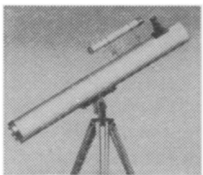


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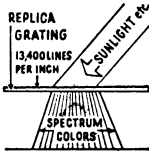


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PSYCHIATRY

Study Young Delinquent

► THE RICH MAN'S son who gets into trouble with the police or juvenile authorities is not just a completely "spoiled brat." He does not commit his offenses while following along with a gang. He is not showing off to try to gain stature with the other boys.

These and other facts were reported to the American Psychiatric Association meeting in Philadelphia by Drs. Herbert H. Herskovitz, George Spivack and Murray Levine of the Devereux Schools, Devon, Pa. These investigators made a study of all the boys enrolled in the Devereux Schools during the past five years after getting "into trouble."

Generally, their report stated, the fathers were energetic, aggressive, perfectionistic and rigid or intolerant, indifferent, ambivalent and pressuring. Mothers tended to be over-indulgent and over-protective or inconsistent. In no case did both parents completely spoil the child. In an astonishing number of cases there was evidence of family instability, including divorce or death of a parent, but very few families were troubled with alcoholism, criminality, or perversion.

Many of the boys had a history of poor conduct, truancy and defiance at school dating back as far as kindergarten but some did not start to misbehave until puberty. But it was rare that the incident that brought them to Devereux was the first intimation that the boy was in need of psychiatric help.

The offenses, committed usually when the boy was alone or with only one or two others, not a gang, were most often auto theft, burglary, vandalism, malicious mischief or sex offense.

Only one of the boys was psychotic and only one had organic brain disease. The majority were unrepentant, negative, and resisted and resented authority.

Murders by Children

► WHY CHILDREN commit murder was discussed at the Psychiatric Association meeting by Dr. Lauretta Bender of Creedmoor State Hospital, Queens Village, New York.

Dr. Bender described her study over a period of 25 years of 30 boys and girls aged from five to 15 years who were held responsible for the death of another person.

About a third of the boys (there was only one girl) had been examined by a psychiatrist before the death occurred. Frequently severe mental illness was found and dangerous behavior was predicted.

Nearly half the murders were caused by blows with heavy objects or shooting. They involved mostly the older boys who were affected by such severe illnesses as schizophrenia, organic brain disease or epilepsy.

The younger children were more often implicated in fire setting and drowning, in situations which appeared to be accidental and where the responsibility of the child could never be proved. Nevertheless they suffered profound grief or depression and

continued for years to be preoccupied with death and their own death-dealing powers.

Five of the juvenile murderers were mentally defective; at least one third more were grossly retarded in reading.

Murder by knifing was mostly impulsive, as a rage reaction on the background of psychiatric disturbance. Murder by blows also started as an impulsive rage reaction and continued blindly. Shooting generally appeared to be calculated and planned.

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