

# **A Critique of Criminology: Toward an Integrated Structural-Marxist Theory of Delinquency Production<sup>1</sup>**

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Juvenile delinquency is understood as a latent outcome of the social reproduction process of capitalism. A structural-Marxist understanding of contradictory social relations that contour life in modern capitalism allows us to reinterpret and apply the insights from various criminological theories in building a new theoretical approach. A review and a critique of the major theoretical perspectives in criminology are provided, and a structural-Marxist perspective on the larger social structural context is explicated. A new integrated theory of delinquency, grounded in Marxian insights on the role of productive relations in shaping other social relations, is developed and supported with empirical evidence from research representing a broad range of theoretical perspectives.

We attempt in this paper to present a comprehensive theoretical approach to understanding the social production of serious patterned delinquent behavior, defined as repeated engagement of a juvenile in the FBI's Part One Index crimes (Elliot and Ageton 1980). We review past theoretical efforts in criminology in order to reinterpret and build on them in developing a structural-Marxist approach to delinquency. Our approach can be considered "structural-Marxist" insofar as its analytical starting point is the objective structure of social relations grounded in the process of material production under capitalism (Appelbaum 1979; Blackburn 1972; Burris 1979; Gimenez 1982; Godelier 1972).

Our specific concern is with structures of control that solicit and compel certain types of behavior from individuals and shape an ideological orientation for the individual in relation to the agents and apparatuses of

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social control. We focus first on social control structures at workplaces and then on those within families, schools, and peer groups. We see these various structures of control as interconnected in a process of social reproduction, contoured by class and production relations of capitalism.

Our analysis borrows heavily from Etzioni's (1970) compliance theory, which postulates a relationship between the type of power employed for control (normative, remunerative, or coercive) and the type of subordinate's ideological involvement in the compliance relationship (moral, calculative, or alienative). Going beyond Etzioni, we may see that the type of control structure in which an individual is immersed arises from: (1) objective class relations, the structure of which defines the extant forms of compliance as well as specific hierarchical positions in compliance structures; and (2) the individual's life-cycle encounters with these institutionalized, class-contoured compliance structures. As cumulative learning processes, these encounters produce both conventional and delinquent behavior. The socialization process can be conceptualized as cumulative experiences arising from such compliance encounters and producing distinct paths of individual socialization. The subjective experiences acquired in these encounters of the individual with compliance structures largely determine the individual's orientation toward authority. Such an ideological orientation can be considered an initial interpersonal "bond" (Hirschi 1969) to specific authorities that, through patterning in repeated compliance situations, is generalized to the social order.

From the point of view of the individual, encounters with compliance structures and the formation of interpersonal bonds begin with the family in parent-child relations. And, with the basic structure of the social order assumed as given, this is where conventional criminology commences its examination of delinquency. However, there is compelling evidence (e.g., Kohn 1977) that family compliance structures are class differentiated and that parent-child relations are profoundly shaped by parents' encounters with workplace compliance structures.

The relations of workplace control, which take various class-related forms under capitalism, shape the consciousness and behavior of parents who repeatedly produce and reproduce control relations with children. The specific nature of these early relations of control, which define the socialization process, strongly influences the type of control structure the child will encounter when entering school; differentiated control structures within schools have been designed for the various labor needs of capitalist industry (Bowles and Gintis 1976; Carnoy and Levin 1976; Noble 1977; Spring 1972).

But much socialization takes place beyond the reach of parents and official agents of socialization. Just as "informal" group organizations of workers emerge within bureaucratic industry, so do peer associations

emerge in the encounters of juveniles with bureaucratic community and educational institutions. Such peer groups develop control relations of their own. The child does not arbitrarily enter a peer group but selects, and is selected for entry, on the basis of previous socialization experiences. Peer groups, through their various structures of control, can reinforce either conventional or delinquent behavior.

The more coercive the control relations encountered in these various socialization contexts tend to be, the more negative or alienated will be the individual's ideological bond and the more likely is the individual to engage in serious, patterned delinquency. We agree with Etzioni that coercive controls create an alienative orientation toward authority. They create negative ideological bonds and open the individual to entry into peer associations that reinforce patterned delinquent behavior (Elliot, Ageton, and Canter 1979).

This entire process of delinquency production is comprehended as a latent outcome of the reproduction of capitalist relations of production and the class structure. We present a class-based theory in that class differences in serious, patterned delinquency are predicted. We recognize the controversy surrounding class-linked predictions of delinquent behavior (Braithwaite 1981; Tittle, Villemez, and Smith 1978). Many of the problems of class-delinquency studies spring from an inadequate conceptualization of objective class categories and from techniques for the self-reporting of delinquency that fail to tap significant differences in frequency and seriousness of delinquent behavior. Recently, Marxist social scientists have begun reconceptualizing the class structure (Edwards 1979; Wright 1978, 1979); these reconceptualizations will be incorporated into our approach. In addition, more sophisticated delinquency self-report techniques, which tap differences in seriousness and frequency of delinquent acts, are beginning to reestablish the association between class and delinquency, at least for more serious, patterned delinquent behavior (Elliot and Ageton 1980).

Many of our theoretical insights are drawn from current criminological theories. Before we can explicate further our structural-Marxist approach,<sup>2</sup> it is necessary to review critically the main theoretical currents in criminology. After reviewing criminological theories, we will return to a discussion of the structural-Marxist approach and attempt to support

<sup>2</sup> In this paper we confine our discussion to the processes by which groups of individuals come to manifest a specific range of behaviors that have been declared illegal. The processes by which these behaviors are defined as illegal are beyond the scope of the present paper; this important question has been dealt with by other researchers (Chambliss 1964, 1969; Humphries and Greenberg 1981; Spitzer 1979). While we limit discussion in this paper to patterned delinquent behavior, the structural-Marxist approach has obvious implications for explaining other criminal behavior patterns, such as corporate and white-collar crime, which require further development in future theoretical endeavors.

it with empirical evidence from studies that use a variety of theoretical approaches.

THEORETICAL CURRENTS IN CONTEMPORARY CRIMINOLOGY

The major theoretical currents in criminology today are learning theory, strain theory, control theory, labeling theory, conflict theory, radical criminology, and, most recently, integrated theory. Any theory must be judged by its internal consistency and by its ability to explain a broad range of empirical phenomena. The current theories provide a limited range of explanation and insight on which we attempt to expand by means of our approach.

*Learning theory* starts with the notion that criminal behavior, like any other behavior, is learned. As formulated by Sutherland (1947), the theory postulates that "one commits criminal acts because his accepted 'definitions' of the law as something to violate are in 'excess' of his accepted definitions of the law as something that can, must or should be obeyed" (quoted in Akers 1977, p. 40). The definitions favorable or unfavorable to criminal law violations result from "differential association" with situations in which these definitions are learned. It is not simply a matter of quantitative association with situations that provide differing definitions favorable or unfavorable to law violation. For, while frequency and duration of associations are important, Sutherland also emphasizes the priority and intensity of the associations, intensity being the emotional attachment to actors in the learning situation. Also, it is not necessary that the associations favorable to criminal law violation be with persons who are actually engaged in criminal behavior; it is only necessary that definitions, or normative evaluations, favorable to such behavior be present for the individual to learn positive attitudes toward criminal law violation. The law violator also must learn the techniques for committing crimes; these will vary with the complexity of the criminal behavior involved. Here association with individuals experienced in a particular criminal behavior may be necessary. The learning of motives and techniques takes place within intimate personal groups.

Sutherland developed the basic scheme for describing a process of socialization toward delinquency. Sutherland's theory has been thoroughly explicated by Cressey (in Sutherland and Cressey 1978) and has been expanded on by Akers (1977) and Burgess and Akers (1966) with conceptualizations from operant conditioning theory (Skinner 1953; Whaley and Malott 1969). Learning theory is limited to the description of the learning process and does not situate this process in a larger social structural context that would give it specific form and probabilities for patterns of content. Akers (1977, p. 64) states that "social structure is an arrange-

ment of sets and schedules of reinforcement contingencies." This insightful specification of Sutherland's thesis nevertheless begs several questions: Exactly how are these reinforcement contingencies differentially arranged for different social arenas and strata, why are they thus arranged, and how and why do these arrangements and contingencies change over time?

Rewards and punishments associated with the learning process are both quantitatively and qualitatively conditioned by the larger social structural context in which they occur. The ways in which learning occurs and behavior is shaped thus depend not merely on immediate rewards and punishments but also on the social structure shaping the reinforcement capacities and patterns, making different rewards and punishments more or less available for persons in different social positions. Accordingly, in order to explain more fully what behavior patterns are learned, and how and why they are learned, the social scientist has an obligation to explore the larger political-economic structure in which learning occurs.

*Strain theory* attempts to address some of the contextual shortcomings of learning theory. Merton (1938) postulates the existence of a social structural disjuncture between socially desired goals (e.g., material success) and the means for achieving those goals. The disjuncture between goals and means produces a social-psychological strain within the individual, who is then forced to escape the strain through various adaptations. Merton delineated four such adaptations: ritualist, innovator, retreatist, and rebel.

With insights from Sutherland's learning theory, strain theory was further developed by Cloward and Ohlin (1960), who qualified Merton's assumptions regarding homogeneous societal goals and posited that goals and means disjunctures applied not only to legitimate opportunity structures but also to illegitimate opportunity structures. For instance, the "innovator" does not automatically become a thief simply because he is blocked in the legitimate opportunity structure. This individual must also be admitted to, and learn behavior appropriate for, an illegitimate opportunity structure organized around theft. Expanding on Sutherland and Cressey's (1960) notion of "differential social organization," Cloward and Ohlin posit the differential distribution of legitimate and illegitimate opportunity structures which correspond to differential learning experiences. Although, following Durkheim's notion of anomie, they make reference to industrialization, Cloward and Ohlin fall short of specifically explaining the social structural roots of this differential distribution of opportunity structures and the functional reasons for its persistence. They do state that delinquent subcultural orientations (most notably the "criminal" subculture, oriented around theft, and the "conflict" subculture, oriented around violence) appear to vary by availability of opportunities shaped by the differential distribution of legitimate power and material resources.

Strain theory is based on the assumption that goals which are desirable by middle-class standards are shared throughout society. Some researchers support this contention (Cohen 1955; Erlanger 1980; Jessor et al. 1968; Maccoby, Johnson, and Church 1958); others argue that distinct subcultures preclude such homogeneous values (Kitsuse and Dietrick 1959; Lemert 1972; Miller 1958). This issue is open to debate until further information is available on the specification and interpenetration of the ideological structures of different social classes (Laclau 1979; Rodman 1968; Therborn 1980). We suspect that, if the static, mechanistic perspectives on class structure and cultural formations (emphasizing norms and values) were replaced by a more dynamic, dialectical perspective, the main elements of strain theory would be fully reconcilable with subcultural approaches, which view strain as an outcome of contradictory, dynamic *processes* of cultural and class conflict and accommodation (see Simpson and Yinger 1965). As this unsettled controversy suggests, strain theory stops short of attempting to explain the origin of the expectations and discrepant opportunities. The theory merely asserts a goals-means disjuncture as an integral feature of "industrial society." This silence points, once again, to the need for a more precise conceptualization of the overall structural context that shapes expectations, structures of opportunity, and the correspondence between them.

*Control theories* focus on the factors that insulate individuals from delinquency rather than on those which propel individuals into delinquency. In addition to other contributors to the development of control theory (e.g., Briar and Piliavan 1970; Matza 1964; Nye 1958; Reckless and Dinitz 1970; Reiss 1951; Toby 1957), Hirschi (1969) has elaborated and refined control theory in the direction that has received the most empirical support (Hepburn 1976; Hindelang 1973; Johnson 1979). Hirschi focuses on four dimensions of the "bond" that gives an individual "a stake in conformity" to the "conventional order": (1) *attachment*, the strength of ties to parents, teachers, and peers as primary socialization agents; (2) *involvement*, the degree of engagement in conventional activities that restrict the time for delinquent activities; (3) *commitment*, the devotion to conformist conduct; and (4) *belief*, the strength of conformist attitudes. Hirschi's central argument is that insofar as juveniles' bonds to the conventional order are severed, they are "freed" to commit delinquent acts.

Control theory can be criticized for not specifying exactly how bonds fail to develop or how they may be severed. This theoretical silence is the consequence of control theory's almost exclusive focus on the bonded or unbonded individual while it takes the structure of authority and actions of social control agents as an unexamined given. In our perspective, bonds arise out of the *relation* between individuals and authorities.

Both sides of this relationship must be comprehended in order to understand the bonding process. Bonds are more clearly conceptualized as ideological orientations toward authority that are learned during the individual's interactions with agents of socialization (Akers 1977; Conger 1976) in specifically structured patterns of control. The relations of control in specific contexts are composed of relations between the power wielded by authorities and the ideological involvement of subordinates (Etzioni 1970). Involvement, in Etzioni's terminology, is an ideological orientation that corresponds to "bond" as Hirschi uses that term (Thomas and Hyman 1978). Hirschi tends to conceptualize the bond in the quantitative terms of strong versus weak; the reconceptualization of bonding, following Etzioni's notion of involvement, allows us to see qualitative differences in bonding that correspond to specific types of power utilized by authorities in specific, structurally defined situations of compliance.<sup>3</sup>

Hirschi's use of quantitative distinctions for bonds derives from his conceptualization of "society" as a "conventional order" to which an individual is either "weakly" or "strongly" bonded. The uncritical notion of a "conventional order," shared by much of conventional criminology, began to be criticized in the late 1960s by the labeling, conflict, and radical schools of criminology.

*Labeling theory* rose to prominence in the turbulent 1960s concurrently with Hirschi's resurrection of control theory. The former is in many ways the politico-ideological obverse of the latter. Confronted with a political climate in which the conventional order was being pervasively called into question, conventional authority was defensively sanctified by control theorists and offensively vilified by labeling theorists. Both were bolstered by the empirical findings of early self-report studies that showed delinquent activity to be fairly evenly distributed across races and classes. Given the ideological predispositions of control theorists, the early self-report data allowed them to remain oblivious to the class bias of their bonding concepts and to concentrate on why delinquency proliferates if deprivation is not the cause ("It must be because of deficient moral upbringing"). Given different ideological predispositions, the same self-report findings allowed labeling theorists to remain oblivious to the determination of delinquent behavior and to concentrate on why certain groups are officially processed disproportionately if "deviant" behaviors are evenly distributed ("It must be due to discriminating authority").

<sup>3</sup> Etzioni's typologies of involvement (or bonding) can be quantified, with negative bonds equaling alienated involvement, intermediate bonds equaling calculative involvement, and positive bonds equaling moral involvement. This conception eliminates the untenable notion of "unbonded" individuals, who are somehow freed from structural constraints to enter a Hobbesian state of nature. Instead, bonds of all types are seen as the result of structured relations of power and subordination.

Thus, while control theorists were first led to focus on the interpersonal milieu in which delinquent inclinations are formed, labeling theorists were first led to focus on the interpersonal milieu in which labels are imposed.

Earlier, less sophisticated versions of the labeling perspective seemed to suggest that the source of selective, discriminatory biases in the criminal justice system was the conscious, deliberate activity of the social control agents applying the sanctions. Although age, race, and class prejudice on the part of enforcers undoubtedly exists (and itself requires explanation), later research indicates that selective enforcement is also related to the specific nature of the offense, prior criminal record, and specific behavioral cues of the suspect as perceived by enforcement officials (Chiricos and Waldo 1975; Dannefer and Schutt 1982; Hewitt 1977; Piliavan and Briar 1964; Thompson and Zingraff 1981). These findings, of course, do not "refute" the labeling (or conflict or radical) perspective: (1) types of offenses are class related (e.g., property laws contain an inherent class bias protecting the propertied from the unpropertied); (2) prior criminal records can be plausibly considered to reflect previous selective enforcement bias; and (3) behavioral "cues" of criminality are no more intrinsically contained in suspects' behavior than is criminality in offender behavior. Instead of refuting the labeling perspective, such findings potentially reinforce it by offering specific areas of refinement.

However, a commonly acknowledged major shortcoming of labeling theory (see Gibbons 1979) is its failure to explain the social forms and patterns of individual behavior prior to label and sanction application. Many labeling theorists thought that this exclusion of consideration of "primary deviance" could be partially compensated for by their capacity to explain "secondary deviance," or that which occurred as a consequence of sanction application, stigmatization, changes in self-concept and self-esteem, and adoption of deviant roles (see Becker 1963; Douglas 1970; Goffman 1963; Lemert 1972; Lofland 1969; Matza 1969). Although incorporating a symbolic interactionist perspective (see Blumer 1969; Mead 1934) into explanations of deviant careers is certainly an advance (Davis 1975), the bulk of the studies conducted lend only scant and ambiguous support to the otherwise plausible secondary deviance thesis (see Foster, Dinitz, and Reckless 1972; Gibbons 1976; Mahoney 1974).

Labeling theory has made several essential contributions to the construction of a comprehensive criminological theory: (1) its recognition that no act is intrinsically deviant, (2) its renewal (see Mills 1943) of the rejection of presumed pathology in deviant behavior, (3) its incorporation of agencies of social control as a necessary focus of adequate criminological inquiry, and (4) its utilization of symbolic interactionist concepts linking individual behavior and immediate social milieus as reciprocal processes (see Becker 1963; Garfinkel 1967; Schur 1971). Nevertheless, the specific



areas of potential analytic refinement, the silence concerning “primary deviance,” and the murky empirical evidence regarding “secondary deviance” imply that an adequate criminological theory cannot be confined to the labeling theorists’ ahistorical, astructural preoccupation with the immediate sanction-application milieu and its role-reorganizing effects on the offender (see Davis 1972; Gouldner 1968; Liazos 1972).

*Conflict theory* and *radical criminology* arose as an aggregate of attempts to deal with some of the questions about the overall social structure left unanswered by labeling theory. These two schools are similar in their critical posture toward the prevailing social order but are distinguished by their conceptualization of the nature of the social order: (1) conflict theory tends to adopt a pluralistic, conflict perspective of society as an aggregate of diverse interest groups competing for power; and (2) radical criminology tends to adopt an instrumentalist-Marxian perspective of contemporary society as dominated by a unified, capitalist ruling class.

Following the leads of Sutherland (1947) and Sellin (1938), conflict theorists (Chambliss 1973; Hills 1971; Quinney 1970; Turk 1969; Vold 1958; Wolfgang 1968) reject conventional criminology’s presumption that normative consensus characterizes contemporary society’s formulation and enforcement of laws and contend that such legal controls arise in a pluralistic society of conflicting interest groups contending for power. The more powerful groups have the most influence in shaping the legal order to their interests, while those groups lacking social power are most frequently subjected to criminal status. Within the conflict perspective, criminality is preeminently a political question.

Rejecting the approaches of both contemporary criminology and the pluralist-conflict perspective, radical criminologists—including radicalized converts from the conflict perspective, such as Quinney (1974*a*, 1974*b*, 1975)—have attempted to develop an explicitly humanist-socialist critique of the capitalist social order (Platt 1974; Schwendinger and Schwendinger 1970; Taylor, Walton, and Young 1973). Viewing this social order, and the law formulation and enforcement arising out of it, as essentially dominated and controlled by a unified and cohesive (and implicitly evil) capitalist ruling class, such radical criminologists contend that the conventional narrow, legalistic conception of crime, espoused by both conventional and conflict criminological perspectives, is a liberal-technocratic, reformist conception and a form of tacit collusion with the immoral oppressive policies of the ruling class. Casting off such ideological constraints on criminological inquiry, radical criminologists postulate a counter-ideological reconceptualization of criminal behavior to include violations of fundamental human rights (crimes of exploitation and oppression) by the ruling class and its surrogates. Thus, not only is criminality to be seen as a preeminently political question; criminology itself is to be seen as an

intrinsically political endeavor (whether it be conservative, liberal, or radical).

Much of the substance of the radical critiques both of liberal-technocratic reformism and of the ideological distortions of the positivist-pathology model in conventional criminology we consider incisive and valid. Moreover, we agree that any comprehensive comparative assessment of contributions to "social harm" by the routine operations of capitalist institutions and upper-class individuals, and the aggregate "social harm" attributable to legally processed criminals, would weigh heavily against the former (Sutherland 1949).

However, given the patterns of victimization among the underclass and the ideological support for repressive measures promoted by street crime, radical criminologists can hardly celebrate street crime as a form of "primitive rebellion." In their passion for dispensing with conventional criminology's pathologized caricature of the criminal and its empiricist myopia regarding the larger social order in which criminality is situated, radical criminologists at first often simply substituted a romantic myopia regarding the criminal and a pathologized caricature of the social order. Later writings in radical criminology recognize this problem and begin to address the important ramifications that street crime has for buttressing class rule (Crime and Social Justice Collective 1976; Platt 1978).

Furthermore, in their discussions of both the politico-ideological distortions of conventional criminology and the class-biased operation of the criminal justice system, there often resides a simplistic suggestion of conspiracy on the part of the ruling class and its liberal-technocratic "servants" in the academic establishment. Invoking the specter of a ruling class conspiracy is hardly an adequate analysis of sources of power and authority in contemporary capitalist social formations, and it overlooks the distinction between manifest and latent functions of capitalist relations. These problems with radical criminology have been expounded on extensively from both Marxian and non-Marxian perspectives (Gibbons 1979; Greenberg 1976, 1981; Manning 1975; Rock 1974; Sparks 1980; Spitzer 1980; Steinart 1978; Sykes 1974; Turk 1975).

Despite their disparate pluralistic-monolithic caricatures of social power, the conflict and radical approaches both assume an untenable voluntarism with regard to whomever they view as powerful (authorities, interest groups, ruling classes, etc.). Paradoxically, it is as if the more powerful one is in exerting one's "will" to shape the social order, the more external one is to that social order—impervious to its structural constraints and omnipotent over it. Thus, if we are to explain the sources of social power, we have to examine the overall social structure in which it is differentially distributed. Neither conflict theorists nor radical criminologists have developed a coherent and refined conceptualization of social structure: the

former view it in the crude, ahistorical terms of eternal, arbitrary power disparities; the latter view it as an oppressive machinery manipulated by a ruling class.

Conflict theory and radical criminology would be considerably advanced by a fusion of certain dimensions of each perspective, accompanied by a mutual abandonment of their common voluntarist assumptions. Specifically, while conflict theorists should recognize the theoretical necessity to explicate systematically the sources of differential power and authority in their sociohistorically discrete forms and patterns, radical criminologists should recognize that power exercise and interest realization occur only in a process of struggle and are situated in a social structure characterized by multiple contradictions in which emerge political, economic, and ideological rivalries among distinct class fractions (Anderson 1974; Davis 1981; Marx 1963; Poulantzas 1978a). Commensurate with the abandonment of their voluntarist assumptions, both schools need to transport their penchant for interpersonal interpolations from the macro-level of structures to the more appropriate micro-level of genuinely interpersonal interactions. At this level, they would discover that many insightful contributions have already been made by conventional criminology. Significantly, shifts in precisely these theoretical directions can be discerned in more recent works of some Marxist criminologists (Chambliss 1975, 1979; Greenberg 1977, 1981; Quinney 1977; Schwendinger and Schwendinger 1976a, 1976b; Spitzer 1975).

*Integrated theories* that have recently emerged (see Elliot et al. 1979; Johnson 1979) attempt to tie together the theoretical fragments of conventional criminology. In addressing one of the theoretical silences of conventional control theory, integrated theory attempts to weave together the disconnected socialization settings of control theory into a unified conceptualization of socialization *processes*.

Retaining control theory's purely quantitative conception of bonding processes, integrated theories follow the individual through life-cycle encounters with various socializing agencies (families, schools, peer groups), inquiring at each step whether initially strong or weak bonds to the conventional order are being attenuated or reinforced as early socialization experiences "interact" with later ones. By incorporating additional concepts from strain, labeling, and learning approaches, integrated theorists attempt to reconstruct theoretically the individual processes of becoming, or not becoming, delinquent.

For instance, experiences of failure in school, and the attendant implications for labeling, can undermine already weak bonds developed within the family or create strain for juveniles with initially strong bonds, thus attenuating these bonds. Juveniles thus affected are more receptive to the influence of delinquent peer groups in which they learn specific

attitudes, motives, and skills to produce patterned delinquent behavior and possibly consolidate compensatory delinquent identities through alternative bonding processes.

Integrated theories do not view the delinquent outcomes of socialization sequences in undifferentiated terms. Rather, integrated theories allow us to develop qualitative and quantitative distinctions for delinquency (e.g., instrumental, violent, occasional, or patterned). These distinctions are made theoretically possible by the incorporation of concepts from various criminological theories, each reflecting different dimensions of the development of delinquent behavior; the qualitative and quantitative variations in delinquency are made etiologically possible by the multiple paths of socialization through which a juvenile may pass.

Needless to say, integrated theories are a major advance of micro-level inquiry into the interpersonal interaction processes producing delinquencies. Nevertheless, precisely because integrated theories have thus far been restricted to combining the prevailing theoretical currents in conventional criminology, they have also incorporated some of the latter's oversights and distortions. Thus, integrated theories uncritically incorporate the silence of control theory on the social structural origin of initial bonds produced in families. Bonds are conceptualized in the quantitative terms of strong or weak bonding to a conventional order. Moreover, and related to these oversights, integrated theories fail to transcend the confines of micro-level, interpersonal processes to examine why the various socialization paths are arrayed as they are and why distinctive socialization sequences are differentially distributed along class lines.

Such questions cannot be addressed within the confines of micro-level theory—even an integrated theory incorporating a series of micro-level, interpersonal processes. In order to address the systematic, processual character of interpersonal interactions—the larger mosaic of micro-level patterns—we must postulate subapparent but encompassing structures of social activity. Just as the *path* of electrons cannot be entirely explained by their apparent motions but only by postulation of a subapparent structural (electromagnetic) field determining a *process* of particle movement (Einstein and Infeld 1938)—so, too, the path of socialization through which individuals pass cannot be entirely explained by their apparent interpersonal activities. Such explanation requires the postulation of a structural field. This social structural field is postulated to contour the relations of social control, pattern the arrangement of rewards and punishments, and thus determine the distinctive paths of socialization available to individuals. Insofar as this social structural field determines the forms and contents of socialization experiences specific to families, schools, and peer groups, it determines the patterned processes of development of both delinquent and nondelinquent behavior. A postulated social struc-

tural field of class relations allows us to develop precise distinctions in socialization paths that are not randomly distributed but are connected to the underlying relations of commodity production in capitalism. It is to such a field theory, incorporating structural-Marxist concepts, that we now turn.

#### AN INTEGRATED STRUCTURAL-MARXIST APPROACH

The processes of socialization described by integrated theorists can be placed within a context of larger structural relations that define these processes. Structural-Marxists<sup>4</sup> have attempted to connect relations of production theoretically with those relations necessary to reproduce a social formation. It is within this theoretical framework that the latent social production of delinquency is best understood.

In a Marxist paradigm, the fundamental structural relations are those that are entered into at the point of material production. All other human relationships rest on those relationships that revolve around the provision of the physical means of life. Thus Marxists consider the mode of production and reproduction to be the essential starting point of any social analysis, because human existence depends first on the biological survival of the species and thus on the meeting of human needs for which material resources must be expropriated from nature. The relationships among human actors that arise from these essential productive tasks set limits on other, nonproductive social relations, without necessarily determining in any mechanistic sense their form and content.<sup>5</sup> Entering into these necessary productive relationships not only produces the means for physical subsistence but also produces and reproduces the practical intercourse between human beings, that is, produces and reproduces the structured relations through which human actors interact in the essential tasks of material production (Marx and Engels 1967, pp. 6–7).

Individuals do not enter into these relations arbitrarily or simply as a product of their will but encounter them as a given product of the historic development of productive forces. Individuals must interact with these relations (and change them) within the structural limits set by the relations. As Marx and Engels (1967, p. 18) state, “The social structure and

<sup>4</sup> Early formulations of structural-Marxism include those of Althusser (1971, 1977) and Poulantzas (1978b), all of which suffered from ahistorical, static conceptions of structure and failed to include a dialectical notion of the relation between structure and human agency as mediated by class struggle (Anderson 1980; Appelbaum 1979; Burris 1979; Laclau 1979; Wright 1978). A provocative critique of structural-Marxism is provided by Thompson (1978). Anderson’s (1980) reply to Thompson provides an incisive restatement and the most sophisticated elaboration to date of the structural-Marxist position.

<sup>5</sup> For a concise statement of a Marxist understanding of structural determination, see Wright (1978, chap. 1).

the State are continually evolving out of the life-process of definite individuals, but of individuals, not as they may appear in their own or other people's imagination, but as they really are; i.e., as they are effective, produce materially, and are active under definite material limits, presuppositions and conditions independent of their will."<sup>6</sup>

What most clearly distinguishes structural Marxism from the more instrumentalist brands of Marxism is the degree to which actions by ruling (or any other) class members are considered to be voluntary and in concert with other members of the same class. For instance, under capitalist relations of production, even capitalists, as private owners of the means of production, are in a relation of competition with each other which determines the limits on their actions and often necessitates that certain measures be instituted. Even monopolistic practices, such as price fixing, are necessitated by the vicissitudes of capitalist competition. Thus the relations of private ownership of the means of production set certain constraints on capitalists as they interact with each other and as they interact with workers from whom they expropriate surplus labor.<sup>7</sup>

These relations of production also define the class structure at any point in history. Structural Marxism conceptualizes classes in social structural rather than interpersonal terms: classes are integral, not external, to social structure; they are defined by the social relations of production, specifically by relations to the means of production. Classes can be distinguished by their ownership and control of the means of production and of its end products. This differs from defining classes from the point of view of attributes of individuals, for example, life chances, education, income, or occupational prestige, though these may be related to the structural definition of class.<sup>8</sup> As such, classes exist in relation to each other only vis-

<sup>6</sup> This is not an ahistorical abstraction or law of human nature. As Marx (1981, pp. 957–59) discusses and Anderson (1980, chap. 2) reiterates, the still-persisting and most fundamental structural constraint on human action is material scarcity. As the forces of production are expanded to a point where material scarcity becomes less of a constraint, human agency takes on a more determining role.

<sup>7</sup> Greenberg (1981, p. 14) defines "surplus labor" as "labor [or its products] above and beyond what is needed to 'reproduce' the laborer from day to day and from generation to generation . . . the form in which it is appropriated varies greatly [from society to society]." Greenberg (1981, p. 28) goes on to explain: "In the capitalist mode of production, workers sell their labor-power to capitalists in return for wages. The difference between the value that workers receive in the form of wages and the value they produce is surplus value—the specific form that surplus labor takes in the capitalist mode of production—and is appropriated by the capitalist. This is the source of profits." As capitalists compete to expropriate higher levels of surplus value from workers, wealth, used to produce further wealth, increases in a process known as capital accumulation. This process gives the capitalist mode of production its dynamic impetus.

<sup>8</sup> See Wright's discussion (1979, pp. 3–18) comparing the structural-Marxist conception of class, focusing on production relations, with other conceptions of class. Employing such a Marxist, "relational" conception of class—in which most "white-collar" workers are clas-

à-vis the means of production. And as such, the activities of class members, of ruling or subordinate classes or class fractions, are determined by (1) the structure of the mode of production and the patterns of its development; and (2) the relations of that class or fraction with other classes or fractions, which are often antagonistic relations because of structural contradictions characterizing the mode of production.

The modern class structure is a product of a continuous process of struggle among classes in the historical development of capitalism. Figure 1 presents the general configuration of class relations in modern U.S. capitalism. An extended discussion of this class structure is necessary in order to clarify the role of the larger social structural context in the production of serious, patterned delinquency.

The modern class structure arose through a process of struggle among three major classes: the capitalist class, the working class, and the petty bourgeoisie. These classes are placed in relations of antagonism due to the underlying imperatives of capital accumulation. These antagonisms are mitigated or intensified by specific economic, political, and ideological control structures. The antagonistic relations that arise from exploitation in the accumulation process may be conceptualized (metaphorically) as a centrifugal force that pushes the social formation toward disintegration. This underlying class antagonism periodically erupts in open struggle; such eruptions necessitate the establishment (if historical conditions permit) of specific control structures to temper the antagonism. The control structures, when effective, obscure the underlying class struggle. They can be seen (again metaphorically) as a centripetal force that pulls the social formation toward integration. These control structures can be, and have been, upset by periodic economic crises which undermine the efficacy of the controls (such as severe recessions which disrupt wage concessions that ameliorated open struggle between capital and labor and which intensify competitive relations between sectors of capital, disrupting certain political accommodations). The contradiction and constant interaction between these disintegrative and integrative forces define the historical movement of capitalism and, more specifically, determine alterations in the class structure.

Without the connotations of normative consensus invoked by the term "society," modern society can be conceptualized as a *social formation* (see

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sified as part of the proletariat or working class, rather than as part of the "middle class" as in most SES measures—Wright is able empirically to predict differences in income better than do those models based on conventional SES criteria. Also see Braverman (1974), Edwards (1979), Levison (1974), and Parker (1972) for discussions and critiques of conventional SES measures of class.

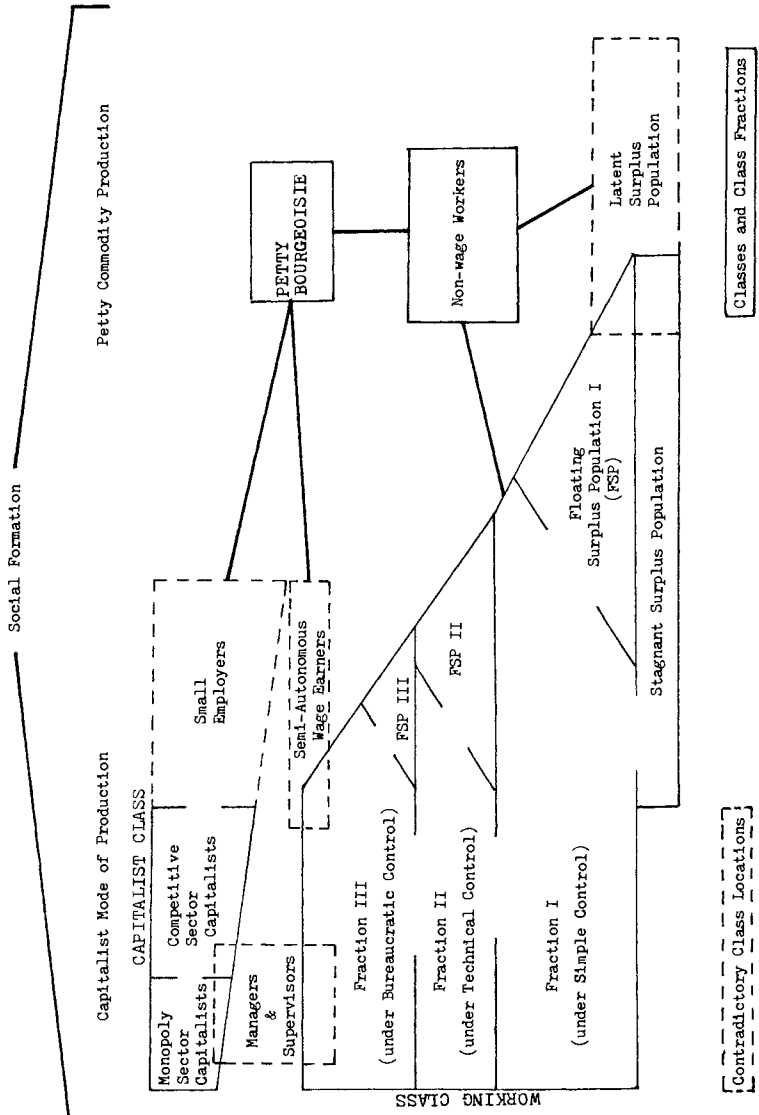


FIG. 1.—The class structure of the United States (adapted from Braverman [1974]; Edwards [1979]; Wright [1978]; material used with permission of Monthly Review Press, Richard Edwards, and New Left Books).



Greenberg 1981; Poulantzas 1980) composed of two modes of production: capitalist and petty commodity production. In petty commodity production, the direct producer obtains the means of subsistence by selling on the market commodities that he or she has independently produced with the possible help of family members, nonwage apprentices or tenant workers, and only a few, if any, wage laborers. In contrast, the capitalist mode of production is characterized by (partially socialized and interdependent) production of commodities by direct producers who are separated from ownership and control over the means and ends of production, and who must sell their labor power for wages in order to obtain the means of subsistence. Limited by its less productive technical means and small-scale division of labor, petty commodity production, in which the roles of owner of the means of production and owner of the final product are fused in the family unit with the roles of laborer and consumer, is geared toward smaller-scaled, simple reproduction of the family unit. However, market competition between producers engenders an expansionary thrust in which direct producers are compelled to introduce innovations in technology and expand the division of labor, or they are increasingly separated from the means and ends of production; thus the fused roles in the petty producer family are fractured into the owners, managers, workers, and consumers characteristic of capitalism (Post 1982). It is this separation of roles and commensurately intensified competition among those in each role that provide capitalism with its incessant expansionary dynamic (and with its recurrent overproduction crises). Thus, petty commodity producers predominate in areas where profits are low or precarious (such as farming), and competition subjects petty commodity producers to perpetual incipient proletarianization and is the underlying source of struggle between the capitalist class and the petty bourgeoisie (Marx 1977).

The intrusion of the capitalist mode of production on petty commodity production (as with the rapid capitalist expansion into agriculture after World War II) involves the production of a latent surplus population (Braverman 1974), composed primarily of agricultural laborers, tenant farmers, and family farm workers, who are displaced by technical innovations and corporate intrusions into agriculture and other types of petty commodity production. The latent surplus population finds itself midway between petty commodity production (from which it has been pushed) and the capitalist mode of production (toward which it is pulled for survival). It may be seen as a "contradictory class location."

Wright (1978) developed the notion of "contradictory class locations," which we apply to the latent surplus population, in connection with two other locations that stand between the capitalist mode of production and petty commodity production. They are contradictory because they share opposite objective interests of two antagonistic classes. They are captured

within the struggle between classes and are defined by their contradictory location in this struggle. First, small employers enjoy the autonomy of the petty bourgeoisie that comes with the ownership and control over the small-scale means of production and its end product. At times, because of their smaller scale of production, small employers, like the petty bourgeoisie, are threatened by competition and intrusions from big capital. Yet, just as the capitalist class, they employ wage labor and are engaged in struggles over workplace control and labor costs with segments of the working class. Second, semiautonomous wage earners, such as college professors and university research scientists, share with the petty bourgeoisie greater control over their own labor process and over disposal of their final product. Yet, just as the working class, they are in a wage-labor relationship with their employer that at times leads to organized struggle against that employer.

Since petty commodity production continually gives way to capitalist incursions, the expansionary dynamic of capitalism renders the latter the dominant mode of production in the modern United States. Yet, even the capitalist mode of production has not generated two monolithic classes at this point in history. Both the capitalist class and the working class are composed of class fractions that have evolved with the development of capitalism.

Fractions of the capitalist class have emerged through the struggle between capitalists for market shares, which has resulted in an uneven expansion of capital and the corresponding rise of sectors within the capitalist economy (Edwards 1979; O'Connor 1973; Oster 1979; Tolbert, Horan, and Beck 1980). Some capitalists have been able to capture greater market shares and monopolize certain industries, such as mining, transportation, utilities, communications, and some manufacturing industries (e.g., auto, steel, electronics, and petroleum). The monopoly-sector capitalists are better able to set noncompetitive prices in concert with other monopoly capitalists and to accumulate capital on a larger scale (Baran and Sweezy 1966). Thus they have greater (but not exclusive) power to influence state policies and are in a better position to temper working class resistance through wage concessions and more sophisticated methods of workplace control. Foreign competition (as in the auto and steel industries) presents the greatest structural constraint on the monopoly sector.

It is primarily in the monopoly sector of capital that top managerial and supervisory positions have been established to provide the more sophisticated control networks within organizations and to deal with complicated market arrangements that may have international scope. These new managerial and supervisory positions have been identified by Wright (1978) as a "contradictory class location" between the capitalist class and

the working class. On the one hand, persons in this location share with capitalists the control over the means of production and control of the sale of end products. On the other hand, they lack the ultimate control over decisions that goes with direct ownership. Managerial and supervisory control is contingent on the profits that accrue to the owners as a result of these decisions. When profits drop as the result of top management's miscalculations, it is the owners' prerogative to dismiss the managers from employment, just as the owners would dismiss workers (Bauer 1981).

The other major fraction of the capitalist class is composed of competitive-sector capitalists. These capitalists are less protected than the monopoly sector from market fluctuations; they are concentrated in wholesale, retail, and service industries and in a few manufacturing industries, such as lumber, textiles, and apparel. They cannot set noncompetitive prices owing to their relatively greater vulnerability to market forces, and accordingly are not able to accumulate capital on as large a scale as the monopoly sector. Thus competitive-sector capitalists lack the resources for wage concessions and generally cannot afford the more sophisticated managerial techniques (and personnel) to control their labor force. Instead, they must depend more heavily on the coercive control provided by the market force of supply and demand for labor to keep wages down and to use threats of dismissal effectively as the primary measure for disciplining workers. The floating surplus population (Braverman 1974), those irregularly employed workers who are readily called up as workforce replacements, provides the competitive capitalist sector with its basic tool for control over its work force. The stagnant surplus population (Braverman 1974) is less actively involved in competition for jobs and moves between unskilled, extremely low-paying jobs, usually in service industries, and state controls provided by welfare and criminal justice apparatuses (Colvin 1981; Piven and Cloward 1971; Quinney 1977).

The different market positions of the monopoly and competitive sectors of capital present different structural limitations on each sector in its ability to resist, meet, or anticipate the demands of their workers. Within the context of these structural limitations, capitalists institute specific structures of control over the labor process in response to the level of struggle presented by workers. Market competition compels capitalists to introduce technical innovations and more efficient divisions of labor (Braverman 1974). But these innovations often meet with resistance from workers who struggle for control over the production process (Montgomery 1979). The various methods used to control workers, which are historically developed through the struggle with workers, on the one hand, and through imperatives of market competition, on the other, define the major fractions of the modern working class.

Edwards (1979) presents the most comprehensive analysis to date of the major fractions of the working class. Fraction I is composed of workers who labor in more competitive industries and who, in Edwards's terminology, are involved in a "secondary labor market," which operates largely by the law of supply and demand for labor in setting the price of labor power. Thus, fraction I is most affected by, and includes a huge proportion of, the floating and stagnant surplus populations which compete for fraction I jobs. These include low-skill jobs in small, nonunion manufacturing; southern textile jobs; service jobs; lower-level clerical and sales jobs; and agricultural wage-labor. These jobs are "typically dead-end jobs, with few prospects for advancement and little reward for seniority in the form of either higher pay or a better job" (Edwards 1979, p. 167). Employers forcefully resist organizing efforts by workers. There is a large turnover of employees in fraction I, which undermines labor-organizing efforts and also reflects the predominant control mechanism for worker discipline—threatened or actual dismissal from the job.

Edwards defines the control mechanism used to discipline fraction I workers as "simple control," which, in our view, corresponds to Etzioni's (1970) "coercive compliance structure." This compliance structure rests predominantly on "coercive power," which Etzioni (1970, p. 104) defines as involving "the application or the threat of application of physical sanctions" that include "the controlling through force the satisfaction of needs." Dismissal from the job definitely involves the forced removal from the means for satisfying basic needs and thus is a coercive mechanism of power. Coercive power tends to create an "alienative involvement," or intense negative orientation (Etzioni 1970, p. 106) on the part of the worker toward the employer and the organization. This workplace control structure conditions the worker's ideological orientation or bond to authority at the workplace. In this case an alienated or negative bond is created by the more coercive simple control used with fraction I workers.

Fraction II is composed of organized workers who, through earlier struggles, gained wage and benefit concessions, job protection, and the establishment of industry-wide unions. The auto, steel, and rubber industries; machine manufacture; and mining offer the best examples of fraction II workers. According to Edwards, capitalists and their managers were forced to shift from simple control to more sophisticated technical control in response to organized worker resistance to the arbitrary and coercive discipline of simple control. Technical control is machine paced and impersonal and relies on the worker calculating his or her material self-interest for pay raises and job security based on seniority with the firm. Edwards identifies fraction II workers as being involved in a "subordinate primary labor market" that relies very little on external pressure from a floating surplus population, which is usually protected in this

fraction by more generous, union-connected unemployment benefits. Job performance is usually routine and boring and holds little intrinsic interest for the worker. The main control is the calculation of extrinsic rewards of material security through movement up a union pay ladder; this process produces a firm-specific "internal labor market" (Edwards 1979, p. 172). This form of control, which defines fraction II, is consonant with Etzioni's (1970, p. 109) "utilitarian compliance structure" composed of "remunerative power," involving the manipulation of material rewards. A "calculative involvement" of intermediate intensity on the part of the worker is produced in this type of control structure. It is a precarious ideological bond, depending on continual remuneration and advancement up the pay ladder and producing little loyalty on the part of the worker.

Fraction III is defined by its involvement in an "independent primary labor market" composed of jobs that are likely "to require independent initiative or self-pacing" (Edwards 1979, p. 174), including: (1) middle-layer workers, such as technical staff, foremen, personal secretaries, and middle-level supervisors; (2) wage-earning craft workers, such as electricians, carpenters, plumbers, and machinists, who are usually members of craft guilds; and (3) salaried professional workers, such as corporation accountants, corporation research scientists and engineers, corporate and state lawyers, social workers, and school teachers. The bulk of state workers are included in fraction III. This fraction, just as other working-class fractions, spans both blue-collar and white-collar occupations. The jobs in fraction III are ruled by more universal standards of professional or craft guild conduct. This differs from the machine-paced and firm-specific standards of the "subordinate primary labor market" of fraction II.

The floating surplus population plays a very small role in controlling fraction III workers, since higher professional and educational requirements prevent most workers from competing for these positions. Edwards (1979, p. 131) argues that, after World War II, many new monopoly industries (computers, technical instruments, chemicals, refining) adopted many of the aspects of technical control and added other sophisticated control mechanisms to ward off the possibility of industry-wide unionization. In any event, the work tasks of most fraction III workers preclude the use of pure technical control, since the work tasks cannot be easily routinized, requiring instead a certain degree of flexible response and initiative on the part of the worker.

"Bureaucratic control" (Edwards 1979, p. 131) is thus necessary to gain compliance from fraction III workers, whose products, as with any wage laborer's product, are expropriated for the profit of the owners. This lack of control over the end product of one's labor is what distinguishes fraction III from semiautonomous wage earners. Bureaucratic control involves an

elaborate manipulation of symbols and statuses that elicits ideological commitments to the organization. The bureaucratic control structure “fosters occupational consciousness; that is, [it] provides the basis for jobholders to define their own identities in terms of their particular occupation” (Edwards 1979, p. 177). Thus, fraction III jobs hold more intrinsic meaning for these workers. While pay scales are commensurate with increases in job status, it is primarily the possibility of job status increase that compels worker compliance. In fact, many fraction III workers are paid less than unionized fraction II workers.

“Bureaucratic control” corresponds to Etzioni’s “normative compliance structure” that includes “normative power,” which “rests on the allocation and manipulation of symbolic rewards” (Etzioni 1970, p. 104) and elicits a “moral involvement,” designating “a positive orientation of high intensity” on the part of the worker toward authority and the organization (Etzioni 1970, p. 107). While ultimate decisions about the organization are left to owners and top management, status among fraction III workers is based on the degree of autonomy and decision-making power allowed for each position. Status comparisons with peers provide a strong element of control. Thus many of the job positions in fraction III overlap with the contradictory class locations of top managers and supervisors and of semiautonomous wage earners. (A good example of the latter overlap is Bell Laboratory scientists who are allowed to spend 10% of their time working on their own inventions.) The job experience of fraction III workers, in which more complex tasks are encountered and greater autonomy and decision making are exercised, conditions these workers’ ideological orientation toward a more positive bond to their work, to authorities at the workplace, and to their organization.

The three fractions of the working class are based on the experiences that arise from the three primary structures of workplace control. It is the objective structures of control that condition subjective class experiences and give rise to class-related ideological orientations. These objective control structures, which arose through the historic development of capitalist relations of production, are the crucial link between the mode of production and subjective class experiences. It is the structure of workplace control that affects the ideological orientation (or bond) of the worker, who in turn contributes to the production and reproduction of a specific type of control structure in the family, the initial institution in which the reproduction of class relations and labor power takes place.

### Family Control Structures and Delinquency

Melvin Kohn (1977) argues that a parent who experiences greater external control at work comes to “understand” the importance (for physical and

financial survival) of conformity to external authority. The stress on conformity to external authority is then (consciously or unconsciously) impressed on children during child-rearing activities in the family. In contrast, parents who experience a lower degree of external control and exercise greater decision-making power at work come to view "internalized self-control," initiative, and creativity as valued attributes that are impressed on their children.

Both orientations for parental values spring from the parents' ideological bonds produced in differential work experiences. An underlying message to the child in both instances is an ideological statement about the world: control of life circumstances and the determinants of one's behavior spring from either external compulsion or internal motivation. The child, in his or her everyday interactions with parents, learns that one acts toward authority either out of fear or calculation of external consequences or out of a sense of internalized respect or commitment. Through the process of parental control over children, a parent's bond to the authority of the workplace is reproduced in the child's initial bond to parental authority.

Thus Kohn (1977) found in his national survey that lower-SES parents and parents under more tightly controlled and routinized work situations tend to have more alienated ideological bonds, impress the attributes of conformity to external authority on their children, use more punitive and physical disciplining practices, and punish their children more for consequences of their acts than for perceived intent of their behavior. Higher-SES parents and parents from more "self-directing" work situations show opposite directions in associations to the bonding, parental value, and parental disciplining variables.<sup>9</sup>

The child participates in a family control structure that contains certain rewards and punishments for specific types of behavior and perceived motives. The more coercive this structure of control, the more negative are the bonds produced in the child. The degree of coerciveness of family control structures is influenced by material resources available to parents as reinforcements and by the ideological bond of the parent, which influences the types of child behavior that will be rewarded or punished. Both material resources and parental bonds are associated with workplace control structures.

As with the parents' social control experiences at work, an initial ideo-

<sup>9</sup> While statistical associations are significant, many are statistically weak (Erlanger 1974). The reader should, therefore, see these findings as suggestive only. Kohn's findings have been replicated by several quantitative studies (Coburn and Edwards 1976; Erlanger 1974; Franklin and Scott 1970; Gecas 1979; Gecas and Nye 1974; Kohn 1976; Kohn and Schooler 1973; Pearlin 1970; Wright and Wright 1976) and by two important qualitative studies on family and work (Komarovskiy 1962; Rubin 1976)

logical orientation either toward conformity to external authority, based on fear or calculation of external consequences, or toward internalized "self-direction" is produced in the child, depending on the coerciveness of the control structure within the family. This family control structure is shaped by the stability and level of parents' association with control structures at work.

Thus we postulate that parents from fraction I of the working class, typified by more coercive workplace controls and more sporadic associations with specific workplaces, tend to enforce an uneven and erratic family control structure that swings unpredictably between being lax and being highly punitive. (See Rubin's [1976] discussion of "settled living" versus "hard living" life-styles within the working class.) We expect more alienated initial bonds to be produced in children who experience such arbitrary, inconsistent, and coercive family control structures. Parents from fraction II of the working class, characterized by more steady and long-term association with a utilitarian compliance structure at work, tend to enforce a more utilitarian compliance structure in the family that produces calculative bonds of intermediate intensity in their children, who can dependably predict external consequences for behavior. Parents in more "self-directing" workplace situations—such as fraction III workers, semiautonomous wage earners, top managers, and owners of the means of production—tend to enforce a more normative family compliance structure in which positive initial bonds of high intensity are produced in children.

Though no studies have been designed that directly link workplace controls, family disciplining practices, and delinquency, some empirical data suggest that our postulations may be correct. In addition to Kohn's (1977) findings, Strauss, Gelles, and Steinmetz (1980) in a national survey of self-reported family violence found significant inverse associations between class-related variables (income and occupational prestige) and parental violence toward children and a significant positive association between unemployment and parental violence toward children. These findings suggest class differences in coerciveness of family control structures.

Regarding delinquency, significant positive associations between more physical and punitive parental disciplining practices and delinquency and between erratic parental disciplining practices and delinquency have been reported in studies using both official and self-reported delinquency measures (Glueck and Glueck 1950; Hirschi 1969; McCord, McCord, and Zola 1959; Nye 1958; West and Farrington 1973). Hirschi (1969) reports that juveniles' positive bonds to parents are inversely related to self-reported delinquency; later studies (see Johnson 1979) suggest, however, that the influence of parental bonding on delinquency is at best indirect.



These studies suggest that the coerciveness of family control structures, conditioned by parents' work experiences, contributes at least indirectly to the production of delinquency.

### School Control Structures and Delinquency

The next important process in the generational reproduction of labor power, necessary for capitalist production relations, is formal schooling. Education entails the molding of human raw material into a product that can be consumed in the capitalist labor process. This product must not only possess certain technical skills but also be appropriately disciplined and ideologically amenable for entry into the various compliance structures at work. Educational institutions serve these purposes; control structures at schools have been designed to fit the labor requirements of capitalist enterprises (Bowles and Gintis 1976; Carnoy and Levin 1976; Noble 1977; Spring 1972).

When entering school, the child, with initial bonds produced in a family control structure, confronts a new structure of control. The school, like parents' workplaces, contains gradations of control (within various "tracks") that are exercised over students. A child with negative initial bonds is likely to be placed in a control structure at school that parallels the coercive family control structure that produced the child's negative bond. This process operates both by deliberate design and through subtle mechanisms.

First, IQ and aptitude tests may designate negatively bonded children for processing in "lower-level" tracks that are more regimented and coercive. The aptitude tests may measure initial bonds more than they measure innate intelligence, for the IQ test "probably measures a rather special kind of motivation" (Jencks et al. 1972, p. 55). Since there is no extrinsic reward or punishment associated with giving right or wrong answers on these tests (nor any feedback on how well one has done), those students who do not give random answers must be internally motivated to achieve. Thus a high IQ score denotes a positive internalized bond that was produced within a family control structure. The IQ score is a primary mechanism for placement into educational tracks which contain differential structures of control.

A second mechanism is the reciprocal relationship between a child's initial bond and the child's elicitation of controls from teachers and other authority figures in the school setting (as with Piliavin and Briar's [1964] finding of police reaction to behavioral cues of juveniles). The negatively bonded child, for instance, may give behavioral cues of being (in the teacher's perception) potentially disruptive. These behavioral cues may elicit a labeling process that creates the "self-fulfilling prophecy" of a

disruptive child who elicits still more coercive controls than before. The labeling process can be seen as a reciprocal relationship between differentially bonded individuals and agents of control structures. The process of labeling in educational settings has been demonstrated experimentally (Leacock 1969; Rist 1970; Rosenthal 1973; Rosenthal and Jacobson 1968; Rubovits and Maehr 1971), though other researchers have been unable to replicate these findings (Barber et al. 1969; Gephart 1970).

A third mechanism involves the finite number of positions in various educational tracks that may not correspond with the number of juveniles who are motivationally prepared (owing to initial bonding) for more "self-directing" tracks. This situation would present a more immediate structural source of strain at all tracking levels for those children who are placed lower than initial family or early school socialization led them to expect. As in Elliot et al.'s (1979) integrated theory, these juveniles, because of the structural disjuncture, would experience failure and strain that would attenuate positive bonds and lead to possible placement in more coercive school control structures.<sup>10</sup>

A fourth mechanism is the differential financial resources of schools in lower-class, working-class, and middle-class neighborhoods. This difference in resource allocation springs largely from differential tax bases associated with income and property ownership differences. This circumstance creates differences in the availability of rewards and punishments for controlling children in the school setting and often necessitates a greater reliance on coercive measures in lower-class schools. Thus, tracking takes place between, as well as within, schools.

The various tracking experiences in the school correspond to the social control requirements at workplaces (Bowles and Gintis 1976). The lower tracks emphasize strict discipline, regimentation, and conformity to external authority. The higher tracks emphasize initiative, creativity, and self-direction. Again, these control structures with their various rewards and punishments shape experiences for individual children and reinforce or attenuate initial bonds to authority.

Thus, parents' bonds engendered by workplace control structures are reproduced in the child through family controls; the child's initial ideological orientation toward authority is most likely to be reinforced in school control structures by mechanisms which render the child suitable for eventual placement in a workplace control structure similar to that of the parent. Thus, inequality and the class structure are subtly reproduced.

Some research suggests that school control structures and related vari-

<sup>10</sup> This situation would constitute in Etzioni's (1970) terminology an "incongruent compliance structure" that would tend toward a "congruent" coercive compliance structure by producing an alienative involvement on the part of the juvenile.

ables are associated with delinquency. Hirschi and Hindelang (1977) report that one of the most consistent relationships found in delinquency literature is the inverse association between IQ scores and delinquency. Also, positive bonding to school has been associated with lower levels of delinquency (Hindelang 1973; Hirschi 1969; Johnson 1979). In addition, lower educational track position has been associated with higher rates of delinquency (Kelly 1974; Schaefer, Olexa, and Polk 1972). However, Wiatrowski et al. (1982), using a sample of high school students, found a significant but very weak inverse relationship between curriculum track and delinquency. It may be, as Wiatrowski et al. (1982, p. 158) point out, that tracking experiences have their impact on delinquency earlier than high school. Indeed, as Greenberg (1977) notes, involvement in serious property offenses (which constitute the bulk of the FBI's Part One Index crimes) peaks around ages 15–16 and then declines, suggesting that the increased regimentation and sudden intensification of tracking that accompanies the shift from elementary to junior high school may be more crucial in explaining delinquency than are later tracking experiences in high school. For explanations of sustained involvement in serious delinquency after junior high school, we must examine the growing influence of peer associations.

#### Peer Associations, Structures of Control, and Delinquency

Peer associations mediate the relationship between delinquency and the other control structures we have discussed. The structured experiences associated with parents' workplaces, families, and schools form the necessary conditions and delinquent peer associations create the sufficient conditions for patterned delinquent behavior.

Peer groups form largely around juveniles' interactions at and around school and reflect the patterns of association structured by school tracking systems and by the differential distribution of opportunities among neighborhoods. Structures of control over adolescents, who are marginal to workplace control structures and who are increasingly moving away from the influence of family control structures, are shaped by a combination of school, neighborhood, and peer group relationships (Greenberg 1977).

Our theory assumes that juveniles with similar bonds (due to similar experiences in schools, neighborhoods, and families) will be in greater contact with each other and will be drawn to each other on the basis of shared values and experiences. Specifically, students in higher educational tracks, in which positive bonds are reinforced, tend to form peer associations that contain more normative compliance structures that continue the production of positive bonds and thus insulate these juveniles from delinquent involvement. Students in intermediate tracks, which are more

conducive to calculative involvement, are likely to form peer relations oriented around the pursuit of extrinsic rewards. The possible contradiction between rewards in school and those associated with peer relationships places these juveniles under greater strain. Such a situation can attenuate their bonds and lead to occasional involvement in less serious types of instrumental delinquency. Students in lower educational tracks, which tend to produce more alienated bonds, would be most open to associating with similarly negatively bonded peers who are likely to reinforce tendencies toward serious, patterned delinquency (Elliot et al. 1979).

Studies strongly suggest that most delinquent behavior occurs in groups and that juveniles with delinquent peer associations tend to be delinquent themselves (Erickson and Jensen 1977; Short, Rivera, and Tennyson 1965; Short 1958; Voss 1964). There is conflicting evidence on the relationship between bonding among peers and delinquent behavior. Hirschi (1969) reports that "attachment" (or positive bonding) to peers is inversely associated with delinquency. Jensen and Erickson (as reported in Jensen and Rojek 1980) found no association between attachment to peers and delinquency. Yet Hindelang (1973), Empey and Lubeck (1971), and Erickson and Empey (1965) found positive associations between attachment to peers and delinquency. These disparate findings may be due to different measures of "attachment to peers" (Jensen and Rojek 1980) and to differences between rural and urban samples in some of these studies. We argue that a more important source of disparity in these findings may exist: attachment between delinquent peers may vary by the seriousness and frequency of delinquent acts in which a peer group is involved. We postulate that control relations within delinquent peer groups determine both the level of bonding between the peers in question and the type of delinquency in which these juveniles are involved.

This latter point is suggested in Cloward and Ohlin's (1960) description of types of delinquent "subcultures," two of which we will discuss. The "criminal" delinquent subculture is oriented toward instrumental delinquent activities, such as theft. We argue that the emphasis placed on material gain by members of this delinquent subculture emanates from a utilitarian control structure contained within the instrumental delinquent group itself. Maintaining access to material rewards becomes important for establishing a position within the internal control structure of this type of delinquent group. Group members with stronger "connections" to adult fencing operations or to adult professional thieves, and group members who are able to "haul" more goods, enjoy greater status and power within the group because of their access to sources for remunerative rewards. Thus internal competition for positions of control within the group requires illegal activities oriented around material gain. This internal competition meets with an external social environment in

which legitimate instrumental opportunities are constrained, but illegitimate instrumental opportunities are open for those "cunning" enough to exploit them. These internal and external forces combine to produce the structural inducements for serious, patterned, instrumental delinquency characteristic of the "criminal" subculture. The internal control relations within these instrumental delinquent groups are conducive to a type of bonding based on calculation of material rewards and punishments; thus an intermediately intense, less negative bond may emerge among these juveniles, causing their mutual attachments to be stronger than those of other delinquent peers.

The second delinquent "subculture" described by Cloward and Ohlin (1960) is labeled the "conflict" subculture. This specific type of delinquent peer association, according to Cloward and Ohlin, arises from the absence in the immediate social environment of both legitimate and illegitimate opportunities for material gain. We would expect this type of delinquent group to be predominant in urban areas where the surplus population has been most recently pushed from agrarian social and economic relations and is least established as a genuine urban community.<sup>11</sup> The delinquent activities of these "conflict" groups are structured around violent gang rivalries over dominance within neighborhoods, often in nascent attempts to establish and control an illegitimate opportunity structure. The lack of material resources for control, and the associated lack of legitimate opportunities for status achievement, render control relations among peers within these groups more coercive. Thus, bonds among peer group members are negative, while, at the same time, violent behavior and motives are reinforced in interactions within and among "conflict" delinquent groups. Those members who gain reputations for being the most violent are able to exert the most control over the group. Again, we see an interaction between internal relations of group control and external structures within the surrounding social environment, in this case an interaction between internal coercive control and external competitive violence between groups. These internal and external forces combine to create the structural inducements for serious, patterned, violent delinquent behavior. These conflict delinquent groups resemble Yablonsky's (1962, 1966) "near groups," characterized by coercive, authoritarian leaders and an absence of solidarity among group members who are negatively bonded to each other.

<sup>11</sup> Because ethnic criteria provide the most readily convenient, invidious distinctions for designating constituents of the surplus population, such urban areas are usually populated by diverse ethnic groups living in close proximity, sharing only the attributes of their common status as redundant labor and common desperation for the sporadic, marginal employment available to them. Thus, the material basis for ethnically articulated conflict is established by the structural requirement of capitalism for a surplus population (see Smith 1981).

Peer groups which reinforce patterned delinquent behavior and those which reinforce conventional behavior are characterized by distinct structures of internal control that affect individual bonds and reinforce specific types of behavior. The internal structures of control within peer groups spring from control structures within the school and from differential opportunity structures in the social and economic environment of neighborhoods. Depending on the interaction between specific internal structures of control within delinquent groups and specific external structures of opportunity in the surrounding environment, the delinquent peer groups will produce either instrumental or violent patterned delinquent behavior.

### Summary

Our theory focuses on the structures of control in several locations in the production and social reproduction processes. Our discussion of structures of control incorporates insights about micro-level processes from learning, strain, control, labeling, and integrated theories in criminology. We suggest that structures of control have parallel patterns associated with work, families, schools, and peer groups, and that those patterns form the mechanisms for the reproduction of the class structure. Expanding on insights about macro-level processes from conflict and radical criminology, we construct a structural-Marxist approach that views delinquency as a latent outcome of the social reproduction process in capitalism.

The structures of control tend to produce differential ideological bonds, depending on the individual's particular path through the control structures. We see ideological bonds as malleable, but they are usually sustained in the socialization process by somewhat similar experiences in control structures that individuals encounter along the path of socialization. The direction of socialization is initiated by the parents' location in workplace control structures, which are shaped by the historical interaction between competition among capitalists and the level of class struggle. These workplace control structures affect the structures of control within families. Children's initial bonds are shaped by family control relations and tend to set the child up for, or preclude placement in, specific control structures at school. School control structures create differential experiences of reward and punishment and reinforce or attenuate initial bonds. The juvenile is then open for recruitment to a variety of peer group experiences that are also shaped by structures of control among peers, which interact with differential opportunity structures in the surrounding community to produce specific patterns of peer group behavior. If patterned delinquent peer groups are available in the immediate social environment, a juvenile's structurally induced bond will open him up to, or insulate him from, entry into such peer relations. Entry into this type

of peer association continues the pattern of reinforcement toward more sustained delinquent behavior.

Figure 2 presents a general path model of delinquency production focusing on the individual's structurally conditioned experiences as he moves toward becoming a more serious, patterned delinquent. From our integrated structural-Marxist approach, we predict the following empirical relationships (numbered as in the figure).

Parents' *class position* (defined by ownership and control over the means and ends of production) is (1) negatively associated with parents' experience of coerciveness in *workplace control structures*, which (2) is positively associated with more alienated bonds in parents.

Alienated parental bonds (3) contribute to the development of more coercive *family control structures*, which (4) are positively related to more alienated initial bonds in juveniles.

Juveniles with alienated initial bonds (5) have a greater probability of being placed in more coercive *school control structures*, which (6 and 7) reinforce the juveniles' alienated bonds.

Juveniles' reinforced alienated bonds lead to (8 and 9) greater association with alienated peers, who form *peer group control structures* which, in interaction with (10, 11, and 12) class-related, community, and neighborhood distributions of opportunities, create qualitatively different paths of delinquent development (13 and 14).

In the first path (leading from line 13), the experience of coerciveness in peer group control relations mutually interacts (15 and 16) with juveniles' alienated bonds to (17 and 18) propel these juveniles into serious, patterned, *violent delinquent behavior*.

In the second path (leading from line 14), the experience of remuneration from illegitimate sources (19 and 20) creates an alternative utilitarian control structure which mutually interacts (21 and 22) with newly formed calculative bonds to propel these juveniles (23 and 24) into serious, patterned, *instrumental delinquent behavior*.

## CONCLUSION

Our structural-Marxist perspective precludes the type of social tinkering characteristic of the liberal-technocratic approach to problem solving. The apparent failure of liberal-technocratic approaches to have an impact on street crime and other social problems has left criminology (and the social sciences in general) in a theoretical vacuum. This vacuum could present an opportunity for creative reconceptualization and theory construction if assumptions concerning the sanctity of the basic social order were no longer taken for granted. However, in the absence of a rigorous critique of prevailing power relations, the theoretical vacuum can be a

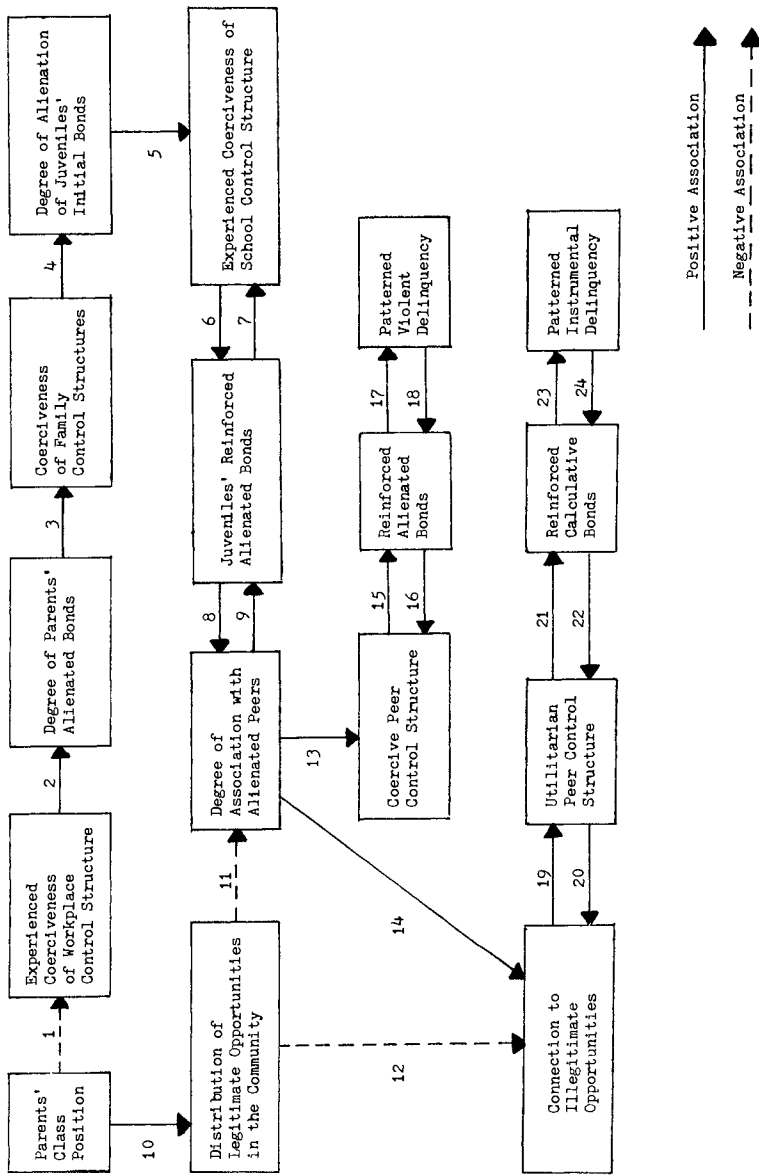


FIG. 2.—General path model of patterned delinquency



precursor to a period of intellectual retrenchment and reaction, in which analytical thought is replaced by simplistic, yet ideologically compelling, appeals to our fears and ignorance about crime. The latter possibility is evident in the recent recommendations for repressive approaches to crime presented by President Reagan's Task Force on Violent Crime (Browning 1982). It is, therefore, imperative that social scientists counter this reactionary drift in social policies not through mere political rhetoric but through analytical and research skills.

Our perspective recognizes the structural limitations of changing one seemingly isolated aspect of society without a concurrent alteration of the core relationships associated with material production. The pivotal factor is the workplace struggle by subordinates for more equal and democratically controlled forms of the production relations that shape their lives and the lives of their families. The involvement in the struggle for changing the relations of production toward greater control by direct producers must be an essential aspect, along with community organizing and educational reform, of any program designed to counter crime and delinquency. Action, then, is not just technical but also political. Interestingly, this is precisely the implication of studies that report a significant decline in crime rates and gang violence concomitant with the political mobilization of the underclass (as suggested explicitly by Browning [1982] and implicitly by Erlanger [1982] and Short [1974]). Such conscious human intervention in the often destructive social reproduction process must take place at all points of that process; otherwise, our efforts are doomed to failure as the underlying structure transforms our intended efforts into outcomes that only reproduce the effects we had hoped to eliminate.

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