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ABSTRACT

This paper critically examines the assertions that use of spanking is characteristic of low SES parents in the U. S. and that child abuse and physical aggression are likely outcomes of this technique of discipline. Data from existing literature and from a 1968 survey taken for the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence are examined, and support for all three hypotheses is found to be weak at best.

The findings in this paper support the growing consensus that a culture of poverty does not exist in U. S. society. Low status parents as a group are found to be much like those of middle and high status in both their attitudes towards and use of spanking. Although child abuse does seem to occur disproportionately in low status families, the occurrence is rare, and appears to be largely the product of structural factors. Previous characterizations of the poor as being "different" in their child rearing are primarily the result of generalizations based on small differences or on a small minority of extreme instances. It is likely that research into other areas in which the poor are supposedly "different" would yield similar findings.

Since available evidence indicates that the vast majority of the poor are competent, the analysis supports the proponents of the view that what the poor basically need is greater financial and educational resources and more control over their own destiny. Moreover, such structural changes will probably also reduce the incidence of behavior--such as child abuse--which may appear to some to be simply the result of personal pathology.

ON THE INCIDENCE AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE USE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN CHILD REARING--A CRITIQUE

Parents' use of spanking is often viewed as a relatively unsophisticated method of child discipline which may have various deleterious effects on child development. The effects are thought to occur in the lower status groups, since it is in these groups that the use of spanking is believed to predominate. Sociologists interested in an overview of social class variations in child rearing often turn to a comprehensive review article by Bronfenbrenner[1] whose conclusion on methods of punishment is:

> The most consistent finding documented is the more frequent use of physical punishment by working class parents. The middle class, in contrast, resort to reasoning, isolation, and . . . "love oriented" discipline techniques. (1958:419)

This paper will critically examine the empirical evidence on this assertion, as well as data on two hypotheses on the consequences of spanking: (1) that use of spanking is a first step on the road to child abuse; and (2) that the child who is spanked will become predisposed to outward aggression in his adult life.[2] In general, the empirical support for all three statements is found to be weak.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AND SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

A. The Existing Literature

Most statements on the relationship between social status (class or race) and techniques of punishment imply the existence of a strong relationship between those variables. At a minimum, spanking is thought to be a much more frequent occurrence in lower class and black families than in middle or upper class white families. But, often something more fundamental is

implied, and social groups are characterized according to their methods of punishment. The task here is to move away from the stereotypes and attempt to estimate the actual extent of difference in the use of physical punishment. Unfortunately, this is not an easy task since very few thorough studies have been carried out. The few studies undertaken use divergent indicators of class and punishment technique, and are limited by their reliance on some form of survey questionnaire. Many problems of comparability are discussed by Bronfenbrenner (1958:404-406) and will not be repeated here; the limits of questionnaire data as compared to observational data are obvious. It is clear then, that no definitive answer to the question can be given. Nonetheless, it is worthwhile to assess whether the prevailing conclusions are consistent with the available data.

Insofar as I can determine, the largest and most systematic study of child rearing practices was conducted in the early 1930's for President Hoover's White House Conference on Child Health and Protection (Anderson, 1936). It was based on a national sample of 3000 families and is apparently the only national study ever done on the subject. The collection of data and the techniques of analysis (which include the limited use of control variables) were quite good, even by today's standards. Yet this study is rarely cited and is difficult to locate. Since 1936 there have been perhaps two dozen studies relevant to the present inquiry, all but one of which have been limited to one metropolitan area. Many of these are, however, based on large and well-drawn samples. The only broad-based research since Anderson's 1930 study seems to be a survey of 800 Californians, conducted in 1956 for the State Department of Public Health (Heinstein, 1964); this study is even more obscure than Anderson's. Chart I (adapted

and enlarged from Bronfenbrenner) presents the basic information on all readily accessible studies published between 1936 and 1970 which have data on the use of physical punishment.

Chart II, which displays representative findings from these studies, suggests that the relationship between social class and the use of spanking is relatively weak. Bronfenbrenner's conclusion was based on an examination of the significance levels of the first six studies in the chart; but only three of those studies found significance at the .05 level, while at least two samples had a reversed relationship. The addition of two studies not available to Bronfenbrenner only serves to further cloud the issue.[3] Moreover, examination of the percentage differences shows a range of +6 ("middle class" more likely to use corporal punishment) to -41 ("working class" more likely), with a mode around -16 and a mean of about -12 (mean and mode computed by sample, not by row). Given the number of samples and these findings, the best conclusion is that there is indeed some relationship between class and punishment technique, but that it is probably not strong enough to be of great theoretical or practical significance.[4] Moreover, in virtually all samples the modal response for all groups studied is the same; it is thus inappropriate to characterize the classes as being different.

Before moving onto the consideration of some new data, let us consider some possible objections to my interpretation:

Nature of the indicators. Regrouping the studies by indicator has no effect on the conclusions above. Although the indicators do vary, most of them are concerned with the frequent use of spanking. When the few that are different are separated out, the relationship looks no stronger. A more

serious problem is the lack of quality of the indicators. Besides the fact that all are based on the respondent's own memory and analysis, most deal with spanking per se, rather than with a tradeoff between corporal and psychological punishment. Even if the "usual" method of punishment is the same for all strata, the term is vague enough so that there is a wide variation in the extent to which psychological techniques are used. Many of the studies contain some items which deal specifically with psychological methods; theory and conventional wisdom would predict that a much larger percentage of middle and upper class parents would report use of such methods as "reasoning" with the child who has acted improperly and extensive use of reward or praise for proper behavior. Here again, although the data on the middle class often show the expected relationship, the findings are not uniform and the relationships are often very weak.

Anderson's 1930 data show the relationship clearly enough: 73% of Class I, versus 43% of Class VII used reasoning, and 44% versus 19% used deprivation of pleasure (Anderson, 1936:219). However, in 1943, Davis and Havigshurst found that 57% of their working class respondents, versus 53% of the upper-middle class respondents, thought that reasoning was a successful way to get children to obey. (The relationship in that study was significantly reversed, however, on the question of use of reward or praise, in which the upper-middle class gave 78% approval, while the working class gave only 53%.) In Eugene, Oregon, in 1950, Littman, (1957) found very little difference between the middle and lower class parents in their sample on the use of reasoning, scolding, deprivation of privileges or possessions, isolation, or ignoring or distracting the child. Sears,

in 1951, found virtually no differences between the upper middle and upper lower classes on the extent of use of reward, praise, isolation, reason, scolding statements involving withdrawal of love, or deprivation of privileges (Maccoby and Gibbs, 1954). Heinstein's 1956 California survey showed "apparently little use of so-called constructive methods," but this finding was partly attributed to the young age of the children studied (1964:64). The major recent evidence for a relationship between class and the explicit use of psychological punishment comes from Miller and Swanson's 1953 work in Detroit (1960). The proportion of parents using at least some form of psychological manipulation is the reciprocal of the rates of corporal punishment reported for Detroit in Chart II. In each Detroit sample, working class parents who did not emphasize corporal punishment were markedly more likely to use some mixture of psychological and corporal techniques, while middle class parents were more likely to emphasize psychological methods.[5]

Quality of the samples. A review of Chart I will make painfully clear the wide variation in the quality and breadth of the samples used in the studies. However, there is no evidence that the quality of the sample is related to findings. Perhaps the most serious drawback of most of the samples is the lack of attention to the social class gradient. Several consider only two "classes," several others arbitrarily truncate Hollingshead's scale at level V, omitting the lowest two classes. Fortunately, the best sample since the 1932 national sample is also one of the more recent ones reported in Chart II. Heinstein's study is based on data collected in 1956 through a statewide California sample stratified

to accurately reflect all income groups and geographic areas. The findings by education are summarized in Chart II, but as the footnote there indicates, grade school educated mothers were actually less likely to emphasize spanking than other mothers without a college education. Heinstein's data are somewhat difficult to summarize, but, in general, he finds a curvilinear relationship between mother's education or occupation of head of household and the use of physical punishment, and no relationship between family income and the use of physical punishment. Because the study is rather inaccessible, the major tables are reproduced in Chart III.

Trend over time. Looking over the data in Chart II, it seems that the most consistent finding is not the difference between social classes, but rather that the relatively small difference appears in almost all the samples, independent of time. In addition, there may be evidence of a trend away from spanking at all social levels. Anderson found that in 1930 over 61% of the parents in all classes had spanked their child in the previous month, while in the 1950's and 60's the proportion of parents who consider spanking to be their usual or most effective method of punishment is considerably lower. Moreover, irrespective of the data at hand, there are good theoretical reasons to postulate a shift over time, as Miller and Swanson (1958) have done.[6] However, one should be very cautious about concluding that such a trend exists, since Anderson's indicator is not really comparable to the others, Heinstein's data show a relatively high use of spanking (albeit on young children), and in the data on self-reported socialization experiences discussed below, there is no evidence of a meaningful relationship between age of parent and the use of physical punishment.

B. Some Limited New Data

A 1968 survey which contained some limited items on corporal punishment, and is valuable because of its national sample, is that of the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence. The survey instrument was designed by several sociologists and political scientists under the general supervision of Dr. Sandra Ball Pokeach; the actual data collection was done by Louis Harris Associates.[6a] The sample included 1176 adults (941 whites, 195 blacks, 40 other non-whites) over age 18, in 100 clusters in all parts of the U.S. The specific individual to be interviewed was specified in advance, but no call-backs were made. Unfortunately, the survey did not include items on the actual extent of spanking, but two related areas were probed: the respondents' own experience as a child, and his or her current attitudes towards spanking.

Personal Experiences

Here as elsewhere, the definitiveness of the analysis will be hindered by the lack of adequate indicators. The respondent's experiences as a child are indicated by a single item, "As a child, were you spanked frequently, sometimes, or never?"; his class or origin is indicated by an even weaker item, "What (class) would you say your family was when you were growing up--middle class or working class?" The difficulties with these items are many and obvious, and need not be outlined. What is surprising, however, is that when these items are cross-tabulated (Table 1), the resulting frequencies are quite compatible with those reported in Chart II. Most important, the percentage point differences between the classes are approximately at the mean for Chart II. Controls for age did not affect the findings,

and region of origin was not asked. Table 2 shows a multiple classification (dummy variable regression) analysis summarizing the net effect of available variables that can probably be assumed to be prior to or contemporary with the spanking experience. This analysis shows religion to have the most marked effect, with Baptists being most likely to report that they were spanked frequently as a child. (Forty-seven percent of Baptists--most of whom were raised in working class homes--report that they were spanked frequently as a child.) Tables 1 and 2 also present data for blacks; limited though they are, they are just about the only data available. Of the studies reviewed above, Davis and Havigshurst's (1946) is the only one which separates the findings by race. Their conclusion is compatible with the data shown here: insofar as there are differences between the races they seem to be at least, in part, related to class.

Values

Wolfgang (1958, 1967) has suggested that blacks and low income whites are part of a "subculture of violence" which emphasizes the use of physical aggression in both parent-child and peer encounters. The data above cast serious doubt on that thesis, since actual differences between status groups are small. Nonetheless, it is worthwhile to consider whether the differences that do exist reflect differences in underlying normative systems.

Here again the data have inherent limitations. There is obviously a large gap between attitudes, especially as reported to an interviewer, and actual behavior. But if acts and values are to have meaning as distinct

concepts, they must be assessed independently of each other. If one wishes to argue that behavior is the only true indicator of values, and that verbal statements or other indicators of values are misleading, then subcultural theory is merely a tautology.

In the Violence Commission survey respondents were first asked whether they approved of spanking in general, and if they did, were then asked about four specific instances in which a parent might strike a child: (a) Are there any situations that you can imagine in which you would approve of a parent spanking his or her child, assuming the child is healthy and over a year old? If yes: (b) Would you approve if the child: (1) was noisy and getting on the parent's nerves; (2) had been disobedient all day; (3) had been expelled from school; (4) had broken a law? In each case, the respondent could reply "Yes," "No," or "Not sure." Conceptually, there are two quite different types of examples presented in (b). The first two instances, especially (1), deal with situations which may commonly arise around the home, and to which response is likely to be immediate. The latter two, on the other hand, are unusual situations which involve outside agents and in which discipline is likely to come after a longer lapse of time and after a more explicit decision as to the appropriate type of punishment. Because of the conceptual differences, the two groups of questions were analyzed separately. Extended analysis of separate indices for the two groups revealed no important variations between them; therefore, only the first will be presented in detail.

An index of approval of spanking was constructed by scoring item (a) and items (b-1) and (b-2) 0 for a reply of "No," 1 for "Not sure,"[7] and 2 for "Yes." The resulting index has a range of 0-6.

Contrary to popular belief, poorly educated white parents have the highest rate of outright rejection of spanking. Sixteen percent of parents in this group, as compared to no more than five percent of parents at any other level of education score "0" on the index (see row 1 in Table 3a). The distribution of index scores for adults without children (not shown) is similar. The highest rate of rejection of spanking for any college educated subgroup is for nonparents with post graduate education, but even here the rate is only 9%, and is based on less than 20% of the college educated respondents.[8] One may question the validity of this finding by asking whether persons with higher education were not just being more "objective," realizing that there must be some instance in which they would approve of spanking. To examine this issue further, we can combine the respondents who said they would never approve of spanking with those who gave approval to the general question, but then disapprove of spanking in each of the four situations. However, this combination does not affect the relationship. Even if one were to make the hostile assumption that people who answered "No" did not know what they were talking about and should therefore be dropped from the analysis, the resulting percentages do not change the thrust of the analysis which follows.

For whites, the pattern at the upper end of the approval of spanking scale is quite irregular. For people with children there is wide variation by education on high approval of spanking but no clear relationship

between these variables. The difference between the grade-school educated and the higher educated groups is narrowed, but grade-school educated parents still score relatively low. Paradoxically, those least likely to score high on spanking are college drop-outs, while those most likely to score high are those who graduated from college. For people without children, the pattern is similar, although there is less variation among the college educated. Analysis of, and controls for income, age, sex, region of residence, and religion, revealed some patterns of interest,[9] but had no effect on the general finding of no fundamental differences among parents of different social classes in their approval of spanking. Unfortunately, occupational data were not coded by the contractor.

The data for blacks are considerably more consistent with conventional notions than are those for whites. Table 3b shows a clear downward progression in approval of spanking by education for black parents; the distributions by income and for adults without children are similar. Moreover, for respondents who have not at least graduated from high school, the rates of high approval are substantially higher than those for the comparable white groups. They are also consistent with the data on actual experiences reported earlier. However, the 79% figure for the grade-school educated is based on a quite small N and is unstable; the figure for grade-school educated blacks without children is lower (65%, N=45). For blacks with college experience, the rate of approval is comparable to that of whites with similar experience.[10] Furthermore, data to be presented below suggest that the difference by race is most

likely the product of differences in beliefs regarding the efficacy of spanking rather than the result of differences in attitudes about violence. It would be a mistake to assume that the relationship had anything to do with an "oppositional value system," "subculture of violence," or emphasis on "manliness."

Table 4a shows the mean score on the index of approval of spanking for various demographic groups, net of the effect of other variables in the table. All blacks and whites in the sample are included in this analysis.[11] The results are not fully consistent with the preceding discussion because the multiple classification analysis suppresses interaction effects. In particular, this analysis shows a tendency for respondents with postgraduate education to be low in approval of spanking, and for education and income to have opposite effects on approval.

Are the Data on Values Valid?

One important objection which may be raised against the data on values is that the items used in the index are too general, and that, in particular, the respondent's view of the severity of a spanking is not indicated. Thus, for example, in response to the question about spanking a child who had been "noisy and getting on the parent's nerves," one approver (presumably a high status person) may have in mind a firm but quick slap on the child's bottom, while another (presumably a low status person) may be thinking in terms of repeated slapping, perhaps administered by the father when he returns home from work. There is some evidence that this may be correct in at least some cases, since approval

for a parent "beating" a child--although overwhelmingly rejected by all groups--follows class and racial lines. There is some ambiguity, however, as to how the respondents interpreted the question of "beating." It is clear that they did not consider it to mean child abuse, since there is solid evidence that there is very strong opposition to child abuse in all social status groups (Gil, 1970). In lower status groups, the term is often used to mean "a good hard spanking," and it is probable that this is the interpretation used by such respondents. But, particularly in well-educated circles in which there is increasing concern about child abuse as a social problem, the term "beating" probably was taken to mean "abuse," thus reducing the amount of agreement. At any rate, class and racial differences in the techniques and severity of spanking are likely to be relative, not absolute. For example, Langner's data on midtown Manhattan (1969) shows that although the use of straps in spanking is much more common among parents with low income, over 80% of low income parents in all ethnic groups do not use this method.

Another objection which may be raised relates to the range of infractions for which a child may be spanked. The items used in the index, it may be argued, are limited in that they deal with situations in which there may be a less explicit decision about appropriate punishment, and more of an immediate reaction, in which the parent may find it expedient to spank. But if there really were fundamental differences in values, one would expect that parents in higher status groups, even if they did spank, would be more likely to hedge their approval when interviewed.

This issue may be examined further by looking at the other items asked: approval of spanking a child who had been expelled or who had broken the law. These items represent extreme instances with which a parent may be confronted, and for this reason are especially illuminating. Conventional wisdom would predict that the "psychologically" oriented middle or upper class parent would consider spanking especially futile in such instances, and "reasoning with the child" and "understanding of his motivations" especially important. Yet the pattern of approval of spanking in these situations is only slightly different than for the index reported. Except for college graduates, there is a downward progression by level of education from parents with grade school education through parents with post-graduate college work. College graduates, however, have the highest rate of approval, and the rates for all education levels are higher than those on the more mundane items. Analysis of other variables does not change the conclusion that there are no fundamental differences in approval by different status groups. Table 4b is a multiple classification analysis showing the mean score on an index identical to that previously discussed, except that the two additional items have been included. The range on this index is 0-10. The results of this analysis are very similar to those based on the shorter index.

Finally, there is a question of what might be called "life-style." Data from the Violence Commission survey deals with frequency of spanking and with attitudes of general approval or disapproval, but neither of these really defines the atmosphere in the home. Is it possible, then, that behind the small differences and mixed patterns found in our analysis still

lie major differences in the typical mode of response or usual method of punishment? This is possible, of course, but looking back to the literature discussed at the beginning of the chapter, it seems unlikely. Probably the most systematic study (and the one with the largest sample) reported in the literature in recent decades is one based on a statewide sample of Californians in 1956 (Heinstein 1964). This study concentrated on the mothers of children under six years old, but it is probably safe to assume that this affected the magnitude of use of physical punishment rather than relative differences between classes. The study asked mothers not about corporal punishment per se, but about their usual method of punishment. It is preferable to our questionnaire because the reply was open-ended and the interviewer did not explicitly mention corporal punishment. High status respondents thus had maximum opportunity to mention some sort of psychological technique, but did not.[12]

The limitations of the data on attitudes are obvious, and the relationship between reported attitudes and actual behavior is problematic. There is little doubt that there exist variations by age, class, race, sex, religion, region of the country, etc., in the way children are raised, although the statistical patterns are often irregular and the within-group variation great. However, given the present state of the literature, any assertion of characteristic differences in the use of spanking by status groups or of the use of spanking being indicative of a "subculture of violence" must be considered undemonstrated empirically.

APPROVAL OF SPANKING AND OF INTERPERSONAL AGGRESSION

Besides the items on spanking, the Violence Commission survey included questions on the conditions under which the respondent might approve of various

acts of interpersonal aggression, such as husbands slapping wives, men fighting with strangers, and teenage boys getting in fights. Responses to these items showed no strong or systematic pattern by class or race (Lange, et al., 1969; Stark and McEvoy, 1970; Erlanger 1972). Yet, even though there is no evidence of the existence of a "subculture" with respect to spanking or violence in general, analysis of the relationship between the two sets of values (across class lines) is still of interest. Popular thought would hold, it seems, that approval of physical aggression and of spanking should be highly correlated, supposedly because they both involve physical means of dealing with problems.[13]

Items on teenage fighting can be combined to form an "index of manliness" since they ask about such situations as fighting back when challenged or picked on.[14] This index is somewhat correlated with the other indices of approval of aggression; for example, for white married parents of children under 18, its correlation with approval of a man punching a stranger is +.30, and with approval of marital fighting is +.20. For black parents, the intercorrelations are +.60 and +.12. However, for both races, the correlation between the manliness index and approval of spanking are markedly lower than the others, at +.13 for whites and virtually zero (+.02) for blacks. Moreover, for black parents of teenagers, "manliness" and spanking actually are negatively correlated (-.17).[15] Thus, the disproportionately high rate of black approval of spanking reported earlier seems best explained by a rejection of norms of violence. Apparently blacks spank their children simply because they believe it to be efficacious. If it is true that spanking a child makes him aggressive (and there is

only mixed evidence that this is so), it is apparently an unintended--and for blacks, unwanted--consequence.

SPANKING AND CHILD ABUSE

One of the most unfortunate peripheral effects of the assertion that corporal punishment is rooted in "subcultural differences" is the notion that child abuse is but an extreme instance of the emphasis on corporal punishment. Thus, Gil (1970), in his important book on child abuse, argues that since spanking and abuse are both predominently found in families of low SES, the former is a major cause of the latter. In support of his statement that there is a strong association between low status and the use of physical means in disciplining children, Gil cites only Miller and Swanson's second 1953 sample. Chart II shows that this particular sample had by far the most extreme finding in forty years of research.

Gil's comprehensive review of official data on abuse shows that nationwide, about 50% of the families of abused children had incomes of less than $5,000, versus about 25% of the U.S. population. About 60% of the families had received some form of public aid during or prior to the year of abuse, and 40% were on AFDC or other form of public assistance at the time of the abuse. The predominence of low income families undoubtedly is, in part, related to their high visibility, but the extent of serious problems in families of reported offenders (see below) suggests that more than mere visibility is at work.

The data in Gil's study suggest that much serious abuse takes place <u>not</u> in the <u>lower</u> class, but in what might be described as an <u>underclass</u> of American society. Offenders had the following characteristics:

1) Only about one-half the fathers were employed during the previous year.
2) At the time of the abuse, the unemployment rate for offenders was three times the national average.
3) About 15% of the families involved shared living quarters with another family.
4) During the year preceding the abuse incident, about 10% of the parents experienced some "deviance" in physical functioning, about 45% had some "social or behavioral deviance," and 10-15% had "intellectual deviance."
5) Seven percent of offenders had previously been hospitalized in a mental institution, and 15% of the mothers had themselves been abused as a child.
6) "Mounting stress on perpetrator due to life circumstances" was considered to be specifically operative in 60% of the cases.

Interpretation of Gil's data on family characteristics is made difficult by the lack of a control group. Nonetheless, most of the findings are dramatic enough to suggest that child abuse takes place in families caught in a tangle of individual and social problems. Under these circumstances the occurrence of child abuse--although abhorrent--is not a particularly surprising outcome. The data indicate the eradication of corporal methods of child rearing would not have much effect on abuse, while social action to change life circumstances would probably have a significant effect. Of course, this is not to say that treatment or immediate intervention should not be on an individual level.

There are no systematic data available on child abusers' usual punishment techniques, but Gil's data do indicate that mistreatment of children finds no support among the mass of low status parents. In a nationwide survey of 1500 adults he found that low status persons are just as concerned about child abuse as high status persons, and that low status parents favor more strict measures to help abused children such as removal from the home. Over 90% of the respondents of all social classes indicated that they would take steps to remedy the situation if they knew of parents who abused their child. About 58% of the respondents agreed that "almost anyone could at some time injure a child in his care, and 34% of males under 55 thought that they could at some time intentionally injure a child." Given that the propensity to abuse is fairly evenly distributed in the population, while actual abuse is heavily skewed towards the very bottom of the social order, the most plausible explanation at this time seems to be a resource model of child abuse. Put briefly, when a middle class parent feels tense or quick tempered, he generally has access to medical or professional help, or the resources to take a break and "get away from it all"; it hardly seems necessary to add that unemployed parents of large families don't have these opportunities. Values, child rearing practices, or parent's socialization experiences may play an ancillary role, but the root of the problem of child abuse seems to lie primarily in structural factors.[16] Emphasis on other factors tends to individualize what is essentially a social problem.

CHILDHOOD SOCIALIZATION AND AGGRESSION AS AN ADULT

The long-term effects of childhood socialization experiences has long been of concern to psychologists (Becker, 1964). Of interest here is the

hypothesis that the form of punishment experienced by the child will influence the form of aggression "preferred" in his childhood and later as an adult. The reasoning is extensively discussed in Feshbach (1970), Miller and Swanson (1960), Yarrow (1968), and elsewhere, and need not be presented in detail here. Briefly, the use of corporal punishment, in which the punisher is clearly identified and in which a physically aggressive role model is established, is postulated as leading to outward aggression. By contrast, psychological manipulation, which is based on appeals to guilt and results in the development of a strong super-ego, is postulated as leading to a turning of aggression upon the self.

Many studies have found a significant relationship between spanking and physical aggression in children (see e.g., Bandura and Walters, 1959; Eron, 1971; and the citations in Feshbach, 1970), and many statements (most notably an early one by Berkowitz, 1962:291) consider the hypothesis to be firmly established. There is, however, a great deal of contradictory evidence. For example, Allinsmith (1954), in a widely cited study, found that in a sample of 115 junior high school boys in Detroit, boys whose parents favored corporal punishment were more likely to write story endings with "direct expression of anger." However, Beardslee (1955), using data collected in the same project (Miller and Swanson, 1960), found that form of punishment had no effect on the use of "self-modifying defenses" in story completions. Yarrow in an extensive examination of the literature on this question done for NIMH, concluded:

> The evidence. . .is less than impressive; it can hardly be regarded as greatly convincing for <u>some</u> significant correlations to appear when <u>many</u> have been explored. (1968:70-71)

Arguments about the relationship between form of punishment and subsequent forms of aggression may be confused with the more specific case of the consequence of punishment for aggression. Sears (1957), is often cited as showing that punishment for aggression only serves to breed more aggression,[17] and Eron et al., conclude that their similar findings serve only to "corroborate the montonous findings of survey studies of child rearing practices," (1971:72). However, in reviewing this facet of the literature, Yarrow again concludes that "theoretical persuasiveness has led to a kind of selectivity of evidence," (1968:81).

Insights from the Violence Commission Data

Miller and Swanson, (1960) have argued not only that physical punishment leads to aggression, but that these phenomena are characteristic of low status groups in American Society. This thesis has been elaborated into a theory of homicide and suicide by Gold (1958). I have already argued that spanking is widely distributed in the social structure, and that noncorporal means predominate in all status groups. In addition, the Violence Commission data show that there is at best a rather weak association between relatively minor aggression (such as slapping and punching)[18] and social status, as indicated by education, parents' social class, or race.[19] It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the Miller and Swanson/Gold thesis does not hold in its strict form. However, the data do lend mild support to the more general hypothesis that childhood punishment is related to adult aggression.

Table 5 shows the relation between childhood punishment experience and subsequent aggression for males aged 18-60. Approximately 22% of those who were spanked frequently as a child have been aggressive four or more times, as compared to about 12% of those who were not spanked frequently. This relationship is statistically significant and largely independent of class or race.[20] However, the first order correlation between spanking experience and minor aggression as an adult is only about .11; aggressors cannot be stereotyped as having been spanked, (nor as being lower class). Table 6a is a multiple classification analysis, showing the net effect of childhood punishment experience and of a variety of demographic variables which probably can be assumed to be prior to or contemporary with the aggression.[21] All blacks and whites in the sample are included in this analysis. The entire model has a multiple correlation coefficient of about .33, and, adjusted for degrees of freedom, explains only about 8% of the variance on the dependent variable. When entered last, childhood punishment experience adds .02 to the multiple correlation coefficient.

The Violence Commission survey also contains some suggestive data on more serious aggression. However, because of the manner in which the questionnaire was designed, for <u>serious aggression</u> we are forced to use an indicator of <u>victimization</u> rather than of aggression. Since victimization and aggression are known to be highly correlated (Wolfgang, 1958), it is probably safe to assume that the sample of victims gives a good indication of the population of aggressors. Existing theory would predict that, if anything, using victims rather than aggressors would <u>underestimate</u> the strength of the socialization-violence relationship.

Persons with strong internal control (presumably the product of psychological manipulation during their childhood socialization) may be more likely to "turn the other cheek." The present data must therefore be seen as giving a low estimate of the relationship.

Table 6b shows the results of a multiple classification analysis using an index of victimization (including threats) by serious aggression[22] as the dependent variable, and including all blacks and whites in the model. Again, the entire model has a rather low multiple correlation coefficient (.29), and, adjusted for degrees of freedom, it explains only about 6% of the variance. The relationship between childhood punishment experience and aggression is slightly stronger for serious than for minor aggression, but the effect of punishment is still rather small.[23] The zero order correlation is .15 and when entered last, childhood punishment adds .03 to the multiple correlation coefficient.[23a]

These findings on spanking experience and subsequent aggression suggest that socialization factors are worth pursuing in future research. However, given the low correlations found in virtually all previous research, and the inconsistencies among the studies, it is unlikely that a variable employing a simple distinction between corporal and psychological punishment will prove to be a powerful predictor. It is more likely that extreme childhood experiences will prove to be related to serious aggression as an adult.[24]

CONCLUSION

This paper has examined some plausible and widely held notions about spanking and aggression, and found the evidence on all of them to be weak.

This outcome is representative of research in this area. In Feshbach's (1970) extensive review of studies of aggression in children, perhaps the most unequivocal finding is that boys are more likely than girls to be physically aggressive. He adds, however, that "where other forms of aggression are measured, the findings are much less consistent." Many studies find statistically significant relationships, and these findings have been assembled into summary statements in review articles and texts.[25] Rarely do such statements include the sample size, percentage differences, or correlations. Although impressive on the surface, most of these summary statements are in fact based on small relationships and inconsistent findings.

Given the data currently available on the use of spanking and on the causes and distribution of aggression, sociologists should be quite wary of the implications drawn from summary statements. The relationship between social class and spanking is, for example, quite inadequate to support Lipset's extrapolation to "authoritarian family patterns" in the lower class (1960:107). Similarly, Wolfgang and Ferracuti's thesis that there exists a "subculture of violence" requiring that lower class and black communities be "disrupted, dispersed, and disorganized" and their members resocialized into the middle class value system (1967:300) finds no support in available data.[26] Miller and Swanson's model, linking physical aggression to lower class socialization techniques, is also called into question.

These findings are of more than just theoretical import. Many popular notions of physical aggression portray blacks and the white lower

class as "violent," while the white middle and upper class, by contrast, are viewed as self-controlled and sophisticated. These characterizations obviously carry important implications for social policy. Given the present state of knowledge, it is difficult to construct a rigorous explanation of aggression; more exploratory work is needed. However, available data are sufficient to strongly indicate that the class and racial characterizations are incorrect. At this time there is no evidence that blacks or the white lower class, as groups, differ substantially from the white middle class in their attitudes towards violence, in general, or in child rearing. The basic finding is one of a very wide area of overlap, even if there are differences at the extremes. Moreover, what differences exist may be the result of structural factors.

CHART I

NATURE OF MAJOR STUDIES OF PUNISHMENT TECHNIQUES
(Studies Listed in Chronological Order)

Reference and Location of Study	Date of Field Work	Age of Children	Total N for Tables Discussed	Description of Sample
Anderson (1936) National Sample	1932	1-12	2480	National sample of "families having child between 1-5 years of age... chosen on basis of geographic location, size of community, and socio-economic status as measured by father's occupation ...special effort to obtain families from each socio-economic class in proportions similar to those of each class in the general population." Total N=2758 white families, 202 black families. Seven class SES scale based on Minnesota Scale for Occupational Classification.
Davis and Havigshurst (1946) Chicago	1943	5 (appx)	100	Middle-class sample "mainly" from mothers of nursery-school children; lower class from "areas of poor housing." All mothers native born. Two-level SES classification following Warner
Sears, et al. (1957) Maccoby, et al. (1954) Newton/ Roxbury, Mass.	1951-2	4-6	372	Kindergarten children in two Boston suburbs. Parents American born, living together. Twins, adoptions, handicapped children and other special cases omitted. Two-level SES classification following Warner, with Warner's levels 1-3 as "upper middle" and 4-7 as "upper lower." This study was in part intended as a replication of the Davis and Havingshurst study, but samples had differences in ethnic status, and Boston low-status parents average higher in status than Chicago. For detailed comparison see Havingshurst and Davis (1955).

Reference, Location	Field Work	Age	N	Sample
Miller and Swanson (1958)		0-18	479	Random sample of white mothers with child under 19 and living with husband. Step-children and adoptions omitted. Four-level SES classification based on occupation.
Detroit	1953			
Miller and Swanson (1960)				Boys grades 7-8 with above borderline intelligence, with one year of age 4 grade, at least 3rd. generation Amer., Christian, unbroken unmobile family of N.W. European stock. SES (4 levels) on education and occupation.
Detroit	1953			
Littman et al. (1957)		0-18	206	Random sample yielding 5% of preschool census and of non-parochial school population of Eugene, Oregon. Non-whites omitted from analysis. Intended in part as replication of Sears et al. Two-level SES following Warner.
Eugene, Ore.	1950			
Kohn (1950)				Selection of census tracts on basis of SES; random selection from these of 200 m.c. and 200 l.c. families with child enrolled in fifth grade. SES by Hollingshead with I, II, and III middle, IV, V working, and VI and VII omitted.
	1956-7	10-11	339	
Heinstein (~1964)				"Stratified, cluster samples of non-institutional, non-military personnel." Detailed interviews with mothers of children under six years old. If more than one child under six, "study child" was selected using table of random numbers. Education, income, and father's occupation used separately as indicators of SES.
State of Calif.	1956	0-6	809	
Contra Costa County, Calif.	1956	0-6	812	
McKinley (1964)		16-18	260	"Questionnaires obtained from eleventh and twelfth-grade boys in high schools in and near Boston ...235 of the cases are from suburban communities that are above the average level for metropolitan Boston in terms of occupational level and income." SES by Hollingshead, with I and II upper, III middle, IV and V lower, and VI and VII omitted.
Boston Area	1959			

CHART II

FINDINGS OF MAJOR STUDIES OF PUNISHMENT TECHNIQUES

Study [()=year of Field Work	% Favoring Physical Punishment [()=number on which % is based	Significance Level	Percentage Point Difference
National (1932)	upper/upper 61% (283) | lower/lower 78% (165) (Indicator: Was child spanked in last month?)	$<.001$	-17
Chicago (1943)	middle 53% (45) | lower 51% (47) (Indicator: What is the most successful way to get a child to obey?)	n.s.	+2
Newton/ Roxbury (1951-2)	upper middle 17% (198) | upper lower 33% (174) (Indicator: not specified)	$<.001$	-16
	upper middle 3.9 (198) | upper lower 4.8 (174) (Indicator is score, based on scale of 9, where 9=physical punishment very often used	.01	(0.9 point on scale of 9)
Detroit (1953) (a)	upper middle 15% (33) | lower/lower 31% (65) (Indicator: Suppose your child of 10 were to do something you feel is very wrong, something you warned him against doing ...)	$<.10$	-16
(b)	middle 11% (38) | working 52% (77)	$<.001$	-41
(c)	middle 16% (57) | working 34% (48) (Indicator: Here are some ways parents have of punishing their children. Which of these do you use most?)	$<.05$	-18
Eugene (1950)	father-child middle 19% (85) | lower 15% (121)	n.s.	+4
	mother-child middle 12% (85) | lower 13% (121) (Indicator: based on use of physical punishment as "primary mode" of punishment)	n.s.	-1
Washington D.C. (1956)	mother-son middle 14% (79) | working 16% (82)	n.s.	-2
	mother-daughter middle 9% (75) | working 16% (77) (Indicator: Report that physical punishment is used occasionally // frequently versus infrequently)	n.s.	-7

Study	% Favoring Physical Punishment				Sig. Level	
State of Calif. (1956)	mother-son college educ.	58% (80)	no college	52% (352)	n.s.	+6
	mother-daughter college educ.	44% (72)	no college	51% (304)	n.s.	-7
Contra Costa County (1956)	mother-son college educ.	49% (88)	no college	53% (321)	n.s.	-4
	mother-daughter college educ.	38% (96)	no college	55% (288)	<.01	-17
	(Indicator: physical punishment as usual method of punishment)					
Boston Area (1959)	mother-child upper	40% (62)	lower	47% (92)	n.s.	-7
	father-child upper	33% (72)	lower	49% (92)	<.05	-16
	(Indicator: use of "relatively severe techniques of discipline")					

(a) reported in Miller and Swanson (1958)
(b) reported as "Sample I" in Miller and Swanson (1960)
(c) reported as "Sample II" in Miller and Swanson (1960)
In both samples, the proportion of respondents favoring a mixed approach of psychological and corporal was also greater for the working class.
(d) Among grade school educated mothers, the percent using corporal punishment was markedly lower than that shown for the non-college educated group as a whole.

N.B. Except for the California samples when data for more than two classes are reported, only those for the two most extreme classes are shown in the chart.

CHART III

Percent of California Mothers Using Physical Punishment as Usual Method of Punishment by SES and Sex of Child (1956 data)

EDUCATION OF MOTHER	SEX OF CHILD	
	Male	Female
8 Years or Less	42	49
9-11 Years	51	50
12 Years	56	52
1-3 Years of College	59	50
4 or More Years of College	56	32
No College (N)	52 (352)	51 (304)
College (N)	58 (80)	44 (72)

OCCUPATION OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD	SEX OF CHILD	
	Male	Female
Farm Laborers, Laborers	49	47
Operatives and Service Workers	50	45
Craftsmen and Foremen	55	59
Clerical, Sales	47	51
Professional, Managerial	59	45
Blue Collar (N)	52 (264)	51 (216)
White Collar (N)	55 (168)	47 (160)

ANNUAL FAMILY INCOME	SEX OF CHILD	
	Male	Female
Under $3,000	54	57
3,000-3,999	52	42
4,000-4,999	46	57
5,000-5,999	58	53
6,000-7,999	58	48
8,000 and Over	51	44
Under $5,000 (N)	50 (219)	51 (170)
5,000 and Over (N)	57 (211)	48 (202)

Source: Heinstein (1964:60-62)

TABLE 1

PERCENT SPANKED AS A CHILD BY RACE, SEX, AND PARENTS' SOCIAL CLASS

For respondents aged 18 to 60 only

	WHITE			BLACK	
	Middle Class	Working Class	Total	Working Class	Total
MEN:					
Never	2	2	2	3	2
Sometimes	77	63	68	52	54
Frequently	21	35	30	45	44
(N)	(97)	(239)	(344)	(69)	(80)
WOMEN:					
Never	7	5	6	7	6
Sometimes	69	63	65	49	52
Frequently	24	32	29	44	42
(N)	(135)	(206)	(351)	(55)	(65)

TABLE 2

ADJUSTED MEAN SCORE, CHILDHOOD SPANKING EXPERIENCE[a]
BY SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES[b]

(Grand mean 2.26, N=1136)

	N	
SEX		
Male	(578)	2.28
Female	(550)	2.24
RACE		
White	(941)	2.26
Black	(195)	2.34
CHILDHOOD RESIDENCE		
"Farm"	(351)	2.29
"Town"	(314)	2.25
"Small City"	(164)	2.28
"Big City"	(291)	2.22
PARENTS' SOCIAL CLASS		
"Middle Class"	(315)	2.21
"Working Class"	(768)	2.28
CURRENT RELIGION (1968)		
Baptist	(283)	2.39
Methodist	(135)	2.19
Lutheran	(69)	2.14
Episcopalian	(38)	2.27
Other Protestants	(213)	2.26
Catholic	(279)	2.23
Jew	(20)	2.25
AGE		
18-25	(154)	2.26
26-35	(232)	2.29
36-45	(230)	2.23
46-60	(282)	2.29
Over 60	(238)	2.22

[a]Multiple Classification (Dummy Variable Regression) Analysis. Spanking experience is scored: 1 = Never, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Frequently.

[b]Blacks weighted .53, but unweighted N's are shown. It was assumed that the respondents (14%) who did not indicate income of head of household had only one wage earner in the family and family income was substituted. If family income was also missing, the respondent was assigned the mean income for his educational level.

TABLE 3

PERCENT WHO WOULD APPROVE OF SPANKING

By Education and Race
For parents with children under 18

a. WHITE

Score on Index	Grade School	Some High School	High School	Some College	College Graduate	Post Graduate
1-6	84	95	97	96	100	96
3-4	35	43	49	60	39	50
5-6	40	46	41	33	50	40
(N)	(43)	(89)	(193)	(92)	(36)	(28)

b. BLACK

Score on Index	Grade School	Some High School	High School	Some College +
1-6	100	100	97	77
3-4	21	32	43	46
5-6	79	63	47	31
(N)	(14)[a]	(41)	(30)	(13)[a]

[a]Percentages based on such a small number of cases are unreliable.

TABLE 4

ADJUSTED MEAN SCORE, INDICES OF APPROVAL OF SPANKING[a] BY SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES[b]

(Grand mean a=4.35, b=6.53, N=1136)

	N	a	b
SEX			
Male	(578)	4.35	6.55
Female	(550)	4.37	6.54
RACE			
White	(941)	4.31	6.47
Black	(195)	4.74	7.11
CHILDHOOD RESIDENCE			
"Farm"	(351)	4.43	6.70
"Town"	(314)	4.36	6.41
"Small City"	(164)	4.19	6.24
"Big City"	(291)	4.34	6.59
PARENTS' SOCIAL CLASS			
"Middle Class"	(315)	4.39	6.53
"Working Class"	(768)	4.39	6.61
EDUCATION			
Grade School	(243)	4.44	6.76
Some High School	(233)	4.40	6.49
High School	(352)	4.41	6.62
Some College	(182)	4.21	6.25
College	(72)	4.32	6.61
Post Graduate	(54)	4.01	5.94
CURRENT RELIGION (1968)			
Baptist	(283)	4.47	6.86
Methodist	(135)	4.47	6.50
Lutheran	(69)	4.43	6.83
Episcopalian	(38)	4.13	6.44
Other Protestants	(213)	4.30	6.38
Catholic	(279)	4.33	6.44
Jew	(20)	4.30	6.73
CURRENT REGION OF RESIDENCE			
Northeast	(312)	4.32	6.47
South	(319)	4.57	6.90
Midwest	(322)	4.13	6.23
West	(183)	4.47	6.55

	N	a	b
CITY SIZE			
SMSA	(316)	4.35	6.62
Suburb	(291)	4.26	6.37
Town:10-50,000	(128)	4.42	6.39
Town:Less than 10,000	(118)	3.96	6.09
Rural	(283)	4.59	6.85
CURRENT FAMILY INCOME (1967)			
$ 0-2,999	(178)	3.98	6.11
3-4,999	(169)	4.10	6.24
5-6,999	(197)	4.43	6.72
7-9,999	(298)	4.37	6.57
10-14,999	(205)	4.57	6.66
15-19,999	(57)	4.70	6.73
20,000 and over	(32)	4.85	7.25
AGE			
18-25	(154)	4.37	6.56
26-35	(232)	4.76	7.13
36-45	(230)	4.53	6.56
46-60	(282)	4.14	6.35
Over 60	(238)	4.05	6.11
HAVE CHILDREN UNDER 18			
Yes	(579)	4.27	6.47
No	(536)	4.44	6.60

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[a]Mutiple Classification (Dummy Variable Regression) Analysis. Range on index a is 0 - 6, on index b, 0-9. Content of indices discussed in text.

[b]Blacks weighted .53, but unweighted N's are shown. See also note b, Table 2.

TABLE 5

PERCENT WHO HAVE SLAPPED OR PUNCHED 4 OR MORE TIMES

By Race, Education, and Childhood Spanking Experience
For male respondents aged 18-60 only

	WHITE					BLACK
	Grade School	Some High School	High School	Some College +	Total	Total
Spanked frequently	39	23	12	20	22	19
(N)	(18)[a]	(26)	(33)	(30)	(107)	(36)
Not spanked frequently	14	10	9	14	12	13
(N)	(21)	(31)	(76)	(114)	(242)	(46)

[a]Percentages based on such a small number of cases are unreliable.

TABLE 6

ADJUSTED MEAN SCORE, VIOLENCE INDICES[a]
BY SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES AND
CHILDHOOD SPANKING EXPERIENCE[b]

(Grand mean a = .52, b = .20, N=1136)

	N	a. Minor Aggression	b. Victim of Serious Aggression
SEX			
Male	(578)	.78	.28
Female	(550)	.25	.10
RACE			
White	(941)	.52	.19
Black	(195)	.55	.22
CHILDHOOD RESIDENCE			
"Farm"	(351)	.47	.16
"Town"	(314)	.50	.18
"Small City"	(164)	.57	.26
"Big City"	(291)	.56	.22
PARENTS' SOCIAL CLASS			
"Middle Class"	(315)	.48	.18
"Working Class"	(768)	.52	.19
EDUCATION			
Grade School	(243)	.55	.31
Some High School	(233)	.63	.19
High School	(352)	.47	.17
Some College	(182)	.70	.22
College	(72)	.18	.01
Post Graduate	(54)	.20	.12
CURRENT RELIGION (1968)			
Baptist	(283)	.46	.19
Methodist	(135)	.65	.21
Lutheran	(69)	.32	.11
Episcopalian	(38)	.74	.49
Other Protestants	(213)	.64	.16
Catholic	(279)	.38	.15
Jew	(20)	.26	.29

	N	a. Minor Aggression	b. Victim of Serious Aggression
CURRENT REGION OF RESIDENCE			
Northeast	(312)	.54	.16
South	(319)	.37	.25
Midwest	(322)	.60	.15
West	(183)	.60	.26
CITY SIZE			
SMSA	(316)	.50	.23
Suburb	(291)	.61	.18
Town:10-50,000	(128)	.52	.16
Town:Less than 10,000	(118)	.59	.26
Rural	(283)	.42	.17
AGE			
18-25	(154)	.45	.32
26-35	(232)	.71	.29
36-45	(230)	.72	.25
46-60	(282)	.46	.14
Over 60	(238)	.27	.04
CHILDHOOD SPANKING EXPERIENCE			
Never	(58)	.26	.12
Sometimes	(713)	.44	.13
Frequently	(365)	.73	.34

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[a]Mutiple Classification (Dummy Variable Regression) Analysis. Range on index a is 0 - 6, index b, 0 - 9. Content of indices is discussed in notes to text.

[b]Blacks weighted .53, but unweighted N's are shown. See also note b, Table 2.

NOTES

[1]Bronfenbrenner's article is reprinted in Lipset and Bendix's widely used reader on social stratification.

[2]Many other aspects of the relationship between socialization and interpersonal aggression are discussed in detail by Becker (1964) and Feshbach (1970).

[3]In addition, Eron, in a study done in Columbia County, New York in 1960, found that parents did not differ by occupational group in their use of psychological or physical punishment for direct aggression in their children (1971:128). A North Carolina study by Elder and Bowerman (1963) is not shown in the chart because of its weak indicator of punishment technique. The study, primarily concerned with the effects of family size, found no clear relationship between father's occupation and the use of corporal punishment.

[4]On balance, perhaps 1 or 2% of the variance is explained. On the other hand, the finding is not irrelevant, given that social class may still be one of the best predictors we have. The lack of clear relationships between class and child rearing techniques is also evident with other aspects, such as feeding and toilet training. See, for example, Bronfenbrenner (1958, passim) or Heinstein (1964, passim).

[5]Interestingly, Miller and Swanson conclude that the mixed technique of punishment (which they overwhelmingly found in the lower class) is the most successful in producing socially desirable results (1960:398).

[6]See also Bronfenbrenner (1961). For a critique of the conclusiveness of Miller and Swanson's findings on the cause of change, see Haber (1962).

[6a]Preliminary analysis of some of the data reported on here may be found in Lange, et al., (1969) and Stark and McEvoy (1970). The latter authors underestimate the extent of involvement in and approval of aggression by persons with low income or education because they do not control for age.

[7]The rate of "Not sure" is highest for item (b-1) at 6% of the sample. Contrary to the usual pattern of "Don't know" responses, the rate is about constant for all social groups. The only exception is for the black middle class, which has a rate of 15%.

[8]One question which arises is whether the anti-spanking response reflects a new "permissive" trend. Two factors suggest that it does not. First, we would expect the better educated groups, rather than the poorly educated, to be the vanguard of "extreme Spock." Second, and most important, further analysis shows that when the relationship is controlled for age, it is older, rather than younger people who are opposed to spanking. This is especially marked for those respondents without children, indicating that it is not a view of prospective parents but rather of people with grown children or who never had children. For those who are parents of grown children one can only speculate as to whether their views are those of mellowed grandparents or whether they reflect the views held while they were raising their children.

[9]Males are generally more approving than females, and younger parents are more approving than older ones, especially at higher levels of education. Analysis by region and area of residence revealed little variation, except that the South (especially urban areas) had a higher rate of approval (52% as compared to 36% for other regions). Religion may be summarized as having the following effects: at one extreme there are Baptists, who have a high approval of spanking; at the other are devout Catholics, who are rather low; and in the middle are other Protestants and non-devout Catholics. The difference between Baptists and devout Catholics ranges from 11 to 24 percentage points, depending on the sub-group analyzed, and is greater than any differences by education or race.

[10]The percentage for college graduates with children is unstable, but since that for persons without children is similar, it lends confidence to the 30% figure.

[11]Because of weighting problems, respondents of other races (N=40) are excluded. Black responses are weighted .53, but unweighted N's are shown.

[12]This is not to imply, however, that there are no differences between classes in the type of infraction for which a child is spanked. Kohn (1959, 1969) suggests that the type of infraction is a more significant area of class differentiation than frequency.

[13]Note that the issue here concerns the adult's own views on child rearing, not those under which he was brought up.

[14]The index was constructed in a manner analogous to that for approval of spanking. The items were these: a) Are there any situations you can imagine in which you would approve of one teenage boy punching another? If yes, or not sure: b-1) If he didn't like the other boy? b-2) If he had been ridiculed and picked on by the other boy? b-3) If he had been challenged by the other boy to a fist fight? b-4) If he had been hit by the other boy?

[15]Compared to whites, blacks are also disproportionately low in their approval of fighting to demonstrate "manliness."

[16]The finding that child abuse breeds more child abuse would invalidate this statement only if one wishes to argue that abuse constitutes a form of child rearing. I find it difficult to accept such reasoning; instead, I would see this pattern as part of a cycle of pathology which is largely the product of structural factors.

[17]The Sears data show that high punishment for aggression breeds more aggression, but also show that it is a combination of permissiveness and punishment that is more important. The rate of aggression was twice as high for children of inconsistent parents than for children of consistent parents who punished. McCord (1961) also finds consistency of parental discipline to be an important factor in boys' aggression.

[18]Because of several ambiguities in the questionnaire, the "index of slapping and punching in conflict situations" is only a rough indication of the use of violence. The core items used for the index were "Have you ever slapped or kicked anyone?" and "Have you ever punched or beaten anyone?" The ambiguities are these:

1) The respondent was asked whether the aggression occurred when he was a "child," or "adult," or both, but this was according to his own definition. There is reason to suspect that older persons may be defining events which occurred in their early twenties (or so) as having been in their "youth." For this reason respondents over 60 are dropped from Table 5, although they are included in the multiple classification analysis of Table 6.

2) Although frequency of occurrence is recorded, it was asked independently of time. Thus, unless a person reported that the event(s) occurred only during childhood or adulthood, we cannot determine the frequency as an adult. In addition frequency was recorded in only four categories: 0 score 0, 1 = 1, 2 or 3 = 2, 4 or more = 3.

3) Type of incident, e.g., conflict, military, sports, play, is recorded only for the most recent incident.

For each of the two core items, an adjusted index was constructed by reducing the frequency to zero if the aggression occurred only during childhood or if the last instance was not in a situation of "anger or conflict". The latter adjustment is quite stringent and assumes that the most recent incident is representative of the previous ones. Experimentation with less stringent adjustments had no important effect on the findings

[23]However, here, as with less serious aggression, persons who report they were never spanked are very unlikely to report having been involved in interpersonal violence. Since they are only about 4% of the sample they have only a very small effect on the R^2.

[23a]Current age is also included because of the reporting problem mentioned in note 18.

[24]For example, McCord and McCord suggest that "many of those who committed crimes of violence [in the Cambridge-Somerville Youth Study] were raised by cruel fathers" (1959:192). Langner, (1969) found that psychiatric impairment in children is related to hitting with a strap or stick, but not to any other facet of "punitiveness."

[25]In addition, many social scientists apparently believe that if a relationship is small or not statistically significant, it is not a "finding." Baumrind (1966), for example, includes only findings significant at the .05 level or better in her review of the effects of disciplinary techniques.

[26]An extended theoretical and empirical critique of Wolfgang and Ferracuti may be found in Erlanger (1972).

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