as it was in the self reports. This difference could be due to the larger sample used for the self reports in comparison to those interviewed. Still, the dominant theme remains that a majority of both races feel discrimination is a problem in our society. One white youth, for example, felt that racial discrimination is getting worse "especially after the Rodney King deal...there are even blacks prejudiced against blacks." Another white interviewee says, "I think it's getting better. The blacks are getting better jobs or whatever." Some whites indicated discrimination goes both ways, "People will say that they don't want that black person in my neighborhood, or that white person, or that Chinese person."

Opportunities

The youth were also asked if they felt blacks had the same job opportunities as whites (Tables 1, 2). A difference of opinion exists between the blacks and the whites. Fifty-eight percent of blacks felt they did not have the same opportunities as whites to get a job or the ability to make the same amount of money. The whites, however, felt both groups

have equal job opportunities (67 percent strongly agree/agree).

A reading of the interviews supports these sentiments of job and economic inequality. A black youth reports, "Racial discrimination in the work place is hush-hush. Employers cover it up by not hiring you.. .they say it's because you don't have enough experience as the white person they just hired." Another states, "A white person will get a job before a black person will". A small number of blacks believed equal job opportunities were possible for blacks through hard work and determination. "If a person works hard at their job, they should have equal opportunities.

The majority of the whites interviewed believed blacks do have equal opportunities in the work place. This view is in contradiction to the view of blacks. "Employers look at personal characteristics such as experience and reliability rather than race." Yet, some whites felt employers would hire a white person first, and that blacks would get lower wage jobs. One youth responds to the question of whether a black could get the same job as a white, "It depends on what position, like the president of the company, I doubt it. If it was McDonalds, maybe." Thus, youth appear to be divided on the extent blacks are provided equality. The differences seem to be race specific. Blacks feel oppressed while whites believe blacks have equal opportunities.

Youth were also asked whether they felt the opportunities for blacks would improve or worsen in the future. Responses from the self reports indicate both races are optimistic about improving opportunities for blacks in the future. Seventy—six percent of the blacks felt their opportunities would stay the same or improve. A 75 percent majority of whites also felt blacks have rising opportunities.

The responses from the blacks interviewed were evenly distributed. Some blacks feel the majority of resources lie in the hands of the dominant whites and will stay that way in the future. “People who own businesses, like the white people, might be prejudice and might not want to hire blacks and hire white people instead.” Other blacks feel their opportunities will improve if society can set racial conflicts aside and come together. “Black opportunities will improve in the future if people stop arguing and work together.” There are also some black youth who felt opportunities will stay the same.

Whites were pretty much in agreement that black opportunities will improve in the future. “It’s getting better. . . blacks are getting more equal rights.” Only one of the white youth interviewed believed opportunities will get worse in the future. Negative attitudes towards blacks in our society were seen as an explanation for this perception. “I think it’ll get worse. There’s a lot of prejudice.” Evidence of prejudice could be seen in some of the responses. One white, for example, said, “I feel that blacks should stay and work with blacks and whites should work with whites.” In sum, variation exists among blacks

concerning opportunities in the future. Whites, on the other hand, are in more agreement that opportunities in the future for blacks will improve.

Trust

Before concluding the section on general views, trust between blacks and whites was evaluated. Responses from the self report indicate that blacks were indecisive concerning the extent they trust whites (30 percent strongly agree/agree, 44 percent not sure). The whites showed a great sense of trust toward blacks (82 percent strongly agree/agree).

From the interviews, a dominant theme from both blacks and whites emerged that both groups trust each other. Only a few felt no trust at all for the opposite race. One white youth expressed, "I can trust black people. There's a difference between black people and niggers. Niggers are the kind of people that have attitudes, that think that they're all bad. Black people are cool." A black youth expressed his trust for white people since, "... half my friends are white."

Overall, the majority of blacks felt they are oppressed through racial discrimination in the job market and in society as a whole. They were evenly distributed on their feelings about their future improving or worsening. Contradicting the blacks, white people tended to feel blacks were not discriminated against in the work place and opportunities will continue to improve in the future. Both races feel some sense of trust for the opposite race.

Views of Police

Treatment

The responses from the self reports are presented in Tables Three and Four. The question of personal treatment by the police varied between the two races. A majority of the blacks felt they were treated fairly (63 percent sometimes/most time). Eighty—one percent of the whites indicated they were treated fair sometimes to most of the time. A reading of the interviews indicate a majority of the blacks expressing unfair treatment by the police. This contradicts the self report data. Again, this may be due to a larger sample in the self report or that in the interviews the youth had an opportunity to expand more on their responses.

One youth said, “The cops put me into the car and I could hear them talking about me outside the car, they were calling me spick and stuff like that.” Other blacks indicated the police used an excess of force. “I gave myself up already, but they still threw me down and stuck me in the back with a gun.” Another reported, “He grabbed me by the back of my neck and threw me on the ground.” A few blacks did express they were treated fairly. “They didn’t make any comments or try to hurt me.” Another stated, “If it was a different kid, and they did the same thing I did, they would be here too.”

The white youth felt they were treated in a fair manner. One white youth stated he was treated fairly because the police, “...saw me and all my friends drinking and let us off.” The whites that felt they were treated unfairly focused on perceived

police brutality. One expressed roughness when, "...they slammed me up against the car for no reason." Another said, "They stepped on my head and on my back and put the hand cuffs on real tight.

Next, youth were asked if they believed police treat all people alike. The answer from the self reports show a consensus for both races. It is believed that police do not treat all people alike (84 percent of the blacks and 85 percent of the whites expressed police never or seldom treat everyone equally).

The same conclusions could be drawn from the interviews. One black indicated police show a bias toward the rich. "Like in a rich neighborhood, if they called the cops and said somebody broke into their house or got shot and killed or something, they'll be over there in a hurry, but around here if somebody gets shot or something, they'll take their sweet old time getting here. It's like they don't care." Another black said, "I think they treat blacks worse than whites. They be saying that all black people live in the ghetto and all black people are thieves and are all the same."

The whites agreed with the blacks on this issue. One stated, "They (police) are prejudice with the black people and people in gangs." Another indicated that a person's economic status had a connection with police treatment. "You can go to a rich person, that's why they're gonna treat them better. If you go to a regular person, that's why they're gonna treat them with less respect." The dominate theme is that police do express different treatment to those of different race and economic status.

The youth were then asked whether they felt police pick on blacks. A majority of both races from the self reports indicate that police do pick on black youth. Seventy-seven percent of the blacks responded sometimes or most of the time, and 24 percent responded never. Sixty-six percent of the whites agree police pick on blacks sometimes to most of the time. Thirty—five percent responded almost never/never.

The interviews support the findings from the self reports. One black youth stated, “The Davenport police station has a little bit of racial discrimination. Cause I know my brother and one of his white friends were walking down the street.. .as soon as they (police) pulled up, they never said anything to his friend, and they started asking my brother all kinds of questions about where he’s been. . .they took my brother and he had to go down to the police station. The white guy went home as soon as they pulled up.” Another suggested police use more violence with blacks, “They’ll just hit a black person, or they’ll beat a black person up.” There was only one black from the sample that felt differently. When asked if police pick on blacks his response was, “No, that is just the stereotype.”

A white youth suggested, “Sometimes I think they get off on beating up black people.” Another expressed, “. . .they watch them closer than white people.. . if they are walking downtown you would probably think they were going to rob a store or something.” Some whites disagreed saying, “They treat us worse because they are afraid of blacks”, and “Sometimes in certain circumstances they are easier on blacks.” On the whole, both blacks and whites

feel police do not treat everyone equally. Still, the blacks feel more strongly than the whites that police single out blacks and treat them worse. Respect

From the self report data, a majority of the blacks (69%) responded they had respect and trust for the police at least some of the time. The whites, on the other hand, did not respond as positively toward the police (42 percent sometimes/always).

The majority of blacks from the interviews, however, either do not respect the police or will only show it if they get it in return. "It's kind of hard to have respect when you see what happened to Rodney King. I think it's harder to have respect for the judicial system that just set them free." The whites were split about in half in their responses. One youth expressed respect to the police for their help in straightening him out. "By them busting me, that's what got me sober, and that's what's helping me out."

The last question referred to the desire to become a police officer in the future. It was quite apparent from the self reports that neither whites nor blacks had any ambition to become police officers. Of the blacks, 84 percent said they would never want to be an officer, with only 5 percent indicating a future career as a police officer. Whites showed a somewhat higher interest in this field (12 percent). Still, the majority of whites also stated no interest in becoming a police officer (76 percent). There were not a lot of comments in the interviews on this topic. Most youth just answered with a yes or no. Again, both races had little desire to become a police officer.

Overall, the perceptions that black and white youth have of the police vary quite a bit on the issues of individual treatment and respect for the police. Both races, however, agreed that police do not treat all people alike. They agreed that police seem to discriminate against the poor and blacks. There was also a lack of desire to become a police officer.

Views of Probation Officers

The youth were asked various questions about their probation officers including treatment, respect, desire to become a probation officer, and perceived problems in the system. Responses to these questions are listed in Tables 5 and 6.

Treatment

Youth were first asked if their probation officer treated them fairly. Results from the self reports suggest both blacks and whites believe they received fair treatment. Of the blacks, 79 percent responded most of the time to always. Of the whites, 84 percent similarly responded.

The following quotes and impressions from the interviews compliment these responses. One black youth reported, “My probation officer treats me good and respects me.” A few blacks, however, felt differently. One youth believed his probation officer did not treat him fairly; she had no confidence in his positive abilities. “When she first sees you is what she bases you on.. .Once she gets something set, it’s set in her ways. . .She

just thinks you're never going to become what you want to be." Another black youth felt his probation officer only wanted to lock him up, "That's gonna make me worse. If I get locked up, I'm gonna come out mad as hell."

The dominant response from the whites was that their probation officers also treated them equally. One youth stated, "I got what I deserved to get." Another youth reported fair treatment through the leniency his probation officer gave him. "My offense was pretty minor. They were a lot more lenient on me than somebody who robbed a store or something."

Next, youth were asked if probation officers treat all people alike. The results from the self report data indicate a majority of the blacks feel probation officers do not display racial or economic discrimination. Sixty-five percent felt they treat the rich and poor equally and 78 percent felt they treat blacks and whites equally. The whites had a stronger feeling about this as evidenced by the percent indicating equal treatment between the rich and poor and black and white (82 percent and 87 percent respectively).

Again, the majority of both groups in the interviews agreed with the trends that emerged from the self reports. Most of the blacks answered just "yes" or "no". For those few that responded "no", the unfair treatment was believed to be for racial reasons. One black suggested that some probation officers express some prejudice against blacks. "He (probation officer) said before that he doesn't like blacks." Another black echoed a similar sentiment, "When whites come here for a crime worse than a black, they get off the hook and get sent home faster than a black."

The majority of whites feel probation officers treat all people alike. “They treat everyone alike; male, female, black, white, rich, and poor.” One white even suggested that probation officers do not discriminate against blacks, but rather against whites. “I think it’s the other way around. I have seen blacks get into trouble for the same thing I have and get let free.”

Respect

Both blacks and whites felt some sort of respect when asked whether they had respect for their probation officers. As indicated in the self reports, 68 percent of the blacks and 89 percent of the whites responded sometimes to most of the time.

The youth did not expand much on their responses to why they respect their probation officers. One black youth expressed he would only reciprocate the respect that was given to him. “I am the type of person where if I get respect, I give it.” One white expresses both respect and trust for her probation officer, “My probation officer is supportive. He talks to me about how to keep out of trouble, what things to do, and if I need something to come talk to him.” Of the few that did not trust their probation officers, one said, “They lied to me and said that I wasn’t going (to detention), probably because they thought that I would run.”

The results from the self reports indicated a majority of blacks and whites had no desire to become a probation officer. Eighty-six percent of blacks said they would never like to be a probation officer. Of the whites, 79 percent answered in a similar fashion.

Not many youth expanded on their responses as to why they had no desire to become a probation officer. The few that would like to be a probation officer indicated it was due to their experiences in the system. This experience was believed to allow them to help children. One white youth reported, "I did the same mistakes and would like to show them (kids) that you can succeed." The dominant reason for not wanting to be a probation officer was as one youth stated, "I don't want anything to do with the law."

Problems in the System

Finally, the youth were asked if there were any problems they felt were present in the court system. The main problems cited were the amount of strictness and the lack of focus on the family. The blacks were about evenly split between the system being too strict and the lack of family focus. One youth said, "The rules are too strict. . .allows cops to just go out there and harass you." Another black suggested the judge can be too strict depending on his or her mood, "He could be in a pissed of f mood and say, 'fuck it, dumb nigger, you going two years in Eldora'." Concerned about broken ties with the family one black states, "There is too much money in putting kids in placements. . .they

seem to me like they don't want to work with the family." Another black offers a solution to the same concern, "I would punish them at home and not in some other place where you can't see their parents at that young age."

The white youth had opposite views than the blacks on the strictness of the juvenile court. Whites believed the court was too lenient. One youth stated, "They were easy on me and I did it again! They need to be more strict." The whites did not worry as much about the family as blacks. There were a few from both races that felt there were no problems.

Overall, both races seemed to have positive attitudes toward their probation officers. Like in the police section, however, the desire to become a probation officer is not present.

Views of School

Educational Ambitions

The vast majority of blacks not only expressed a desire to go on to college, but wanted to enter fields that are predominantly white. One black stated, "I want to go to college. . . into law to be a lawyer." Another expressed a desire to pursue a career in medicine, "I want to finish school and go on to college to be a cardiologist." Yet another expressed his desire to be an engineer. There were only a few who did not see college as an option in the future.

The whites varied on their responses. Some would like to pursue a college degree; others would not like to pursue a college degree; while still some did not know. One

white youth who reported he would like to go on to college stated, “It’s something that I have to do.” One expresses his dislike for school and his lack of interest in pursuing any further education, “I’m gonna get my GED. I didn’t want to go to school, to hell with it.”

Treatment

The youth were also asked if teachers showed equal treatment to youth from different racial or economic backgrounds. The majority of both blacks and whites expressed equal treatment in the self reports (Tables 7, 8). Of the blacks, 67 percent felt teachers treated blacks and whites the same sometimes to most of the time. Sixty—nine percent answered similarly to the treatment of rich and poor youth. Of the whites, 76 percent and 73 percent, respectively, expressed equal racial and economic treatment.

In the interviews, the blacks seemed to indicate they had experienced unequal treatment. This is in contrast to the responses provided in the closed ended questions. One youth, for example, stated a teacher expressed prejudice towards blacks by referring to them in a derogatory manner, “I have a friend here that his teacher called him a nigger.” Another reported, “This kid was calling me the ‘N-word’ ...I keep telling people, the principal and stuff, that he was calling me that, but I guess they didn’t want to listen.” Another youth suggested teachers make false assumptions about blacks, “Sometimes I think that teachers think because I’m black that I will be satisfied with a

passing grade and sometimes I get mad because I think I deserve more. I have higher standards.” Only one youth from the sample felt teachers displayed equal treatment, “I don’t think they treat blacks and whites or rich and poor any different. White youth did not provide any responses regarding teacher treatment of youth.

Overall, it seems that blacks have a much more optimistic view on school and pursuing a future education than whites. The whites felt if they went to college it was more of a duty because society expects it from them. Although blacks are positive about their education and overall possibilities, teachers are perceived as discriminating against them.

Blame

In the final stage of the interview, youth were asked who they blamed for their current situation (Table 7, 8). In the self report data, most black and white youth placed blame on themselves (76 percent and 75 percent of respectively).

The interviews also indicated nearly all the blacks placed blame on themselves. One black reported, “If I had done things right, I wouldn’t be in this position.” Another expressed, “I should of tried harder and I didn’t.”

The majority of the whites also blamed themselves with only a few placing the blame on their family. One youth who blames himself said, “It’s up to you to succeed in life.” Another indicated, “I need to stay sober and work harder.”

When asked whether they regretted committing the delinquent act, the majority of both races felt a sense of regret. One black male who was arrested for theft said, "I regret it. . . I wish that there had been another way." Another stated, "I'm just trying to make a dollar, that's what I was doing, trying to make a dollar." The whites did not express reasons why or why not they regretted their actions. Overall, both blacks and whites took personal responsibility for their behavior.

Summary

Both the black and white youth of Scott County feel discrimination is a present problem in our society. Whites felt blacks had equal job opportunities while blacks disagreed with this view. The majority of both races are optimistic about improving future conditions for blacks. Each race seemed to express some sense of trust toward the opposite race.

The general views of the police from the youth were negative. Both races agreed that police give unequal treatment to people of different racial backgrounds. Black youth emphasized this view more so than the white youth. The youth were split on the question of respect. Blacks had less respect for police than whites. It was clear, however, that neither race had any inclination of becoming a police officer.

Regarding probation officers, the youth seemed to answer more positively than negatively. The probation officers were believed to display equal treatment to people of different racial and economic backgrounds. Both races trusted their probation officers, but would not like to pursue a career in this field.

Responses to the self reports indicate teachers show equal treatment to all youth. However, when the question was asked in the interviews, the few blacks that responded indicated racial discrimination by teachers. No comments were provided by whites.

Finally, there is little variation on who youth blame for their current situation. The vast majority of both blacks and whites place blame on themselves.

Table 1. Definition of Variables Use4 to Represent Youths' View of Discrimination in General, Scott County.

Variable Name	Definition
DISCRWRS	Racial discrimination getting worse?
BLKBREAK	Most white people want blacks to get a better break?
BLACKJOB	Feel blacks can get as good a job as whites?
FUTOPP	Black opportunities in the next five years?
FUTDISCR	Do you think there will be discrimination ten years from now?
TRUSTWB	Feel about trusting white or black people?
BLKRIGHT	Best way for blacks to gain rights?

Table 2. Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Discrimination in General, Scott County.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
DISCRWRS	Strongly agree	14	42	5	13
	Agree	14	42	19	51
	Neither agree or disagree	2	6	5	13
	Disagree	1	3	7	19
	Strongly disagree	2	6	1	3
BLKBREAK	Strongly agree	3	9	--	--
	Agree	10	31	7	19
	Neither agree or disagree	12	38	15	40
	Disagree	4	12	8	22
	Strongly disagree	3	9	7	19
BLACKJOB	Strongly agree	12	36	14	38
	Agree	4	12	7	19
	Neither agree or disagree	8	24	7	19
	Disagree	6	18	5	13
	Strongly disagree	3	9	4	11
FUTOPP	Improve	14	42	15	40
	About the same	12	36	13	35
	Get worse	7	21	9	24
FUTDISCR	Less discrimination	5	15	13	38
	Equal amount of discrimination	9	27	10	29
	More discrimination	19	58	11	32

Table 2-continued.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
TRUSTWB	Most	6	18	11	30
	Some	21	64	20	54
	None	6	18	6	16
BLKRIGHT	Laws and persuasion	2	36	7	19
	Nonviolent protest	16	48	23	62
	Use violence	5	15	7	19

Table 3. Definition of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Police in General, Scott County.

Variable Name	Definition
COPFAIR	Do police treat you fairly?
COPATTD	Do you think police think they are big shots?
COPEWSAM	Do you think police treat black and white alike?
RICHPOOR	Do you think police treat rich and poor alike?
COPPICK	Do you think police always picking on blacks?
COPHELP	If help needed would you go to police?
RESPCOP	Have a lot of respect for the police?
BECOP	Would you like to be a police officer when grow up?
COPACCUS	Do you think police accuse of things you didn't do?
COPINNOC	Do you think police try to arrest innocent people?
MORECOP	Do you think city better off if more police?
COPCRIT	Do you think police criticized too often?
PREVTRBL	Do you think police pick on people who in trouble before?
BUYOUT	Do you think most police let buy you way out of trouble?
COPSTEAL	Do you think police can get away with stealing?
COPARRST	What do police place emphasis on in deciding to arrest?

Table 4. Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Police in General, Scott County.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
COPFAIR	Always	13	20	9	17
	Most of the time	13	20	11	20
	Sometimes	27	41	14	26
	Almost never	4	6	10	18
	Never	9	14	10	18
COPATTD	Always	19	29	25	46
	Most of the time	11	17	11	20
	Sometimes	21	32	12	22
	Almost never	9	14	2	4
	Never	6	9	4	7
COPBWSAM	Always	9	14	3	6
	Most of the time	9	14	6	11
	Sometimes	23	35	12	22
	Almost never	10	15	13	24
	Never	15	23	20	37
RICHPOOR	Always	6	9	7	13
	Most of the time	2	3	1	2
	Sometimes	16	24	7	13
	Almost never	18	27	11	20
	Never	24	36	28	52

Table 4-continued.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
COPPICK	Always	9	14	9	17
	Most of the time	5	8	9	17
	Sometimes	29	44	23	43
	Almost never	8	12	7	13
	Never	15	23	6	11
COPHELP	Always	17	26	11	20
	Most of the time	13	20	10	18
	Sometimes	15	23	10	18
	Almost never	8	12	7	13
	Never	13	20	16	30
RESPCOP	Strongly agree	5	8	6	11
	Agree	11	17	8	15
	Neither agree or disagree	21	32	15	28
	Disagree	9	14	9	17
	Strongly disagree	20	30	16	30
BECOP	Always	5	8	3	6
	Most of the time	3	4	--	--
	Sometimes	9	14	5	9
	Almost never	6	9	1	2
	Never	43	65	45	83
COPACCUS	Always	3	4	8	15
	Most of the time	10	15	7	13
	Sometimes	27	41	20	37
	Almost never	9	14	7	13
	Never	17	26	12	22

Table 4-continued.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
COPINNOC	Always	4	6	4	7
	Most of the time	1	1	7	13
	Sometimes	17	26	20	37
	Almost never	23	35	13	24
	Never	21	32	10	18
MORECOP	Always	10	15	11	20
	Most of the time	14	21	6	11
	Sometimes	18	27	15	28
	Almost never	8	12	11	20
	Never	16	24	11	20
COPCRIT	Always	8	12	9	17
	Most of the time	11	17	9	17
	Sometimes	27	41	17	31
	Almost never	10	15	8	15
	Never	10	15	11	20
PREVTRBL	Always	21	32	26	48
	Most of the time	17	26	14	26
	Sometimes	21	32	7	13
	Almost never	4	6	5	9
	Never	3	4	2	4
BUYOUT	Always	2	3	3	6
	Most of the time	2	3	3	6
	Sometimes	12	18	15	28
	Almost never	14	21	8	15
	Never	36	54	25	46

Table 4-continued.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
COPSTEAL	Always	15	23	14	26
	Most of the time	10	15	13	24
	Sometimes	15	23	11	20
	Almost never	7	11	3	6
	Never	19	29	13	24
COPARRST	Recommendations of the victim	10	15	5	9
	Past prior record	12	18	10	18
	Minority status	4	6	5	9
	Family considerations	5	8	5	9
	Seriousness of the offense	28	42	21	39
	Other	7	11	8	15

Table 5. Definition of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Probation Officers in General, Scott County.

Variable Name	Definition
POFAIR	Do you think probation officers treat you fairly?
POACCUSE	Do you think probation officers accuse of things you did not do?
POTROUBL	Do you think probation officers pick on people who been in trouble before?
POWSAME	Do you think probation officers treat white and black the same?
PORICH	Do you think probation officers treat rich and poor same?
POWHITE	Do you think probation officers treat whites better than blacks?
POHELP	Would you go to probation officers if needed help?
POATTD	Do you think probation officers are big shots?
TRUSTPO	Do you trust your probation officers?
BEPO	Would you like to be a probation officer?
POTHINK	How much you care about what probation officer thinks?
POBAD	Probation officer thinks you are a bad kid?

Table 6. Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of Probation Officers in General, Scott County.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
POFAIR	Always	17	53	25	68
	Most of the time	10	31	4	11
	Sometimes	3	9	1	3
	Almost never	--	--	5	13
	Never	2	6	2	5
POACCUSE	Always	--	--	1	3
	Most of the time	5	15	1	3
	Sometimes	7	21	11	30
	Almost never	5	15	5	13
	Never	16	48	19	51
POTROUBL	Always	4	12	5	13
	Most of the time	4	12	6	16
	Sometimes	15	45	18	49
	Almost never	4	12	2	5
	Never	6	18	6	16
POWBSAME	Always	10	30	13	35
	Most of the time	7	21	4	11
	Sometimes	12	36	12	32
	Almost never	3	9	4	11
	Never	1	3	4	11

Table 6-continued.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
PORICH	Always	8	24	9	24
	Most of the time	8	24	5	13
	Sometimes	11	33	10	27
	Almost never	4	12	6	16
	Never	2	6	7	19
POWHITE	Always	--	--	1	3
	Most of the time	1	3	3	8
	Sometimes	5	15	8	22
	Almost never	6	18	4	11
	Never	21	64	20	56
POHELP	Always	5	15	2	5
	Most of the time	7	21	3	8
	Sometimes	9	27	13	35
	Almost never	5	15	10	27
	Never	7	21	9	24
POATTD	Always	1	3	1	3
	Most of the time	2	6	2	5
	Sometimes	10	30	14	38
	Almost never	8	24	7	19
	Never	12	36	13	35
TRUSTPO	Always	16	48	14	38
	Most of the time	10	30	7	19
	Sometimes	4	12	4	11
	Almost never	--	--	3	8
	Never	3	9	9	24

Table 6-continued.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
BEPO	Always	1	3	2	6
	Most of the time	--	--	2	6
	Sometimes	6	18	1	3
	Almost never	3	9	3	8
	Never	23	70	28	78
POTHINK	A lot	7	21	10	27
	Some	20	61	9	24
	Not at all	6	18	18	49
POBAD	Strongly agree	3	9	4	11
	Agree	2	6	4	11
	Neither agree or disagree	4	12	6	16
	Disagree	15	45	17	46
	Strongly disagree	9	27	6	16

Table 7. Definition of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of School and Blame for Current Situation in General, Scott County.

Variable Name	Definition
TCBWSAME	Teachers treat black and white students alike?
TCRPSAME	Teachers treat rich and poor students alike?
BLAMSELF	Blame self for trouble with law?
BLAMFAM	Blame family for trouble with law?
BLAMPEER	Blame peers for trouble with law?
BLAMPOL	Blame police for trouble with law?
BLAMJCT	Blame juvenile court for trouble with law?
BLAMSOC	Blame society for trouble with law?

Table 8. Frequency Distributions of Variables Used to Represent Youths' View of School and Blame for Current Situation in General, Scott County.

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
TCBWSAME	Always	10	30	5	13
	Most of the time	6	18	8	22
	Sometimes	9	27	12	32
	Almost never	3	9	5	13
	Never	5	15	7	19
TCRPSAME	Always	7	21	9	24
	Most of the time	8	24	5	13
	Sometimes	9	27	12	32
	Almost never	3	9	6	16
	Never	6	18	5	13
BLAMSELF	Strongly agree	16	48	11	30
	Agree	9	27	17	46
	Neither agree or disagree	3	9	4	11
	Disagree	3	9	1	3
	Strongly disagree	2	6	4	11
BLAMFAM	Strongly agree	--	--	--	--
	Agree	--	--	--	--
	Neither agree or disagree	7	21	2	5
	Disagree	4	12	13	35
	Strongly disagree	22	67	22	59

Table 8-continued

Variable Name	Category	White		Black	
		N	%	N	%
BLAMPEER	Strongly agree	3	9	--	--
	Agree	2	6	4	11
	Neither agree or disagree	7	21	4	11
	Disagree	5	15	15	40
	Strongly disagree	16	48	14	38
BLAMPOL	Strongly agree	3	9	4	11
	Agree	--	--	3	8
	Neither agree or disagree	4	12	4	11
	Disagree	7	21	14	38
	Strongly disagree	19	58	12	32
BLAMJCT	Strongly agree	2	6	4	11
	Agree	2	6	1	3
	Neither agree or disagree	3	9	3	8
	Disagree	7	21	17	46
	Strongly disagree	19	58	12	32
BLAMSOC	Strongly agree	1	3	2	5
	Agree	3	9	2	5
	Neither agree or disagree	5	15	2	5
	Disagree	5	15	14	38
	Strongly disagree	19	58	17	46

Chapter Eleven

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Two research projects have been conducted over the last three years for the purpose of assessing why minority youth are disproportionately overrepresented in secure facilities in the state of Iowa. To address this issue, research was conducted in two phases. Phase One of the research examined case files in the juvenile court offices of Black Hawk, Woodbury, Polk, and Scott counties. Although legal variables (e.g., severity of the offense) were most often the most significant predictors of case outcome, race/ethnic effects and gender effects were observed at a number of the stages in each of the four counties. The race/ethnicity effect occurs typically at intake and petition, while the gender effect is present at the stage of judicial disposition. Minorities were also more likely than whites to receive an outcome involving placement in the state training school. This finding was present even after controlling for relevant legal and extralegal factors.

Phase Two of the research was conducted to determine what factors may account for the above findings. Juvenile court personnel and delinquent youth in each of the four counties were interviewed to capture their views on a number of issues revolving around discrimination and fairness, in general. More specific, decision makers were asked for their feelings and opinions on a variety of topics: the role of the juvenile court, explanations of delinquency, race—specific differences in behavior, police relations, views of the findings from Phase One of the study, and suggestions reducing the disproportionate overrepresentation of minority youth in secure facilities. Youth were

asked more general questions than the adults that focused on the youths' perceptions of job opportunities, police, probation officer, and school fairness. The primary focus is on the adult decision makers' responses. Those from the youth served a secondary or complimentary role.

An analytical framework was incorporated to examine decision making from a broad perspective. The underlying objective of this approach was to determine how decision makers' views on a variety of issues impact decision making. The purpose in doing this was to place the observed race and gender findings within the context of this larger view of decision making. It was anticipated that this approach would provide a better understanding of the role legal and extralegal factors may have on juvenile justice decision making, which may or may not include subtle forms of racism or bias.

In this Chapter, a summary of the results and themes that emerged from Phase Two of the research is presented and discussed. Recommendations for improving race relations and possibly, reducing the disproportionate overrepresentation of minority youth in secure facilities are provided in the last half of the Chapter.

Results and Themes from Phase Two

The more dominant themes and trends that emerged from the interviews with adults and youth are detailed in Table 1. Recall, the specific findings from Phase One are summarized in Table 2 in Chapter One.

Role of Court and Views of System

There were some variations among the four counties regarding the underlying philosophies guiding personnel in their interactions with youth. Most of the juvenile courts adhered to some combination of an orientation that reflected aspects of rehabilitation and legalistic principles. Counties differed in the extent one was emphasized over the other. Black Hawk county and Scott county also placed a strong emphasis on rehabilitative intervention while Polk county minimized this method for dealing with youth. Woodbury, and to a much lesser extent Scott county, were also more particular about the importance of adherence to middle—class standards than other counties (e.g., style of dress, emphasis on education, etc.). Most of the juvenile court decision makers felt more resources were needed, as well as, independence from state control.

Causes of Delinquency

Juvenile court personnel pointed to a number of, factors that were perceived to be associated with delinquent behavior. Socioeconomic status, essentially being poor and residing in poor areas was a recurring theme. Beliefs in more conservative explanations,

however, were the dominant themes. For example, individual choice, lack of family supervision and parenting skills stood out. Peer pressure and gang affiliation also emerged as possible explanations. A small minority of the decision makers focused on violent images that are perceived to come from music and the media.

Race Specific Differences

Some of the officers suggest blacks commit more crime, while others contend they are involved in different types of delinquency, such as drug sales and usage. Some suggest both whites and blacks commit crime, but blacks are caught more often due to police concentration in low income areas.

A majority of the decision makers also believed that blacks came from dysfunctional families. Here, the perception is that many of the homes do not provide adequate support, supervision and discipline. In part, the disproportionate number of single parent families was viewed to be lacking in these factors. Teen—pregnancy and a lack of positive male role models were also cited.

There were officers from some of the counties who explicitly and implicitly felt that many of the characteristics just described are passed on from generation to generation. Included in these values are the deemphasis on education and respect for the law. In response to this belief, some of the decision makers believed it was especially important to stress adherence

to and respect for middle-class standards. It is unclear if the decision makers feel the presence of these perceived values is an adaptation to impoverished conditions or an inherent tendency among lower class minorities.

Minorities, especially black families are believed to be more distrustful of the system than whites and their families. Black parents are believed to be less willing to hold youth accountable for their actions and/or encourage respect for authority. Parents are also seen as often failing to attend scheduled meetings with decision makers which may result in the need for further court involvement. At the same time, minority youth are not seen as less likely to admit guilt or cooperate. Interestingly, youth argue that juvenile court decision makers may act too quickly in wanting to remove them from what is perceived as an inadequate home environment.

Race Differences in Processing

Some decision makers feel police may be bias towards blacks, while others believe they are doing a fine job. Accordingly, police are perceived to be responding where crime exists. Youth split on whether the police were fair to them. However, both whites and blacks, especially the latter group, believe that police do not treat all people alike. Thus, both groups of youth appear to be responding to perceptions of bias rather than personal experiences of bias. Very few of the whites and blacks want to become police officers.

In all four counties, decision makers were very strong in their conviction that access to counsel did not impede the quality of justice youth are provided within the juvenile justice system. The racial/ethnic background of the youth was also seen not to impact the quality of the services administered.

All the youth in each of the counties viewed probation officers in a positive light. Most indicated they had good relations with their officer.

Both adults and youth suggested there may be problems in the school system. A lack of minority staff and a willingness on school officials to suspend and place youth in behavioral disorder classes were cited as areas of concern. An increasing reliance on calling the police and on the juvenile court to solve problems was also raised.

A variety of opinions were offered to explain the disproportionate overrepresentation of minorities in secure facilities. Most of the decision makers placed blame on the minorities themselves. A greater likelihood to commit crime and an unstable family environment were the dominant explanations. Defficiencies in the juvenile justice system were cited by a few of the personnel. The lack of telephones for the poor and transportation issues were highlighted. The failure to provide more home visits and create innovative programs was also raised.

Many of the officers failed to provide answers on the questions regarding the findings from Phase One of the study. Those that did respond felt family distrust and a lack of supervision and discipline may account for the racial/ethnic and gender effects.

Additional factors that were provided pointed to the lack of community alternatives and placement facilities for minorities and females. In one particular county, a formal policy exists between Indian Youth of America and the juvenile court office, which allows for the diversion of Native American Indians away from the authority of the juvenile court.

Some of the decision makers in all four counties were reluctant to participate in the study. These individuals did not agree with the findings. Some questioned the validity and reliability of the findings while others saw little benefit in conducting the research. Most did not express thoughts in one direction or another. A small number of the personnel indicated the study was needed.

Suggestions for Change

The suggestions varied for attempting to alleviate the disproportionate overrepresentation of minorities from secure facilities. Some of the personnel argued for more diversified staff, the establishment of alternative programming, and the development of means to correct for problems of transportation and other issues associated with the likelihood of detention. Some decision makers focused on the need of the minorities themselves to take responsibility and/or adapt to the dominant culture. The extent decision makers espoused either of these views varied within and among the individual juvenile court offices.

Recommendations

A number of recommendations will be presented in this section that are derived from the patterns of decision making observed in Phase One of the study and the responses and impressions from Phase Two. The recommendations are classified into those that are general and those specific to juvenile court decision making and practices. Although each of the recommendations is presented independently of one another, together they are believed to be methods that could lead to a reduction in the disproportionate overrepresentation of minorities in the system and in secure facilities. The recommendations are based on (1) ideas on how to prevent delinquent activity and (2) a desire to make decision makers more aware of biases that impact decision making.

General

Kurt Lewin (1943), a pioneer in the area of planned change, suggests that before any change can take place, the change target's environment needs to be assessed in order to understand the inter—play of resisting and driving forces that will affect the promotion of change. In other words, before change can occur, there is a need to understand why factors influence persons and/or organizations in deciding case processing and outcomes. There is also a need on the part of the decision makers to be made aware of and believe that they may be acting in ways which may result in bias treatment of minority youth. Thus, the task to introduce change is two-fold.

The first step is to identify why people act the way they do. The results from that effort are reported in the beginning of this Chapter and in the previous Chapters of the report. Decision making was presented as consisting of a variety of interrelated views on life, conformity, and race relations. On the basis of this broad perspective, the objective was to show how biases may be hidden in legal and extralegal factors and personal values that influence decision making.

There is no evidence to suggest decision makers practice blatant racism. That is, decision makers do not look at blacks and other minorities and as a result consciously respond to them in a different manner solely on the basis of their skin color. Subtle inadvertent biases, however, were evident, more so in some juvenile court offices than others. Again, these attitudes and actions were not driven by purposeful intentions to treat minorities differently than whites. Decision makers operate under good intentions.

Thus, we need to identify what factors may be indicative of subtle unintentional forms of bias. A reoccurring theme from the interviews with the decision makers is conformity to traditional middle-class values and norms. Decision makers' attitudes towards perceived deviations from these values and norms are likely to be manifest in biased treatment toward blacks and other minorities relative to whites. Examples of deviation to these standards include: lack of individual responsibility, alternative styles of dress and demeanor, listening to rap music, perceived or actual affiliation with gangs, nontraditional family structure and interaction patterns with juvenile court officials or agencies of social control. Similarly, beliefs in the existence of minority subcultures that are believed to deemphasize education and respect for the law or authority, and

encourage sexual promiscuity, as evident by nonmarital child bearing, are also indicative of defiance to middle-class norms and values.

The second stage in Lewin's change strategy is to develop an awareness of the motives and a belief in the need to change those sources of bias. To accomplish this task, decision makers and society in general, need to recognize that racism can take many forms. Blatant racism is overt and intentional while subtle racism is disguised and unintentional.

As indicated in Chapter Two, most individuals do not see themselves as racist or treating someone differently because of his/her skin color, ethnicity or culture because he/she adheres to images of blatant racism (e.g., the Rodney King incident). Yet, conscious acts of blatant racism are not the norm in our society. Unfortunately, subtle or indirect racism is much more extensive but not as apparent, such as a strong expectation of adherence to certain cultural standards. As a result, most people are not as willing to recognize or admit to subtle racism:

that they themselves could be unintentionally responding to individuals differently because of their skin color, ethnicity or culture.

Thus, juvenile court decision makers need to be made aware of unintentional expressions of racism. They also need to recognize that all persons to varying degrees may practice subtle racism. People differ in the extent to which they accept this and

attempt to be sensitive to these attitudes and issues. As of right now, many of the juvenile court decision makers have difficulty accepting the possibility that some of them could be practicing subtle forms of racism or bias. That is because he/she adheres to an imagery of blatant racism as the only form of racism. The denial of subtle racism is evident among a number of decision makers in all four counties. However, the failure to acknowledge the existence of subtle racism is greatest in Woodbury county and to lesser degrees in the other three counties. Although decision makers in Polk county appear to be more open to this possibility than those in Woodbury, they are very closed in general to outside scrutiny. This could be a consequence of operating within the Capitol district.

Recommendation: Recognition and Acceptance of the Duality
of Racism is Needed

A number of mechanisms could be incorporated to aid in the recognition and acceptance of both blatant and unintentional expressions of racism. The most obvious is the hiring of minority personnel. As indicated in Table 1 in Chapter Two, there are only four nonwhite staff (out of 84). There are no minority juvenile court decision makers in Woodbury and Scott counties.

Recommendation: Hire Minority Juvenile Court Decision
Makers

In addition to the hiring of minority staff, juvenile court personnel need to be exposed to cultural and gender sensitivity training sessions. As indicated in Table 2,

decision makers have little exposure to this kind of learning experience. It is important to note, however, that cultural sensitivity sessions would be meaningless if juvenile court decision makers do not accept that there is a need for such sessions.

Recommendation: Use of Cultural and Gender Sensitivity
Training Sessions

As juvenile court personnel indicated in Woodbury county, there is a need to provide internships to minorities and females attending high school or college. The results from this study indicate that minority youth, for the most part, are distrustful of the criminal and juvenile justice systems and generally, not interested in this kind of occupation as a career. Thus, the use of interns and/or volunteers could be an effective means to combat these two factors, as well as, provide diversity among the juvenile court staff. Interns and volunteers with the proper training could also be on call to aid in finding alternative methods for dealing with youth, short of detention facilities. These people could help in providing transportation for those who lack such means. Interns and volunteers could be also used with little financial cost to the juvenile court office.

Recommendation: Utilize Internships and Volunteers

The creation of a job line for a liaison worker would be also extremely beneficial for diversification. In addition, a major theme and finding from the present research is that minority families are perceived to be of the system which often entails a failure to attend scheduled meetings and/or hold their children accountable for their behavior. Many of the youth (both minorities and whites) also indicated that they often did not

understand the nature of the charge or wrong doing. A liaison worker would be valuable for helping with difficult cases and allowing for greater two—way communication between the juvenile court office and youth and families in the community. In essence, this person could act as a “trouble shooter.” This person’s role would be to improve community relations and educate both the staff and the community at large of the feelings and goals of each party.

Recommendation: The Creation of a Job Line for a Liaison
Between the Office and the Community

Greater links need to be made between the community and the juvenile court staff. Both groups need a forum to meet each other in situations other than those when a youth is involved in trouble. Mechanisms are needed for both parties to express their goals, objectives, concerns, and complaints. Forums, town-hall meetings, neighborhood organizations could be used as a means to enhance communication, understanding, and trust between all parties.

Recommendation: Greater Contact Between Juvenile Court
Personnel and the Community in Settings
Other Than Those Pertaining to Court Matters

The last recommendation in this part focuses on the juvenile court offices themselves. Although each of the four county courts is taxed due to shortages of

resources and rising expectations from state government and the society at large, time should be set-aside to conduct inhouse evaluations. Whether these evaluations are conducted every six months or once a year, these agencies need to take a look at themselves. What kinds of decision making are we making? What factors seem to influence our decisions? What can be done to make changes? Is there a need for change? What problems are we facing in this office? Questions like these should be addressed.

Recommendation: In—house Evaluations of Decision Making
and Concerns

At a minimum, each of the Chief Juvenile Court Officers should take a close examination at the concerns raised by his/her staff and assess what problems he/she sees among the personnel as presented in the findings reported here.

Specific

A common theme that emerged from the interviews with the juvenile court decision makers is the lack of state support. In order to accomplish some of the tasks that would be needed to deal with racism and improve race relations in general, there is the need to provide funds for both the creation of additional job lines within the juvenile court office and for innovative probation programming.

Recommendation: State Government and Private
Parties need to Provide More Funds For
Jobs and Programming

Decision makers expressed a need to create and develop alternative probation programs. Programs that provide role models, and socialization and employment skills should receive priority consideration for funding. Programs like Second Chance and Youthful Offenders in Waterloo are examples worth emulating and developing. The former program focuses primarily on hard core delinquents (ages 14-18) and entails meetings, exposure to the positive aspects of education, interacting and working with others, and job experience. Area VII Job Training assists the youth in locating job placements within the community. The latter program is an effort linked with Big Brother/Big Sisters where the aim is to provide positive role models for younger youth. Targeted Outreach could be another alternative approach which a program undertaken by Boys and Girls Clubs of America and emphasizes strategies for the prevention of delinquency.

In short, programs that emphasize socialization and job training are needed. In addition, there is a need to coordinate with existing private agencies and groups for the creation of programs to prevent delinquency and aid delinquents in their effort to conform.

Recommendation: Priority Funding Consideration for Programs
That Involve Job Training and Positive Role
Models

Recommendation: Juvenile Court Services need to Increase
Efforts with Private Agencies and Groups
To Create and Develop Alternative Programs

Depending on the county, decision makers voiced some concern for the lack of community-based treatment facilities and residential centers for minorities and females. These factors were cited as possible explanations for some of the observed race/ethnic effects and gender effects. The lack of alternative community options and placements could also be linked to the over use of detention in some communities, especially for minorities. Thus, an emphasis needs to be placed on the creation, development, and use of both community-based facilities and residential centers. Whether these should be race/ethnic and gender specific is somewhat troublesome and should be subject to further examination. At a minimum, however, finances for such efforts need to come from state government and private agencies.

Recommendation: Creation, Development, and Use of
Community—Based Facilities and
Residential Care

Although a number of the recommendations indicate a need for alternative programming which include both community-based and residential facilities, juvenile court offices may consider an approach that places less of an emphasis on intervention and holding youth accountable for their behavior. Release and warn could be used more often for youth who are first, and maybe even second time offenders, and who are involved in minor delinquent acts. All four of the offices contend that they are having to deal with more youth and more problematic youth. A policy that emphasized minimal intervention could possibly reduce case loads and create more time for intervention with more problematic youth.

Recommendation: Adopt a Philosophy of Minimal Intervention,
Especially for First and Second Time
Offenders Who Have Committed Minor
Delinquency

A number of the decision makers suggested that some of the difficulties that may exist between juvenile court staff and families could be due to the lack of transportation and/or access to a telephone. One possible solution to this dilemma could be an increase in home visitations by probation officers, the liaison and/or interns. This method could possibly help with single—parents who might work during the day and are unable to make scheduled meetings during a normal working day. In addition, home visitations may aid in the development of methods for utilizing house detention instead of the more restrictive methods involving the removal of the child from a home because the single parent may be working and unable to ensure supervision.

Recommendation: Use of Home Visitations by
Probation Officer, Liaison or Intern

On the basis of the findings from both Phases of the research, there exists evidence that many of the observed race effects occur at the stage of intake. In some of the counties, black youth were more likely to be referred to petition than white youth. In addition, in some of the counties blacks were more likely to have their cases dismissed at petition than whites on the basis of legal insufficiency. These two findings suggest that blacks may receive different treatment than whites at intake. Most of the decision makers, however, did not believe that blacks or minorities were less likely than whites to deny guilt or cooperate which may account for the differences in treatment. State law requires an admission of guilt for an informal adjustment to take place. If this perception is true,

family cooperativeness or deficiencies in the youths' background (e.g., school or family) may explain these occurrences. Alternatively, the perceived uncooperativeness and/or deficiencies in background may reflect biases. A number of options are available to address this issue.

The first is to place intake decision making in the control of the prosecutor's office which would promote most likely decision making based more on legalistic criteria than extralegal criteria (e.g., educational problems). A second option is to change the state law so that an admission of guilt is not a prerequisite for participating in an informal adjustment. All that would be needed then is an indication from the youth he/she would be willing to abide by the stipulated conditions. Utilizing a liaison at intake could be a third option. The use of a liaison at this point could possibly offer insights and dismiss or reduce distrust and tension that may exist between the juvenile court officers, the youth, and the parents.

These options are not mutually exclusive but rather they are interrelated efforts. The adoption of one of these options or all three would most likely lead to the reduction in the differential treatment of minority youth at the stage of intake.

Recommendation: Place Intake Decision Making in the
Prosecutor's Office and/or Omit the
Admission of Guilt at Intake From State
Law and/or Utilize Liaison Worker.

Last, further research is needed to assess police interactions with minority youth and lower-class youth overall.

A large number of the decision makers and youth indicate that if bias is present it is most likely to occur at this point in the proceedings. Interestingly, youth did not suggest that the police treated them personally unfair rather their negative views reflected an imagery of unfairness. Police and the minority community need to interact with one another to foster positive feelings toward one another.

Recommendation: Further Research is Needed to Assess
Police Interactions with Minority
Youth and Lower-Class Youth

Recommendation: Police Departments Need to Improve
Relations With the Public and in
Particular, Minorities

Table 1-continued.

Race Specific Differences

Distrust of the System= parents believed not to be willing to hold youth accountable for actions, suspicious of authority, and failure to attend meetings. Yet, minority youth are not seen as less likely to admit guilt or cooperate. Youth argue that system is too quick to remove them from what is perceived as a bad home.

Race Differences in Processing

Police= some decision makers feel police may be bias towards blacks while others believe they are doing a fine job (police respond where crime exists). Youth split if fair to them. However, both blacks and whites, especially the former group believe that police do not treat all people alike. Youth appear to operate off of perceptions rather than personal of experience.

Access to Counsel= consensus that type of counsel plays little role.

No differences whether represent white or minority.

Probation Officers= youth of both races strongly indicated that officers treated them fairly.

Schools= both adults and youth suggested there may be problems.

Lack of minority staff and a willingness to suspend and place youth in behavioral disorder classes were cited, as well as, an increasing reliance on the juvenile court to solve problems.

Disproportionate Overrepresentation of Minorities in System

A variety of opinions that range from it not being an issue to placing the blame on the minorities. Unstable family environment and deficiencies in the juvenile justice were also cited as important factors.

Explanations of Specific Findings (Phase One)= most cited family distrust and lack of supervision and discipline. Additional factors were lack of community options and placement facilities for minorities and females.

Table 1-continued.

Disproportionate Overrepresentation of Minorities in System

Feelings About Study= some did not want to participate and/or agree with the study. Some questioned fairness of questions and definitions of variables. Most did not express thoughts one way or another. Small number indicated the study was worthwhile or needed.

Suggestions for Change (alleviate disproportionate representation)

Major themes were: need more diversified staff, establish alternative programming, and rectify issues regarding the lack of transportation and allow minorities the ability to provide adequate supervision for youth to the issue is not a concern of the court, there is a need on the part of the minorities to adapt to cultural expectations or create programs for themselves.

Table 2. Distributions of the Number of Training Session Attended on Handling Minorities and Female Youth.

Variable	Black Hawk	Woodbury	Polk	Scott
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Minority				
X =	2.53	3.96	6.96	5.36
std.dev =	3.79	3.05	9.75	4.97
range =	0-10	0-11	0-35	0-20
Female				
X =	.53	1.65	2.14	1.57
std.dev =	1.13	2.76	5.15	3.32
range =	0-4	0-12	0-25	0-12
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